BOETHIUS' CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY

GEORGE COLVILLE
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V.

BOETHIUS' CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY.
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INTRODUCTION.

HE author of the De Consolatione Philosophiae lived during a critical period of one of those great divides of history where the moribund old and the as yet inchoate new are blended in a tangle almost defying the efforts of the critic to unravel. The bright sunlight of Augustan historic literature had given place to a rapidly deepening twilight soon to become the midnight of the "Dark Ages." Boethius personally occupies a unique position as the last representative of ancient Latin literature—the end of the line of which Ennius was the starting-point and which culminated in the great world-literature of the Augustan period. The fall of the Roman Empire of the West may well have been the first event borne in upon Boethius’s early intelligence, and his growing youth would almost certainly witness the struggle of the last outpost of the ancient world-power. A portion of Gaul was held under the Eagles for ten years longer, with Syagrius for its Imperator, until the victorious companions of Chlodowig overran that one remaining oasis of pure Roman Civilization in Western Europe. The field was thus left free for the expansion of Germanic Barbarism into the polity of the Middle Ages and, by the
time Boethius had reached manhood, the final hindrance was removed to the already-growing dominion of the Papacy. It is curious, as regards the former of these two facts, to note that the cause of the revolt against Romulus Augustulus, the son of the prefect Orestes, was the refusal of the demand of the barbarians that they should be allotted a third of the lands of Italy to be held on a tenure of military service. As regards the second point, the myth is significant which gives the indulgence in a Papal intrigue with the court of Constantinople as the cause of Boethius's disgrace with Theodoric.

While on the one side we see the new nations, represented by the Goths, introducing barbaric customs and social forms from the north, we must not forget that Rome at this time, and probably for more than a century later, was in externals still mainly the old classical Rome. The absurd belief so long current that "the Goths and the Vandals" were the destroyers of ancient architecture and ancient art has now been entirely exploded for serious students of history. Apart from the fortunes of war, there is no ground whatever for conceiving that the barbarians were guilty of any special acts of destruction. As Gregorovius and other modern scholars have observed, it is probable enough that the Goths, like other warriors on plunder bent, rifled some of the smaller works of art for the sake of their gold, silver or precious stones, but with the larger works, such as statuary, and above all, architecture, we have reason to believe that the injury they did on their campaigns was comparatively trifling. Theodoric himself always showed a laudable desire to preserve the monuments of the city in their integrity. What Rome was like in his time may be gathered from a
passage in Cassiodorus (Var. viii. 13), "Nam quid populus copiosissimus statuarum, greges etiam abundissimi equorum sunt cautela servandi." This quotation alone affords us positive evidence of the artistic wealth of Rome after the barbarian invasions. The real destroyer of the classical art of the Italian cities was not the much culminated "Vandalism" of the Northerners, or even to any large extent the zeal of the Christians, as such, but the greed of the inhabitants themselves, and doubtless amongst them many families proud to claim a long patrician pedigree. For centuries, the practice of dismantling ancient buildings and plundering statuary in order to use the materials for building purposes was ruthlessly carried on, and throughout the early Middle Ages the vast lime-kilns of Rome and its neighbourhood were fed by the treasures of antiquity. This abominable custom appears to have begun as early as the middle of the fifth century. One of the last of the Roman Emperors of the West, Marjorian, in his celebrated edict, promulgates the severest penalties against all who destroy or mutilate monuments of the city, and more especially against public functionaries who give permission or facilities for so doing.

The full names of our author seem to have been Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, which last name was sometimes, and perhaps more correctly, written Boetius. The name Flavius has been inserted by conjecture on the ground that his father and grandfather bore it; also that of Torquatus has been suggested. But neither are to be found in the best manuscripts. The year of his birth is generally given as A.D. 475, but this is only a hypothetical date, and others have been put forward, amongst them 455. No sufficient evidence is forthcoming for deciding the point.
The Anician gens having been prominent for many generations amongst the bluest blood of patrician and senatorial Rome, we may fairly assume that the metropolis of the West was the birthplace of Boethius. At the death of his father, Flavius Manlius Boethius, consul in 487, he was adopted, as he tells us himself, by persons of influence in Rome. One theory suggests that his grandfather was Flavius Boethius, the praetorian prefect executed by Valentinian's orders in 455.

He married Rusticiana, the daughter of the senator Symmachus, and had by her two sons, Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, and Quintus Aurelius Memmius Symmachus. The importance of the family is indicated by the fact that these sons were both made consuls in 522. A previous wife has been given him by some historians in the shape of a "beautiful and learned" woman, named Elpis, but there appears to be no truth in the story. Elpis was the authoress of two Christian hymns, the names of which are quoted sometimes as Decora lux and Beate Pastor, and sometimes as Aurea luce and Felix per omnes. She is supposed to have been a Greek Sicilian, and Sicilian writers of a later date are mainly responsible for the story of her marriage with Boethius. The only reliable account of her is contained in her epitaph, which implies that she followed her husband into exile, but does not give the name of the husband. As this statement would not leave time for the second marriage with Rusticiana, the Elpis theory falls to the ground and with it the myth of two sons by her named Patricius and Hypatius.

Boethius became consul in 510, and the diptychon of his consulship is still preserved in Brescia. Theodoric appointed him magister officiorum in his court, and
employed him to set the coinage in order. His scientific attainments were also shown in the construction of a sundial and water-clock, which were sent as presents to Gunibald, King of the Burgundians. In 522, on the occasion of his sons becoming consuls, he pronounced a panegyric on Theodoric and, standing between the two youths, distributed largesses to the people in the circus. That was the turning-point of his career, and we thenceforward find him surrounded by enemies who plotted his downfall. Towards the end of Theodoric's reign, he was formally accused of treason by Basilius, Gaudentius, and Opilio, court parasites whose hocuspocus of the taxes he had endeavoured to put down. These "dogs of the Palace," as he calls them, alleged that he had conspired against the king, and that he was desirous of overthrowing the barbarian power and restoring the so-called Roman freedom. In the result, he was condemned and sent to Ticinum (Pavia), and his property was confiscated. It was in this Ticinum prison, which was long after the baptistery of a church, that the De Consolatione Philosophiae was written.

In 525 he was put to death, either at Ticinum or at Calvenzano. The manner of his death is variously reported, but it was probably by beheading. A writer of the name of Valesius says, however, that he was tortured by a cord tightened round his head, until his eyes were forced from their sockets, and that then he was clubbed to death. Symmachus, his father-in-law, appears to have been put to death shortly afterwards.

Theodoric survived Boethius a few years, and his final illness and death were supposed to have been occasioned by the horror he experienced one night when sitting at supper in his palace at Ravenna. A fish was brought
on the table, and as the attendants removed the covering of the dish, Theodoric thought he saw in the head of the fish the features of his victim Symmachus. It is related that he was seized by a fever the same night, and died a few days later. This may or may not be true, but certain it is, according to all accounts, that remorse for the death of both Symmachus and his son-in-law haunted Theodoric during the few remaining years of his life. The Church historians tell the story of how his soul was seen, naked, shoeless, and bound hand and foot, careering through the air, followed by the avenging shades of Symmachus and Boethius, and ultimately hurled into the crater of the Lipari volcano.

The Variarum of Cassiodorus, the Epistolae of Ennodius, and the Historia of Procopius, are (beside the De Consolatione itself) the three original sources as regards the life of Boethius. Cassiodorus, though a distinguished man at Theodoric's Court, was shrewd enough to escape Boethius's ill-fortune, for when the intrigues of ambitious sycophants began to influence the too credulous king, he withdrew from the Palace, and went into temporary retirement. During the virtual regency of Theodoric's daughter, Amalasunta, we find Cassiodorus once more a man of state, and his final retirement to a monastery only took place when he had reached the age of seventy. Some of his later years were spent in writing a history of the Church, based on Sozomen's work on the same subject. It is, however, not in this treatise, but in the "Variarum" collection of state documents that we obtain from Cassiodorus an insight into the personality of Boethius and into the conditions of his time.

Magnus Felix Ennodius was Bishop of Pavia from 511 until his death in 521. His Epistles, written in turgid
and obscure Latin, were addressed to various contemporaries, and bore chiefly upon private matters. Three were sent to Boethius, but they consist mainly of fulsome compliments, and contain none of the interesting facts preserved by Cassiodorus and recorded by the Byzantine historian, Procopius.

Procopius became secretary to Belisarius in 527, accompanied the great commander in nearly all his expeditions, and was prefect of Constantinople in 562. In his Historia he treats of Boethius, and also describes the fate of Rusticiana in her widowhood.

The works of Boethius formed one of the few surviving torches of ancient learning which carried on the fire of classical culture throughout the Dark Ages and the early Middle Ages. In the monastery, in the castle, everywhere where men read and thought at all, was to be found the treatise De Consolatione Philosophiae, and numberless were the renderings made. Some of the earliest specimens of the literature of the modern languages consist of translations and imitations of this last of the classics. Alfred the Great did the work into Anglo-Saxon. The first specimen of French literature is a poem on Boethius, to which has been assigned a date not later than the year 1000. It formerly belonged to the Abbey of Benoît-sur-Loire, but was subsequently removed to the public library of the town of Orleans. Hallam states that it is a fragment of 250 lines, written in stanzas of six, seven or a greater number of verses of ten syllables each, sometimes deviating to eleven or twelve, and all the lines in each stanza rhyme masculinely to each other (Hallam's Literature of Europe, i. 30). But it was not only in the actual versions of the work that its influence was shown. There is scarcely a treatise on
philosophy or on speculative theology that does not bear traces of its having been carefully perused. In short, the De Consolatione was the model of literary composition, both in Latin and, where it existed at all, in the modern languages throughout the whole of the earlier mediæval times.

It will interest many readers to know that the Tesoretto of Brunetto Latini, the preceptor of Dante, affords, in a manner, a link between the last great writer of ancient Latin and the first great writer of modern Italian. In Il Tesoretto, we may see the rough idea which Dante took as the skeleton of the Divina Comedia. In the figure of Natura:

“talor toccava il cielo
sicke parca suo velo
e talor lo mutava
e talo lo turbava,”

with the elaborate pourtrayal of the appearance of the semi-divine woman, “sic ch’io credea che’l crine fussa d’un oro fine,” and in the rest of the glowing description we unmistakably recognize the Boethian Philosophia as the prototype. Additional point is given to this, when we remember that Brunetto Latini had already translated the De Consolatione into the Italian language.

As the last western philosophical writer of the ancient world, Boethius, appropriately to his position, sums up the culture of the civilization of Greece and Rome in well nigh all its branches. His works constitute the last epitome of classical learning produced by the classical world itself, and form a kind of encyclopedia of the “wisdom of the ancients.” In addition to his translations of Aristotle, Porphyry, and other Greek writers, his original treatises on geometry, arithmetic, and music, besides those
on the philosophical sciences properly so called, logic, metaphysics, and ethics, form valuable condensations of these subjects as then understood. Wherever the subject-matter admits of it they are expressed in elegant Latin, and expounded in due regard to literary form.

The philosophy of Boethius naturally reflects the eclecticism of the contemporary Athenian schools that were carried on by the successors of Proclus, and that only outlived Boethius for some four years. The Aristotelian side of this eclecticism is, however, perhaps the most prominent with our author. The schoolmen studied Aristotle in Boethius's translations, and in reading the latter we have a foretaste of the scholastic phraseology and mode of argumentation which dominated mediaeval speculative thought. From the text of the *De Consolatione* it will be seen how much he is exercised in endeavouring to reconcile free will and necessity, prescience and contingency, perfection of the divine nature, and the existence of evil. The nominalist and realist controversy which obtained such importance long after, is also found in embryo.

The works of Boethius may be said to have been the staple philosophical reading of the earlier Middle Ages. Alcuin and many other eminent pillars of the Church based their own dissertations on theological dogmas upon the works of the probably pagan Roman, who by a freak of tradition had attained the position of a Christian divine and martyr. In this connection we may consider the much debated point of Boethius's religious profession. The chief Christian writings attributed to him consist of the *De Unitate et uno*, the *Brevis Fidei Christianae Complexio* and the *De Persona et Natura contra Uticam et Nestorium*. Of these, the first does not seem
to have been ascribed to him until the twelfth century and the others, though also bearing his name, are not identified with him until some time after his death. More than one obvious hypothesis as to their authorship presents itself, should the internal evidence of the undoubted works of our author render it difficult to believe that he wrote the one and the other. First of all, they may have been written by another person who wished to make it appear that they were from the pen of Boethius. Secondly, they may have been written by another Boethius, totally unconnected with our author. Thirdly, it is possible to suppose them to be the work of his son Annicius Manlius Severinus Boethius. The latter was probably otherwise unknown as an author, but subsequent generations, finding two or three isolated treatises bearing the name, would naturally ascribe them to his illustrious father, more especially in an age when literary criticism, in our sense of the term, was non-existent.

The question now arises as to whether there is any internal evidence to show inconsistency between both classes of writings. The answer is that there is negative evidence of an almost conclusive character. First, the *De Consolatione*, written in captivity and under the shadow of an imminent death, does not mention the name of Christ, allude to any Christian dogma, or express any religious sentiment that bears a distinctively Christian interpretation. The consolation the author finds is exclusively afforded him by the goddess of Reason, who commends him to Plato and the other great names of ancient thought.

As to Boethius's undoubted works, they deal entirely with the pagan culture of the classical world. The latest editor of five Christian writings ascribed to him, Pro-
fessor Piper, while virtually surrendering two of them, as based on insufficient evidence, would have us regard the other three as early exercises of their alleged author, written at the time he was under guardianship. He further supposes that Symmachus and the Johannes who was afterwards Pope, were his two chief guardians. This opinion is, however, rejected by other scholars as being unsupported by any cogent evidence.

Lastly there is nothing in the authentic accounts of Boethius's life that indicates his having taken part in the religious squabbles of his time, the theory of his conspiracy with the Byzantine court being obviously a subsequent invention. All things considered, we shall not be far wrong in adopting the opinion, held by most authorities in the present day, that Boethius was the last of the Roman pagans, and that he owes his quasi-saintship in the Catholic church to the circumstance of his having been persecuted and unjustly put to death by the Arian heretic Theodoric.

Boethius's philosophical position in the works strictly expository of Aristotle is that of the Stagyrte with little admixture of the Neo-Platonism which represented the dying thought of the age. In the De Consolatione, however, we find distinct Platonic traces. The universal, the eternal form, appears in complete separation from the flux of particulars, the realm of Fortune. The God of Boethius is the complex of all categories and nothing more. Will and action cannot be predicated of the infinite consciousness, in the eternal nature of which is contained all concepts and no sensibles. Boethius sharply distinguishes between what Hegel calls the false infinite (das schlechte Unendliche), the indefinite series in time, and the true infinite or eternal, which is, as such, indepen-
dent of time, whether limited or unlimited. In the fifth book of the De Consolatione, we can fancy we discern the chief source of inspiration coned over by Scotus Erigena, two centuries and a half later, in his monastic cell in the west of Ireland. The mere word-juggles of the schoolmen also found a fruitful soil in Boethius's philosophical and logical treatises, but, nevertheless, we still perceive in him a distinct feeling for that real problem of philosophy, which lived on obscurely amongst the better thinkers of the Middle Ages and only became quite lost in the trivialities of Locke and the British psychological school.

Boethius's dry and, as it seems to us, very unprofitable treatise on music was a great school-book down to two hundred years ago. It is based on the Pythagorean system and treats music as one of the four mathematical disciplines, the essence of music consisting in number and proportion. Arid discussions on the divisions of the tetrachord and of the monochord occupy a number of dreary pages, in addition to the exposition of the opinions of the different sects on these and cognate subjects. Nevertheless, this scholastic jargon, absolutely destitute of theoretical, let alone practical, utility, continued to be the staple requisite for the musical degree at Oxford, until far into the eighteenth century. Much of the treatise is utterly unintelligible to anyone that has not minutely studied the antiquities of musical theory in the classical world. It would be certainly a thankless task for any human being in the present day, without the spur of academic distinction before him, to wade through these five books, in which the science of music, as it then existed, is supposed to be summed up.

The division of the circle of mediæval learning into the
seven sciences, the so-called trivium and quadrivium, the first consisting of Grammar, Rhetoric and Dialectic, and the second, the mathematical disciplines, consisting of Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy, was long attributed to Boethius, but modern scholars are inclined to regard it as having already existed before his time.

The reputation of Boethius with his contemporaries and with succeeding generations rested almost as much on his moral character as on his literary achievements. In a decadent age, and connected with a court in which all manner of corruption was rampant, we have every reason to believe that he maintained a standard of strict integrity, throughout his public and private life. The account he gives of himself in the first book of the De Consolatione of his dealings with the oppressive functionaries and of his efforts to save the coloni from the tyranny and rapacity of the fiscal agents, is fully confirmed, as regards its general tenour, by the statements to be found in the collections of Cassiodorus.

Of George Colvile, the author of the present translation, few facts have been ascertained. He is alleged to have been at Oxford University, but no trace of him is discoverable upon the University rolls. His name seems to have been spelt in various ways on different occasions, as was the wont in those days. It appears sometimes as Colvile, sometimes as Coldewell, but always in connection with his translation of the De Consolatione. The obscurity of the man may be gathered from the fact that in that vast body of research respecting English worthies, the Dictionary of National Biography, no new information concerning him has been unearthed. But, notwithstanding our want of knowledge of Colvile's personality, he will always remain, on account of his book, interesting to
students of the literature of the period. His work is one of the finest specimens we could desire of the rugged, terse, vigorous English of the sixteenth century. It is especially free from the euphuism that characterized some of the Elizabethan writers. For these reasons, it has been given a place in the present series and we believe that the subscribers to the Tudor Library will be glad to find it included in a collection of works illustrative of the literature of the Renaissance and of the age immediately succeeding it. The book, as appears on the title page, was published by John Cawood in 1556. It seems to have had a success, as a second edition was printed by Cawood in 1561.
The boke of Boecius, called the conforte of philosophye, or wysedome, moche necessary for all men to read and know, wherein suche as be in aduersitie, shall fynde muche consolation and conforte, and suche as be in great worldly prosperitie may knowe the vanitie and frailtie therof, and consequently fynde eternall felyctie. And this boke is in manner of a dialoge or communication betwene two persones, the one is Boecius, and the other is Philosophy, whose disputations and argumentes do playnly declare the diuersitie of the lyfe activie, that consisteth in worldly, temporall, and transitory thynges, and the lyfe contemplatyue, that alwayes dyspyseth the worlde, and all thinges therin, and beholdeth almyghtye GOD, and all heauenlye thynges. Translated out of latin into the Englyshe tounge by George Coluile, alias Coldewel, to thintent that such as be ignoraunt in the Latin tounge, and can rede Englyshe, maye understande the same. And to the mergentes is added the Latin, to the end that suche as delyghte in the Latin tonge may rede the Latin, accordyng to the boke of the translatour, whiche was a very olde prynte.

Anno. M. D. L V I.
To the hygh, and myghty pryntesse, our Souereigne Ladye, and Quene, Marye by the grace of God, Quene of Englande, Spayne, Fraunce, both Cicilles, Jerusalem, and Ireland, defender of the faith, Archeduches of Austrie, Duches of Myllayne, Burgundye, and Brabante, Countesse of Haspurge, Flaunders, and Tyroll.

Your humble, and obedient subiecte,
George Coluile, alias Coldewell,
wyssheth all health, honoure, and prosperitie.

HERE as manye thinges (mooste gracious soueraigne Ladye) be wryten both learnedly, and wysely, by the sage Philosophers in theyr bookes, yet me thinketh there is one thinge alone, amongst so many dyuers, and sondry thynges, to be had chieffely in remembrance, that is to saye: to pray that a hole reasonable body, may haue an hole and perfyt mind or wytte. For both the same beynge hole and perfyt, maye iustely be called health, whiche consisteth in the ryght, and fyrme constitucion, and temperaunce both of the body and mynd. And where as the health and perfection of the mind or wyt (which is the chieffest and best part of a naturall and reasonable bodye, well fourmed in all partes of the same) wanteth, can there be any felicitie in the same? Also if nature (as it happeth often tymes) hath geuen an impotent or weke bodye, to a freshe, lusty and quycke mynde or wytt, there the same mynde beynge as a thyngye bound, constrained in, or languysshynge, can nether exercyse and vse her proper vigore
and strength, nor yet profyte her selfe anye thynge accordyng
A certayne Philosopher (when he complayned on the wekenes
of his owne body) sayde (after my judgement) very well thus:
O nature, yf thou haddeste geuen me a bodye lyke vnto my
mynde, it myghte haue done whatsoeuer it desyred. Nowe
whether that nature, or almyghty God hath geuen vnto your
moost excellente maiestie (gracious Lady and Quene) both a
perfyte mynde, and also a body accordyng to the same: yet
for so much as there can be no suche health of body in this
present lyfe, but that it may other whyles degenerate and fall
into the contrary parte, youre maiestye is worthye for youre
singuler vertue and goodnes to haue, not onely prosperous, but
also continuall health both of your mynde and bodye, that you
maye longe reygne, rule, and gouerne in hygh felicitie this your
realme, and the common wealth of the same, whereof you are
oure cheife heade, and soueraygne comforte. And as I thoughte
it no lesse but my bounden duetie to declare my good wyll and
mynde towards youre grace, whiche hath alwayes accepted all
mennes good hartes not vthankefullly, pretendyng goodnes
vnto you: where as it fortuned in my studies, I redde ouer the
noble worke of Boecius, called, the comfort of phylosophy, or
wysedome, as muche necessary for all kynde of vertuous people,
as others: I (of my selfe vnworthy, both for lacke of wytte and
elocuence) toke vpon me after my rude maner, to translate the
same worke out of Latyn, into the Englysshe tounge, and so to
dedicate the same unto youre hyghnes, not thynkyng it a
thynge worthy for your grace, beyng so rudelye done, but that
I, and also my translation, myghte obtayne more fauour of the
readers, vnder the protectiõ and fauour of your name. And if
any man receaueth any profyt therby, I shall desyre him to
gue thankes therefore vnto youre maiestie, whose moost royall
person I beseche almyghtye God, longe to preserue amongst
vs to raygne, and to sende you moost prosperous successe in
the same. Amen.
THE ARGUMENTE OR SUMME OF THYS BOOKE AND WHEREOF IT TREATYTH.

HERE was a noble man, a consul of Rome named Boecius, this man was a catholike man and dysputed for the faith in the comon counsayle agaynste the heretykes Nestoryus and Euticen, and confuted them, as it appeareth by a booke that he made, wherein he proueth two natures in Chryste. Thys Boetius was a greate ruler in the courte of Theodorik Kynge of the gotes, in so much that he (when he sawe the Kyng aboute to oppresse the Romaynes wyth hys accustomed tirannye) resysted hym by hys polytyke and godly counsayle, and per-swaded hym from it more then all other of the counsayl dyd, and soo delyuered the people (not wythout greate daunger of hys owne person) from the tyrannicall raun of Kyng Theodoryke. The Kyng Theodoryk (partly perceuyng of hymselfe, and partely by other flatteryng counsalours who alwaies dispised Boecius and hys godly wysdome, that hys tirannicall com-maundementes coulde take no place by reason and meanes of the great wysedom of Boecius that alwayes destroyed the euyl opynyon and folyyshe myndes of the Kyng, and suche as favorid hys vngodly and vncharytable inuentions) imagined falsly w'out iust cause to distroy Boecius after thys sort. He Surmisde that Boecius dyd interrupt and kepe backe a certayn man that shou haue brought letters unto the kyng, wherin were con-tayned certayne accusations of the Senatours of Rome concernyng great hurt and domage done by them agaynst the Kynges most royall Maiesty. He also surmysed that Boecius had wrytten certayne letters vnto the Emperoure of Constantynoble to requyre hys ayde and helpe to restore the Romaynes to theyr former lyberty and to be delyuered from the tirannical subiection of the kyng Theodoryke. Vpon these two causes
falsely surmised by the kyng, Boecius was accused by vile and slanderous persons hired for mony, and beyng neuer put to aunswer, was vniustlye founde gyltye, and adiudged by the Kynge to auoyde hys Countryes, and to remayne in a Citye called Papia as a banyshed man, and to lose all hys landes and goodes for euer. Boecius being thus banyshed from hys landes goodes and kynred, consideryng hys formor prosperitye past, and the present aduersite that he was in, made thys presente booke callede the comforte of wysedome, agaynste the mutable chaunces of fortune, wherby a man (althoughe he be banyshed or deprevyed of wordely possessions, goodes, riches dignities or any other worldlye felicitye or pleasure) myghte receiue comfort agaynst such aduersitye (commyng by fortune): wyth phylosophy or wysedome, whyche teachyth a man to dyspyse worldly thynges, and to loue vertue, and to labor to attayne vnto the hygh perfect felicite or soueraigne good that is almyghtye God, in whome onely is all abundance and suffysaunce, nothynge wantyng that canne be worthely desyred, and neuer subiect to fortunes chaunces.

And by wysedome a man maye learne to knowe God to knowe hym selfe and the world, and so nether to reioyse in worldly prosperitye, nor to be sory in aduersitye of worldly thynges, as for the losse of wyfe, chyldren, landes, goodes, ryches, or dyngnyties. And as I haue declared before, thys booke is a dialoGE or communycation of two personnes togethers, the one is Boecius bewaylyng hys misery for hys losses temporal: the other is Philosophy or wisdome which doth conforte hym in all hys trybulations. Boecius vseth in thys boke somtyme prose, in the whyche he sheweth reasons of greate conforte, and also he vseth some tyme myter or versys delectable to cause a man to forgette hys heuynes and grefe in heryng of them, moreouer this boke is deuided into fyue partes. In the fyrst parte or booke Boecius complayneth vpon hys myserable chaunces. In the seconde he deuyseth comfortable remedies for aduersites. In the thyrd he determyseth what is the perfyt felicyte and in whom it is. In the fourth boke he moueth certayne questions to phylosophy or wisedome. And in the fyfte and laste boke he treatyth of goddes purueians or prouidens, of destiny chancys, and fre wyl, and what diuersites be betwene them, and soo endyth hys worke no lesse famous then profytable.
THE PROLOGE OF GEORGE COLUILE,
ALIAS COLDEWELL TO THE READER.

CONSYDERYNGE wyth myselfe, the shorte and vncertaine course of thystran sitory lyfe, the vanities of the worlde, and the mutable chaunces of fortune, with her flatterynge and deceyueable gyftes. I do much meruayle that the mooste parte of men (hauinge wytte, reason, and vnderstandynge, whereby they should excell other brute beastes) do so ernestly folowe the gyftes of fortune, and chaunce (being so variable) as they should do such thinges wherin perfyt felicitye or sufferaygne good, stedfastly dwellyth, when they see daylye before their eyes, that there is noo certaintie nor stedefastnes therein, I meane that men forsake the wayes of god, and al vertues, that be always fyrme and neuer fayleth, and foloweth the worlde, the deuyll and the fleshe, that darkenyth the wytte and vnderstandyng with theyr vanyties and pleasures, as with ryches, possessions, honors, dignities, power, aucthoritie, fame, & suche other, that turnyth vpsydowne in one momente of an houre, vanysheth awaye, and commeth to noughte, and seynge that therin is no perfyt felycitie, for they content no man that haue thë, but euer they wante and couette more and more, and when they thynke them selfe most sure of them, then they be mooste vnsure, for expe-
rience sheweth that in one instant eyther man is seperatyd from them, by deathe, or els they be taken from man by the chaunce of fortune, whereby it semeth that euyll fortune is better then good fortune, for euyll fortune, sheweth her self as she is in dede without flatterye, maketh a man to know God, the world and hymselfe. And good fortune deceiueth a man with her gyftes that seme both plesaunte and permanente, and be not so in dede. O howe many wyse and wel learnyd men haue wrytten
ryghte fuytelfull doctrine, to the intente that men myght lerne
to knowe the troubles, the vexacyons, the vnquyetnes and the
uncertaynte of thy sayne worlde, and of all thinges worldly
and temporall, that no man shuld pretend any inheritaunce,
contynuance, or certaynte in them, any longer then it shal please
fortune, that is mystres and ruler of them? Socrates was the
fyrste begynner and worshipper of wysdome, and when he
coulde fynde no certayne ende of goodnes in naturall thynges,
he gau hyg hole mynde and stude to the contemplation of
vertue. And he seyng the myndes of men vehementlye inclyned
to errours and to transitorye thynges, instituted, and taught the
people, so that they myght knowe and perceyue that god
almyghtye, was and is the hygh soueraigne good or perfyt
felicitie. After hym folowed Plato, who (emongest dyuers of
her godly workes) made a brydell to refrayne the pleasures and
sensualitie of the body, he chaungyd the ignorance, the feblenes
& negligence of yong men vnto diligee stræght & vertue.
Then cam vp poetes whych (for theyr eloquens, rethorycke &
many fayned tales and inuencions) were much to be comended,
some of thè did wryt the noble liues & dedes both of heuenly &
worldly creatores: some wrote of Emperours and of shamefull
loue out of all good order for euyll and lasciuious lyuyng: Some
did wryt of the myserable fall of Kynges and prynces, for theyr
wicked vyces, And other of them seynge yonge people en-
clyned to all kynde of euyll, repreued the same playnelye in
theyr wryttynges, with out favoour or flatterye, hauynge respect
to no degre from the lowest to the hyghest. Al these wryters,
dyd thus of a godly zeale that they had to subdue vyce and to
stere up men vnto wysedome and vertue, and to cause men to
be abasshed and ashamed of their euyll lyuyng. These worthy
wryters, these diligent myndes and hartes eschewed Idlenes,
obtayned grete worshyppe and immortall fame for their godlye
labors, and lefte great cómoditie and example to all men that
shoulde come after them. Alas why do not men now a dais
lerne to bere away their counsayle, & shew it in their con-
versacion and liuing But sythen in these our dayes there be
so many neglygent ignoraunt, and folyshe people, that dis-
pyseth vertue and ernestly foloweth and enbrasythe the blynde
vanytys of thy worlde, and estemeth them as thynges most
certaine, most sure, and perfyt sufferaygne good, I mooste
vnworthy baren of eloquence, and very rude haue taken vpon me to translate thys noble boke of Boecius, out of the Latyn into the Englyshe tounge, wherein the errours of all men for the most parte, be touchyd, that do put their truste in temporall thynges, and do so ferently labour for them wyth no smal daunger of theyr conscyence, and leueth the hygh way to god, whych is the perfit and most sure felycitie & sufferayne good in dede, the onely conforte both of y* bodye and soule, in whom is al thyng that can be wel desyred, and nothynge wantynge, and beyonde the whyche nothynge can be thoughte good and lawefull, or worthye to be wysshed or required. And gentle readers, I pray you perdon me, if for lacke of wytte by ignoraunce or neglygence I haue omytted any thyng, or haue erred in the traslatyon, and consyder that my onelye purpose was nether for prayse of men, nor for any reward, but to contente the myndes of the wise, and to instructe the ignoraunt vnlearned people with the holesome doctryne of Philosophye, or wysedome, that is conteyned in this boke, and soo to cause men to cesse, and leue of and gape no more soo gredylye as they do for worldlye and transytorye thynges, but to ensue and folowe vertue in godly lyuyng, and synallye to ascēd from thys lyfe actyfe in thys worlde, vnto the lyfe contemplatyfe whych neuer shal fayle, where the elect and blessed soules do raygne wyth god the father, god the son, and god the holye ghoste, world wyth outhe ende. 
Amen.
THE FYRSTE BOOKE.

BOECIUS SPEAKETH.

THAT in tyme of prosperite, & floryshing studye, made pleasaunte and delectable dities, or verses: alas nowe baying hauey and sad overthrown in aduersitie, am compelled to fele and tast heunies and greif. Beholde the muses Poecicall, that is to saye: the pleasure that is in poetes verses, do appoynt me, and compel me to wirte these verses in meter, and ye sorowfull verses do wet my wretched face with very waterye teares, yssuinge out of my eyes for sorowe. Whiche muses no feare without doute couercome, but that they wold folow me in my iourney of exile or banishment. Sometime the ioyce of happy and lusty delectable youth dyd comfort me, and nowe the course of sorowfull olde age causeth me to reioyse. For hasty olde age vnloked for is come vpon me with al her incommodities and euyls, and sorow hath commaunded and broughte me into the same old age, that is to say: that sorowe causeth me to be olde, before my time come of olde age. The hoer heares do growe vntimely vpon my heade, and my reuied skynne trembleth my flesh, cleane consumed and wasted with sorowe. Mannes death is happy, that cometh not in youth, when a man is lustye, & in pleasure or welth; but in time of aduersitie, when it is often desyred. Alas Alas howe dull and deffe be the eares of cruel death vnto men in misery that would fayne dye: and yet refusythe to come and shutte vp theyr carefull wepyng eyes. Whiles that false fortune fauoryd me with her transitorye goodes, then the howre of death had almost ouercom me. That is to say deathe was redy to oppresse me when I was in prosperitie.
Nowe for by cause that fortune beynge turned, from prosperitie into aduersitie (as the clere day is darkyd with cloudes) and hath chaungyd her deeyuayle countenaunce: my wretched life is yet prolonged and doth continue in dolour. O my frendes why haue you so often bosted me, sayyng that I was happy when I had honor possessions riches, & authoritie whych be transitory thynges. He that hath fallen was in no stedfast degre.

**BOECIUS SPEAKETH.**

Whyle that I considerydde pryuylye wyth my selfe the thynges before sayd, and descrybed my wofull complaynte after the maner and offfyce of a wrytter, me thought I sawe a woman stand ouer my head of a reverend countenaunce, hauyng quycke and glysteryng clere eyes, about the common sorte of men in lyuely and delectable coloure, & ful of strength, although she semed so olde that by no meanes she is thought to be one of this oure tyme, her stature is of douteful knowledge, for nowe she sheweth her selfe at the common length or statur of men, and other whilsts she semeth so high, as though she touched heuë with the crown of her hed. And whe she wold stretch fourth her hed hygher, it also perced thorough heauen, so that mens syghte could not attaine to behold her. Her vestures or cloths were perfy of the fynyste thredes, & subtlyl workemanship, and of substauance permament, whych vesturs she had wouen with her own hands as I perceyued after by her owne saiyng. The kynde or beawtye of the whych vestures, a certayne darkenes or rather ignoraunce of oldenes forgotten hadde obscuryd and darkened, as the smoke is wont to darken Images that stand nyghe ye smoke. In the lower parte of the sayde vestures was read the greke letter .P. wouen whych signifieth practise or actyffe, and in the hygher part of the vestures the greke letter, T. whyche standeth for theorica, that signifieth speculacion or contemplation. And betwene both the sayd letters were sene certayne degrees, wrought after the maner of ladders, wherein was as it were a passage or waye in steppes or degrees from the lower part wher the letter .P. was which is understand from practys or actyf, vnto the hygher parte wher the letter T. was whych is understand speculacion or contemplacion. Neuertheless the handes of some vyolente persones had cut the sayde vestures
and had taken awaye certayne pecis thereof, such as every one
could catch. And she her selfe dyd bare in her ryght hand litle
bokes, and in her lefte hande a scepter, whych fore sayd
Phylosophy (when she saw the muses poeticall present at my
bed, spekyng sorowful wordes to my wepynges) beyng angry
sayd (with terrible or frownynge countenance) who suffred
these crafty harlottes to com to thys sycke man? whych can
help hym by no means of his greife by any kind of medicines,
but rather increse the same with swete poysnon. These be they
that doo dystroye the fertile and plentious commodytys of
reason & the fruytes therof wyth their pryckynge thornes, or
barren affectes, and accustome or subdue mens myndes with
sickenes, and heuynes, and do not deluyer or heale them of
the same. But yf your flatterye had conueyed or wythdrawen from
me, any vnlerneyd man as the comen sorte of people are wotte
to be, I coulde haue ben better contentyd, for in that my worke
should not be hurt or hynderyd. But you haue taken and
conueyed from me thys man that hath ben broughte vp in the
stuydes of Aristotel and of Plato. But yet get you hence
maremaides (that seme swete vntyll you haue brought a man to
deathe) and suffer me to heale thys my man wyth my muses or
scyences that be holsome & good. And after that philosophy
had spoken these wordes the sayd companye of the musys
poeticall beyng rebukyd and sad, caste downe their counte-
naunce to the grounde, and by blussyng confessed their sham-
fastnes, and went out of the dores. But I (that had my syght
dull and blynyd wyth wepyng, so that I knew not what woman
this was hauyng soo great auworthitie) was amasyd or astonyed,
and lokyng downeaward, towarde the grounde, I began pryuylye
to ioke what thynge she would saye ferther, then she had said.
The she approching and drawynge nere vnto me, sat downe
upon the vertermost part of my bed, and lokyng vpon my face
sad with weeping, and declynyd toward the earth for sorow,
bewayled the trouble of my minde wyth these sayinges folowynge.

PHYLosophy speketh.

Alas howe much is the minde of this man dulled being
drouned in the depe care of worldlye and transytorye thynes,
and leuynge her owne clerenes of vnderstandynge, wandryth in

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outwarde darkenes of ignorance as often as it is moud with erthly blastes. The care of temporall thinges that is so hurtefull increasyth out of measure. This man beyng somtyme fre from cure of worldlye thinges to whome the heuen beyng open that is to saye hauynge knowledge of heuely thinges by lernynge, was wonte to goo into the heuenly wayses by science of astronomy, and dyd behold y\textsuperscript{e} son beames y\textsuperscript{i} be so red, & did se the sterres or constellacions of the cold mone. And he beyng a man that with sycence had ouercom ignorance, had every sterre comprehended in nuber, that is to saye, knewe the number of the sterres, and dyd knowe what sterres dyd kepe and vse dyeurs erraticall or wandrynge courses, and moused in dyeurs and sundry circles of the zodiake. And also he was wont to serche out the naturall causes, why the greate wyndes do trouble the plaine waters of the sea, And what sprete or power turnyth the stedefaste and hole fyrmament? And whye the ster called hesperus risyth in the resplendent est, and goeth downe in the occydent sea, And who temperith the pleasaunte tyme of Ver, when all growynge thinges springeth forthe, that decketh the earthe wyth freshe reddy flowers. And who hath caused the frutefull autumpne in a plentifulfull yere, to brynge forthe the full clusters of grapes, And also thys mä was wont to declare the secret causes of naturall thynges, and now he lyeth ouerthrowne as a man that hath no intellygence or wytte, hauynge his necke thrust downe with heuye chaynes, that is to say: with passions and vexacyons of the mind berynge hys face downeward with great wayte or heuynes, for the losse of temporall goodes. Alas, he is constrainedy to beholde the folyshe erthe that is to saye, the folyshe and vayne thinges on the erth.

PHILOF.

But he hath nowe more nede of medycyn then of anye bodye to bemonde or lamente hym. BOE. Then truelye she beholdynge me stedefastlye sayth, Arte not thou the same man that somtyme in thy youth was broughte vp wyth my learnyng, and nourysshed with my doctrine, and becam than a stronge man therein? And did not I giue the suche knowledgew and instructions whiche (yf thou hadst not forgotten) woulde haue kept the safe and sound from thyth aduersitie? knoweste thou

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not me? why speakeste not? Doeste thou holde thy peace for
shame or for that thou art amasyd or astonyed? I had leuer
thou were ashamed. But as me semeth thou art astonyed, and
when she sawe me not onely as one that had no tounge, but
also utterly domme, she put her hand softelye vnto my brest to
fele me, And sayde: I can perceyue no daunger about this man,
he hath a lythargye, that is to saye, he is forgettefull or dull, the
commen syckenes of myndes that be deceyued, he hath a lytel
whyles forgotten hymself, and when she sawe me not onely as one
that had no tounge, but also utterly domme, she put her hand
softelye vnto my brest to fele me, And sayde: I can perceyue no
daunger about this man, he hath a lythargye, that is to saye, he
is forgettefull or dull, the commen syckenes of myndes that be
deceyued, he hath a lytel whyles forgotten hymself, but he shall
easely & sone remember hym self again, if he hath knowne me heretofore. And to
thintent ye he may know me: let me wype his eies a litel from
the darkenes of mortall thinges. These thinges she sayde, and
with her clothes gathered together she wyped and dried my
eyes drowned with wepyng, for the losse of worldlye goodes and
such vayne temporall and transytorie thynges.

BOECIUS.

Then the darkenes left me, whè the nyghte was gone, and my
former strengthe of vnderstandyng came agayn euyn so as (by
example thus) the sonne lyethe hydde when the sterres be
couered wyth cloudes of the swyfte wynde named chorus, and
the fyrmament standeth closyd and coueryd with thicke showers,
so that the nyght spredeth from aboue over all the earthe when
that the sterres cannot be seene in the fyrmament. If then the
wynde that is called Boreas do blowe from hys den in the
country of Trace putting awaye the nyght, that is to saye, the
clowdes and darkenes, and openyth the daye, that before was
shut vppe, & the son fortifyed with his sodeyne lyght, dothe
shyne and tryke into men eyes wyth hys beames meruailynge
at the same.

BOECIUS.

Euen so the clowdes, that is to saye the causes of my sorow,
being put awaye by the comfort of Phylosophy, I lokyd vp
toward heuen, and receyued my wytte and reason to beholde
the face of my phisicion. And so whè I had turnyd myne eyes
and behelde her aduyysedlye, I perceyued that she was my
norysh, in whose scoles I was broughte vppe, and conuersaunt
from my youth, and sayde vnto her. O thou mysteryes of all
vertues descended from ye heuenlye seat. Art thou come into these solitayre places of my exyle? Arte thou come to be accompted gylye wyth me, of false accusacions? PHIL. O thou my chylde Boece, nourished vp by me, shulde I forsake the now? and be no partaker with the of thy burden which thou hast susteyned for malyce and enuye of my name? Certes it were not mete for me Philosophy to leue the, being innocent and wyth oute blame and to suffer the alone in thy iourneye if I feared myne owne faute, for ye I shoule, I shoulde quake for feare lest ye some other newe thinge should happen vnto the?

Thynkest thou that Phylosophy is the fyrst that hath bene in of peryll wicked men? haue not I strouen longe a goe fyerslye before the tyme of my Disciple Plato agaynst the fondenes of folysenes or folye? and the same Plato, being a lyue, hys mayster Socrates vniustlye deserued vyctory of death, whyles that I stode by. The inherytance of which Socrates, that is to say: lernynge consernynge felycitie or happynes, when the people of Epycuryens and Stoicyence, and dyuers others went about to take awaye vyolentlye, every man for hys part what he lustyd, of the doctrine of Socrates, to defend and maintayne their opinion therein. And when they would haue drawnen me Phylosophy that is to saye: wysedome in stede of a praye crying out and resisting the same opinion, they cutte the clothes that I had made wyth mine owne handes.

And with the pecys that they had cutte of, they went away thynking that they had, haue me wysedome holye awaye with them, in the whiche Epycuryens and Stoiciens, for bycause there apperyd some steppes of myne habyte or doctryne, the ignoraunte common people thought that the sayde Epicuriens and Stoiciens were my famylyer scolers, and peruarted and turnyd some men by the errour of the vnlearned multytude of them, That is to saye: by cause they semyd wyse and were no Philosophers or wyse men in dede, they were pursuyd to death. And ye thou hast not knowen the banyshemët of Anaxagoras, nor the poysonyng of Socrates, nor the tormentes of Zeno, because these thinges, be straunge, yet thou myghteste haue knowen the Canios, the Scenecas and the Soranos, whose fame is not verye olde nor with out prayse. Whych men none other thing was the cause of their death but that they beyng instructed in my doctryne, semed unlyke to the techynge of the wycked, soo that there is no cause
that thou shouldest maruayle thoughge we be tossyd in thy vale of misere wyth aduersities on euerye syde, whose purpose is chyfelye to dysplease wycked people, whose companye (be they neuer so great a multytude) is not to be regardyd, for it is gouernyd by no wysedome or reason, but raunshed folyshelye euerye where by wilful errour onelye, whych althoughge they stand at any tyme agaynst vs stoute and strong reysyng batel, that is to saye : although the wycked and folysh people stryue agaynst the wyse, truelye our captayne reson or wysedome, gatherith together his company, that is to say: aboundâce of vertues into the towre of heauenlye knowledge, where as they that be euill and folysh be occupyed in gatherynge vp lytell fardeles of worldlye thynges much vnprofitable, and we that be aboue, wyse in heuene vertues, doo deryde and laughe at the folysh people that do gather vp the most vilest things (that is to say temporal thinges) being safe and sure from all the hole furious rowte and tumultes of the folysh and wycked folkes, and defed with such a bulwarke of wysedome wherunto it is not lawfull for the folysh people that would assaute us, to come.

PHYLOS.

He that is vertuous and sober in his lyuyng, and hathe trodden downe vnder his fete, and ouercome the proude fortune that is to saye fortunes chaunces, & beholdinge good fortune and euyll fortune, that is to sai hath knowen aduersitie and prosperitye indifferëtly, and can kepe his mind so, that he neither reioise in prosperitie nor be sad and sorye in aduersitie : the ragyng floudes of the sea y' the heate of the son sterreth vp & causyth to boile from the very bottom of the same, nor the vnstable hyll called Vesenus as often as it thrustyth oute the smoky autte of fyer out of his chynes or cliftes, nor the brennyng lyghtnyng that is wonte to stryke vpon high towres, can mowe that ma. Therfore why do wretchyd men meruayle onelye and fere cruell tyrantautes that rageth without strëgthe of heuene vertues. Trust not vpon the goodes of fortune, nor feare thou for any aduersitie. And then thou shalt mytigate and make weke the furye of the impotent tyraunt. But whoso that quaketh and fereth for y' loss of worldly thynges, or do wysshe for temporall goodes, is not stedfast nor at lybertye, but hathe forsaken his buckeler of for malyce of their wysedome wer put to death.

Wise men that beholdeth heauenly things following vertue for hope of good thynges after this lyfe, neuer felith aduersitie of temporall thinges but ouercometh y' world, and the vanities thereof.

Lechery is lik the fluid of y' seas, & boylinge of the same, for it rageth in de-syre, and y' act thereof is fylthye. Cour-ting breynth, and cesseth not, as the hill Vesenus. Pryde is lyke unto the light-ening, for it heareth the mynde so high as though it passed men of
defence and safegarde, and is remouyd from his place of securitie, and maketh a chayne whereby he may be drawn, that is to say: makyth a snare of sorrow or care to wrappe his minde into.

**PHYLOS.**

Perceyuest thou not those thynges that be spoken, & be they not pryned and well fyred in thy mynde? Art thou no more apt to vnderstand the then an asse to play on the harpe? Why wepest? Why shedest thou teres? Tell me thy gryfe, hide it not. If thou wylte haue helpe of the phision, it behoueth the to shewe thy greife. BOEC. Then I takynghe vnfo my selfe a good harte or mynde sayde. Doith not the crueltie of fortune suffyciently appere agaynst me nedeth it anye other instruction? Doth not this place, that is to say: this person shewe the? Is this the place of study y' I had in the counraye wherein thou dydst chose the sureste seate for thy selfe in our scoles, in the whych thou sitting wyth me often tymes, disputest of godly and worldelye thynges? Had I than so vyle habyt, and suche sorowful countenaunce? When I dyd serch out with the, the secret causes of nature? When thou dyddest declare vnfo me the course of the sterres with a Virge or rodde of geometry? When thou dyddest forme my maners and dysposicion of lyfe to yse symylytude and lykenes of the heuenly order? be not these the rewardes due vnfo them that folowe the? Certes thou hast confyrmyd thys sentence by yse mouthe of Plato. Blessed is the commonaltye that is ruled by wise mē, or if it happen that the rulers of commennaltyes do studye wysedome. Thou haste lykewyse confyrmed and sayde by the mouthe of the sayde Plato, that it is necessarye that the commonaltye be governed by wise men, lest that the gouernment thereof. committed to wycked and euyl cityzens, should hurte the good people. I therefore folowyng the same sayinge that I lernid of the, emongest my secret and solitorye lesures, wysshed to practyse the same in the administracion of the commonwelth. God and thou (whiche haue instructe and taughte them y' be wyse) be my wytnes, that nothinge mouyd me for to beare rule but for the common welthes sake, and for y' cause I hadde verye greuous and contynuall enmyte and hatred wyth wicked men: for my conscience hath suche libertye y' I more lound the ministracion of iustice then I
regarded the anger of greate men. How often haue I wythstande
the mā named Canigast, that stroue to hinder every pore mannes
welth? How often haue I tourned the man Trygyull, prouost
of the kynges house from the wrōges that he had begun to doo,
and more that he purposed to do to pore men? how often haue I
defended poore men that were wrapped in infynyte miseries,
by the couitousnes of cruel straugers vpponysshed, whereby I was
in daunger to lose myne autoritye? There was newe anye
manne that coulde drawe me from iustye to do wronge.
When I sawe the goodes of the people of the prouynce spoyled or
taken awaye, eyther by pryuye robberye or by commō trybutes,
I was as sorry for it as they that suffred the wronge. When a
greuous order was made there in the time of greate honger or
scarsitie, whyche would haue impoueryshed gretelye the pro-
unce of Campanye, I stroue agaynste the prouost of the pretory
(that appoynted that order) for the loue of cōmen welth, and I
laboured agaynst it, the Kyng Theodoryke knowyng the same,
so that I ouercame and caused yū the order toke none effecte.
Paulyn a noble counsayler of Rome (whose ryches the houndes
of the Palace, that is to say, the kynges gredy officers wold haue de-
uousyd by desyre and ambiciō) I deluyered and drewe out of theyr
rauynynge gapynge mouthes. I dydde put my selfe in daunger of
the malycē of the false accusar Ciprian the kyngs seruaunte, that
the payne of the accusation before adiudged shuld not wrongfullye
punyshe Albynew a counsayloure of Rome. Have I not brought my
selfe into troubles ynoygh? But I oughte tobe more sure emongest
other whom I haue profited then emongest yū kyngs seruauntes
whome I haue ben against alwaies for the loue of iustice, by whose
accusacion (that is to say by the kynges seruauntes, my familiy
felowes, that haue accusyd me) I am banished of the whiche
accusars Basilius was one, yū sometyme was dryuen out of the
kinges seruice for hys malycē and wyckednes, and nowe
broughte in agayn for to accuse me for nede of other mēs
monyre and reward. Opilion and Gaudēcius, (certes) were other
two of my accusars, whyche when the kyng Thedyryke for
theyr manyfolde deceytes & falsehed had banished, they would
not obey hym, but refused and defendid thē by takyngYe sac-
ctuare, and when the kyng herd of it, he comaued yū except
they departed and went awaye from yū Citye of Rauenna within
a certayne tyme appoynted, that they shoulde be marked on the

Canigast was
a tynaute and
an officer of
kyng Theodo-
rike.

Triguyll was
the kynges ser-
uaunte a cōmō
extorcioner.

The order
was that in a
dere yeare the
kyngs barnes
beynge full of
corne, no man
should by anye
corne but of yū
kyngs at a dere
pryce, such as
was appoynted
by the kyng
and his cruell
officers.

Albyne was
falsely judged
to be punyshed
before he was
accused, &
foole worthy
punishment.
forshed with a hote Irô & dryuen awaye. What crueltie might seme more then this? For the same day was I falsely accused by the very same accusers. What may be sayd to thys? Hath my study and learnyng deserved this? or hath my damp
nacion or judgement made the accusars true? Oughte not fortune to be ashamed of thys? Although fortune were not ashamed that I was vniustlye accusyd, yet ought she to be ashamyd of the vyle gayne of the accusers. But perchaûce thou woldest know the cause wherof I am accused. It is sayde that I wuld haue saued the senators. And thou wouldest knowe howe and after what maner I am accused. It is noised that I stopped y\textsuperscript{e} messenger and woulde not suffer hym to brynge hys letters of accusation vnto the kyng, whereby the senatours shold haue bene founde gylyte of treson commytted agaynste the kynges royal maiestye. O myssters Phylosyphy what thinke you herein, shall I denye it, lest that I should shame the? Truelye I do confesse that I haue desyred to saue the senate: And I confesse that I wyll neuer cesse to doo the same: But as towchynge that I did stoppe the message of the messynger, it shal cesse, for it is not treue. Shall I call it a wronge or treason to wyshe the preseruation of the order of the senate? Certes the same senate that consented to my dampnation dyd thys by theyr decrees judicall, as thouge it were not lawefull to desire theyr helth. But foly that alwaye workyth her own destractiö cannot chaûge the meryte of thynge. And I thinke by the iudgement of Socrates that it is not lawefull for me to hyde the truthe, nor to consent to lesynges. But how so ever it be, I referre it to thy iudgment, and to them that be wysse, to iudge, for the truthe and order of thys thing cannot be hyd from our successours, for I haue put it in wrytyng and in memory. For what auayleth me to speake of the letters falsely surmysed to be made by me (whereby I am accusyd) to haue hoped for the de
lyuerance of the Romaynes from the handes of the kynge Theodoryke. The craft of wych letters shoulde haue bene knownen yt I myght haue ben present before mine accusors which is a thynge most expedyent and necessary in all causes of iudgement, and what other fredom may më loke for? Certes I woulde there were some other thinge, I would then haue answered wyth the wordes of one Canius, (which whë he was accused of one Gaius, Cesars cosyn germayne sonne, that he was gylyt of a
coniuracion or conspiracy made agaynst hym) the said Canius
answered Gaius thus. If I had knownen it, thou shuldeste not
haue knownen it, I would haue wrought so warelye. In whyche
thinge before specyfied that I am vniustelye accusyd of euyll
men, sorowe hath not soo dulled my sensis or wytte, that I do
only conplayne that the wycked folke do goo aboute and inuente
wycked thynges agaynst vertuous folke, but I do marauyle
gretlye howe they can brynge to passe the thynges that they
haue take in hande. For to wyll to dood euyll and wycked
thyngs perchaunce is through our owne faulite: but it is lyke a
monster before god to do such euyll and wickyd thynges, that
euery wycked persō hath conceyued in hys mynde to dood
agaynst an innocent, wherof one of thy famlyyers that is to say
a Phylosopher demaunded iustly this question. Truelye he
sayth if there be a god frō whêce commeth euyll thynges? And
yf there be no God, from whence cometh good thynges? But
if it were lawfull, that wycked folke (that desyreth the death
doing of all good folke and of all the senate) wolde go aboute to
destroye me, whom they haue sene to defende good folke, & the
senate, whether thynkest thou that I had deserued the same of
the senate? that is to saye: that the senate shoule wyll my
distraction. Thou doest remètre (as I thynke) when that I was
aboute to saye or do any thyngye, thou beinge present didist
alwayes rule me. Thou remembre (I saye) at the Cytye of
Veron when the kynge Theodorike gredy and desyrours of
commen destruction, and to distroy al the senate, went aboute
to impute vnto all the hole order of senatoures, the treason and
gylte of hys royall Maiestye, wherof Albyne the senaoure was
accusyd, with how greate peryll of my selfe dyd I defende
the innocentye of the sayd senate? thou knowest that I saye truth,
and neuer bostyd nor reioysed for anie prayse to my selfe. For
a man demynysheth in maner the secretes of hys conscience as
often as he in praysyng hymselfe receiued any renoume of hys
dedes emongest men. But thou seyste what chaunce or ende I haue
for my innocencye. I do suffer paynes of false gyltie or felony,
wythoute deserte for a rewarde of my vertues. What opē con-
fession of felonye had iudges euuer so accordynge in crueltye?
but that eyther the erroure of manes wit, or the chaunce of
fortune (that is vnceertain vnto al mortal men) hath turnyd some
of the same iudges to compassion and pytye, sauynge in my
accusation. For although I had bene accusyd that I sayde I woulde brenne churches, & stranglye pristes with cruell swerde, and distroy all good folke, yet shulde not the iudge condenme me, excepte I were present and conuict of the offence vpon my confession therof: but I being absent the space of fyue hundred myles in great study, and hauing no knowledge that I was accusyd of any gylte or felonye, was adiudged by ye senat to deathe of prescription. O wel be they worthy prayse (it is spoken ironice that is to vnderstannde they be euil worthy prayse) that for my kyndenes haue thus iudged me, none of the could be so iudged of lyke cryme after the maner as I was whan I was present, as they were present at my iudgment, the innocencye of the whyche my offence they that haue accusyd me, haue scene and do knowe. Whyche innocencye to hyde & couer with som faute, they haue surmyshed that I haue hurte and pollyted my conscience with sacrifyse, or Nygromancy, in doinge sacrifyse to deuylys for ambicion or desyre of dignitie. But certainlye thou Philosopy being in me, dyddest put awaye all desyre of mortal thynges from my mynde, so that there was no place left for sacrifyse to deuyles in thy syght.

And thou diddest pour into mine eares and mynde daylye the sayinge of Pytagoras which is, that god must be serued and not Goddes. Nor it was not conuenyent for me, to requyre helpe of vnclene spyrytes or deuyles, whome thou haddest made of such excellency by wisdome, that thou wouldeste haue made me lyke vnto god by vnderstandyng. Furthermore my innocent wyfe of my howse, and a multitudes of my honeste frenes, and my father in law namyd the holy & reuerend Symachus in thys behalfe do defende me from all suspicion of such offence. But o thou malicye, those wycked that accusyd me doo take wytnes of the (O Phylosophye) of my crime and accusation, for they thought that I haue had affinitie or occasyon to inchauntment, because I am brought vp and instructyd in thy doctryne and informyd in thy maners. And it is not suffycient that thy reuerence do nothing profit me, but that thou rather willinglye are contented to be blamed of them for my offence, and accusacion. But yet besydes all my harms I haue thys more hurt, that the iudgement of many of the commen people do not consyder the meryt and desyre of thyngs, but onelye the chaunce of fortune, and doo iudge that onely such thynges be ordeyned of god, that
worldelye felycytye or delyte commendeth, which is as much to 
say: that (after the iudgement of the common people) yf a man 
haue welthe he is a good man, and worthy to haue it. And if he 
hath aduersitie, that he is an eyyll man & worthy to haue it, and 
that God hath forsaken hym. And soo there vpon it folowethe 
that wretchys and vnhappye or pore folke, be not regarded, or 
estemed. For whych cause it greueth me to remember what 
vnfittynge rumors and dyuere sayinges be emongest the people 
of me. And this I dare be bolde to say, that the last bourden of 
euyll fortune is thyss, that when my accusacion is imputed to 
wretched folke, it is thought that they haue deserved the same 
that they doo suffer. And certes I that am expulsyd from al 
good folke, spoyled of my dignities, and spotted in my estyma-
cion by false accusacion, in stede of rewarde haue receyued 
ponyshment, me thynketh that I do se the wyckyd companye of 
felonowes folke abounde in ioye and gladnes, and evry vnthryst 
lyye in a wayte to accuse good folke with newe fraudes. And I 
do se the good people lyce oppressed for fere of my peryll and 
ponysshement. And I do se euery vnthriftie person bolde to 
comyt synne, vnponysshed beynge procured therto for money. 
Also I do se the Innocetes not onely with oute succur, but 
also without defence. Therfore I am forced to crie vnto god 
of heuyn in this maner.

O Thou maker of the fyrmamente that bereth the starres, that 
art joyned to the eternall seat, Thou doist turne the firnamet 
awais with swyfte mouyne, and makeste the starres to kepe a 
due course, so that y* moone somtyme shynyngge with her fulle 
lyght when she is in the full, set dyrectly euyn agaynst her 
brother the sonne, shynyng with his beams obscureth and taketh 
away the lyght of the starres by reason of the great lyghte of the 
same. And lykewise thou causist y\' the moone other whyles pale 
of lyght approchynge nere vnto the sonne, doo lose her lyght.

And thou causyste the euenyngge sterre called Hesperus, that 
bryngeth in the colde in the begynnynge of the nyght, to change 
is olde course commynge agayne in the mornynge (at the son 
rysynge) very pale, and is then called Lucyfer. Thou makest 
daye shorter in the wynter time when the hoare frostes be on 
the ground, that maketh the leaues of trees to fall, Thou de-
uydest and makest the nyghtes shorte in sommer season. Thy 
myghty powre hathe appoynted diuers partes of the yeare, so that 

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There be four partes of the yere, Ver, Somer, Au-
tune and Wynter.

the gentel wynde Zephirus that is to saye: Ver tyme, bryngeth againe the grene leues that the wynde Boreas, that is to saye: the wynter toke awaye. And whatsoeuer sedes were sowne in the tyme of the sterre named acturus, are become longe corne and ripeth in the hote tyme of the sterre named Syrius in harvest. Nothyng is free from the olde lawe or order of gods purveyance or prouydece nor leuith the worke of hys place appoynted. O Lorde God thou gouernist all these foresayde thinges to a cer-
tayne ende, whye refusyste thou to gouerne mans actes or dedes in due order? Why rulyste not slyppy fortune that causyth so muche vrayete or chaunge of thinges, she ponyssheth Innocentes not gyltie, with ponisshement due for the wicked, and exalteth hygh, men of wycked maners, whyche treade vnnder foote the neckes of good folkes vniustlye. The vertuous man lieth in darkenes and is not set by. The iust man beryth the blame of the wyckyd periury couered with falsshedde is not ponysshed. But when the wycked persons (whome the moste partie of the people do feare) lysteth to exercyse their powre, they rejoyse to subdue myghty kynges, that is to saye: good and wyse men. O god what soeuer art thou that knytttest to gether the bondes of thinges in due order, loke vpō wretche people dwellynge on the earth that be not the vylest parte of thy worke, sore troubled with the bytternes of fortune, withdrawe the greate assaults thereof, and knyt fast, or rule the good and stedfast men of the earth, wyth lyke bondes as thou knytttest and rulyste the hyghe heuen, that they be not tormentyd wyth fortune, that is neuer stedfast but euer varyable.

After that I had barckyd oute or rashly spoken these thinges vnaduysedly my sorowe remaynynge styll, Phylosophy with a quyete countenaunce beynge nothyng moued or angerye at my complayntes, sayde vnto me thus. PHYL. When I sawe the sad and wepyng, I knewe by and by that thou were a wretche, and a banished man, but howe farre of thou were exiled or banished I knewe not but by thy owne sayinge. But yet thou art not banished farre from thy countray, that is to saye, farre from thy owne reason or judgemente, but thou hast strayed out of the waye or erred a litel. But if thou woldest rather accompt thy selfe banished from thy countraye, then I saye thou rather haste banished thy self. For certes to banishe the it was not lawfull for any man at any tyme, if thou remebryste what countrye
thou were borne in. Whyche countreye is not rulyd by the
gouernment of many, as the cytye of the Attheniens some-
tyme was gouerned. For of thy countrye is but one lord, one
tkyng, and one prynce, whych is almyghtye God, that more
recioyseth at the quyete consuersion of manye Cytezens together,
then of theyr exyle and banyshement. By whose precepts to be
ruled, and to obeye hys iustyce, is very hygh lybertye.

Hast thou forgotten the old lawe of thy Citie? wherein it is
establisshed for a law that who socuer had determyned therin to
dwell may not be banysshed from thens. But who soeuer hath
no desyre therein to dwel hath not deserued to be therein. Yet
the disposition and maner of this place of exyle doth not so
muche moue me, as thy face onelye whyche is the inwarde dis-
position of thy mynde. I do not requyre the walles of thy librari
deckyd with Irourye and glasse, rather thē the quietnes of the
inward thought of thy mynde, wherin I do not set and lay bokes,
but wise sentences that maketh the bookes to be precyous or
estemed. And Cerstes Boecius, thou haste sayd and declared the
truth of thy dedes done for the common vutilitie and profyt of the
people. But thou hast declared lytell of the commoditie that
thou hast had, by the multytude of thy actes and dedes. And
thou haste recyted thinges manifest to all men, of the honesty,
that is to saye: of the saluation of the senate, or of the falsehead,
that is to sai: of the forgynge of letters to themperor, imputyd to
the and layd to thy charge. The wyckednes and deceyts of thy
accusars thou hast touchyd playnely, and verye strayte, albeit
the thyngs might haue bene better spoken of & more fully by
voyce of the come people that knew it. Thou hast much blamed
the acte of the vniuste senate, and hathe lamented for my blame,
and hou haste bewayled the losse of thy good name. Laste of
all thou haste complayne vpon fortune, that rewardes be not
equally distrubuted to men accordyng to their desertes. And in
the ende of thy furyous meter, thou hast prayed that the same
peace of the dyuyne purucyans or prouydence, may rule men on
earth as it ruleth the heuen. But for bycause that manye passions,
and trybulatyōs haue greuyd the, and that dolor anger and
heuynes turneth thy mynd dyuersly as it appereth nowe: Therefore
as yet thou shalt not tast the stronge medicine in thy
weakenes, but suche as be somewhat easy, whereby the thynges
that by longe increase of corruption & paine haue growthen vnto
an hard swellynge, by softe handelynge of lenytyue medycynes may be dissolved and made more apte to suffer the vyolence of stronger remedies.

He that soweth anye sedes in the grounde when that the sonne is in the sygne of Cancer (whyche is in the monethe of June, when that sygne waxeth hote with the sonne beames) maye eate acorns of the oke tree, for any hope of corne that he is lyke to haue growinge of suche sowyng of his seades. And let no man seke to gather violettes in the floryshyng wodes, whë the fieldes sowndyng wyth the blusterynge cold wynd named Aquillo, bryngyth fourth no flowers at all. Nor let any man loke to gather grapes in the srynge tyme called Ver, when al thinges do begyn fyrst to budde and grow. For the god of wyne called Bachus (after the faynynge of poetes) bryngethe forth his fruytes, that is to say: grapes rather in Autumpne, whych is the end of sommer. For God hathe appoyned the tymes of the year, and hathe directed them euery one to hys proper offyce and hath so estabyleshed them, that he wyll not suffer them to be altred, y' the tyme ordained for one offyce, shall serue for a nother. The thing therefore that chaungethe hys due order, neuer hath good ende thereof.

PHIL.

O Boecius, before I geue the any medycyne, tell me fyrst whether thou wylte suffer me to demaûd of the certayne questyons for to knowe the state of thy mynd, whereby I may the better vnderstand howe to cure the of thy dyssease? BOECI. I saye aske me whatsoeuer, please the that I may answere the. PHIL. Then the sayde phylosophye sayde: Thynkyst thou that the worlde is gouernyd by folyshe and by casuall chaunces? or beleuyst thou that it is rulyd by reason, that is to saye: by gods puruiance? B. Truly I say y' I neuer thought by any maner of means that suche certayne thynges should be rulyd by the folyshe happe of fortune. But I doo knowe that almyghty God the creatoure of things rulith his own worke, and I neuer sawe the tyme that coulde turne me from the truth thereof. P. It is euë so, for thou saidest so a lytle before, and lamentedest that mankinde was not gouerned by the dyuyne puruyans of God, not doubtyng but that other creatours were ruled by the saide diuine ordinacre. But O, I do gretly wondre why thou art sycke for
so much as thou art set in so good opinion. Neuertheles, let us serche deper : I do thynke that some thynge is yet amysse with the, but I cannot tell what it is. Saye to me Boecius (for as moch as thou doubtiste not but that almyghtye god ruleth the worlde) doest thou knowe howe he gouerneth it? BOE. I do scarsely vnderstande what thou menist by thy question, and as yet I cannot answere the to the same question. PHIL. I was not deceyued in that I sayd som thynge was amysse wyth the, for the syckenes of perturbacion or trouble hathe crepte into thy mynde as by an open way that hath no impediment, or stoppe. But tel me, doist thou remember what is the ende of all thynges naturall? BOE. I have harde it, but heuynes hath caused me to forget it. PHIL. Knowes thou of whō al things haue taken theyr beginning? BOE. I saye I haue knowne and haue answered, that God is the begynnynge of al thinges. PHIL. Then howe maye it be that (synce thou knowest the begynnynge of all thynge) thou knowest not the ende of the same? But suche be the maners of troubles, and such be theyr strength that they maye cause a man to forgette partelye, but cannottte plucke awaye from hym all together. But I woulde that thou woldest aunswere me to thys question. Remēbrest thou that thou art a man? BOE. Why should I not remember it? PHIL. Canste thou tell than what thynge a man is? BOECI. Askiste me thyng? Or whether that I do knowe that I am a resonable and a mortall beste? I do knowe & confesse that I am so. PHIL. Knowest thou whether thou were any other thynge? BOE. None other thynge. PHIL. Nowe knowe I another great cause of thy disease. Thou haste forgotten to knowe thy selve, what thou arte. Wherefore I haue found fully the cause of thy sicknes, or els the maner and wayes how to recouer the of the same. For bycause thou haddest forgotten thy selve what thou art, therefore thou hast complayned that thou art both a banyshed mā, and spoyled and robbed of thy own proper goodes, and ryches, temporall. And no meruayle it is, for thou wotyst not what is the ende of al thyngs, and thou thykest that euyll men and wicked be myghtye and happye. And why so? because thou hast forgotten by what means the worlde is gouernyd. And thou thykest that these mutaciōs and chaunces of fortune, dowander wythout anye gouernoure. Whyche be the greate causes not onelye of syckenes, but also of vter destruction and death. But thou art bounde to geue thankes to
the Author of helthe, that nature is not cleane extynct in the, but that some strength yet remayneth. And I haue a great restoritie towardes thy healthe, that is to say: the trew vnderstanding of the worlds gouernaunce in that thou beleuyst that it is not gouerned by the folishe chaunces of fortune, but subiect to goddes ordynance. Therfore feare not, for of this lytle sparke of truth, the lyuely heate shall reuyue & recouer his olde strength agayne. But forasmoche as now, it is no time to vse stronger medicines, & that the nature of mens mindes is suche, that when they haue forsaken trewe opynyons, they receyue false opinmons and errorrs, whereof spryngeth the darkenes of perturbacion, or trouble of the minde that taketh away the treue lyght of vnderstanding of the same. But I wyll proue to remoue a lytell the same darkenes with easy and moderate medicynes. That after that the darke cloudes of false affectes be taken or remoued awaye, thou mayst beholde and know the cleare lyght of the verye trueth.

As the sterres, beynge couered with darke cloudes, can giue no lyghte to the earth. And as the troublous wynde named Auster, moueth the sea with heat, and causeth the water (that before was clere as glasse, and lyke the cleare day) to become foul and thycke by reason of the mudde, or fylthe, that is dysolued and styrrd vp from the bottom, so that a man can not se, any thynge within the water. And lykewise as the stone, fallen from some hyghe Rockes, into the water, dothe let and trouble the water course, that renneth from the hyghe hyll: Euen so, ioye, feare, hope, and dolour, do interrupte, and tourne the mynde of man, from knowledge of the truth. For the mynd that is troubled, w any of these thynges, is darked and bounde, as it were in bondes or chaynes. Therfore yf thou wilt se the trueth, with a cleare syght, and come to the knowldege of the trueth, by a ryghte pathe: Ioye not in worldlye, or temporall thynges, put awaye feare of euyll fortune to come. Truste not in good fortune, and be not sorye for the losse of worldlye goodes. For the mynd is darked and bounde, as it were in bondes, where these things do reygne.

Here endeth the fyreste Booke.
THE SECOND BOKE.

BOECIUS.

AFTER this phylosophy held her peace a lytel whyle, and then she by a modeste stylnes perceyuing me, dylygent and intentyfe to heare her speake: said as folowethe. PHIL. Forasmuche as I haue knowen and founde out the originall causes, and the disposition of thy syckenes, O Boecius, that is to saye: that thou arte sycke for the losse of thy former fortune that was prosperous, & nowe beynge chaunged as thou surmysest, hath chaunged and turnyd the disposition of thy mynde. I do wel know the manolfde deceytes of the sayde fortune, for so long she vsyth hyr famylier flatterye, with them whom she intendethe to deceyue, vntyl she hathe ouerthrown them sodenly with intollerable greife and sorowe, whome she hath forsaken and left in dyspayre of any cōforte agayne. Whose nature maners & dygnytie, yf thou do consyder, thou shalt perceyue that nether thou haddest in her, nor hast lost by her, anye good thinge at all. But I thynke I shall not laboure muche to brynge these thinges of fortunes goodnes into thy remembranue. For thou were wonte to re-rebuke wyth sharpe wordes the same fortune both beynge present and flatter-ynge, and thou didest argue or dispute agaynst her wyth sentences, drawen out of my doctryne or informaciō. But truly euery sodein mutacion or chaüge of thynges cometh not wythoute some trouble of the mynde. So it is done and commeth to passe, that thou art fallen a lytel from the quietnes of thy mynde that thou were in before. But it is tyme that thou do receiue and taste som easye and pleaunnt thyinge, which after that it is entred into the inwarde partes of thy mynde, it may prepare a waye for stronger medycynes. Therefore behold the per-

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swasion of the swetnes of Rethoryke is presente, that goeth forwarde, then onely in the ryghte way, when she foloweth my precepts. And with Rethoryke is a mayd of my howse, named Musyke, that syngeth nowe lyghter mesures, & now greater mesures. What thynge is it therfore, (O thou man,) that hath caste the into heuynes, and wepynges? I beleue that thou hast seene some straungge thinge. If thou dost thynde that fortune is turned agaynst the: thou art therin decyued, for she is not chaunged, these were her maners alwayes, this is her proper nature, to be nowe prosperous and nowe contrarye. And she hath rather kept her owne nature and constancy aboute the in this her mutabylite. Truelye she was alwaies such when she flattred the, & decyued the, with the delite of false profyte. Thou hast knowen the doubtfull countenaunce of that blynde goddes fortune, which although she do hyde her selfe vnto some men, in promysyng them prosperye: hath shewed her selfe many festlye and holye as she is to the, that is to saye: inconstaùit. If thou allow her: vse her maners, and cõplain not. If thou feare her falseched: refuse her & forsake her, as one whose pastime is perillous and hurtfull. For fortune, whiche nowe is the cause of thy great heuines and greif: ought to be the cause of thy quietnes and reste. But certes she hath forsaken the, as she hath done other. For neuer man yet was sure of her. Accomptest thou that thynde happy and prosperous that wyll not tarye and remayne? And is fortunes presence so precious to the, that is so slipperye and wil not tary? And also when she departeth from the, she bringeth in heuynes and mornyng? Therfore syns that fortune can not be retayned as a man wolde haue her, and when she departeth she maketh men carefull, what other thynde is slypperye fortune but a certain token of wretchednes to come? And it is not sufficienste to beholde the thinge presente, but it is wysedome to consyder the ende of all thynges, & the chaungyngge from one thynde to another, maketh that the threatnynges of fortune are not to be fearid, nor her flatterynge to be desyryd. Moreover thou oughtest to suffer paciently all thinges y' be done within the compasse, & boundes of fortune, that is to say: al worldlye thynges, syns thou hast submytted thy selfe to her yoke by desyre of temporall thyngs. But if thou wilt prescribe a lawe to Fortune to tarye or departe hence, whome thou of thyne owne free wyll, hast chosen

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for thy lady: thynkest thou not that thou doest her wronge therein? And that by thy impacyence thou makest her wrouth and angrye? Whom thou canst not chaunge other wyse then she list her selfe. If thou commytte the sayles of thy shyppes, to the wyndes, thou goyst not whyther thou wouldeste thy selfe, but whyther the wynde dryuethe the. If thou sowe thy sedes in the feldes, thou muste consyder that the yeres be somtyme plentious, & other whyles scarce or baren, so that it is not in thy powre, to order & rule the yere as thou lysethe. Lyke wyse thou hast submytted thy selfe to fortunes gouernaunce, therfore it behoueth the to obeye the maners of her beynge thy lady and mystres. Certes thou laborest to staye her tournynge whele. O, thou fole of al foles mortall, if fortune bega to be stedefaste and not mutable, she myght not be called fortune.

**PHYL.**

When yf fortune with her prouderyght hande, causyth mutatyon aswel of aduersytie as of prosperytye. And when she is caried aboute as the boelynge floud named eurype. Then she beynge cruell deposyth kynges, that somtyme were fearefull to other: & exalteth the pore & simple, that were subdued and overcome. She regardith not the carefull that wepythe, nor heryth the wretched that wantith. She is so hard hartid that she laughith at the mourninges, of such as she hath made carefull. Suche is her pastyme, thus she proueth her power and strëght. She sheweth a great bost or fayre face to her seruanites that gapeth for worldlye thinges, when a man is sene overthrownen and exaltyd in one howre. These be the wonderous workes of fortune, when a man shalbe vp and dounie in a shorte tyme, that is now in auctorytie and nowe not estemed or abiecte.

**Philosophy talketh with Boecius in the stede of fortune sayenge.**

**PHI.**

I wolde fayne talke with the (Boecius) a few wordes (with the sayenges of fortune, or in the stede of fortune) therfore take thou good hede whether that she asketh the thyngge, that is right and lawfull. O thou man, wherfore makest thou me a wronge doer and gilty, with thy contynuall complayntes? What wronge
haue I done the? What goodes haue I taken from the? Reason
with me before what Iudge thou wilt, of possessions, riches or
other dignities, whether that any man lyuyng, can clayne any
of theym to be his owne. I wyll gyue the gladlye suche that
thou prouist to be thi owne proper. For whē nature brought
the out of thy mothers wombe, I receuyed the all naked, without
any thynge, and cherisshed the with myne owne goodes, and was
redye to norishe the more mekely of mine owne gentlenes, & I
endued the with abondaunce, & with the beaute of all thinge y'
I had, which things maketh the now so angry and cruel agaynst
me. Now it pleseth me to withdraw my hand, thou oughtest to
thāke me for vsing of goods that were none of thynce. Thou
hast no iust cause to complaine as though thou haddest loste thy
goodes vitterly. Therfore why mournyst thou? I haue done
the no wronge. Ryches, Honour, and suche lyke, be myne
owne, and they beyng my seruauntes, do knowe me for their
ladye and mystres, they do come wyth me, and do go awaye
wyth me. I dare boldely say, that yf those things that thou
complaynyst to be lost, were thyne: thou could not haue loste
them by anye meanes. Should I alone be defended to vse my
owne ryght? It is lawfull for the firmamente to make cleare
bryght daye, and after that to shadowe the same againe with the
darke night. It is also lawfull for the yerce to decke the grounde
sometyme (as in the Ver) with flowers, other whyles (as in
sommer) with corne, and to dystroye the same agayne (as in
Autumpne & wynter) with rayne and colde. It is lawfull for
the sea, (in a caulme) to be playne and smothe, and in tyme of
tempeste, to be roughe and raginge, with floudes and stormes.
Shoule the insaciate couetuousnes of man, bynde me to be
stedfast agaynst my nature? This is my power and this is
always my play. I do turne the wauerynge whelre rounde aboute,
that neuer cessith. I do reioise to chaing low thynges, that is to
say: Aduersitie, with high things, y' is to sai, prosperytie.
Clyme upon my whelre if thou wilt but upon this conditiō, that
thoushalte not iudge that I do the anye wrong, yf thou fall or
come downe, when I lyste to play. Knewest not thou my
maners? Knewest not thou Cresus kynge of the Lydeens, of
whome Cyrus the Kynge of Persiens, was sore afferd, a lytel
before that Cyrus toke Cresus, in batel, and led hym to the
fyer to be brennyd, but that a raygne fell from heuen, and
sauyd hym, whereby he escaped. And hast thou forgotten howe that Paulus a consull of Rome, wepte for the myserye of the kyng of Persyens, whom he had taken prysoner and captyue.

What other thynge causyth the exclamation, and lamentation of tragidies? But onelye that I fortune, sodenly by my rashe stroke, haue subuertyd noble kyngedomes that were sometyme prosperous. Hast thou not learnyd (when thou were a yonge man) that there laye in the entrye at Jupyers house two tunnes of wyne, the one full of good wine, theother ful of euil wyne, of the whyche every man (that entred) must nedes nedes. What cause hast thou to complayne, if thou hast taken more parte of the good (that is to say) of prosperitie then of aduersitie? And what and I amnot clene gone fro the? What and my vnstede-fastnes be a iuste cause for the, to hope for better thynges? dyspayre the not therefore, and desyre not to lyue after thy owne mynde, & wyll, although thou be placyd in the worlde whyche is commen and indifferent for all lyuyng thynges.

FORTUNE SPEAKETH.

If that Fortune (whom the gentils do call the goddes of plenty) woulde geue wyth a full horne, that is to sai abound-auntlye, as much ryches as the water of the sea turnyth vppe grauell, when it is tossed and moud with the ragnge wyndes. And woulde geue asmuch Ryches as there be starres, shynyng in the firmamët in a clere bright nyght, when the sterres do appere and shyne. And woulde never wythdrawe her hands, but powre downe and geue ryches continuallye: yet for al that miikynde would not cesse wepynge and cöplayning. And although that god, that is so ryche of gold, woulde gladely here mans desyres and requestes, and geue them neuer so plentiouslye, and decke the couetous men with hygh honour: yet are they not contentyd. But it semyth vnto the, as they had gotten nothinge. Suche is their insaciate couetus, deouering that, y' they haue gottë and euer gápynge, redy to receyve more and more. Therefore, what brydel can holde to any stededefast ende, the gredye couytuousnes of men? whe n that the more they abounde in ryches, the more they thyrst and desyre to haue: Soo he that fearyth that he shall lacke, and is not contented

Tragedie is a wrytting blamynge dyse, whiche do begyn with prosperite & ende with myserie. Jupiers house is the worlde the two tunnes of wyne, betokeneth prosperitie and aduersitie, whereof all y't lyue in ye worlde muste needes tast.

The full horne is a fable syngnyfeyng plentitie, or prosperitie. For Harclues wrastylyng with Achileus (which was transformed into a bul) tooke hym by the horne and brake it and filled it full of apples and swete flowers, and dyd sacry-fyce therwith too fortune, and so when it is ful, it is taken for prosperite, and whë it is emptie it is taken for aduersitie.

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with that he hath, but soroweth for more, accompting him selfe pore, hath neuer ynough, and so is not ryche, but poore.

**Phylosophy speketh.**

Therefore, yf that fortune spake wyth the for hyrselffe after thys maner before sayde, Certes thou haddest nothinge to answere her wythall. And yf thou haddest any ethyng to defende rightfully thy complaynt withall, it behouyth the to shewe it.

Boe. Then I saye, that the thynges that fortune hath sayde be goodly, and made swete with the pleasure of Rhetorike and musike, and then onely they delyte men, when they be harde. But yet the felinge of sorowe & greifes is more depe, & paynfull vnto the diseased, and wretched people, then the sayd pleasaunte wordes can helpe and ease. For when the words of fortune do leue of to sound in myne eares, the former greife commeth againe, and ouermuch greuyth my mynde.

Phil. And thou saiest ryght soth. For the sayd wordes of fortune be no medicyns for thy disease, but rather nouryshynges agaynst the cure of thy greife. For the medycynes, that shulde serche vnto the very botom of thy sores, and take awaye the primatyue cause thereof, I wyl declare vnto the, when tyme shall requyre.

Neuerthelesse, esteme not thy self a wretche, or clene forsaken. Hast thou forgotten the number and maner of thy prosperitye? I do passe ouer, and nede not shew howe that the noble men of the Cytye of Rome, whyche were Consulles, toke charge of the, beyng an orphant withoute father and mother, and that thou were chosen and elect into the affinite of Princes of y* Cytye. And thou begannyst rather to be dere and welbeloued, then a neyghbour, the whiche is the most precyous kynd of Aliaunce. What man would not iudge the most happye, that haddyst suche a father in lawe, such a chast wyfe, and such good chaunces of thy men chyldren as thou haste? And byesides this (I am disposed to passe ouer commen thynges) I doo not speake of the dygnytys that thou haddest in thy youth, whych are denyed to old folke that is to say, scarce any olde folke coulde attayne vnto anye suche. For nowe it delyghtethe me to come vnto, and remember the singuler aboundaunce or hepe of thy
prosperities. So that if any fruit of worldly and trasitorye thinges, myght be accountyd felcytye, or prosperitie, myghteste thou forgette (for any hurte that myght happen) the day that thou sawiste thy two sonnes made Consuls, and ladde together from thy house with so greate assëble of Senators, & wyth so greate Ioy of the people? And whan thou sawest them set in the courte, in the Chayres of hygh dignitie and iudgement, thou thy selfe beinge an orator, or speaker of kynges laude and praysynges, dyddyst deserue glory of wytte and eloquence, when that thou (sytyng in the middes of thy two sonnes beyng consules) diddest satysfye and please the expectatyon of the multytude of the people that was aboute the, wyth triumphant laude and prayse of vyctorye?

Thou then (as I thynke) didest deceyue Fortune with thy gloryous wordes, when that she thus fauored the, and cheryshed the as her owne derlynges. Thou dydest beare awaye from fortune, such a gyft and reward, that she neuer gaue to any pryuate man. Wylt thou call Fortune to accompte nowe for anye thynge: She hath nowe firste wynkyd vpon the, wyth her frownynge or cruell countenaunces or lokynge. And yf thou couldest consider the number and maner of myrthe and sorowe, that is to saye: of thy prosperitie and aduersitie, thou cannyste not denye but that thou art yet happye. For if thou countist thyselxe therfore vnhappye, by cause those thinges be gone that semyd happye & good: yet thou oughteste not to esteme thy selxe a wretche or an abiecte. For the thinges that nowe seme vnhappye and sorowefull, do passe awaye. Arte thou the fyrst that art be com a sodeine geste into the shadowe of thys lyfe, or thynkest y' that ther is any certayntie or stedfastnes in worldelye thynges? When y' the swyft hour of deth taketh awaye the same man, that is to saye Mans lyfe? For althoughe there is seldome any hope that the god dys of fortune woulde contynue, yet is the latter daye of mans lyfe in maner a death to fortune. What matter is it therfore as thou thynkest, whether that thou dyinge, forsake fortune, or she fleinge awaye, forsake the? That is to saye: Whether thou by death of thy bodye, forsake fortune, or Fortune by flyinge from the, forsake the? Surely no matter or difference it is.

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When the sonne begynnythe to send or geue forthe hys lyghte, with his bryght glysteryng red charetes, then the bryghte daye sterre, beyng obscuryd, dyymmed, or dullyd in her beautie and countenaunce, becommeth pale and wan, & loseth her cleare lyght, by the greate bryghtenyes of the sonne. And when the woode waxeth freshe, gaye, and redde with rosye or redde flowers, in the fyrst sommer season, with the blowynge of the warme wynde named Zephirus: If the cloudy wynde named Auster do begynne to blowe boysteouslye and roughelye: then the beautie of the freshe flowers do clene vanyshe awaye from the thornes. The sea is ofte smothe and calme when the floudes be not mouyd. And ofte the stormye wynde Aquilo, stereth horrible tempestes, and ouerturnythe the sea, If the forme of thys worlde be so seldom stedefast, and turnythe wyth so many alteracions & chaunges: why then wylte thou put confydence in the vnstedefast fortunes of men? Or wylte thou trust to the goodes of fortune, that be vncertayne and transitorye? It is manysted and estabylshed by gods law, perdurable, that nothynge gotten or engendred, is always stedefaste and stable.

O thou noryce of al vertues, thou sayest treuthe. I cannot deny the swyfte course of my prosperitye. But thys is the thynge that moste greuyth me, when that I doo remember y* I was happye or in prosperitye. For in all aduersitie of Fortune, the mooste greife of aduersitie, is to remember, that I haue bene in prosperitie.

But what thouge y* thou sufferest ponishmet of false opinion, thou mayste not impute the same to the lacke of thynges, as though thou haddest nothynge. For thou hast many thynges lefte yet. For yf the vaine name of causall prosperitye, do moue the: it is mete that thou accompt and reken with me, howe moche & howe great ryches thou hast yet in store. If therfore the thynge that thou hadst, & dyd possesse, most precious and best in all the treasure of thy fortune, be reserued yet vnto y* by gods grace vnspotted and inuyolate, mayst thou
ryghtfullye complayne vpon the myschaunce of fortune, hauynge styll thy best thynges? Certes the same precious worshyp of mankind, Simachus thy father in lawe, is in good helthe, a wyse man, & a vertuous man for whose sake thou wouldyst be redye to ieopard thy lyfe if nede were, he beynge a man fautles, is sorye for thy injuries.

Thy wyfe also lyueth, both sober of wytte, and excellent in clenes of chastite, and shortly to conclude all her vertues, she is lyke her father Symachus. She lyueth, I saye, to the, and she beynge wery of her lyfe, kepyth her lyfe for thy sake, being overcome with wepynge, and sorowe, for lacke of the. In the whyche one thyng I must nedes graüt that thy felicitie is mynyshed.

What shall I saye of thy two sonnes beynge Consulles, in whom there shynyth the wysedome of theyr father, and of theyr graundefather, as mucche as is possyble to be in chyladers of theyr age, but yet the cheyfe cure of al men lyyung is to conserue theyr owne lyfes. O thou man yf thou remember thy selfe, the goodes that thou hast yet remaynyng, do make the happye. Whyche goodes, no man douhtyth, but that they be derer and more to be estemyd, then thy owne lyfe. Therefore nowe wyte thy eyes and wepe no more, for fortune is not all agaynste the, nor the stronge tempest of aduersitie hath yet touchyd the, for thy ankers, that is to saye: thy frendes do styke fast to the, whych will not suffer the to wante conforte of the tyme presente, nor hope of the tyme to come.

BOE. And I do wyshe that they maye cleue fast, and abyde, for whyles that they doo remayne, howe socuer thynges be, or how-socuer the world goeth, I shal escape and do wel. But thou seyst howe that thapparell and outewarde goodes that I had be now gone.

PHIL. But I haue somewhat comfortyd the, yf thou forthinke the not of all thy hole fortune, for thou hast y* best goods styll. But I maye not suffer thy delycyse or tenderenes, that thou wepynge and sorowefull, complaynyst that thou lackyst somewhat of thy prosperytie. For what man is so full of prosperytie, that doth not complayne, or is not pleasyd wyth some parte of hys estate or dege? For the estate & condition of worldlye goodes, is so carefull a thyng, that eyther is commeth neuer to a man together holye, or ells it neuer contynueth styll wyth him. For
although one man hath aboundaunce and plentye of monye, yet
he lackyth another thyng that is to saye, he is ashamed of his
ignobilitytie, that he is no gentylman borne. And another man is
well knowne for a gentyll man, but yet he is so nedye & poore
that he had leuer be vnknownen of his gentyles bloude. Another
hathe both aboundaunce of goodes, and is noble, and yet he
bewaylethe hys chaste lyfe, that he may not marye a wyfe.
Another is happely maryed and hathe no chyldren, and gathereth
treasure for a straunge heyre. Another is happye wyth chyldren,
but he beyng sorowful for the synes and offences of hys sonne
or doughter, wepyth. Therfore no mä (for the most parte) is con-
tentyd wyth hys estate or degre of fortune. For euere man hath
some thinge, that (being not prouyd) he knoweth not, or beyng
prouyd, he ferythe. And adde thereto that euere welthye man
hath such delycate felynge, that (except he hath all thynges
at his commaundement) he is so impacient in aduersitie, that he is
ouerthrown, and dyspleysyd wyth every lytel thynge. And very
small things they be in aduersytie, that draweth awaye the
cheyfe perfection of prosperitie from them that be moste fortunate.
How many men (thinks thou) woldhe thynke them selfe neste
vynto heauen, y't is to saye: welthy, yf that they myghthe haue but
the lest parte of the resydue of thy fortune that remayneth with
the. This place that thou callest an exyle: is a countrie to them
that dwell therin. So that no man is wretched or abiecht, but
he that judgeth hymself so. And cõrrary wyse, all fortune is
good to hym that is contented. What man is he that is so welthy,
but wold wishe to chaõge his estate, when he is not contented
therwithall? How moch byternes is mixed with the sweetnes
of mans prosperite, which prosperite, although it seme plesaunt
to hym that hath it, can not be so kept as a man wolde haue it,
but when it lysteth, it gothe awaye.

Therfore, it appereth howe wretched is the prosperytie of
mortall thynges, which do not alwayes contynue with them that
be pacient, & contented, nor deliteth hooly the wretched man,
impacient. O you mortall men, wherfore seke you in outward
thynges, the felicitie that is establisshed within you? Errour
and ignoraunce confoundeth you. I shall shewe the shortlye,
the roote of hye felicitie in this lyfe. Is there any thyng more
precious to the, then thyne owne selfe.

Thou wylt answere & say naye. Then yf that thic mynde
be quyet and hoole, thou shalt possesse the thynge that thou woldest not lese at any tyme, nor fortune can take it from the. And to thentent that thou mayst knowe, that felycitie can not stand in fortunes things, or worldly things, yea maist thus gather and understand therof. If that felicitie be the soureseygne bountie or goodnes of nature, lyuyng by reason, truly that can not be soureyne good, that maye be taken awaye by any means: but that thynge is more excellent, that can not be taken awaye. Than it is playne that vnstedfastnes of fortune maye not attayne to recyue beatytude, that is to saye: perfyte felycitie.

More ouer, that man, that this tomblynge or rollynge vnperfyte felycitie, or goodnes, caryeth aboute, eyther knoweth that it is mutable, or els he knoweth it not. If he knoweth it not, what: blissed or good fortune may be to the blindnes of ignoraiice? And if he knoweth that it is mutable, then he oughte to feare ythou loose not that thynge that he dowtedh not, but that he maye loose it, therfore contynuall feare wyll not suffre hym to be blyssed or happy.

If he do loose it, that is to saye: yf he lose temporal felicitie, or ryches of fortune, and do lytle or nothing esteeme it, the is it of smale valour that a man can take in good worthe, wheth it is lost. And for bycause I knowe, that thou thy selue art the man, to who it hath ben perswaded and declared by many reasons & demonstracions, that the soules of mankynde, be in no wyse mortal or do dye: And syth also it is manyfest, that fortunes felicitie is ended by the death of the body humayne, or of mankynde, it maye not be dowted (yf this fortunes felicite myght take away perfyte felicitie or blyssednes) but that all mankynde in the ende of death, falleth into myserie & wretchednes. And for so muche as I do knowe, that many holy men haue fought for the fruyte of perfyte felicitie, not onely by the death of theyr bodyes, but also by paynes and ponysshementes, by what meaynes then may this mortall lyfe present, garnysshed with fortunes felicitie: that is to saye: with worldly thynges, make men blessed, whiche when it is paste & ended, can not make them wretched.

Whosoever is wyse and stedfast, and would appoynt hymselfe a firme and suer sete or house that wyll not be ouerthrown wyth the troblous blastes of the winde named Euras, and careth howe to auyde the sea threatnyng with his floudes. Let hym

The toppe of the hyll, sygnifieth prospeertye.
The fell wynde Auster sygny-
fyth enuy, and the power of Noble men that assaulteth hygh prosperitie. The most grauell of sande, syngnyfeth pueritie which can not suﬀre the slyding wayte that is to saye, indygence, & neede of thinges necessarie. The lowe rocke signiﬁeth the meane lyfe.

forsake and not buylde vpon the toppe of an high hyll nor vpon the moyst grauell or sandes. For the fel wynde named Auster troubleth the hyll top. And the moist grauell or sand will beare no slynge wyghte. Therefore yf thou wylte fe and auyde the peryous chauce of pleasuant dwellyng: Remember certaynely to fasten & buylde thy house vpon a lowe rocke. For then althoughe the wynde beinge troublesome wythe his ouer-tournge blastes troubleth the sea, thou being happye and quyetyl set in a lowe valleye of suertye and defence shalt leade a clere lyfe, caryng nothing for the furious aye or wynde.

By this metyr is ment that it is better for a man to leade a meane lyfe then to couet to high or to lowe for in high prosperyte dignitie and auctoritie is great iobardy, for it draweth to it enuy of the nobilitie. And extreme pouerty is to be eschewed, for neede compelleth a man to begge or steale. And the meane betwene bothe is most suer and quyetyt, & consequently of them that be wyse, to be desyred.

PHIL.

But forasmuche as the medicynes, of my reons aforesayd, do begyn to enter into the, I do now thyneke it tym to vse more stronger medycines that is to say: stronger reasons. Come of and harken vnto me. If that ye gifts of fortune were not bryttell, frayle, and transytorie, what thing is in them that may be thyne at any tyme, or that waxeth not vile, fylthy and foule yf it be well perceyued and consydered.

Be ryches of their owne nature preycyous? or by the that vsyest them? whether is ye more precious of these, ye is to say riches golde, or a great hepe of monye gathered together? Certes, ryches shynethe more and causteth moreprayse to be geuen vnto men in dysr bubutinge, then in horedyng vp and keping of ye same. For the couytousnes of them that kepe it: causteth them to be hated, and the liberalitie of them that do dysrribute it, maketh them renownyd and to haue an honest reporte. If the thing that is conveyed and deluyed from one to another, maye not remayne styll with any manne? Then is monye a precyous thynge, when it is conveyed from one to another by the vse of gyfte, and cessyth to be kepte styll with anye man:

It is spoken in mockage, that muste be vnderstande, monye is
Not precious for the causes alledged. And yf all the monye in the worlde were gathered together and in one mans possessyon, other folke that lackyd monye shoule haue nede ther of. Also one hole voyce fylleth at one tyme the cares of mucche people that heryth it, But riches can not passe vnto many or fyll manye, excepte they be deuyded into percelles and porcions. And when it is so done it maketh them pore that do forgoo it. Therefore I may saye O troublesome and nedy ryches, whych many men cannot haue al hole together to them selfe: And commethe to no man without impoueryshyng other. Do the shynyng or glysteryng of pearles and precious stons draw mens eyes that is to sai cause mē to desire thē. But yf there be any goodnes in theyr shynyng, it is the clerenes and beautie of the stones & not of mens eyes. Wherfore I doo maruayle greatlye at men, that they shoule so wonder at theym, and desire to haue them. What thyng is there that (wantyng mouyne of the soule and ioynyng of membres of the bodye to gyther as these stones doo want) semyth goodly to a luying & reason-able creature. Whiche precious stones (albeit that they gather vnto thē selve somwhat of the latter beautie of this worlde, by the dylygence of theyr maker, (& theyr dystyncte nature): haue not deserued by any meanes of thē self, that men shuld meruayle at them, they beynge subiecte and put vnder mans dignitie or gouernaice. Do not ſy freshe beautie of the feldes delyght you?

Bo: What els. For it is a fayre porcion of a goodly worke in this world, & so are we somtyme glad at the syght of the calme sea, and so likewise and by lyke reason, we do meruayle at the heauen or fyrmamēt, Sterres, Sonne, and Moone.

PH. Do any of the same thinges, appertayne to the? Dareste thou rejoyce, and glory in the shynyng of any of theym? Arte thou decked with the flowers of Veer which is the sprynge time, when somer fyrst begynneth? Do thy plentyousnes, increase by sommer fruytes? What, art thou rauysshed with vayne ioyes? what, dost thou enbrac estrangeth goodes for thyne owne? Fortune can neuer make the same goodes thynke, yn the nature of thynges hath made none of thynke, or estrangeth to the. As the fruites of the earth, ought to be yn foode of beastes, and not thynke. But yf thou wylt gyye nature that she nedeth, and replenish her to ſy ful, then is it no nede for the to seke
for the abundaunce of fortune, for nature is contentyd with verye lytle thynges. And yf thou wylte choke nature wyth to muche, eyther y' thou geuyst wilbe vnplesaunt, or hurtfull unto the. Thynkyest thou thy selfe goodly or more to be estimed for thy gay apparell? Of the whych yf the beawtie thereof be fresh and pleasaunt to behold: I woulde rather marrayle at the substaunce thereof, or the craft of the workman that made it, then at the. Do a longe rowe of seruauentes gowyng in order waytyng vpon the, make the happye and good? whyche yf they be euyll manerd, then be they a perilous charge to they house, and a vhemet greuous bourden to the, beynge their mayster. But yf they be honeste and good: shall theyr goodnes be accountid or imputed to the? [So that by all the things before sayde, it apperyth that none of them is thy goodnes.

In whyche thynges yf there be no goodnes to be desyred that maye be ascrybed to the: wherefore art thou sorye for the losse of them? or why shouldest thou be glade to kepe them?

But if they be good of their owne kind what is that to the? For although thei were taken from the, yet they shoulde be good of themselfe, without the. For they are not therfore precious, for that they cam emongest thy ryches, but bycauser they semyd precyous vnto the, therefore thou haddyst leuer accompte them for thy owne ryches. But what thyghe desyrest thou with so greate exclamatyon of fortune.

Truely I think thou sekyst to expell necessyte, wyth abundaunce of ryches. But surely this happeth to the, far other wise & cotrary. For certes a man hath nede of muche to beare the great charge of good house kepyng.

And trewe it is that many thinges they haue nede of, that haue muche. And contrarye wyse they haue lytell nede, that mesyrth theyr abundaunce and desyre with necessitie of nature, and not with theyr insaciate covitousnes, that is to saye, that couetyth the no more but that is volverent for their present necessitie. O you men, haue ye no goodnes proper and naturall sette within your selfe, but that you do seke for your goodnes in outewarde things seperate from you? Surelye the condycyon of thynges be so chaungid that ma beyng a godly beast, by meanes of reason, thynketh himselfe nothyng estemed, but he be sene a man by possession of worldelye goodes, that haue no life. And where as other beastes be contented wyth suche
beawtye and goodnes, as nature hath geuen thë, you creaturs
that be lyke vnto god by your reason or soul: do seke ÿ beauty
of your excellent nature, in the lowist or meanist things that is
to saye: in worldelye goodes, as though that they were better thë
your reason, that is moste beawtyfull, and ye do not consyder
what iniurye you doo vnto almyghtye God youre maker and
creatoure. He woulde that mankynde were more excellent, and
shoulde passe all erthlye thinke, but you doo thryste downe
your dignytye emongest al low thinges, estemynge them more
then your selfe.

For yf euery good thinke, is more precyous then the thinke
that is owner therof, when that you do iudge the vylest thynge
(as worldly goodes) to be your goodes, thë do you submytte
your selues vnder them. Which certes happethe not withoute
a cause, for suche is thee naturall condycion of man, that then
onlye he excellethe all other thynge, when he knoweth hym-
selfe, and when he knoweth not hymselfe, then he is taken
amonge beastes, as a beast.

For the nature of all other beastes (man onelye excepte) is
not to knowe them selfe. But yf a man know not hym selfe, it
cometh by some vyce that is in hym, & not of nature. O thou
mankynede, howe great is this thyerrour, that thynkest that any
thynge can be made gaye, with other mens apparell or goodes.
But it cannot be so.

For if a man shyneth by the thinges that be put vpon hym,
and not of hymself: thë be those things praised and not he. For
the thinke that is hydde and coueryd with the same shynyng
things, remainyth stylle in hys fylthynes. And I denye that the
thinge is good, that hurteth hym that hath it. Doo I make a
lye or saye otherwyse than I thinke? Thou wylte say naye.
Certes, ryches hath ofte tymes hurt them that had it foras-
muche as euer wycked man is more gredye and desyrous of
other mës goodes wheresouer they be, whether it be gold or
precious stons, and thinketh hym most worthy, that hath it.
But for all that, thou man that hast tëporal riches now, thou
feryst the sharp speare and sworde, where as if thou haddest
entred and walkyd in the way or path of thy lyfe, as a way-
farynge manne pore and without monye: thou mayste synge
before the thefe without seare of robbynge and without hurte
of spere & swerde. O precious felicitie of Ryches temporall,
which when thou hast gotten it, thou canst not be sure thereof & kepe it.

The first age of mâ was much happye that was contented with such as Â fields brought forth without labor of man, and was not hurt wyth great excesse of metes & drynkes, they were wont to satysfye theyr long hunger wyth lytell acorns of the oke, that is to say, they sought not for deynetey meates, and knewe howe to myng to myng the wyne with honye, that is to saye: they knewe not pleasaunt drynks, nor how to dye the white fleses of woll of Seria (a countrey so called) with the Venim of tyre, that is to saye: to make purple coloure wyth the bloue of shell fyshes of Tyre, a countrey where there be manye suche fyshes, but were contentyd wyth such colors as the shepe did bere. They could then be contentyd to take holesom slepes upon the grasse & knew no beddes of downe, and drynke fayre rennyng water for lacke of wyne and ale, and also dwell vnder the shadowe of the hygh pyne tree for lacke of cyrous houeses. Then had no straunger or merchaunt sailed on the seas with ship nor sene straunge costes to cöey their merchandisse to diuers countreys and places. Thë Â cruel trompetes of warre made no noyse to cal men to battel, nor shedyng of bloud with mortal hate had imbriwyd the searefull armour, that is to say: then was there no warre. What crewell enemye would fyrst moue warre before he sawe crewell woundes, or sawe some profyt by battell and warre that is to saye: then was there no cause to fyght. I would our conditions were turnyd againe into those olde maners. But the greate gredye couytousnes to catche and haue ryches, brennyth more ferently then the hyll callyd Ethna. Alas who was he that fyrste doluyd vp the peces of golde that laye hyd in the earth, and the precyous stons that wer contentyd to haue leyen hid and vnknoen. Surely he dygyggd vp precious peryls, for many daungers mankynde do suffer for the same.

PHIL.

What shall I speake of dignities and power, whyche you that know not the trewe dignitie & power, do liken or compare it vnto heuen. And if these dignities and power shoulede happen vnto any wycked man they do as much hurte as the brenning
hylly Ethna with all his flames of fyer, brastynge out of the same. 
And no deluge or fode that drownyth the countries doth so 
much annoiaunce. Truly I thinke ye" haff not forgotten that 
youre forefathers the Romaines dyd couet to put downe the rule 
and auctoritie of Consuls for theyr prydye, which rule of Consules 
was the begynyng of their lybertye, whyche foresayd Romaynes 
before that, dyd put awyee from the cytye the name of kynges, 
for the lyke pryde.

But certes ye power and dygnitye be geuen vnto good folkes 
as it seldome happeth) what goodnes is in dygnitye and power, 
but onelye the goodnes of them that vse them. Soo it commeth 
to passe that honor commeth not to vertu by dignityes but it 
comyeth to dignitye by vertue of them vse the dignitie. But 
what is that same your noble powr that ye so much desyre and 
loke for? Doo you not consyder the erthly bestes ouer whome 
yeume to haue premynence? If thou sawest a mouse 
emongest other myse chaunging vnto hym selfe a ryght and 
power ouer other myse? How much wouldest thou laughe 
therat? that is to say, temporal power is such that it extendeth 
but onlye vnto the bodye. For ye thou loke vpon the body of 
a man, what thing shalt thou fynde more weke and feble then 
mankynde, whome either the bytynge of lytell wormes or some 
serpente that crepeth into their secrete partes, oftentymes 
ylleth. Certes howe may a mæ execute Iustycye vpon another, 
but vpon hys bodye, or vpon fortune, that is to saye: vpon hys 
goodes and possessyons.

Mayst thou at anye tyme rule or commaunde a fre thought? 
Mayst thou remoue the mynde or thought that cleuyth to it 
selke, by good reason, from the state of her owne quyetenes? 
When a certayne Tyrant thought once to cöppell with ponys- 
ment and tormentes, a certayne fre man called a philosophor to 
accuse other men of confederacye of treason had & moued 
agaynst the saide Tyranta: the sayd philosophor did bite of his 
owne tounge, and did cast it into the face of the cruell tyrant. 
Soo that the tormentes that the cruell Tyrante thought should 
haue bene the cause of crueltye to be executyd vpon others:

The wyse man that is to say the phylosopher turnyd it to a 
matter of vertue. What thyng maye anye man do to another, 
that he maye not receyue the lyke of hym. We haue harde 
saye that Busyrys a Gyaunt, dyd vse to kyll his gestes, and that
he was lykewyse kyllde of Hercules, beinge then his geste. Regulus, a noble consull (whiche had cast into bandes, or chaines many prysoners that he had takē in the batteyle of the Carthagynens) was at the laste taken hym selfe, and his handes boude in chaynes, by them that he hadde taken before tyme, of the Carthagyens. Thynkest thou, that he is myghtye, that can do nothynge to another, but such as he may do the like to him? Moreouer, yf there were any naturall or good thynge in dygnyte and power, they wolde neuer come to wycked, and euyll folke. For thynge contraryous, be not wone to agre, & associate theymselfe togyther. And nature dysdayneth that contrary thynge, be ioyned or copled togyther.

Therfore, for bycause it is certayne, that wycked persons (for the moste parte) do beare rule, it appereth truely, that the same dignites and power, be not good of the selfe, by their owne nature, syns they be contented, to contyne new with wycked folke.

Whiche thynge, I may most worthely jude by the same dygnyte, and power of all the giftes of fortune, that do chaunge moste abundaunte, to many wycked and shrewed folke. Of the which goodes of fortune, one thynge I thynke oughte also to be consyderyd, that no man dowthy but that he is stronge in whom he seith strength, and that he is swyft in whom swyftnes apperyth, so by lyke reason, musyke makyth musicions, physyke phisicions and rethoryke makyth retricyons. For euery natural thing workyth his owne property, & is not minged with any effects contrary to the same, but of it selfe puttyth awaye and resysteth thynges contraryous to it selfe. And Ryches cannot satisfythe the Ragyng auyryse and couitounes of men, nor power or dygnite contentyth or ruleth a myghtye man, whome inordynat ambiccion or desire of much honor holdyth boid in stronge chaynes. And dygnyties geuen vnto wycked folke, do not make them worthy, but sheweth and declareth them rather vnworthy. And whye soo? For you men do reioyse in thynge that appere otherwyse then they be inde, ye geue and attribute to them wronge names, that be easily repriued by their effect and dedes. So that Riches ought not be called ryghtfully riches, nor power called iustly power, nor dygnitie well called dignyte. For nether of the maye cause any man to be contentyd, but euer desyrous of more the like things. And fynally I maye lyke wyse say of all the gyftes of
fortune, in the whiche it is manifest, that there is no goodnes of
it selfe, or of hys owne nature, to be desyred or lokyd for. For
they neuer ioyne themselfe to good folke alwayes or for the
most parte, nor make them alwayes good, that they be ioyned
or copled vnto.

PHIL.

We haue wel knowẽ what hurte kynge Nero dyd in his tyme,
he brennid yẽ noble Citie of Rome, he slewe all the fathers the
counselors and senators, he in his wodenes, slewe his owne
brother. He imbrewed or bathed hym selve in his mothers bloude
whome he kylled. He beholdyng euery parte of her colde deade
body or corpus dyd neuer wete hys face wyth teares, that is to
saye neuer wepte, he was soo hard hartyd, that it dyd not greue
him to beholde a huge, her goodlye dead corpus. Yet he
rulyd wyth his scepter royall, all the people, whome the Sonne
dydde shine vppon, or geue lyght vnto, from the farthestest rysynge
thereof vnto the place where the sonne hydeth his beames vnder
the waters, that is to say, he ruled from the est vnto the west, he
rulyd also wyth his scepter all the people that the, vi. cold sters
do oppresse with colde, that is to saye: all the Northe. And he
lykewyse rulyd all them that the wynde called Nothus beynge
vyolet, dryeth with his heate broylynge the hote grauell or
sandes, that is to saye: he ruled all the Southe parte. Yet
coulde not all his gret hygh power chaunge or cesse the woodnes,
rage and crueltye of the same kyng Nero. Alas it is a heuye
& dolorous chaüce as often as a wycked swerde or power is
ioyned to crewell madnes, that is to saye wycked crueltye ioyned
with aucthorytie.

BOECIUS.

Then I saye O Phylosophy, thou knowest that the desyre of
mortall and transitorye thynes, neuer had rule ouer me, or dyd
ouercome me.

But I haue desyred to bere rule in causes of the common welth,
that vertue shoulde not wax olde or be forgottẽ in me, for lacke
of exercyses.

PHIL. For sothe that is a thynge that may allure and drawe
mens myndes, that be excellent by nature (but not yet brought
to the full perfection of vertue) that is to saye: desyre of renowne

Nero brenned
the Cytie of
Rome to lerne
therby, howe
the Cytie of
Troy brêned.
He killed his
brother to the
tente he hym
selfe myghte
raygne, with-
out any doubt
of hym, he
kylled his
mother and
ripped her
belye, to se
the place
wherin he
was conceuyed
and laye.

The malice or
goodnes of a
man is best
shewed when
a man is in
aucthorytie.
or glorye, and the fame of good admynistration in the commen wealth, and to doo good and profytable thynges for the same, whych fame and renoume, how lytell and voyde of estimatyon it is, cōsyder as foloweth. Thou hast learyd by the demonstrations of astronomy, that all the circuite or compass of the earthe is by reason, as a pricke or lytle tytle in respect to the compass of heuē that is to say: of the fyrmament. Or yf all the earth wer compared to the greynes of the celestiall globe or compass, it should be iudged as nothyng in respecte thereof. Of the whyche earthe or worlde being so lytell a thyngye, scarce the fourth parte thereof is inhabyted, of lyuyng creatures that we do know, as thou haste learned of Ptolome that provyth the same. And if thou haddyst abatyd in thy mynde from thythes forthe part, howe muche the seas and marshe groundes do contayne, and lykewyse yᵉ quantitie of the dry wast grounds, the woodes, desertes and sands: then shuld there remayne scarcely a very little place for men to inhabyte in. Therefore you mē being inuironed or compassed within the lest part of the sayd prycke or tytle, of the erth, do you thynke that your fame or renoune be spred abrode? And howe great and notable is your glorye and fame, that is dryuen into so narow a place? And adde thereto that manye nacyons beyng of dyuers languages, of dyuers maner and of sondry reason of lyuyngg doo inhabyte and dwell in thythes lytell compass of the erth inhabitable, vnto whome nether the fame of all men, nor the fame of cityes cā come for the dyfficultye of wayes, for the dyuersitie of speache, for the lacke of the vsage and entercourse of marchaudise. For in the time of Marcus Tullius (as he hymselfe in a certayne Booke dothe wryte) the fame and renoune of the cómen welth of Rome had not passed or come than vnto the hyll named Casacus, and yet was Rome an olde Cytye and fearyd of the parthis & of other inhabytynghe there aboute. Seyst thou not nowe in howe narowe and lytell romyth is the glory and fame brought that thou goyst aboute and laboryst to delate and sprede abrode? Canne the fame and glorye, of one Romayne, extende and spred thyther that the fame and glorye of the hole cytye of Rome, coulde not come? And what sayest thou to thythes, that the maners and lawes of dyuers people do not accorde emonge them selfe, so that the same thyngye that some do prayse, other do disprayse and iudg worthy of ponyshimet, whereby it commeth to passe that yf any

The Sirians do take it for a prayse, to eat theyr parêtes, when they be deed, rather then wormes shoulde. The Jewes to marie, the
man delyteth to haue glory and renoune. It behoueth hym that it be not shewed in any wyse emongest dyuers people.

Let ev erye manne therefore be contented to haue an honeste prayse and reporte emongest hys n eyghboures. And lette the sayde immortall fame and glorye shute vp close within the bondes of people of one nation where thou dwelllest.

But how many men (that in their time were noble and famous) be nowe clene forgotten and out of memory, for lacke of wryters, or by neglygente wryters. And albeit that such wrytinges of mës fame and glorye do sumwhat profyte, yet in processe of tyme beyng olde and longe past, the sayd wrytynges and also the actors and wryters, do consume. But yet you men do thinke to get vnto your selue an immortall and perdurable name when you do thinke vpon the fame to come, or that youre fame shall endure always emongest men, whose tyme of contynuaunce, yf thou compare it with the time infinite, that is eterne, or euerlastynge, what haste thou to reioyse in the continuances of thy fame? For if one momët of an hour were compared vnto tenne thowsande yeares, bothe the same tymes haue an ende, and the moment hath some portion of tyme, though it be verye lytel. But yet the sayde nnumber of yeares, and as manye more, howe manye socuer they be added together thereto, maye not be compared to the tyme euerlastynge that hath noo ende. For comparyson maye be made of thinges that haue an ende emongest them selve. But noo comparyson coulde euer be made of thyngeas that haue no ende, to thyngeas, that haue an ende. And soo it happeth, though that fame be neuer so longe of tyme as thou canst thinke, yf thou compare it with the tyme euerlastyng, it semeth not onely verye lytell, but also none at all. But you thincke that you know nothynge well done, or that you can do nothynge wel, but yf it be to please the peoples eares, or for the vayne prayse of the worlde. And you requyre and seke for the prayse of other mens smale saynings, and leue clere the excellencye of your owne consciens and vertue. Consyder howe gloriously one man moketh another in such lightnes of Arrogancye. For when a certayne tyraunt began to speake angerly vnto another man, whych falsely vsurpyd and toke vpon hym the name of a Phylosopher, not for vertues sake, but for a vayne glorye. And when the Tyraunte sayde that he woulde knowe whether he were a philosopher, for he woulde then suffer

next of their kin. The Tryualles to kyll their Father, when heis lx yeares olde and bren hym.
pacientlye all wronges done vnto hym. The man that named hymselfe a phylosopher, suffered and tooke pacynce a lytell whyle, and after he had receyued rebukes of the tyraunte, he at the last struyung and impacyent, sayde vnto the tyraunt: knowst thou not that I am a phylosopher? Then the tyraunte answered and sayde roughly: I had taken the for a philosopher, if thou hadest holden thy peace. But what is thys to these notable vertuous mē that seke for glorie by vertue, for of such do I speke nowe, what is fame (I saye) to them after the body is once dede? For yf mē do dye all hole as well the soule as the bodye (whych thyng our reason denyeth to beleue) then is there no glorie at al, when there is no man to whome glorie is sayde to belonge. And if the soule (hauynge knowledge of it selfe and delyuere from the person of the earthely body and beyng also fre) goeth to heue. Do it not dyspyse all erthly thinges, and beynge in heuen, dothe shee not reioyse that she is seperate from all worldely busynes, that is to saye: caryth nether for glory, renoune, riches, power, dygnytie nor authorytie of thys worlde.

PHILOSOPHI.

Who so euer with hasty thought, desyreth only glory, and renoune, and beleueth that it is y* cheyfest thynge, that can be desyred. Let hym beholde the partes of heauen or fyrmament, both large and open, or apparat, and lykewyse the small and narrow compasse of the earth, and compare them together, and then he shalbe asshamed, of his glorie, and fame, that it can not fyll the lytle space of the earth. Therfore, oh to what intent do proude men, exalt theyr neckes in vayne, with the yoke of mortall fame and glory, although it be spred, and passeth by people, and nacyons farre of, and thoughe it be spoken of by mens tounges.

And thoughe thy noble house do shyne wyth excellent tytles, that is to saye, thoughe thou be a noble man, commen of noble byrthe, and famous with hyghe lawde and prayse. Yet death settyth noughte by such hygh glorie renounce and fame, and death wrappyth vp the pore man, the ryche and noble man together.

And death makyth the lowest thynges equal with the hyest and greatest thynges. Where be nowe the bones of faythfull

Fabricius was a noble con- sull, of Rome, and so fayth- full, that beyng a Captayne agaynst Kynge Pyrrus, neyther golde, nor syluer, could corrupt him, to be
Fabricius? what is become of Brutus, and of wyse Cato? A lytell and smale fame of them yet remaynynge declareth their vayne name in a fewe letters. And although we have knowne the goodlye wordes wrytten of theyr fame: do wee know them that be consumed and dede out of thys worlde, longe before oure dayes? ye do lye therefore as men vnknoen when you be dede, and your fame doth not make you to be knowne. If that you do thinke that your lyfe endureth the longer by fame of a worldely name that is to saye: by the glorye of mortall fame, when that the laste day shal take from you the same mortall fame, then commeth vnto you the seconde deathe.

PHYLOSOPHY.

But that thou shalte not thinke y I wyll hold cruell battale against fortune. Thou shalte vnderstande that the same false and sotyll fortune sometyme deseryth some goodnes at mens handes, at such tyme as she do openly shewe her selfe and vncour her face, by shewyng her falsehed or aduersitie, and declareth her vnstable maners. Perchaunce thou knoest not yet what I doo speake. For it is a meruaylous thynge that I entend to saye, ye and I can scarce expresse the sentece with my worordes. For I do thinke that euyl fortune do more profytte men then good fortune. For when she semeth the good and gentyll with prosperitie and welth thē she lyeth falsely.

But euyl fortune is always trewe, when she sheweth her selfe mutable by her vnstedfastnes. Good fortune deceuyeth, and euill fortune teachythe. Good fortune byndethe wyth the beawte of her goodes the hartes or thoughtes of them that hath them, Euyl fortune vnbyndeth mens hartes and thoughtes by knowlege of her frayle felycitie. And thou seist good fortune proude prodigall and not knoinge herselue, Euyl fortune is sober meke and wise, by exercise of her aduersitie. Furthermore good fortune wyth her flatterynge draweth the men that be wauerynge, from felycitie or perfytte good whych is god. Euyl fortune for the most parte bryngethe men agayne to perfytt felycitie, draweth them as yt were with a hoke. Doeste thou esteme this for a smale thynge? that this sharp and euyl fortune, hath shewed vnto y very mynydes and thoughtes of thy faithfull frendes? The sayde euyl fortune hath dyscouered vnto the both the open playne and doutefull countenaunce of thy felowes. Good fortune going
from the, toke awaye her owne frendes, and left the thyne owne frendes, and none of hers. When thou were in prosperitye and ryche as thou thoughteste thy selfe to be, what wouldeste thou haue geuen to haue knowen this thyng all hole togethe, that is to saye: thy frend from thy foe? Cesse thou nowe therefore to complayne for the losse of thy worldly ryches, synce thou hast found thy trewe frendes which is the mooste precyous kynde of all ryches.

PHILOSOPHY.

The loue of God that gouernythe both the land and the sea, and likewyse commaundethe the heuen, and kepyth the world in due order and good accorde, that is to saye: causythe ý due seasons of the yere to come successuyuely accordyng to their nature. And that the sedes, that is to saye: the Elementes beyng contrary one to a nother do holde contynuall peace and vnytye, one with another, so that one doth not corrupte and hurt another. And that ý sonne in hys bryghte golden chariote, bryngeth forth the clere freshe daye. And that the mone gouerne the nyght that the sterre Hesperus, called the eveynyng sterre, hath brought in. And that the ragynge sea do kepe in his floudes, to a certayne ende that they extende not theyr vttermost course and ouerflowe the earth. If thy dyuine or godly loue shuld slacke the brydell, that is to saye: shuld take no cure to gouerne, whatsoeuer thyng now louyth together, and agreith, would be at contynuall varyance and dyscorde, and would striue to dystroye and lose the engyn of ý world that kepyth them in mutuall amite, in their goodlye ordynate mouinges.

This loue of god consereueth vertuous folke, and suche as be ioyned together in the bond of frendship. And this loue knytteth together the sacramët of wedlocke, with chast loue betwene man and wyfe. Thys loue also settith his lawes whych is trewe frendeshipe to faytheful frendes and felowes. O howe happe were mankynd yf this loue of God that rulyth heuen, myght rule and gouerne theyr myndes, that is to say: that they myght so agre together in such perfyte frendshyp, that one myght loue another, and agre as the elemëts do agre.

Here endeth the second boke.
NOWE when Phylosophy had ended her songe, and that the swetenes of her metyr had confyrmyd me beynge desyrous to heare wyth open eares, and meruaylynge at her wordes I (a lytle after) sayde. O phylosophye, whych art the very comforte of werye myndes, howe much haste thou cheryshed me with the grauitie of thy sentences, and with the pleasauntenes of thy syngynge. In so much that I do thinke that frō henceforth, I am able to wythstand the assaultes of fortune. Soo that the medycines that thou a lytell before saydest were very sharpe, I do not onelye nothyng feare, but I beyng very desyrous to here them, do vehemently or ernestlye often requyre them.

PHIL: I well perceyued the same, when thou being styll makyng no noyse and herkenyng, receyuydest my wordes. And that I had expected or revocate the habite of thy mynde, that thou hast now, (or that is more true) that I had perfyted the habite or maner of thy mynde. And certes the residue of the thinges that do remayne be suche, that when they be tasted, truely they do byte or be vnplesaunte. But when they be receyued inwardly: they taste swetely. But for by cause thou sayest thou art so desyrous to here them, Oh howe muche wouldyste thou brene with desyre, yf thou knewest whether I wold lede the.

BOE: I saye, whyther wouldyste thou leade me. PHIL: To the trewe felycitie, that thy mynde dreameth of. But thy syghte beyng occupyed with fantasies and immagynations, that is to saye: with temporall or worldely thynges: thou mayst not beholde and loke vpon the same true and perfyt felycitie.
BOE: Then come of and shewe me I beseche the, without anye taryinge, whyche is the same trewe felicitie.

PHIL: I wyll doo it gladelye at thy request, but fyrst I wil go about to mark and appoynte out by my wordes, that false felycytie, that is better knownen to the, that after thou hast sene her, when thou hast turnyd thy eyes on the contrarye parte, that is to saye: from false felicitie vnto trewe felicitie, thou mayst the better knowe the similitytude and beawtie of the same trew felicitie.

He that wyll sowe a goodly felde wyth corne, fyrst he must ryd the same felde of shrubes and thorns and cutte awaye the bushes and ferne with his hoke or syth, y the newe corne may grow and encrease with ful eres.

The laboure of the bees, that is to sai: the honye, is swete to the mouth, that hath tastyd some euyl tast or bytternes before. And after that the south wynde called Nothus, cesseth to geue his sheury blastes, then do the sters shyne more plesaunt and bryght. And after that the day sterre called Lucifer hath chased awaye the darkenes of the nyght. Thé the bryght daye ledyth fourthe the shynyng horser of the sonne, that is to sai; after the darke nyght the clere day shineth more plesaunt. So lykewyse thou fyrst beholdeynge false goods, that is to saye: false felycytie of worldely things begynne thou to wythdrawe thy neck from the yoke of the sayd false felicitie or worldely thynges. And after that, trewe goods, that is to saye: vertue, or trewe felicite wyll enter the better into thy mynde.

BOECIUS.

Then Phylosophy lokynge donneworthy a litle, and remem-brynghe her selfe as one that had her wits to seke, or put vp into the narow seate of her mynd, beganne to speake after thys maner.

P: All y cure of mortal folk howe manye maners of wayes socuer they do labour and trauell, yet they all do laboure (althoughe it be by dyuers and sondry meanes) to come vnto one ende of felycitize, or blessednes. Truely that thynge is good (whyche when a man hath obteyned it) that nothynge can be desyred ferther besydes it, which thynge certes is the soueraygne good of all thynges, and contayneth in it selfe all good thynges.
To the whych good thyng yf any thyng shoulde be awaye or wantynge: it cannot be sufferaigne and perfyt good, for by cause som thing is left behynd or forgotte that maye be desyred. Thercfere it appereth þy felicitie is a perfyt state by gatheryng together of all good thynges. The same perfytte state, or felicitie (as I haue sayde) al më lyuyng do labor to optayne and gette dyuers wayes. For the desyre of felycittye or blessednes, is naturally plantyd in mens myndes and harte, but that wandrying error ledyth them out of the way to false gods, that is to say: worldlye thynges, of the whyche men, some (certes thynkynge that the perfytte felycitié and goodnes is to haue nede of nothyng) doo laboure to habounde in ryches.

Other men (judging good that thyng; that is most worthy honour) do stryue to be honorable emongst their citizens and neyghboors after they haue gotten honors. There be other that do dertermyne that soueraygne felycitié is in high power, and they them self will raygne or rule, or do laboure to be nere vnto suche as doo rule or raygne. But other to whom fame semeth perfytte felycitié and goodnes, do make haste to optayne a gloryous name by feates of warre or armes, or by the meanes of peace makyng.

But many do measure the fruyte of perfytte felicitie, wythe myrth and gladnes, that is to saye: doo thynke that perfytte felicitie standythe in ioye and gladnes. They do thynke it the most perfytte felicitie, to haue aboüdaice of corporal pleasure. Also ther be some men that do chaunge or joine the endes and causes of thynges one wyth another, as they that do desyre to haue ryches, for to haue power and pleasure or they desyre power bycause they wold haue monye or fame and renoune. Soo in these thinges and suche lyke, the intente and purpose of all mens actes, and desyres be occupied: as noblenes and fauoure of the common people whych semeth to geue vnto all men a certayne glorye and prayse. And lykewyse wife and chyldren, that men desyre for the cause of pleasure and myrth. But frendes which is the most holy thyng, may not be acountyd emonges the goods of fortune, (whych consysteth in worldly and träsATORY thynges) but in vertu. But al the other thynges that cometh of fortune, be taken eyther for the loue of offyce or power, or of pleasure, and deleyghte. And truely it is mete to referre al goodes temporall, and transytorye, vnto þy other goodes of for-

They that do erre from perfyute felycitie, do take these, v. thynges for it, as ryches, honoure, power, glorye, and pleasure, which be the false goodes of fortune.

The lacke of any good thyng causeth më to desyre the same.

Frendshyp is a vertue and none of for-tunes goodes.

Riches, power, honour, glorye, pleasure, and all other transy-
tune, abouenamed. For strength and gretnes of bodye semeth to geue powre: fayrenes and swyfnes, to geue glory and prayse: and helthe of bodye, to geue pleasure, and delyght. In all whych thynge it apperyth that blessednes and felicitye is desyred. For that thynge that anye man requyreth or desyreth aboue all other thynge, the same he iudgeth to be soueraygne good or felicitie. But I haue dyffyned that soueraygne good is perfyt felicitie. For euerye man demeth that state to be blessed, that he desireth aboue all other thynge. Therefore thou hast before thine eyes shewed and declared the proposed fortune and maner of mannes felicitie, that is ryches, power, honour, glorie and plesures, which thynge truelye the Epicurus onclye considering and beholding, estemid consequentlye with hymselfe, that pleasure was soueraygne good or perfyt felicitie, forsomuch as all the other thinges semyd to reioyse the harte and mynde, but none so much as plesure, after his judgment. But now I returne againe to mens studyes and ententes, whose mynde and harte sekethe soueraygne good or perfite felicitie, although it be with an i-imperefte and dull memorye drownyd in desyre of worldely goodes, wandryng as a dronken man that knoeth not whych way to go home to his house. Seme theye to erre and goo oute of the waye that labouryth to haue ynoughe and to haue rede of nothyng the-then that is truelye. Certes there is nothynge that more performeth and geueth blessednes then a plentecous estate of al goodes hauing ynoughe hymselfe of his owne and rede of none other mans. Do they erre from felicitie, that do thyneke that thynge moste worthy reuerence and honor y is best? No truely. For that thing is not vyle and to be dyspysed that the entente of all men lyyng (almoste) laboureth to optayne. Is not power, to be nombred in ryches? What ells? Is the thynge to be estemyd weke and feble without strength, that semeteth to be more worthy and stronger then all other thyngs? no truely. Is glory famy and renoune nothyng estemyd? no not so. For it cannot be denyed but that all thyng, that is most excellent, semythe to be moste gloruous, and clere. For it is manyfest that blessednes is not carefull and sadde, nor subject to dolours, and greifes, but full of pleasures and gladnes, what should a man say more when in the leste thynges that can be, some thynge is desyred that deyltethe a man to haue, and to enioye as his owne. And these be the thynges that menne woulde wishe to haue, and for thys
cause they doo seke for and desyre ryches dignities, rule, glory and pleasures, that by them they do thynke that they shal have suffisans, reueréce, power, renoune, fame, myrth, and gladnes. Therefore that thinge muste nedes be good, that men do aske and seke for soo manye dyuers and sundrye wayes. In the which sekyng it is lyghtly shewed, and euydently it apperyth, how great the power and strengthe of nature is, that though the sentences and iudgementes of men be dyuerse one contrary to another: yet for all that in louynge and desyryng the ende of good and blessednes, they do agre and be of one mynde and iudgemente.

PHILOSOHY.

It pleaseth me to shew, with a sownynge songe, vpon softe strynges, by what raynes or meanes, that is to say: by what naturall inclinacions, myghtie nature ruleth. And by what lawes nature beyng prouydente and circumspecte conserueth and kepythe the hole greate worlde. And by what lawes nature kepeth in and fastenyth all thynges with a fast and sure knot, that cannot be loosed. Although the lions of Libia, hauing goodly chaynes aboute their neckes doo take mete at their maysters handes. And although they fearc their cruell mayster and be wont to suffer beating, yet if the bloud of bestes that the same lyons haue deououred do moist or tast in theyr mouthes, that is to saye: if they once taste bloude: then their corages that before was forgotten for lacke of vse, cometh agayne to his olde nature and kynde. And with gret roryng they breke their chaynes from theyr neckes, and fyrste of all their mayster that kept them as tame, felyth theyr rauenynge rage beyng rente into peces with their blody teethe, that is to saye: they fyrste kylle their mayster, that kept the. Likewise the syngyng byrde that syngeth vpon the hygh bowghes in the woode, if she be taken and put into a strayte cage, although the duygent cure of men delytynge in her, geueth her swete drinkes and dyuers meates wyth plesaunt labour: yet yf she chauise to escape out of the strayt cage and seith the plesant shadowes of the woodes, beyng sorye of her strayt kepyng, ouerthrowwith her metes and treadeth the vnder her fete and flyethe vnto the woodes, and there syngeth and warbleth with swete notes and songes. Also the sprigge or bough of a tree by greate vyolence made croked boweth downe the toppe, but whé the hand

seke for riches dygnyte, rule, glory, fame, renome, and deynte for suffysaunce: they do seke therin fely-cite and blessednes. For felicite is suffysaunce, and wanteth nothynge, for yf it dyd want anythinge, it wanteth suf-fysaunce and consequetly it could not be called justly felycite.
of him that boweth it, letteth it go at lybertye, it holde the
toppe vpryght towarde heuen, that is to sai: it returnyth to his
olde naturall course. The sonne lykewyse that at euen before
night fallyth (as the poetes faine) into the western waters: by a
secrete path retourneth his charyot, to his accustomed rysing.
So that all thynges naturall do returne and come agayne, to their
naturall courses. And all naturall thynges rejoyseth at theyr
returne to their owne nature. And nothyng hath any other
prescribed order but that onelye that hath ioyned the begynnyng
to the ende. And hath so establisshed the worlde of it selfe: that
it shall not chaunge from hys naturall course.

Certes, O you erthly men, you do know vnperfetly or as it were
in a dreme, your owne begynnyng and the verye ende of true
felicite, although you do se it by a thynne or slender imaginati-
on or fantasye. And therfore your naturall intent and purpose
ledeth you to the true good or blessednes, and much error
with-draweth you from the same. Consyder nowe than Boecius
whether that men may com to that perfyt ende and blessednes
by such thyngs as mē thought they shuld come by nature, that
is to say, yf that ryches or honors and suche temporall thyngs
can bryngye a man anye suche thinge that hath suffysaunce and
wantyth nothyng at all. For then I wold thynke that some men
were blessed and happye by opteynyng of these foresaid thinges,
that is to saye: that hath the sayde goodes of fortune all redye.
But and yf those thynges, that is to saye: worldlye goodes
cannot do the things that they do promyssse, and do wante muche
goodes, Is not then the kynde of false felicitie apprehended
and knoen openly by them? Therefore I aske the Boecius fyrste of
all (whyche not longe agoo diddest habound in riches) whether
that care dyd not trouble thy mynde for euerie wronge done
amongst all those aboundaunt ryches.

Boe: Certes I doo saye that I cannot remember that I was
euer of so quiet mynde, but that somethyng dydde alwayes
greue me.

Phil: Dyyddyst not thou want some thynge that thou woldest
haue had, or thou haddest stōthing that thou wouldest not haue
hadde?

Boe: I saye it is euen soo.

Phil: Then thou desyreddeste to haue the thynge that thou
dyddest lack, and to lacke that thou haddest.
**BOE:** I saye I do confesse no lesse.

**PHIL:** Then there nedeth some thynge that evry man de-
syrethe, that is to saye: Then evry man hath nede. **BOE:** I
graunt that evry man laketh. **PHIL:** Then he that hath nede
of anye thinge, is not thoroughly suffised and contented. **BOE:**
I saye the same. **P:** So then thou lackeddest suffisaunce, when
thou haddyst aboundaunce of ryches. **BOE:** I saye what ells.
**PHIL:** Then ryches cannot make a man haue Inough or to be
contented, whyche that hee hathe, whyche was the thing that they
semed to promise. And certes this thing I do thynke cheifelye
to be considered, that monye by his owne nature and kynde hath
nothynge that it cannot be taken fromme theym that haue it,
agaynste theyr wyll, that is to saye: that it hath nothyng in it,
but may be taken away whether they wyll or not that haue it.
**BOE:** I do knowledge, that it is so. **PHIL:** Why shouldest thou
not confesse it, when the stronger folke takethe it awaye dayly,
from the weaker against theyr wyll? For els whence commethe
all these complayntes in courtes, butt hat monye is taken awaye,
from folke agaynst theyr wyll, eyther by force or by crafte and
decyte. **BOE:** I saye it is soo.

**PHIL:** Than euere ye man shal haue nede of some outwarde
helpe, whereby he maye kepe hys monye.

**BOE:** Who wyl deny that.

**P:** Certes he shuld haue no nede therof, but for that he hath
mony, that he maye lese.

**BOE:** I say there is no doute thereof.

**PHIL:** Therefore the matter of monye is otherwyse, thō men
do thynke it is. For y ryches that were thought to make men to
haue suffissaunce and to be contented, makethe theym rather to
haue nede of other mennes helpe. What waye is there whereby
indigence and nede maye be put away and satysfied with riches?
Canne not ryche men be hungerye? Canne not ryche men be
thrystye? Doo the members and lymes of ryche men, fele no
wynter colde? But thou wylte saye that ryche men haue Inough,
to slacke theyr huger to quench ther thirst and to kepe them
from cold. Certes by this waye nede and pouertie maye be
eased by ryches. But it cannot be clene taken awaye. For yf
thys indigence and nede, alwayes gapyng and desyrynge riches,
might be satisfied with riches, then it behoueth that there remayne
and be such a nede and indigence, that may be fulfyllde and
Nature is satisfied with a lytle, but couetuousnes can never be satisfied.

But I holde my peace and wyll not tell that a lytell thynge suffyseth nature, but nothyng is Inoughe or suffyseth couetuousnes. Wherefore if ryches cannot put away indigence and nede, but doo cause and make indigence and nede? how may it be, that ye can beleue that ryches geueth and bryngeth to any man ynoough or suffysaunce.

Though a couetuous rych man, had a ryuer euer flowyng golde contynuallly, and dyd neuer cese, yet coulde it neuer staunche or satysfyse his gredy couetuousnes. And although he had as many precyous stones of the red sea, as his necke coulde beare, And although he doth eare hys fruytefull felde with an hundrde oxen, yet thys gredy and insaciable cure of couetuousnes, wyll neuer leue hym whyles he is a lyue. And his frayle ryches wyll not go with hym when he is dede.

**PHILOSOPHY.**

Honoure is a reuerence gyuen to another for a testymony of his vertue Aristo .4. Eicoroum.

Reuerence is a decent, and ¿noneynente gratynte or thankes Tullius.

But, do dignities make him honorable and reuerend, that hath them? Is there such vertue in dignities, that they maye put vertues in the mindes of them that haue dignities and expell vyce? Truelye they be not wonte to expell vyce and wyckednes, but rather to augment the same. Wherefore I haue dysdayne that digneties should so often happen vnto wycked and vitious men. For whyche thinge Catulus that was a vertuous wise ma in Rome (Seinge Nonius a vicyous man, syttinge in the place of dignitie and judgmente) called hym a swellynge full of corruption (that is to saye) a man hauynge an hepe of vyces, in hys breste.

As the swellynge in the necke called Struma, is ful corruption impostumed so was he full of vyce and wyckednes. Seyst thou not howe grete shame and vylanye digneties bryngeth to wicked folke? Truelye the vnoworthines or malyce of them shuld lesse appare, ye they were not honored. O Boecius myghtist thou be brought to so greate perylles, that thou wouldeste thynke or be contented to bere offyce or be felowe in offyce with the man named Decorate, when thou sawest in hym the hart and mynde of a wycked knaue and accuser of men? Certes I cannot judge them, worthy reuerence for their honors, whö I deme vnworthy to haue such honors. But ye thou sawest a man ful of wysdome, myghtest thou thynke him, vnworthy of reuerence, or of the wysdom that he hath?

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Boe: No truely.

Phylo: Certes dygnitie be properly incident to vertue. And vertue gyueth dygnities anone to them, to whom dignities shal be ioyned. And for bycause that honours, that the people do gyue to men, can not make men worthe suche honours: it appereth that honours haue no proper beautie, or similitude of dignytie of it selfe. In whiche thynge the same thynge aboue sayde, is to be considered. For yf a man be so moche the lesse estemed, bycause he is dyspysed of many? When that dygnytie can not make euyl men reuerende: then dygnitie maketh y euil folke, be rather dyspraysed, then praysed, which disprays dignytie sheweth to many. And truely not without a cause. For the wycked do reuenge them selte vpon dygnytie, when they defowle it, with theyr vilanye and wyckednes. And that thou mayst knowe that the same trewe reuerence can not happen to any man by these shadowy or transytorie dygnitie, vnderstande thus. If a man had vsed to haue mocch dygnytie in the Cosul ship, and by chaunce came emongst straunge nacions, shulde his honoure of the consul shyp, make him to be honoured amongst the strauengers? But and yf this honoure, were a naturall geste to dygnities, they myght never cease any where, amongst people fro doyngethey r offye and dutie, as the fyre in everie countrye never ceaseth to heate and warme. But for bycause, to be reuerenced and honourable cōmeth not to anye of the proper nature and strength in it selve, but mans false and vayne opinion causeth it: anone when they come there vnto them that esteme not the same dygnities, they r honours immediatlye vanyshe awaye and cease. But thou maist saye, y it is so amongst strange nacions. Do not the dignities endure alwaies amongst thē, where they first began? Understand no. Trulye the dygnyte of the prefectory, was somtyme a great power, amoung the Romaynes, which nowe is nothyng els, but a vayne name, and the dygnytie of the senatours, that somtyme was estemed an hyghe honoure is nowe a great burden or charge. And yf a man had the offye to take hede of corne and other vytayle of the people, he was taken for a greate man. Nowe what is lesse estemed then the said prouostship? Certes as I sayde a lytell before, the thynge that hath no proper bewtye, or worshyp of it selve, receyueth some tyme renoune and some tyme loseth renoune by meanes of the vsage of the thinge. If therefore dignities cannot

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It is called irreuerent setes and romes, wycked men do gyye.

No man lyueth alwaies in felicitie, but sometyme, he taysteth of aduersytie.

There was a Kynge of Sysil, named Dionysus that was euer sad, his famy-

make men reuerende? If by their own meanes, they were foule, and by the vice of wicked folke? If they lose their bewtye and vertue by mutacion of tymes? And if they become detestable and foule, in mens estimacion? what goodnes is in them to be desyred, and cannot geue the same vnto other? vnderstand none at all.

**PHILOSOPHY.**

Al though the proud Nero, with all hys detestable and furious lechery, decked and adornyd himselfe wyth fayre purple of the country of Tyre, and also wyth white stones, called pearles, yet for all that he liued disdained and hated of al men. And he hauynge great segnorye and lordshyp gaue to the reuerende fathers, the senators of Rome, reuerent seates, and rounmes, of dignities in courtes. Who therefore would thynke and take such honours or rounmes of dignityes good that such wretches do geue? vnderstand no man.

**PHILOSOPHY.**

Can kingomes and the acquaintaunce or fauoure of kinges, make a man myghtye? He aunswerith himselfe in mockynge (called Ironice) what elles, when that their power enduryth euer? But surely olde tyme past, and thys our presente age, and tyme, is full of examples y kyngs haue chaungyd their felicitie, into sorowe and calamyte. And phylosophye sayth agayne Ironice, O full noble and hyghe excellent is that power, whyche is not founde sufficient ynoughe to preserue and defend it selfe. And if the power of kynges be the cause of blessednes or felicitie, if the same power faileth in any part, do it not diminisshe felicitie, and bryngeth in wretchednes and miserye? But yet although the empire, and rule of mankynde be spred very wyde, and brode, It behouethe that there be many people lefte, and remaynynge, ouer whom euer eurye Kyng hath not dominion. So that, on whatsoeuer syde, power wanteth, that shuld make men blysfull and happye, on the same syde entreth weakenes or lacke of power that maketh men wretches. So that by this means it must nedes be, that there is in kynges more wretchednes and infelicitie: then blessednes and felycitie. A certayne Tyraunte that hadde experience of the peryll of his
estate and fortune, dyd declare and shewe the feare and dreade of his kyngedome by the terrours of a sworde hangyng over the heade of one of hys famylyer frendes. What is therefore this power that cannot put awaye the bytinge of carefullnes, nor avoid the prickings of feare. Certes these kynges woulde fayne lyue safely and sure, but they ca not. Maye they therefore from henceforthe rejoyse of theyr power? Doest thou juge hym myghtye whom thou seyst do that thynge that he ca not do? Doest thou esteme him myghtye that hath many men of armes, aboute hym? That more fearythe them that feareth hym? how semeth he myghtye that is put in the handes of hys seruauntes? For what shal I say of them that be in the fayvour of kynges, when that I my selfe haue shewed the, that the same kyngedomes of themselfe be vnsure and mutable. And that often tymes the power of kynges, when it decayethe and fayleth, ouer throweth such as it auauensed whē it flourished and was in prosperitie.

Kyng Nero constrayned Senecke his familar maister that taughte hym, to chose what death he woulde dye. Antonius, commaundte Papinion, that hadde bene longe a valiaunt man in y court, to be slayne with the swordes of knyghtes. And both of them, that is to saye: Senecke, and Papinion, would haue forsaken and haue yelded vp their power and authoritie yf they myght. Of the whyche two notable menne, Senecke labored to geue vnto Nero his riches, to haue his fauour and to go himselfe into exile alone. But whyles that the same authoritie and power of kynges ruleth men redye to fall, and in suche indignation, nether of them, that is to saye: of Senecke and Papinion, myght do that he woulde. Therefore what is this power, whych when men haue it, that they be aferde of? whych whē thou wouldst haue it, thou art not suer of it. And when thou wouldest leue it, thou kannst not eschewe it. Be they more thy frendes at nede, that fortune, and not vertue getteth? But surelye whom good fortune maketh thy frende, euill fortune maketh thine enemye and foe. And certes what pestylyence is stronger to hurt, then a famylyer enemye or so? Understand surely none at al.
He is myghty that can subdue sensualitye in hymselfe and folowe reason.

Thile is an Ilande in the sea beyonde Britain wher the sonne is in the hyghest in somer and goeth not beyonde the same Iland.

Glorye is a common fame with laud and prayse.

Fame is the knowledge of a man for hys actes and deades as wel farre of as nyghe.

A foole seteth his mynd, vpó glorye, a wise man, vpón his conscience.

If thou bee fayre thanke nature. If thou be noble,

He that wylbe myghtie, must subdue and mayster his cruell desirs and appetytes, and may not put his necke vnder (as one ouercome) to y' foule rayynes and libertye of lecherye or vicious mocions. Although thy power and auctoritie extendethe so farre, as the grounde and countrey of India, trembleth and fereth thy lawes, and cōmaundementes. And albeit, that the ferthest Ile in the sea calleth Thile, doth serue and obeye the: Yet if thou cannest not put awaye the foule darke cares, and auoyde wretched complaynts from the that do happen by euyll fortune, thy power is nothing, or thou hast no power at all worthy to be esteemed.

GLORIE.

But how deceyueable is glory oftētymes, whervpon (not without cause) a certayne poete (that used to make dities) cried oute and sayde. O glory glorye, emongest thousandes of men, thou art nothyng ells but a great swellynge or fillynge of mens eares.

For certes manye men, haue receyued and had often grete fame, by the false opinion of the people. And what thing may be thought more feble, then suche fame of the people: For they y' be praysed vnworthelye, ought to be ashamed of their prayse, whyche prayses if they be justly deserved, what thinge hath it augmentyd to the conscience of a wise ma, that mesureth not his good by the rumour of the people, but by the truth of hys conscience. And yf this thing be goodly to haue a fame spredde abrode, then is it a consequence that it is a foule thinge to be kept close. And as I sayde a lytell before, that it muste neades be that there be manye people, to whome the fame of one man cannot come, it foloweth then that he whome thou estemest to be famous and renomed semeth not gloryous nor famous, in the moste parte of the worlde. And truelye emongest these thynges, I do not thynke the fauour or prayse of the people worthye to be remembred, that commeth not by wyse and iuste judgement, nor firmely endureth or continueth euer. Nowe truely, what man seith not how vaine and slipperie the name of nobilitie and gentlesse is? Whych if it be referred to glorye and renowne of lynage, it is none of theirs that soo do glorye therin. For nobilitie or gentlesse semeth to be a certayne prayse, commynge by the
deserts of their auncetoures. And if laude and praysynge maketh nobilitie or gentlesse, then muste they be nedes noble and gentyll, that be prayed. Therefore another mans glory, nobilitie, or gentelles, maketh not the noble or gentle, yf thou haue no nobilitie or gentleesse of thy selfe, commynge by thine owne deserts. But Certes yf ther be any good in noblesse or gentles, I thynke it semeth to be as a thyng of necessitie joyned to noblesse and gentles, that they do not degenerate or vary from the vertue of their noble, or gentle progenitours and auncestours.

PHILOSOPHY.

Al mankynde lyuyng in thys worlde commeth of one and like byrth. For Certes one alone is the father of thynges. And there is one a lone that mynistreth and geueth all thynges, he gaue to the sonne his beames, he gaue to the mone her hones, y is, to be sharp at both endes in y wane, he gaue vnto man
kynde the earth, and the sterres vnto the firmament, he inclossed the soule of man with members of the body, which soule came from the high sete of heuen. Therefore all mortall men came of noble sede or begynnynge, that is to saye, from God. Whye then do you yost your selfe of your kinred and auncetours. For yf you beholde God, your begynnynge and maker, then is there none degenerate, that is to say vnoble or vngentell of byrth, except he forsake God, hys begynnynge, geuing hymselfe to vyces.

PHILOSOPHY.

But what shall I saye of corporall pleasures, the desire whereof is full of carefullnes, and the satisfysynge thereof is ful of payne and sorow, how great sycknes and intollerable dolours be these pleasures wonte to bryngye to the bodyes of suche as do vse them, as a certayne fuyyte of such wyckednes, of the whyche pleasures, what delectacion their motions and effectes haue, I know not. For whosoever wil remeber hym-
selfe of his pleasures, he shall well knowe that the endes thereof be sorow full and greuous. Whyche pleasures temporall if they coulde make men blessed and happye, then is there no cause but that brute beastes may also be called blessed, whose hole intent and purpose, hasteth to fulfyll their bodelye pleasure. The reioysynge also of wyfe and chyldren should be honest, but it is...
Philosophy.

Therefore there is no doughte but that these wayes, be certayne bywayes vnto felicitie or blessednes and cannot bryng anye man thyther as they do promisse to bryng the. But wyth howe great perylles and euyls, they be wrapped, I will shew you shortlye. Certes what thyng of these folowing is without peryl. Thou shalt not goo aboute to gather monye, but thou shalte take it awaye from some man that hathe it. If thou wouldest shyne wyth dignities, thou must make peticion to hym that gueeth them? If thou desirest to excell others in honoure, thou makest thy selfe subiecte, by humble askynge of them. If thou desire power: thou shalt be in daunger of beseging or layinge in awayte of them that be inferiors to the? If thou aske glory, thou being troubled wyth euer adversitie, canest not be quyet. And if thou woldest lede a voluptuouse lyfe, euerely wold dispise the and cast in thy teth, the thraldome and bondage of thy bodily actes, and dedes, most vyle and bryttell, that is to saye: that thou art a bondeman to the vile pleasures of thy bodye. Nowe than, they that desyre corporall goodes aboue them selue, that is to saye: aboue reason,
howe lytell and frayle possessyoun do they labour for? Cannyst thou excell the elephantes in greatenes, or the bulles in strenght? mayste thou surmoit the tyger in swiftnes? loke vpon the space and compasse of the firmamët the stedfastnes and swyftenes thereof, and than cesse to wonder at these vile inferior worldly thinges. Whych fyrmanct certes is not rather to be wondred at for these thynges, but for the self same resoun wherby it is gouerned. But howe swyftly passyng away and transitorye and howe fletynge and more swyfter fadynge awaye, is the beawyty of the body, thë ÿ mutabilitie or chaüge of the sommer flowers. And (as Aristotle sayth) if that men had eyes as quicke as a beast named Lynx, soo that their sighte myghte se thorow or penetrate the bodies that they doo see, shoulde not that bodye of Alcibiades that was mooste fayre without fouthe, seme most foule within to them that sawe ÿ in trayles, or inner partes thereof? And so therefore thy owne nature causeth not the to seme fayre, but the wekenes of the eyes, that loketh vpon the, cawseth it. But esteme thou the goodes or fayrenes of the bodye as much as thou wylt, so that thou doest knowe that the same goodes or fayrenes, whatsoeuer it be that thou meruailest at, or so estemest, maye be dessolued and clene takë awaye, with the heate of a feuer, that lasteth but three dayes. Of all whych thynges before sayd, a man may gather brefely that these worldely thynges, that cannot perfourme the goodnes that they promes or seme to haue in thë nor be ye perfytt by hepynge vpe of goodes they (I say) be not as ways and pathes to bryenge men to felycitye and blissidnes, nor can make men happy or blessed.

**PHYLOSOPHY.**

Alas, alas, what ignoraunce ledethe wandringe wretches in a wronge waye clene contrary frô felicitie, and perfet goodnes. Ye seke not golde, vpon the grene tree, nor gather perles vpon the vyne tree, ye hyde not your engynce or nettes to take fyshe vpon the hyghe mountaignes to make rych feastes of fyshe. And ye goe not to the waters Therene, when you lyst to hunt the goote or roo.

Men do knowe the secrete ebynges, crekes, and cauerines in the flouds of the sea, and which shore of the sea is full of whyte perles, or whych shore aboundith most with a shell fyshe, that
serueth to dye red purple with all. And whyche costes of the see hath aboundaunce of tender fishes, or of sharp fyshes called Echynes. But men do make themselfe so blynde, that they force not to knowe wher the sayd perfytte goodnes and felicitie, lyethe hidde, that they seke for, and doo couet or desyre. And dyuers of them do seke in the erth, that perfyt felicitie, y sur-mounteth the fyrmament, that beryth the sterres. What maye I desyre worthy for the folyshe thoughtes and myndes of men. They seke for ryches and honor, and when they haue gotten suche false goodes with great trauell: Then I would wyse that they myght knowe the trewe and perfyt goodes and felicitie.

PHILOSOPHY.

Hetherto it suffyseth that I haue shewed the maner and forme, of false felicite or blessednes, which if thou beholdeste perfetlye, it restythe to declare from henceforthe, whyche is the very true felicitie.

BOE: Truelye I do se, that ryches cannot be satisfied with suffysaunce, nor power wyth kyngedomes, nor reuerence with dygnities, nor glory with nobilitie or gëtles, nor myrth with pleasures. PHIL: And hast thou perceyued the causes why it is so? BO: Certes me semeth that I see them as it were thorowe a thynne or narrowe chyn or clyfte, that is to saye: not very perfytlye, but I had leuer knowe them more apparauntly of the. PHIL: Truely the redye waye to knowe them is very perfyte. For that thinge, that by nature is symple plaine and inseperable, mans errour deuideth and separatith the same, and leadethe it from the true and perfyt good or felicitie, vnto false and vnperfyt good, and infelicitie. But thynkest thou thys, that a man hath nede of nothinge, that nedeth power?

BOE: I saye it is euen so.

PHIL: Therefore suffysaunce and power be both one and lyke by nature and kynde.

BOE: So it semethe. PHIL: And doest thou think that such thynges as suffysaunce, and power be, are to be dispysed, or
contrarye wyse, that they be most worthy reuerence aboue all things. BOE: I saye it is worthy reuerence and it may be no doute thereof.

PHIL: Let vs therefore conferre reuerence, to suffysaunce and power, that we may iudge these three thynges, all one thyngye. BOE: Let vs adde them together as one thyngye, yf we wyll confesse the truthe. PHIL: What thynkest thou than, dooste thou iudge that to be an obscure and ignoble thyngye, that is suffysaunt, myghty and reuerend, or els right clere and excellent by al fame and renoune? And consider also whether that thinge, that hath nede of nothyngye, that is moste myghtye, that is moste worthy honor (as it is afore graunte) and hath nede yet of fame and renoune, whyche it cannot geue vnto it selfe, shoulde it seeme for that moore abiecte or lesse estemed of any parte?

BOE: I can not denye it, but I muste nedes confesse it, as it is in dede, ryght famous of renoune and noblenes.

PHIL: Then it is a consequence, that we confesse and graunte that glory and renoune nothyngye differeth from the other three, that is to say, from ryches, suffysaunce and power.

BOE: I saye it foloweth.

PHIL: Than the thinge that hath no nede of any other, that canne do all thinges of his owne myght, that is clere noble and reuerend: do not this truely appere to be a thyngye moste ioyfull.

BOE: I saye I cannot certaynelye tell or thynke from whence any sorow maye happen to any such thyngye.

PHIL: Then it is nede that we muste graunte this thinge to be full of gladenes, if the foresayd thynges remayne true. And also we must nedes graunte that the names of suffysaunce, power, noblesse reuerence and gladnes, be dyuers and sondry thynges, but ther substaunce is all one, without any dyuersitie.

BOE: I saye it must nedes be euyn so.

PHIL: Then the selfe same thyngye that is all one and symple or pure of nature, and cannot be deuyded, the wyckednes of men deuydeth it, and when they labour to get part of a thyng that hath no partes, they nether gette anye porcion of the thyngye, nor yet the selfe same thyngye that they desyre. BOE: I saye after what maner do men deuyde the thynges. PHIL: He that seketh ryches, to auoyde and defende pouertie, he laboureth not Gladnes is a quyetnes, or cotentacion of a mans appe- tyte, or desyre in anye good thyngye that he hath gotten.

He that de- syreth monch one thyngye
to get power, but had leuer be accounted nedy vyle and pore, and also forgo and lose many naturall pleasures, then he wold lose the mony that he hath gotten. But by this means he that lacketh power, he that is greued, he that is vile or out cast, and he that is of noo fame or of no reputation, hath no suffysaunce. And truelye he that onely desyreth power, spendeth and wasteth riches, dispiseth pleasures and honour wythoute power, and setteth not by glorye. But certes thou seyst that he wanteth many thynges, and yet happethe that he hath sometyme nede of thynges necessarie, and is bitten or greued wyth care and anguysh. And when he cannot put awaye these thyngs, he cesseth and is not myghtye, whych is ý thing that he mooste cheyfely desyreth. And lykewyse a man may reson and speake of honors, glorie, and pleasures, as of power, and suffysaunce. For when cuerye one of them is the selve same, and lyke the other, whosoeuer seketh to get any one of them w'out the others, certes he hath not that he desyrethe. BOE. I saye what than, yf a man coueteth to gette all the to gether. PHIL. Certes I wolde say that he woulde get hym soueraigne felicitie and blessednes. But shoulde he fynde the same soueraygne felicitie, in thynges, that I haue shewed that cannot geue and performe that thing that they do promes?

BOE: I saye they cannot.

PHIL: Therefore blessednes or perfyt felicitie should be sought for, in noo wyse in the thynges that are thoughte to geue but one thing singularly, of all thynges that are to be desyred.

BO: I saye I confesse the same and nothynge can be sayde more true then that.

PHIL: Therefore haste thou bothe the forme and the causes of false felicitie. Nowe turne the inwarde thoughte of thy mynde, vnto the contrary, for there thou shalt see anone the same true and perfyt felicitie and blessednes, that I haue promysed.

B: Truly I say this is very playne and euydent, and it were to a blyndman, and thou dyddyst shew the same trewe and perfyt felicitie a lytell before, when thou dyddyst laboure to shewe me the causes of false felicitie. For (except I be deceuyed) the same is the treue and perfyt felicitie or blessednes that perfourmeth in mā suffisance power, reuereunce, noblesse, and gladnes. And that thou mayste knowe that I do perceyye the same inwardely I do confesse vndoutedlye that the same is the
full and perfyt felicitie or blessednes, that maye truely perfourme one of the sayd thynges, for by cause they all be one, and the selfe same thyng, and not dyuers thynges in substaunce, that is to say, suyfysaunce, power, reuerence, noblesse, and joye or gladnes. PHYL: O my chyld Boece I perceue thou art happye or blessed in thys opinion, yt thou wylte put thereto this, that I shal say.

BOE: I saye what is that.

PHI: Thynkest thou that there be anye thyng in these worldly and transitorye thynges yt may bring in or shew any such state.

BOE: I say I thinke not. For thou hast shewed that nothynge can be desyred, aboue perfytte felicitie.

PHIL: Therfore these worldlye thynges, that is to saye worldelye suyfysaunce, power reuerence nobles and pleasures, semethe to geue vnto men the symylltudes or lykenes, of true good, or ells to geue certaine vnperfit and fained goodes: for truly they cannot geue the true and perfyt good.

BOE: I say I graunt the same.

PHIL: Now for bycause thou hast knowen whyche is the same verye true and perfytte felicitie, and whyche fayneth, or dis-symulythe the same, that is to saye, that shewethe the false felicitie, then nowe it resteth that thou mayst knowe where thou mayste seke for this trewe felicitie.

BOECIUS: Certes that thyng I saye, I greately loked for nowe of late. PHYLOSOPHY: But forsomuch as it pleseth my scoler Plato, in his boke, named Thimeo, he saith that in the lest thynges of all, the helpe of God, ought to be required. What thynkest yt now to be done, that we maye deserue to fynde the sete or place of the same soueraygne good? BOE: I saye, we must cal vpon the father of all thynges, that is to saye, almyghtye God, wythout whō no begynnynge is well and perfytelye made. PHIL: Thou sayeste truely. And wythout taryenge she, that is to saye: phylosophy, made her prayer vnto God, euен thus as foloweth.

PHILOSOPHY.

O Father and maker of heuen, and erth, that gouerneth the worlde wyth thy perpetual prouidence, And causeth yt time
to passe forth, frō thy age perdurable. Thou beyng alwaye fyrme and stable, causest all thynges to be moued, whome no outwarde causes haue brought out, to make a worke of flowyng fletynge or wauerynge matter. But the inwarde forme of thy inestimable goodnes, withoute enuye or malyce, hath moued the thereto frely. Thou bryngest forthe al things from thy godly example aboue, beyng moste fayre of all other, beryng in thy remembranrae the goodly hole worlde, accordyng to the lykenes, as it was conceiued, and formed in thy thought before thou com-maundeste the sayde worlde, (beyng made perfyt) to hold abso-lutely his perfyt partes, that is to say: the elementes and all thynges made of them. Thou byndeste the elementes by nomber accordyngely, so that the colde thinges maye agre with the hote thinges, and the drye thynges with the moost. That the fyer that is most pure flye not to hye, nor the heuynes or wayte of the erth drawe downe the same ouerlowe.

Thou God, deuidest by membres conueniente and consonante the soule of the worlde, that is to saye: the bodyes or planetes aboue, being meane betwene God and mannes soule, that is also of a three folde operacion, mouyng all thinges here in this worlde, by there influence and myghtye power. Which soul or planetes being deuided hath gathered or engendryd a mouing by operacion, into two worldes circles or spere, that is to say. The spere that fyrest moueth, and the spere of the planettes. And the same soule or planetes returned agayne, goethe into it selfe by intelligence, whiche is one operacion, and compassethe the profounde and depe thought by knowyng of God, whych is another operacion. And so it mouethe the heuen by like ymage or intelligēce whych is the thirde operation.

Thou bryngest forth the soules of men, and the lesse lyues, that is to saye, lyuynge brute beastes, and all growyng things by lyke maner and causes. And shapeth the reasonable soules of men, to the lyght cartes, that is to say: to the sterres of heuen.

Thou sowest the soules in heuen, and in the earth, that is to say, into aungeles in heuen, and into bodyes of mankind on the erth whych soules of mankynde, when they be conuertyd vnto the, by thy benygne or gentle law thou causest them so to retourn, by thy turnynge fyer, of charitable loue.

O father, graunt that mans thought maye ascende vp into that
strayte and noble sete of hygh and perfytte goodnes, and graunte
that it maye fynde the foilitaine of goodnes, and graunt also
(that after the light is founde) to fasten her cleare syght in the.
Put away the cloudes, and waytes or burdens of the delyghte of
worldely thinges. And shine thou with thine owne bryghtnes.
For thou arte cleere and resplendaunte, and a quyet rest to make
myndes and thoughtes.

To loke on the, is the ende of al things thou beinge the selfe
and the same one onely, art the begynnyng, the bearer, the leder,
the path, and terme or ende, beyonde the whyche, there can be
nothinge iustly thought or desyred.

PHILOSOPHY.

For by cause thou hast sene whiche is the forme of perfytte
good, and whych also is the forme of imperfytte good. Nowe I
thynke it mete to declare wherein thys perfytte good or felicitie
is set. In the which I do iudge to inquyre fyrste, whether anye
suche perfitt good (as the same that thou a litel before dyddyst
defyne or determine) myght be in the nature of thyngs, that no
vayne imaginacion or shadowe deceyue vs, and put vs out of the
trewth of the thyng or matter, that we be aboute to talke of.
And it cannot be denied, but that there is parfytte good: And
the same good is the fountayne of al good. For why? euer
tyng that is called vnparfytte, the same is taken vnperfyt by
diminishing of y thing that is perfytte. Whereby it commethe
to passe, that yf (in any kynde of thyng) any thing is sene to
be vnperfytte, therin, it is necessary that somthynge be also
parfytte. For yf perfectiion be taken awaye, certes it cannot be
imagyned from whence that thyng is, that is adiudged vn-
parfytte. For the nature of thynges toke neuer any begynnynge
of thynges dymynished and vnparfytte but procedyng from
hole and parfytte thynges, came downe or descended into these
lower and baren thynges. And (as I haue shewed a litel before)
if ther be any felicitie or blessednes vnparfyte vayne or frayle,
it may not be doubted but that there is some felicitie and
blessednes that is hole and perfyt. BOE: I saye it is fyrmely
and truely concluded. PHIL. But consider after this maner,
wherein perfytte felicitie dwellethe.

The common conceyte of mans minde do proue, that God is
the soueraygne and cheyfe good of al things. For whè nothyng maye be thought better then God, what man doutyth that thinge to be good when nothyng is better than it. Euen soo truelye, reason declareth that GOD is good, that it maye conclude also, that perfyt good is in him. For except it were soo, he canne not be prynce and soueraynge of all thynges. For somethyng hauing perfytte good, shoulde be better then he, and it shulde seme that that same thing were before and of more antiquitie or elder then God. For all thynges perfytte, are manyfest and do appere to be fyrst, before things that be vnperfyt. Wherefore, that my reason goeth not fourth in-fynytely, or wythoute ende, we muste graunte the hyghe God to be full of soueraygne and perfytte good. And we haue con-fyrmed and establyshed before, that perfyt good is true felicitie or blessednes. Therfore it muste nedes be, that trewe felicitie, or blisshednes: is set in the high God. BOE: I do graunt it, and it maye not be denied by any meanes.

PHYLO: But I beseeche the, se howe fyrmelye, and howe holy thow mayst proue, that we haue sayde, that the hygte almyghty God, is full of soueraygne good. BOE: Howe should I proue it.

P: Dost thou thinke that the father of al things hath taken from any outwarde thinge the same soueraygne good, whereof it is sayde he is ful, or els thynkest thou that he hath it naturallye of hymselfe? As thoughe thou shouldyst thinke that God hymselfe and the blessednes of God be of dyuers distyncte substaunce and not vnite all in one or of one onely substaunce? For yf thou thynkest that God hath receyued the sayde good outwardlye of any other, thou mayst iudge and esteme the same that gaue it hym, better and more excellent then he that receyued it. But I do confesse that God is ryght worthylye mooste soueraygne and excellent of all thynges. And truely yf soueraygne good be in GOD by nature, but yet by reason dyueres, when we speke of God the soueraygne prynce of all thyng, let hym faine that can, who hath ioyned together these dyuers thynges, that is to say, God and soueraygne good. Farther-more the thinge that differeth from every thing, the same is not the verye same thyngye, that it differeth from. So that the thinge that differeth from soueraygne good, is not by nature of it selfe, the same soueraygne good. But it were a wycked thyngye or wronge so to thynke of that thinge, that is to say: of God, that

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excelleth and passeth all other in goodnes. For alwayes the nature of nothyng maye be thought to be better then the begynnyng of the same thyng. Wherefore I shall conclude by good reason, that the thyng, that is, the begynning of all thynges is of hys owne substaunce soueraygne good.

BOE: I saye it is wel concluded.

PHIL. But it is graunted before that soueraygne good, is perfyte felycitie and blessednes. B: I saye no lesse but it is euen soo.

PHIL: Therfor it behoueth to confessse that God is the same soueraygne good. B: I saye I can not auoyde, the resons before alledged. And I do perceyue that thyng shewed of them, is a very consequence to the thyngs. PHIL: Beholde now whether thyng maye be proved hereafter more firmly, that two soueraigne good thynges that dyffer one from another, may not be. For it appereth that the goodes that dyffer of them selfe, can not be all one thyng : Therefore nether of them canne be perfyte when that one of them hath nede of the other. But it is manyfest that the same, that is vnperfyte, is not soueraygne and perfyte. Therefore the goodes that be soueraygne, by no meanes may be dyuers or dyffer one from another. Soo then I have proued and gathered that both blessednes and God, be soueraigne good. Wherefore it behoueth that the soueraygne dyuinitie, is the same lyke thyng, as soueraygne blessednes or felycitie. BOE: I saye that by thynges nothyng maye be concluded more true, nor more firme by reasoning, nor more worthy, then God. PHI: Therefore vpon these thynges, (as the Geometricians are wonte to byynge in thynges, that they call apparaunces after they haue shewed their propositions) euë so wyll I geue the as a correlary or conclusyon, for bycause that men be made blessed by obteyning of blessednes, and that blessednes is the same dyuinitie, it is manyfest that men be made blessed by optyning of the diuinitie. And as men be made iust and blessed by obtaynyng of Iustice, and wyse by obteyning of wysedome : So by lyke reson it behoueth that men haue gotten diuinitie, be made gods. Then is euery blessyd man a God: But certes by nature, there is but one God, albeit by participacion of dyuynitie, no thyng leteth, or prohibyteth, but there be many Goddes.

BOE: I saye this is a gaye, and a precious thyng, whether thou woldest call it apparen, or a conclusion. PH: And certes
nothyng is fayrer, or more goodly then this thyng, that reason persuaded shulde be added to these forsayde thynges. BOE: I saye what thyng is it. PHY: When blyssednes semeth to contayne many thyngs, it is to doubt, whether all these thynges do ioyne togyther, as it were one body of blyssednes, by certayne diuersytie, or varyete of partes, or membres, or whether there be any one thyng, of them that of it selfe accōplisheth the substaunce of blyssednes, vnto the whiche all the other be referred. BOE: I saye, I wolde thou woldest open the same vnto me, by example of the same thynges. PHI: Haue I not judged that blisse and thoughte it soueraynne good. PHI: It behoueth that thou adde souerayne good to all these thinges that folowe. For blyssednes, is sufferayne suffysaunce, the same is soueraynne power, the same is soueraynne reuerence, the same is soueraigne clerenes, and the same is demed to be souerayne pleasure. BOE: What then? PHI: Be all these thynges, that is to saye: suffysaunce, power, and the other thynges, as it were membres of blisse andes? or whether be they all referred vnto good, as vnto the chyefe of them. BO: I say, I perceiue well what thou preposyst to serch out, but I desyre to here what thou defynest or dost determyne. PHY: Vnderstande thou the solucion of the questyon thus. If all these thynges, were membres of blisse andes: then shoulde they dyffer one from another. For suche is the nature of partes, that dyuers partes or membre do make one bodye. BOE: Truely, all these thinges haue ben shewed before, to be all one thinge. PHI: Then be they no membres, or els it shoulde seme, that blyssednes were ioyned, or made al of one membre, which can not be. BOE: I say it is, no doute, but I loke for the resydu of thy question that remaineth. P: Truelye it is manfest that all other things be referred vnto good. For therefore suffysaunce is requyred, by cause it is thought to be good. Therefore power, is desired, for it is thoughte also to be good. And lykewyse a man may conjecture of reuerence, noblesse, and plesure or delyghte. Then is soueraynge good the effecte and cause of all thynges that are to be desyred. For that thinge that hath no good in it self nor symlytude or likenes of good, by no meanes ought to be desyred. And on the contrary wise those thynges also, that by nature be not good, yet yf they seeme to be as they were verye good, they be desyred: whereby it happethe that bountye or goodnes, is thought ryghtfully the verye
effecte and cause of all thynges to be desyred or loked for. For that thyng semeth cheyfly to be desyred or wished, for the cause or loue, wherof any thing is desyred. As yf a man would ryde for cause of helth, he desyreth not so much the mouing to ryde, as the effect of his helth. Therfore when that all thyngs be desyred, for the cause and loue of good, they be not desyred rather of al mê, thê the same good. But we haue graunted that felicitie or blessednes is the thinge for the whyche all other thynges be desyred: wherefore onely felicitie or blessednes is sought for. Whereby it appereth clerely, that there is but one substaunce of the same good, and of blessednes or felicitie.

BOE: I se nothyng why any man may contêde or say any thing to the contrarye.

PHIL: But we haue shewed before that God and perfet blessednes or felicitie, is all one, and the selfe same thyng. BOE: I say the same. PHIL: Therefore it is lawefull to conclude safelye and truelye, that the substaunce of God, is sette also in the same good, and not ells where, in any other thyngne.

PHYLOSOPHY.

Come hether to gather all ye that be taken wyth the wycked chaynes of deceyftfull pleasure of erthlye thynges dwelling in your myndes here, that is to say: in perfyt felicitie shalbe the rest of your labours. Here is the standing port or hauen for plesaunt quyetnes, here is the onely open house of refuge for the carefull. That is as much to say, as all ye that be wrapped and tangled with temporal affections, come to God, whiche is perfyt felicitie. Where ye shalbe suffysed with al good thynges that canne be desidered. For what soeuer thyng the floude Tagus with hys golden grauell or sande greueth, or the floude Hermus with his shynynge banke, or the floude Indus, that is nexte vnto the hote part of the world and myngyth the grene precious stons with the whyte stones. Al these do not make cler the sight or vnderstanding of your myndes and thoughtes, but rather wrappeth vp your blynde myndes into their darkenes, making you to forget God, thus (whatsoeuer pleaseth and stereth youre myndes here) the earthe hath norished the same in her low cauerne. But the shynynge wherewith the heuen is gouernyd and continueth in strength and forse, putteth away the darke ruynye and decay of Tagus is a flode in spayne that hath grauell or sande like golde. Hermus is a flod in Asia hauing grauell and baks lyke gold. Indus is a flode that rennyth to the red sea and hath in it much perle and grene precious stones.
the soul, and whosoever may perceyue the same shining, he wyll denye, and refuse the resplendent beames of the son.

**Boecius.**

I assent to all thy sayinges, for they all be knytt to gether with ryghte stronge reasons.

**Phil:** Howe muche wylte thou esteme it, if thou knowest what thynge the sayde good is?

**Boe:** I wyll esteme it aboue all things if it so happen that I maye knowe also there withall, God that is good. **Phil:** Certes I shall open the same by very good reason, so that the thynge, that be concluded a lytle before, do yet remayne in thy mynde. **Boecius:** I saye they shall remayne. **Phil:** Haue I not shewed the that the same thinges that be desyred of many folke, that is to say : suffysaunce, reuerence, power, and such other be not true, and perfyt goodes, by cause they vary and dyffer one from another? and that when the one is without the other it may not brynge in suche good that is full and absolute, that is to saye, haunynge nede of nothyng? But we haue shewed before, that then it is trewe and perfyt good when that all the sayd thynge be gathered together, as into one forme, that is to saye into good, so that the same that is suffysaunce, is power, reuerence, noblesse, and delight. And truely except all the sayde thinges be one without diuersite, they haue nothyng in them whereby they shoulde be accountyd emongeste thynge that are to be desyred.

**Boe:** I saye it is declared alredy, and no man maye doughte thereof.

**Phil:** Then the thynge that do vary and dyffer, be no goodes. But when they haue begonne to be al one thynge then they be goodes. Do it not happen that these thynge be good by adop- tion or optaynyng of vnitie?

**Boe:** So I saye it semeth. **Phil:** But al that is good, grauntest thou to be good by participation or partakyng, or not? **Boe:** It is so. **Phil:** Then thou muste nedes graunt by lyke reason, that one and good, be all one thynge. For there is but one substaunce of such thynge, whose effecte is not naturally dyuers.

**Boe:** I saye I cannot denye it. **Phil:** Hast thou not knownen the that every thing that is, do so longe remayne and dwel together, as long as it is all one? And when it cessethe and is
not all one that then it dyeth and dyssolueth together? BOE: By what meanes? PHILO: As in bestes, when the soule or lyfe and the body, do ioyne together in one, and so remayn and dwel, it is called a beast. And when y\(v\) vnitie of them both is dissolved by seperacion of the one from the other then it appereth that it dyeth and is no longer a beste. And lykewyse the body of mankynde, when it remayneth in one forme by coniunction or ioynynge together of the mēbers or lymmes, the fygure of man is sene, but yf the partes of the bodye (beynge distributed and seperated one from another) haue destroyed the vnitie, the body is not as it was before. And whosoever woulde serche other thynges, after the same maner it wyl appere, y\(e\) euery thynge wyl remayn in his proper substaunce whyle it is all one. And when it is no more all one, it dyeth. B: When I consyder w\(i\) my self many thynges, yet it semeth that it is none other thynge, then thou hast saide. PHIL: Therfore is there any thynge, that (in as moche as it worketh naturally) leueth the appetyte and desyre of beynge, or of substaunce, and desyreth to come to death and corruption? Bo: If I consyder the bestes that haue any nature to wyll or not to wyll: I fynde nothing (excepte it be compelled by outwarde vyolence) that forsaketh the intente or desyre to lyue, and hastyth of fre wyll to dye. For euery beste laboureth to defende and kepe his lyfe and to eschew deathe and distruction. But I dought muche what I maye iudge of herbes, and trees, and of such things that haue no lyuyng soules, nor felynge at al as bestes haue. PHIL: Certes theoref thou mayst not dout, when thou lokest on the hearbes and trees, howe they do growe, and flowryshe in places, conuenient for them, wher they cannot lightly wyther nor drye so longe as theyr nature may kepe them. For some of them do growe and spryng in the feldes, other in the mountaynes, other in the marish, and other do cleue to the rocks or stones, some be grosse and plentyful some be lene and baren, whych would drye awaye yf a man go aboute to conuey thē into any other places then such they be in al readie. For nature gueuth to euerye thinge, that thynge that is conuenient, and laboureth to lyue and not to die, whiles they may haue strengthe to contynue. What shall I saye that they all do take there noryshyng from their rotes, as thoughe they had mouthes fastened in the earthe, and spredeth their nourishyng by the pyth, by the wod and by the barke? And what wylth thou saye:
that the softest thynge suche as the pyt of tre is, in the myddest, 
is defended wyth a certayne hardnes of the wode, and the barke 
is sette vtttermoste of all, agaynst the intemperance of the ayer, 
as a defender to sustayne the hurt that may fal? And thus thou 
mayst see howe greate is the dyligence of nature, for al thinges 
be renued with multiplication of sede, whiche sedes who doth 
not know but that they be as certayne instrumentes not onelye to 
tary for a tyme, but also to remayne for euer, by generation or 
successyon. And also the thyngs that men do think haue no 
soules, do not euer of them desyre (by lyke reson) to kepe that 
is hys owne? wherfore els doth lightnes bere vpward the flames 
of the fyre, and grauitie or heuyynes presse downe the erth but 
that the same places and mouings do best agre so, for euer of 
them. And farthermore euer thyng, kepethe the thynge, that 
is agreyng and according to it, ryght as the thynges that be 
contrarye, corrupteth and dystroyeth it.

Nowe truely the thynges that be hard as stones, do cleue so 
fast together, to theyr partes and defend them self, that they maye 
not be easelye deuided or broken a sonder. But veryly, the 
thynges that be soft and lyquyd, as the ayer and the water, do 
yghtly geue place to any thyng that deuydeth them, but yet 
they do quyckely come together and ioygne vnto the partes, 
from the whiche they be deuyded. But the fyre wyll in noo 
wyse deuyded, but refuseth all dyuisyon. And I do not speke 
nowe of the voluntarye mouynges of the soule, that hath know-
ledge, but of the natural intencion of thynges, even as it is that 
we do digest meates, that we haue eten without thynkying thereon 
howe it is digested and as we do take wynde and breathe in slepe, 
not knowyng thereof. For certes, the loue in beastes to tary, or 
lyue, commeth not of the wyll of the soule, but of the be-
gynnynges and instyncte workes of nature. For certes the wyll 
often tymes embraseth death, when that causes cöpelleth the 
same, whiche death nature feareth. And contrarywyse, other 
whyles the wyll cöpelleth vnto the thyng, that nature alwaies 
desireth, that is the worke of generacion, wherby onelye the 
contynuance of mortail thynges, endureth. And this loue or 
appetyte that euere thynghe hathe to it self, procedeth not, nor 
cometh of the mocion of the soule: but by naturall intencion. 
For the prouyndence, or wysdom of God, hath giuen vnto thynges 
that he hath creat this, that is to saye: a great cause to con-
tynewe styl, in as moche as they desyre naturally to lyue as longe as they may. Wherfore there is nothyng that thou nedest to doubtte in any maner, for all thynges that be: desyreth naturally stedfast dwellyngs, and to eschewe distraction. BOE: I confesse that I do se nowe without any doubtte, the thynges that of late, semed vncertayne vnto me. PHY: Certes, the thyng that desyreth to be and remayne alwaies, desyreth to be one and not dyuers. For yf that one, were taken away and distroyed: certes there shulde remayne no beynge to any thyngge.

BOECIUS: I saye, it is trewe. PHI: Therfore al thinges desyreth one. BOE: I haue graunted.

PHY: Then I haue shewed that the same one thinge, is the thing that is good. BO: Ye truly.

PHY: Then all thynges desyreth good, and that thou mayst descrybe and decerne thus, the same good is the thing that is desyred of all men.

BOE: I saye nothyng maye be thought more true, for either al thyngs be brought to nothing and do wander withoute a gouernour or gyde destitute and spoyled of one, as of their head and beginning, or if there be any thinge wherevnto all thynges, draweth, that thyngge is the soueraign of al goodes.

PHI: O my norished child I am glad of the, for thou hast fastened in thy mynde, and thought, the verye marke of perfette truthe, but in thys it appereth to the that thou saydist a lytel before that thou diddest not knowe, or were ignorant.

BOE: What is it? PHI: Certes thou saidest thou wist not what was the ende of all thinges: surely the same ende is the thyng that is desired of all men.

And forasmuch as we haue gathered that good is the thyngge that is desired of all, it behoueth that we confesse and agree that good is the ende of all thinges.

PHYLOSOPHY.

Whoseuer seketh out the trueth with a profound mynde or thought, and coueteth to be compassed or deceyued with no false opynyons, let hym rewolue and thynke in hym selfe, the lyght of his inwarde syght, which is reson, and let hym turne againe the longe mouinges and operacions of the soule turning them into a circle, or compasse, and let hym teche his mynde and thoughte,
be ioyned together, but when the bodye is dede the mind or soule knoweth al thynges without anye iet. Lyke as a candell lyghte ynder a bushel can not lyghte any fether thô the bushel but when the bushell is taken away then the lyght of the cædell lighteth al aboute.

Memorye and vnderstandyng be the treasures of the soule or mind. (after that it is retournyd, to his owne tresures or power) to holde all that he hathe laboured for, outwardlye, and then the thyng that the blacke cloude of ignorant hath hydde, shal appere more euydent and clere then the sonne.

For the bodye (brynginge in the wayt of obliuion or forgetfulnes) hath not put out of the mynde, all the lyghte of knowledge. For the sede of trweth that is styrryd by the wynd of doctrine cleueth fast inwardelye, to the mynde or thought. For els why do you iudge of your owne voluntarye mynde, things ryght to a man that doth ask ye any thyngye, excepte the noryshyne and grounde of ryght or reson lay hidde in your depe harte thought or mynde. And if the muse or wysedome of Plato soundeth truth, euery forgetfull man recordeth the thing that he lerned before. The meanynge is this. He that wyll knowe the truthe let hym ioyne his reson of the inwarde mynde to the outwarde thinge, and let hym resolue by deliberation the thyng that he hath conceyued, whether it be ryght or wrong, and then the reson that contaynethe in it supernaturally the rote of truth, shal open the same truthe of the outwarde thinge. For Plato sayth, that mannes soule knoweth all thynges, but the bodye causeth it to forrette, and by studye and exercyse it commeth to perfyte knowledge agayne, and sayeth also that to knowe is nothyng els, but to remember a thyng that was forgotten which was knowne before, and saith also that the effectes of the bodye blyndethe the soule.

BOECIUS.

Thë said I, I graunt wel vnto Plato. For thou remembryst me the secoût tyme of these thyngs. Fyrst yȝ remembryst me that I lost my memory, by the contagious coniunction of the body and soule. And afterwarde when I was oppressyd wyth the bourden of my dolour and sorowe. PHIL: If thou beholde the thynges before graunted, it shall not be farre of but thou shalt remembre the thyng that thou of late diddest confesse, that thou knewest not. BOETIUS. What thinge was that?

PHYLOSOPHY. By what gouernemente the worlde is gouerned. BOECIUS. I remember well that I confessed that I knewe it not, but although I se now what thou purposeste, yet I desyre to here it more plainely of the.
PHIL: Thou thoughtest it no doughte, a lytle before that this worlde is gouverned by God.

BOE: Certes I thynde it no dought nor neuer wyll, and I will shewe the shortly by what resones I am brought to it. Thys worlde colde neuer be brought into one forme of soo dveyers contrayre partes, excepte that there were one that ioyned together such dveyers thynges. And the same dveyersitie of nature so varieng one from another woulde separete and deuyde a sonder, the thynges that be ioyned together, except ther were one that held together the thing that he hath knyt together. And the order of nature, shoulde not go fourthe, so certainly, nor shewe so ordinary mouynge, in places, times, effect spaces, and qualities, except ther were one that remayned aways stedefast, and dveyosed and ordryd the same varietys and chaunges of thynges. And the same one whatsoeuer it be whereby al thynges that be made, do remayne and be moued, I call God by a name that is commonly vsed of al folke. PHIL.: Then whyles thou art of that opinió, I thinke I haue lytle els to do, but thot thou beinge sure of felicyte and blessednes, mayst go se thy countray safe and sound. But let vs beholde the thynges that we purposed before. Haue I not nombred suffysaunce in felicytie and blessednes? And haue we not agreed that the same felicitie and blessednes is God?

BOE: It is euen soo. PHIL: And that he shall nede no outward help to governe the worlde? For yf he shoulde nede, he shoulde not haue full suffysaunce. BOE: It must nedes be so. PHIL: Then he alone orderethe al thynges. BOE: It may not be denied. PHIL: And that God is declared to be the same soueraygne good. BOE: I do wel remember it. PHIL: Then he dysposed all thyngs by the same good. And if he whó we haue agreed to be good, do rule al thynges, alone by hymselfe then is he as a certaine key and sterne wherby the whole worlde is kept stedfast and withoute corruption. BOE: I say I agre fyrmely thereto, and I sawe a lytte before (that thou were aboute to saye so) althooghhe it were by a sclender suspicion or imagynacion. PHIL: I do beleue, and certes I do thyndke thou ledest nowe thy eyes more stedfastlye to beholde the truthe then before. But yet the thyng that I shall say, appereth no lesse to be bolde. BOE: I say what is that? PHIL: When it is beleued fully and truly that God governeth all thynges wyth the keye of

Ordinary mouynge be taken for goyng of the son, nere or farre of from places whô he goeth in a croked circle and also the varyance of ye night and daye some tyme long som tyme short. Effect is taken for the clchemyng and flowerynge, of the waters. Space is takë for the planettes, nere or farre of. Qualites bë taken, for heat, colde, drye, and moyste.
his goodnes, and that all the same thinges that I haue taught, do make haste by naturall intencion to come to good, maye it be doughted but they be gouerned wyllingly? And do turne them self of ther fre wyl at the commaundement of there gouernor as thynges conuenyent and obeying there gouernoure? 

BOE: I saye it muste nedes be soo, and that rule of God shoulde not seme blessed, yf there shoulde be a yoke of vnruuly thinges that draweth perversely backwarde, or stubbournelye, and no comforde of obedient thynges, submytting them selfe to good order.

PHYLO: Then there is nothyng (that kepeth his own nature) labourethe to resyste or go agaynst God. 

BOE: It is trewe.

PHY: What and yf any thyng dyd laboure agaynst God, myght it any thyngne auayle, at laste agaynst hym, whom we haue graunted to be almyghty by ryght of blyssednes?

BOE: I say it could nothyng auayle him at all.

PHY: Then is there nothyng that eyther wyll, or maye resyste this soueraygne good?

BOE: I saye, I thinke not that any thyngne maye resyst God.

PHY: Then it is the same soueraygne good, that ruleth all thynges stronglye and dysposeth them gently. 

BOE: I say, the same wordes that thou vsyste, do moche more delyght me, then the effect and ende of the reasons, that thou hast concluded, so that we foole (that do reprehende and rebuke some tyme great thynges that toucheth goddes myghtie work) maye be at the last ashamed of our folysshenes, as I that sayde a lytell before, that God refuseth the workes of men, and nothyng medleth therwith. 

PHY: Thou haste harde in fables, that gyauntes haue ben aboute to assaute heauen, but the gentle strength of God, hath deposed and dystroyed them, as it was mete and worthy, but wylte thou that we knit togethre the same resons? Perchaunce of suche conference, or dysputacion, some goodly sparke of trueth may procede and appere. 

BOE: Do at your pleasure. 

PHY: No man doughteth that God is omnipotent?

BOE: No man doughteth it, that is in his ryght mynd. 

PHY: Then he that is almyghtie, can do althynges. 

BOE: It is trewe. 

PHY: May God do any euyll? 

BOE: No, truelye.

PHIL: Then euyll is nothinge when that he cannot doo it that canne do all thynges. 

BOE: I saye doest thou mocke me weuyynge or knytyngge together a meruaylous subtyle laborinth by thy reasons, that haue no ende lyke a rounde compas, by the
whych subtilly resons, thou goeste oute where thou dyddest enter, and where thou diddest enter or goo in, thou goeste oute? And thou foldyst together marauylous compassyng rounde resons of the symple or pure dyuinitie. For a lytel before thou be-gynnyng at blessednes saydeste that the same was soueraygne good, which blessednes thou saydest was set in God. And also thou saydest that God was soueraygne good and full of felycitie, or blessednes, wherby thou dyddest proue as a corrolarye, or conclusion that no man was blessed but God. And thou saydest also that the forme of good, is the substauence of God, and of blessednes. And thou saistest that the same one thynge was the same good thynge, that was desyred by nature of all thynges. And thou dyddeste proue that God ruleth all thynges by the gouneraunces of hys bountiousnes, and that al thynges obeyeth hym, howe vyolent soeuer they be, and thou saydaste that there is no nature of euyll. And thou dyddeste proue these thynges by no outewarde reasons, but by proues takynge auctoritie one thynge of another, and by inwarde and proper or famylyer proba-tion. Phi: Then I do not mocke saith philosophy, but I haue shewed the, the gretest thing of all by the gyft of God, whome of late we prayed vnto.

For certes suche is the forme of the diuine substauence, that it falleth and slydethe not into outward or straungeth thynges nor receuyeth any outward or straung thynge into it selfe, but as the phylosophyer Permenides saith of the substauice of God. Thou ledest all the multitude of thynges in a cyrcle, that is to saye: the deuyne substauence turnyth the mouyng Worlde of thynges round lyke a compas whyles that the same substauice kepeth it selfe stedfast and immouable. And if I haue stirred resons, not taken from without, but set within the compas of the thynge that we treate of, there is no thyng that thou shouldeste meruaile at since thou hast lerned with Plato (saying) that the words ought to be conuenient and agrayng to the thinges, whereof they be spoken, or whereof men do speke.

**Phylosophy.**

Happe or blessed is he that maye se the shynynge foun-tayne, or well of good, that is to say, God. And happe is he that maye vnbynde the bandes of the heuy earth, that is to say the bandes of worldly thynges. The wise Orpheus of Trace

Laborinthus, is a hous made full of subtyll dores, or entres, that a man being in, could not gette oute, for when he thought to go oute, he wente in. It was made by one Dedalus, for a pryson, to werye such as laboure to gette out of y* same.

Compassyng resons he saith, that they depende, one vp o another, so that a proportion co-cluded in one reason, is the begynnynge of the other conclusyon.

Everye talke ought to be accordyng to the matter that is talked.
Orpheus was a harper, that played most sweetely, as the Poetes do say, and his wyfe was named Eurydycen, which dyed upon the stygnyngle of a serpent, as she fled by a medo, from a sheperd named Aristeus that pursed her to deflower her, and she wente to hell, after she was dead, as the Poetes do say.

Xion is tur-mented in hell with a turnynge whele, and of him came al gyauté, suche is the fable. Tantalus is one that standeth in water to the chynne, and hath Apples hangynge at his mouthes, and yet is redy to dye for lacke of meate, and drynke. Ticius, is tur-mented with a Grype, euer terynge and freyng his maw or lyuer.

that somtyme was sory for the death of his wyfe after that he had caused (with hys weping and dolorous songes) the renning waters to stand stylly and the wodes to moue. And after that he had caused the hartes to ioyne their sedes to the cruell lyons withoute feare, to herken vnto his songe. And thereby had also made that the hare feryd not the sighte of the dogge being so well pleasde with hys swete songe and his harpe. And when the brennyng loue, that he bare to hys wyfe broyled the inward partes, of his brest, or harte. And when that these swete songes that hadde ouercomen al other thynges, could not comfort there mayster Orpheus. He complaynyenge vpon the cruell goddes, wente to the houses of hell, and there he tempering his melidious söges, wyth y swete sounding stringes of his harp syngeth mourningly al that he had taken and drawe out of the cheyfe fountaynes of his mother the goddes Caliope; And he sange as muche as he coulde for wepyng, and as much as loue (that doubled hys sorow) would permyt and suffer hym. And pitiouslye moued hell. And instantly desyred the lordees infernall with his swet and humble prayer to haue restitution of his wyfe agayne. The porter of hel, called Cerbarus, with his three hedes, byeng ouercome with that new melodye wondere grealtye. And the goddes infernall reuengers of synnes whyche do ver and torment synners with fear, being sory for Orpheus, wept for pitie of hym at the swet sound of the harpe. Then the turnynge whele dyd not cast downe the heade of Xion. Then Tantalus (that was almooste consumed, with longe thryste for lacke of drynke) regarded not the waters, to drynke. Then the grype called Vulter, whiles he was full of the melodye of Orpheus, cessed tyryng and rendyng of the maw of a man called Tycii. And at laste the iudge or lorde of soules infernall (hauynge compassyon) sayd, we be ouercome, let us geue vnto Orpheus hys wyfe to beare hym compaynye that he hath well bought with his song. But a lawe or condition, shall restrayne our gyfte, that is to saye: vpon this condicion, so that it shall not be lawfull for hym ledyng awaye hys wyfe, to turne his eyes and loke backe vpon her vntill he be out of hell, for if he doe, his wyfe shal returne vnto us againe. But who maye geue a lawe to louers, that is to saye: loue ought not to be con-strayned by lawe. For loue is a greater lawe to it selfe than can be made by man. Alas when Orpheus and his wyfe were nye
the endes of the nyght, that is to saye, nye the ende or entry out of hell, he lokynge backe vpon Euridicen his wife lost her, and kylled her, in leuyng her behynde in hell, for brekyng of the condicion aforesayde commaunded by the iudge infernall. Ye, whatsoeuer you be, that do seke to lede your soules vnto euerlastyng lyfe or blesse, this fable appertayneth to you.

For whosoeuer beynge ouercome wyth the desyre of worldly thynge, doo turne theyr eyes of reson, and vnderstandyng from heuenly things to the caue or pit of hel: whatsoeuer good thyng he getteth by his labours in vertue and godly contempla-cion at anye tyme, by lokynge backe (that is to saye by the loue and desyre of temporall and worldly thynge) he loseth it agayne.

Here endeth the thyrd boke.
THE FOURTH BOOKE.

WHEN Phylosophye (after that she hade kept the reuence, of her countenaunce and grauitie of her spekyng) had songe these thynges softly and swetely. Then I (that had not vtterly forgotten my inwarde gryfe and sorowe) dyd interrupte her intent and purpose beyng yet redy to speke some other thyng. And I sayd: O thou gyde and leder of the very true lyght or knoledge, even the same thinges that thy owne wordes haue spoken hetherto, haue appered vnto me inuincible, aswell for there deuine speculacion as for thy resons. And the same very thinges that thou shewedst me, although I had forgotten them for sorow of the wronge that was done to me, yet for all that they were not vnto me vtterly unknownen. But thys is the cheifeste cause of my greyfe and sorowe, that where as the ruluer of all thynges is good, why be there any euiles, or why do euiles passe vponyshed? Whyche thynge alone well consydered, howe much is it worthy to be meruayled at? But yet ther is another greater thyng to be ioyned to thys, moreouer to be meruayled at. For whiles that wickednes ruleth and flourysheth, vertue is not only vnrewarded, but also subiect and troden vnder the fete of the wicked and is ponyshed in stede of wicked offenders, whych thynges to be suffered in the kyngdom of God that knoweth all thynges, able to do al thinges, and willyng to do onely good thynges, no man maye thereat nether meruayle ynoughe, nor complayne ynoughe.

PHI: It shoulde be a greate infynite wonder and more horrible then all the monsters of the world, if it were so as thou takest it, that euyl men should be worshypped and that good men shuld be vyle or nothyng estemed in the well ordred
suche a father of the howshold, but it is not so. For if those thynges that be concluded a lytell before, be kepte hole or vnbroken, thou shalt knowe (the same God of whose kyngedome now I speake, beynge the authour) that good mē be alwaiais mightye, and euyll men always abiect and vnmyghty or weke, and that vyces be neuer vnponyshed, nor vertue vnrewarded, and that felicitie and blessednes happteth to good folke, and myschaunces to wycked folke. And thou shalte knowe manye thynges of thys kynd which may strengthen the with stedfaste sadnes, when thou haste put awaye thy complayntes, agaynst euill fortune. And for by cause thou haste sene the fourme of true blessednes or felicitie, as I of late haue shewed the, and that thou haste knownen wherein it is set, all thynges omittted and ouerpassed that I thynke mete to omit and passe ouer, I wyll shewe vnto the, the waye that maye brynge the home, to the knowledge of true blessednes and felicitie. And I wyll fasten fethers or resones in thy mynde, wherby it may ryse vp in helth, so that after thou hast cast awaye all trouble of worldly and temporall thynges, thou mayst revyrt and turne into thy countrye safe and sounde, by my leding, by my path way and by my steppes.

Phylosophy.

Certes I haue swyft fethers that is to say: vertue and wyse-dome, that asceneth vnto the hygh heuen. Whyche fethers when a swyfte mynde hath put on, it being disdainefull, dispiseth all earthly thynges and surmounteth the globe, that is to say: the grete body of the airy element, and seyth the cloudes behynde hys backe, and passeth the toppe of the fyery elemente that waxeth hote by the swyfte mouinge of the firmament, vntyll it resyoste into the houses or places of the sterres, and ioyneth her wayes wyth the sonne, or foloweth the iournye of the colde old man, that is to say, of the Planet Saturne. And the sayde mind beyng a knyght of the shynyngge sterre that is to say, of God by seking of truth that ledeth men vnto the true knowledge of God, passethe the circle of the sterres, that is to saye, of the sterre heuen, in all places, where as the shynyngge nyght is paynted with sterres, and when the mynde hath bene dryed vp as voyde of the thyng that it seketh, whiche is God:
Then it passeth higher vntyll it leueth the higher and uppemmooste heuen or fyrmandement. And presseth downe the backes of the swyfte ayry fyrmandemente, optaynynge myght of the reuerend lyght, that is to saye: of God. There, that is to saye: beyonde the hyest fyrmandment, the lorde of kynges holdeth his scepter, that is to saye: his empire, and tempereth the rules or gouernementes of the whole worlde. And he beyng the shynynge judge of thinges, alwayes firme and stedfaste, in hymselfe, ruleth the swifte carte, that is to saye: the mouynge rounde compas of the heuenly bodies. O thou mynde of mankynde, yf the waye that nowe thou beyng forgetful of, doest seke for, would bryng the thither, that is to saye: vnsto the knoleadge of GOD, after thou hast forsaken all worldly thynges, thou wouldest saye vnsto me I do remember this is my coutraye, here was I borne, here wyll I fasten my steppe, that is to saye here wyll I rest. But yf thou list to loke vpon the darkenes of the earth that thou hast left behylene, that is to saye: worldly thynges. Then thou shalte see these cruell tyrantuntes, that is to saye: cruell prynces whome the symple and wretched people do fear, to be as men banished from the sayd countrey of God.

BOECIUS.

Then when Phylosophy had ended her tale, I sayde. O Phylosophy thou promisest gret thinges and I dought not but thou mayst perfourme them. And I praye the tarye not but tell me now, seing thou haste styrryd me to here. PHI: Fyrst it behooueth the to knowe that good men be myghty, and wycked men be alwaies vnmyghtye and weke of all strength, of the whych the one is shewed by the other. For when that good and euyll be thynges contrary, yf good appereth to be myghty and stronge, then the wekenes of the euyll is manifest. And when the frayltie of euyll shewethe it selfe, then the stedefastnes of good is perceued. But to thintent that more credite shoulde be geuen to my saying, I will procede by both wayes (confiyrmynge the thynges that be proposed) now on the one parte, and nowe on thother parte. There be two thynges or pryncyple, wherin standeth theeffect of all menes actes and dedes, that is to saye: wyl, and power. Of the whych if eyther of them flyle, there is nothyng that can be done. For if that wyl fayleth none effect is
done. For no manne taketh in hand to doo the thynge that he will not do. And if power be away wyll in vayne or voyde, whereby it commeth to passe that yf thou see anye man that would obtayne, that he cannot get, thou mayst not dought, but he wanteth power, to haue that he wold haue. BOE: It is verye clere and maye not be doubted in any maner. PHIL: Truey ye yf thou se anye man to haue done that he woulde doo, doofhast thou that he lacked power to do it. BOE: No. PHIL: Than that thing that a man maye doo, in that thynge, he is myghtye, and in that thynge that he cannot doo, he is to be judg dyme and weke. BOE: I saye I confesse the same. PHIL: Remembrest thou by the former resones, that it is gathered or conceived, that al thentent of mans wyll maketh hast or tendeth vnto felicitie or blessednes, whyche is ledde by dyuers studies or wayes. BOE: I saye I do remember that the same was so shewed and declared before. PHY: And doest thou remember that the same felycitie or blessednes is the same good, and after the same maner desyre, of all men when felicitie is requyred? BOE: I saye I doo not recorde it, for I holde it fired in my mynd or memory. PHIL: Then all men both good and also euill doo laboure to come to good, without any difference of intent. BOE: I say the same, it is a very consequence. PHIL: Then it is certayne that men be made good by adoption or optaynyng of good. BOE: It is true. PHIL: Then good men do optayne the thynge that they do desyre. BOE: So it semeth. PHIL: Then truely if euel men should get and obtayne the good that they do desyre they myght not be euil. BOE: It is euyn so. PHIL: Then when that both the good and the euill folke desyreth good, yf the good folke obtayneth the good and the euil folke do not, Is it nowe anye doughte but that the good folke be myghty, and the euill folke weke and vnmyghtye? BOE: I saye whosoeuer doughteth of thys, cannot consider the nature of thyngs, nor the consequence of reson.

PH: And farther if there be two that haue one naturall purpose or intent, and the one of them worketh and perfourmethe the same thynge by offyce of nature or naturallye, and the other may not do the same by naturall offyce, or naturallye, but folowethym that perfourmeth the offyce naturallye, but yet by a nother wayes, or meane, then is conveniente for nature, and dooeth not fulfyll or perfourme the purpose, whych of these two iudgest thou to be mooste myghtye? BOECIUS. Although I do conjecture
what thou wouldeste saye, yet I desyre to heare it moore fullye of the.

PHIL: Then, wilt thou denye that the moviung to walke or go is in men by nature, or that it is not naturall? BOE: I do saye I do not denye it. PHILO: Then, dooughtest thou that the acte of going is the naturall offyce of the fete? BOE: I saye I dought it not. PHIL: Then if a man beynge myghtye to go vpon his fete walketh, another that lacketh the naturall offyce of hys fete laboureth to go vpon his handes, which of these may instelye be iudged more strong or myghtye. BOE: I saye procede in thy other sayinges, for noo man doughteth but that he that maye go by naturall offyce of hys fete, is stronger, then he that maye not do the same. PHIL: Euen soo the soueraygne good before spoken of is shewed indifferently, as wel vnto the euyll folke as to the good folke, but the good doo optayne it by the naturall offyce of vertue, and the wycked folke do enforce themselfe to get it by sundry couytous desyres of temporall and worldly things, whyche is not the naturall offyce or meane to obteyne good. Doist thou thynke it otherwyse? BOE: No truely for the thyng, that is the consequence is manyfest, And of these thinges that I haue gaunted, it is necessarye, that good folke be myghtye and euyll folke vnmyghtye and weake. PHIL: Thou sayest right, and it is a sygne or judgement that nature is recovered in the and resisteth the dysseease, as the phisicions be wonte to hope of the paciente and sycke folke. But for by cause I see the redy to vnderstand, I shall shewe the diuers and many sundry reasons. For see howe gretely the wekenes of wycked and euyll folke appereth that cannot attayne vnto the thyng that ther natural intencyon ledeth, and in a maner almost compelleth the. And what if that the same wycked folke shoulde lacke this so grete and al most inuyncible helpe of nature. Consider also how lytlye power the wycked folke hath, for they seke not lyght and vayne rewardes, whych they can not folowe and obtayne. But they fayle and cannot attayne the cheyfest and hyest thynges that is to saye soueraygne good, nor these wycked wretches, can gette the effecte of soueraygne good, whyche they go aboute onely to obtayne night and daye, wherein the myghte of good folke doth appere.

For certis, as thou woldest iudge hym moste myghtie and stronge in goynge, that may come to the place in going on his feet, beyonde the which place there lyeth no way farther to go:

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euen so it behoueth that thou do judge hym, moste stronge and myghtie, that optayneth the end of al thynges that be to be desired, beyonde whiche ende, there is nothyng: whych ende, good folke doe optayne, whereby it foloweth that ther is a thyng contrary to this, that is to saye: that these wycked seme to be desolate, naked, or voyd of all strength. But why do the wycked folke folowe wyckednes and forsake vertue? is it for that they be ignoraunt of good thinges? But what is more feble then the blyndnes of ignoraunce? Do the wycked know that good is to be folowed? ye truely, but that cuitousnes, ouerthroweth them being clene turnyd fro good. And they be also frayle by intemperance of vice, that cannot resist vyce, and whether they (knowynge and wyllynge) do forsake the good and be turnyd vnto vyces? Ye truely, And by thys meanes they cesse not onelye to be myghtye and stronge, but also they cesse vttuely to be. For they that forsake the ende of al thynges that be, do cesse also to be, or haue no beinge, whych thyng perchaunce should seme to some man a meruayle, that I shuld say that wycked folke (whyche be the most part of men) be not, or haue no beynge. But it is euen soo. For they that be wycked (I doo not denye) but that they be wycked, but I denye that they be pure and symple. For as thou hast called a dede man a Corpus or carkes, and maye not call, hym simply and purely a man, euen soo haue I granted I graunted that vicios and wycked folke be wycked, but I cannot confessse that they be absolutely with out any dyuersitie as they were before they were vicios. For the thinge that kepeth order, kepeth nature, and is styll as it was, but the thing that varyeth from order and nature, forsaketh the thyng that is set in his natur. But thou wilt say that wycked folke may do things: Certes I wyll not deny, but that they may do. But I say that their power, commeth not by strength, but by wekenes. For they may do euyll thynges which they might not do if they might remayne in the workes of good folke, And the same possybylitie or power of euyll folke, sheweth euyllentlye that they maye do ryght nought. For as I haue gathered and proued a lyttle before that euyll is nought or nothyng, whè that the euyll folke may onely do euill, It appereth a playne conclusion, that euyll folke may do ryght nought, and haue no poweror myghte. BOETI: It is playne soo. PHILO: Then, that thou mayst vnderstand what is the strengthe of this power,
that wycked may do nought, I haue defyned and determyned
a lytel before that nothynge is more myghty then soueraygne
good. BOE: I saye it is so. PHIL: But wycked soueraygne
good can do no euyl. BOE: No forsoth. PHIL: Then is there
any man that thynketh that men can do all thynges. BOE: No
man so thinketh, except he be mad. PHIL: But yet wycked
folke may do euyl. BOE: I say would to God they coulde not.
PHIL: Now then when that he that is myghtye in good
thynges may do all thynges, but they that be myghtye in euyl
thynges, maye not do al things, It is manyfest that they that
may do euyl, may do lesse or be of lesse power. And soo it
commethe to passe to prove thyts conclusion, that I haue shewed
before, that is, that all power is to be numbred emongest thynges
that are to be desyred. And all thynges wycked ought to be desired,
are referred vnto good, that is to say, vnto God, as vnto a
certayne perfection of theyr nature. But the power or possiblyte
do euyl, may not be referred vnto good, that is to say, to God.

Therfore euyl is not to be desyred. But all power is to be
desyred. So therfore it appereth that the power of the wiked
folk, is no power. By all whyche thynges before sayde, it
appereth truely, that good folke be myghty, and the wycked
folke withoute any dought, be vnymyghtye and weake. And it
appereth that the same sentence or sayinge of Plato, is true, that
sayd, that wyse men onely might do the thing that they desyred
to doo.

And that wycked folke myght doo the thyng, that accordeth to
ther wycked pleasures, but they cannot fullfyll and do the thyng,
that they desyre, that is to say, they cannot obtayne soueraign
good, yet they do all thynges, whyles they do thynke to attayne
vnto the soueraygne good that they desyre, by those thynges
wherein they delite, but they cannot attayne therevnto. For
wyckednes cannot optayne and come vnto felicitie and
blessednes.

PHYLosophy.

Who so myght take away the couerynge of the outward vaine
apparell of proud kynges, that thou seist do syt in the hye tope
of there pryncely chayres, shynynge with faire purple, and set
aboute with sorowfull armoure, thretenyng symple wretches
with theyr cruell lokes and breathyng with cruell harte, he
should se such lordes or tyrantaues bere inwardly in ther mynde
strayte chaynes or bondes of wickednes.

For on the one parte lecherye casteth downe theyr hartes,
wyth her gredy venym or poisō, on the other part the ragyng
wrath or anger ý stereth vppe the floudes of veracion, tor-
menteth theyr myndes.

Also sorowe and heuines werieth them when they be caught
or fallen into any mischaüce or ellesayne slypperye hope
greueth them. Therefore when thou seyst one hed that is to say
one prynce sufferso many passions and trybulacions. Then doeth
not he the thynge that he desyreth, seyng ý he is ouerthrowen ð
so many wicked lords that is to sai: ð so many vyces, ý haue
rule ouer him. The meaning of thys myter is thys If that a
man myght se and perceyue with his corporall eyes, the
inwarde hartes and myndes of prynces, whom he seyth outwardlye
syttynge in their chayres of estate and maiestie garnysshed with
purple and glisteryng gold, hauyng grete power and aucthoritie,
in worldely and temporall thynges, yet he should wel vnderstand
that ther hartes were troubled with muche anger, hope, feare and
many other tribulacions and passions, so that they cannot do
that they would doo, whereby it appereth and it is a very con-
sequece that they be vnmyghtye and weke.

PHILOSOPHY.

Seist thou not than in howe greate fylth the wycked folke be
wrapped, and with what clerenes the good folke do shyne. In
whych thynge it is euydent and manyfest that good folke neuer
want reward, nor wicked folke neuer lacketh there ponyshmentes.
For of all thynges that be done, the thynge for the whych every
thynge is done, the selfe same thynge, semethe wel to be the
reward of the same thing. As ýf a man do ren in a furlonge
space for a crowne, the crowne is ý reward for the whych the
rennynge is. And in like maner I haue shewed before, that
felicitie or blessednes is the selfe same thynge; for the whyche all
thynges be done. Then is the same good, appoynted as a
common rewarde for mannes actes and dedes, whyche good, maye
not be seperated from good folke. And he shall not be called
ryghtfully good, that lacketh goodnes, wherefore men well

The lecherous people be like a sowe ý
more delitith to wallowe in the myre then
in a faire fountain or water sprynge.
manered and vertuous, neuer loseth their rewardes. Therefore howe muche soeuer wycked folke waxe mad agaynste good folke, yet for al that the wyse man shall neuer lose his crowne or reward, nor shal drye vp or dymynyshe. Nor another mans wyckednes taketh not awaye the proper honoure frome good folke. And yf good folke should reioyse of any outewarde good that they haue receyued of anye other then of themselves, truly he that gaue them such goodnes, or some other person myght take it from them. But for asmuch as to every man his owne proper goodnes is his reward then every man shall lacke his reward, when he cesseth, and is not good. Furthermore when that all reward, therefore is desyred, bycause it is thought to be good who would iudge that he had noo rewarde, that is good? But what is the rewarde of good folke? Truely the fairest and gretest rewarde. But remember the same corrolarye or conclusyon that I gaue the as cheife a little before, and ynderstand it thus. When y sayd good is felicitie or blessednes, it appereth that all good folke (in as muche as they be good) be made blessed or happye. And it behoueth that they that be blessed, be goddes. Therefore the rewarde of good folke: is to be made goddes, whiche rewarde, no daye consumeth, no power dimisseth, and no wickednes defaceth. And synce it is thus that good folke neuer fayle of reward, then a wyse man may not doughte of the con-tynuall and inseperable payne of wycked folke. For when that good and euyl, payne and rewarde, be contrarye one to another, then the things that we se to happen as a rewarde of good, the same thynges beyng contrarye must nedes be the ponyshmente of the euyl folke. For as goodnes is the rewarde of good folke, soo wyckednes is the ponyshmente of wicked folke. Nowe certes whosoeuer is tormentid with ponyshment, there is no dought but that he is tormented wyth euyl.

Therefore if the same euyl folke will esteme and praise themselfe, may they seeme to be without ponishmët: which euyl folke not onely extreme wyckednes of all euyl trobleth, but also corrupteth vehemently. And se also of the contrarye part of the good folke, what payne folowethe the wycked folke. For thou hast lerned a little before that every thyng that is, is one. And the same one, is good, so the consequence to the same is, that every thing that is certes the same semethe to be good.

Therefore by this meanes, what soeuer thyenge fayleth and is
not good, it cetsyth to be, or it is not. Whereby it comethe to passe that euyll folke cessoeth to be the same that they were. But the same other fourme of mannes body sheweth yet that wycked folke, have bene men, and certes byeng turnyd into malyce or wyckednes, they haue lost the nature of man. But whē that goodnes onely may exalte euere man aboue the nature of men: It must nedes be, that wycked folke (whose wyckednes hath cast them oute from the condicion of man) do put them vnder the merite of man or cause them to be lesse esteemed then men. Therefore it happeth that if thou seist anye man turned into vices or wickednes, thou mayst not thinke that he is a man. If any man brenneth in couitous and is a violente extorcioner or raucener of other mennes goodes, thou mayst saye that he is lyke a woule. And if a man be cruel, and troublous, and exercyseth his tounge with chydyng he may be lykened to a dogge. Also he that is a pryuye lyer in a waye, and reioyseth to stele by craft and soteltie, he may be compared to yong foxes, or yong coubbes. And a man that is disteempryd, and wexeth wode for anger, it semeth that he do bare the stomake of a lyon. If a man be fearefull and fleynge, and feareth thynges that he ought not to fere he is counted lyke vnto hertes. And if a man be slow, astonyed and waxethe dull, he lyueth as an asse. If a man be lyght inconstant and often chaungeth his mynd and thought, he differith no thynge from byrdes.

And he that is drowned in foule and fylthy plesures, of lechery, is wrapped in the delight of the fylthy sow or hogge. So then it foloweth, that he that forsaketh his goodnes, is no man. And when he cannot passe and turne into the condytyon of God, he is turnyd by his wycked condicions into a beste.

The wynde named Eurus droue y sayls of Ulixes duke of Naryce and hys shippes wanderynge in the sea, to the Ile where as the fayre goddes called Circes, daughter of the sonne is dwellyng, that myngethe to her newe gestes drynkes that be towched or turnyd by wordes of enchauntment. And after that her hand beyng myghty and skylfull in herbes, hadde chaunged the felowes of Ulixes into dryuers figures of beasts, the one had the face of a bore, another was chaunged into a Lyon of Mars, or moryke, a coultre so called, dyd grove with tethe and claws like a Lion. Another was chauged into a woule, and howled in stede of wepyng. Another walked aboute the house, as meke

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myndes were
as a tigre of India. And although the power of Mercury, the God, which is called the byrde of Archady, hauyng pytie vpon the duke Ulixes, beyng compassed aboute with dyuers euylls, hathe delyuere hym from the mischeif of his hostes Circes, yet for all that, the rowers and maryners, hadde dronke the sayde wycked drynke. And they beyng turned into swyne, had there bread and meate, turnyd into acornes, and nothyng remayned hole of the fygure of man, but they were all chaunged as wel in voice as in bodye, sauyng that theyr mynde remayned as it was first, vnchaunged and bewayled the monstrus chaunge of ÿ body. O light hand of the goddes Circes that chaungeth the bodyes into the fourme of bestes, whyche is a smale thynge in respecte of the chaunge that is of the soule of man from vertue to vyce, by misusyng of the body.

And the herbes of Circes, be but weake, whych although they be able to chaуг the members of mans body, yet canne they not turne mens harts or mindes, for there in, is hyd the strength of men as it were in a secrete towre, that is to saye: the reason of man is enclosed in hys wytte or mynde. But the cruell vyces or synnes draweth menne vnto them more strongly, then the enchaunitmentes of Circes, and goeth thorowe or percyth mens harts. And although they hurte not the bodye, they make a man wodde, and distroyeth hym wyth the wounde of the mynde or thoughte.

Boecius.

Then I saye, I graunt that thou haste sayde. And I perceyue that wycked folke may be sayde ryght well to be chaугed into bestes, by ÿ qualitie of their mind or thought, although they kepe the forme of mans body. But I wolde not that it were leful for them to do the same wickednes or bestly thoughtes, whose mynde being cruell and wicked, waxeth wode in destruction of good folk. P: Certes it is not lawfull for them, as it shalbe shewed in place conueniente. But yet if the selfe same thynge (that is thoughte to be lawfull for wycked folke, to do) be taken away from them, soo that they myght not hurte good folke a grete part of the payne of the wiked folke, shoulde then be revealed and shewed. For it semeth perchaunce incredible to some folke, that it behoueth that wycked folke be more vnhappye when they haue accomplisyed ther desyres, then

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if they myght not performe and do the same, that they desyre. For if it be a wretched thyng to wyll to do euyl thynges, It is a more wretched thyng to haue myght to do it, without whych myght the effect and dede of the wicked will, should fayle.

And nowe synce that euery of the sayde thynges, that is to say wyll, myght, and effect, hath his own mysery, it behoueth that the wycked (whome thou seyst to wyl and may do wyckednes) be greued w three folde myscheyfe.

BOECI: I saye I graunt the same, but I herteley desire that the wycked folke (forsakynge the power to do euyl) maye some lacke the sayde thre folde myscheyfe. P: So shall they want peraduenture sooner then eyther thou wouldeste be sorye they shoulde, or that they themselfe wene, that they shall wante. For there is nothyng so durable in so shorte bonds of this lyfe, that the myndes (specially immortall) do thynke longe to abyde and endure. Of whyche foresayde wycked the gret hope and the gret compassing power of wyckednes, is oft distroyed with sodayne ende, and er they beware thereof: which foresayde sodden destructyon, trueelye hathe appoynted them an ende of theyr wretchednes.

For yf wyckednes make the wycked folke then must he nedes be most wycked that longest is wycked. Whyche foresayde wycked folke I would iudge most vnhappy or catyfe, if that extreme death at lest waye dyd not finish their wyckednes.

For if I haue truelye concluded of the myschye of the wycked folke, then it appereth that their wyckednes is withoute ende whyche appereth to be eternall or euer contynuyng. BOE: I saye this is a merueylous and a hard conclusion, to graunt: but I do knowe that the same doo wel agre to the thynges that were graunted before. PHIL: Thou iudgest well in this, but he that thynketh it a harde thyngye to agre to the conclusion, it behoueth hym to shewe eyther that some false thyng hath gone before, or ells he must shewe that the conflernynge of proposicions is not effectual or maketh no force of a necessary conclusion, Or els yf he graunte the thynges precedent there is no cause at all, whye that he should complayne vpon the argument. For thyse thyngs that I shall saye now shall no lesse seme marauylous, but is soo necessarye to be concluded,of the thynges that be concluded before.

BOE: I saye, tell me what is it?
PHIL: Certes the sayd wycked folke be more happye and
blessed that be ponyshed for their deseretes, then yf no ponsych-
ment of right do chastyece them at all. And I do not intend thys
now, for that any man myght thynde that the wycked maner of
ten be corrected by ponsishment, and that they be brought to the
ryght waye for feare of ponsishment, nor for that their payne and
ponsishment shoulde be an example to others, to eschewe vyce
and wyckednes, but I doo iudge that the wycked folke that be
iustlye ponyshed be more blessed after another maner, the for ẏ
sayd .ii. causes though no maner of correctyon nor respect of
example be had.

BOE: I saye what shalbe that maner besydes the sayd other.
PHIL. Haue we not graunted that good men be happy and
blessed, and euyll folke wretched. BOE. I say it is so. PHIL:
Then yf anye good be added or put to the wretchednes of any
man, is not he more happy then the man, whose myserye is pure
withoute myxture of anye good wyth such mysery or wretchednes.
B. I say it semeth so as thou sayest. PH. What if some other
euyll (besydes the euyl he hath alredi) were annexed vnto ẏ
same wretche that wanteth al good, sholde he not be demed
more wycked then he a great deale whose euyll is tempered
and mytigated with ẏ distribution or partakyng of suche good.
BOE: I saye what ells. PHIL. Then certes the wicked folke
when they be ponished, haue some good annexed, That is to
saye: theyr payne and ponsishment that they suffer, whych
is good, by reason of iustycye. And there is in the same wicked
folke (when they be vnponyshed) some other euyll, that is to
saye: the lacke of ponsishment, whyche lacke of ponsyshmet (for
desert of wickednes) thou hast graunted to be euyll. BOE: I
cannot denye it. PHIL: Then such wycked folk be more wycked
when they be wrongfullye perdoned and deluyerd from ponsy-
shment, then when they be ponyshed by iust iudgement. And so
it is manyst that it is ryght to ponyshe wycked folke, and
that it is a wicked thing to let them escape vnponyshed.

BOE: Who wyll denye the same.

PHIL: Certes no man can deni al thing to be good, that is
iust and ryghte, and on the other syde the thyng that is vniust
and false, appereth to be euyll. BOE. I say Certes, that these
things be consequences, to the thyngs that be concluded a
lytell before. But I praye the tell me, dost thou thynde that any
ponsishment is lefte for the soule after that the body is dede?
PHIL. Ye truelye and that very great ponishment, of the whyche soules I thinke that some be tormented with intollerable payne, and other be ponyshed by the meke paines of purgatorye, but I am not now mynded to speke of suche thynges. But I haue spoken hythereto that thou myghtest know, y the myght and power of wycked folke (that semed to the most vnworthy) is no myght nor power. And that the wycked folke that ya complaynest vpon that they were vnpunyshed, thou sawest dyd neuer wät due ponyshment for their wyckednes. And thou dyddest praye that the power and myght, in malyce that the wicked folke had agaynst the good folke, shortlye to be ended. And that thou myghtest perceyue that it is not long, and that y myght of the wycked were more vnhappye yf it were continuall or longe enduryng, and that it is most vnhappye if it were perdurable, and should neuer cese. And furthermore it is proued that the wycked folke that be let go without just ponyshment, be more wycked then when they be ponyshed by iust judgemente. And to thy sentence it is a consequence, that then at the last the wycked folke be turmented with more greuous ponyshments, when they seme to be vnponyshed. BOE. When that I do consyder thy resones (I say) I do thinke that nothing is sayde moore true. But if I tourne agayne to the judgementes of the comen people, what man is there that not onely semed to haue beleuyd these thynges, but at lest way to haue hard these thynges? PHI. It is euyn so. For the commen people cannot lift vp their eyes (that be vsed to darkenes) vnto light of the very truth, but they be like vnto birdes whose sight the night doth lyghten and the daye doth blynde. For whyles the commen people do not beholde the order of thynges, but theyr own affectes and desyers, they do iuge that euyll the power of the wycked agaynst good folke, or their escapyng from ponyshment is happy and blessed. But se what Goddes lawe apopynteth. If thou conforme thy mynde to the beste thynges, thou hast nede of no iuge that shal rewarde the, for thou hast applied thy selfe to the most excellent and beste thynges. But if thou hast turnyd thy mynde vnto euyll thynges, as vnto vyce, seke not anye outewarde ponysher without thy selfe, for thou hast cast thy selfe into the worste thynges. Like as if thou shouldest loke vpon the foule erth and heuen in order (all outewarde thynges leyde apart for the tyme) then it
The ãmon people do judge farre from the trueth.

should seme to the by reson of lokyng, that thou were now present in the sterres and now in the foule earthe. But the commen people beholde not these thynges. What than, shall we ioyne vnto these commen people whych (I haue shewed) be like vnto beastes? What woldest thou say yf that a man had utterly lost his sight and also hadde forgotten that euer he sawe, and yet dyd thynke that he lacked nothing of the perfection of a man would not we that saw the same iuge that he were blynde. For the commen people woulde not beleue the thyng that I shall saye, whych is sustayned by as strong groundes of reason, that is, that they that do wronges be more wretched thē they that suffer wrong. BOE. I saye I wold saye heare these reasones. PHIL. Wilt thou denye that all wycked folk be not worthy ponishment. BOETI. No. PH. Truely it appereth diuers wayes that they that be euyll be wycked. BOE. I saye it is euen so. PHI. Then thou doughtest not that they that be worthye ponyshmente be wretches. BOE. I saye it behoueth so. PHIL. If thou than satiste as a jude, whether wouldest thou thynke hym worthy ponyshement that hathe done wrong, or he that hath suffered wrong? BOE. I saye I woulde not doute but I would satisfye and contente hym that hath suffered wronge with the ponyshement of hym that dyd the wrong. PHI. Then it semeth the, that he that doth wrong is more wretche then he that taketh wronge. BOE. I saye it foloweth well. PHI. Therefore for thys cause and for other lyke causes of the same sorte, it appeareth that syns of it self, by nature maketh men wretches. And it semeth to euerye man that the wronge that is done, is not the wretchednes of hym that taketh the wronge but of hym that doeth the wrong. BOE. Certes the orators do contrarye for they do labour to moue the jude, to haue pitie vpon thē, that haue done some haynous and greuous offence, where as more pytie ought to be shewed vnto them that haue suffred wrong and it behoueth that they y haue done such offences should be brouthe (not with angre, but rather with merciful accusers) vnto judgemente, as sycke folke be brouthe vnto the physicion, that the jude myght put awaye the syckenes, of the offence, with ponyshment, by whych meanes the dyligence of the orators should either holye cesse, or els if they would profyte offenders, their diligence shoulde be turned into the habyte of accusation, that is to say they shoulde rather accuse offenders,
then excuse them or intreate for them. And so the offenders (if it were lawfull for them to se by any chyn or cliffe the vertue and goodnes that they haue loste, and that they shoulde expulse the vylenes of theyr synnes, by tormëtes of paynes, to optayne some recormpence of theyr goodnes) woulde not esteme thys for ponyshments, but wold forsake the diligence of suche orators and defenders, and commyt them selfe holy to the accusars and to the iudges. Whereby it happeth that hatred hath no place emongest wise me. For who hateth good folk but he be a very folke? And he hath no wyt that hateth wicked folk. For lyke as syckenes is the dyssease of the bodye, euen so vyce and synne is as the syckenes of the mynde, or soule. And when we doo iudge that men that be sycke in their bodyes, be not worthy to be hated but rather worthy to be pytied, eucē so much the more are they not to be hated, but to be pytied whose myndes wickednes greaueth, that is more fierse and cruell, than any syckenes of the body.

**Phylosophy.**

What pleasure haue you, to stere vp so great hatred, and so busyleye to seke for your death, with your owne hand? For if you aske deth, he draweth nye of his owne fre wyll, and steyeth not his swyft horses. Certes it is great meruayle that men do seke to kyl one another with the swerde, whom the Lyon, the Serpent, the Tygre, the Beare, and the Boore, do seke to kyll with theyr tethe. Do men moue vnryghtfull hostes, and cruell batell, and kyl eche other with dartes, bycause theyr maners be dyuers, and agre not togyther? Truly, the quarell and cause of crueltie is not suffycient and iuste. Then yf thou wylte gyue a conuenient reward for mens desertes: loue iustlye good folke, and haue compassyon and pitye vpon euyll folke.

**Boecius.**

By this I do perceyue what felycytie, or blyssednes is in the desertes of good folke, and of wycked folke. But in this commen fortune of the people, I doo conceyue that therein is some good or euyll. For no wise man hadde leuer be a banisshed manne, nedye, poore, and shamefull: then to be full of riches, reuerende
in honoure, stronge in power, and to dwell styll in his Cytie, and florysshe in welth. So certes after this maner, that is to say: by riches honour and power, the office of a wyse man, is estemed more clere, and more assured of wysdom, then when felycytie or blyssednes of gouernours or rulers, is scattered or deuyded, as it were emongs the commē people next adioynynge as subiectes. Sythe that namely pryson, lawe, and other tormentes of lawefull paynes, do rather appertayne vnto myschiuous cytisens for whom they were ordyned, then for good folke. Therfore I do greatly maruayle, why these thynges folowyng be turmed clene contrarye, that is to saye: that ponyshmentes of wycked folke, do oppresse good folke. And that the wycked folke, do beare awaye the rewardes of vertue, that is to say, why they be exalted to honor and his estate. And I desyre to lerne of the what thou thynkest to be the reason of suche a wrongeful confusion. For I woulde lesse meruaylf yf that I thought that al thynges were myngyd together with chaunce of fortune. But now God the gouernoure of all thynges incresethe my meruaylynge, syth that he geueth often tymes plesaunt thynges to good folke, and sharpe thynges to euil folk: and contrariewyse he geueth harde thynges to good folke, and to wycked folke theyr desyres, except the cause be knowen what difference is betwene goddes doynges, and fortunes chaunces. PHILOSO. It is no meruayle at all thoughpe people thinketh that there is somethinge folishe and confuse, when the reason of Gods ordynaunce is not knowen. But although thou knowest not the cause of so grete a disposition, yet doute thou not but all thynges be well gouerned, for asmuche as god the good gouernor, attempereth and gouerneth the world vnyuersall.

PHILOSOYPHE.

He (that knoweth not the sterres of arcture named the gret beare to be turned nyghe vnto the hye banke called the north pole. And why the slowe stere called Boetes, passeth the waynes that is vnderstand, the sterres of the greate beare, and drownythe his late flames or beames in the sea, when he vnfoldeth his ouer swyft rysynges) shall wonder at the lawe and course of the hygh firnament. And likwyse he (that knowethe not whye the horns of the full mone do waxe pale, when they
be infecte with the bondes of the dark night which is the shadow of the earth. And howe that the mone beyng confuse and darke in the tyme of the eclypse, discouereth the sterres y she had couered with her clere lighte before) shall wonder at the same. The commen errour moueth the people and they do werye their brasynne vesseles which is there belles, with many strokes or knockes at all the foresaid thinges. But no man wondrethe when y the blastes of the wynde named Chorus, beteth vpon the sea banke, wyth ragyng floude. Nor no man wondereth when the great quantitie of snow (congelyd by colde) or dyssolued and molten with the feruent hethe of the sonne, for in this it is euydent to perceyue the causes thereof. But in the former examples, the secret causes trobleth mês mynds. And the mutable commen people be astonyed and do meruayle at the sodayne chaunces of thynges, that fal in their tyme or age. But if thou wylt not wonder, let thy cloudye and derke errore of ignoraunce cesse, and lerne the causes of suche chaunces. And thê certes, they shal no more seme meruailous vnto the.

BOECIUS.

I saye it is euuen so. But forasmuch as it is in thy goodnes to declare vnto me the hyd, and secrete causes of thynges, and to shewe me the darke reasons thereof, I pray the that thou wouldest dispute and iudg of the same secrete causes, for this wonder or meruayle troubleth me gretely. P. Then philoso- physe smylynge a lytle thereat, sayd: thou requyrest me to shewe the, the greteste thinge of all thynges that maye be requyred, wherevnto scarce any thinge is left sufficiete to resolue the same. For the matter that thou askest is such, that one doubt beyng determyned, other doughtes innumerable do ryse vp thereof, as the heads of the serpent Hidra: And there shoulde be no ende of the same doubtes, except a man kept in, the same doutes wyth the quicke fyer, or serche of the wytte. For in thys matter men be wont to inquyre of the symplitie or puritie, of gods ordinaunce, of the order of destinye, of sodayne chaunces of fortune, of the diuine knowledge and predestinacion, and of the libertie of fre wyll. All whyche thynges, of howe greate wayte and difficultye they be of, for to determyne, thou thy selfe doeste verye well perceyue. But forasmuch as it is
cuels slewe, as appereth in Cronycles.

The thynges that Philo-
sophy spake before, were
dyryued of this principle,
that god is
perfyte good,
and the end of
all things,
and the
thinyges that
Phyllosophy
now entendeth
to spake, be
dyryued of this
principle, that
god is the
begynynge
of all effectes.

The dyffyni-
cion of
proudence.
The dyffyni-
cyon of
destynye.

parte of thy medicine, for the to know these thynges, although I
haue lytle leysure to do it, yet I wyl endure my selfe to declare
somwhat thereof. But if the swetenes of the versys or metyr of
musycke, do deylght the any thyng at all, thy must deyer and
put of a lytle that deylght, vntyll I shall forme certayne reasones
ioyned in order, together for that purpose. BOE: I say do what
it please the. PHIL. Then spake phyllosophy thus as one that
began to speake by another principle. The generation of all
thynges, and the procedynges of natures mutabilitie, and all
other thyng that mouetb now taketh their causes, order,
and fourme by the stedfastnes of gods wyll and pleasure. And
the same, that is to saye: goddes wyll and plesure, beyng
set fast in the towre, or profounde altitude of hys simplicitie or
puritie, hath appoynted many maners or wayes, for thynges to
be done: whych wayes or maners, when they be conceuyed in the
puritie of the dyuyne intelligence, it is named prouidence or
ordynaunce. But when the sayde maner or wayes is referred by
men vnto the thyng that mouethe and disposeth, it is called of
olde folke, destynye. Whyche thynges, that is to say, prouidence
and destenie, shal easely appere to be contrary thynges, yf a man
wyll well consyder in hys mynde the strength of them both. For
prouydaunce is the same deuyne or godly reason that is established
in the soueraine hygh prynce of al thynges, which godly resô di-
poseth and apointeth al things. But destinye is a disposition,
cleuyng vnto mutable or temporal things, by which dispositiô,
prouydecke knytteth al things in order. For prouydaunce embrasethe
all thynges together in one, although they be dyuers and infinite.
But destynye deuydeth all thynges being distributed in mouing,
places, formes, and tymes, as thus. Thys explycacion or declara-
cion of temporall order, that appertayneth vnto destynye, being
vnite or knytte together, in the syght of gods thought, is called
prouydaunce or ordynaunce. But the vniting of such ordynaunce
temporall, beynge deuyd and shewed in successyon of tymes,
may be called destinie. Which destinie and prouydaunce,
although they be dyuers, yet the one of them dependeth vpon
the other. For the order of destinie procedeth and commethe of
the simplicitie or puritie of gods prouydence. For lyke as a
workeman conceuying in his mynde the forme or fashyon of the
thyng that he is about to make, moueth and goeth aboute
theffecte of his worke, and ledeth by temporal or bodily ordy-

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naunces the thing that he had conceyued symply and presently in his thought, euen so certeyne god by his prouidence or ordinaunce disposeth and ordythe singularly and fyrmely all thynges that be to be done. But he mynystreth dyuersly and temporally the same thynges by destynye that he hath disposed or appoynted to be done. Then whether that destynye be exercised by certayne godly spyryts, attendyng vpon gods prouidence, or by the soule, or by nature, holye seruyng god, or by the celestiall mouinge or constellacion of sterres, or by the vertue of Aungels, or by the dyuers craftes and sotelyes of deuylles, or by anye of them, or by them all, the order of destinie is accomplished and done. Certes it is manyfest that gods prouidence is a stedefast and symple or pure forme or maner, of thynges to be done.

But destinie, is a mutable disposition and temporall order of the things that gods simplicitie or puritie hath appointed or suffered to be done. Whereby it happeth that all thynges that be vnder or subiect to destinie be also subiect and vnnder gods prouidence and ordynaunce. To the whyche prouidence or ordynaunce destinie is subiecte it selfe. But some thynges that be subiecte and put vnnder godes prouidence, and ordynaunces, doo excell and passe the order of destinie. Truely the things that be fixed and knyt faste nyghe to the godhed, do excell the order of mouable destynie, for as circles or wheles that do turne them selfe about one self centyr or poynete, the innermost circle next vnto the centyr or poyn, cometh and ioyneth next of al vnto that which is a lone in the myddell, and is as it were a certayne centyr or poynete to the other circles or wheles, that be set and placyd aboute, and be turned without the centre or poynete. And the uttermost cyrcle that is turned wyth a greater compasse, is set fourth with so muche more large spaces as it is distant by diuision from the myddle of the centyr, or poynete. But yf there be any thinge that knyttethe and vnytethe it selfe, to the same myddell centyr, or poynete, it is driuen into simplicitie, that is to sai: into a thinge pure and alone of it self, constant and immovable, and ceasseth to be seporate or to go at libertye. And so by lyke reason the thynge that departeth or goeth awaye ferthest from the fyrst thought of God, is wrapped with greater bandes of destynye. And soo much more is any thynge fre from distynye, as it is nere the same centyr, or poynete of thynges, that
is to saye nere vnto god. And if the thyng doo cleue firmly; to the hygh thought of God without mowing, truely it passeth the necessitie and power, of destinie.

Therefore like comparison or diversitie as is betwene reasonynge, and vnderstandynge, and betwene the thinge engendred and the thyng ye that is, and betwene tyme and eternitie, and betwene the circle, and the middle centyr or poyn, euyn so is the mouable order of destynye vnto the stedefast simplicitie or puritie, or gods prouidence and ordynaunce. The same order of destynye moueth heuen and the sterres, and tempereth the elementes together emongest them self and chaugeth them by enterchaunceable mutacions. And the same order of destynye reueneth all thynges, growinge, springinge and fallyynge by lyke progressions of frutes and of sedes, that is to saye, of all beastes and growing thinges.

And thys order of destenye kepethe in and constraineth from liberty al mens actes and fortunes by a band of causes that can not be vndone or losed, which causes when they do procede from the immouable begynnynges of gods prouidence and ordynaunces, it behoueth that they be immutable. And so al thinges be well gouerned, as longe as the simplicitie or the onelye stedefastenes abydyng in the dyuine thought, sheweth fourth the immouable order of causes. And truly this order of the deuine prouidence, kepeth in, by his stedefastnes, thynges mutable of them selfe, and that otherwyse wold passe awaye casually and rashelie, if that restrayned not: wherby it happeth that although all thyngs seme confuse, darke, and troublesome to you that be not able to consider thys order of thinges: the proper maner of gods prouidence directynge it selfe to good, disposing and ordereth all thynges. For there is nothyng done for the entente of euil, not so muche of the same wicked folke. Which wicked folke (as it is shewed aboundantlye befor) do seke for good, but that wycked errour do perueri, and turne them from it, and not the order that cometh from the bosome of the high soueraign good, that is god, do turne anye man from his begynnyng, that is to saye from god. Certes what confusion may be more wycked, the that other whiles aduersitie and other whiles prosperite do happen vnto good folke, and also to wycked folke sometyme what they desire, and sometyme the thynges that they hate and abhorre. Do men nowluie in such perfection of mynde that suche folk as they do iudge to be good or euil

Ther be two maners of destynye, one consisteth in worldly thinges, that bee mutable, and the other dependeth uppon goddes prouydence, whiche is constant, and not mutable.

A má that kylleth hym self, pretendeth good to hym selfe, to anoyd the trouble of his mynd, estemynge a short deathe of the bodye, better then a troublesome life here.

Mens iudge-mentes be vn-perfyte to
must nedes be suche as they doo iudge them? But mens iudge-
mentes in this thynge do varye and not accorde. For the same
folke that some me do esteme worthy reward, other agayne do
deme to be worthy of ponyschmente. But let vs graunt that some
mâ may discerne and knowe the good or the euyl folke, maye he
than knowand se the inward condicion of mans thoughte as it hath
bene wont to be sayd of the bodyes? That is to saye: maye a
man knowe a mans thought, as men may knowe the complexion
or outward condiciôs of the bodye? Certes is not this lyke a
myracle vnto a man that knoweth not, whye that swete thynges
agree well to hole folke, and bytter thinges to sycke folk? Also
why some sycke folke be heled with gentle medicines, and other
sick folke with sharpe medicines. But the phisicion that knoweth
bothe the maner and temperaunce of helthe and syckenes,
meruayleth not therat. But what other thynge semeth to be
the helth of mens mindes and thoughts, but onely vertue? and
what other thynge semeth y sickness of mens myndes and
thoughtes, then vyce and syns. Who els is the keper of good
folk, and expulser or suppresser of wickyd folke, but only god
the ruler and the healer of mennes soules, whych god, when he
beholdeth and loketh downe from the high towre of his prouidence,
he knoweth what is conveniente and meeete for euyrye man, and
geseth to euyrye manne the thinge that he knoweth is mete for
him. Nowh hereof commeteth thys notable myracle of the order
of destinie, when that god (that knoweth all thynges) doeth the
thynge that the ignoraunte people do wonder at. For to speake
a fewe thynges of the profondue depenes of the godhide that
mans resonne, may attayne vnto, the same man that thou demyst
jyst and kepyng equitie, and ryght, semeth contrarye to Gods
prouidence that knoweth all thynges. And certes my familier
felowe Lucan declareth, that the cause victorius, plesyth the gods,
and the cause that is overcome pleaseth Plato. Therefore what
soeuer thinge thou seist donne here in this world contrary to the
knowledge and expectacion of the ignoraunt folk, it is the ryght
order of thynges, but to thy judgement, it is a peruers confusion
of thynges. But admyt that some man is so well learned or
instructed, y both gods iugement, and mäs iugement do agre in
him together as one, but yet y he is weke minded or harted, that
yf any aduersitie by chaunce happen vnto hym he wilbe clene
turnyd from his vertue or innocensye, wherby he may not kepe
his fortune, then the wise dispensacion or prouidence of God spareth hym, whome aduersitie and trybulacion myghte empayre and make worse. And god wyll not suffer him to laboure that is not mete or able to laboure. Another man is absolute perfite in al vertues, holy and nere vnto god, so that gods prouidence woulde deme it wronge y he shulde be touched with any aduersitie, in so much that he will not suffer him to be vexed w any infyrmitie or sycknes of the body. For as a certayne phylosopher (more excellente by me) hath sayde: certes a true preistly man laboreth not, for vertues haue preserued the body of an holy mā from aduersitie. And often tymes it happith that the cheyf thynges y be to be done, be geuen vnto good folke, that the wyckednes aboundyng in euyl folke, shold be oppressid. And god dystrubeth and geueth to some folke nowe good, nowe euyll things, accordyng to the qualitie of theyr mind. And some good folke he greueth with aduersitie, lesthe that they should waxe proude, of long prosperitie. And other folke he sufferethe to be vexed with harde thynges, that thereby they may confyrme the vertues of their mynde, by the vse and exercys of pacience. Some folke doo feare more then they ought to feare, y thing that they maye well suffer. And other dispiseth the more then they oughte, the thyng that they cannot suffer, and god ledethe them into experience of them selfe, that is to saye: makethe them to knowe themselfe by aduersitie. And manye haue optayned a worshipfull fame of thys worlde by the meanes of a glorious deth. And some that coulde not be overcome by ponishment, haue shewed example vnto other, that vertue cannot be overcome by aduersitie. And there is no dout but that all these thynges be done ryghtfully, and ordynately, for the goodnes of them, for whome they seeme to happen. For certe where as sometyme aduersitie, and otherwhiles thinges desired, doo happen vnto wycked folke, noo man meruayleth therat, but iudgeth that it comethe of the causes thereof, that is to saye, for theyr wyckednes. Lykewyse of the ponyshmentes that happen vnto wycked folke no man meruayleth, for all men doo thinke that they haue well deserued the same, and that theyr ponyshmentes doth aswell feare other from wyckednes, as causeth them to amend that be ponyshed. And the prosperitie that happen vnto wycked folke in worldly goodes sheweth a great argument and proufe vnto good folke, what they ought to iudge of such
prosperitie whych men doo se often tyme serue y wycked folke. In whych thing I thynke also the same to be oderneyd by god, that some mans nature is perchaunce so overturnyng and importunate vnto wyckednes, that the pouertie of his houshold may rather prouoke hym to stele, whose pouertie the goodnes of god cureth and releueth, wyth the medycyne or remedy of mony, and ryches. And another man perceyuing his owne conscience corrupt with wickednes, and consyderynge wyth hym selfe his prosperitie and welth, ferethe lest perchaunce the losse of the same prosperitie whiche is pleasantaunt vnto hym, should turne hym to sorowe and heunies, and therfore he wyl chaunge his euyll maners and conditions, and forsake his wyckednes, for fear to lose hys prosperitie and riches. Prosperitie and ryches vn-worthelye gotten hathe ouer thrown othere into iust destruction accordelye. Some be permytted to haue power to ponysh, for that it shulde be an occasion of continuauance of exercyse in vertue to good folke, and a ponyshment to the wycked folke. For as there is no concorde or agregmente betwene good folke and wycked folke, euen so the wycked folke cannot agre emongest them selfe. And why not ?

For all wycked folke do vary of them selve by theyr wyckednes, that rendith their conscience, and doo often tymes suche thynge, that when they haue done, they themself do iudge that they oughte not to haue bene done. For whyche cause that hye prouydence of god, hath often shewed a gret myracle so that wycked folke, hath made wycked folke good folke. For when that some wycked folke do se that they suffer wronges of the wicked, they being mowed with enuy and hatred of theyr wronges and hurtes, haue returnyd vnto the fruyte of vertue, that is to sai vnto goodnes, when they do studye to be vnlyke vnto the wicked whom they haue hated. Truely it is onely the power of god (to whome also euyll thynge be good) when he in vsynge of those euyles, choseth outhe theffecte of some goodnes, that is to say, when god turneth euyll to good. For order bindeth together all thynge, soo that what thynge departeth from the reson and order appointed to the wycked, the same thing must nedes fall into some other order, that is to saye: of the good, soo that nothinge be lefte to folyshe, or outhe of order in the kyngdome of gods prouidence or ordynaunce. The strong god hath done al thyngs in the world, when he sawe and behelde
before all worldes. And certes it is not lawfull for men eyther to comprehende with their wit, or to declare with ther spech all the causes of gods workes: It is sufficient onely to behold thys that the same God, the maker of all natures, ordaynyng all things, disposeth them to good. And whythes that he hasteth to retayne and kepe the thynges that he hath made into his similitude and lykenes, that is to saye: in goodnes, he excludeth all wyckednes from the bondes of hys commenaltye of thy world, by order of necessite of destenie: whereby it happeth, that the euyl that men do thyneke to abound in the world if thou considerest Gods prouidence, that disposeth all thynges, thou shalte perceyue that there is no euyll at all any where. But I se well nowe, that thou being of late sore burnded, with the wayte of thyth difficulte question, and also weryed with the prolixitie or length of my reason, lokest for som sweetenes of verses or metyr. Therfore take thyth drafte, whereby when thou arte refreshed, and stronger, thou mayst ascende into hier questions.

**PHILOSOPHY.**

If thou wylt behold wyelsey the ordynaunce of god in thy pure mynde and thought, loke vpon the altitude of the hygh heuen, for there the sterres do kepe their olde course and concorde by the iust bande of thynges. For the sonne moued with his redde fier and hete letteth not the cold copas of the mone, nor the sterre called the beare (that turneth his swift courses about the north pole, beyng neuer washed in the depe Occean sea) coueteth to drenche hys flames in the same sea, seinge other sterres to be drowned therein. And the sterre Hesperus, that is to saye, Venus, sheweth always by euen courses of tyme, the late darkenes, that is to saye, the nyghte. And the sterre called Lucifer, bryngeth agayne the cleare daye. Euen soo the loure euerlastynge of gods prouidence, maketh the enterchaungeable courses of the sterres. And by suche mutuall concorde, trouble-some warre and varians, is expeulsed from the mouths of the sterres, that is to saye: from the regions celestiall that beareth the sterres. Also this concord tempereth the fourre elementes by equal maners that the moist elements that struyeth with the dry elementes, doo geue place and suffer the drye planetes at cer-tayne tymes. And that the cold elementes agree with the hote
planetes. And that the fier beinge the lyghtest elemet, haue the higher place and the heuye earth, the lower place, and rest beneth by the heuynes of the same. By the same concord and by like causes, the yeare floryshyng with flowers gueth sweete sauours. And y hote sommer ripeth the corne. And the Autumnne (loded w appels) cometh again. And the droppyng rayne moisteth the wynter. This temperans of gods prouidence, norysheth and bringeth forth all thynges, that beareth the lyfe in the world. The same temperans taking awaye the thynges that be made, hydeth them and bereueth them of theire being, and drownethe all thynges, that be brought forth and borne, with the last death. And whiles these thynges be doing, the hye maker of things that is to saye: almyghty god, sytteth unmoveable hymselfe, and rulethe all thynges, and turneth and moderateth the orders of thyngs, being of himselfe a kyng by his wyse gouernaunce, a lord by power of creatyng all thyngs, the fountayne of all goodnes, the begynynge of al thynges, the lawe binding all thynges, and the wise iudge, of equitie and iustyce, rewarding euerie man accordyng to his desert, which god moueth al thynges to go fourth, and likewise restraining al things stoppith the from their course, and establysheth for a tyme, things mutable and wanderynge by their nature. And except that god callyng boke the rght progressions and groundes of thyngs, constraineth and reuocateth al thyngs againe into a due compas and course, the things that the stedfast order of his prouidence nowe contayneth, beinge separate from the fountayne of their begynnyng, shoulde fayle and come to nought. Thys fountayne is the continuall loue of all thyngs that haue life. And all thynges desireth to be kept w the ende of good, for els they could not otherwayes endure, excepte that all thynges being turned agayne by loue, do come agayne to the begynnyng, that is to say: to god that gaue them their being and made them.

**PHILOSOPHY.**

Seist thou not nowe what foloweth all these thynges that I haue sayd? BOE. I say what thinge foloweth? PHI. All fortune is good without dou. BOE. And howe can it be soo. PHI. Vnderstande thus, that all fortune whether it be good or
euyll is geuen either to rewarde or exerçyse good folk, or for thintente to ponyshe and correcte euyll folk. And so all fortune is good that appereth eyther to be iuste or profyteable. BOE. I saye it is a verye true reason. And yf I do consider the prouidence of god, or destyne whych thou taughtest a lytle before, thy sentence is knyt together with stronge resons. But let vs (if it please the) nomber this opinion or sentence, emongest those thynges that thou diddest allege a lytle before, were not to be thought of any man. PHI. And wherefore. BOE. For that the commen speche of men dothe muche mystake the talke of fortune, saying often that some mens fortune is very euyll. PHI. Wylt thou therefore that I returne a lytle to the speche of the commen people, so that I seme not to digresse ouermuch from the vs of the people. BOE. I saye do as it shall please the. PHI. Dost thou not iudge all thyng good that profyteeth. BOE. Yes. P. The fortune that dothe exerçyse or correct, doth good. BOE. I saye I graunt the same. PHI. Then is al fortune good. BOE. What ells? PHILOSO. But this fortune that exerçiseth, is the fortune of such that be sette in vertue and do stryue agaynst vyce: but fortune that correcteth, is of suche that declyning from vyce, do chose and take the way of vertue. BOE. I cannot denye it. PHILOSOPHII. But what sayest thou, of plesaunte fortune, that is geuen to good folk for rewarde, doo the commē people iudge the same wicked fortune? BOE. No trueyle, but iudgeth it good, as it is in dede. P. What sayest thou of the other fortune that is euyll and sharpe, and restrayneth wicked folk by iuste ponyshment, do the commen people esteeme it good. BOE. I saye that they do iudge the same most wretched of all thynges that maye be thoughte. PHI. Take hede therefore lest that we folowynge the opinion of the commen people, haue not concluded a thyng gretyly, not to be thought of them. BOE. What is that. P. Certes of these things that are graunted it fortuneth that of them that be other in professing of vertue, or in thencres or vertue, or in optaynyng of vertue, al maner of fortune (what soeuer it be) is good. But all maner of fortune is euell to them that remayne in wickednes, whych thing the commen people do not so iudge and take it. BOE. That is true, although no man dare confesse the truth there of. PHI. Why so? A wyse man ought not to be greued, whē misfortune happeth no more then a strong man to disdaine or to be moued
with angre, when alarum or tumult of warre ryseth. For to bothe, the same difficultie to stryue agaynst fortune, is the matter, that is to saye: to the one whych is the strong man it is a cause to optayne renome, to the other, which is the wyse man, it is a cause to confyrme hys wisedom or vertue. For therefore it is called vertue, by cause it, stryuing agaynst vice, with all force, is not overcome wyth vyce or aduersitie. Nor certes you that be set in the increase or waye of vertue haue not come to abounde in pleasures and to continue in lustes of the fleshe. For then you do sowe and plant a verye sharpe conflict or battell, with all fortune. Therfore lest that eyther wicked fortune oppresse you, or good fortune corrupte and hurte you, hold you the meane betwene both with fyrme, and stedfast power and strength. For certes al that is vnder the mene vertu or passeth the meane vertue, dispiseth vertue, or is vicious, and hath no rewarde of his trauell or laboure. For it lyeth in your owne power, what fortune you had leuer haue, that is to sai: to take what fortune ye wyll. For all fortune that semeth sharpe or euyll (yi it do not exercyze the good folke, or correct and chastyce the wicked folke) it greueth or ponysheth.

**Philosophy.**

Agamemnon the sonne of Atrydes beynge aduenger of wronges, done vnto his brother Menelaus the kynge, held warre tenne yeares together agaynst the Troyans, and the citie of Troye, and dyd reuenge (with destruction) the chambers of his sayde brother Menelaus defiled, that is to saye: he reuenged the raushyng of hys brothers wyfe, named Queene Helayne, that was taken awaye by Parys and by hym carnally known, which Helaine was kept vp in his brothers chamber. Whyles that the said Agamemnon desired to sprede and sette fourth the Sayles and Nauye of the grekes. And bought or optayned prosperous wyndes (that before were contrarye vnfo him) with the bloud of his owne dochter, kyld for a sacrifysce vnfo the goddes for the same, he putthet of the fatherlye loue, that he bare to hys sayde dochter, and the pryest being sad or sory, to sacrifysce her (as yi custome then was) cutteh thre he for to haue a prosperous wynde of the goddes in yi journey or viage, against Priamus, and the Troyans. Ulixes named Itacus lamented that he had lost his felowes, whome the
Ulixes a Greke commyng from the seage of Troy, was taken, and his felowes daunoued by Polyphemom, a Gyaunte haung but one eye. The Centaures, were halfmen, half Beastes. The Byrdes were named Harpies, hauyng Vyrgyns faces and dystroyed the countrey about them. Cerbarus was portor of a place called hell, and dyd hurt the countrey al about.

Diomede is a gyaunt that kyled men, and made his hores eate them. Hydra was a serpente hauyng manye heades, and wha one was cut of, another sprange vp. Achelous was a flood ye could chauce it seyle into a Bull with one horne, and intodyuers other formes. Antheus was a gyaunt, that beynge werye with lighting wold recouer strengthe by touching ye grōud. Cacus was a gyaunt that robbid, and dystroyed the countrey.

cruell giaunt Poliphemus, lying in his greate caue, or den, had deoured and swalowed downe into his empty bely. Neuertheles Ulixes beynge wrotethe for the same, had some comfort agayne of his sorowes when he had put out the saide gyauntes eye, as he was in slepe. Hercules is accounted noble and renoumed, for the great traualys he toke in his tyme, for he ouercame the proude Centaures, he kyld the cruell Lyon, and toke awaye his skynne, he strake and droue awaye the byrdes with his arrowes, he toke awaye the golden apples from the dragon, with the hed of metal, that watchted and kepethem. He drue Cerbarus frō hel with a threfolde chayne. He ouercame Diomede and gaue his fleshe vnto his cart horse for meate, he slewe the serpent hidra and brect his venym, he toke awaye the horne from the floude Achelous, euen from his forehed, and made hym hide his face for shame within his bankes, he slew the gyait Antheus on the costes of Libie. And also Cacus ʒ gret monster, that trobled the kyng Euander. The same Herculus slewe ʒ huge bristed bore, that fouled the shoulders of hym with his fome, whych shuldors had borne the fyrmament as the poets do fayne. And last of all he bare vppe with his shoulders (and neuer bowed his necke therat) the sayd fyrmamente. And so he deserued heuen, as a reward of his laste laboure and trauell. Then go you now that be stronge thether as the hard and difficulte waye of the gret example of Hercules ledeth you, that is to saye the waye of vertue. O you slothfull men brought vp or geuen vnto pleasures or case, whye do you turne your backes and forsake vertuous trauayle, to resist vice with vertue, for the man that hath ouercome the pleasures, and desyres of the world, hath deserued heuen for his reward.

Here endeth the fourthe boke.
THE FYFTE BOOKE.

PHILOSOPHY.

WHEN philosophy had spoken and turned the discourse of her talke to handle and intrete of other maters more expedient and mete to be knoen. Then Boecius sayde: O Philosophy, thy exortacion is rightelye made and by aucthoritie most worthy. And I do prowe and perceyue it true in dede, that the question of the deuyne prouydence (that thou spakest of a lytell before) is enterlaced wyth manye other questions. But I do aske the whether that thou thynkest that chaunce is any thing at all, and what it is? PHI. I doo make hast to perfourme the dete of my promys and to open vnto the, the way wherby thou maist be brought againe vnto thy country, that is to saye, vnto blessednes or perfyt felicitie, but albeit that these thynges that thou askest of chaunce be very profitable to be knowne, yet they be turned a lytell from the way of our purpose. And it is to be feared lest that thou being weryed by erronious wayes, or strange questions mayst not be sufficient ne strong of thy selfe to attayne vnto the ryght way. BOE. Feare thou not that, for it shalbe greate quietnes vnto me, to knowe those thynges that I chyfely delyghte in, and it is not to be doughted of the thynges that shall folowe, when that all the circumstaunce of thy disputacion shall therewithall appere vnto me, without any dought. PHI. I wyll consent to thy desire, and doe saye and asyryme that if any man wyl define that hap is a chaunce, comming of sodeine mouing, and by no certayne coniunction of causes, that then chaunce is no thing at al, and I do iudge that then it is but a vayne saying besydes the signification of the thing that we do spek of. For can there be left anye place to foly, or vanitie, where as god setetethe
Nothing commeth of nothing, in comparison to a perticuler cause that supposeth a matter, but in comparison to God, which is the cause vniversall of all thynges, it is otherwyse for he made all thinges wisely in good order? For it is a true saying, that nothyng, is of nought, whych saying no olde manne hath denied at any time, howe be it they haue not put the same proposycion as a certayne grounde or foundacion, by god, the fyrste creator of thynges, but of a materiall subiecte, that is to saye: of the nature of all reason. For yt if any thyng shold come of nothyng, it shuld seme to be rysen of nought. And if this thyng maye not be done, then is it not possible that happe or chaunce be anye such thing y I haue defyned a lytle before, that is to saye: that chaunce shuld come of sodayne mouing without anye conijunction, or knyttynge of causes.

BOE. I saye what than? Is there nothing that mayustely be called eyther chaunce or fortune? Or is there anye thyng (although the commen people, knoweth it not) wherwith those wordes of chaunce and fortune do agre. PHI. My Arystotle speketh thereof, in his boke of phisike, and defyneth the same both bryfely and nere the truthe, by resoun. BOE. I saye after what maner? PHI. As often as anye thinge is done for the cause and intente of some other thing, and then happeth another thinge for some other causes, then the thyng that was intended or that was loked for, the same is called chaunce or happe. As if a manne in diggynge the grounde for thentent to tyll the felde, fyndethe a pece of gold dyggged vp, certes the same is thoughte to come by chaunce. But yet it commeth not of noughte. For it hathe proper causes, whereof the syndyne thereof (beyng sodayne and not loked for) semethe to haue wrought and made such chaunce and happe. For if the digger or tyller, of the felde, had not digged the ground and the hider of the golde, or mony, had not hid the same in the same place the gold had not bene founde. Therefore these be the causes of fortunes hap or chaunce, by cause it commeth, by causes metynge and encounterynge or commynge together sodenly and not by any meane, intent or expectation, of the worker. For nether he that hyd the gold, nor he that tyllled the ground intendent that the same gold shoulde be founde. But as I sayde it happed and came so to passe, that he digged ther as the other had hyd the golde. Then it is lawefull to defyne chaunce and happe to be a thyng unloked for, commynge of causes, that be done for some other thyng or purpose. But the same fatal order procedynge from the ineuytable knyttyng together, or conijunction of causes,
that descendeth from the fountayne of godes prouidence, whych dysposeth and setteth all thynges in theyr places, and tymes, makethe that causes do runne together and come together accordyng.

PHILOSOPHY.

The floudes called Tygrys, and Eufrates do sprynge vp together as one fountayne, out of the holownes or rockes of the hylles, or bankes of the countrye of Achemenye called Perthie, where as the people doo fyght fleyng and do cast dartes backward, and stycketh them in the brests of their enemies that do pursue them. And a none they the sayde floudes doo deuide them self in sondre. And yf they do ioyne them selfe together agayne, into one course and mete, then muste those thynges come together that both waters bryngeth with them at there metinge. And the shippes and blockes that be raised and plucked vp with the floudes wil mete together, and the waters being mixed together in flowyng wyll wrappe in such thynges as they haue founde by chaunce of fortune, whych beyng varyable, the low countrye, or ground, and the fluxible order of the rennyng or flowyng water, or streme ruleth. Euen so fortune that semeth to go at lybertye, without anye gouernment, suffreth rule, or is ruled and goeth by the selfe same lawe and order of goddes prouydence or purueyaunce.

BOECIUS.

I do very well perceyue and knowe the same, that is to say: that chance and fortune standeth by gods prouidence. And I do graunt that it is even so as thou sayest. But I would know whether there be anye lybertie of oure fre wyll in this order of causes, that cleueth so faste together in them selfe, or els whether that the chaunce or necessitie of destenye con- straynethe and kepethe in the mocions or effectes of mans thought? PHI. Certes there is libertie of fre wyll and there was never any resonable nature, that is to saye: naturall understaundyng but it had lybertye of fre wyll. For the thyng that hath reson naturally, hath judgement whereby it maye descerne euery thing and knoweth of it selfe thynges to be eschewed or
desyred. And the thynge that any man demeth to be desired, he foloweth: But he escheweth the thing that he demeth to be eschewed. Wherfore in all thynges wherein reason is, therein is alsoo lybertie to wyll or not to wyll. But I doo not determyne that thys lybertye to wyll, or nyll is equall or lyke in al thynges. For in hyghe and diuine substaunce, that is to say in aungeles, is bothe infallyble iudgemente, incorruptyble wyll to euyll, and redye power to doo thynges desyred, but it behoueth that mens soules be more free, when they kepe them selves in the contemplacion of goddes mynde and wyll, and they be lesse free when they slyde into bodyes humayne, that is to saye, whë they behold worldly thyngs. And they be yet lesse fre, when they be gathered together into erthy mebers or affects. But yet the most extreme bondage of the soules, is when they be geuen to vyce and synne, and haue fallen from the possession or grounde of their own proper reason or understandynge. For after that they haue turned away ther eyes of reason and vnderstandyng fro the light of the hygh and perfyt truth, to inferor and darke thynges, that is, to worldeyle, and carnall thynges, anone they be blynded with the cloude of ignoraunce, and be troubled with myscheuous affectes and passions, wherevnto when they do come, and thereto consent, they do increase the bondage that they haue brought them self into. And they be in maner as prysoners, kept from their owne proper libertie. All whyche thynges, neuerthelesse the sight of goddes prouydence that seyth and beholdeth all thynges, from hys eternitie or euerlastyng godhed, disposeth al thyngs predestinate, according to their desertes, seith all thynges and hereth all thynges.

PHILOSOPHYE.

Homere a man of swete eloquêce discrybeth that the son is cleare, and pure of lyght. Which sonne neuerthelesse cannot breake thorough and shyne into the depe bowels, of the earth, nor botome of the sea, with the light of his beames. The maker of the great worlde, whyche is god, is not, nor seith after that sort. For he (by his knowledge) percethe all thynges, lokyng from aboue. And the earthe resysteth not hym by any gretnes thereof. The darke night letteth him not with her blacke cloudes. But in the instant or moment of a thought, he seith
thynges present, thinges past, and thinges to come. Whyche god forasmuche as he seith and beholdeth al thyngs, thou alone mayste call hym the verye true sonne.

BOECIUS.

Beholde nowe am I confounded agayne with a more dyfficulte dought then I was before.

PHL. What dought is that? truelye I do thynke that I doo perceyue nowe wherewithall thou art troubled.

BOE. I saye it semeth to repugne gretlye, that god knoweth all thynges, before, and that there is anye libertie of fre wyll. For yf god seith all thynges before, and that he maye not be deceuyed, then must that thyng happen and come to passe, that godes prouidence, sawe before to come. Wherfore if that godes prouidence knoweth before by hys godhead, not onely mennes actes, and dedes, but also their counsayles and wylles: Then shal there be no lybertye, of frewyll nether can there be any other dede or any wyll, but suche as gods prouidence (that cannot be deceuyed) hath before knowen and perceiued. For if they might be wrested or altrted otherwyse then they be forsene or purueyed, then shoulde there be no fyrme or stedefaste prescience or foreknowledge of god, of thynges to come but rather an vncertayne opinion. Whych thing to beleue and thynke of God, I iudge it vnlefull and wycked. Nor truely I allowe not that reason, that some men do thinke therby to dissolue or assoyle the knotte, and dought of the sayde question. For they doo affyrme and saye, that somethynge is to come to passe therefore, for that the prouidence and forknowledge of god, saw before, that it is to come, but rather contraryewyse, that the same thyng, that is to come, cannot lye hyd, and vnknowen vnto goddes prouidence.

And by the same meanes it behouethe, that thy thynge, that is concluded of chaunce, slydeth into the cotrary part, that is to say: that lyke is concluded of gods prescience or forknowledge as of chaunce. Nor certes it is not of necessitie that those thynges do happen that be purueyed or forsene of god, but that it behoueth of necessitie that those things that ar to come, be purueyed or foresene of god. As though men serched for what cause prescience is, whether it be the cause of necessitie of euerye thinge
to come, or whether the necessitie of things to come, be the
cause of prescience or purueyaunce of god.

But I do laboure to declare the same thynge, that is to say:
that the chaice of thynges before knowen, is necessarye, howe
soeuer the ordre of causes standeth. All though that it semeth
not, that prescience or forknowledge bryngeth in necessytie of
betydyng, or happenye of thynges to come. For yf anye man
sytte, it behoueth that the opinion of hym is true that thinkethe
that he sytte. And lykewyse agayne on the other parte, yf
the opynyon be true of anye man, that for bycause he ssetteth it
must nedes be of necessitie, that he sytte, then is there neces-
sytie in both. For in the one is necessitie to sytte, and certes in
the other is necessitie of truthe. But anye man sytte not there-
fore, for bycause the opinion of hys syttyng is true. But rather
the opynyon of syttyng is trewe: for that it chaiced before that
some man dyd sytte. And so for as moche as the cause of the
truth, procedeth and commeth of the other parte, that is to say:
of sitting, and not of the true opinion, yet notwithstandyng there
is a commen necessitie in both. So then it apperyth to make
lyke reasons of gods prouidence and of things to come.

For although thinges be theryfore puruayed, bycause they be to
come, yet certes they happen not therefore because they be
purueyed. Neuertheles it behoueth of necessitie that eyther
thinges to come be purueied of god, or els that the thynges
purueyed of god, do hap and come to pas. Which thing alone is
sufficient to destroye the lybertie of fre wyll. But howe peruerse
a thynge or erronious is thys nowe, that the chaunce of temporall
thinges be thoughte or sayd to be the cause of the high prescience
or fore knowledge of God. But what other thing is it to thinke
that god puruyceth thynges to come therefore, bycause they be
tobyde or come, then to thinke that the thyngs, that sometyme
have chaunted, be the cause of the high prouidence or purue-
yaunce of God. Herevnto I adde these thynges as for example,
when that I do knowe that there is any thing, it is of necessitie
that ye same thing is. And so when I haue knowe that any thing
shall happen, it behoueth of necessitie that the same thing come
to passe. So then it foloweth, that the chaunce of thinges knowen
before they chaunce, cannot be eschewed or auoyded. Further-
more if any man esteme any thing to be otherwise then it is, it is
not onelye no knowledge or science, but it is a false or fallible
opinion, farre dyuers, and contrarye from the truth of knowledge or scyence. Wherefore yf anye thyng be so to come, that the chaunce thereof is not certayne and necessary, howe maye that thinge be knowen before that it shall come, for as scyence or knowledge, is not myngled wyth falshed, euen so the thyng that is conceyued by science or knowledge, may be none otherwyse then it is conceyued. For that is the cause that science or knowledge wanteth lyinge. For it behoueth that every thyng be euen so as science or knowledge comprehendet and affirmeth it to be. What shal I saye than? After what maner knoweth God all thynges before, to come, that be vncertayne? For yf he do think assuredlye that the same thynges shall come, that is also possyble not to come or happen, he is deceyued, which thinge is not onely vnlawefull and wycked, to thynke, but also to speake of god. But if that god so knoweth, as things be, so they shall come to passe. And that he knoweth also eyther that the thynges may be done, or may not be done. What is that prescience or fore knowledge that comprehendet nothyng certayne ne stable? Or what dyffere-thye thys fore knowledge from the folysh prophecy of Thiresy the profysiar that sayd: whatsoeuer I shall say, eyther it shalbe, or it shall not be? Or els what is the dyuuine prouydence better than mans opinion, if it demeth thyngs vncertayne as men doo, of whose judgement the chaunce is vncertayne? But if nothinge may be vncertayne wyth hym that is the most sure fountaine of all thinges, then is the chaunce certayne of suche thynges, that he shall knowe before assuredlye shall come.

Wherefore there is no libertie in the counsayles and actes of mankynde, that the deuyne thoughte (that loketh vpon all things without errore of falshed) knytteth and byndeth in, vnto one chaunce. Whyche thinge when it is once receyued and graunted, that is to saye: that there be no fre wyll, then it appereth howe great fall destructyon or hurt folowethe, of all humayne thynges, that is to saye, of thynges appertaynyng vnto mankynde. For the in vayne, rewardes be ordeyned for good folke, and penyshment, for wycked folke when that no fre and voluntary moyung of mans thought, or corage hath deserued the same rewardes or payne. And the same thyng shoulde the same most wycked, that nowe is judged most iust and best, that is to say ethers to penysh wycked folke or to reward good folke, the whych folke their owne proper wyll hath not enforcyd, to eyther one or other, Thyresyus was vii. yeres a man and vii. yeares a woman, and knewe the pleasures of bothe. And Iuno for his judgement of women, made hym blynde, and Jupiter made hym to prophesy.

The knowledge of God, is euer certain and trewe.

All vertues do sprynge of the electio of good and euyll, and ponnyshelment and rewardes, cometh for ye fre acte of good or euyll, and ye fre wyll be taken away.
that is to saye: nether to good nor euyll, but the certayne necessitie of thynges to come, constraineth them therto. Then shuld there be nether vyces nor vertues, but rather a myxte and indiscrete confusion of all desertes of the good and euyl folke. And nothyng may be thoughte more wycked then the same, whē that all order of thyngs is dyrified and taken of and from gods prouydence, and that it is lawfull for mans councails or wylles to do nothyng, that is to sai that mankynde hath no power to wil or do any thynge but as it is constrayned. And so it cometh to passe that all oure vyces be referred vnto god the author of al good things, that is to say, then god is to be blamed for our vyces sith that he constraineth vs by necessity to do them. Therefore is there no reson or meane, why to trust in god or to praye to god. For why should anye man eyther trust in god or pray to god when the order of desteny that cannot be altred knytteth together al thinges that men desire. Therefore then the same onely reward betwene God and men shuld be taken away that is to saye, to hope and to praye. For truely by meanes of iuste humilitie we deserue the inestimable reward of gods grace, and that is onely the way that is to vnderstand, by hope and prayer, whereby it semeth that men may speke with god, and to be vnyte and knytte by reason of supplication and prayer, to the clere lyght, that is to say: to god before that they optaine theyr request. Whych hope and prayer beyng receyued and graunted, yf they seme to haue no strength, by necessitie of thynges to come, what thinge is there, whereby we may be knytte, and cleue faste, to that prynce of thynges, that is to saye to god? Wherefore it must nedes be that mankynde beyng seperated and vnioyned from hys fountain or begynnyng whych is god, doo fayle and come to nought, as thou saydest a litle before.

PHILOSOPHY.

What varyable cause hath seperate the bands of thyngs, that is to saye of gods prouydence, and of fre wyl? what god hath appointed so great warres and strife betwene these two very true thynges, that they both be so deuyded in sundre that they beyng mynyged will not be coupled together. Is there any discorde or varyance in true thynges. They do cleauogether certayne and fyrme one with another. But mans mynde, drowned and
overcome wyth the blynde members of the body, cannot (by the fyer or lyght of the soule oppressed by the bodye) knowe the subtyll conjiunction or ioynyng together of things. But why burneth the soule with so great desyre to fynde the sygnes of truthe, that lye hyd. Do the mynde know the thyng, that she (beynge carefull) desyrethe to knowe? Who desyreth or laboureth to knowe the thynges that he knowethe all redye? And if the mynde knowethe not the thyng that it desyreth, wherefore seketh she beyng blynde and ignoraunt, that is to saye: why sekethe she the thing that she knoweth not, when she seith it? What man knowyng nothyng, wissheth or desireth any thing? Or whoo can folowe thynges that be not in his thought? And althoughe he seke for suche thynges where shall he fynde them? What man can knowe the fourme of the thyng founde and is ignoraunt of the same? But when the soule loketh vpon the profounde hygh thought, that is to saye: vpon god, then it knoweth the summe or effecte and all thynges together vnyuersall and perticuler. But nowe while the soule is hydde in the cloude or shadow of the body, and members of the same, it hath not holy forgotten it selfe, but kepethe the vniuersall knowledge of thyngs, and leseth ÿ perticuler knowlege of things. Therfore whosoeuer sercheth to know true thynges, he is in the habyte of nether of them, for nether he knoweth all thynges nor hath vterly forgotten all thynges, or is not all ignoraunt, but remembreth the summe or effecte of all thynges. Whyche effecte he retaynyng, counsayleth with hym selfe, and calleth to remembrance depelye by studye, thynges before sene or knownen, to thintente that he maye ioyne the partes or thynges that he hath forgotten, to those partes or thynges, that he hath reserved and kept styl in hys memorye.

**PHYLOSOPHY.**

Then sayd Philosophi: this questyon of goddes prouydence is olde, and greatly moued, and disputed of Marcus Tullius, when he deuydeth dyuynacion, that is to saye: in his boke of dyuyna-
cions, and thou thy selfe hast, long and vterly sought for the same but yet it hath not ben any wher suffycyent and firmely determyned of any of you at this day. And ÿ cause of ÿ dark-
es or diffycultie therof, is for that the mouyng of mans reason can not be applyed vnto the symplicitie, or purenes of goddes

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prouydence, that is to saye: mans reason can not comprehend the thynge that god seyth. Whiche prouydēce of God, ye it myght be thought, or compassed by mans wyt, then were it vterlye withoute any doughte at all. The cause and reason of whiche dought, I wyll assaye and proue, at the laste so to declare and open, when I haue fyrst answered to thy reasons, by the which thou art moued. For I aske why thou thinkest that the reason of them that do assoyle this, is not good nor effectuall. The which reason, or solucion judgeth that lybertie of fre wyll can not be let by prescience or fore knowledge for by cause it supposeth that prescience is not the cause of necessytie in things to come, takest thou any other argumente of necessitie of thynges to come, els where, but that the thyngs that be known cannot fayle, but come to passe? Therfore ye prescience or fore knowledge of thyngs to come putteth no necessytie in thynges to come (as thou thy selfe diddest confesse a little before) what, is there any cause that voluntarye determynacions or actes of thynges be compelled to certayne happes or chaunces? That thou mayst the better understand by way of example what may follow, let vs suppose that there is no prescience, should therfore the thyng (in asmuch as belōgeth therto) that commeth of fre wyll, be constrained to come by necessytie.

Boe. No. PHI. Then lette vs suppose agayne that there is prescience, but that it putteth no necessytie in thyngs to come, then (as I suppose) the same lybertie of wyll shall remayne hoole and fre from all necessytie. But thou wylt say that although presciēce is no cause of necessytie in thynges to come: yet it is a sygne that they be to come by necessytie. Therfore by this meanes although prescyens had_neuer ben: yet it may appere that chauces of thynges to come be necessarie. For euery sygne sheweth the thyng onely whereof it is the sygne, but yet it makethe not the thing that it signyfyeth. Wherefore it behoueth to shewe before that some thing happethe by necessitie, that it maye appere that prescience or foreknowledge, is the sygne of thyth necessitye or els ye there be no necessitye, the same prescience maye not be the sygne of the thyng, that is not.

But nowe it appereth that the profe of thyhs (sustayned by stedefast reason) is not taken of signes and outewarde argumentes, but of conuenyente and necessarye causes. But thou mayste saye howe maye it be that the thyngs do not come, that
be purveyed to com. As though we do beleue that the thinges y' gods prouydence saw before to come, should not come. But that we should rather iudge, though they happen or come, that they had no necessitie of their owne nature that they shoulde come. Whyche thynge thou mayst easely perceiue by this example, we do se manye thynge with our eies whyles they are in doyng, as those thynge the carters seme to do in ordering and tempering of their cartes, and such other voluntary acts after the same maner. Is there, therefore anye necessitie in oure eyes or lokyng, that compelleth any of the thinges so to be done? Boe. No truly. For the effect of a craft should be in vayne if al thyngs should be mowed by compulsion of our eyes, or by lokynge on.

PHI. Than the thinges whych (when men doo them) haue no necessitie that men do them, And the same thynges be to come withoute necessitie, before they be done. Wherfore ther be some thinges to come whose commynge is quyte and free from any necessitie. For certes I thinke no man will say thyse that those thinges that nowe be, were not fyrste before they were done. And the same thinges although men hadde knowne them before, yet haue they free chaunces. For as the knowledge of thinges presente, bringeth in no necessitie to thinges that men do, euyn soo prescience or fore knowledge of thinges to come, bryngeth in no necessitie to those thinges that are to come. But thou sayest that the same thing is to be doughted, whether there maye be anye prescience or fore knowledge of such thinges as haue none necessarrye chaunces. For they seme to disagre or varye, that is to understande of prescience and thinges to come. For thou thinkest that yf thynges be knowne before they come, yf of necessitie, they must folowe and come. And, yf there be no necessitie, they might not be knowne before. And thou thinkest that nothing may be comprehended, by prescience, or foreknowledge of god, but it be certayne. And if those thinges that haue vncertayne chaunces be purveyed as thynges certayne, thou takest that for to be some ambyguuite or doughte of opinion, and not for the truthe of science or knowledge. For thou beleuest that it is agaynste the hole effectes of science or knowledge to iudge a thyng otherwayes then the thinge is, and in thyse thou doest erre. The cause of which error is that all thinges that any man hath knowne, he thinketh that it is knowne by the
strength and nature onely of those things that be knownen, which is all contrarye. For al thyng that is knownen is not knownen by the power of the thyng that is knownen, but is rather knownen, by the meane of the that knoweth it, as it may appere by thys shorte example. For the sighte of the eye and the touchyng of the handes, knoweth one selfe roundnes of bodye not after one maner, but dyuersly. For the syghte without mouinge of it selfe, beholdith the hole body, together a farre of. But the touchyng, cleuyng together, and being ioyned to the rowndnes, and mowed about the same roïdnes, comprehendeth and holdethe the rowndnes therof by the partes therof. Also the outewarde sensys, beholdeth the manne him selfe after one maner, imaginacion after another maner, reson after another sorte, and the deuine intellygence or vnderstandynge, beholdeth hym farre otherwyse. For the outewarde sensys as the eyes, iudgeth the fygure or fashion of the man, as it is made in the mater subiecte or sensyble. But the imaginacion decernythe the fygure of the man withoute anye matter. But reson passeth also imaginacion, and wayeth or considereth by vnyuersal cõsideracion the same kind and nature of man, that is in all perticuler partes, naturallye. But the eye of intellygence, or vnderstandynge is hygher, for it passeth the vnyuersall compasse, and beholdethe wyth the syght of pure thoughte, the selfe same symple and pure forme of man perdurable. In whyche thynges, that is to saye, in the sayde vertues of knoledge, this ought to be specyallye considered, that the hygher strengthe for to comprehend thynges cõprehendeth in it selfe the lower strength. But the lower strength can ryse by no meanes vnto the hygher strengthe, soo that it may comprehend the same. Nor certes the sensys of the eye or wyte, can comprehend any thing without some matter subiecte, nor the imaginacion beholdethe the kyndes vnyuersall, nor reason taketh the symple or pure form as intelligence doth. But intelligence dyuyne as a thyng that loketh aboue or hath respecte to a hygher thyngye, after it hath conceyued the fourme, it iudgeth and decerneth certaynelye all thyngs that be vnder the fourme, that is to say, all thynges cõ be in man. But yet it comprehendeth or knoweth the same forme after such maner, cõ it can not be knownen to any of cõ lower powers, cõ is to say, to the reson, imagynacion, or wit. For it knoweth the vniuersall reson or fourme, the figure of imaginacion, and the sensyble matter
conceyued by wyt, and vseth nether reason nor imaginacion nor wit outward but beholdeth all thynges formallye (as a man would saye) by one instante thought of the mynd, without any dyscurse or circumstaunce. And reason (when it beholdeth anye thynge vnyuersall) vsethe nether imaginacion, nor outewarde wyt, yet it comprehened thynge imaginable and sensible. For this reason is the thynge that defyneth the vniuersal thyng, of the thing conceyued thus. Man is a two fotedd beast and resonable, whych knowlege when it is vnyuersall, yet euerye man knoweth that man is a thynge imaginable and sensyble. For this reason is the thyng that defyneth the vniuersal thyng, of the thing conceyued thus.

PHILOSOPHY.

There was some tyme a gate or entre, that is to saye, a cytye called Athence, that brought vp old men, that is to saye: philosophers, Stoicians, that were very darke or obscur in theyr sentences, the whycz Stoicians thought that reason and imaginacion of sensyble thynges, were imprinted in mens mindes, from the outward bodyes of thynges, after the fashyon as the maner is sometyme, whæ a man in wrytyng with a swyft pen, do make letters in a playne and clene pagin or leafe of paper or perchement, that had no wrytyng therein before. But if the mynde hauyng full strengthe doth nothyng, or hath no power, in it selfe, but onely lyeth suffryngge and subiect to the symlytudes and impressions of outewarde bodyes. And yf it represent the vayne imaginacions of thynges, as ymages apperynge in a glasse that men do vse to loke in.

From whence commethe thys knowledge in our myndes, that
The mynde, or wyt is passive by reson of possible vnderstanding and yet more actisue in vnderstanding then passive of outward body, and the cause of vnderstandings oughte not to be attributed to outwarde thynges: as the Stoicience thoughte and intended.

Yf mans mynde in knowynge, foloweth her owne moueyng, and not the mouing of the thyng that is known: much more goddes providence foloweth her owne proper moueyng in knowledge, and not the mouing of the thing that it knowoweth.

decerneth al thynges and beholdeth al thynges pertyculerlye? Or whence is the strength of our myndes that deuydeth al knownen thynges and gathereth together thynges that be deuyded? And from whence commeth the power that chooseth both wayes, that is to say: to ioine and to deuyde? Or whence is the power that otherwythes lifteth up our hed or mynde to hygh thynges, and otherwythes goeth downe or falleth into inferior and lowe thynges, and at the last when it sheweth it selfe as it is, repreueth and confuteth false thynges, with true thynges? Thys strength of the mynde is the cause more efficiencye or actyfe, whych is farre stronger then the cause pacient or sufferyng, and receyueth more the fygurres and simlytudes of the matter imprynted in it, then the cause that suffreth, or pacient.

Neuertheles some passion of the mind in a quyke lyuelye bodye, goeth before the operation, of the same mynde, steryng and moueyng the power, and strength of the mynde, or wyt to worke. As when the lyght stryketh or toucheth the eyes, or a voice sounding in yeares, then the power of the mynde, beynge stered vp, callynge vnto lyke mouynges, the kyndes of thynges, that it holdeth within it selfe, applyeth and ioyneth the same kyndes to the sayde outwarde Images, fygures, or symlytudes, to the fourmes of things that be hyd inwardely in it selfe, that is to say in the power of the wyt or mynde.

PHILOSOPHY.

But yf in sensyble or felynge bodyes, the obiecte, or outwarde qualtyes, do moue and sterre the instrumentes of the sensys or wyttes, and that the passion or sufferyng of the body, goeth before the vigor or strégh of the actyfe or workynge mynde, which prouoketh and sterreth the acte or worke of the mynde in it selfe, and exciteth and moueht the meane season the fourmes of thynges that restethe within. And I say if in sensible bodies the mynde is not affected or taughte by passion or sufferyng of the bodye to knowe thynges, but judgethe by his owne proper strength the passion sbiecte to the bodye, much more the things that be quyet, fre and seperate from all affectes or passyons of bodyes, that is to saye: god and his aungels, do not folowe in iudgyng, outwarde obiects or qualtyes, but do per-
fourme the acte of their mynde or thoughte withoute outward obiectes. So than by this meanes or reason, many maners of knowledge haue come to dyuers and sundry substanences. For the sensys or wyte beyng onely destitute or baren of other knowledge, commeth to lyuyng thynges immouable, as vnsto oysters and such lyke shell fyshes of the sea, that be noryshed cleuynge vnsto rockes. But imaginacion commeth to bestes moueable in whome there semeth to be some affecte or nature to flee or to couette and desyre some thing. But reason appertayneth onely vnsto mankynde, as intellygence or vnderstandyng appertaineth onely unto the deuyne nature.

Whereby it foloweth the same knowledge excelleth or is more noble (then other) that of her owne proper nature, knoweth not onelye her selfe, but also the subiecte of all other knowledges. But what than yf that wytte, and imaginacion doo stryue agaynste reason, saying that the same vnuyersall thyng that reason thynketh to see, and beholde in it selfe, is nothynge at all. For they do saye, that the thyng that is sensyble and imagina, maye not be vnuyersall. Therfore eyther the judgement of reason is true, and that nothynge is sensyble, or that because that reason knoweth that many thynges be subiect to wyt, and imaginacyon, a man would thynke that the conceuyng of reason were false and vain whyche conceuyng of reason consydereth the thyng that is sensyble and synguler, as a thyng vnuyersal. And yf that reason would aunswere on the contrarye parte vnsto these thynges, that is to saye: vnsto wyt and imaginacion, saying that she beholdeth þy thing that is sensyble, and the thing that is imagynable, by the meanes of vnuyersall thynges, and that they, that is to say: wyt and imaginacyon maye not attayne vnsto the knowledye of the thing that is vnuyersal by cause theyr knowledge can not passe the bodylye fyglyres. And would also saye that for the knowledge of thynges, men ought to beleue and credyte rather the more fyrme and perfyt judgemanet of things in stryfe. Than in suche controuersy, would not we (that haue the power, as well of reason as imaginacyon and wyte) allowe rather the cause and strengthe of reason, then the power of wyt, and imaginacion? A lyke thinge it is when that mans reason thinketh that the deuyne intellygence or knowledge cannot behold, and see thyngs to come but after the maner as the same reason of man knoweth.

Witte and imagination be inferiours to reason, and all thre be inferiours to diuyne intellygence. The power of the soule that hathe mooste knowledge is most excellent.
For (as thou diddest saye) if that some thynges sebe not to haue certayne and necessarie chaunces, they cannnot be knowne before for certayne to come. Therefore by thys meanes, there is no prescience or fore knowledge of the same thynges, whych prescience if we do beleue to be in these thyngs, then is there nothing but commet by necessitie. Therefore yf we maye haue suche judgemente of the dyuynye mynde or thoughte, as we be partakers of reason, accordyng as we haue iudged, that imaginaciō and wyt must geue place and be vnder reason, euen so woulde we thinke that it were ryght and mete, that mans reson should submyt itselfe and geue place, to the deuynye thought. Wherefore yf we may, let vs be lyft vp or let vs ryse vppe by dilygente consideracion into the toppe of that hyghte dyuynye intellygence or knowledge, for there reason shall se that thyng that it cannot beholde in it selfe. And that certes is, after what maner the certaine and determinable prescience or fore knowledge of god, seith thinges that haue no certayne chaunces to come. And thys is not an opynyon, but rather the simplicitie or purenes of the hyght knowlege of god, that is closed or shutte vppe in no boundes, that is to saye: cannot be comprehended or compassed, for it is infynyte or without ende.

**PHYLOSOPHY.**

By howe greate dyuersytie of shapes and figures, do the beasts go vpon the ground. For some haue straite bodies (as serpentes and al crepyng wourmes) and in crepyng they turne vp the dust and do make a contynuall forowe or prynt therein, by the strengthe of there breaste, when they crepe or slyde, as adders and snakes, or snyles. And there be other whose wanderyng lyghtnes of there wyngs do make a noyse in the ayer, in beting the wyndes, and passethe the space of the longe ayer, by theyr apparaunte flying. There be other beasts that deleyghteth to go on the grounde and to wander eyther the grene feldes or els to go vnder the woddes, and to make the prynte of there fete on the ground, in goyng. All which beasts although thou seyst that they do varye and dyffer in theyr varyable fourms and shapes that is to saye: although they be of dyuers kyndes and fashions, yet their faces beyng bowed downewarde toward the grounde, may shewe theyr bestyall,
heuy, and dul sences or wits. But mankynde alone lyfte vp
hys hye toppe or head and being light, standeth with a vpyrgh
dodye and beholdeth the earth vnder hym. Therefore excepte
thou beynge all worldly, arte euyll aduyssed, or oute of thy
ryghte mynde, the vpyrghst stature or fygure of thy bodye
warneth the, or putteth the in remembrance that thou seke
heauen with thy vpyrghste countenance, and that thou lyft vp
thy forehed, and beare thy minde on hie, That thy mynde or
thought beyng ponderous, waytye or heuye, synke not downe to
the earth, that is to say : vnto temporal and worldly thinges,
whyles that thy body is lyfte vp and set soo hyghe as it is by
nature.

PHYLOSOPHY.

Therfore forasmuch as it is shewed a lytell before, that all that
is known, is not known by the nature of the thing it selfe, that
is knoen, but by the nature of them that knoweth, let vs
vnderstand (as much as it is lawfull for vs) what is the state of
the dyuine subsstaice, that we may know what is the nature of
the scyence or knowledge. Truely the comon judgement or
opinion of all reasonable creatures, is that god is eterne, let vs
thē consyder what is eternitie. For ſhal declare openly to vs
bothe the dyuyn nature, and also the dyuyne science or know-
ledge. Therfore eternitie is the possessyon of lyfe interminable,
being hole and all together parfytte, whiche appereth more
euydent by comparison of example of temporall thynges. For
whatsoever thing lyueth in tyme, the same thing beyng present,
procedeth and goeth fourth from thynges past, vnto thynges
to come. And nothyng is establysshed in tyme, that may com-
prehend together the last space of hys lyfe, for it hath not yet
ouerturned the time of tomarow, and it hath now lost ſ tyme of
yester daye. And truely ye liue no more in the lyfe of thy
presen day then in that same mouable and transitorye moment.
Therfore whatsoever thyng suffereth condicion or successyon of
time temporal although it neuer began to be nor cesseth to be,
(as Aristotle iudged of the world) and although the lyfe and the
continuance thereof were extended or stretched forth wyth tyme
insunya, yet for all that it is no such thyng that by ryghte it
maye be iudged eternall. For it dothe not enbrace altogether
the space of hys lyfe, although it endurethe insynitylye or time

For as moche as mans body is strait vp toward hea-
uen, yt the mynde thereof shuld not be lyft vp in
euynlye con-
placion, the
bodye shoule
some more
worthye then
the soule.

The dyffyny-
cion eternitie.

Somethynge
is eterne, and
in eternitie,
and the very
eternitie as
god.
Somethynge
be eterne, and
in eternitie,
and be not ye
same etern-
tie, as Aun-
gelles which
be substantences
seperate.
Somethynge bee eterne, not in eternytie, nor be not eternytie, as mouing, time, and the worlde.

Another diffynction of eternytie.

God is not older (the things ye be made) by quantytie of time, but by prosperytie of pure nature alone. And so god is before ye worlde by his owne pure nature, and not by antiquytie of tymes.

The infynyte mouing of temporal things do folowe as much as they may the state of eternytie, but it cannot folowit wholly, for temporal stat is succes-
syely and be-
infinite, for it hath not the times to come that be not yet, nor the times past that be done and gone. Therfore whatsoeuer thynge doth comprehende and possesse together all fulnes of life intermynable or without ende, to the whych nothing wanteth of the future or tyme to come, nor nothing of thy time past, hath escaped, the same thing mایryghtfully be called eterne. And it behoueth that the same eterne thynge be alwayes presente with it selfe, and myghtye or stronge alwayes to assiste it selfe, wantyng nothynge, and to haue alwayes present the infynyte continuance of mouable tyme. Whereof some men do thinke a mysse, whyche (when they do heare ye Plato thought that this worlde had no begynnyng of tyme nor shuld haue any ende) thought by thys meanes, the worlde to be made coetern with god the creatoure thereof. For the worlde to be ledde by lyfe interminable (as Plato graunted that it was led) is one thing, and to embrace and comprehend together all the presence of lyfe intermnynable, is another thynge. Whyche thynge is manifeste, proper, or appertaynynge to the dyuyn ye thoughte. For God semethe not older then thynges that be made, by quantitie of tyme, but rather by propertye of hys symple or pure nature. For this infynyte mouynge of temporall thynes folowethe thys presente state of immouable lyfe, whyche is eterne. And when it may not fayne or counteruayle the selve same, and be made equall to it, that is to saye: vnto god by immobilitie, but wantethe the same immobilitie and decresyth or dymynysheth from the simplicitie or puritie of the presence of god, into an infynite quantitie of tyme to come, and of tyme past, so that when it cannot posses together the hole fulnes of his lyfe by this meanes, because it neuer cesseth to be, in some maner wayes, it semeth somewhat to folowe or to be lyke the same thynge, that it may not fullfyl, attayne vnto, nor expresse, but byndeth it selve to some maner presence of thys lytle swyft and transytorye momente of tyme. The presence of thys instante tyme, for because it beareth a maner ymage or similitude of the everlasting being of god, to whatsoeuer things it happeth, it geueth the thing that they sem to be. And for bycause the presence of suche moment of tyme might not continue, it toke quykely the infinite waye of tyme by successyon. And by that meanes it is made that it shuld continue the lyfe, in goyng from one beyng to another, the fulnes whereof it could not enbrace and
holde in tarying. Therefore yf we (in folowyng Plato) wyll put worthy and conuenent names to thinges, let vs say then that god is eterne, and that the worlde is perpetuall. Then for bycause that euerye judgement comprehendeth ý thinges that be subject to it after his owne nature that is to say, accordyng to the nature of the known. Then is there alwayes in god an eterne and present state. And his scyence or knowledge, that ouer goeth all mouyng of tyme temporall, remayneth in symplicitie, or purite of hys owne presence, embrasyng and compassyng the insynyte spaces of the tyme past, and of the time to come, con- sydereth all thynge in his symple or pure knowledge, as though they were nowe presentlye done. Soo than yf thou wilt way or consyder the prescience or fore knowledge of god, by the whych it knoweth all thynge, thou shalt not judge it to be prescience as of thynge to come, but more rightely science or knowledge of thinges instaunt or present that neuer faylethe. Wherefore it is not called preuydence but rather prouyde, as establysshed farre of from lowe thinges, and beholdeth all thinges as it were from the highe toppe of all thynge.

Therefore what askest thou that those thynge be doone by necessytie, that be apprehended in the syghte of God? When that men makethe not those thynge of necessytie that they se done in there sight? Doo thy syghte gve or inforce any neces- sitie to those thynge that thou seyst present before the? BOE. No. PHI. Truelye if there be any worthy comparson of the deuyne sight, and of mans sight, in respecte of the thynge present, as you do see somethyng in thys youre presente temporall tyme, euen soo god seith all thynge present with his eterne sight wherefore this dyuine prescient, chaughteth not the nature and propertye of thynge, as touching necessite or chaüce of them, but beholdeth such thynge presente before hym as they shuld hap to you in tyme to come, that is to say, that god seith those thinges that be to come to you, as presently as you do se those thinges that be done before your eyes. And he confoundeth not the judgement of thynge, but by one syght of hys thoughte he knowethe thynge to come, aswell necessarye, as not necessarye. In lyke manner, as when you do see bothe together, a man walke on the earthe and the son ryse in the firmament, although both of them be sene at once, yet you do perceyue and judge the one to be voluntarye, the other to be necessary. So than the deuyne

holdeth the tyme past and y§ time to com but the state of eternitie is present al- wylies and not successyne.

Prouyde and presciency supposeth some thing to come. Prouyde sup- poseth all thynge present in syghte.

All thinges to god be present and nothyng to com nor past as it is to men.
sight beholdeynge all things troubleth not the qualitie of thynges, by necessitie, whyche thynges be present with hym by hys eternitie, but as to the condicion or succession of tyme, they be to come and not present.

Whereby it foloweth that this is not an opinion, but rather knowledge cōfirmed with truth, that when GOD knoweth any thing to be, he knoweth well that the same thing wanteth necessitie to be, that is to say: it is not of any necessitie to happe or be. Here yf thou sayist that the same thyng, that god seith to come or hap, cannot otherwyse but muste nedes come to passe, and that the same thyngs that canne not choue but come to passe, muste betyde and chaunce by ncessytye, and that thou constrayne and bynde me to thy name or worde of necessitie: certes I do knowledge and confesse a thyng of perfytte truthe, but scarcelye any man shall attayne thereto, but the beholder of the deuyne nature. For I wyll tell the that the same thinge that is to come, is necessary when it is referred to the dyuyne knowledge. But when it is taken and vnderstād in his owne nature and kynde, it semeth fre and clerely absolute from any necessytie. For ther be two necessities, yf one is symple, as that it is necessarye that all men be mortall, and the other is condicional, as yf thou knowest that any man do walke, it is necessary that he do walke. For the same thinge that anye man hath knouen to be, maye none other wyse be, then it is knouen to be? But thys condicion draweth not with it, the same symple necessitie. For the proper nature of thys condicyonall necessitie, maketh not thys necessitie, but the addyng to of the condicyon maketh it. For no necessitie causeth the man to go, that goeth by hys owne proper wyll, although when he goeth it is necessarye that he do go. Than after the same maner if gods prouidence seith any thyng presente, it behoueth by necessytie that it is so, although it haue no necessitie of nature. And god beholdeth and seyth those thyngs that be to come the whych do procede by lybertye of fre wyll, as thynges al redye present. Therefore these things when they be referred to the diuyne syght, be made necessarye by the condicyon, of the deuine knowledge: but when they be considered by them selfe, withoute the deuine sight, they be absolute and fre from necessytie, and cesse not from the libertie of theyr nature, that is to say: they haue the lybertye of theyr nature. And without dought al thynges shalbe done,
whyche god knoweth before, be to come. But certayne of them do come of fre wyll, whyche although they do happen, yet they lose not theyr owne nature in beyng, by the whyche (before they were done) they had power not to come. What matter or difference is it than to saye, that thinges to come be not necessarie, when for the condition of the deuine science or knolege, they doo happen by all maner waies in the likenes of necessitie, or as though they came of necessitie. This is the difference, y is shewed by those thinges that I declared a lytle before, that is to say, the sonne rysynge and a man goyng. Whych thinges whyles they be done, cannot be vndone. Neuertheles the one of them before it was done, it was of necessytie to be done, that is to saye: the sonne rysynge: but not the other, that it is to say: the manne goyng. Soo truelye those thinges that god hath presête, without dought they be. But of them, the one, that is to say the son rysynge, commeth of necessitie of thyngs. The other that is to say the man goyng, commeth of power to do. Therefore haue we sayde ryghte well that those thynges be necessary if they be referred to gods knowledge. And if they be considered by them selve, than be they absolute or fre from the bonds of necessitie. Euen so as al things that appereth to the wyt, yf thou refer it to reason, it is vniuersal, if thou refer it to it self, it is singuler. But yf y wylte say, it is put in my power, to chaunge my purpose, I wyl auoyd gods purueians, whé I shal chaunge those thinges y gods purueyance knew before shuld be. And I wyl saye that thou mayste chaunge thy purpose, but yet because the present verytie of godes prouidens beholdeth, that thou mayst chaunge it and whether thou doiste chaunge it, or whether thou turnest it, thou cannest not avoid the diuine prescience, or fore knowledge. Euen as thou cannest not fle from the syght of the present eye, y lokyth on the, although thou turne thy selve into dyuers accions or doynges, of thyne owne fre wyll. What wylte thou say now, mayst thou say vnto me shal not the deuyno knolege be chaüged after my disposition, or as I am chaunged, as when I will nowe this one thyng, and now another thing? semeth not the deuine knowledge like wyse to alter and chaunget her courses and stedes of knowing: BOE. No forsooth. PHI. For the deuyno sight goeth before al thing to come, and returneth and calleth the same vnto the presence of hys owne proper knowledge, and chaungeth not (as thou thinkest) hys stedes or courses, to know
now thys, and nowe that, but alwayes remaynyng stedefast without chaungynge, seith before and comprehended at one twyncke-lyng of an eye, al mutacions or chaunges. Whych presence of gods syght to enbrase and se all thyngs, god hath not receyued of ý chaunce of things to come, but of hys owne proper simplicitie or pure nature. Whereby the same thing that thou puttest a lytle before is assoyled, that is to say that it is not mete, that our things to come be sayde to geue or bryng in the cause of gods knoweledge. For this power of knoweledge enbraseth all things, by his present knoweledge hath establyshed an order vnto al things, and oweth nothing to later thinges, that is to sai, hath asmuch power in things to come hereafter, as in thynges present, or is not in dette vnto later thyngs, for any knowledge receyued by them. Which thinges beforesayde, forasmuche as they be euen so, that is to say: that necessitie is not in things by dyuine fore knowledge, libertie of fre wyll remayneth in all mortall men not corrupte nor constrayned by any meanes. And the wycked lawes do not set fourth rewarde or ponyshmentes, to the wils of men that be fre from al necessitie.

For god the fore knower and beholder of all thinges from aboue, and the present eternitie of his sight alwayes renneth together with the future qualitie of our actes and dedes, geuing rewarde vnto the good folke, and ponyshments to the wycked and euyll folke. And hope and prayers be not put in god in vayne, or as thynges of no force or effecte, whych when they be good, iuste and ryghtful, cannot be vnfruytfull, but meritorius and good. Eschew and resyst therfore vyce, folow vertue, lift vp your mynde to perfyt hope, powre out your humble prayers to god aboue. Greate necessitie of goodnes and rewarde is promysed and appoynted for you, yf you wyll not dyssemble, but cötyne faythfull true and obedient vnto almyghty god, when you do al thinges before the eies of the iudge, that is to saye: before GOD, that seith all thinges.

FINIS.

Imprynted at London in Paules Churcheyarde at the sygne of the holy Ghost, by Ihon Cawoode, Prynter to the Kynge and Quenes Maiesties.
Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum.