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THE GENTLEMAN AND THE CIRCLE OF COURTESY IN EDMUND SPENSER'S THE FAERIE QUEENE

by

Peter Bernard Murphy

B.A. (Hons.) Simon Fraser University, 1975

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF

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Title of Thesis/Project/Extended Essay

"The Gentleman and the Circle of Courtesy in Edmund Spenser's The Faerie Queene"

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ABSTRACT

Can The Faerie Queene be considered a finished work? This thesis proposes that the poem can be read as complete, even though Spenser's alleged design for it will remain for ever unfinished. A sense of completeness in the work arises because it adheres to and accomplishes its major theme of courtesy. In doing so, it fulfils Spenser's central ambition that it would "fashion a gentleman". While the theme of courtesy is an obvious one, it has been generally overlooked by critics as a unifying and defining force in the poem. Early criticism regarded The Faerie Queene as incomplete because it failed to meet the formulae of classical design. Most later critics, while not submitting to this dogmatic approach, have nevertheless agreed with its conclusion, usually on the basis of external evidence such as Spenser's plan for the poem contained in his letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, or the existence of the "Mutabilitie Cantos".

Acknowledging the contributions of several recent critics, I propose that The Faerie Queene is complete by the end of its sixth book, which because it is entirely concerned with courtesy, provides an appropriate place for the study to begin. In relation to this, however, it has also been necessary to outline the philosophical concepts behind Spenser's theme, and to show his familiarity with them as demonstrated in his other works, The Shepheardes Calendar, The Fowre Hymnes, and Colin Clout's Come Home Againe. By comparing these works to The Faerie Queene it is possible to deduce that Spenser's gentleman was inspired and fashioned by the power of love, which was described by Plato and by Neo-platonic philosophers as the motivating force of the cosmos. The Platonic love process follows a circular pattern, the Creator's love moving continuously from Him to His creation, and back again. According to Renaissance thought, the process could be observed in the world in the actions of good men, and was

symbolized, syncretically, by the classical symbol of the Dance of the Graces, which depicts love being freely given, received and returned. Such processes may be seen to be at work in Book VI of The Faerie Queene, especially in the actions of Calidore, the Knight of Courtesy, and symbol of Spenser's ideal gentleman.

On another plane, however, the same processes work to give The Faerie Queene itself an appearance of circularity. Evidence for this lies in the many parallels found in its first book, "Holinesse", and its sixth, "Courtesy". The two virtues seem to be so related as to be interdependent, and it is this very quality that suggests Books I and VI form a beginning and conclusion to the work. Spenser may not have completed the plan for his great poem outlined, somewhat ambiguously, in the letter to Raleigh, but on the basis of the philosophical concepts employed with continuity in Books I and VI, his design of The Faerie Queene is complete at the end of Calidore's adventures.

TO MY CHILDREN

CONTENTS

PREFACE

In this study I propose that The Faerie Queene, although an unfinished work, may be read as complete. Reasons for this, simply stated, are that Spenser's overall theme for the work is courtesy, and by the end of the poem's sixth book, which deals with that subject, the author has provided enough material to achieve his aim of "fashioning a gentleman". In order for the reader to understand how this occurs, it is necessary that he or she be acquainted with the philosophical concepts that underlie The Faerie Queene's design and purpose. The Renaissance beliefs, a mixture of christian and classical philosophies, are evident in other poems written by Spenser which predate, or are contemporary with The Faerie Queene, and his understanding of them can thus be readily and reliably established. His application of these ideas to The Faerie Queene, his greatest work, and the longest poem in English, is, therefore a logical progression.

This thesis is divided into three chapters. Chapter One provides background to the poem, first discussing previous literary criticism relating to its unity, then outlining the concepts that influenced Spenser and demonstrating his use of them in The Fowre Hymnes, The Shepheardes Calendar, and Colin Clout's Come Home Againe, to show how and why these concepts apply to The Faerie Queene. The second chapter concerns itself with courtesy as it is presented in the poem's sixth book. After discussing Elizabethan ideas concerning the gentleman, the very expression of courtesy, this chapter looks principally at the adventures of Calidore, that virtue's exemplar. Additional characters both major and minor, whose actions parallel or are directly related to Calidore's, are also examined. Among these are Calepine and Serena, Melibee, Pastorella, and, of course, the Blatant Beast, Calidore's and courtesy's mortal enemy. In conjunction with this,

Chapter Two also discusses the symbol of the three Graces, whose circular dance expresses the platonic love concept of giving, receiving, and returning which was thought to motivate the cosmos, and is itself essential to understanding The Faerie Queene. The third and final chapter concerns itself with the fulfilment of the platonic love element in The Faerie Queene, and attempts to demonstrate its presence in the work by relating the Holinesse of Book I to the Courtesy of Book VI. The two books are comparable because their structures are parallel, and this allows the possible conclusion that their virtues are themselves comparable. In Renaissance terms this makes for a viable argument: just as christian and pagan concepts could be amalgamated, Holinesse, an entirely christian virtue, could be associated with Courtesy, whose origins were partly christian but strongly pagan in origin. Because Books I and VI contain such similarities, it is possible to conclude that respectively they form a possible beginning and end to the work, and that their similarity reflects the transcendental processes that formed the essence of Renaissance thinking. Because it seeks to unite and synthesize these diverse elements, The Faerie Queene itself appears as a unity, and for this reason can be read as complete.

Chapter 1

The completeness of The Faerie Queene is a problem that confronts anyone attempting to criticize the poem.[1] Most critics since Dryden have taken the position that the work is incomplete, though they do not usually subscribe to his dogma concerning the classic principles of epic unity. Recent critics have instead tended to view The Faerie Queene as sui generis, and in judging its completeness have asked whether or not Spenser's intentions for it are indeed accomplished. Any assessment of such intentions has usually relied on four principle sources: Spenser's letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, which prefaced the first edition of The Faerie Queene (1590); sonnets XXXIII and LXXX of Amoretti, in which Spenser indicated that The Faerie Queene was to exceed six books; the Cantos of Mutabilitie, claimed by Spenser's publisher as a fragment of an incomplete seventh book to the work; and finally, textual references in The Faerie Queene itself promising further development. Of these four sources the letter to Raleigh has been the most influential, especially since it presents an outline of the poem's intended plot. A few critics have attempted interpretations ignoring the letter. In Spenser's Faerie Queene, Janet Spens argues that Spenser's original, but later abandoned, intention was to base the poem's structure on the seven deadly sins.[2] Alastair Fowler's Spenser and the Numbers of Time uses numerology and astrology in an attempt to show that a seven-book Faerie Queene was structured around the planetary week.[3] Most critics, however, have made use of the information the letter to Raleigh contains, and have attempted to make The Faerie Queene conform to it. Any interpretation based on the letter, or which considers any of the other external references incontestible can, however, only reach one possible conclusion: The Faerie Queene was only half completed. Although it would be foolish to argue that the poem is without flaws, it is nevertheless

possible to approach the subject of its completeness--as well as Spenser's intentions for it--from a point of view which does not dismiss the outside references as being of no consequence, but neither adheres strictly to the burden of their authority. This approach is valid, I will argue, because of certain aspects of The Faerie Queene's structure, and because I believe its main theme to be courtesy. Before proceeding with this discussion, however, it will be necessary to examine the four influences mentioned; first, because of the importance hitherto attached to them, and second, because information contained in them may bear on the present study.

The essence of dealing with The Faerie Queene's completeness is to establish that a major theme exists in the poem, and to show how this theme is effectively brought to completion. In assessing this, my emphasis will be on Book VI and its effectiveness as a conclusion to the work, and also on Book I insofar as it is related to Book VI by the common theme of courtesy. In this regard the letter to Raleigh may be helpful, but its limitations must also be considered. The letter, written in 1589, is the only existing statement made by Spenser regarding his overall plan for The Faerie Queene. Or does it indeed present a plan? The letter gives a general summation of the literary and philosophical writings that had inspired the poem, and these would seem to cover a large range of desirable influences for any poet of Spenser's time: Homer, Virgil, Plato, Aristotle, Ariosto, Tasso, Arthurian legend, and even queen Elizabeth herself--all are listed as sources of inspiration for The Faerie Queene. As for the plan of the work, the letter outlines the events of the first three books, which by that time had been completed, and states that they are part of an eventual twelve representing Aristotle's "twelve private morall virtues", and under the guise of "continued Allegory or darke conceit", would provide by way of "ensample", the means to, "fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline."

Although the letter to Raleigh may be valuable in interpreting The Faerie Queene, it presents some difficulties when taken as a complete plan for the work. As Courthope first pointed out, the letter is full of contradictions and ambiguities.[4] Spenser does not even keep to his declared purpose in the letter, "...to discover...The Faerie Queene's...general intention and meaning...." Some other problems of the letter are outlined in Graham Hough's Preface to The Faerie Queene: Spenser claims that the end of his work is allegorical, but this is not strictly so; Tasso is claimed as an influence, but how strong an influence he could have been is questionable since his Gerusalleme Liberato had not been published when Spenser began The Faerie Queene; the twelve "private morall" virtues proposed as the basis for each of The Faerie Queene's six books do not exist as such: Aristotle did not advocate any twelve specific virtues, much less could he have conceived of a virtue like chastity, or the concept of holiness, both of which derive from christianity.[5] Some further difficulties of the letter to Raleigh as plan are provided by Josephine Waters Bennet. By comparing the 1590 edition of The Faerie Queene, which included the letter as preface, to the 1596 edition, which excluded it, Miss Bennet shows that Spenser seemed to have been unsure of the final direction the poem would take when he composed the letter:

> The omission of the letter to Raleigh from the 1596 edition of the poem may have been due to the exigencies of printing or to political considerations, since Raleigh was out of favour at that time. But it may also have been due to Spenser's wish to suppress some features of his plan, since by 1596 he must have realized that he was not going to be able to carry out that plan fully.[6]

While Miss Bennet's arguments are largely concerned with discrepancies surrounding Spenser's use of the annual feast the letter mentions as a "grand finale" to the poem, she does believe that "...the twelve quests...constitute one of the most well defined elements of the plot." She allows, on the other

hand, that "...the third and fourth books depart from this pattern."[7] William Ponsonby's title page of 1590 which presents The Faerie Queene as "Disposed into twelve bookes, Fashioning XII Morall vertues," remained unchanged in 1596, and this would seem to indicate that Miss Bennet's former assertion might be correct. It is equally possible, however, that the claim could have been overlooked by the printers, or even kept on as a selling point, and that the six-book Faerie Queene was all that Spenser finally intended. Although no final solution to the problem is possible, the criticisms of Miss Bennet and others are enough to alert readers to the fact that the plan contained in the letter to Raleigh ought to be approached with caution; some of its claims may be accurate, but a great many are not.

The two sonnets from the Amoretti which make brief reference to The Faerie Queene must also be considered in assessing its completeness. The first of these, Sonnet XXXIII, suggests that when Spenser wrote it he was uncertain about continuing the work; to some extent, however, it also indicates that he felt the poem sufficient as it stood:

> Great wrong I doe, I can it not deny,
> to that most sacred Empresse my dear
> dread,
> not finishing her Queene of faery,
> that mote enlarge her liuing prayses dead.
> But lodwick this of grace to me aread:
> doe ye not thinck th'accomplishment of it,
> sufficient work for one mans simple head,
> all were it as the rest but rudely writ.
> How then should I without another wit,
> thinck euer to endure such taedious toyle,
> sins that this one in tost with troublous fit,
> of a proud loue, that doth my spirit spoyle.
> Ceasse then, till she vouchsafe to grawnt me rest,
> or lend you me another liuing brest.

Sonnet LXXX, however, suggests that Spenser did have intentions of carrying the Faerie Queene beyond six books, although it might also be said that his concern for this task in the later poem is as casual as in the earlier one:

After so long a race as I haue run
Through Faery land, which those six
books compile,
giue leave to rest me being halfe fordonne,
and gather to myself new breath awhile.
Then as a steed refreshed after toyle,
out of my prison I will breake anew:
and stoutly will that second worke assoyle,
with strong endeuer and attention dew.
Till then giue leaue to me in pleasant mew,
to sport my muse and sing my loues sweet
praise:
the contemplation of whose heauenly hew,
my spirit to an higher pitch will rayse.
But let her prayses yet be low and meane,
fit for the handmayd of the Faery Queene.

These statements of intent as they apply to The Faerie Queene as we know it are nevertheless questionable, for the exact state of the six books to which Spenser refers is uncertain. The Amoretti sonnets were published a year before the second Faerie Queene, which would mean that they were written even earlier. Judson, in his Life of Edmund Spenser comments: "The Amoretti volume was probably published early in 1595, since it had been entered in the Stationer's register on November 19, 1594...."[8] This could mean that between the time of Spenser's writing his comments in Amoretti and publishing the second installment of The Faerie Queene, he could easily have changed his plan, as, for instance he changed the 1590 ending of Book III for the second edition. Both sonnets imply that he wished to have done with the work, thus it does not seem unreasonable that he would abandon his original "plan" as set forth in his letter to Raleigh. Such a change might account too, for the letter's omission from the second printing.

A further point to be made here concerns the sestet of Sonnet LXXX which states:

...giue leave to me in pleasant mew,
to sport my muse and sing my loues sweet
praise:

the contemplation of whose heauenly hew,
my spirit to an higher pitch will rayse.
But let her prayses yet be low and meane
fit for the handmayd of the Faery Queene.

Since this is presented out of context, it is first necessary to explain that the reference made here to The Faerie Queene is but a digression, and that Spenser's intention in using it is to contribute to the love theme of the Amoretti sonnets. In Sonnets LXXVII and LXXIX the poet begins a meditation upon his absent and unrequiting mistress, and through this he seeks a deeper understanding of the nature of love. Sonnet LXXX marks a transition point between the more abstract thoughts of LXXIX:

...onely that is permanent and free
from frayle corruption, that doth flesh ensew
That is true beautie: that doth argue you
to be diuine and borne of heauenly seed:
deriued from that fayre Spirit, from whom al
true
and perfect beauty did at first proceed.

and the more visionary aspect of those which follow: Sonnets LXXXI to LXXXIX proceed from a visual impression: "Fayre is my loue, when her fayre golden heares,/with the loose wynd ye wauing chance to mark."; to rapture: "Yet are myne eyes so filled with the store/ of that fayre sight, that nothing else they brook." (LXXXIII); to a final realization that the love he seeks is unrequited and destined to remain so:

So I alone now left disconsolate,
mourne to myself the absence of my loue:
and wandring here and there all desolate,
seek with my playnts to match that mournful doue:
Ne ioy of all that heauen doth houe
can comfort me, but her owne ioyous sight:
whose sweet aspect both God and man can
moue,
in her vnspotted pleasauns to delight.
Dark is my day, whyles her fayre light I mis,
and dead my life that wants such liuely blis.

Spenser's reference to The Faerie Queene in Sonnet LXXX is thus an expression of his desire for inspiration. He hopes that his meditation on love and on his mistress will renew his spirit sufficiently to allow him to finish the work with ease, no longer languishing in the thought expressed in Sonnet XXXIII that the task is too tedious to continue. The meditation upon his mistress' beauty and the songs he will sing because of it will, he hopes, be inferior to those sung in honour of his patron for The Faerie Queene, but because of their part in deriving inspiration for the larger work, however, they are fit to be its 'handmayd'. The implication of this is to suggest a favourite theme of Spenser, more of which will be said later. The theme is that the unrequited lover, in his struggle to understand his predicament, will come to see the nature of its heavenly origin through the means of contemplation. This same theme, as will be shown, is also present in The Shepheardes Calendar, Colin Clout's Come Home Againe, The Fowre Hymnes, and The Faerie Queene itself. The Fowre Hymnes show the ideal development of the lover's understanding as it proceeds from the contemplation of love and beauty, to that of heavenly love and heavenly beauty. The inclusion of such a theme in the Amoretti and the relation it has to The Faerie Queene is of special interest because it suggests a possible clue to the completeness of the latter work. The theme of the nature of love is a strong one in the sixth book of The Faerie Queene, the Book of Courtesy. Since Sonnet LXXX of Amoretti refers directly to the completion of The Faerie Queene, and since the theme of learning the nature of love accompanies that reference, it is possible that the sonnets did provide Spenser with the inspiration to complete the larger work, and that the poem as it stands is the result of the poet's wishes. A final similarity between Amoretti and The Faerie Queene (one which is also shared by Colin Clout's Come Home Againe) is the introduction near the end of

"venemous tongs" (Sonnet LXXXVI). What exactly this might mean from a literary point of view is difficult to say. Its inclusion in each of these works could be just an accident, but Spenser was, after all, a poet who loved 'deliberate' accidents, as The Faerie Queene shows. It is thus possible that while each of the separate works mentioned is in itself complete, they are all nevertheless linked to each other in an unspecific way. Each work thus provides information about the other without necessarily being essential to it. The possible meaning of the "venemous tongs" as it pertains to The Faerie Queene as well as the other works is best left here for later discussion; it will be dealt with in the evaluation of Book VI for the reason that this part of Spenser's work provides the greatest number of clues to the meaning of this term.

The two Cantos of Mutability that have been appended to The Faerie Queene as part of its seventh book have been given this distinction on evidence that is at best superficial. William Ponsonby's claim that the cantos "...both for Forme and Matter, appeare to be parcell of some folowing Booke of the Faerie Queene, UNDER THE LEGEND OF Constansie," is as vague in its assumptions as it is accurate. It is true, for instance, that the verse form of the cantos is identical to that of The Faerie Queene. But whether this is also true of their "matter" is arguable. The main characters of the Cantos of Mutabilitie are unlike those encountered in the six books of The Faerie Queene, for they are not mortals but gods. While it is true that gods do appear from time to time in Books I-VI, their roles there are incidental rather than prominent. As for the idea of mutability itself, Spenser had already presented a powerful image of it in the Garden of Adonis episode in Book II, and it would therefore seem fair to ask what reason he might have had for presenting it again. Although as readers we can be grateful to Ponsonby for publishing a work by Spenser which otherwise might have been lost, we need

not take him at his word that the Cantos of Mutabilitie belong to the extant Faerie Queene. What would seem as likely is that they were from a discarded portion of the work, but because of their intrinsic value Spenser may have wished to preserve them. On their own the Cantos tell a complete story, and any relation they bear to the contents of The Faerie Queene's six books is unapparent.

Several minor textual references in The Faerie Queene would seem to suggest its continuance: we are told at the end of Book V to expect the reunion of Artegall and Britomartis at the Faery Court; in Book VI further installments in the stories of the Salvage Man and Calepine are promised; others which seem incomplete are those of Serena, Tristram, and Pastorella. These "dropped stitches", as Northrop Frye has called them, are, of course, impossible to pick up. On the one hand, they may be used as evidence for the argument that The Faerie Queene is unfinished: on the other, Spenser might have just as easily resolved them by rewriting. I am inclined to take the latter view, first, because Book VI ends on a note of finality, with no final promise of further adventures; secondly, as I intend to show, the ending of Book VI, and hence of The Faerie Queene, is similar in many respects to other endings of Spenser's finished works.

Dryden saw The Faerie Queene as incomplete because it failed to conform to the classic principles of epic unity: "There is no uniformity of design in Spenser: he aims at the accomplishment of no one action."[9] While later critics may have abandoned this view, they have been unable to discover any definite alternative to the conclusion it predicates. In approaching Book VI as The Faerie Queene's last installment the problem of its conclusiveness has been viewed in two ways. The first of these looks to the allegory for a unifying theme; the second looks to the imagery. The former view is espoused by critic B.E.C. Davis, who seems to regard the work as complete, but

only in the sense that Spenser might have hastily finished it off because he was tired of it:

> The allegory of courtesy falls into detached sketches, interposed with much that is purely romantic. Its position is rather analagous to that of Shakespeare's last romances as summed up by Mr Strachey (Books and Characters, p. 52): 'It is difficult to resist the conclusion that he was getting bored with himself. Bored with people, bored with real life, bored with drama, bored in fact with everything except poetry and poetical dreams.' Substitute for "people" and "drama", "allegory, historical and philosophical", and the statement will apply to Spenser. So it is not surprising to find his hero at least at the conclusion of his recorded adventures, lifted bodily from the toil and turmoil of Faeryland to disport himself upon the swords of Arcadia.[10]

Davis' overall conclusion about The Faerie Queen, which was undoubtedly influenced by Dryden's, is that it is "...an allegory of truths and objects unrelated to one final cause." The cause in question is courtesy, and Davis' assertions as to why it is not dealt with conclusively are that,

> Calidore leaves his task half-achieved by chaining the Blatant Beast so insecurely that the monster succeeds in regaining his liberty. And thus the allegory draws to a conclusion in which nothing is concluded.

Having said this, Davis continues:

> The gentleman has been fashioned, his virtues have been systematically examined and portrayed at full length. But this task, proposed in the preface and duly fulfilled, involves another, the quest into origins, an attempt to solve the eternal problem of evils yet unsubdued.[11]

Such a conclusion seems itself to be inconclusive: Davis readily, and even emphatically, admits that Spenser's proposed task of "fashioning a gentleman"--something which the letter to Raleigh is not ambiguous about--has been fulfilled, yet he is reluctant to allow that Spenser has actually accomplished that task. Instead, he extends it: it can only be complete if it includes, "...an attempt

to solve the eternal problems of evils yet unsubdued." If a problem is eternal, one might ask, how can it ever be solved? The question is not one of which Spenser was unaware. That virtue cannot overcome all evils completely is shown not only in Book VI, but also in several other books of The Faerie Queene. Redcrosse, for instance, cannot finally defeat Duessa and Archimago, despite his achievement of holiness. Or not, at least, for anyone other than himself. Though Duessa is exiled (I,viii,50) and Archimago imprisoned (I,xii,36), both reappear at the outset of Book II to cause trouble for Guyon. Guyon manages to avoid their influences, but like Redcrosse he too has an enemy he is unable to subdue completely: this is Mammon, whom he resists with great determination, but does not destroy (II,vii). Neither, at the end of Book II, is Guyon able to do anything about the hoggish Grille (II,xii,87). Similar to these incidents is Artegall's failure to overcome Detraction and Envy, as well as their agent, the Blatant Beast (V,xii,37-43). It could be said that these incidents are minor, while the failing of which Calidore is accused is related to his actual quest. But the fact is that, contrary to Davis' argument, Calidore does not fail: he does subdue the Blatant Beast. He is, furthermore, the first ever to accomplish this task, and his subjugation of the monster is longest lasting (VI,xii,38-39). Several knights succeeding Calidore are also credited with bringing the Beast into check, but they, too, fail to destroy him, nor can they prevent him from eventually escaping. By having other knights besides Calidore take up the struggle against the Blatant Beast Spenser emphasizes the necessity for continuing vigilance on the part of those aspiring to virtue to act against what the creature represents: slander, backbiting, gossip, and, in fact, any discourteous act. For Calidore then, as for Redcrosse and Guyon, the final triumph of his quest is a personal one rather than an achievement which directly includes other men. The evils against which Spenser complains, both personally and through artistic presentation, are

indeed 'eternal problems', but Spenser's understanding of them is not Davis's. Davis would have Spenser provide a solution to such problems, but Spenser, knowing that no absolute solution was possible did not attempt one. His answer, instead, was to illustrate how the virtuous man must combat the eternal difficulties of being mortal in a world of other mortals.

Spenser's private complaint against "wicked tongues" which have slandered his reputation is also found in some of his other works, and would seem here to be in keeping with his general meaning: he, as an individual, realizes the dangers of discourtesy, real and abstract, and is voicing his personal disapproval of it.

Northrop Frye proposes that Book VI may be regarded as a proper conclusion to The Faerie Queene because it fits the Coleridgean hypothesis that a work of art is complete if it forms an organic unity. Frye argues that the unity of The Faerie Queene resides in its imagery rather than its allegory. While he does not discount the possibility that Spenser may have eventually intended to finish his twelve book plan, Frye's view is that the work might well be considered finished as it stands. Although he admits that the poem has some internal flaws and loose ends, he believes it to have a sense of completeness by the end of the book of Courtesy. One of the indications of finality, Frye states, is Spenser's introduction of Colin Clout as his "signature". By doing this, he makes the end of Book VI reminiscent of the end of The Shepheardes Calendar and also, therefore, of The Faerie Queene:

> ...the appearance of Spenser's 'signature' in Colin Clout and two other symbols from The Shepheardes Calendar, the four Graces, and the envious beast that barks at poets, make the end of the sixth book also a summing up and conclusion for the entire poem and for Spenser's poetic career. There is, at last, nothing in the poem as we now have it that seems to depend for its meaning on anything unwritten.[12]

Frye's article thus provides a base for further criticism, and Richard Neuse

has used it as his starting point in considering The Faerie Queene's completeness. Neuse accepts Frye's argument that the imagery is a criterion for unity, but he rejects the ending of the work as inadequate, and sees it, in fact, as Spenser's admission that the work is a failure.[13] It fails, Neuse believes, because Spenser has realized the didactic limits of poetry:

> ...the ideal of courtesy does not triumph because what is 'now counted wiseman's threasure' in poetry as in life is to 'seeke to please'...the poet acknowledges that his art, far from enhancing and subserving real life, is in fact threatened by it...the failure of courtesy, I believe, dramatizes Spenser's implicit avowal that the potential ideal which his epic was designed to embody had been defeated by a world hopelessly antagonistic to its realization.[14]

Like Davis, Neuse feels that Calidore's failure to subdue the Blatant Beast permanently is a factor in The Faerie Queene's inadequacy. But unlike Davis (and most other critics) Neuse believes that Spenser deliberately cut the work short: "...the dominant sense of Book VI is one of disillusionment, of disparity between the poet's ideals and the reality he envisions."[15] That combination of the real and the ideal, Neuse suggests, is expressed in Book VI by the marrying of poetry with courtesy: "Courtesy, combining as it does the profoundly ethical and spiritual with the esthetic, appears as the supreme poetic possibility in human existence, and as such represents the perfect point of transition from (poet's) art to (reader's) life."[16] But Neuse does not see Book VI as the realization of Spenser's ideal for either poetry or courtesy. Calidore, he feels, is no hero; rather, he is an anti-hero:

> Unlike some earlier heroes, Guyon, for instance, Calidore does not possess the innocence that allows him to be transformed by experience...he remains to the end the smooth self-controlled courtier who far from redeeming the failure of the court, actually sums it up in his person. Thus rather than evolving towards an ideal, Calidore's character seems to me to develop, if at all, in a reverse direction.[17]

Neuse's expectations of Spenser here are more limiting than illuminating, for he conceives of virtue as something attainable and static rather than the continued striving after an ideal. The idea that Calídore 'develops' in reverse is highly questionable, since it suggests that Spenser was unconscious of his motives in depicting him. But Spenser was, as all his works reveal, a very conscientious and craftsmanlike poet, and was, therefore, unlikely to allow any of his heroes to develop beyond his control. While it may be true, as Neuse implies, that Calidore is different from some knights of The Faerie Queene such as Redcrosse and Guyon, he is similar to others, Britomartis and Artegall being two. Redcrosse and Guyon pursue and master their virtues by a step-by-step series of adventures, but Britomartis and Artegall begin their quests as exemplaries of particular virtues. Calidore, too, falls into this latter category, and like his two predecessors, gains, by the end of his quest, greater understanding of the virtue for which he stands. Neuse's version of Calidore is that he is incapable of learning, and to prove this he cites several incidents in which he believes Calidore behaves discourteously. The first of these is in Canto IX, when Calidore, impressed by Melibee's wisdom, and also with Pastorella's beauty, requests to stay a while amongst the shepherds, and offers gold in return for hospitality.[18] Neuse considers this is gross misconduct, but surely it can just as easily be seen as an innocent mistake. Calidore's intentions on this occasion are, I believe, honest, for he feels it only right to pay highly for something he considers precious. Since he cannot compensate Melibee for the benefit of his wisdom, he attempts to at least pay him for bed and board. Contrary to Neuse's argument, Melibee's refusal of the gold on the grounds that it is "...the cause of mens decay," does have an effect on Calidore. If it did not, surely we would see him trying to impress Pastorella with his wealth rather than his

consideration, or perhaps even offering to pay Colin to recreate the Graces' dance. Neuse also charges Calidore with duplicity in the form of 'smooth talk', as he attempts to ingratiate himself with Melibee, and also in his adoption of shepherd's clothing in winning Pastorella. But both these charges are hollow. In the first place, one might ask, is Melibee a wise old man or just an old fool? If, as Neuse suggests, he is taken in by the smoothness of Calidore's manners--manners of a type with which he as a former courtier would have been familiar--then his wisdom is mere cliché. If, in turn, this is so, then Melibee cannot be considered a sympathetic character, and his death, when it occurs at the hands of the Brigants, has little or no meaning. Secondly, it should be asked, what exactly does Calidore gain from Melibee through this supposed courtly smoothness and duplicity? Surely if he was after gain he would find it more profitable to go to the court than the countryside. As for Calidore's behaviour towards Pastorella, he can hardly be accused of duplicity with her since he has no base motive. He is unquestionably in love with her, and his affection of shepherd's garb shows, if anything, his humility and sensitivity to her limited experience. Since it causes her to recognize his good attributes (something she was apparently incapable of doing while he was dressed in armour) it must surely be seen as a success in communication rather than an act of dishonesty. Furthermore, in exchanging his dress for that of a shepherd Calidore does not seek to appear something he is not; he is, rather, expressing civility, which, as Colin Clout later states, is one of the attributes of courtesy bestowed by the Graces:

> They teach vs, how to each degree and kynde
> We should ourselues demeane, to low, to hie;
> To friends, to foes, which skill men call Ciuility. (VI,x,23)

Oddly enough, Neuse credits Calidore with the quality of civility, but in doing

so ignores the fact that it is one of the gifts of grace.[19] It is civility too that Calidore expresses in his dealings with the other shepherds, especially Coridon. The complaint that Calidore's behaviour is punctilious and "...always suggests the sly wink of contempt for the hapless peasant...," is not borne out by the text, and Coridon is by no means the wooden character Neuse would make of him. The "sly wink" that Neuse claims to see is directed at no one, not even "...an invisible audience of his...courtly peers...." If it had been Spenser's intention to show duplicity in Calidore, the knight's dishonesty would surely have been made more obvious. Neuse's position is an exaggeration and does not take into account such facts as Coridon's jealousy of Calidore, nor Pastorella's lack of interest in the shepherd: "...she no whit his presents did regard/Ne him could find to fancie in her brest." (VI,ix,40). As for Calidore's behaviour towards Coridon, it is fair and benevolent, in contrast to Coridon's to him:

> ...euer when he came in companie
> Where Calidore was present, he would loure,
> And byte his lip, and euen for gealousie
> Was ready oft his owne hart to deuoure,
> Impatient of any paramoure:
> Who on the other side did seem so farre
> From malicing, or grudging his good houre
> That all he could, he graced him with her,
> Ne euer shewed signe of rancour or of iarre. (VI,ix,39)

The climax of the rivalry between these two suitors is a wrestling match, initiated by Coridon, not Calidore. Neuse believes that Calidore's courteous behaviour towards Coridon never springs from genuine concern; however, Calidore's actions in the wrestling match reveal obvious sensitivity as the attitudes of the two rivals are again contrasted:

> ...Coridon forth stepping openly
> Did challenge Calidore to wrestling game:
> For he through long and perfect industry,
> Therein well practisd was, and in the same

> Thought sure t'avenge his grudge, and worke
> his foe great shame.
>
> But Calidore he greatly did mistake;
> For he was strong and mightily stiffe pight,
> That with one fall his necke he almost brake,
> And had he not upon him fallen light
> His dearest iont he sure had broken quight. (VI,ix,43-44)

While it may be true that Spenser does not reflect the values of egalitarianism in his treatment of Calidore and the shepherds (the concept would in any case have been alien to him) there can be no doubt that in these incidents he shows respect for the humanity of persons low and high.

The final point Neuse makes in his argument against Book VI is that courtesy fails because the Blatant Beast triumphs (or seems to triumph) in the end. In order to establish this point, he rightly places the Beast and Calidore in antithesis. His dismissal of Calidore as an anti-hero and false courtier, however, leaves him in the position of having no hero, or at least none that succeeds, in Book VI. Because he has relegated Calidore to a weakened position, Neuse has no choice but to see the Beast's power as ultimately stronger than courtesy. In an attempt to have some sort of hero for the book, Neuse turns to the poet himself, and he, it would seem, is left stranded between the Beast and Calidore:

> Between them, Calidore and the Beast represent major aspects of a society which, as I have suggested, has no room for the Spenserian poet or poetry.

The conclusion he reaches as a result of this is that Spenser admits defeat at the end of Book VI; since his poetry has failed, so, Neuse reasons, has his sense of purpose:

> By the end of Book VI the Beast is triumphant and even threatening to disengage itself from the fiction. At this

> point, the poem in one of those characteristic Spenserian twists, becomes a spell to ward off its own destruction. Is this not the poet's final acknowledgement that his quest, though unfinished, has reached the limits of his epic enterprise?[20]

There are several flaws in this argument, not the least of which, as has been shown, is Neuse's misinterpretation of Calidore's character. He also overlooks, as did B.E.C. Davis, the significance of Calidore's defeat of the Blatant Beast, and gives too much significance to the poet's final and anti-climactic statements. Neuse's misunderstanding stems from his insistence upon the static nature of virtue. He believes that in order for Calidore to be an effective character, his virtue must triumph conclusively, once and for all time. But for Spenser virtuous attributes are not merely character traits, nor does his idea of courtesy mean simply 'good manners', learnt through conditioning. In accordance with renaissance belief, virtue, like beauty and love, was something to be approximated rather than achieved. Just as the symbol of the three Graces depends upon their continuous motion for its meaning, so virtue depends upon continuous striving. The Blatant Beast is the antithesis of virtue and thus stands for all things the courteous man must fight against, which is to say, human weakness exaggerated into vice. The representation of this in a single personality such as the Blatant Beast, makes the actual isolation and final defeat of vice, in oneself and in others, seem possible, when in reality it is out of the question. Spenser's Beast, then, is a creature who like one's own nature, cannot be destroyed, although he can be tamed--by someone such as Calidore, who understands the nature of courtesy. Hence Calidore's victory over the Beast is not for all time, except in his own particular case. To emphasize this, Spenser makes the subjugation of the Beast a task for succeeding generations of knights:

> Albe that long time after Calidore
> The good Sir Pelleas him tooke in hand
> And after him Sir Lamoracke of yore,
> And all his brethren borne in Britain lande;
> Yet none could bring him into band. (VI,xii,39)

In saying this Spenser is suggesting that no one can defeat the Beast as Calidore did, but Calidore's accomplishment established an ideal for others to attempt to imitate. Spenser makes use of the historical nature of his characters to present his own generation with a challenge: the Beast, he says, has now become so strong that none may defeat him, though all have cause to fear him:

> Ne is any that may him now restraine
> He growen is so great and strong of late,
> Barking and biting all that him doe bate,
> Albe they worthy blame, or cleare of crime:
> Ne spareth he most learned wits to rate
> Ne spareth he the gentle poet's rime,
> But rends without regard of person or of time. (VI,xii,40)

Spenser's pronouncement is thus an exhortation to his readers to be aware of and to fight against the vices which the Beast represents; and he identifies himself as one who is also struggling to do so, at both a personal and a poetic level. He feels threatened by the power of the Beast, but not defeated, and because of this his verse, the testimony of his own striving for virtue, may finally be "...counted wisemens threasure." Thus Spenser's personal 'quest,' as Neuse calls it, does not end in failure or disillusion, but rather with a continuing vigilance for courtesy.

All the aforementioned critics accept the argument that The Faerie Queene lacks a single theme or action that unites its six books, and all their arguments centre on whether they are for or against such a unity. While one can agree with Richard Neuse's statement that, "No single hypothesis, surely,

will reduce such variety to a unity...," the possibility that The Faerie Queene may have at least one major unifying theme is not to be overruled.[21] It may be true, as Dryden said, that the work does not succeed as a traditional epic because it has no single hero performing a single quest, but it is wrong, I believe, to think there is no final cause towards which its actions and episodes move. In order to establish what that cause might be, it is necessary to look again at Spenser's intentions. We know from the letter to Raleigh that the "generall end" of the work is "to fashion a gentleman", which is to say, Spenser hoped his readers would themselves be influenced towards that end. But it is in the Proem to Book I that Spenser states what he sees his task to be, with its literary as well as its moral qualifications:

> Lo I the man, whose Muse whilome did maske,
> As time her taught, in lowly Shepeards weeds,
> Am now enforst a far vnfitter taske,
> For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine Oaten reeds,
> And sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds;
> Whose prayses hauing slept in silence long,
> Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds
> To blazon broad emongst her learned throng:
> Fierce warres and faithfull loues shall moralize my song. (I, Proem 1)

The poet states here that in this work he will move from his usual pastoral mode (his "lowly shepheards weeds") to a higher form. This form is generally taken to be the epic, since that form is associated with Calliope, the chief of the Muses, whom he invokes. But Spenser also says that he feels unfit for the task, and in the Proem's second verse refers to himself as the Muse's "weaker nouice." This would seem to suggest that his 'epic' will be somewhat different from any written previously. Although two of his subjects are love and war, these will be seen from the point of view of one whose true calling is pastoral poetry, which will no doubt colour their presentation. What this suggests is that the work is intended to be a reflective one, and not merely a depiction of

heroic battles or sentimental love affairs. Spenser also emphasizes that his work will deal with gentility, or more properly, with courtesy. Thus he states that he will "...sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds." His reference to Venus, Mars, and Cupid in stanza three is a popular renaissance motif, which illustrates the gentling of chivalry. The idea, promoted by many renaissance artists, Botticelli among them, was that European Civilization had arrived at the stage when the need for the harsher virtues of the warrior had lessened, and freer rein could be given to gentler pursuits. It was felt that the time had come for the knight to become the gentleman, and for chivalry to become courtesy. Courtesy, then, is a major theme of The Faerie Queene, and although it has long been recognized as a subject of the work, it also forms, I believe, the basis of its unity. It is fitting, therefore, that the Book of Courtesy is the final one, for each of the five books which precedes it presents a virtue that is also one of the qualities of courtesy. Further to this, the Book of Courtesy may be seen as a fitting conclusion to The Faerie Queene because, like the initial Book of Holiness, its subject is one that includes many virtues. Holiness and Courtesy are also complementary inasmuch as the nature of the former is private and personal, while that of the latter is public and social. While the weight of my discussion to follow will be concerned with courtesy, I will also show how the first and sixth books of The Faerie Queene are related, to form, respectively, a fitting beginning and end to the work. This is so, I believe, because both contain elements of the renaissance belief that love is the motivating power behind human actions, the understanding of which principle is essential to gentility. Because of this, and of the complementary nature of the two books, The Faerie Queene, aside from minor flaws, may be seen as complete. Understanding how this can be so, however, first requires an examination of Spenser's meaning of courtesy.

The idea that courtesy is the main subject of The Faerie Queene is not, of course, new, and critics have been exploring Spenser's portrayal of it for some time. The sources of Spenser's ideas are well known, as H.S.V. Jones explains:

> There is no difficulty in finding parallels to the views of the poets in the many books of the gentleman produced within the period of the Renaissance. The English books of this class derive most of their ideas, even when they do not translate their texts, from Italian originals. Examples are Elyot's Governour (1531), the anonymous Institucion of a Gentleman (1555), Lawrence Humphrey's The Nobles or of Nobility, William Segar's The Book of Honor and Armes (1590), the same author's Honor Military and Civil (1602), and Peacham's Complete Gentleman (1634).[22]

Jones also notes the influence, especially on the Institucion of a Gentleman of Chaucer's Gentilesse, a poem which, given his admiration of its author, probably influenced Spenser. The most important courtesy book to come out of the renaissance, however, was probably Baldassare Castiglione's Libro del Courtegiano, The Book of the Courtier. This book no doubt formed part of the Italian influence upon English writers of courtesy manuals, of which Jones speaks. Besides Jones, other critics who have written about Spenser's portrayal of courtesy are William Fenn De Moss, A.C. Judson, and Mohonimohan Bhattacherje. While each expresses slightly different concerns--Judson and Bhattacherje, for example, are interested in the democratic possibilities of Spenser's scheme of things--all point out the philosophical influences of Classical and Renaissance thought upon Spenser's view of courtesy. William Fenn De Moss's "Spenser's Twelve Moral Virtues According to Aristotle" tries to show that Spenser accomplishes the intention expressed in the letter to Raleigh, of making his gentleman fulfil Aristotle's description of a virtuous man.[23] Courtesy, De Moss states, is comparable to what Aristotle calls "Near-Friendliness," a virtue including all that friendliness does, save affection. He comments that, "The sphere of Aristotle's Near-Friendliness is 'human

society with its common life and association in words and deeds.' The virtue is a mean between flattery, obsequiousness, complaisance, on the one hand, and surliness, disagreeableness, contentiousness, on the other."[24] Near-Friendliness, De Moss states, is a "...kind of Golden Rule: In your association with others, including strangers, speak to them and act toward them as a virtuous friend would do."[25] Applying the idea of such a mean to Book VI, he makes Calidore representative of it, flanking him on one side with the Blatant Beast, whom he makes the symbol of surliness, disagreeableness, and contentiousness; and on the other with Blandina, who represents flattery, obsequiousness, and complaisance. While De Moss's schematic interpretation is an interesting one, it seems to me too limited. His attempt to contrast the Beast with Blandina fails because the two characters are simply not different enough. Blandina is no less deceitful, for instance, than the Blatant Beast is, as her treatment of Arthur in Canto VI proves. It would be more proper, I think, to see Blandina as a reflection of the Beast's influence, for her strength as a character, and hence her importance, is so much less than his. The suggestion that the virtues of courtesy are similar to Aristotle's idea of Near-Friendliness is, nevertheless, well taken, for it does seem to describe the appearance of Calidore's actions.

Mohonimohan Bhattacherje's appraisal of Book VI in the light of Castiglione's Courtier is of interest since it outlines many parallels the two works contain in respect to the character of Calidore.[26] This article, however, ignores some obvious points of The Faerie Queene's text. Bhattacherje states, for example, that Spenser and Castiglione agree that the court is the most likely place for courtesy to be found, and emphasizes Calidore's courtly position. But Calidore is never seen at court, and while an ideal court may be the most suitable place to nurture courtesy, Spenser says that,

> ...vertue's seat is deep within the mynde
> And not in outward shows but inward thoughts
> defynde. (Proem VI,5)

This is especially true when The Faerie Queene is compared to The Courtier, in whose fourth book the nature of courtesy and virtue is said to be of the mind. Bhattacherje's article is useful insomuch as it shows that Spenser has incorporated some of Castiglione's ideas into The Faerie Queene, but its emphasis is placed largely upon the superficial attributes of a gentleman, such as skill at arms, courage, riding ability, running, jumping, swimming, and wrestling. While these skills may form part of Calidore's courtesy, they are very much in the "outward shows" category. One point which is of interest to the present argument, however, is Bhattacherje's observation that Calidore fits Castiglione's description of a virtuous lover, since his love of Pastorella is of the higher sort. Castiglione states that,

> The Courtier is the real lover in the true sense of the word; but he does not enjoy the beauty of his beloved through his sense of touch or his palate, but only through his eyes and ears....[27]

Starting from this Bhattacherje observes that,

> Sir Calidore was content merely to have sight of Pastorella now and then and to hear the music of her voice. True love, according to Castiglione, gives peace and repose and is a stranger to the pangs of jealousy....It was Coridon who put on a frowning appearance at the sight of Calidore whom, as a rival lover he looked upon as his mortal foe. But Calidore suffered no sting of jealousy and allowed Coridon to be Pastorella's partner in the dance. Love had given Calidore contentment, his ambition and vanity had disappeared, his soul was suffused with a new light and filled with a new treasure.[28]

The capacity that Calidore is shown to have for love experience of this type is perhaps the most crucial point in understanding Spenser's view of courtesy. This is because courtesy itself was regarded by renaissance thinkers as a form

of love. Calidore's personal experience with Pastorella, as Bhattacherje says, is indicative of the gaining of new spiritual insight. But it also suggests that as a virtuous man Calidore has a special place in the universal scheme of things. In order to discuss this idea further, however, and to examine Spenser's use of renaissance love theory as it pertains to The Faerie Queene, it is necessary to look at the philosophical ideas about love influencing his work.

The main ideas of renaissance love theory come from two classical philosophers, Plato, and the Neoplatonist, Plotinus. The influence of these men's ideas was not direct, however, but was disseminated through the work of translators. Most of the ideas of the two philosophers, on love as well as on other subjects, had only been rediscovered in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, although some of the concepts they formulated had been known to theologians through the works of men such as Augustine, and had become part of the christian religion. The most influential of the renaissance translators was the Italian priest, scholar, and physician, Marsilio Ficino, a friend of the Medici, at whose request, and with whose help, he founded the Platonic Academy in Florence. Ficino's influence upon the spread of Platonic and Neoplatonic ideas was more than that of a translator, for he was an original thinker, and wrote commentaries upon the Greek originals. As a christian clergyman living in an ostensibly christian society, Ficino was also bound to be influenced by the teachings of his church in his assessments of pagan beliefs. Ficino's commentary on The Symposium (it was Ficino who first used the term 'Platonic Love') was probably the most influential source of Spenser's beliefs about love. When dealing with love as courtesy, however, the influence of Baldassare Castiglione's Book of the Courtier should also be considered, although it should be remembered that Castiglione was himself influenced by the ideas of Platonism, which probably came to him by way of

Ficino's translations.

In The Symposium Plato personifies love as the son of Contrivance and Poverty, from whom he inherits equal portions of his character. Because he was begotten on Aphrodite's birthday, he is said to have been born with the godess's love of beauty, and was destined to become her follower and servant. Love's character, which Socrates claims to have learnt about from a girl named Diotima, is described by Plato as follows:

> He is always poor, and far from being sensitive and beautiful, as most people imagine, he is hard and weather-beaten, shoeless and homeless, always sleeping out for want of a bed, on the ground, on doorsteps, and in the street. So far he takes after his mother and lives in want. But being also his father's son, he schemes to get for himself whatever is beautiful and good; he is bold and forward and strenuous, always devising tricks like a cunning huntsman; he yearns after knowledge and is full of resource and is a lover of wisdom all his life, a skilful magician, an alchemist, a true sophist. He is neither mortal nor immortal; but on one and the same day he will live and flourish (when things go well with him), and also meet his death; and then come to life again through the vigour that he inherits from his father. What he wins he always loses, and is neither rich nor poor, neither wise nor ignorant.[29]

The most outstanding quality of love in this description is that of instability, and this has much to do with the role love is said to play among men: men seek love, Plato says, because they believe it will make them happy. What they are really seeking, therefore, is what they perceive to be the Good. It necessarily follows from this that the Good is also perceived as the beautiful. Thus love becomes the desire for the perpetual possession of the good and the beautiful, and hence too, of immortality. The volatile nature of love, however, as well as man's mortality, works against this possibility, so in order to possess the desired end permanently, man must procreate. Procreation, in the sense meant here is not only physical, but spiritual, with the latter meaning being held in the higher esteem. Indeed, the expressions and creations of love could include many temporal achievements:

in the fine arts; in politics and government; in commerce. But the highest spiritual achievement for the lover involves contemplation of the beauty that attracts him, and is only possible by his proceeding through a series of levels of love, often referred to as 'Diotima's ladder.' The highest love is thus attended by the knowledge and awareness of what is being sought, and why. Pursuing his goal to the limit, the lover comes to love beauty in its purest form--the idea of beauty--and in so doing, he becomes a friend of God, and an immortal.

A principle of the desire to procreate, according to Plato, was that such desire arose in the presence of beauty. The experience of beauty brought with it, moreover, a feeling of serenity and harmony, which were the most desirable conditions for procreation. A creation of beauty, whether natural or man-made, was thus perceived as a complex object having harmony and proportion of parts. Plotinus disagreed with this definition of beauty, saying that simple things, having no proportionate parts could also be beautiful. As examples, he cited colour, light, gold, the shape of the moon, and the stars. Thus, in Plotinus' philosophy, beauty became a single intangible essence. In discussing beauty, Marsilio Ficino often combined both these ideas, but Ficino's assignment of the first cause of beauty, of the very idea of beauty, as Plato called it, was to God, as the church had taught him. It is important to remember this, for it illustrates a fundamental truth about the renaissance: the renaissance was not a true rebirth of classical values, but the combining of them with christian beliefs.

The idea of a cosmological hierarchy of being also came from Platonism. For Plato the real world lay beyond the senses, a world of ideas, or ideal forms. Man's body was thus an impediment to true knowledge, and only through contemplation could he achieve union with the Good. As with his idea

of beauty, the Good, for Plato, was not a single entity, but a harmony between the ideal forms. In Neoplatonism, on the other hand, Plato's Good is transformed into the One. And, in addition, Plotinus made Plato's beauty into one intangible essence:

> The Neoplatonists translated Plato's Good into the One; it was the principle of all existence, though itself above being, immaterial and indefinable. From the One's self-knowledge emanated the first Intelligence (the Logos or the Word) containing the immaterial Ideas (Plato's forms) of all beings. The Logos in turn gave rise to a second intelligence, the World Soul, from which the individual intelligences derived, passing down in a hierarchy from intelligence to intelligence until the moon and the sub-lunar world was reached. The human soul was last in the hierarchy of spiritual beings.[30]

Christian thought, in its attempt to adapt pagan philosophy to suit its doctrines, interpreted the One as God, and made him, furthermore, a conscious creator, a concept that Greek thought had never included. The final end of love as Plato had initially described it thus became readmission into the presence of the creator. In the opinion of Ficino, man could not hope for full achievement of this state during his life on earth, but he could, through moral living and contemplation, have glimpses of it. The experience was limited, however, to a spiritually awakened few, and its duration was extremely brief.[31]

Ficino observed that when a man was at leisure, and away from the company of others, he was prone to fall into a state of grief. The explanation he offered for this was that grief was the longing of the soul to reunite itself with the creator. Furthermore, he believed that if one was aware of the source of grief, and reflected upon it sufficiently, a brief glimpse of the infinite was possible. Thus the state of melancholy became desirable in itself, since it could be a means to a higher enjoyment. Most men, however, were destined to remain unaware of the reason for their grief, and would blindly attribute

it to external sources; consequently they would remain for ever miserable. The spiritually aware, on the other hand, would come to appreciate the value of their unrest, and would even promote it in themselves deliberately. Ficino believed this to be the case for poets and artists.[32] Ficino's spiritual lover shares in many of the aspects of the very character of Love Plato describes: for ever poor inasmuch as he lives constantly in want of the higher life; resourceful in that he uses his melancholy to further his knowledge of heavenly love and beauty; continually partaking of life and death insofar as his glimpses of the eternal are but fleeting moments of ecstacy, preceded and followed by dark periods of searching and reflection.

A further constituent of Ficino's theories concerns the subject of friendship. In the love between friends Ficino saw but another expression of the longing for the love of God:

> Since friendship strives by mutual consent of the lovers to cultivate the Soul through virtue, it is apparently nothing but a perfect concordance of two Souls in the worship of God. Those who worship God with a pious mind, however, are loved by God. Therefore there are not two friends only, but always necessarily three, two human beings and one God....He unites us into one; He is the insoluble bond and perpetual guardian of friendship.[33]

Ficino is writing here, after the true platonic fashion, of the friendship between two men, but because of the influence of such writers as Petrarch and Dante, the idea that the result was the same in relationships between members of the opposite sex was also accepted. Thus we find in Castiglione's Courtier that the object of desire may be female, and that the perception of her beauty nevertheless serves to unite the soul with the infinite. In Spenser's work too, the love of woman is seen to have this effect, as in Colin Clout's admiration of Rosalind in The Shepheardes Calendar, and elsewhere. The

influence of renaissance love theories upon Spenser's work is noticeable in several of his poems besides The Faerie Queene. These include The Fowre Hymnes, Colin Clout's Come Home Againe, and as mentioned above, The Shepheardes Calendar. A brief examination of these poems, and how the ideas are used in them will be useful at this point, since it has a direct bearing on his use of them in The Faerie Queene.

The Shepheardes Calendar, it has long been noticed, has associations with The Faerie Queene, and especially with its sixth book. The most prominent similarity the two works share is the inclusion in both of the shepherd-poet Colin Clout, who is usually thought of as Spenser's persona. The character of Colin is first established in the Calendar where he is inspired to make songs by the mysterious figure, Rosalind, whose unrequited love keeps him in a state of perpetual grief. Associations here with Ficino's belief that grief encourages reflection are obvious. That Colin is a pastoral poet (as Spenser himself also claims to be in the proem to Book I of The Faerie Queene) is of special significance since the purpose of pastoral poetry, far from being the idyllic portrayal of rural life it is often supposed to be, is to engender reflection upon human nature. As Patrick Cullen has pointed out, the characters of pastoral poems are rarely real shepherds, but are instead urban people transposed into a country setting, the contrast of the two environments providing subject matter for reflection upon the problems of city life.[34]

The framework around which the Calendar is built is, of course, the calendar year, and Spenser's use of it provides a further metaphor for the process of grief, reflection, rapture; and a return to a state of grief. The poem begins with a winter setting to which it eventually and inevitably returns. Its construction is deliberately circular, which feature associates it with the eternal. The Shepheardes Calendar begins with Colin Clout lamenting over unrequited love, and at its end his predicament remains, apparently, unchanged,

regardless of intervening experience. As the Calendar ends, Colin's life, too, seems to be drawing to a close, and as it does he is dismayed by the insignificance of the life he has led. He appears unsure of the worth of the songs which express his insights. But his very immortality is said to be assured by them, as E.K.'s gloss to the December eclogue explains:

> ...all things perish and come to theyr last end, but works of learned wits and monuments of poetry abide for euer.

Colin's desire for immortality, which was caused by his apprehension of Rosalind's beauty, is thus fulfilled because it is expressed in a work of art. To explain this further it is necessary to consider the following: the circular aspect of The Shepheardes Calendar demonstrated by the experience of Colin is portrayed elsewhere in the poem by another symbol the renaissance associated with love's processes, that of the three Graces. The Graces appear in the April eclogue, and their symbolism is thus explained by E.K.:

> The Graces) be three sisters, the daughters of Iupiter (whose names are Aglia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne, and Homer only addeth a fourth as Pasithea) otherwise called Charites, that is, thanks. Whom the Poetes feyned to be the Goddesses of all bountie and comeliness, which therefore (as sayeth Theodontius) they make three to wete, that men first ought to be gracious and bountiful to other freely, then to receiue benefits at other mens hands courteously, and thirdly to requite them thankfully: Which are three sundry Actions in liberalitye. And Boccace saith, that they be painted naked...the one hauing her backe toward vs, and her face fromwarde, as proceeding from vs, the other two toward vs, noting double thanke to be due to vs for the benefit, we haue done.

Renaissance thinkers such as Ficino were quick to christianize such symbols as the Graces, because they found them useful in explaining platonic theories. The circle, long thought of as a symbol of eternity, was portrayed in the

Graces' dance, and this was all that was required for the Graces to be identified with christian rather than pagan beliefs. Ficino certainly had no difficulty in adapting it to his purposes:

> The circle...so far as it takes its beginning in God and attracts, is Beauty; so far as it goes forth into the world and moves it to rapture, it is Love, and so far as it returns to its origin and unites with the creator his creation, it is Beatitude. Amor starts from Pulchritudo and ends in Voluptas.[35]

In The Shepheardes Calendar this process may be seen in the fact that Colin's longing after unrequited love causes him to desire the greater eternal love represented by Pan, with whom he first quarrels, but eventually becomes reinstated. As the gloss of the April eclogue explains, Pan also represents Christ, the synchretism thus expressing the creator's love at work in the world. A fleeting glimpse of this love, which is also the essence of all beauty, is what Colin experiences. The sight and loss of it becomes the real cause of his discontent, and it is this beauty too that is manifest in his songs. Since art was thought to mirror the eternal beauty (and hence eternal love) contemplation of it was seen as a means to approach that beauty. Although Colin Clout appears to fail, or at least to be uncertain of his own success at the end of The Shepheardes Calendar (as too, when he appears in The Faerie Queene) he has in fact succeeded because of his artistic achievements, which are a testimonial to his vision of the eternal.

The same experience of grief, vision and artistic expression that Colin Clout is seen to undergo in The Shepheardes Calendar is also found in Colin Clout's Come Home Againe. There, Colin's visionary capabilities are remarked upon by Cuddy, another shepherd and friend of Colin:

> Shepheard it seems that some celestiall rage
> Of love...is breath'd in thy brest,

That powreth forth these oracles so sage,
Of that high powre, wherewith thou art possest. (ll. 823-26)

The beauty of Rosalind that inspires Colin is also said to be celestial in its nature. When some of Colin's friends seek to comfort him by blaming Rosalind for being the source of his unhappiness, Colin replies:

Ah Shepheardes...ye ne weet
How great a guilt upon your heads ye draw:
To make so bold a doom with words unmeet,
Of thing Celestiall which ye never saw,
For she is not like as the other crew
Of shepheardes daughters which emongst you bee,
But of divine regard and heauenly hew,
Excelling all that euer ye did see. (ll. 927-934)

In recognizing Rosalind's heavenly qualities, Colin knows he can never hope to possess her finally. He will, however, be compensated for this by the experience of praising her in his verse. This will give him temporary comfort for his grief, and the beauty expressed in his songs will, furthermore, be a source of wonder to his fellow shepherds (and, similarly, to anyone who is moved by artistic beauty):

Yet...so much grace let her vouchsafe to grant
To simple swaine, sith her I may not loue:
Yet that I may her honour parauant
And praise her worth, though far my wit aboue.
Such grace sometimes shall giue me some reliefe,
And ease of pain which cannot be recured.
And ye my fellow shepheardes which do see
And heare the languors of my too long dying
Unto the world foreuer witness bee,
That hers I die, nought to the world denying
This simple trophe of her great conquest. (ll. 939-951)

In The Shepheardes Calendar and Colin Clout's Come Home Againe Spenser presents renaissance theories of love and beauty in a pastoral setting. A purer statement of his knowledge of these ideas is found, however, in The Fowre Hymnes.

The Hymnes also show traces of influence by Castiglione's Book of the Courtier, which adapted these theories to suit a courtly setting by making them part of a system of courtly behaviour. Spenser's use of them in The Faerie Queene as a means of fashioning a gentleman might thus be expected.

In her discussion of The Fowre Hymnes, Josephine Waters Bennet points out that in writing them Spenser was probably influenced by the Canzona della Amor Celeste y divino (1486) of the Italian poet Girolamo Beniviene (1453-1542).[36] Benevieni, a Florentine, was a pupil of Ficino's at the Platonic Academy, and composed several poetic works related to his master's teachings. His early works were written with an enthusiasm which favoured the paganism of the ideas he was studying rather than christian beliefs, but in later years he became a fervent Catholic and ascertained that the only serious value of the poems of his youth was their analogy with christianity. To this end his poems were appended with explanatory commentaries of a christian nature. The Canzone were based on a combination of platonic and christian beliefs, and were originally published with a commentary by Pico della Mirandola, another influential Italian scholar whose beliefs were similar to those of Ficino. Miss Bennet argues that,

> If we accept the Canzone and Commento as a commentary on The Fowre Hymnes, it immediately becomes evident that what Spenser wrote was not four separate hymns, divided into two pairs, and lacking any connection with each other, but rather a single, carefully constructed poem in four parts.[37]

While the argument for a single poem in four parts may be enhanced by a discussion of sources and influences, it is also possible to reach this same conclusion by examining the texts of the poems alone. The progress of the four poems is quite straightforward: love proceeds to beauty; beauty to heavenly love; heavenly love to heavenly beauty.

The first of the poems, the Hymne in Honour of Love, begins by praising and examining the powers of love: "Who can express the glorie of thy might?" (l.49) Spenser asks, thereby setting himself the task of fashioning a poem derived from the power of love. Love is seen in the poem to hold sway over the four elements of the universe, and hence over all matter. Love's power harmonizes the elements, and thus establishes and fixes the universe's very order. The creatures of the animal world are moved by love's power to propagate themselves, albeit unwittingly. Man alone, because of his powers of reason, seeks knowingly to multiply his kind, but having also an "immortal mynd", or soul, he may wish for the immortal and the heavenly, which constitute beauty. In saying this Spenser echoes the ideas of Plato's Symposium, which no doubt reached him through the influence of Ficino et al:

> Those whose creative instinct is physical have recourse to women, and show their love in this way, believing that by begetting children they can secure for themselves an immortal and blessed memory hereafter for ever; but there are some whose creative desire is of the soul, and who long to beget spiritually, not physically, the progeny of which it is the nature of the soul to create and bring to birth. If you ask what that progeny is, it is wisdom and virtue in general; of this all poets and such craftsmen as have found out some new thing may be said to be begetters.[38]

Plato proposes here that procreation and glory are expressions of immortality and therefore of beauty. Man, perceiving and experiencing beauty becomes "enravisht", or enraptured, by it, and the result, the poem states, is that Cupid's darts enter men's eyes, and through them, their hearts. This idea conforms with Plato's belief that love enters the soul by means of the senses, the highest of which are the eyes and ears. These two senses are thus associated with the higher spiritual love rather than the vulgar, or physical love. Once man has been afflicted with Cupid's arrows, the poem continues, he can desire nothing but love, and being deprived of it, is like Colin Clout, made

wretched. The intention of this, Spenser explains, is to teach men to respect love. The placing of obstacles in the lover's path causes him to strive to ascend the ladder of love described by Plato's Diotima. Those who respect and strive after love in this manner are said to eventually reach paradise and experience heavenly love and beauty. The poet sees himself at the end of the Hymne in Honour of Love as one struggling to achieve this. Having been wounded by love, he hopes to learn more of it; his suffering, he hopes, will lead him to sing the praises of love's heavenly form. This position, it will be recalled, is the same as Colin Clout's at the end of the January Eclogue. Colin's motto, Anchora speme, is an expression of that situation. The meaning of the motto as given by E.K. is as follows: "...notwithstanding his extreme passion and lucklesse love, yet leaning on hope, he is somewhat recomforted."

Continuing the theme of love established in The Hymne in Honour of Love, The Hymne in Honour of Beauty begins by referring to love and love's powers of inspiration:

> Ah whither loue wilt thou now carrie me?
> What wontlesse fury dost thou now inspire
> Into my feeble breast, too full of thee?
> Whylest seeking to aslake thy raging fyre,
> Thou in me kindlest much more great desire,
> And up aloft my strength doest rayse
> The wondrous matter of my fyre to praise. (11. 2-7)

The poem honours Venus, the "queene of Beauty", and "Mother of loue", and the poet asks her to bestow her grace upon him so that he may see with a "finer sight". This grace is likened to light entering his eyes, and will be the poet's source of inspiration. It will allow him to compose a work worthy of dedication to Venus, and also to his mistress, whose beauty first inspired him, and remains the cause of his earthly sorrow.

Having established his intentions, the poet then begins to praise love's

powers. The greatest of these, as was described in the Hymne in Honour of Love is that of organizing power of the cosmos. The creations of love are further stated to be the very measure of beauty as mortal men may apprehend it. The source of such beauty is nevertheless eternal, and may not be seen with "sinfull eyes", which is to say made mortal by the fall of Adam. Such beauty is "...perfect Beauty.../Whose face and feature doth so much excell/All mortal sence, that none the same may tell." (ll. 40-42) Although perfect beauty may not be perceived directly, it is still the ultimate source of all beauty, and its essence is part of all that is beautiful. The example Spenser uses to illustrate this principle is that of the body and the soul. The soul, derived from the celestial light of the creator, takes on bodily form when it comes into the world, and the body, though it lacks celestial beauty, is still an earthly expression of that beauty. Not all men, he says furthermore, are endowed with the same quantity of the celestial essence. Naturally, the hierarchical worldview of Spenser's time provided--or rather, was justified by--an explanation:

> For of the soul, the bodie form doth take
> For soule is form, and doth the bodie make.
> Therefore where euer that thou doest behold
> A comely corpse, with beauty fair endowed
> Know this for certaine, that the same doth hold
> A beauteous soule, with fair conditions thewed,
> Fit to receive the seede of vertue strewed.
> For all that fair is, is by nature good;
> That is a signe to know the gentle blood. (ll. 132-140)

However, this is no guarantee, merely an ideal. Often a beautiful soul could be found in a misfortunate, deformed, body, or if its virtue was left undeveloped--for we must remember that development is possible and desirable--the soul could degenerate through sin yet retain the outward beauty of its bodily form. Examples of the former and latter states of the soul found in The Faerie Queene are respectively, the Wyld Man, and the discourteous knight Turpine.

Spenser considers that lust [by which he means, I think, a general desire for pleasure, rather than the narrower sense of only base sexual desire] is the worst enemy of the soul in its desire for beauty; love, on the other hand is its greatest benefactor, leading men to understand the beauty in themselves, as well as in others. The process may be described thus: the lover seeing the beauty of his beloved begins to see in his mind the beauty of his own soul, "For louers eyes more sharply sighted bee/Then other mens...." In each other lovers behold a glimpse of the eternal beauty and the gifts of grace whose source is Venus. The presence and sight of the beloved leads to rapture:

> ...how many wonders doe they reede
> To their conceipt, that others neuer see
> Now of her smiles, with which their soules they feede
> Like Gods with Nectar in their bankets free
> Now of her lookes, which like to Cordials bee;
> But when her words embassade forth she sends
> Lord how sweete musicke that unto them lends.
>
> Sometimes upon her forehead they behold
> A thousand Graces masking in delight (ll. 246-254)

This explains the rapture of Calidore, when he beholds the beauty of Pastorella, and also the dance of the Graces. The incident will be discussed further below.

As The Hymne in Honour of Beauty ends, the poet makes an impassioned plea to Venus, and to his unrequiting mistress. He hopes that his verse tribute to them will help him to regain the sense of life which he felt when he first experienced love. The Hymne in Honour of Beauty graces Venus by expressing the poet's knowledge of love and beauty in art, and thus becomes a form of praise to be repeated in her honour. The poet's mistress is also honoured, as she is in The Shepheardes Calendar and the Epithalamion: her personal beauty, too, is immortalized, hence he names her the "great Goddesse of my life" (l. 282). By ending the poem on a personal note, Spenser manages to bring the subjects of love and beauty 'down to earth', as it were, by directing attention to him-

self, but the next of the Hymnes, The Hymn of Heavenly Love begins by rejecting the 'base world' in favour of ethereal values.

The Hymne of Heavenly Love praises the unrelenting qualities of divine love found in christian teachings, and it also relates them to the concerns of renaissance thought. The higher quality of heavenly love is emphasized by contrasting it with the earthly love of the preceding poem, and others the poet has written.

> Many lewd layes (ah woe is me the more)
> In praise of that mad fit, which fooles call
> loue,
> I have in the heat of youth made heretofore.
> That in light wits did loose affection moue.
> But all those follies now I do reproue,
> And turned haue the tenor of my string,
> The heauenly praises of true loue to sing. (11. 8-14)

The poem retells the biblical account of creation, and the fall of the angels, and of the fall and redemption of man. Its main theme is God's love for man, which man so often leaves unreturned. Christ, the perfect example of God's love made flesh, comes on earth only to be persecuted and killed, but in so doing he atones for all men's sins. As he exemplifies heavenly love made flesh, Christ is thus the perfect example of the "gentle blood" referred to in The Hymne in Honour of Beauty. But how, the poet asks, can God's love of man ever be requited? To which question he gives the following explanation:

> Ne ought demands, but that we louing bee,
> As he himselfe hath loued us afore hand,
> And bound thereto with an eternal band,
> Him first to loue, that us so dearly bought,
> And next our brethren to his image wrought. (11. 185-89)

If a man loves God, he will also be disposed to love his brethren, who are like himself made in the creator's image, and this action also pleases God. The circle of love described by Ficino and the classic philosophers is thus

supposed to be operating in christianity: love proceeds from the creator to man, from man to his fellow man, and thence returns to God. The process is continuous and everlasting. Man's part in the process is, however, often neglected, and in order to sensitize himself to his need to be part of the divine love cycle, some type of self-imposed stimulus is necessary. In this regard Spenser recommends meditation, not surprisingly, on the life of Christ. His method of communicating this through poetry is by concentration upon detail, and his poetic use of this may be likened to that of the metaphysical poet, George Herbert:[39]

> Beginne from first where he encradled was
> In simple cratch...
>
> From thence read on the storie of his life
> His humble carriage, his unfaulty wayes,
> His cancred foes, his fights, his toil, his strife,
> ...(etc.) (ll. 225-26; 232-34)

The outcome of meditation on, and imitation of the life of Christ brings about desire for him that leads one to forsake the things of this world, and the sight of heavenly beauty, which blinds mortal eyes but enlightens the spirits given it, makes worldly things appear mere "durt and drosse". Thus one may perceive the eternal:

> Then shall thy rauisht soul inspired bee
> With heauenly thoughts, farre aboue humane
> skil,
> And thy bright radiant eyes shall plainly see
> Th'Idee of his pure glorie, present still
> Before thy face, that all thy spirits shall fill
> With sweet enragement of celestiall loue,
> Kindled through sight of those faire things
> aboue. (ll. 281-287)

Although in slightly different terms, in The Book of the Courtier Castiglione describes a similar process which occurs when the perfect courtier has completed the ascension of the "stayre of love". If in the following passage "Christ" is

substituted for "his guide", and "the bodilie beauty" were interpreted to mean that which exists essentially in every human creature, its meaning would closely conform to Spenser's:

> When our Courtier therefore shall bee come to this point, although hee may bee called a good and happie lover, in respect of them that be drowned in the miserie of sensuall love, yet will I not have him set his hart at rest, but boldly proceede farther, following the high way after his guide, that leadeth him to the point of true happiness. And thus in stead of going out of his wit with thought, as he must doe that will consider the bodily beautie, hee may come into his wit, to beholde the beautie that is seene with the eyes of the minde, which then begin to be sharpe and throughly seeing, when the eyes of the bodie lose the floure of their sightlinesse.
>
> Therefore the soule ridde of vices, purged with the studies of true Philosophie, occupied in spiritual, and excercised in matters of understanding, turning her to the beholding of her owne substance, as it were raised out of a most deepe sleepe, openeth the eyes that all men have, and few occupie, and seeth in her selfe a shining beame of that light, which is the true image of the Angelicke beautie partened with her, whereof she also partneth with the body of a feeble shadow.[40]

In Castiglione's version, the ideas of heavenly love and heavenly beauty are not separately treated as in the Hymnes, but the meaning in both works is essentially the same.

Having shown the ends of love, Spenser proceeds in his next hymn to further praise the heavenly beauty to which he has introduced us. The theme of contemplation as the means of reaching heavenly love and beauty is carried forward into the Hymne of Heavenly Beauty, which represents the final phase in the cycle of love. Having experienced love and beauty, and gained insight into heavenly love, the speaker in the poem wishes to communicate his experience to other men. He begins by asking how this might be possible. The most probable answer, although it is never stated directly, is that it can be done through his art of poetry. Ordinary words cannot describe the experience of heavenly beauty, but in poetry words are not used in an ordinary sense. By

means of the sense of hearing and, [though more abstractly] through sight, poetic art can make the necessary appeal to the "eyes of the minde". This is so since sight and hearing are the senses through which divine knowledge comes, and it is through these senses that love enters the soul. Thus it comes to us, as Castiglione says, through words:

> I may tell you, it is not a small token that a woman loveth, when she giveth unto her lover her beautie, which is so precious a matter: and by the wayes that be a passage to the soule, that is to say, the sight and the hearing, sendeth the lookes of her eyes, the image of her countenance, and the voice of her words that pearce into the lovers hart, and give a witnesse of her love.[41]

Spenser calls upon the spirit of love to illumine his thoughts so that he may teach men, whose main preoccupations are "faire shewes" and "vaine delights", the nature of heavenly beauty. This in turn will influence them to learn to love, and to strive for its benefits. He asks those who wish to learn to begin by looking at the wonders of the universe, and meditate upon the things that compose it: the earth, the sea, the air, the sun and stars (thus the four elements, earth, water, air, and fire) and all creatures contained therein. They should also look beyond the universe to "...that mightie shining christall wall/Wherewith he hath encompassed this All," while remembering that the wonders of this world and the visible heavens are only a corrupt reflection of the perfect universe, which is beyond time and the senses. The higher one proceeds, the higher becomes the quality of beauty, and the closer one comes to heavenly beauty:

> For farre aboue the heauens which here we see
> Be others farre exceeding these in light,
> Not bounded, not corrupt, as these same bee,
> But infinite in largenesse and in hight,
> Unmoving, uncorrupt, and spotlesse bright,
> That need no Sunne t'illuminate their spheres
> But their own natiue light farre passing theirs.

> And as these heauens still by degrees arize,
> Vntill they come to their first mouers bound,
> That in his mightie compasse doth comprize,
> And carrie all the rest with him around,
> So those likewise doe by degrees redound,
> And rise more faire, till they at last ariue
> To the most faire, whereto they all do striue. (ll. 64-77)

The visible heavens are beautiful, but their beauty is exceeded by those we cannot see: "Faire is the heaven, where happy soules have place..." (l.78) "More faire is that where Idees on hie/enraunged be, which Plato so admyred, /And pure Intelligences from God inspyred." (ll. 82-4) But this is not the end of the heights of heaven. Combining the pagan with the christian in the eclectic style of the Renaissance, beyond Plato's heaven of ideas Spenser places the heaven to which kings and potentates ascend; beyond that is the place of the angels, and beyond them God Himself. But this hierarchical ordering is merely common theological knowledge, and what it really represents cannot adequately be described. Similarly, Redcrosse's vision of the New Jerusalem in Book I of The Faerie Queene cannot be extended. Spenser's description stops here, and he returns to the meditatory aspect once again, asking "How...can mortall tongue hope to expresse/The image of such endlesse perfectness?" (ll. 104-5) The tongue he speaks of is then silenced, and the duty of expression left to the mind; but this is merely rhetorical: the tongue still speaks as before, through the medium of poetry, on God's essential qualities:

> His truth, his loue, his wisdom, and his blis,
> His grace, his doome, his mercy, and his might,
> By which he lends us of himselfe a sight. (ll. 110-12)

It is God's grace, he says, which ultimately enables men to perceive God's beauty and the beauty of all creation. Since men's eyes are corrupt they might not behold the eternal vision, for it is brighter than the sun, but because of

grace, and because of the medium of poetry, they can see a mirror image of the eternal world in the wonders of the visible creation. Meditation thus leads to knowledge, but this must be pursued with reverence and humility if the eventual reward is to be wisdom, which Spenser calls "Sapience". With Sapience comes the ability to understand and appreciate the intricacies of the universe. Of the personified Sapience he says:

> Both heaven and earth obey unto her will,
> And all the creatures which they both containe;
> For of her fulnesse which the world doth fill
> They all partake and do in state remaine,
> As their great Maker did at first ordaine. (ll. 197-201)

Included in this is the knowledge of oneself as a part of God's plan. To know this is to know the heavenly beauty and, of course, heavenly love. Once again there is a parallel with the ideas of Castiglione:

> What tongue mortall is there then (O holy love)
> That can sufficiently praise thy worthinesse?
> Thou most beautiful, most good, most wise,
> art derived of the unitie of the heavenly
> beautie, goodnesse, and wisdome, and therein
> doest thou abide, and unto it through it,
> (as in a circle) turnest about.[42]

Although this statement presumes a knowledge of heavenly love, that love is hard to separate from heavenly beauty, since beauty and love perpetuate each other, beauty being created out of love, and love being the desire for beauty. The image of the circle is therefore extremely appropriate in describing these processes.

In presenting Sapience and its rewards, Spenser, too, begins by asking humbly:

> How then dare I, the nouice of his Art,
> Presume to picture so diuine a wight
> Or hope t'expresse her least perfections part,
> Whose beauty fills the heauens with her light,

> And darks the earth with shadow of her sight?
> Ah gentle Muse thou art too weak and faint,
> The pourtraict of so heauenly hew to paint. (11. 225-31)

Nevertheless, he sums up his poem by presenting a favourable picture of the worth of pursuing an understanding of heavenly beauty. The technique employed is convincing: we have, of course, no real glimpse of the heavenly beauty, but we have seemingly experienced it by having participated in the images of the poem. By the vehicle of art, then, we are able to put aside the distractions of "...this vile world and these gay seeming things," (l. 299) and take up the poet's exhortation to,

> ...looke at last up to that soueraine light
> From whose pure beams al perfect beauty
> springs. (11. 295-96)

The desire for beauty then, which is also love, should be a gentleman's central preoccupation, and concerning this point it is timely to recall Plato's idea that this desire is also one for immortality. Spenser's achievement in the Fowre Hymnes is thus the creation of, to use his own term from Epithalamion, "...an endless moniment", a monument against time, for the beauty he speaks of has been captured for ever by his art. This idea applies, of course, to all poetry, but it was Spenser's conscious intention to project it, as I intend to show, in The Faerie Queene, as too, in The Shepheardes Calendar, which has already been discussed.

Chapter 2

Since Spenser's portrayal of courtesy in The Faerie Queene was part of his intention of fashioning a gentleman, it would seem appropriate before discussing Book VI to look briefly at some Elizabethan ideas concerning gentlemen and gentlemanly behaviour. While much was written on the subject, exactly what it meant to be a gentleman evaded definition, as Ruth Kelso explains in The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century:

> Like every other term which covers an accumulated array of abstractions, gentleman has teased men to attempt definition and at the same time has eluded them; far easier is it to recognize a gentleman than to say what makes one. Sixteenth Century England was particularly interested in the problem... but the sixteenth century was no more successful than its predecessors in arriving at a complete, unambiguous and generally accepted definition. The methods of renaissance scholars...doomed their efforts to failure, for they made little attempt to approach the subject from a fresh point of view, but accepted the accumulations of the past....If what Plato, Cicero, Justinian, Thomas Aquinas, Dante and every commentator of renaissance Italy and France have to say on nobility must be worked somehow into the definition of the true gentleman, no reasonable, consistent, clear result is possible.[1]

Spenser, of course, with the declaration that his perfect gentleman (Prince Arthur) will exemplify virtues prescribed "...according to Aristotle and the rest", is no exception to these observations. But while no all encompassing definition of a gentleman is possible, the age considered certain abilities and activities part of gentlemanly behaviour and Spenser has included many of these in the characters of his knights. As the knight of courtesy Calidore naturally exhibits many of them and demonstrably more than any other knight. A general smattering of gentlemanly attributes, taken mostly from the Mediaeval chivalric code would have included a knowledge of hawking, hunting and heraldry, as well as the virtues honour, courage, readiness, generosity to vanquished

foes, and the willingness to fight always on the side of right. Other facets of a gentle education were skill at arms and a knowledge of armour. The latter, according to one English courtesy treatise, The Book of St. Alban's, had been invented by Adam and had been handed down to noble men in a line that also included Jesus Christ.[2] Although the claim seems far-fetched today, it was regarded with all seriousness by an age that tried to amalgamate christian and classical virtues. The gentleman's aim was to be in fact an emulator of Christ's own humanity. The christian prince was, of course, regarded as the highest embodiment of the gentlemanly ideal and his qualities of character were often described in courtesy books whose authors were usually churchmen, by names such as the "King's Mirror". Spenser's claim that Queen Elizabeth would find herself "mirrored" in The Faerie Queene was a variation on this theme:

> Their material usually consists of a theory of government; personal advice to the ruler on the conduct of his private life, the education of his children, and the management of his public career; and a more or less spirited contrast between the good king and the tyrant. Virtues stressed are justice, liberality, clemency, the maintenance of peace, wisdom in the choice of councillors, and high personal integrity.[3]

While The Faerie Queene is not a courtesy book of the practical, advice giving type, one does not need to read far into it, and especially in Book VI, to find that Spenser's heroes uphold those very virtues. Spenser said that his gentleman would be an expression of the "twelve moral virtues" of Aristotle's Ethics. As mentioned earlier, this statement presents a problem in itself because of the inability to identify exactly twelve Aristotelian virtues, and also because virtues such as holiness and chastity do not have a place in Aristotle's creed.[4] The best approach to this would be to look to Spenser's work itself for his intention rather than to the letter to Raleigh.

The 'virtues' of holiness and courtesy themselves show how loosely Spenser followed the scheme he proposed in the letter, in which it seems that each book was intended to describe a separate virtue, for holiness and courtesy each comprise many virtues rather than one alone.

Critical commentary on Calidore's courtesy and its place in The Faerie Queene has tended to be enumerative rather than interpretive: previously mentioned critics like William Fenn De Moss have done the valuable work of exploring some critical 'dead-ends' such as 'how closely does Spenser adhere to Aristotle's "twelve morall virtues"?[5] and Mohonimohan Bhattacherje has shown the influence of Castiglione's Courtier on Spenser.[6] But H.S.V. Jones has provided an insight, albeit perhaps an obvious one, which opens the way for further study:

> Indeed since the declared purpose of The Faerie Queen was 'to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline,' courtesy, it should be evident was the subject of the whole work; so that at almost every turn in the preceding books the poem had offered some illustration of a virtue that was really its central theme.[7]

Having said this, Jones does not explore the idea further nor its significance to the work's unity. This latter aspect I will argue, provides proof that Spenser's plan for The Faerie Queene, with allowance for some imperfections, was brought to completion in the poem as it exists.

Like other writers of courtesy books, Spenser never specifically states what it is that makes a gentleman, or of what exactly courtesy consists. He provides, however, a great deal of information concerning these subjects by demonstrating them in the actions of his heroes. As regards courtesy Calidore of course is the principal character. By observing the particular virtues that underlie Calidore's actions, it should therefore be possible to formulate a description if not a definition of courtesy as Spenser saw it.

Before looking specifically at Calidore, it is worth examining the Proem to Book VI, for it provides a sampling of Spenser's ideas concerning courtesy. Although the Proem begins by speaking ostensibly about Faeryland, a closer look reveals that Faeryland's qualities have a general affinity with those of courtesy. The first of these is a sense of freedom and renewal. The "waies" of Faeryland are "spacious and wyde" and "sprinckled with...sweet variety," which is "pleasant to eare or eye". The resulting sense of ease and enjoyment, rather than tedium of action is only made possible, however, by the influence of the Muses, who "keeping haue of learnings threasures", implying that knowledge is a prerequisite to the enjoyment of the benefits Faeryland can provide. Since knowledge is also necessary to the achievement of virtue, presumably only the virtuous man can take advantage of Faeryland's capacity to inspire. The truly virtuous man is thus necessarily courteous. Since courtesy is the outward expression of a variety of virtues, and the capacity to participate in various types of experience, it also has a variety of applications. In the milieu of society these would constitute different kinds of engagement and exchange, with benefits resulting therefrom, especially after the manner symbolized by the three Graces. The reference made in the Proem to eyes and ears introduces, furthermore, the platonic idea expressed in The Courtier and The Fowre Hymnes that beauty enters the soul through the senses of sight and hearing. This allusion to beauty would seem to suggest that the motivating power of courtesy is love. The beauty of Faeryland, which cannot properly be separated from the beauty of courtesy, has the quality of moving its perceiver to rapture, and results in his spiritual renewal. The three final verses of the Proem confirm the platonic aspects of courtesy tempered of course, by renaissance opinion: courtesy is thus of the mind, and to prevent it becoming a mere outward show requires a sincerity derived from self-knowledge ("learnings threasures"). The greatest expression of courtesy is, not surprisingly, the

Queen, (in this case both Elizabeth, and the imaginary Faery Queene) in whom, as in a fine looking-glass, courtesy is undistortedly mirrored. And the Queen is herself the fountain of her Kingdom's virtue. As its highest member she is the earthly representative of God himself; virtue flows from her to the members of her court, and is returned from them to her in, as it were, circular fashion. By this metaphor courtesy is shown in proper context: displayed in civility it is a temporal reflection of the Platonist processes associated with heavenly love and beauty, and also with virtue.

As the representation of courtesy, Calidore naturally embodies and displays the various aspects of it described in the Proem. He is a combination of both chivalric and courtly virtues. As virtue was planted in the earth by the gods, so "gentleness of spright" and "manners mild" are "planted naturall" in Calidore, thus making him the human 'ground' from which courtesy springs.[8] Calidore's manners, appealing to the mind, his good looks and deportment, appealing to the eyes, and his gracious speech, appealing to the ears, all have the power to "steale mens hearts away", and thus the ability to create rapture over the senses of those who come into his company. In this respect Calidore's courtesy is enchanting, stealing the heart away by appealing to eye and ear. The same attributes of courtesy, and, as described, of Spenser's Faeryland are part of the platonic love cycle represented in the classic motif of the three Graces. Marsilo Ficino described the process as follows:

> This divine quality of beauty stirs desire in itself in all things: and that is love. The world that was originally drawn out of God is thus drawn back to God; There is a continual attraction between them--from God to the world and from the world to God--moving as it were in a circle. This circle may be said to display three qualities: beginning in God it is beauty; passing into the world it is love, and returning to unite the Creation with the Creator, it is pure delight.[9]

Calidore's vision of the Graces, which will later be discussed in greater

detail, may be seen as a coming-of-age for him, a realization of personal attributes of which he was previously unaware. It is necessary to look now, however, at the rest of his adventures in order to gain full appreciation of what his courtesy truly means. In this way it will be possible for the reader to see the processes associated with courtesy at work in Book VI, and as Calidore comes to know them.

The story of Crudor and Briana which begins Calidore's quest seems at first to resemble the tales of Book V, with Calidore assuming the role of Artegall: an injustice has been perpetrated on innocent travellers by Sir Crudor and the Lady Briana, whom he refuses to marry until she has made him a mantle lined with hair from Knights' beards and Ladies' heads. Out of her determination to marry Crudor, Briana has arranged for the hair to be collected in the form of a tax from all who pass by her castle, which guards an impassable stretch of road. To this end, Briana employs her Seneschal, Maleffort, who ruthlessly enforces her will. When Calidore encounters two victims of this evil scheme he acts to correct it. What makes Crudor and Briana's story different from any in Book V is that the crime does not merely arise from someone's desire to impose his unvirtuous will upon others, but rather from a perverse love relationship. Since courtesy is closely associated with love, developing out of it as well as enhancing and renewing it, Calidore, as the agent of courtesy, is the appropriate one to deal with the situation. Justice, a necessary but less sophisticated virtue than courtesy, would merely be inclined to punish the offending parties. While not shrinking from this, Courtesy's method is more subtle in approach, and aims for the achievement of more far-reaching results.

The fault of character that Crudor and Briana share, which is both the root of their problem, and the cause of them inflicting pain on others, is pride. The nature of pride is that it separates rather than unites human kind.

It is said of Briana that "...a prouder Lady liveth none" (VI,i,14) and of Crudor that he "...through high disdaine/And proud despite of his self pleasing mynd/Refused both to yeeld her love againe", (VI,i,15) until such time as she delivers the hair-lined mantle to him. Calidore's task, therefore, is to destroy the pride in their natures, and to redirect the feeling that exists between them so that it becomes love in the true sense of human and divine exchange. Calidore's method of achieving this is slightly different for each of these two characters, but he brings about the desired result in both.

Crudor being absent from the opening scenes of the story, Calidore deals first with Briana. His initial action is to kill Maleffort, the seneschal. The significance of Maleffort seems to rest both on the part he plays in Briana's life, and on the meaning of his name. Maleffort's duty to Briana is to carry out her will in obtaining hair for the mantle: for this role he is aptly named, Maleffort meaning literally 'bad strength', since he represents Briana's strength to impose her perverse (i.e. deviating from the platonic cycle of love) will upon others. Having rendered Briana powerless, Calidore then confronts her, accuses her of injustice and inhumanity, and tells her to learn courtesy in her treatment of others. Stripped of the means of obtaining Crudor, whom she desires above all else, Briana has little left but her rage, and she vents this upon Calidore. The result of the encounter is that Calidore lures Briana into arranging for him to meet Crudor in battle, so that they may decide their differences. In doing this Briana unwittingly takes the first step towards a more positive involvement with Crudor, for once he can allay the pride and unruly passion in each of them, Calidore will then bring them together as lovers in the true sense. In contrast to Briana, Calidore retains a calm exterior throughout his encounter with her, revealing that he is truly master of the situation. Briana's behaviour, on the other hand,

demonstrates her internal chaos: her passion may be unrestrained, but it is devoid of power.

The combat between Calidore and Crudor begins immediately the latter arrives. The impression we get of Calidore is, in fact, that he cheerfully lends himself to this task. Throughout the battle Calidore maintains the same calm exterior he protrayed to Briana, and with it, too, he exhibits the ideal, courteous chivalry expected of a sixteenth century gentleman. The impression we get of Crudor, on the other hand, is distinguished by three things, at least two of which are contrary to courtesy: his pride; his anger, expressed in his ferocity; and his skill at arms. Calidore's task in this combat is not to kill Crudor as he did Maleffort, but rather to reform him and then to reunite him with Briana. Inevitably, Calidore, because of his greater virtues, is the victor, and having won, he addresses himself to these issues. By vanquishing Crudor, Calidore proves the superiority of courtesy over mere passion and physical skill. This superiority leads, furthermore, to the greater victory of avenging and reforming agent, as may be observed in the battle's decisive moment. Prior to this both knights have fought with equal ferocity and skill, but the moment arrives when both sense the opportunity to seize victory:

> But Calidore that was more quicke of sight,
> And nimbler handed, then his enemie,
> Prevented him before his stroke could light,
> And on the helmet smote him formerlie,
> That made him stoope to ground with meeke humilitie. (VI,i,38)

The purpose of humbling Crudor is, of course, to defeat his pride. While the stroke Calidore deals Crudor is not the coup de grace, Crudor is conclusively defeated thereafter and eagerly begs for mercy. Calidore obliges his rival but he also exacts a price for allowing him to live: Crudor must learn the ways of courtesy, and to this end Calidore admonishes him regarding

his earlier behaviour. If he expects mercy from others, Crudor is told he must also be prepared to grant them mercy; consideration of others is necessary, Calidore advises, since all men are subject to the whims of fortune. Crudor accepts these terms and then and there renews his status as a Christian Knight, swearing by the cross, and by his sword its symbol, to uphold the values of courtesy which Calidore has described. Naturally, he also agrees to release Briana from the unreasonable task he had previously demanded. The two repentant and renewed lovers are thereafter united.

What is shown by this series of events is that courtesy has the ability to break down the most difficult barriers to love, in this case both between the erring Knight and his Lady and also with the wider community who will benefit, where they previously suffered. To illustrate the latter point, Spenser has Crudor and Briana surrender their castle to Calidore as a reward for the good he has done them. But Calidore has no desire to keep the castle for himself and gives it instead to the Squire, on whose behalf he first intervened in the situation. By changing the love between Crudor and Briana from one of wilfulness and selfish pursuit at others' expense, to one of mutual respect for each other and their fellows, Calidore has turned a negative situation to a positive one. His love, given in the form of courtesy, is received both by the Squire, whom he aids, and by Crudor and Briana whom he changes. Crudor and Briana return Calidore's love by their hospitality and by giving him their castle. Calidore keeps the exchange continuous by giving the castle to the Squire. After this he will similarly use his courtesy in other situations, but always with the same end in mind. The courtesy portrayed by Calidore is thus love militant, his gentlemanly virtue ensuring the continuation of the love processes of the cosmic order.

The story of Squire Tristram, the second of Calidore's quests, illustrates some further aspects of courtesy. First, as the canto's opening stanza states,

the story advocates fair treatment to all, whether low or high in station. In addition, the story illustrates the desirability of the protection of women [a commonplace idea for the renaissance gentleman]: understandably the object of love was to be honoured and kept from physical harm. But what the story actually promotes in exploiting these two themes is the subordination of actions to the ideas of love and courtesy. The tale begins with Calidore witnessing Tristram's slaying of a (nameless) knight. According to the dictates of chivalry the action is a transgression since a squire may not kill his superior. When Calidore investigates he discovers that Tristram acted in defence of a lady, and because of this he rules the squire's action excusable.

A recounting of the dead knight's behaviour reveals that he was an enemy of courtesy and of love. He was proud, disdainful, and scornful of the gentility that Calidore represents, and that he notices in Tristram. The nameless knight's actions, furthermore, reflect what Castiglione describes in The Courtier as "unhonest lust", meaning that he feels the desire for beauty, but this becomes lost in his wish for sexual gratification:

> ...who so thynketh in possessynge the body to enjoye beauty, he is farre deceived, and is moved to it not wyth true knowledge by the choise of reason, but with false opinyan by the longinge of sense. Whereupon the pleasure that followeth it is also false and full of erroures.[10]

Those in this category are thought to be living in a state of disharmony and indiscipline. Since their senses are not informed by reason and knowledge, their actions can only bring wretchedness to themselves and to others. The behaviour of the knight slain by Tristram reveals this: his passions aroused by the sight of two naked lovers, the knight discarded his own lady and pursued the female member of the pair. Not being entirely unchivalrous, he challenged her lover to fight, though without giving him a chance to dress or

to fight back. Having wounded him and thus rendered him hors de combat, he found only that the object of his desire had fled. Infuriated at this he turned his wrath and abuse upon his own lady. Seeing this happen, Tristram went to the lady's defense, and meeting with disdain from her oppressor, slew him.

Tristram's intervention may be seen as being on the side of right, not only because he acted to defend a woman and thus adhered to the code of chivalry, but also because his action can be categorized as being on the side of the 'love force'. In acting against the proud, disdainful knight, Tristram moved against what the knight stood for: pride, selfishness, disdain for others, and the "unhonest lust" described by Castiglione. The fact that Tristram, who by appearances is merely a young woodsman, is actually of noble, even royal blood, is complementary to his courteous behaviour. Today Tristram's nobility may seem a literary cliché, especially perhaps when he is contrasted with that other more mysterious figure of courteous behaviour, the Salvage Man, but Spenser's depiction of Tristram as noble was not intended pandering to the gentry [that would, after all, have defeated his purpose.] No, instead of Tristram's action being done because he is noble, he is noble rather because of what he does. The fact that he acts against one who is nobly born, but not noble in deed confirms this. Spenser's depiction of courtesy is enriched by the story of Tristram, finally, because the squire's nobility helps to define courtesy after the manner of The Fowre Hymnes, which express, of course, the renaissance ideal:

> For of the soule the bodie forme doth take:
> For soule is forme, and doth the bodie make.
> Therefore, where euer that thou doest behold
> A comely corpse, with beauty faire endured,
> Know this for certaine, that the same doth hold
> A beauteous soule, with faire conditions thewed,
> Fit to receive the seede of virtue strewed.
> For all that faire is is by nature good;
> That is a signe to know the gentle blood.[11]

Tristram exemplifies this ideal by his actions, and in his person. In relation to Calidore, Tristram by his hope to become the knight's squire, provides him with the opportunity to be a true model of Castiglione's courtier: he is to be the educator and advisor to a young prince, helping to make him virtuous. (Although Spenser did not bring this idea to fruition, the mere fact that it is mentioned, provides the desired impact.) Tristram's strong desire to be squire to Calidore, who is the most courteous of knights, adds to this.

Following Tristram's departure, it remains for Calidore to complete the task of seeing the wounded Sir Aladine, and the Lady Priscilla, to safety. In doing this he is seen again to be acting in the cause of love. As with Crudor and Briana, Calidore's action results in the restoration of two lovers to each other. His first task is to see that Aladine's wounds are treated and that he is restored to health. This is accomplished by taking him to a nearby castle, which [as luck would have it] belongs to Aladine's father. There the young knight recovers, to the delight of all, but especially to Priscilla, who openly declares her love for him. Once Aladine's life is out of danger, the two lovers confide to Calidore that they had been meeting clandestinely when the discourteous knight attacked them, and thus, owing to Priscilla's prolonged absence, her reputation is in danger. Priscilla's father had apparently planned to marry her to a rich lord, but she had preferred Aladine. Thus if they are ever to win over her father's intentions, it will be necessary not to incur his wrath. Calidore agrees to help them, and upon presenting Priscilla at her home, shows her father the head of the slain discourteous knight, who, he explains, had carried the lady off with evil intent. Although the statement itself is something of a white lie, the desired effect of restoring Priscilla to her home with her honour intact is achieved. No mention is made at this point of a future marriage between Priscilla and Aladine, but it may be assumed that the event is at least possible now since Priscilla's father,

relieved at her return, is more amenable to her wishes. Calidore's actions in the incident may thus be seen to be working as described, since by his courtesy, he has once again created order and affection where he had found chaos and cruelty.

The section of Book VI which follows this incident differs from those preceding and coming after it in that Calidore is not the central figure of the action. The workings of courtesy and the circular love process nevertheless continue, thus illustrating that they are not necessarily dependent upon a hero who intervenes in their cause, but are instead readily available to those who desire love and aspire to virtue. The beginning story of the third canto starts, however, in a familiar way with Calidore encountering yet another pair of lovers who will require his aid. The difficulties which beset this pair are not immediately apparent--if anything, Calidore, courteous though he is, seems to be the cause of their trouble since he has interrupted their love-making. But the couple, Sir Calepine and Lady Serena, share a common fault, which is first noticable when the tranquility of the scene is broken once again, this time by the Blatant Beast. The circumstances of the Beast's intrusion are these: having disrupted the lovers, Calidore apologizes and then engages Calepine in conversation; while they discourse Serena wanders abroad picking wild flowers. At this point the Beast attacks Serena and carries her off. Seeing this, the two knights spring to aid her. Only Calidore, however, is ready in this regard [readiness being another quality of a courteous man.] Calepine, meanwhile, struggles to put on his armour, which he had discarded during his liaison with Serena. Serena's rescue from the Beast, is due, therefore, mainly to the actions of Calidore, who with the Beast, temporarily vanishes from the poem's action. From this incident we may interpret that Calepine's fault is unreadiness, which as the tale continues is seen to be caused by his attitude of complacency. This fault is shared, further-

more, by Serena, although in her case it is manifested in a different way, as illustrated, for instance, by her falling victim to the Blatant Beast.

A further clue to the complacency that Calepine and Serena share comes from their names. Serena is obviously derived from 'serene', and the name suits her inasmuch as it describes her outwardly calm exterior. Rather than being genuinely serene, however, Serena merely hides her passions, with the result that they inevitably get her into trouble. Her 'serenity' is thus more a state of dreaminess rather than the equanimity of true courtesy. The name "Calepine" in Spenser's day referred to a popular Latin dictionary called after its Italian author, Ambrosio Calepino, and the word was used in everyday speech to mean an unquestionable source.[12] Thus Sir Calepine is someone who thinks himself on top of his situation when in fact he may not be. As we see by his inability to go immediately to Serena's aid when she is attacked by the Beast, he can be blind to his own unpreparedness. Calepine is in fact as vulnerable to his personal oversights as Serena, and it is this quality of sharing a common fault that makes them suitably matched.

No single solution is possible for both Calepine and Serena, however, and each must undergo a particular set of experiences before his fault can be remedied, and they can be reunited. The story of Calepine and Serena marks a departure from those of previous cantos by the fact that Calidore does not fully resolve this couple's problem for them. Their problems also differ from those previously dealt with, being not so much outrages against courtesy as personal weaknesses. The fact that Calepine and Serena undergo educative experiences also sets the stage for a similar event to occur involving Calidore. Discussion of Calidore's experience will for the moment be postponed, while intervening events are considered.

Calepine's unpreparedness and eagerness to take the world for granted soon cause him more strife when he and Serena encounter Turpine, a knight so

discourteous that he meets Calepine's appeal for help only with abuse. Calepine's anger at this is such that when Turpine's Lady offers her horse to the wounded Serena, he refuses out of pride, even though it will make things more difficult for himself and Serena. In spite of this, Calepine's actions are still on the side of courtesy. His anger with Turpine is justified since Turpine has behaved insensitively and inhumanely. Calepine's fault here is to expect naively that he ought always to be received courteously. Turpine, unfortunately, does not fit the knightly stereotype that Calepine expects. Though outwardly he appears to be of noble birth, he is inwardly depraved, his spiritual growth stunted. Spenser describes this condition in An Hymne of Beautie:

> ...oft it falles (ay me the more to rew)
> that goodly beautie, albe heavenly borne,
> Is foule abusd, and that celestiall hew,
> Which doth the world with her delight adorne
> Made but the bait of sinne, and sinners scorne;
> Whilest every one doth seeke and sew to have it
> But every one doth seeke, but to deprave it.[13]

Nothing Calepine can do will please or even appease Turpine. He is single-mindedly discourteous, and pursues and threatens Calepine with violence even when Calepine has given up any attempt to win him over. At this point, Calepine's predicament reaches its lowest point. Like the shipwrecked sailors in the metaphor which begins Canto IIII, Calepine can no longer feel secure in his own resources. Like their floundering ship, his 'equipment' for life, his code of chivalry, has met forces with which it cannot contend. Only outside help can now redeem the situation. As the shipwrecked sailors find relief and comfort at the sight of an approaching fishing boat, so too may Calepine take heart at the arrival of the Salvage Man.

In the Salvage Man, Spenser presents a figure who embodies his basic belief that courtesy is something fundamental and natural in human nature. Given the proper environment, courtesy will become refined and sophisticated,

but in becoming so it must be true to a fundamental sense of good-will such as the Wild Man exhibits. The introduction of this idea serves to point out the difficulties that can result when courtesy develops in the more complicated environment of society. Turpine, a product of that environment, has lost all sense of good-will towards others.

Calepine's flaw of complacency results from his being out of touch with the basic feelings underlying courtesy. As his behaviour has thus far shown, he has the manners of courtesy, and a vague sense that they are to be valued and defended, but he is not fully master of his reasons for doing this. The Wild Man, as physically powerful as he may be, is nevertheless a fundamentally gentle creature. He has no language, but the sounds he makes are sweet and soothing. The quality of gentleness combined with strength is another basic facet of Spenser's view of courtesy. It is this combination that succeeds in defeating Turpine and in rescuing Calepine and Serena.

Following their rescue, Calepine and Serena are given the opportunity to begin the process of reforming themselves. Their need to become familiar with the basic qualities of their natures in order to do this is illustrated by their being taken to the Wild Man's forest dwelling place, where he attempts to treat their wounds, which represent, of course, their faults of character. Safe in the forest, Calepine and Serena are free from the turmoil of events in the world they have left. The Wild Man's dwelling is thus a kind of pastoral retreat where they may recollect themselves. [As such it is the forerunner of one that Calidore will later experience.] Its most outstanding quality is its simplicity, its basic lack of the artificial comforts of life:

> ...the bare ground, with hoarie mosse
> Must be their bed, their pillow was vnsewed,
> And the frutes of the forrest was their feast. (VI,iv,14)

Despite such rough accommodation, the two are grateful for their safety, and

for the kindness of their host. The Wild Man's medicinal remedies succeed in curing Calepine's battle wounds, but Serena's, received in her attack by the Blatant Beast, do not improve, for they are "inwardly vnsound". Thus at this point it is appropriate that the two become separated, their problems requiring different solutions. Only after each has been cured by appropriate action and experience will they be reunited.

Calepine is the first to depart from the Wild Man's company. By chance, wandering in the forest, he encounters a bear carrying an infant in its paws. His immediate impulse is to rescue the child, but in order to accomplish this he must jettison his armour and weapons which hinder his speed and movement. The meaning expressed here is that Calepine must shed his previously naive attitudes which inclined him to hide behind convention (as too he hid behind Serena during his fight with Turpine), and to develop a new and spontaneous sense of courtesy. This also explains why, when he does catch up to the bear he defeats it, not with the arms of chivalry, but with his ingenuity, and the most basic of weapons, a rock.

The story of the child whom Calepine has rescued provides evidence of the advance he has made in his understanding of courtesy. Although we do not hear the full story of how the rescued infant becomes heir to the land of Sir Bruin and Lady Matilda, we have enough of it to aid in understanding the import of the incident as it relates to Calepine and the cause of courtesy. By surrendering the child to Matilda's care, Calepine accomplishes several things: he provides Sir Bruin with an heir, and Matilda, who is infertile, with a child. In doing this he also restores these two lovers to each other, since it was the lack of children that had caused disaffection between them. In the long term, Calepine's action will have further good results, for it is prophesied that the child will surpass his father's accomplishments and win

greater fame for his family. Calepine's actions may thus be seen as courteous after the manner exhibited by Calidore, since they restore love and harmony and promote its further proliferation. But the experience also affects Calepine himself, raising him from being a naive, though well-intentioned knight, to one who is well-informed about the nature of courtesy. Evidence of this comes with his speech to Matilda upon her child's future:

> ...certes it hath oftentimes bene seene,
> That of the like, whose linage was vnknowne,
> More braue and noble knights haue raysed beene,
> As their victorious deedes haue often showen,
> Being with fame through many Nations blowen,
> Then those, which haue bene dandled in the lap.
> Therefore some thought, that those braue imps were sowen
> Here by the Gods, and fed with heauenly sap,
> That made them grow so high t'all honorable hap. (VI,iv,36)

In saying this Calepine reveals his understanding of true courtesy and the mysterious nature of its operation. That it is a realization, the product of his recent experience, is evidenced by the change in attitude that he exhibits. He is no longer inclined to take courtesy for granted, nor to be unprepared. Though he is careful to thank Matilda as a friend, when she offers him arms and a horse, he still refuses them, indicating his new sense of self-reliance. For a time this will mean some privation and suffering for Calepine, a further penance for him, it would seem, but he will never again act complacently, as is later shown in his discovery and rescue of Serena.

Before Calepine and Serena are reunited, however, (thus completing their 'circle of love') Serena, too, must undergo an educative experience. Serena's problem arises from her inability to understand the strength of her passions; she fears and denies them, and this results in trouble for her, as we have already seen. Her weakness manifests itself when she encounters the Salvage

Man. Her first reaction to him is fear, for she recognizes in him the rough power of her own animal nature. She is surprised to find that the Wild Man's intention is to serve her--as might her own desires if she would only take command of them. From the Salvage Man's example Serena learns that the passions need not merely express the brutal, and that in animal nature there is the possibility of good:

> ...the wyld man, contrarie to her feare,
> Came to her creeping like a fawning hound,
> And by rude tokens made to her appeare
> His deepe compassion of her dolefull stound,
> Kissing his hands and crouching to the ground. (VI,iv,11)

But the Wyld Man is not the only one to give Serena the kind of advice that she most needs. She receives further instruction during her stay with the Hermit, during which time she is teamed with Timias, another victim of his own passions. Like Serena, Timias has been wounded by the Blatant Beast, and the Hermit's remedy helps them both to recover from their wounds:

> The best (sayd he) that I can you aduize,
> Is to auoide the occasion of the ill:
> For when the cause, whence euill doth arize,
> Removed is, th'effect surceaseth still.
> Abstaine from pleasure, and restraine your will,
> Subdue desire, and bridle loose delight,
> Vse scanted diet, and forbeare your fill,
> Shun secresie, and talke in open sight:
> So shall you soone repaire your present euill
> plight. (VI,vi,14)

Although they are healed by their adherence to the Hermit's advice, neither Serena nor Timias has yet enough experience to act in a way that is both spontaneous and mature. It is necessary, therefore, that they be subjected to further adventures in order that they may gain the necessary insight. Because the two stories intertwine at this point it would seem appropriate to discuss them together, and also, since Timias' story is hitherto unknown to briefly

discuss it. While the two characters do not share exactly the same fault, they represent complementary parts of the same problem, Serena's difficulties stemming from her passivity, Timias' from his impetuosity.

In previous appearances Squire Timias is portrayed as desirous of love and beauty, particularly in women. His youthful overeagerness, however, prevents him from fulfilling his understanding of it, and he is frequently wounded as he pursues and defends his idea. His adventures prior to Book VI (in Books III and IIII) have shown him to be the victim of conflicting desires related to sexual love and spiritual love. When he acts to defend Florimel, a symbol of ideal feminine beauty, against the lustful desires of the "griesly Foster", Timias succeeds but is injured by the Foster and his companions.[14] The nymph Belphoebe, who represents spiritual love and beauty, finds him and restores him to health. Timias loves Belphoebe, but is unable to restrain his desire for her twin sister Amoret, whose beauty symbolizes sexual love. The conflict leads to Belphoebe's desertion of Timias, who is then forced through his guilt to live as a hermit, until such time as he can prove to Belphoebe that she and not Amoret is the genuine end of his desires.[15] The story does not, I believe, mean to imply that Timias should take a vow of permanent celibacy, but rather that as a knight in training his spiritual 'eye' ought to rest upon the non-sexual aspects of love and beauty. Thus in Book VI we find Timias attempting to defend Mirabella (=wondrous beauty) for unselfish reasons, and not because he sees her as sexually desirable.[16] His actions in this incident nevertheless get him into trouble, indicating that Timias has still much to learn before his knightly education is complete.

The occasion which resulted in Timias becoming linked with Serena is one that sees the squire involved in combat with three symbolic enemies of courtesy: Despetto (maliciousness), Decetto (deceit), and Defetto (defeat, inclination to failure). Timias, encountering the Blatant Beast, attacks him,

but in the ensuing fight is bitten by the monster, who is working in the service of his three foes. Seeing him wounded, the three villains attack. Timias fights bravely, but it becomes obvious that he can no longer hold off his attackers. As in other seemingly hopeless situations in The Faerie Queene the solution is contrived, although without tedium, the reasons being at first unapparent. Timias' rescue at the hands of Arthur occurs because the squire is worthy of grace owing to his disposition toward good intent. Timias' error in this situation was to have allowed himself to have been drawn into combat at all, or to have allowed himself to be interested in the vices represented by his attackers. Arthur's intervention restores Timias, reminding him of the gentlemanly ideal to which he aspires, and thus banishing any further inclination towards vice. But Arthur cannot cure Timias' guilt, represented by the wounds of the Blatant Beast, for this transgression, nor teach him how to avoid the same trap on another occasion. The cure for these things is left to the Hermit.

In order to understand what happens to Serena and Timias during the Mirabella incident, it is necessary to dissociate them from Mirabella and consider each of their experiences separately. What Mirabella represents is illustrated by her situation: because she has been disdainful of love, having scorned those attracted to her and therefore used her beauty merely to satisfy her own vanity, she has been punished by Cupid, who has sentenced her to save as many lovers as have pined away for her. As she travels about Faeryland she is accompanied by Disdaine and Scorne who continuously abuse her. The restorative aspect of her punishment is interesting because of its connexion with the platonic love cycle. The linking of justice and courtesy with love also relates the incident to others in Book VI; a certain authority is also lent to it because of the inclusion of a member of the deity (one of the few incidents in The Faerie Queene where this occurs and

probably the most significant). The story suggests that love and beauty misused disturb the cosmic harmony, which, if justice is to prevail, must be restored.

When Timias sees Mirabella, however, he sees only a beautiful woman being abused. With the youthful rashness for which he has become well-known, he intervenes. As on other occasions he fights well, but only for a time. Disdaine and Scorne defeat him and make him their captive. Not unpredictably, Arthur arrives to rescue Timias, whose action is again motivated by good intentions even though his rashness is a fault. Until Timias is free of the vices' domination, however, Arthur does not recognize him. On only one other occasion, his discovery of Timias exiled by Belphoebe, did this failure of recognition occur. What this indicates is that while Arthur may act to preserve the cosmic harmony, he does not do so only because his squire is in trouble, but rather because he instinctively recognizes the need. When Arthur recognizes Timias he embraces him as a friend. This reassertion of the bond between them indicates Timias' return to a harmony of self, after having been led out of that harmony by his irascible nature. This is but another illustration of Neoplatonism at work in their relationship. The Neoplatonist operations of love are present in the friendship between Arthur and Timias:

> Since Friendship...strives by mutual consent
> of the lovers to cultivate the Soul through virtue,
> it is apparently nothing but a concordance of two Souls
> in the worship of God. Those who worship God with a
> pious mind, however, are loved by God. Therefore they
> are not two friends only, but always necessarily three,
> two human beings and one God...He unites us in one; he
> is the insoluble bond and perpetual guardian of friendship.[17]

Timias' restoration through his friendship with Arthur illustrates another point about the cosmic exchange of love and beauty. The process does not cease once its cycle is complete, but continues, first in one form, then

another. Thus Timias in his various adventures finds himself involved in the process several times, each time being a new step for him on the road to maturity.

Because the events surrounding Timias externally involve other people, and through them the deity Himself, and are internally part of the squire's psychological development, they illustrate that love is the motivating power in the universe as well as in the psyche. The story of Cupid's court, where the god sits in judgement over all affairs of love, and makes sure that love's progress proceeds undisturbed, also illustrates love's all permeating sense. Balance in the affairs of love must be preserved, hence Mirabella must restore as many lovers as she has destroyed. She cannot free herself from her task even though Arthur gives her the opportunity to do so, for she knows there is no alternative for her except expiation. She therefore chooses to remain captive of the forces with which Cupid is punishing her until she overcomes them in the prescribed manner.

When Serena sees Timias beaten and subdued by Disdaine and Scorne, she flees in terror, but this only results in more trouble for her. The folly of her passivity is thus exposed. Because of her actions she almost becomes the sacrificial victim of savages. The scene in which this is depicted reveals and affirms the truth about Serena's nature: she is asleep when the savages find her, as she has always been asleep to the danger of ignoring her passions, which the savages of course, represent. Serena's rescue seems only to occur by chance. Calepine, long lost to her, suddenly happens upon the sacrificial ceremony and puts an end to it. While the sequence of events might be likened to the rescue of Timias, there are differences: Calepine, for instance, cannot like Arthur be seen as the agent of divine grace can since he does not represent the unchanging idea of virtue perfected. He can, however, be seen as an agent of courtesy, which is a manifestation of that grace and thus

suggestive also of its workings.

Calepine's rescue of Serena accomplishes two complementary tasks: first, in providing relief for Serena, it allows her to give her life a new direction; in the reunification of Serena with Calepine the circle of love for the couple's adventure is complete. Evidence that the former takes place may be seen in her response when Calepine enquires about her plight. She feels such shame that she is, at first, unable to speak. Serena's feeling shame indicates she realizes that following her passions has led her almost to the point of being consumed by them. If she is to avoid this in future she must learn to restrain them as the Hermit advised. Because of the strength of her passions, however, Serena cannot do this alone. She requires Calepine's companionship in order to accomplish it. Confirmation of this comes when at daybreak her ability to speak returns, and she makes herself "...known to him at last" (VI,viii,51). The darkness, suggestive of her ignorance of self, that prevailed when she fell prisoner to the savages, disappears, and the light, indicating reason and love, returns to her world. For Calepine Serena's rescue completes his adventure and establishes his new found confidence: he no longer hesitates or is unready in acting to defend a just cause. To indicate this, and to give Calepine's experience a magical quality, Spenser has him arrive to rescue Serena wearing the armour he had earlier left behind (VI,v,8), (VI,viii,47). No explanation of his recovery of the armour is given. The sequence of events that has befallen Calepine, and Serena too, takes on the quality of a dream from which each awakens with a renewed awareness. The constant feature of the story is, of course, the love that the couple shares. Neither forgets this, regardless of any personal fault. The story of Calepine and Serena is thus like others in the Book of Courtesy in its incorporation of the separation and reconciliation theme. Like the others too, it moves, as it were, in a circle wherein the lovers are parted and reunited after intervening

experience has led to an increase in their harmony and self-knowledge. Through their actions the mysterious process of love is continued, and love itself is quantitively increased.

With the end of Calepine and Serena's tale we return once again to the adventures of Calidore. When last seen he was pursuing the Blatant Beast, but in this we learn he has been unsuccessful. Calidore has pursued the Beast in both populated and unpopulated parts: the court, cities, towns, hills, forests, and plains. Wherever man can go, the Beast, too, can go; his influence is found, therefore, wherever creatures live. At last, however, Calidore breaks off his search. The fact that this happens in the country of the shepherds is significant. To the Elizabethan reader the use of a pastoral setting would have introduced the idea of contemplation, the traditional sense of this genre being reflective. The pastoral world is, in effect, the "faeryland" of Faeryland. As Faeryland is an abstraction of the real world, so the land of the shepherds is a retreat from the daily life of Faeryland. Proof of this lies in the fact that the land of the shepherds is the one place the Blatant Beast is never found. When Calidore asks if the shepherds have seen the Beast, they reply that they have not, nor have they heard of the creature:

> They answer'd him that no such beast they saw,
> Nor any wicked feend, that mote offend
> Their happie flockes, nor daunger to them draw:
> But if that such there were (as none they kend)
> They prayd high God him farre from them to
> send. (VI,ix,6)

The shepherds' first concern is to extend their hospitality to Calidore. He appears tired after his long ride, and they offer him food and drink. Symbolically, this indicates the knight's need for the spiritual nourishment that only the pastoral retreat can give him. In this setting, Calidore will gain understanding of himself, and of his ideal of courtesy.

The shepherd girl Pastorella is central to Calidore's gain in understanding. Her name translates from Italian to mean little, or dear (perhaps both) shepherdess, but its sound in English also suggests the word pastoral, and hence, since she is beautiful, the contemplation of beauty. Pastorella, small, dear and beautiful, is a microcosm of the beauty that permeates the cosmos, and in true Neoplatonic fashion, when Calidore sees her beauty it creates desire and love in him. The shepherds amongst whom she lives, recognize her beauty and are inspired to praise it in their piping. When Calidore first sees her she stands above them on a little hill as they play. In doing so she prefigures that mysterious "shepheardes lasse" to whom Colin Clout pipes as the Graces dance. Like her counterpart, Pastorella, too, has a heavenly aura about her:

> And soothly sure she was full fayre of face
> And perfectly well shapt in euery lim,
> Which she did more augment with modest grace,
> And comely carriage of her countenance trim,
> That all the rest like lesser lamps did dim;
> Who her admiring as some heauenly wight,
> did for their soueraine goddesse her esteem,
> And caroling her name both day and night,
> The fayrest Pastorella her by name did hight. (VI,ix,9)

Since she is endowed with natural beauty and gracefulness, Pastorella is the ideal match for Calidore. From his fascination with her will come his new knowledge of courtesy and a new appreciation of love and beauty. Once Calidore has fallen in love, he temporarily forgets his quest of pursuing the Blatant Beast, and this signals the beginning of a new direction in his experience. This is not to say that his original quest is lessened in importance, but it must be interrupted, just as the experience of Calepine and Serena was, in order for Calidore to improve his awareness of love and courtesy.

The old shepherd Melibee exemplifies the contemplative side of courtesy about which Calidore must learn. The name Melibee is borrowed from Chaucer's

prose work The Tale of Melibee, the main theme of which is good counsel.[18] Spenser's Melibee is himself a good counsellor, but otherwise the character bears no direct relation to the original story. Spenser's Melibee suggests the idea of reflection. He has himself reappraised his life and changed its direction several times before finally achieving the peace and serenity he enjoys in his pastoral home. Like Calidore, Melibee is himself a courteous man, as his invitation of hospitality to Calidore shows. The life he leads is one of informed simplicity, and his home is everything that the ideal court should be in terms of human interaction. Unlike real courts, however, it lacks glitter and magnificence, and, of course, intrigue. As a shepherd, Melibee's life is peaceful and without cause for complaint. He has, it seems, everything he needs. His experience, however, is not limited to his rustic surroundings. As a young man he despised his shepherd's lot and sought a life at court, but after several years he grew to know its falsities, and at last determined to return to the pastures he knew in youth. His willingness to return to a simple life after years of courtly sophistication reveals both Melibee's reflectiveness and his humility. His life's course, too, has followed the circular pattern of self-discovery established in previous tales: Melibee proceeded from an original location and set of circumstances to pursue an expectation whose result was disillusioning; only following this was he able to return to his original place with a greater awareness and appreciation of it. Speaking of his recovered pastoral experience, he has, he says, "...learned to love more dear this quiet life" (VI,ix,25). Men ought not to blame their misfortunes and discontent upon fate he informs Calidore, because, "It is the mynd that maketh good or ill...each unto himself may fortunize", (VI,ix,30). Both these comments illustrate how Melibee's happiness with a pastoral environment has resulted from his contemplative attitude. In combination with Pastorella, Melibee presents the champion of courtesy with an appeal

to his contemplative nature. The old shepherd's part in this is based on his good advice, while Pastorella's appeal comes from the effect of her beauty upon Calidore's senses. Together the two appeals send the Knight into ecstasy:

> Whylest thus he talkt, the knight with greedy care
> Hong still vpon his melting mouth attent;
> Whose sensefull words empierst his hart so neare,
> That he was rapt with double rauishment,
> Both of his speach that wrought him great
> content,
> And also of the object of his vew,
> On which his hungry eye was alwayes bent;
> That twixt his pleasing tongue, and her faire hew,
> He lost himselfe, and like one halfe entraunced
> grew. (VI,ix,26)

Most interesting perhaps is the statement that Calidore is "half entranced", indicating that although Calidore is spellbound by Melibee's words and Pastorella's beauty, he has yet to experience the full state of rapture that comes, according to the Neoplatonic creed, when the lover perceives beauty not with the senses, but with the eyes of the mind.

While in the land of the shepherds, Calidore increasingly finds that the manners and habits which always served him well at court, and in other parts of Faeryland, are of no use to him. A different value system seems to be in force here, and the contrast of experience forces him to examine his habits and values. Calidore is surprised to find that when he offers gold to Melibee as payment for lodging at his house, Melibee refuses it, saying gold is a cause of strife and best left out of human affairs. Calidore is equally disarmed when his fine manners fail to impress Pastorella. She has no understanding of them, and prefers instead the more spontaneous charm of the shepherd Colin's songs. Calidore reacts to these things by changing his outward appearance and manner. He adopts shepherd's clothing in place of armour, and exchanges his spear for a shepherd's crook. In previous stories of The Faerie Queene the

abandoning of arms has always been a sign of impending danger, but in Calidore's case Spenser reverses the image to make his point. By removing his armour Calidore does make himself vulnerable, but this is appropriate because of his circumstances: in matters of love, vulnerability makes one open to change. By making himself vulnerable, Calidore avails himself of love's powers with the result that he wins the affection of Pastorella. In accomplishing this he loses none of his genuine courtesy; its outward form is changed, but its inner core remains the same. Spenser thus presents true courtesy as something that is part of an ideal human nature, and not merely a code of politeness, for use at court or elsewhere. Calidore's handling of the shepherd Coridan, his rival for Pastorella's love, is evidence of the unchanging strength of his courtesy. While Coridan's rivalry cannot be regarded seriously, owing to his own naivete and Pastorella's lack of interest in him, as a character he is important because his story depicts another aspect of courtesy, the ability to empathize. Coridon, having himself taken Pastorella's love for granted, is naturally jealous of Calidore's success with her. He complains to his friends that Pastorella has betrayed him, and behaves morosely whenever Calidore is in his presence. Calidore, however, shows only kindness to Coridon. When he brings gifts to Pastorella, Calidore genuinely approves his generosity. But Coridon, feeling that Calidore is indifferent to him, challenges the knight to a wrestling match. Although Coridon is an expert wrestler he cannot defeat Calidore, who even after having won the match finds praise for his opponent, and in a gesture of modesty, awards him the prize of oak leaves. This incident shows the importance to courtesy of human generosity and understanding, and plays down such attributes as wrestling ability mentioned in ordinary courtesy books. Like other experience Calidore has undergone thus far during his stay among the shepherds it demonstrates the importance to courtesy of "inward thoughts" as opposed to "outward shows". Calidore's winning of Pastorella and

his approval by the shepherd community does not rest upon his kind of dress or his pursuit of arms, but rather upon his humanity. Although this may always have been so, the demonstration of it away from the circle of chivalry, as in the early adventures, draws the reader's attention to it and also reveals a changed awareness in Calidore himself. Most important to this is Calidore's love of Pastorella, for without it he would not have entered into the learning process he has, nor could he achieve the understanding that later comes to him from his vision of the Graces.

The tenth canto of Book VI begins by recalling Calidore's quest to mind: "Who does now follow that foule Blatant Beast?" the poet asks. The reality the Beast represents is thus contrasted with the idyllic world of the shepherds. This suggests that the Beast must eventually be dealt with; his power is not negated by Calidore's removal to a pastoral retreat where the Beast cannot enter. But this is not to say that Calidore's pastoral experience should be decried. The land of the shepherds is not comparable with the Bowre of Bliss or even with Phaedria's island in the lake of idlenesse. These other places are openly distracting and opposed in purpose to virtue, representing instead the false path of immediate gratification of the passions. The pastoral world is no such trap, and is instead a place of reflection and regeneration. Calidore may be removed there from the world to which the Beast belongs, but his courtesy has not diminished and it still stands opposed to what the Beast represents. It has, in fact, become enhanced, and Calidore sees the proof of this before he returns to fulfil his quest.

A change that has occurred in Calidore since he has become enamoured of Pastorella is that his sight, meaning also his understanding, has been mysteriously enhanced. In contrast to his new sense of vision the values of the court now appear as "false blisse", and "painted shows". (VI,x,3). He is also aware of the unregenerative quality of court life. As it can provide no outlet

for spiritual growth, the court is likened to a ship, "sayling alwaies in the port", which is to say it never permits the discovery of anything new, nor allows for the taking of any beneficial risk. The effect of love upon sight is described in An Hymne of Beauty:

> ...lovers eyes more sharply sighted bee
> then other mens, and in deare loues delight
> See more than any other eyes can see,
> through mutual receipt of beames bright,
> Which carrie priuie message to the spright,
> And to their eyes that inmost faire display
> As plain as light discouers dawning day. (11. 232-38)

Other men, lacking such insight, will continue to desire and believe in the values emanating from the court, since, unlike Calidore, they have nothing against which to compare them:

> For what hath all that goodly glorious gaze
> Like to one sight, which Calidore did vew?
> The glaunce whereof their dimmed eies would daze,
> That neuer more they should endure the shew
> Of that sunne-shine, that makes them looke askew. (VI,x,4)

In reference to his criticism of the court Spenser is careful to include one exception that would pass the test of Calidore's heightened perceptions: Gloriana, while she is the central figure of her court, remains ideal, and is not to be blamed for the faults of her courtiers.

Spenser's allusions to the court at this point in the poem are only important, however, in terms of providing contrast. His main concern is with the enraptured state of Calidore's senses, and their nurture by the pastoral environment. At the centre of the pastoral world is Mount Acidale, a place which incorporates the virtuous pastoral atmosphere and raises it to the level of the supernatural. It is thus appropriate that Acidale should provide the height of appeal to Calidore's newly found sense of sight and hearing. In the

description of Acidale which follows, these senses, considered higher and more spiritual than their counterparts, are emphasized exclusively:

> It was an hill plaste in an open plaine,
> That round about was bordered with a wood
> Of matchlesse hight, that seem's th'earth to disdaine,
> In which all trees of honour stately stood,
> And did all winter as in sommer bud,
> Spredding pauilions for the birds to bowre,
> Which in their lower braunches sung aloud;
> And in their tops the soring hauke did towre,
> Sitting like King of fowles in maiesty and powre.
>
> And at the foote thereof, a gentle flud
> His siluer waues did softly tumble downe,
> Vnmard with ragged mosse or filthy mud,
> Ne mote wylde beastes, no mote the ruder clowne
> Thereto approch, ne filth mote therein drowne:
> But Nymphes and Faeries by the bancks did sit,
> In the woods shade, which did the waters crowne,
> Keeping all noysome things away from it,
> And to the waters fall tuning their accents fit. (VI,x,6-7)

Acidale, while it is firmly centred in the pastoral world, is not entirely part of it. Its woods "seem" to disdain the earth, though this should not be thought to mean disdain of men or of love, but merely a means to contrast the ideal, supernatural world, with the mortal, corruptible, and less desirable temporal world. The inhabitants of Acidale too are other-worldly, being not men, but Nymphs and Faeries, ideal, imaginary creatures who imitate the beauty of their surroundings with their very speech. The hawk who sits atop the trees of Acidale is the symbol of Ra, the Egyptian Sun-god, and is thus an allusion to the sun itself as a source of light and goodness.[19] In Neoplatonic terms this would also include love, beauty, and God.

The goddess Venus, Spenser states, uses Acidale as a retreat from her court at Cytheron; men likewise retreat from the court to the pastoral retreat of poetry, to reflect and to free themselves of the court's mundane qualities.

So even Venus' court, the very mention of which suggests exceeding pleasantness, cannot compare with the bliss that envelops Acidale.

The Graces' dance to which Calidore becomes witness is generally considered to be the core of the book of courtesy for it is the very image that inspired the renaissance theories of love and courtesy. This image is explained by Edgar Wind in Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance:

> Why the Graces are three, why they are sisters, why they interlace their hands; all that is explained in De Beneficia by the triple rhythm of generosity, which consists of giving, accepting, and returning. As gratias agere means "to return thanks", the three phases must be interlocked in a dance as are the Graces...for 'the order of the benefit requires that it be given away by the hand but return to the giver', and although, 'there is a higher dignity in the one that gives, the circle must never be interrupted. A further moral was added by Servius, which to judge by the frequency with which it was repeated--for example by Fulgentius, Baccaccio, Perotti, and Spenser--must be regarded as singularly apt: 'that one of them is pictured from the back while the other two face us is because of one benefit issuing from us two are supposed to return'. When Calidore sees the Graces' dance their choreography illustrates Servius.[20]

As Wind points out, Spenser's description of the Graces' dance makes them a symbol of charity, and indeed their charity is one which includes the distribution of the gifts of courtesy. The idea of eternal exchange that the symbol represents was also a favourite of Renaissance Neo-Platonists, for it can be used to express their theory of the relationship between God, man and cosmos. Since courtesy may be characterized as the earthly manifestation of this relationship, the meaning of the Graces' dance is especially important to Book VI of The Faerie Queene, since it is a crystallization of the ideas of the circular love process expressed in many of the book's tales.

In adapting the symbol of the Graces for use in The Faerie Queene Spenser departs slightly from the orthodox depiction of it, but in doing so he does not alter its basic meaning. What Spenser adds to the image is entirely his own

and suitable to the ends of his work. Calidore, his curiosity awakened by music and dancing discovers not only three Graces but,

> An hundred naked maidens lilly white,
> All raunged in a ring, and dauncing in delight.
>
> All they without were raunged in a ring,
> And daunced round; but in the midst of them
> Three other Ladies did both daunce and sing,
> The whilest the rest them roundabout did hemme,
> And like a girlond did in compasse stemme:
> And in the middest of those same three, was placed
> Another Damzell, as a precious gemme,
> Amidst a ring most richly well enchaced,
> That with her goodly presence all the rest much graced. (VI,x,11-12)

The figure at the centre of the Graces' dance--the fourth Grace as she is often called--is not the queen, nor as Spenser later explains, is it Venus. Although there can be no doubt that she is a conflation of these. Exactly who she is and what she represents is purposely kept a mystery, except for what is revealed in stanza 16:

> She was to weete that iolly Shepheards lasse,
> Which piped there vnto that merry rout,
> That iolly shepheard, which there piped, was
> Poore Colin Clout (who knowes not Colin Clout?)
> He pypt apace, whilest they him daunst about.
> Pype iolly shepheard, pype thou now apace
> Vnto thy loue, that made thee low to lout:
> Thy loue is present there with thee in place,
> Thy loue is there aduaunst to be another Grace. (VI,x,16)

The key to the problem of the "shepheardes lasse" is to be found in the question Spenser addresses to his readers: "who knows not Colin Clout? Anyone familiar with Spenser's other poetic works would recognize Colin, the shepherd-poet who takes his inspiration from the love of Rosalind, his unrequiting mistress. Colin and Rosalind appear in The Shepheardes Calendar, Colin Clout's Come Home Againe and (though she is left unnamed) in An Hymne of

Beauty. Even though his love of her is unrequited, Colin takes inspiration from Rosalind because through his desire for her beauty, he has been able to gain a glimpse of the celestial beauty itself. This is illustrated in the following lines from Colin Clout's Come Home Againe. Colin here addresses some shepherd friends, who have been blaming Rosalind for Colin's melancholy humour:

> Ah shepheards...ye ne weet
> How great a guilt upon your heads ye draw:
> To make so bold a doome with words unmeet,
> Of thing celestiall which ye neuer saw.
> For she is not like as the other crew
> Of shepheards daughters which emongst you bee,
> But of diuine regard and heauenly hew,
> excelling all that euer ye did see.
> Not then to her that scorned thing so base,
> But to myself the blame that looked so hie.
> So hie her thoughts as she herself haue place.
> And loath each lowly thing with lofty eie.
> Yet so much grace let her vouchsafe to grant
> To simple swaine, sith her I may not loue:
> Yet that I may her honour paravant,
> And praise her worth, though far my wit aboue,
> Such grace shall be the guerdon for the griefe,
> And long affliction which I have endured:
> Such grace sometimes shall give me some reliefe,
> And ease of paine which cannot be recured.
> And ye my fellow shepheardes which do sea,
> And heare the languors of my too long dying,
> Vnto the world for euer witnesse bee,
> That hers I die, nought to the world's denying,
> That simple trophe of her great conquest. (11, 927-951)

For Colin, Rosalind is the embodiment of perfect beauty. Since she is unattainable, his longing for her may be compared to the desire for heavenly beauty that initiates man into the circle of divine love. Colin's participation in this is expressed in his songs, the delight of which (especially in the case of Calidore) can also lead other men to experience the rapture that comes from involvement with the divine processes of heavenly love and beauty.

When man, by the power of love, has become attuned to the divine order,

and thus become virtuous, he--and ideally his society--should live in a way that expresses its values. The direct expression of this at the individual level is courtesy. Colin's explanation of the Graces' dance includes all these possibilities:

> These three on men all gracious gifts bestow,
> Which decke the body or adorne the mynde,
> To make them louely or well fauoured show,
> As comely carriage, entertainement kynde,
> Sweete semblaunt, friendly offices that bynde,
> And all the complements of curtesie:
> They teach vs, how to each degree and kynde
> We should our selues demeane, to low, to hie;
> To friends, to foes, which skill men call Ciuility. (VI,x,23)

To complete his own circle of courtesy Calidore must now move from his new understanding of courtesy to the real expression of it through action. Once again his love of Pastorella provides the inspiration for him to accomplish this.

After he has seen the Graces' dance and heard Colin's explanation of it, Calidore is reluctant to leave Acidale or his teacher's presence:

> ...with delight [Calidore] his greedy fancy fed,
> Both of his words, which he with reason red;
> And also of the place, whose pleasures rare
> With such regard his sences rauished,
> That thence, he had no will away to fare,
> But wisht, that with that shepheard he mote
> dwelling share. (VI,x,30)

He must, nevertheless, leave both if he is to complete his quest as promised to the Faerie Queene. His exchanging of the pastoral reality for that of the world at large does not occur as immediately or mysteriously as his entrance into the land of the shepherds. The transition, and Calidore's retransformation take place during the course of several incidents. The impetus for them all is, of course, love, "that enuenimd sting" as it is called in VI,x,31, which first calls him away from Acidale and Colin's company. He returns from his mystical

experiences to his wooing of Pastorella, and shortly thereafter he must act in her defense, thereby assuming, in part at least, his former role of Knight-at-arms. Calidore's defense of Pastorella involves his slaying of a tiger. What is remarkable about the incident and what identifies it as an act of transition in his behaviour, is that when he realizes the necessity to act he is essentially unprepared, but courageously and spontaneously he attacks the animal and kills it, not with a sword or spear, but with his shepherd's crook. By contrast, Coridon, (still Calidore's rival) though he at first feels the impulse to save Pastorella, runs away for fear of losing his own life. He is, as the incident demonstrates, merely a shepherd "fit to keepe sheepe, Vnfit for loues content" (VI,x,37). On this basis, at least, Pastorella rejects Coridon. He is an ordinary man, and ordinary men are not made of the same stuff as great lovers, or men of courtesy. This is not to say Coridon should be despised and rejected by all. Civility demands that he be treated fairly. Calidore realizes this and continues to be friendly towards him. As earlier stated, this incident marks the beginning of Calidore's departure from the pastoral world into a world of everyday reality (and hence greater danger). The differences shown between Coridon and Calidore serve the purpose of illustrating the achievement of the division between the two worlds: as Coridon's character is now seen as that of a 'mere shepherd', so too the land of the shepherds becomes mere pasture and loses any magic quality it held previously. What magic still remains becomes part of the character of Calidore, and takes on an ever more active, as opposed to reflective, quality.

The plundering of the shepherds' village by the Brigants signifies the completion of Calidore's pastoral experience. It serves to bring home that the pastoral world, even though it might at times be a means to the knowledge of eternal processes, is a world of limitations, and not a guaranty against worldly evils. The Blatant Beast may not have visited the shepherds' pastoral retreat,

but this does not mean it is impregnable to the agents of discourtesy. For Calidore, the coming of the Brigants starts another of the separation and return cycles that have been part of other episodes in the Book of Courtesy, but this time he acts in his own personal cause as well as for the benefit of others.

Having won the love of Pastorella conclusively, Calidore now loses her to the Brigants and must recapture her. Significantly, besides Pastorella the Brigants take Melibee, whom they slay when he is found to be of no use to them. This despicable act, contrary to all that Calidore represents, signals the final severance in the story with things pastoral and contemplative, and also shows the extremeness of the Brigant's world. Being all action and selfish plunder without respect for human feeling, it has no place for the sensitivity and reflectiveness of the good man. Calidore's actions, by contrast, are motivated by good intent, and are inspired by love and understanding gained through reflection. It is thus appropriate that he sets out to perform the rescue dressed as a shepherd but wears his sword underneath his shepherd's "weeds", for this image illustrates his position clearly: he is the man of action, transformed by pastoral reflection to a new awareness, returning now refreshed to his former self. Once the rescue of Pastorella is accomplished, the cycle of love lost and restored is accomplished for Calidore. But it remains for Pastorella to be brought finally into the new reality the knight has established. This is done by the completion of yet another circular set of events: Pastorella, who had come to Melibee as a foundling, is discovered through a series of coincidences to be no mere shepherdess, but a lady of noble lineage. Being restored to her rightful parents completes her circle in this regard, thus linking her with the real world and ending her previous pastoral associations. Fittingly too, Coridon is seen to find his proper place in the new order. As the pastoral setting has become the pasture, so the rustic clown

has become the practical shepherd. For his part in aiding Calidore against the Brigants, Coridon is rewarded with the sheep recaptured from them. These are said to have been Melibee's flock, and, as a fitting tribute to Melibee, Coridon's acquisition of them is a sign of his acceptance of Calidore's friendship.

In light of the theories of love and courtesy expressed in the Graces' dance, Calidore's actions would seem to be working after the same pattern of giving, receiving, and returning for they are unselfish acts which result not only in the obvious benefits they set out to achieve, but also in some which are unexpected, Pastorella's restoration to her parents and the winning of Coridon's respect and friendship being two. Calidore also benefits personally from his achievements since by them he realizes the strength of the courtesy which he embodies. What remains for him now, of course, is the final achievement of his quest. He must "...overtake or else subdue," the Blatant Beast (VI,i,7). The Beast has been portrayed from the outset of Book VI as the enemy of courtesy par excellence, but apart from a few brief, dramatic appearances, very little is known about him. He first appears at the end of Book V, where he is the servant of two malicious hags, Envie and Detraction. Artegall, the knight of justice, encounters him as his own adventure closes. The hags, and the Beast, who has many tongues, taunt Artegall with abuse and slander, but he chooses to avoid rather than to confront them. This task is left to Calidore, apparently because it is more in the realm of courtesy than justice. What this seems to indicate about the Blatant Beast is that his actions are related primarily to the private and the spiritual rather than the public arena, although mention of the creature in Book V implies that private vice will probably result in public consequences. The knight of justice thus tells Calidore that he sensed danger on seeing the Beast and hearing the prattle of his thousand tongues (VI,i,9). It is Calidore, however, who first describes

the Blatant Beast's origin and nature:

> It is a Monster bred of helishe race,
> ...which often hath annoyd
> Good Knights and Ladies true, and many else
> destroyd.
>
> Of Cerberus whilome he was begot,
> And fell Chimera in her darkesome den,
> Through fowle commixture of his filthy blot;
> Where he was fostred long in Stygian fen,
> Till he to perfect ripenesse grew, and then
> Into this wicked world he forth was sent,
> To be the plague and scourge of wretched men:
> Whom with vile tongue and venemous intent
> He sore doth wound, and bite, and cruelly
> torment. (VI,i,7-8)

It seems obvious from this description that the Blatant Beast represents, to some degree at least, the vice of calumny. Critics generally agree to this, although it is also acknowledged that if the Beast is to be considered the very antithesis of courtesy he represents--or ought to represent--more than mere slander. Such a proposal is made by William Fenn De Moss, whose thesis is that the Blatant Beast is the symbol of unfriendliness. The Beast, he claims, is the extreme opposite of courtesy, representing "...Surliness, Contentiousness, Unfriendliness", since according to Aristotle courtesy is the mean between these qualities and "...Flattery, Obsequiousness, and Complaisance."[21] In order to illustrate this argument, De Moss suggests that Calidore represents the mean, while the Blatant Beast and Blandina stand respectively for the two extremes. This argument is attractive because of its logical neatness, although it is questionable whether Blandina is of sufficient stature as a character to warrant comparison with Calidore and the Blatant Beast. She appears after all, on only three occasions, two of which are no more than brief glimpses (VI,iii,42 and VI,v,33), and even show her in a sympathetic light as she tries to persuade the vicious Sir Turpine (her husband) to meliorate his behaviour. Only on her third appearance is Blandina's character questioned (VI,vi,39-43) and while there can

be little doubt that she is practised, as her name suggests, in flattery, Spenser still allows her actions a certain leeway of intent because she acts in her mate's defense rather than from purely selfish motives:

> Whether such grace were giuen her by kynd,
> As women wont their guilefull wits to guyde;
> Or learn'd the art to please, I doe not fynd.
> This well I wote, that she so well applyde
> Her pleasing tongue, that soone she pacifyde
> The wrathfull Prince, and wrought her husbands peace. (VI,vi,43)

While it may be true, as De Moss claims, that Aristotle's mean and its two extremes are portrayed in the characters of the Beast, Calidore and Blandina, the illustration of it in The Faerie Queene is not poignant. Once Turpine--a much more memorable character than Blandina--is despatched by Arthur, his briefly mentioned lady is forgotten. The Blatant Beast, however, is the most impressive figure of Book VI next to Calidore, and while he may to some extent fit the scheme of an Aristotelian ideal there is more to his character than De Moss's thesis implies.

One thing obvious about the Blatant Beast is that he is the antithesis of courtesy. Courtesy, for Spenser, does not mean merely the manners necessary to get along at court, nor for that matter in society at large. It is a virtue which will, to be sure, find part of its expression in these things, but at its root is a spirit of personal striving for knowledge and virtue. Evidence of this has been seen in the story of Timias and Serena, who could only be cured of the wounds the Beast had inflicted on them by the pursuit of virtue. What can be concluded from this incident is that the Blatant Beast, despite his fantastic description, is not so much a monster in the physical sense as he is a possibility of the psyche. Because of this Calidore only subdues him after gaining greater knowledge of himself and his place in the universal scheme of things.

The Blatant Beast represents the dark side of the psyche, the spirit of ignorance and selfishness, the result of which is slander and malice. It should be no surprise, therefore, that when we examine the Blatant Beast's characteristics, as portrayed during Calidore's final pursuit and capture of him, we find that the most impressive things about him are his teeth and his tongues. Looking into the Beast's mouth is likened to a vision of hell ("Orcus"), the place of dead souls, or more appropriately, the place in the psyche that loves and is concerned with other people, but can go dead and be bitter and ignorant. The Beast's tongues themselves make the sounds of animals both large and small, thus showing the meaninglessness of the unenlightened spirit, whose unpleasant utterances are sometimes pathetic like those of domesticated animals, such as cats and dogs, and sometimes fierce and untamed like those of the bear and tiger:

> But most of them were tongues of mortall men,
> Which spake reprochfully, not caring where
> nor when. (VI,xii,27)

All the tongues, of course, are really the tongues of men, and the cacaphony of sounds represents the chaos of their individual psyches, which is responsible too, for the collective disorder found in the world. Emphasis is placed on the tongue since speech, which comes from the tongue, is man's most powerful means of expression and influence. The tongue's power is especially great when it speaks out of ignorance and malice because only disciplined minds can respond to the logic of truth. The contrast to the Blatant Beast's discordant noises lies in Colin's songs, which while they cannot evoke the dance of the Graces, are worthy enough to accompany it, the symbol of a universal harmony all men could share in if they were virtuous.

The conditional quality of this possibility is demonstrated in the nature

of the success that Calidore has against the Blatant Beast. The usual complaint that critics make against Book VI is that it ends inconclusively because Calidore does not finally destroy the Beast. The fact that Calidore's accomplishment of virtue only enables him to muzzle the creature, who eventually escapes, (though not in Calidore's lifetime) has often been taken as a sign of Spenser's pessimism and final disillusion with his task and with poetry in general.[22] But this judgement is hardly fair. Calidore's achievement of containing the Blatant Beast is great because it represents the defeat of ignorance by virtue. It may be a limited success, but this is no disgrace, as Spenser explains by likening Calidore to other mythical heroes who preceded him in similar quests. Those alluded to are Hercules ("that strong Tirinthian swaine;" VI,xii,35) and also, by implication, Orpheus. In the latter connexion it is important to notice the similarity of the Blatant Beast to his ancestor Cerberus. According to legend Hercules dragged Cerberus up from Tartarus in order to make him

> ...see the hateful sunne, that he might tell
> To griesly Pluto, what on earth was donne,
> And to the other damned ghosts, which dwell
> For aye in darkenesse, which day light doth shonne. (VI,xii,35)

But in order for this task to be complete, Hercules had, necessarily, to let the dog Cerberus go again. Calidore's quest has him capture the Beast whom he then shows to all the folk of Faeryland who "...much admyr'd the Beast, but more admyr'd the Knight." This can be interpreted to mean that Calidore succeeds in pointing out the evil the Beast represents, while at the same time courteously expressing the kind of behaviour to be admired and imitated. Courtesy is thus seen as a private virtue even though it is publically manifested: the Knight of Courtesy must proceed by example, for he has no power of imposing the kind of order he represents as, for instance, the Knight of

Justice does. Like Colin, Calidore must hope that his example will succeed, as the shepherd hopes his tunes will be fit for the Graces' dance. Any claim that Calidore's courtesy fails on the grounds that he does not permanently subdue the Blatant Beast can thus be dismissed. As Elizabeth McCaffery suggests, Spenser's likening of Calidore to Orpheus is the key to understanding this.[23] Orpheus put Cerberus to sleep with the music of his lyre in order to gain access to the underworld, but he could not contain or destroy him. Similarly Colin's songs, the symbol of poetic art, allow access to the 'underworld' of the unconscious mind and the imagination. The songs themselves cannot make those who hear them virtuous, but they can expose them to the secrets of the soul. Since the Blatant Beast represents the dark side of the psyche, Calidore's achievement is a victory over that part of himself. What Spenser asks of his readers is that they attempt the same.

Chapter 3

The October Eclogue of The Shepheardes Calendar contains the suggestion that poetry, because of its nature, can have no permanent place on earth, and having performed its task here, ought to return to heaven from whence it came:

> O pierlesse Poesye, where is then thy place?
> If nor in Princes pallace thou doe sitt:
> (And yet is Princes pallace the most fitt)
> Ne brest of baser birth doth thee embrace
> Then make thee winges of thine aspyring wit,
> And, whence thou camst, flye backe to heaven apace. (October, ll. 79-84)

What poetry is likened to here of course is love, which according to platonic theory descends to earth at the creator's wish and takes on living form, but returns eventually to heaven, the process being endlessly repeated. Since poetry and other forms of art were considered by renaissance thinkers as the product and expression of divine love, they were also necessarily associated with the achievement of human virtue. In order to know and express the divine will, however, man first needed knowledge of his own nature, and one way that this could be acquired was through contemplation of the beauty expressed in art. Thus Calidore's initiation into the mysteries of love comes about through hearing the songs of Colin Clout. Self-knowledge transformed into action becomes virtue, as Sir Philip Sidney explains in his Apology for Poetry:

> The highest end of the mistres knowledge,
> by the Greekes called Architectonike...
> stands (as I think) in the knowledge of a
> mans selfe, in the Ethike and palitick
> consideration, with the end of well dooing
> and not of well knowing onely...so that,
> the ending end of all earthly learning (is)
> vertuous action.[1]

In light of this it might be asked where expressions of virtue other than

poetry should proceed once their task is complete, since they too must surely have no permanent place on earth. Ought they also to "flye backe to heaven"? The purpose of asking this question is to raise the problem of where The Faerie Queene, having reached the end of its sixth book, might proceed--or if indeed it needs to continue further. The answer to this problem may be found, I believe, by comparing Book VI to Book I, for in certain important aspects these two books resemble one another. The complementary quality that exists between them would seem to allow the possibility that they form a proper beginning and end to the work, Holinesse being a reflection of Courtesy and vice versa. If this is so, then it is possible to conceive that Spenser may have intended to structure The Faerie Queene, like The Shepheardes Calendar, to follow a circular pattern. The germ of this idea is, in fact, proposed in Spenser's letter to Raleigh, in which he states that each of his heroes would begin and end his quest at the Faerie Queene's court. While this particular plan is never brought to fruition, it is entirely possible that Spenser, in keeping with the circular aspects of the platonic love process, wished at least to suggest such a circular pattern for his great poem.

In considering the relationship of holiness to courtesy it is well to remember that courtesy is in fact the subject of the whole work of The Faerie Queene and not merely of a single book. This is stated in the proem to Book I. Unlike other proems in The Faerie Queene this initial statement of intent does not attach itself to the particular virtue of the book it precedes. It outlines instead the general intention of the whole work, proposing to "...sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds." The proem also states that the work is to be a serious one, although Spenser does his best to disguise it as an entertainment. The serious nature of it is emphasized by the poet's exchange of "oaten reeds", suggesting pastoral gaiety, for "trumpets sterne", which imply the graver atmosphere of the royal court. The change from pastoral to courtly

mode is something of a verbal sleight of hand on the poet's part, and is not so great as it seems when The Faerie Queene's purpose of moral instruction is called to mind. As Spenser would have known, the word court derives from the Latin cohors, meaning a sheepfold, and thus if Book I contains 'pastoral' instruction of the religious kind, it should not be surprising to find that Book VI, whose setting is the most pastoral in a literary sense, should be related to it thematically.[2]

Numerous references to courtesy in The Book of Holinesse aid in establishing its nature and value. Many of these are concerned with false courtesy and show how the superficialities of courteous expression might be used for evil purposes. The theme of the power of words, and the use of persuasive speech is a feature of the books of Holinesse and of Courtesy, and plays an important part in each. In Book I we first find reference to speech and its power to persuade when Redcrosse meets Archimago, who charms him with his pleasant voice and seemingly courteous manner in order to separate him from Una. This is the beginning of a series of events that test Redcrosse's ability to distinguish the true from the false, and while the subject of these lessons is undoubtedly holiness, courtesy is featured, in this incident, and others in its antithesis. It is worth mentioning here, too, that Redcrosse, unlike Calidore, has no gift of language.[3] This, it would seem, adds to his quality of innocence, although when we think of Calidore, whose speech has charm and grace, but who lacks spiritual awareness, the similarity becomes evident: innocence of worldly things and worldly expertise both lack the knowledge that comes from heavenly vision. Both are forms of 'unknowing' that must be overcome if virtue is to ensue.

A strong example of false courtesy occurs when Duessa descends to the underworld to seek the restoration to life of the evil Sans Foy. Duessa refers to him as "...the flower of grace and chevalrye," which fits in well with Duessa's

polite dealings with Night, as belonging to a dark form of courtesy. Her code of manners cannot, however, be properly called courtesy because, unlike true virtue, it is incapable of resulting in a harmony beyond the bounds of its own purposes. To emphasize this, Spenser's description of hell includes the Furies, whose cause is suffering and discord, the opposite of their counterparts the Graces, who promote good-will and harmony amongst men.

A further example of false courtesy in Book I is found at the court of Lucifera. Here, pride, besides being the enemy of holiness, is also the enemy of courtesy. Lucifera, pride's symbol, rules a kingdom that is not rightfully hers. Conversely, courtesy, as in the incident mentioned above, has no place in the underworld. Lucifera rules not by "lawes, but pollicie", and as the word "pollicie" is related to 'polite', and to the Latin politus, meaning polished, so is the behaviour of Lucifera's courtiers merely superficial:

> Her Lordes and Ladies all this while deuise
> Themselues to setten forth to straungers sight:
> Some frounce their curled haire in courtly guise,
> Some prancke their ruffes, and others trimly dight
> Their gay attire: each others greater pride does spight. (I,iv,14)

To counter false courtesy, some examples of true courtesy are also found in The Book of Holinesse. The first of these is in the character of Arthur, whose behaviour, like Calidore's, is exemplary of courtesy. Arthur's courtesy is evident from his first action, when he encounters Una suffering her loss of Redcrosse to Duessa:

> When as this knight nigh to the Ladie drew,
> With louely court he gan her entertaine;
> But when he heard her answeres loth, he knew
> Some secret sorrow did her heart distraine:
> Which to allay, and calme her storming paine,
> Faire feeling words he wisely gan display,
> And for her humour fitting purpose faine,
> To tempt the cause it selfe for to bewray; (I,vii,38)

Unlike his false counterparts, Duessa and Archimago, Arthur does not use his courtesy only to charm and seduce. Rather than being self-centred, his motives are altruistic and suggest the kind of harmony for which the Graces stand: Arthur realizes that by increasing the happiness of a fellow creature he potentially increases that of others including himself. His internal self-harmony, deriving its wholeness from heavenly sources, has the effect, once it is expressed, of increasing the general harmony of the universe, and what is visited upon other men is also visited upon Arthur. The more men possess harmony-of-self, the more they transmit it to others. Thus the triple rhythm of giving, receiving, and returning for which the Graces stand, is duplicated in the actions of the truly courteous.

In Book I the actions of the false courtiers at the House of Pride are countered by the genuine courtesy of the occupants of Dame Caelia's House of Holinesse. Dame Caelia's daughters are, "...well upbrought/In goodly thewes, and godly excercise," which expression combines the influence of both courtesy and holiness.[4] Zele, the character who meets Redcrosse and Una and guides them about the house, is distinguished by his "courteous glee", and Reverance, who leads them into the presence of the Dame herself, entertains them with "rare courtesie". Dame Caelia, too, entertains them "With all the court'sies that she could devise". What these characters serve to show is that holiness is accompanied by courtesy, and theirs is not the only proof of this theme connecting the two virtues.

Another feature common to Books I and VI, and not to the others, is the inclusion of hermits, whose function is to instruct the hero (or his substitute) in matters that he does not understand because he lacks experience. Although both books have a particular character who is referred to as the hermit, each also has some auxiliaries who perform a similar task. In Book I, for example, are the allegorical virtues in the House of Holinesse, who instruct Redcrosse

before introducing him into the care of the hermit, Contemplation. In Book VI, the hermit's auxiliaries are Melibee and Colin Clout, both of whom have important knowledge to pass on to Calidore. In this regard, the episode involving the Graces' dance, which Colin interprets, is perhaps the most readily similar to any in Book I, being comparable to Contemplation's explanation of the New Jerusalem. Before discussing these incidents in greater detail, however, it is well to look at the lesser ones, for they too offer information that assists in relating the themes of holiness and courtesy.

The most concrete example of actual holiness in Book VI is found in the Hermit of Canto V. His life is monastic, his house and chapel being located, "Far from all neighbourhood, the which annoy it may," and he lives his life, "In streight observance of religious vow." Like Contemplation of Book I, he is devoted to prayer and meditation, and as Contemplation's instruction of Redcrosse provides the cure for the knight's spiritual illness, the second hermit's advice to Timias and Serena also cures them of the spiritual wounds the Blatant Beast has inflicted upon them. The contemplative and pastoral aspects of the hermit are enhanced by the fact that he was once a knight, who having grown weary of "Warres delight and worlds contentious toyle," has abandoned his life of action for one of reflection. His outlook on life, influenced as it has been by religious contemplation, provides an example of the courtesy Spenser wishes to encourage. This is indicated by the description of the hermit entertaining his guests:

> Not with such forged showes, as fitter beene
> For courting fooles, that curtesies would faine,
> But with entire affection and appearaunce
> plaine. (VI,v,38)

The means the hermit used to cure Timias and Serena was that of counsel, and his effectiveness in this regard comes from his skill in the "art of words".

The art of words is given much attention in Books I and VI, the probable reason for this being that words and speech were considered by renaissance thinkers as expressions of, and, therefore, a means of interpreting, the soul. Spenser's affirmation of this idea occurs in other incidents too, the most striking examples being Calidore's courteous speech, the power of the Blatant Beast's hundred tongues, and, of course, Colin's songs. Arthur's skill with words, as witnessed in his comforting of Una, can also be added to this list, as too may Archimago's and Duessa's.

The hermit's art of words, unlike Archimago's and Duessa's in Book I, is not merely the ability to speak in sweet accents, but has been integrated with his experience of life. He is thus described as not only knowing the effective use of speech, but as a man of great self-discipline, who is able to "doe as well as say the same". This quality of having his actions concomitant with the advice he gives shows that the hermit's virtue is neither exclusively theoretical, nor merely practical, but is instead informed by both these qualities. The achievements of Redcrosse and Calidore are thus comparable to the hermit's because by the ends of their quests they have both become appropriately aware of the spiritual, as well as practical aspects of both their virtues. Returning to the issue of speech, however, the inference that may be drawn from the emphasis placed on the use of language, by the hermit, and in other incidents, is that the speech of the virtuous has the power to effect positive change in others, as conversely that of the unvirtuous only breeds chaos. The virtuous man's speech is thus "spontaneous" in the rudimentary sense of the word, the latin spontaneus meaning 'of one's own accord': the man of holiness, as of courtesy is one who knows himself and his universal significance, and this is projected in his use of language, as well as in his actions.[5]

Although he is not a hermit in the true sense, Melibee is nevertheless a

hermit-like character. He exhibits qualities found in other hermits, such as being a contemplative, a good man who has experienced the world and the court, but now shuns all places of empty ostentation in favour of a simpler, more private, and moderate life. He is also an example of what every christian man should be: generous, thoughtful, unambitious, unworldly, and thankful to his God for the bounty of nature which he enjoys. But, in addition to being these things, Melibee also lives in a community of other men, and this is what makes him essentially different from the other hermits. He has abstracted himself from the world, to be sure, but he has not taken up a life of general seclusion, having only occasional contact with others. Because of this Melibee appears to be associated as much with holiness as with courtesy: in his life with other men his holiness becomes externalized into wise and courteous treatment of them; in private it is the basis of his satisfaction. Like the hermit who cured Timias and Serena, Melibee has the distinction that his actions live up to the advice he gives. He has, as well, the gift of speaking beautifully. Calidore is enthralled when he listens to Melibee's talk, and when he is also able to see Pastorella at the same time, he feels himself partaking in all the pleasures of "eye and eare". Calidore's experience of this prefigures his vision of the Graces, and is no doubt intended as a parallel to, as well as a step towards it, which would explain why Calidore is, on this occasion, only "halfe entraunced":

> Whylest thus he talkt, the knight with greedy eare
> Hong still vpon his melting mouth attent;
> Whose sensefull words empierst his hart so neare,
> That he was rapt with double rauishment,
> Both of his speach that wrought him great
> content,
> And also of the object of his vew,
> On which his hungry eye was alwayes bent;
> That twixt his pleasing tongue and her faire hew,
> He lost himselfe, and like one halfe entraunced
> grew. (VI,ix,26)

Melibee is unique in The Faerie Queene inasmuch as he is the one noble character who dies. His violent death at the hands of the Brigants illustrates the value the world, in its ignorance, places on beauty. To the merchants and brigants, whose business is the acquisition and sale of slaves, Melibee's accomplishments have no value. Pastorella, on the other hand, is valued because of her physical beauty. The judgement of both Pastorella and Melibee is based, however, on only superficial criteria. No account is taken of the spiritual and cosmic values of human life. At the primitive level of trade and acquisition people and things must be either physically useful, or passionately appealing. Melibee, who is neither, has no apparent usefulness to men of worldly affairs. His wisdom, because it is of the soul, and relies upon reflection, is too difficult a commodity for the fast-paced world of material exchange, which in its harshness condemns him to uselessness and to death.

Melibee is akin to other hermits in The Faerie Queene because, like them, he is exemplary of virtue perfected, and thus exhibits both holy and courteous characteristics. He is unlike the others in his being less of a recluse. His virtue thus leans more toward courtesy than holiness, and appropriately so since he is a figure in the Book of Courtesy.

The last hermit-like character of Book VI is Colin Clout, who is usually interpreted as Spenser's persona, or, as Northrop Frye has called him, Spenser's "signature". As in The Shepheardes Calendar and Colin Clout's Come Home Againe, he not only stands for the poet himself, but also represents the universal idea of the poetic artist. The qualities that make Colin similar to the other hermits are his self-imposed abstraction from the world, and denial of worldly desires; his greater perception, and knowledge of things other-worldly; and his ability to express his interpretation of the universal order. The result of Colin's expressions in both words and music is the creation of a magical

atmosphere that raises his listeners' senses to rapture. The degree to which this occurs seems to be dependent on the capacity of those who hear his outpourings to respond to them. Thus the shepherds who hear him, are only compelled to dance, while Calidore, who has greater self-knowledge, experiences sights and sounds beyond the usual range of his senses.

Calidore's experience with Colin is comparable to that of Redcrosse with the hermit Contemplation. By having both these knights arrive at the high point of their quests after a series of accidental, rather than deliberate adventures, Spenser emphasizes the freely given quality of divine grace, and its connexion, therefore, with love. The reception of grace, as was shown in the case of Timias and Serena, is contingent on those needing it being open to its influx. Redcrosse's acceptance of grace leads him towards religion and a spiritual life by helping him overcome his sin of pride, symbolized in the giant, Orgoglio. Calidore receives grace when he falls in love with Pastorella. Although he had "natural grace" in his outward behaviour prior to this, his actions were motivated by chivalry, giving them a schooled rather than a spontaneous quality. Spontaneity only comes to Calidore after he has experienced love, and it is only after this too, that he is able to defeat the Blatant Beast.

Both Redcrosse and Calidore reach their highest points of awareness, and achieve visionary experiences, after they ascend to the summit of a particular hill where each receives final instruction for the perfection of his virtue. The symbolism of the arduous climb to self-discipline and higher values, to a closer relation with God and cosmic harmony, is portrayed with reference to similar achievements in the Bible and pagan mythology. The hill that Redcrosse climbs is known simply as the "Highest Mount", and it is likened in importance to three other famous mountains. The first two of these, Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments, and the Mount of Olives, where Christ

spent the night in prayer prior to his crucifixion, and from which he later made his ascent to heaven, emphasize the piety and solemnity with which Redcrosse's achievement is to be received. In contrast to this, the third reference made is not only pagan, but is also suggestive of jollity, though its importance should be taken no less lightly than that of its counterparts. The Highest Mount is compared, in this last instance, to,

> ...that pleasaunt Mount, that is for ay
> Through famous Poets verse each where renownd,
> On which the thrise three learned Ladies play
> Their heauenly notes, and make full many a louely lay. (I,x,54)

This is Mount Ida, the home of the Graces. Mount Ida itself has no place in the landscape of The Faerie Queene, but it is portrayed in Book VI as Mount Acidale, [as is noted in IIII,v,5].[6] Mount Acidale is made the dwelling place of Venus and the Graces, and its relationship to Mount Ida is emphasized by the two names being etymologically related. The Greek word 'Ida' means a wooded hill, and Acidale is,[7]

> ...an hill plaste in an open plaine,
> That round about was bordered with a wood
> Of matchlesse hight, that seem'd th'earth to disdaine. (VI,x,6)

Spenser's name Acidale takes as its root the latin word acus, a needle, which can also mean, "...the keen attention or aim, of the eye, ear, etc. when fully directed towards any subject".[8] A dale, of course, is a valley, or as it would seem here to be a river valley:

> ...at the foote thereof, a gentle flud
> His siluer waues did softly tumble downe. (VI,x,7)

The joining together of 'aci', and 'dale' in 'Acidale' describes, through

contrast, a place of panoramic view, meaning, on the one hand, the high point of a hill, and a valley on the other: The two components thus complement and emphasize one another in visual effect:

> So pleasauntly the hill with equall hight,
> Did seeme to ouerlooke the lowly vale;
> Therefore it rightly cleeped was mount Acidale. (VI,x,8)

Mount Acidale is thus a wooded hill overlooking a valley, a place from where all that happens around it can be surveyed. Symbolically, it is somewhere above the everyday world, an Ida for immortals, a place, as has been shown that its name suggests, of vision.

The idea of vision unites the points of climax in the adventures of Redcrosse and Calidore. Redcrosse, on the Highest Mount, sees the New Jerusalem: Calidore on Acidale sees the Graces' dance, and the main quality of both these experiences is extra-sensory, resulting from each knight's learning to know himself through the nature of his particular virtue. Both experiences too, are part of the ethic of love and beauty which motivates the whole poem, and both are subtly related to the magic of language. In respect of the former, this may be compared with the ideas expressed in The Symposium, The Courtier, and, The Fowre Hymnes. In respect of the latter, this association would seem to be necessary not only as an aesthetic coup de grace for Spenser, but also as a way of lending authority to the work through the use of syncretism popular at the time.

The ethic of love and beauty derived from Platonism and Neoplatonism is a persistent one in The Faerie Queene, and underlies the meaning of the entire work. Its full realization, resulting in heavenly vision, occurs only in Books I and VI. At this point, it is well to recall one of Spenser's comments in his letter to Raleigh: "In that Faery Queen I meane glory in my generall

entention...," for Plato proposed in The Symposium that glory was an expression of immortality, and therefore of beauty: "...it is the desire for immortal renown and a glorious reputation...that is the incentive of all actions, and the better a man is the stronger the incentive; he is in love with immortality." Both Redcrosse and Calidore are pursuers of glory, and both achieve it by the completion of their quests. And within the context of The Faerie Queene, at least, both can be said to have become immortals. Redcrosse, of course, is also a depiction of St. George, whose immortality was well-established in myth and legend. Calidore has no similar connexion, [unless we wish to think of him as a portrayal of Sir Philip Sidney] but he is Spenser's expression of the ideal (English) courtier. Thus, of all the knights who attempt to subdue the Blatant Beast, he is the only one ever to succeed. It is only at some future date, presumably after Calidore's death that the Beast breaks his chain and escapes:

> Thenceforth more mischiefe and more scath he wrought
> To mortall men, then he had done before;
> Ne euer could by any more be brought
> Into like bands, ne maystred any more:
> Albe that long time after Calidore,
> The good Sir Pelleas him tooke in hand,
> And after him Sir Lamoracke of yore,
> And all his brethren borne in Britaine land;
> Yet none of them could euer bring him into band. (VI,xii,39)

Calidore's achievement, like all great legendary deeds of heroism, is never to be repeated; it becomes, however, an ideal to pursue for those who come after him.

The desire for immortality, as stated, is one of Plato's requirements for the lover's ascent to a vision of absolute beauty. There can be no doubt that Redcrosse and Calidore both see such beauty, for their experience can be shown to comply with Diotima's description of it:

> The man who has been guided thus far in the mysteries of love, and who has directed his thoughts towards examples of beauty in due and orderly succession, will suddenly have revealed to him as he approaches the end of his initiation a beauty whose nature is marvellous indeed, the final goal...of all his previous efforts. This beauty is first of all eternal; it neither comes into being nor passes away, neither waxes nor wanes; next it is not beautiful in part and ugly in part, nor beautiful at one time and ugly at another, nor beautiful in this relation and ugly in that, nor beautiful here and ugly there, as varying according to its beholders; nor again will this beauty appear to him like the beauty of a face or hands or anything else corporeal, or like the beauty of a thought or a science, or like beauty which has its seat in something other than itself, be it a living thing or the earth or the sky or anything else whatever; he will see it as absolute, existing alone with itself, unique, eternal and all other beautiful things partaking of it, yet in such a manner that, while they come into being and pass away, it neither undergoes any increase or diminution nor suffers any change.[9]

Such is the sense of beauty Redcrosse feels as he observes Hierusalem. It is a "goodly Citie",

> Whose wals and towres were builded high and strong
> Of perle and precious stone, that earthly tong
> Cannot describe, nor wit of man can tell;
> Too high a ditty for my simple song;
> The Citie of the great king hight it well,
> Wherein eternall peace and happiness doth dwell. (I,x,55)

Although the beauty of Hierusalem is far beyond anything the Redcrosse Knight has ever seen, he tries to describe it as best he can:

> Till now, said then the knight, I weened well,
> That great Cleopolis, where I haue beene,
> In which that fairest Faerie Queene doth dwell,
> The fairest Citie was, that might be seene;
> And that bright towre all built of christall cleene,
> Panthea, seemd the brightest thing, that was:
> But now by proofe all otherwise I weene;
> For this great Citie that does far surpas,
> And this bright Angels towre quite dims that towre of glas. (I,x,58)

This description of the New Jerusalem is, however, no real description, for just as in the Hymne of Heavenly Beauty, no description of it is possible. But there can be no mistaking the fact that what he sees is unique and eternal, and that "...all other beautiful things partake of it." By comparing Hierusalem with the Pantheon, for example, Spenser wishes to show the likeness--and the unlikeness--of the two. The heavenly city is eternally beautiful, while the Pantheon is eternal only in its beauty, the form of which could be destroyed. In calling the Pantheon a "towre of glas", Spenser is saying that it is at once a reflection of its heavenly counterpart, in the sense that "glas" also means 'mirror', but it is also greatly inferior to it, as glass is inferior to crystal.

Calidore's sight of the Graces' dance, too, can certainly be regarded as visionary in the sense that Plato describes. When this event occurs, Calidore, like Redcrosse, has come to the end of his "initiation" into a state of greater awareness. The vision comes upon him without expectation, after the manner of Diotima's description, and the dance itself is no less unique, and no less eternal in its symbolism than the New Jerusalem. The arrangement of the dance in a ring is probably the most obvious of eternal symbols. Spenser likens it to Ariadne's crown, the mythological name for the Corona Borealis, the symbol of Bachus's love for Ariadne raised to heavenly and immortal status.[10] The crown is described as being at the centre of the great circle of the heavens, just as the three Graces, linked arm in arm, are at the centre of the many maidens who dance with them:

> Being now placed in the firmament,
> Through the bright heauen doth her beams display,
> And is vnto the starres an ornament,
> Which round about her moue in order excellent. (VI,x,13)

This description, which comes into Calidore's imagination as he watches the

dance, reinforces the theme of the cosmic order, and hence of the love that motivates that order. The reference also enhances the visionary aspect of the scene, extending the view from Acidale, which is itself a place of special quality and beauty, a step further to include the heavens, as well as the landscape, within its panorama. With the emphasis placed upon the heavens' "order excellent", the overall effect of the description is to suggest eternal beauty and harmony. The combination of these ideas with love is completed by the image of the Graces themselves, the circular aspect of their triple rhythm of giving, receiving and returning, and their association with Venus:

> Those were the Graces, daughters of delight,
> Handmaides of Venus, which are wont to haunt
> Vpon this hill, and daunce there day and night:
> Those three to men all gifts of grace do graunt,
> And all, that Venus in her selfe doth vaunt,
> Is borrowed of them. (VI,x,15)

The goddess of love is not personally present at the event, but she is represented by Rosalind, Colin Clout's object of unrequited love, and the source of his poetic inspiration. By including this in the incident, Spenser suggests the idea that art, in this case poetry, is an expression of the beauty of the cosmic order, since it derives from love. As he interprets the Graces' dance for Calidore, in song and in words, Colin Clout takes on the roles of both poet and hermit. The effect of this is to make the art of language, for which Colin stands, rise above the level of practical advice, as in the case of the other hermits we have seen, to become a means of participation in the mysterious and the miraculous. The precondition for such participation, as shown in the experience of Calidore, is the quality of being properly disposed towards love.

The relationship of love to beauty expressed here, as in The Fowre Hymnes, and in Plato and Castiglione, is that of continuous exchange; beauty flows

from love and thence returns ad infinitum. On Mount Acidale, Calidore, like the Redcrosse Knight on the Highest Mount, comes to witness eternal beauty as it exists both in the vision he sees, and in himself. The same experience is described by Castiglione, who urges his "happy lover" to follow,...the high-way after his guide, that leadeth him to the point of true happinesse:"

> Therefore the soule ridde of vices,
> purged with the studies of true Philosophie,
> Occupied in spiritual and excercized in
> matters of understanding, turning her to
> the beholding of her own substance,
> as it were raised out of a most deepe ,
> sleepe, openeth the eyes that all men have,
> and few occupie, and seeth in her
> selfe a shining beam of that light,
> which is the true image of the Angelicke
> beauty pertened with her, where of she also
> partneth with the body of a feeble shadow.[11]

The ascent of the "stayre of love" portrayed in the experiences of Calidore and Redcrosse does much to suggest a close affinity between Books I and VI of The Faerie Queene. Other factors contributing to this idea are the parallel nature of the virtues these knights pursue and represent, the apparent presence of the one virtue in the other, and an emphasis on skills of language, especially by hermits, and hermit-like characters, who give advice for the pursuit of virtue. Undoubtedly the achievement of cosmic vision is the climax of both books, yet there remains a further accomplishment in each which contributes to their similarity. This, of course, is the subjugation of the monsters who are symbolic of the forces opposing each knight's virtue.

Books I and VI are the only two that contain monsters whom their heroes must subdue. Although these monsters themselves are not equatable, they do have many similarities that would seem to suggest a strong relationship between the two books in which they appear. The Dragon of Book I has his origins in biblical stories, as well as in English legend. In defeating him

Redcrosse lives up to the legend of St. George and the dragon, and symbolically, to the idea of the conquest of Satan through holiness. As the patron saint of England, Redcrosse thus becomes the example for all Englishmen to follow a religious life. Calidore, on the other hand, is not a saint, but as an example of the courteous man, his capture of the Blatant Beast is no less important to the idea of Courtesy than is Redcrosse's defeat of the dragon to Holinesse. Unlike Redcrosse's Dragon, the Blatant Beast, though he is said to be descended from various monsters in Greek mythology, is unique to The Faerie Queene. He shares, however, some similarities with the Dragon that indicate Spenser intended his readers to make a connexion between the two. It is indeed difficult for any reader not to think of the Dragon when he encounters the Blatant Beast. A look at the similarities the two monsters share will prove useful in understanding the overall purpose of such a connexion.

When Una and Redcrosse encounter the Dragon, and similarly when Artegall meets the Blatant Beast, the quality they first notice about these monsters is the great power of their voices. The Dragon is heard to make "...a roaring hideous sound/that all the air with terrour filled wide," (I,xi,4) while the Blatant Beast barks so loud, "that all the woods and rockes.../Began to tremble with dismay," (V,xii,41). It is significant that Spenser has first chosen to emphasize this quality of both beasts because it immediately identifies them as enemies of orderly speech and agents of chaos. Indeed, both use, or have used speech in order to promote disharmony. The Blatant Beast speaks "...licentious words, and hatefull things/Of good and bad alike, of low and hie," (VI,xii,28) while the Dragon reputedly used his tongue to bring about the Fall of Man, disrupting the original harmony of the cosmos (I,xi,47). Some other qualities both monsters have in common are as follows: both are, not surprisingly, of dark supernatural origin: the Dragon is a "hell bred beast" (I,xi,40), and the Blatant Beast is "bred of hellish race", being the offspring

of Cerberus and Chimaera, (VI,i,8). Among the Beast's ancestors too, are Echidna, a monster who is half-woman and half-dragon, and Typhaon, the giant who fathered Cerberus, (VI,vi,10). Besides being despoilers, ravaging all good order in the world, the two creatures are also oppressors of mankind. The Dragon usurps Una's father's Kingdom, and no man is exempt from the Blatant Beast's slanders. The monsters' fearsomeness is increased by the fact that both are full of anger and poison. The Beast is filled with "bitter rage and contention", (VI,xii,41) and has "...tongues of Serpents with three forked stings,/that spat out poyson and gore bloudy gere," (VI,xii,28): while the Dragon is said to be "...swolne with wrath and poyson, and with bloudy gore," (I,xi,8). But the single most impressive feature that the Beast and Dragon share is the power of their mouths and teeth. Both have huge jaws, each with three rows of iron teeth, and mouths that are compared to the mouth of hell, (I,xi,12-13; VI,xii,26). The mouths of the two monsters are also related inasmuch as through them, both are eventually brought in check. The Blatant Beast is muzzled and silenced; the Dragon is slain by stabbing in the mouth. Each is thus contained by being defeated in his most deadly part. That this should be the mouth is significant, for the symbolism may be related to the theme of the power of speech and words to which Spenser gives so much weight. This is most obvious in the case of the Blatant Beast, for the bulk of his power is in his many tongues. But since the Dragon, as we have seen, may be equated with Satan, the "father of lies", it is also appropriate that Redcrosse, who has many lies to contend with during his quest for holiness, should defeat him, the source of all falsehood.[12] The association of the two monsters with the power of speech theme also initiates one further comparison, which will serve to make clear that these arguments are related to the Renaissance-Neoplatonist themes of love, beauty and cosmic harmony: this comparison is between the two extremes Spenser presents that oppose and support that theme.

On the one hand we have the Dragon and the Blatant Beast, whose utterances are all noise, chaos and destructiveness, and on the other we have the magical qualities of Colin Clout's songs which promote love, beauty, and participation in an eternal cosmic harmony.

In making these comparisons between Books I and VI of The Faerie Queene, I have attempted to show that a great many similarities exist between Spenser's presentations of holiness and courtesy. These virtues, it would seem, are reflective of one another, the one being spiritual in its aspirations, the other earthly and social. The man who practises the disciplines that lead to holiness, as has been shown by the various hermit-like characters, is also necessarily courteous. Since this is so, it would seem reasonable to propose that the opposite is also true, at least in essence. The difference lies in that between the saint and the courteous man: Spenser is saying that only the few can become saints, but those who would learn to appreciate the virtues of a saint, and who would learn to appreciate also their own nature, and hence that of their fellow-man, can, like Calidore, glimpse the heavenly beauty of the Creator's love. The ideas of holiness in courtesy, and vice versa, exist, therefore, in complement to each other, and because of this it can be said that The Faerie Queene begins and ends with a consistent theme. The work begins with the underlying theme of courtesy in its intent to "fashion a gentleman", and proceeds from holiness through the various other virtues to courtesy itself. The answer to the question 'to where does courtesy proceed?' is that it can lead in only one direction, and that is to holiness. Of course the reader does not proceed to turn back to Book I immediately he has finished with the Book of Courtesy, but the ideas expressed in that book would seem to lead to no other place. The development of the work's theme may thus be considered circular, for its first and final representations of virtue lead to and from each other, meeting at their high-points in what is essentially the same place. This idea

of circularity is repeatedly emphasized in the last book, and there most especially in the Dance of the Graces. The work itself thus embodies in its structure the very process of eternal exchange that the circle of the Graces represents. The Faerie Queene is not then, as the two appended Cantos of Mutabilitie might lead one to think, concerned mainly with that subject. Its changes, on the contrary, represent the ebb and flow of the eternal and not of the mortal world. The theme of cosmic love and beauty present in Books I and VI is not compatible with the idea of mutability, for as Plato has said, it "...is first of all eternal; it neither comes into being nor passes away, neither waxes nor wanes...", and this same idea of beauty and immortality is that which exists in the poetic imagination. It is this, not Rosalind herself, for which Colin pines away in The Shepheardes Calendar, and it is this that makes The Faerie Queene, despite its imperfections, and likewise "cutting off through hasty accidents", like the Epithalamion, another "endlesse moniment" against time.

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Chapter One

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Chapter Two

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[8]Martha Craig, "The Secret Wit of Spenser's Language", Elizabethan Poetry: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. Paul J. Alpers (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 447-472; rpt. Essential Articles: Edmund Spenser, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Hamden: Archon Books, 1972), p. 329: "Saint George...was found where a faerie left him in the furrow of a field...'Georgos' is derived from the Greek term for plowman [sic] as 'Adam' was derived from the Hebrew term for earth." By analogy with Spenser's description of courtesy as being like a seed, Calidore, like George (Redcrosse) is the embodiment of that seed, and an exemplary figure to his countrymen.

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[21]William Fenn De Moss, Variorum VI, p. 326.

[22]B.E.C. Davis, Variorum VI, p. 346.

[23]Elizabeth McCaffery, "Allegory in The Shepheardes Calendar", English Literary History, Vol. 36 (1969), pp. 88-109 © The Johns Hopkins Press; rpt. ed. Hamilton, Essential Articles, pp. 565-567.

Chapter Three

[1]Sir Philip Sidney, Complete Works (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), p. 11.

[2]Brewer's Dictionary: "It was on the Latium hills that the ancient Latins raised their cors or cohors, small enclosures with hurdles for sheep, etc. Subsequently as many men as could be cooped or folded together were called a cohort. The cattle yard, being the nucleus of the farm became the centre of a lot of farm cottages, then a hamlet, town, fortified place, and lastly a royal residence."

[3]Northrop Frye, "The Structure of Imagery in The Faerie Queene", Essential Articles, ed. Hamilton, p. 170.

[4]J.E. Whitney, Variorum I, p. 249.

[5]"thewes": manners, Oxford Spenser, glossary.

[6]Latin, sponte: "of one's own accord".

[7]On this occasion it is mentioned that Venus has a

> ...secret bowre
> On Acidalian Mount, where many an howre
> She with the pleasant Graces wont to play.

[8]Robert Graves, The Greek Myths, 2 Vols. (London: Pelican Books, 1955), Vol. 2, p. 259.

[9]Oxford English Dictionary, Acus, aci-

[10]Symposium, pp. 93-94.

[11]Graves, Greek Myths, Vol. 1, p. 109, Note 8. Spenser's reference to Theseus here is incorrect. By this time Theseus had deserted Ariadne. It was Bachus (or Dionysus) who married her and raised corona to the heavens as an act of love. See also A.C. Hamilton, ed., The Faerie Queene (London & New York: Longman, 1977).

[12]Castiglione, Courtier, p. 318.

[13]John 8, 44: "When he tells a lie he is speaking his own language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." (Oxford and Cambridge: The New English Bible, University Presses, 1970). Alternately: "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it." (The Holy Bible, Authorized Version, 1611).

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