

Spenser's Twelve Moral Virtues "According to Aristotle". (Continued)

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SPENSER'S TWELVE MORAL VIRTUES "ACCORDING TO ARISTOTLE"

An article by Ambassador Jusserand, entitled "Spenser's 'Twelve Private Morall Vertues as Aristotle hath Devised,'" *Modern Philology*, January, 1906, is my apology for writing. M. Jusserand undertakes to prove that Spenser's solemn statement concerning the substance of the whole *Faerie Queene*, made to the poet's friend and patron Sir Walter Raleigh, at Raleigh's request as Jusserand thinks, is "misleading, every word of it." Jusserand says:

Spenser's statement [in the letter to Raleigh] that he intends "to portraict in Arthur, before he was king, the image of a brave knight, perfected in the twelve private morall vertues as Aristotle hath devised" is misleading, every word of it. There is no such definite list; Aristotle's number is not twelve, and the virtues he studies are far from being the same as those forming the basis of the *Faerie Queene*.¹

That Jusserand's paper has not been without its influence was shown in a recent article by Professor Erskine, of Columbia University. Although Professor Erskine points out one false step in Jusserand's argument, he accepts his conclusion. In discussing "The Virtue of Friendship in the *Faerie Queene*," *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, XXIII (1915), 831-50, Professor Erskine asks, "Had Spenser read Montaigne, or Plutarch, or Cicero's *On Friendship*, or Aristotle's *Ethics*?" Replying to his own question, he says, "He may have read them all, though M. Jusserand has taught us to suspect the Aristotle." Again, Erskine speaks of Jusserand's "having shown that Spenser did not get his list of virtues from Aristotle."

It is the purpose of the present paper to show that not only are Jusserand's arguments faulty, but his conclusion is incorrect. Jusserand makes three main arguments: first, that Spenser's and Aristotle's lists of virtues are not the same in number; second, that they are quite unlike in nature; and, third, that Spenser actually derived his virtues, and his ideas concerning a list of twelve virtues,

¹ *Modern Philology*, III, 376.

from Lodowick Bryskett, who in his *Discourse of Civil Life* includes a discussion of moral virtues, in which the number twelve is mentioned.

I shall reply to these three main arguments in the order in which I have stated them.

The first of Jusserand's three main arguments, that Spenser's and Aristotle's lists of virtues are not the same in number, falls into three subdivisions or arguments: first, that "Aristotle draws nowhere any dogmatic list of virtues;" second, that it is difficult to know how to count Aristotle's virtues; and, third, that "Aristotle's number is not twelve," for, count his virtues as you will, you cannot get the number twelve. I take up the last subdivision first.

Jusserand finds that nine of Aristotle's virtues are certainly virtues, but that there is some doubt concerning the remaining four: Temperance, or Self-control; Shame, or Modesty; Friendship; and Justice.¹ Jusserand says:

If we include both [Temperance and Modesty] we have a total of eleven; if we exclude both, a total of nine; if we admit Self-control alone, a total of ten. Adding arbitrarily Justice and Friendship, or only one of them . . . we should have a total varying from ten to *thirteen*,² a total of twelve being perhaps the most arbitrary of all and the most difficult to reach.³

Now, it should be noted at the outset that a total of thirteen is exactly what we want. Spenser's total is not twelve. It is thirteen. In his letter to Raleigh, only a short distance from the assertion which Jusserand undertakes to disprove, Spenser makes the following statement:

In the person of Prince Arthure I sette forth *magnificence*⁴ in particular, which vertue for that (according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the perfection of all the rest, and conteineth in it them all, therefore, in the whole course I mention the deedes of Arthure applyable to that vertue, which I write of in that booke. But of the *xii. other vertues*,⁴ I make *xii. other knights* the patrones, for the more variety of the history.

¹ The fact that Spenser wrote a Book on each of these four virtues—see *Faerie Queene*, Books II, III, IV, and V—might be expected to throw some light on whether Spenser counted them as virtues or not.

Hereafter references to book, canto, and stanza of the *Faerie Queene* are given without the title of the epic.

² Italics mine.

³ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 374-75.

⁴ Italics mine

So much for Jusserand's point that "Aristotle's number is not twelve." Neither is Spenser's. We may now proceed to find what is the nature of Aristotle's list of virtues, how Aristotle's virtues are to be counted, and how Spenser got his number of virtues.

In Book II, chap. vii, of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle discusses a list of moral virtues or qualities essential to the good man. They are exactly twelve in number: (1) Courage, (2) Temperance, or Self-control, (3) Liberality, (4) Magnificence, (5) Highmindedness, (6) the mean concerning Ambition, (7) Gentleness, or Mansuetude, (8) Truthfulness, (9) Wittiness, or Jocularly, (10) Friendliness, or Courtesy, (11) Modesty, or Shame, and (12) Righteous Indignation. Concerning this discussion Aristotle says: "For the present we are giving only a rough and summary account [of the virtues], and that is sufficient for our purpose; we will hereafter determine their character more exactly."¹ We are promised, then, a careful discussion of the moral virtues "hereafter." In Book III, chaps. ix ff., Book IV, and Book V, Aristotle keeps his word. Moreover, an introductory sentence and a concluding one mark the limits of this discussion of the moral virtues as definitely as two milestones. The first two sentences of III, ix, are as follows: "Let us then resume our consideration of the several virtues and discuss their nature, the subjects with which they deal, and the way in which they deal with them. *In so doing we shall ascertain their number.*"² The last sentence in Book V unmistakably closes the list of moral virtues: "This then may be taken as a sufficient description of Justice, and the other moral virtues." Between these two absolutely definite limits, Aristotle discusses exactly twelve good qualities or desirable means. In this careful consideration of the moral virtues, the same good qualities, or desirable means, are listed as in the less careful discussion which precedes it, with one exception: in the "rough and summary account" Righteous Indignation is included. We know from the *Rhetoric* that Aristotle decided that his discussion of this quality was false, as Envy and Malice, which he gave as its extremes, are not opposites, but compatible and coexistent.³ In his second

¹ My quotations are from the translation by J. E. C. Weldon.

² Italics mine.

³ See Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, Book II, chap. ix.

discussion of the moral virtues, which is to “determine their character more exactly” and “ascertain their number,” he omits Righteous Indignation and adds Justice, leaving the number unchanged. Surely there is enough here to suggest the number twelve if any such suggestion were needed.

But Jusserand has difficulty in totalizing Aristotle’s virtues, for he finds it hard to decide which ones are to be counted. In the first place, he contends that “Some of his virtues are only a branch or development of another virtue. . . . Magnificence is only the same as [Liberality], but practiced by the very rich, instead of by the moderately rich, man.”¹ Now it is plain that Aristotle’s Magnificence and Liberality are not the same. It would be strange indeed if they were, since Aristotle treats them as two separate virtues. They are much the same in principle, as both imply being free in giving and spending. But practically they are very different. Any one who gives to the right cause, at the right time, in the right manner, and to the right amount, considering the means of the giver, and who takes from right sources, is liberal.² He has to avoid the extremes of illiberality and prodigality. The magnificent man, on the other hand, must avoid the extremes of meanness and vulgar display, or bad taste. He must be a kind of artist. “The magnificent man,” says Aristotle, “is like a connoisseur in art; he has the faculty of perceiving what is suitable, and of spending large sums of money with good taste. . . . With equal expenditure he will make the result more magnificent.”³ And, as we shall see later, Magnificence includes far more than this. The poor widow who gave the mites was liberal; but the problems she had to solve in being so were very different from those of a person who is in a position to practice the virtue of Magnificence and wishes to do so.

Again, Jusserand objects, “Others . . . are treated of quite apart, at great length; but it is not clear whether, if one wanted to do what Aristotle neglected to perform—that is, to tabulate his moral virtues—these should, or should not, be admitted in the list. Such is the case with Justice. . . . Such is the case also with

¹ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 374–75.

² *Nicomachean Ethics*, IV, i–iii; II, vii.

³ *Ibid.*, IV, iv–v; II, vii; *Magna Moralia*, I, 26; and *Ethica Eudemia*, III, vi.

Friendship. . . . Aristotle has treated them apart, and shown that *he* did not include them in his regular count."¹

Jusserand's assertion that Aristotle treated Justice apart from the other moral virtues is a misinterpretation. Justice is not separated from the preceding discussion in Books III and IV; on the contrary, it is in the closest possible way connected with it. In Book IV, chap. xiii, while discussing Truthfulness, Aristotle says: "We are not speaking of one who is truthful in legal covenants, or of all such matters as lie within the domain of justice and injustice, for these would be matters belonging to a different virtue." Again, the last sentence in Book IV is as follows: "But let us now proceed to consider Justice." Hence, one can no more draw a line between Books IV and V than between Books III and IV. Finally, the sentence which so clearly and definitely closes the discussion of the moral virtues is, as we have already seen, the last sentence in Book V: "This then may be taken as a sufficient description of *Justice*, and the *other moral virtues*." One virtue, Friendship, Aristotle does treat "apart at great length." According to Jusserand its "admission into [Aristotle's] treatise is justified, not to say excused, on the plea that it is either a virtue or related to virtue, and that it is most necessary in life."² But it could hardly need a better justification.

Finally Jusserand points out: "Some, admitted into the class at one part of the work, are described elsewhere as doubtfully belonging to it. . . . There is also a chapter on Shame (*αἰδώς*, Lat. *verecundia*), though 'it is not correct to call it a virtue.' But 'neither is Self-control,' adds Aristotle in the same chapter."³ Thus Jusserand makes much of showing that Aristotle is sometimes uncertain whether a given one of his desirable means is a virtue or not—that is, whether or not it comes under a technical definition of virtue. And then, strangely enough, he expects Spenser to be severely technical when his master has not been. But Aristotle tells us plainly in Book I, chap. i, of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, and again in Book II, chap. ii, that in a discussion on ethics, scientific exactitude is impossible. He answers Jusserand's objections some centuries

¹ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 374–75.

² *Ibid.*, p. 374.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 374–75.

before they were made. He says: "An educated person will expect accuracy in each subject only so far as the nature of the subject allows."¹ Jusserand overlooks the important fact that both Aristotle and Spenser are eminently practical in their aims. In Book II, chap. ii, Aristotle says: "Our present study is not, like other studies, purely speculative in its intention; for the object of our inquiry is not to know the nature of virtue but to become ourselves virtuous, as that is the sole benefit which it conveys." Spenser's statement to Raleigh of the object he had in writing the *Faerie Queene* shows the practical nature of that work: "The general end therefore of all the book is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline."² With such a purpose, is it likely that Spenser would stop to quibble over whether such a quality as Temperance, for example, does or does not come under a technical definition of virtue? What would his gentleman be without it? Is it not reasonable that, in attempting to follow Aristotle, Spenser would take all of Aristotle's desirable means or good qualities? Whether certain of them come under a technical definition of virtue or not, they are virtues in any practical sense. And Aristotle himself regarded them as such, as is shown by the fact that he discussed them as virtues. Besides, they are absolutely necessary to a system which is to "fashion a gentleman or noble person" not only in "vertuous," but also in "gentle," discipline.

This brings us to a very simple explanation of how Spenser got his number of virtues. He simply took all of Aristotle's desirable means, or qualities essential to the good man. Now Aristotle discussed, all told, thirteen good qualities, or desirable means, as Jusserand himself observes. One of these, as Jusserand also observes, is Magnificence. Magnificence, as we saw, Spenser gives to Arthur, leaving exactly twelve others. Clearly, if one of Aristotle's virtues contains all the others, his virtues might properly be divided into "the twelve" and the *one* which includes the *twelve*.

So much for the number of Spenser's and Aristotle's virtues. We come now to Jusserand's argument that "the nature of the virtues considered by Spenser matches the Aristotelian selection

¹ *N. Eth.*, I, i.

² Spenser's Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, included in all editions of the *Faerie Queene*.

scarcely better than their number"¹—a proposition which to Jusserand means that the two do not match at all.

Before discussing the nature of Spenser's virtues, it will be necessary to clear the ground somewhat, by saying a word about how the *Faerie Queene* is to be interpreted. There is a notion that Spenser's episodes are unimportant. For example, Jusserand disposes of the lesson of one of Spenser's great cantos by saying, "It is only incidentally dwelt upon, forming the episode of Guyon's visit to Medina, Bk. II, c. 2."² And in this attitude toward the episodes Jusserand is by no means alone. Any notion that whatever is not a part of Spenser's main plot can have little to do with his meaning is based upon a misconception of the fundamental structure of Spenser's great poem. An episode filling one of Spenser's cantos—a great poem in itself—such as the one in which Guyon is taken by his Palmer (Reason or Prudence) to the house of Medina (the Mean), where the Knight of Temperance learns the fundamental conception of true Temperance, cannot be considered unimportant. Such an episode may be "only incidental" to some of the points named in Spenser's letter to Raleigh, in which the author undertakes to state the "general intention" and to give something of the plot and plan of more than half a million words, and to propose and name the contents of a second poem, which would probably³ have contained another half million words, all in a four-page letter—a summary which disposes of the whole of the Book on Temperance in six lines. But in Spenser's development of any given virtue, such an episode is of very great importance.

It is mainly by means of the episodes that Spenser's discussion of the virtues is carried on. This fact will become clear as we proceed. We may note here, however, Spenser's direct testimony that his episodes are organic. In the Book on Courtesy, at the end of a three-canto episode showing Calidore's Courtesy among the lowly, Spenser makes it unmistakably clear that each episode in the *Faerie*

¹ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 375.

² *Ibid.*, p. 381 and note.

³ It will be observed that Spenser does not say how many Books will be in the second part; he speaks only of "these first twelve bookes" and of "the other part." Nor does he give the number of the political virtues. Aristotle gives nowhere a list of the political virtues.

Queene represents some phase of the virtue under discussion; that the author "never is astray."¹ Again, in the Book on Justice, in introducing the account of the spousal of Florimel, Spenser assures us that he is admitting to the poem nothing save what "with this present treatise doth agree, True vertue to advance."² And the episode turns out to be a study in just distribution of honors, which according to Aristotle is the essence of Justice.³

Moreover, Spenser does not intend that his readers shall misunderstand him. "By certaine signes here set in sundry place,"⁴ he aims to see to it that the *reader* "never is astray." And among the most helpful of these "signes" are the very illuminating comments of the author, oftenest at the beginning, but sometimes in the middle of a canto.⁵ No one will need to be reminded of the importance of Spenser's arguments to the cantos and his proems to the books. Sometimes a few lines spoken by one of the characters throw great light on the allegory of the poem.⁶ Professor Greene has truly remarked, "Only a man of abundant leisure can read the [*Faerie Queene*] as Spenser would have it read."⁷ To get the meaning, one must watch not only the enveloping plot and the episodes, but also every comment, every speech, every line, every word, and, frequently, in the case of proper names, every syllable. He must read the poem intensively—minutely:

ne let him then admire,
But yield his sence to be too blunt and bace,
That no'te without an hound fine footing trace.⁴

So much for the manner in which Spenser is to be interpreted. Let us now examine, in the case of each of the six virtues developed by Spenser, Jusserand's argument that Spenser's and Aristotle's virtues are unlike in nature.

¹ VI, xii, 1-2. Cf. I, vii, 50; II, xii, 1; III, vi, 52; VI, iii, 25; VI, ix, 1.

² V, iii, 3.

³ With this canto of Spenser's Book on Justice, cf. *N. Eth.*, V, ii, and V, iv, and *Politics*, II, vii. With Braggadocchio cf. Achilles' Coward, *Politics*, II, vii.

⁴ Book II, Proem, stanza 4.

⁵ See I, viii, 1, or I, x, 1. Other examples will be pointed out later.

⁶ See, for example, I, viii, 49.

⁷ H. L. Greene, "Allegory in Spenser, Bunyan, and Swift," *Pub. Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, IV (1889), 181.

Concerning the subject of Spenser's first Book, Jusserand says: "Holiness is certainly not borrowed from Aristotle's series of moral virtues."¹ This is mere assertion, not argument. Possibly an argument is thought to lie in a supposed inconsistency between "holiness" and "moral virtues;" but if so, it should be remembered that Spenser certainly classed holiness as a moral virtue, as is shown not only by the letter to Raleigh but also by the "XII. Morall vertues" of the title page of the *Faerie Queene*.

Again, Jusserand says that Spenser's reference to the twelve moral virtues of Aristotle was "a mere afterthought, probably, imagined after part of the poem had been written; for Spenser begins with the virtue of Holiness, conspicuously absent as we saw from Aristotle's enumeration," etc.² Surely it is incredible that Spenser should contemplate a great epic for years (see Spenser's letter to Harvey under date of 1580) and finally write the forty-five thousand words of the Book on Holiness without even a general notion of the plot and purpose of his poem. Besides, the fact that the machinery of the court of Gloriana and of the quests is introduced at the very beginning of Book I³ indicates that the plan of the letter to Raleigh was not an "afterthought." But even if we were to admit that the reference to Aristotle was an afterthought, conceived after the first Book was written, it would have to fit, at least approximately. And Book I, Holiness, was one of the three which accompanied the letter to Raleigh. How could Spenser say that each of the twelve Books of the *Faerie Queene* would contain one of Aristotle's twelve moral virtues, "of which these three bookes contayn three,"⁴ when the first of the three had nothing whatever to do with Aristotle? Could he expect to deceive Raleigh, Sidney, Elizabeth, and the rest of the brilliant circle for whom he wrote?

Obviously Jusserand misunderstands, or has forgotten, the meaning of Aristotle's virtue of Highmindedness, or Magnanimity; for he sees in it only "a kind of ornament applicable to all the virtues."⁵ It is well known that this virtue represents Aristotle's conception of

¹ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 376.

² *Ibid.*, p. 381.

³ I, i. See also canto vii, stanza 46.

⁴ Letter to Raleigh.

⁵ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 382.

absolute moral perfection. "The highminded man," says Aristotle, "seems to be one who thinks himself worthy of great things, and who is worthy of them. For he who thinks himself worthy of great things without being so is foolish, and no virtuous person is foolish or absurd." "There will be one particular object of his interest . . . honor." "Highmindedness, then, has to do with honor on a great scale." "The highminded man, as being worthy of the highest things, will be in the highest degree good." "It seems that the highminded man possesses such greatness as belongs to every virtue." "It seems that Highmindedness is, as it were, the crown of the virtues, as it enhances them and cannot exist apart from them." Finally, the following sentence shows Aristotle's exalted conception of Highmindedness: "He [the highminded man] will be only moderately pleased at great honors conferred upon him by virtuous people, as feeling that he obtains what is naturally his due or even less than his due; for it would be impossible to devise an honor that should be proportionate to perfect virtue."¹

But is the Knight of Holiness Aristotle's highminded man? Some change in the conception of the Red Cross Knight was, of course, necessary on account of the fact that he was a Christian hero. So far as possible, however, Spenser has made him conform to Aristotle's conception of Highmindedness. First, he is characterized by a high opinion of himself. For proof of his amazing self-confidence we have not only Spenser's letter to Raleigh, but also the *Faerie Queene* itself. "A tall clownishe younge man" who has never worn armor,² he enters the court of great Gloriana,

Where noblest knights were to be found on earth,³

and to the great wonder of the Queen and the disappointment and mortification of Una, whom he proposes to help, demands the greatest of all quests, the establishment of Truth—true Christianity—and the defeat of Error and the Devil, a quest so difficult that, although great knights from all over the world have tried it, none has been able to fulfil it.⁴ Assuredly he thinks himself worthy of great things. But he not only *thinks* himself worthy; he *is* worthy—as is abundantly proved, not alone by his ability to wear the Christian armor, which

¹ For Aristotle's discussion of Highmindedness see *Nicomachean Ethics*, IV, vii ff.

² Letter to Raleigh and *F. Q.*, I, i, 1.

³ I, iii, 28.

⁴ I, vii, 45.

is the test,¹ nor by Una's later testimony concerning his great work,² but also by his final triumph over all enemies including the Dragon of Evil.³ In the second place, his chief thought is the winning of great earthly honor. His "noble heart" is "with child of glorious great intent" and

Can never rest, untill it forth have brought
Th' eternall brood of glorie excellent.⁴

"All for prayse and honour he did fight."⁵ From first to last the Knight of Holiness is in pursuit of honor. He has come to Faerie Court in the first place to seek for fame:

prickt with courage, and thy forces pryde,
To Faery court thou cam'st to seeke for fame.⁶

Upon our first introduction to him, at the beginning of the *Faerie Queene*, we are told:

Upon a great adventure he was bond,
That greatest Gloriana to him gave,
That greatest Glorious Queene of Faerie lond,
To winne him worship, and her grace to have,
*Which of all earthly things he most did crave.*⁷

And when he appears in the third Book, after he has attained perfect Holiness, his character in this respect is unchanged:

Then he forth on his journey did proceede,
To seeke adventures, which mote him befall,
And win him worship through his warlike deed,
*Which alwayes of his paines he made the chiefest meed.*⁸

Nor does the Red Cross Knight seek merely great honor; he seeks the greatest of all earthly honor. Una tells him that his fight with the Dragon of Evil

shall ye evermore renowned make,
*Above all knights on earth, that batteill undertake.*⁹

¹ Letter to Raleigh.

⁴ I, v, 1.

² I, vii, 47-49.

⁵ I, v, 7.

³ I, xi.

⁶ I, x, 66.

⁷ I, i, 3. Italics in quotations from Spenser are all mine. I quote from Smith and de Selincourt's *Poetical Works of Spenser*, Oxford, 1912, but I have disregarded the italicization of proper names and followed modern usage in regard to *u*, *v*, and *j*.

⁸ III, iv, 4.

⁹ I, xi, 2.

And Heavenly Contemplation has already told him what this great honor is to be. The knight is to be Saint George, famous throughout Europe as a military saint, and the patron saint of England:

For thou emongst those Saints, whom thou doest see,
Shalt be a Saint, and thine owne nations frend
And Patrone: thou Saint George shalt called bee,
Saint George of mery England, the signe of victoree.¹

Finally, that the Red Cross Knight's Highmindedness may be complete and convincing in Spenser's and Aristotle's² view, Heavenly Contemplation explains that the knight is of high birth—

thou springst from ancient race
Of Saxon kings.³

And we know that it is by deliberate plan, not by accident, that Spenser makes the Red Cross Knight's one great passion love of honor. Even Heavenly Contemplation sanctions the knight's pursuit of earthly fame.⁴ And the poet, in his own person—

That I this man of God his godly armes may blaze⁵—

prays aid of

The Nourse of time, and everlasting fame
That warlike hands ennoblest with immortal name.⁶

The moral perfection which the knight attains is, no doubt, to be expected:

from the first unto the last degree,
His mortall life he learned had to frame
In holy righteousnesse, without rebuke or blame.⁷

It is not to be overlooked that all of Spenser's great knights are characterized by Highmindedness, as they are by all of the other moral virtues. This is in accordance with Aristotle's tendency to make any given virtue include all the others, and his teaching that "Neither greatness nor highmindedness is possible without complete virtue."⁸ But although, on account of this close relation between the virtues, such great knights as Guyon and Artegall are characterized by Highmindedness, none of Spenser's knights, except possibly

¹ I, x, 61.

² This statement is warranted not only by Aristotle's and Spenser's strong feeling of aristocracy, but also by Aristotle's discussion of Highmindedness in *N. Eth.*, IV, viii.

³ I, x, 65.

⁶ I, xi, 5.

⁴ I, x, 59, 60, and 62.

⁷ I, x, 45.

⁵ I, xi, 7.

⁸ *N. Eth.*, IV, viii.

the all-perfect Arthur, can compare in Highmindedness with the Knight of Holiness. That especial emphasis should be laid on Arthur's Highmindedness would naturally result not only from the close relation between the virtues, but also from Arthur's moral perfection. But it is in Book I, where Arthur tells his dream of glory, that we are most impressed with his Highmindedness. And according to Spenser's plan in the letter to Raleigh, Arthur must, in the Book on Holiness, represent the same virtue as the Knight of Holiness: "In the whole course I mention the deedes of Arthure applyable to that vertue, which I write of in that booke." Consequently, if Arthur represents Highmindedness in Book I, so must the Knight of the Red Cross. Thus it is clear that the Knight of Holiness exemplifies Aristotle's virtue of Highmindedness. Nor was Spenser doing anything unusual in thus combining pagan and sacred writings. He was only doing what many divines did both before and after him. Moreover, he was only doing what he himself did again and again in the *Faerie Queene*, sometimes in a rather surprising fashion. For example, in II, xii, 52, he compares Acrasia's Bower, falsely named the "Bowre of blis," not only to "Parnasse" and Mount Ida, but also to the Garden of Eden, the comparison being unfavorable even to Eden. Again, the marriage rites of Una and the Knight of Holiness, described in I, xii, are pagan, not Christian.¹ There is nothing surprising, however, in his combining Aristotle's Highmindedness with Christianity; for the combination is simply moral perfection (represented by the Knight of Holiness) married to Christian truth (Una).

I have discussed the case of Holiness at considerable length because it is the only one which is in any way doubtful. In Books II-VI it is certain that Spenser is consciously and deliberately following Aristotle.

The subject of Spenser's second Book is Temperance. Jusserand has to admit that "[Spenser's virtue of] Temperance truly and plainly corresponds to one of Aristotle's [virtues]."² Aristotle outlines Temperance briefly in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, vii, discusses it at some length in III, xiii-xv, and continues the discussion throughout

¹ See I, xii, 37.

² *Mod. Phil.*, III, 376.

most of Book VII. Spenser, in his Book on Temperance, draws upon all three discussions.

Concerning the virtue of Spenser's third Book, Jusserand says: "Chastity may be held to have been [one of Aristotle's virtues], if we give the word the sense of 'shame' (*verecundia*), and neglect the fact that Aristotle, while studying it, declares that this 'shame' is not a virtue."¹ That both Spenser and Aristotle were interested in practical morality, not in whether such qualities as Temperance and Chastity are technically virtues, we have already seen. Although Aristotle tends to make this virtue of Shame, or Modesty, all-inclusive, just as he tends to make all the others, his discussion of it in the *Nicomachean Ethics*² and in the *Rhetoric*³ leaves unquestionable the fact that he means it particularly to apply to sex morality. It is hardly necessary to state that in his Book on Chastity Spenser is discussing sex morality from the standpoint of Shame, or Modesty, on the one hand, and Shamelessness, on the other.⁴ It should be added that sex morality is also an important part of Aristotle's discussion of Temperance, including Licentiousness and Incontinence. Aristotelian Temperance, in the strict or particular sense, applies to "meats" and "drinks" and "what are called the pleasures of love."⁵ Aristotelian Shame, or Modesty, in the strict sense, applies, of course, to the last of these. Spenser, in his Book on Chastity, drew not only upon Aristotle's discussion of Shame, or Modesty, but also upon that part of his discussion of Temperance and Incontinence which deals with sex morality.

Concerning the subjects of Spenser's fourth and fifth Books, Jusserand says: "The reader knows what the case is with Friendship and Justice."⁶ I believe he does.

Finally, concerning Courtesy, the subject of Spenser's sixth Book, Jusserand says: "Courtesy may be held to correspond, if to anything, to Aristotle's friendliness, but not without a considerable

¹ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 376.

² *N. Eth.*, II, vii; IV, xv.

³ *Rhetoric*, II, vi, xii, and xiii.

⁴ See, for example, III, i, 48. See also, III, i, 50; III, ii, 40-41; III, iv, 45; III, v, 55; III, vii, 49; III, viii, 32; and III, xii, 24.

⁵ *N. Eth.*, III, xiii.

⁶ *Mod. Phil.*, III, 376.

extension and modernization of the word. . . . Aristotle's description of friendliness best suits, however, without matching it exactly, the modern notion of courtesy."¹ The *New English Dictionary* reveals nothing inconsistent in Spenser's discussing under the name of Courtesy the virtue which Aristotle says is most *like* Friendliness. But what really counts, a comparison of Spenser's Book on Courtesy with this Near-Friendliness, shows that the two really do match. 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. Aristotle says: "It most resembles Friendliness; for the person in whom it exists answers to our idea of a virtuous friend, except that friendliness includes affection as well. . . . He will so act alike to strangers and acquaintances," etc.² Thus Aristotle's Near-Friendliness 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.

Spenser's virtue of Courtesy matches this Aristotelian ideal exactly. It allows neither flattery, on the one hand, nor contentiousness, on the other.³ It consists in acting toward others as a virtuous friend would act. It should be remembered, however, that with both Aristotle and Spenser friendship includes love; and also that, in accordance with Aristotle's and Spenser's tendency to make any given virtue include all the others, Courtesy and Discourtesy will include other virtues and vices.

For seldome yet did living creature see,
That curtesie and manhood ever disagree.⁴

That the virtue of Spenser's sixth Book does consist in acting toward others as a true friend would act is shown by the characters and the episodes. Calidore, Tristram, Calepine, Prince Arthur, and others represent Courtesy, or Friendliness. Maleffort, Crudor, and Briana, who maltreat strangers (c.i.); the "proud discourteous knight" whom Tristram slays (c. ii); the contemptible Sir Turpine, who will not

¹ *Ibid.*

² *N. Eth.*, IV, xii.

³ See, for example, Spenser's exposition of Calidore's Courtesy in VI, i, 2-3.

⁴ VI, iii, 40.

give lodging to Calepine and his wounded lady, or help the wounded woman over the ford, and who even attacks the defenseless knight (c. iii, vi, viii); Mirabella, who delights in the sufferings of her lovers (c. vii); the "salvage nation," which preys upon strangers (c. viii, stanzas 35 ff.); and the "theeves" who lead Pastorell into captivity (c. ix, xi)—these are some of the examples of Unfriendliness, of not acting toward others as a virtuous friend would act. And, finally, the Blatant Beast is not Slander, as it is sometimes named, nor yet the Puritans, as it is oftenest named. It is the Spirit of Unfriendliness;¹ it is Malice, Malevolence, Envy, Despite, Slander, Contentiousness, and is represented in one place,² no doubt, by the most contentious element among the Puritans. The Blatant Beast, like Duessa,

could d'on so manie shapes in sight,
As ever could cameleon colours new.³

Besides, Spenser more than once shows by the speeches of his characters, combined with the plot, that he is keeping before him Aristotle's ideal of acting toward others as a true friend would act. For example, in VI, iii, 15, Aldine is talking to Sir Calidore, the Knight of Courtesy. The two are strangers, having seen each other but once before. We are told:

In th'end his [Calidore's] kyndly *courtesie* to prove,
He [Aldine] him by all the bands of love besought,
And as it mote a *faithfull friend behove*,
To safeconduct his love, and not for ought
To leave, till to her fathers house he had her brought.

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[To be concluded]

¹ With V, xii, 28-43 and VI, i, 7-10, in which passages the Blatant Beast is identified with Envy and Detraction, the latter including Malevolence, and with VI, v, 12-22, in which the Blatant Beast is identified with Malice, Deceit, and Detraction, compare the author's comment, or literal exposition of Discourtesy, in VI, vii, 1-2.

² See VI, xii, 22-41; but note in VI, xii, 22 and 23, that the Blatant Beast has gone "through every place" and "through all estates," all ranks of life, before he comes to the "Clergy."

³ IV, i, 18.