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BOETHIUS' CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY

GEORGE COLVILLE

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BOETHIUS' CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN BY

GEORGE COLVILLE

1556

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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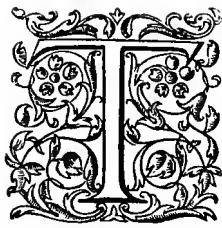
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INTRODUCTION.



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 culumniated “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 prætorian præfect executed by Valentinian's orders in 455.

He married Rusticana, 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 Rusticana, 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 houcussing 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, Amalasontha, 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 Rusticana 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 Benoit-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 mediæval 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 Stagyrite 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 Consolazione*, we can fancy we discern the chief source of inspiration conned 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.

B O E T I U S
D E C O N S O L A T I O N Æ
P H I L O S O P H I Æ.

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 felycytie. 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 actiue, 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 toung by George Coluile, *alias* Coldewel, to thintent that such as be ignoraunt in the Latin toung, and can rede Englyshe, maye vnderstande 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, accordynge

to the boke of the translatour,

whiche was a very olde

prynte.

Anno. M. D. L V I.

*To the hygh, and myghty pryncesse, our Souereigne
Ladye, and Quene, Marye by the grace of God,
Quene of Englande, Spayne, Fraunce, both Cicilles, Ieru-
salem, 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, ho-
noure, and pro-
speritie.*



HERE as manye thinges (mooste gracious soueraigne Ladye) be wryten both learnedly, and wysely, by the sage Philosophers in theyr booke, yet me thinketh there is one thinge alone, amongst so many dyuers, and sondry thynges, to be had chiefelye in remembraunce, that is to saye: to pray that a hole reasonable body, may haue an hole and perfyt mind or wytte. For both the same beyng hole and perfyt, maye iustely be called health, whiche consisteth in the ryght, and fyrme constitution, and temperaunce both of the body and mynd. And where as the health and perfection of the mind or wyt (which is the chiefest 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 fresshe, lusty and quycke mynde or wytt, there the same mynde beyng as a thynge bound, constrained in, or languysshynge, can nether exercyse and vse her proper vigore

and strength, nor yet profytte her selfe anye thynge accordyng
A certayne Philosopher (when he complayned on the wekenes
of his owne body) sayde (after my iudgement) very well thus :
O nature, yf thou haddest 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 gourerne in hygh felicitie this your
realme, and the common wealth of the same, whereof you are
oure cheife heade, and soueraygne conforte. And as I thoughte
it no lesse but my bounden duetie to declare my good wyll and
mynde towardes youre grace, whiche hath alwayes accepted all
mennes good hartes not vnthankfully, 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
eloquence) 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 protectiō and fauour of your name. And if
any man receaueth any profyt therby, I shall desyre him to
geue thankes therefore vnto youre maiestie, whose moost royll
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 agaynst the hertykes 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 tiranny) resysted hym by hys polytyke and godly counsayle, and perswaded 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 rauyn of Kynge Theodoryke. The Kyng Theodoryk (partly perceyuyng of hymselfe, and partly by other flatteryng counsalours who alwaies dispised Boecius and hys godly wysdome, that hys tirannicall commaundementes coulde take no place by reason and meanes of the great wysedom of Boecius that alwayes destroyed the euyl opynyon and folyshe myndes of the Kyng, and suche as fauorid hys vngodly and vncharitable inuentions) imagined falsly w'out iust cause to distroy Boecius after thys sort. He Surmised that Boecius dyd interrupt and kepe backe a certayn man that should haue brought letters unto the kyng, wherin were contayned certayne accusations of the Senatours of Rome concernyng great hurt and damage done by them agaynst the Kynges most royll 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 never 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 prosperytie paste, and the present aduersite that he was in, made thys presente booke callede the conforte of wysedome, agaynste the mutable chaunces of fortune, wherby a man (althoughe he be banyshed or depryued of wordely possessions, goodes, riches dignities or any other worldlye felicitye or pleasure) myghte receiue comfort agaynst such aduersitye (commynge by fortune) : wyth phylosophy or wysedome, whyche teachyth a man to dyspyse worldy 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 abundaunce and suffysaunce, nothyng wanting that canne be worthely desyred, and never 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 worldy prosperitye, nor to be sory in aduersitye of worldy thynges, as for the losse of wyfe, chyldren, landes, goodes, ryches, or dygnyties. And as I haue declared before, thys booke is a dialoge or communycation of two personnes together, 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 booke is deuided into fyue partes. In the fyrst parte or booke Boecius complaigneth vpon hys myserable chaunces. In the seconde he deuyseth comfortable remedies for aduersites. In the thyrd he determineth what is the perfyt felicitye and in whom it is. In the fourth booke he moueth certayne questions to phylosophy or wisedome. And in the fyfth and laste booke he treatyth of goddes purueians or prouidens, of destiny chanches, 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.



ONSYDERYNGE wyth my selfe, the shorte
and vncertaine course of thystran sitory lyfe,
the vanities of the worlde, and the mutable
chaunces of fortune, with her flatteryng and
deceyueable gystes. I do much meruayle
that the mooste parte of men (hauinge wytte,
reason, and vnderstandyng, whereby they
should excell other brute beastes) do so ernestly folowe the
gystes 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 alwayes
fyrme and neuer fayleth, and foloweth the worlde, the deuell
and the fleshe, that darkenyth the wytte and vnderstandingyng
with theyr vanities and pleasures, as with ryches, possessions, honors,
dignities, power, auctoritie, fame, & suche other, that turnyth
vpsydowne in one momente of an houre, vanysbeth awaye, and
commeth to noughe, and seynge that therin is no perfyt
felycitie, for they content no man that haue the, 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 flatteryng, maketh a man to know God, the world
and hymselfe. And good fortune deceiueth a man with her
gystes that seme both plesaunte and permanente, and be not so
in dede. O howe many wyse and wel learnyd men haue wrytten

ryghte fruytefull doctrynes, to the intente that men myght lerne to knowe the troubles, the vexacyons, the vnquyetnes and the vncertaynte of thys vayne worlde, and of all thinges worldly and temporall, that no man shuld pretend any inheritaunce, contynuance, or certayne in them, any longer then it shal please fortune, that is mystres and ruler of them? Socrates was the fyrste begynner and worshypper of wysdome, and when he coulde fynde no certayne ende of goodnes in naturall thynges, he gaue hys hole mynde and studye 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 soueraign 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 ignoraunce, the feblenes & negligence of yong men vnto diligēce strēgth & vertue. Then cam vp poetes whych (for theyr eloquens, rethoryke & many fayned tales and inuencions) were much to be comended, some of thē did wryt the noble liues & dedes both of heuenly & worldly creatures: some wrote of Emperours and of shamefull loue out of all good order for euyll and lasciuious lyuyng: Some did writ of the myserable fall of Kynges and prynces, for theyr wicked vyses, And other of them seyng younge people enclyned to all kynde of euyll, repreued the same playnelye in theyr wryttinges, with out fauour or flatterye, hauynge respect to no degré from the lowest to the hyghest. Al these wryters, dyd thus of a godly zeale that they had to subdue vysce and to stere up men vnto wysdome 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, obteyned greate worshyppe and immortall fame for their godlye labors, and lefte great cōmoditie 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 conuersation and liuing But sythen in these our dayes there be so many neglygent ignoraunt, and folyshe people, that dispyseth vertue and ernestlye foloweth and embrasythe the blynde vanytyes of thys 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 toungue, wherein the errours of all men for
the most parte, be touchyd, that do put their truse in temporall
thynges, and do so feruently 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 comforde both of y^e bodye and soule, in whom is
al thynge that can be wel desyred, and nothyng wantynge, and
beyonde the whyche nothyng 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 thynge, or haue erred in the
trāslatyon, 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 fynallye 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 hollye ghoste, world
wyth oute ende.
Amen.

THE FYRSTE BOOKE.

BOECIUS SPEAKETH.



THAT in tyme of prosperite, & floryshing studye, made pleasaunte and delectable dities, or verses: alas now beyng heauy and sad ouerthrownen in aduersitie, am compelled to fele and tast heuines and greif. Beholde the muses Poecicall, that is to saye: the pleasure that is in poetes verses, do appoyn特 me, and compel me to writ these verses in meter, and y^e sorowfull verses do wet my wretched face with very waterye teares, yssuinge out of my eyes for sorowe. Whiche muses no feare without dout coulde ouercome, but that they wold folow me in my iourney of exile or banishment. Sometyme the ioye of happy and lusty delectable youth dyd comfort me, and nowe the course of sorowfull olde age causeth me to reioyse. For hasty old 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 reuiled 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.

The poetes do faine that ther be IX. Muses that do geue y^e Poetes science to make versis in meter, and y^e same muses be called camene, that is to saye, synging swetlye, For that y^e they do muche delyte men by reason of suche meter, (& they cause men to delyte in y^e wayne hyecons of poetes, and in the vayn plesures of the worlde.

Nowe for by cause that fortune beynge turned, from prosperitie into aduersitie (as the clere day is darkyd with cloudes) and hath chaungyd her deceyuable countenaunce : my wretched life is yet prolonged and doth continue in dolour. O my frendes why haue you so often bosted me, sayinge that I was happy when I had honor possessions riches, & authoritie whych be transitory thynges. He that hath fallen was in no stedefast degré.

BOECIUS SPEAKETH.

The descriptiō of Philosophye or wisedome, whyche for the goodlye reson thereof is compared to the beautye of a fayre womā, and the depe knowlege of wisedome is of doughtefull vnderstanding albeit it is conuersaunt emō. geste menne in earth by science and recheth vp into heauen by yē vertues therof.

By the vestures of subtyll thredes is vnderstante the science of wisedome which is lyke a smokye ymage to ignoraunte persons.

Practise consisteth in yē work of the bodye about worldlye thinges, contemplation consisteth in vertuous occupying of the mynd in vertues and godly things, contempnyng the worlde.

Whyles that I considerydde pruylye wyth my selfe the thynges before sayd, and descriybed my wofull complaynte after the maner and offyce of a wrytter, me thought I sawe a woman stand ouer my head of a reuerend 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 shewethe her selfe at the commen length or statur of men, and other whiles she semeth so high, as though she touched heuē with the crown of her hed. And whē she wold stretch fourth her hed hygher, it also perced thorough heauen, so that mens syghte coulde not attaine to behold her. Her vestures or cloths were perfyt of the fynyste thredes, & subtyll workemanshyp, and of substaunce permament, whych vesturs she had wouen with her own hands as I perceyued after by her owne saiynge. The kynde or beawtye of the whyche 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 yē smoke. In the lower parte of the sayde vestures was read the greke letter .P. wouen whych signifyeth 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 vnderstand from practys or actyf, vnto the hygher parte wher the letter T. was whych is vnderstand speculacion or contemplacion. Neuertheless the handes of some yvolente persones had cut the sayde vestures

and had taken awaye certayne pecis thereroft, such as euery one coulde catch. And she her selfe dyd bare in her ryght hand litel bokes, and in her lefte hande a scepter, whych fore sayd Phylosophy (when she saw the muses poetycall present at my bed, spekyng sorowful wordes to my wepynges) beyng angry sayd (with terrible or frownynge countenaunce) who suffred these crafty harlottes to com to thys sycke man? whych can help hym by no means of hys greife by any kind of medicines, but rather increse the same with swete poyson. These be they that doo dystroye the fertile and plentious commodyties of reason & the fruytes therof wyth their prycykynge thornes, or barren affectes, and accustome or subdue mens myndes with sickenes, and heuynes, and do not delyuer or heale them of the same. But yf your flatterye had conueyed or wythdrawen from me, any vnlernyd man as the comen sorte of people are wonte 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 studyes 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 countenaunce to the grounde, and by blüssyng confessed their shamfastnes, and went out of the dores. But I (that had my syght dull and blynd wyth wepyng, so that I knew not what woman this was hauyng soo great auctoritie) was amasyd or astonyed, and lokyng downeward, towarde the grounde, I began pruyulye to ioke what thyng she would saye ferther, then she had said. Thē she approching and drawyng nere vnto me, sat downe vpon the vttermost part of my bed, and lokyng vpon my face sad with weping, and declynyng toward the earth for sorow, bewayled the trouble of my minde wyth these sayinges folowyng.

The peces of
y' vesturs be
such partes of
wysedome as
every man
hath learned
and retayneth,
the lyttle
bookes be the
partes of wys-
dome, the
scepter sygny-
fieth the rule
of the comon
welth, whiche
is euer well
obserued by
wysedome.
These craftye
harlots, be the
muses or delite
that worldelye
pleasures doo
tangle mennes
myndes with
all, that seme
pleasaunte for
the tyme.

PHYLOSOPHY SPEKETH.

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

outwarde darkenes of ignoraunce as often as it is mouid with erthly blastes. The care of temporall thinges that is so hurteful 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 heuēly thinges by lernynge, was wonte to goo into the heuenly wayes by science of astronomy, and dyd behold y^e son beames y^t be so red, & did se the sterres or constellacions of the cold mone. And he beyng a man that with sycence had ouercom ignoraunce, had evry sterre comprehended in nūber, that is to saye, knewe the number of the sterres, and dyd knowe what sterres dyd kepe and vse dyuers erraticall or wandrynge courses, and mouyd in dyuers and sundry circles of the zodiakē. 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 growyng thinges springeth forthe, that decketh the earthe wthy freshe reddy flowers. And who hath caused the frutefull autumpne in a plentyfull yere, to bryng forthe the full clusters of grapes, And also thys mā 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 downward with great wayte or heuynes, for the losse of temporall goodes. Alas, he is constrainyd to beholde the folyshe erthe that is to saye, the folyshe and vayne things on the erth.

The poetes do fayne, that the sonne and the sterres that do ryse in the east, do go down in the weste, and be drowned in the sea called y^e ocean sea that lyeth in y^e west.

PHILOF.

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

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 vtterly 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 knownen me heretofore. And to thintent þ he may know me: let me wype hys 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 transitorye thynges.

BOECIUS.

Then the darkenes left me, whē the nyghte was gone, and my former strengthe of vnderstandinge 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 fyrment standeth closyd and coueryd with thicke showeres, so that the nyght spredeth from aboue ouer all the earthe when that the sterres cannot be seene in the firmament. 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 stryke into men eyes wyth hys beames meruailynge at the same.

BOECIUS.

Euen so the clowdes, that is to saye the causes of my sorrow, 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 whē I had turnyd myne eyes and behelde her aduysedlye, 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 y^e heuenlye seat. Art thou come into these solitarye places of my exyle? Arte thou come to be accompted gyltye wyth me, of false accusacions? PHIL. O thou my chyld Boece, nourished vp by me, shuld 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 yf I shoulde, I shoulde quake for feare lest y^e 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 folyshenes or folye? and the same Plato, being a lyue, hys mayster Socrates vniustlye deserued vyctory of death, whyles that I stode by. The inherytaunce 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, euery man for hys part what he lustyd, of the doctrine of Socrates, to defend and maintayne their opinion therein. And when they would haue drawen me Phylosophye 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, had 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 famlyer scolers, and peruertryd and turnyd some men by the errorre 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 yf thou hast not knownen the banyshemēt of Anaxagoras, nor the poysonyng of Socrates, nor the tormentes of Zeno, because these things, be straunge, yet thou myghteste haue knownen 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, seemed unlyke to the techynge of the wycked, soo that there is no cause

Socrates was putte to deathe for hys wyse-dom, and yet he was no perfyt philosopher. The Epicuriens and Stoiciens toke the selues perfitte philosophers, when they had learned but a lyttle philosophy.

By the cloths is vnderstand wysedome.

The steppes of philosophye is wysedome.

Canios, Scenicas, and Soranos wer noble Romayns brought vp in wyse-dom, and by the vnlearned

that thou shouldest maruayle though we be tossyd in thy斯 vale
of miserye wyth aduersities on euerye syde, whose purpose is
chelye to dysplease wycked people, whose compayne (be they
neuer so great a multytude) is not to be regardyd, for it is
gouernyd by no wysedome or reason, but rauyshed folyshe
euerye where by wilful errour onelye, whych althoughe they
stand at any tyme agaynst vs stoute and strong reysyng batel,
that is to saye : although the wycked and folishe people stryue
agaynst the wyse, truelye oure captayne reson or wysedome,
gatherith together his company, that is to say : aboundaunce of
vertues into the towre of heauenlye knowledge, where as they
that be euill and folyshe be occupied in gatherynge vp lytell
fardelles of worldlie thynge much vnprofitable, and we that be
aboue, wyse in heuenly vertues, doo deryde and laughe at the
folyshe 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 folyshe and wycked folkes,
and defded with such a bulwarke of wysedome wherunto it
is not lawfull for the folyshe people that would assaute us, to
come.

for malyce of
theyr wyse-
dome wer put
to death.
Wise men that
beholdeth hea-
uenly thinges
folowing ver-
tue for hope of
good thynge
after this lyfe,
neuer felith
aduersitie of
temporall
thinges but
ouercommeth
y^e world, and
the vanities
thereof.

PHYLOS.

He that is vertuous and sober in hys 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 knownen aduersitie and prosperytie
indifferetly, and can kepe his mind so, that he neither rejoiose in
prosperitie nor be sad and sorye in aduersitie : the ragynge
floudes of the sea y^t 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 smokye flames
of fyre out of his chynes or cliftes, nor the brennyngge lyghtnyng
that is wonte to stryke vpon high towres, can moue that mā.
Therfore why do wretchyd men meruayle onely and fere cruell
tyrauntes that rageth without strēgthe of heuenly 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^e
losse of worldly thynge, or do wysshe for temporall goodes, is
not stedfast nor at lybertye, but hathe forsaken his buckeler of

Lechery is lik
the floud of y^e
sea, & boy-
linge of the
same, for it
rageth in de-
syre, and y^e
act thereof is
fylthy. Coue-
tise brenneth,
and ceaseth
not, as the
hill Vesenus.
Pryde is lyke
unto the light-
ening, for it
beareth the
mynde so high
as thoughe it
passed men of

the earth, and
yet it can not
reache y^e heue. defence and safegarde, and is remouyd from his place of secu-
ritie, and maketh a chayne whereby he may be drawen, that is
to say : makyth a snare of sorow 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 understand thē then an asse to play on the harpe ? Why
wepest ? Why shdest thou teres ? Tell me thy gryfe, hide it
not. If thou wylte haue helpe of the phisicion, it behoueth the
to shewe thy greife. BOEC. Then I takynge vnto my selfe a
good harte or mynde sayde. Doith not the crueltye 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^t I had in the countraye 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 vnto me
the course of the sterres with a Virge or rodde of geometry ?
When thou dyddest forme my maners and dysposition of lyfe to
y^e symylytude and lykenes of the heuenly order ? be not these
the rewardes due vnto them that folowe the ? Certes thou hast
confyrmyd thys sentence by y^e mouthe of Plato. Blessed is the
commenaltye that is ruled by wise mē, or if it happen that the
rulers of commennaltyes do studye wysedom. Thou haste
lykewyse confyrmed and sayde by the mouthe of the sayde
Plato, that it is necessarye that the commonaltye be gouernid
by wise men, lest that the gouernment thereof committed to
wycked and euyl cityzens, should hurte the good people. I there-
fore folowyng the same sayinge that I lernid of the, emongest
my secret and solitarye lesures, wysshed to practyse the same in
the administracion of the commenwelth. God and thou (whiche
haue instructe and taughte them y^t be wyse) be my wytnes, that
nothinge mouyd me for to beare rule but for the common welthes
sake, and for y^t cause I hadde verye greuous and contynuall
enmyte and hatred wyth wicked men : for my conscyence hath
suche libertye y^t I more louid the ministracion of iustice then I.

Libertie of
cōscience, is
to feare no mā
to do iustice.

regarded the anger of gret men. How often haue I wythstande the mā named Canygast, that stroue to hinder euery pore mannes welth? How often haue I tourned the man Tryguyll, prouost of the kynges house from the wrōges that he had begon to doo, and more that he purposed to do to pore mē? how often haue I defended poore men that were wrapped in infynyte miseries, by the couitousnes of cruel straungers vnponyshed, whereby I was in daunger to lose myne autoritye? There was neuer anye manne that coulde drawe me from iustyce to do wronge. When I sawe the goodes of the people of the prouynces spoyled or taken awaye, eyther by pruye robbery or by commō trybutes, I was as sory 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 prouynce 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 Kynge Theodoryke knowyng the same, so that I ouercame and caused y^t the order toke none effecte. Paulyn a noble counsayler of Rome (whose ryches the houndes of the Palace, that is to say, the kinges gredy offycers wold haue deuouryd by desyre and ambiciō) I delyuered and drewe out of theyr rauynynge gapynge mouthes. I dydde put my selfe in daunger of the malyce of the false accusar Ciprian the kyngs seruaunte, that the Payne of the accusation before adiudged shuld not wrongfullye punyshe Albyne a counsayloure of Rome. Have I not brought my selfe into troubles ynough? But I oughte to be moreset emongest other whom I haue profited then emongest y^e kings seruauntes whome I haue ben against alwaist for the loue of iustice, by whose accusacion (that is to say by the kinges seruauntes, my familyer felowes, that haue accusyd me) I am banished : of the whyche accusars Basilius was one, y^t sometyme was dryuen out of the kinges seruyce for hys malyce and wyckednes, and nowe broughte in agayne for to accuse me for nede of other mēs monye and reward. Opilion and Gaudēcius, (certes) were other two of my accusars, whyche when the kyng Theodoryke for theyr manyfolde deceytes & falsehed had banyshed, they would not obey hym, but refused and defendid thē by takynge sanctuarye, and when the kyng herd of it, he comaunded y^t except they departed and went awaye from y^e Citye of Rauenna within a certayne tyme appoynted, that they shoulde be marked on the

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

Triguyl was the kinges seruaunt a cōmō extorcioner.

The order was that in a dere yeare the kyngs barnes beyng full of corne, no man should by anye corne but of y^e kinge at a dere prycce, such as was appoynted by the king and his cruell officers.

Albyne was falsely iudged to be punyshed before he was accused, & foūd worthy punyshement.

forehed with a hote Irō & 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 deserued this? or hath my damp-
nacion or iudgement 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 perchaūce thou
woldest know the cause wheroft 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^e messenger and woulde not suffer hym to bryng hys
letters of accusation vnto the kyng, whereby the senatours shold
haue bene founde gyltye of treson commytted agaynst the
kynges royal maiestye. O mysters Phylosphy what thinke you
herein, shall I denye it, lest that I should shame the? Truelye
I do confesse that I haue desyred to sauе 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 iudicall, as thoughe it were not lawefull to desire
theyr helth. But foly that alwaye workyth her own destructiō
cannot chaūge the meryte of thynges. And I thynke by the
iudgement of Socrates that it is not lawefull for me to hyde the
truthe, nor to consent to lesynges. But how so euer it be, I re-
ferre it to thy iudgment, and to them that be wyse, to iudge, for
the truthe and order of thys thing cannot be hyd from our suc-
cessoures, 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-
lyueraunce of the Romaynes from the handes of the kyng
Theodoryke. The craft of wyche letters shoulde haue bene
knownen yf I myght haue ben present before mine accusors which
is a thyng most expedient and necessary in all causes of iudg-
ement, and what other fredom may mē loke for? Certes I woulde
there were some other thinge, I would then haue answered wyth
the wordes of one Canius, (which whē he was accused of one
Gaius, Cesars cosyn germayne sonne, that he was gylty of a

It was sur-
mised that
Boecius dyd
wryte letters
unto Thempe-
rour of Con-
stantinople
against kyng
Theodoryke,
to haue the
Romaynes de-
lyuered from
the Terannyne
of thee Kyng.

coniuracion or conspiracy made agaynst hym) the said Canius aunswered Gaius thus. If I had knownen it, thou shuldeste not haue knownen it, I would haue wrought so warelye. In whyche thinge before specyfyed that I am vniustelye accusyd of euyll men, sorowe hath not soo dulled my sensis or wytte, that I do only complayne that the wycked folke do goo aboute and inuente wycked thynges agaynste vertuous folke, but I do maruayle gretlye howe they can brynge to passe the thynges that they haue takē in hande. For to wyll to doo euyll and wycked thyngs perchaunce is through our owne faulte: 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 doo agaynst an innocent, wherof one of thy famlyers that is to say a Phylosopher demaunded iustly this question. Truelye he sayth if there be a god frō whence commeth euyll thynges? And yf there be no God, from whence cometh good thynges? But if it were lawefull, that wycked folke (that desyrethe the deathe of all good folke and of all the senate) wolde go aboute to distroye 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 shoulde wyll my distruption. Thou doest remēbre (as I thynke) when that I was aboute to saye or do any thynge, thou beinge present didist alwayes rule me. Thou remembrest (I saye) at the Cytte of Veron when the kynge Theodorike gredy and desyrous of commen destruction, and to distroy al the senate, went aboute to impute vnto all the hole order of senatours, the treason and gylte of hys royll Maiestye, wherof Albyne the senatoure 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 reioyseth for anye prayse to my selfe. For a man demynysheth in maner the secretes of hys conscience as often as he in praysynge hymselfe receiueth any renoume of hys dedes emongest men. But thou seyste what chaūce 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 confession of felonye had judges euer so accordyng in crueltye? but that eyther the errore of manes wit, or the chaunce of fortune (that is vncertain vnto al mortal men) hath turnyd some of the same judges to compassion and ptyte, sauynge in my

accusation. For althoughe I had bene accusyd that I sayde I woulde brenne churches, & strangle pristes with cruell swerde, and distroy all good folke, yet shulde not the iudge condempne me, excepte I were present and conuict of the offence vpon my confession therof: but I being absent the space of syue hundred myles in great study, and hauing no knowledge that I was accusyd of any gylte or felonye, was adiudged by y^e senate to deathe of prescription. O wel be they worthy prayse (it is spoken ironice that is to vnderstande they be euil worthy prayse) that for my kyndenes haue thus iudged me, none of the^ē 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 seene and do knowe. Whyche innocencye to hyde & couer with som faut, they haue surmysed that I haue herte and pollutyd my conscience with sacryledge, or Nygromancy, in doinge sacrifysse to deuyls for ambicion or desyre of dignitie. But certaintely thou Philozophy being in me, dyddest put awaye all desyre of mortal thynges from my mynd, so that there was no place left for sacryfyse 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 wouldest haue made me lyke vnto god by vnderstandinge. Furthermore my innocent wyfe of my howse, and a multitude of my honeste frendes, 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 malyce, 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 suffycyent that thy reuerēce 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 harmes 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

Prescripcion
is a iugement yt
a man shoulde
haue his name
stryken oute
of the table of
brasse in the
whiche the
names of noble
& famous men
were wont to
be wrytē for
a perpetuall
fame or me-
morye.

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 euyll 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 whyche cause it greueth me to remember what vnfittynge rumors and dyuerse sayinges be emongest the people of me. And this I dare be bolde to say, that the last bourden of euyll fortune is thys, that when my accusacion is imputed to wretched folke, it is thought that they haue deserued the same that they doo suffer. And certes I that am expulsyd from al good folke, spoyled of my dignities, and spotted in my estymacion by false accusacion, in stede of rewarde haue receyued ponyshment, me thynketh that I do se the wyckyd compayne of felonowes folke abounde in ioye and gladnes, and euery vnthryst lye in a wayte to accuse good folke with newe fraudes. And I do se the good people lye oppressed for fere of my peryll and ponysshement. And I do se euery vnthrifte person bolde to cōmyt synne, vpolygonsshed beyng procured thereto for money. Also I do se the Innocētes not onely with oute succur, but also without defence. Therfore I am forced to crye vnto god of heuyn in this maner.

O Thou maker of the fyrmamente that bereth the starres, that art ioyned to the eternall seat, Thou doist turne the firmamēt alwaies with swyfte mouyng, and makeste the starres to kepe a due course, so that y^e moone somtyme shynynge with her fulle lyght when she is in the full, set dyrectly euyn agaynst her brother the sonne, shyning with his beams obsureth and taketh away the lyght of the starres by reason of the great lyghte of the same. And lykewise thou causist y^t the moone other whyles pale of lyght approchynge nere vnto the sonne, doo lose her lyght. And thou causyste the euenyng sterre called Hesperus, that bryngeth in the colde in the begynnyng of the nyght, to change his olde course commynge agayne in the mornynge (at the son rysynge) very pale, and is then called Lucyfer. Thou makest the daye shorter in the wynter time when the hoare frosts be on the ground, that maketh the leaues of trees to fall, Thou deuydest and makest the nyghtes shorte in sommer season. Thy myghty powre hathe appoynted diuers partes of the yeare, so that

The further
the Moone
is from the son,
the more lyght
she geueth,
the nere the
sonne the lesse
lyght, as it
appereith in
the opposition
and coniunction
of them.
The steere
Hesperus fo-
loweth the
Sonne in the
euening and in
the morning
goeth before
the Son, and
is called
Lucifer.

There be four
partes of the
yere, Ver,
Somer, Aut
tunne and
Wynter.

the gentel wynde Zephyrus 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 sownen in
the tyme of the sterre named acturus, are become longe corne
and ripeth in the hote time of the sterre named Syrius in haruest.
Nothyng is free from the olde lawe or order of gods purueyance
or prouydēce nor leuith the worke of hys place appoynted. O
Lorde God thou gouernist all these foresayde things to a cer
tayne ende, whye refusyste thou to gourne mans actes or dedes
in due order? Why rulyste not slyppery fortune that causyth so
muche varyete or chaunge of thinges, she ponyssheth Innocentes
not giltie, with ponishment due for the wicked, and exalteth
hygh, men of wycked maners, whyche treade vnder 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 falshedde is not ponyshed.
But when the wycked persons (whome the moste parte of the
people do feare) lysteth to exercyse their powre, they reioyse to
subdue myghty kynges, that is to saye: good and wyse men.
O god what souer thou art that knyttest to gether the bondes of
things in due order, loke vpō wretched people dwellynge on the
earth that be not the vilest parte of thy worke, sore troubled with
the bytternes of fortune, withdrawe the greate assaultes thereof,
and knyt fast, or rule the good and stedefast men of the earth,
wyth lyke bondes as thou knyttest and rulyste the hyghe heuen,
that they be not tormentyd wyth fortune, that is neuer stedfast
but euer varyable.

Good & wyse
men oughte to
rule in a com
mon welthe &
not tyrautes &
wycked per
sons.

After that I had barckyd oute or rashly spoken these things
vnaduysedly my sorowe remaynynge stylly, Phylosophy with a
quyete countenaunce beyng nothyng moued or angrye 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
banyshed man, but howe farre of thou were exiled or banyshed I
knewe not but by thy owne sayinge. But yet thou art not
banyshed farre from thy countray, that is to saye, farre from thy
owne reason or iudgemente, but thou hast strayed out of the waye
or erred a litel. But if thou woldest rather accompt thy selfe
banyshed from thy countraye, then I saye thou rather haste
banished thy self. For certes to banishe the it was not lawful
for any man at any tyme, if thou remēbryste what countrye

He is exiled
out of his cou
trye that hath
lost hys wyte,
and is madde,
and he straieth
out of his cou
trye, that fo
loweth not re
son, and hathe
hys wytte.

thou were borne in. Whyche countreye is not rulyd by the gouernment of many, as the cytye of the Attheniens sometyme was gouerned. For of thy countrie is but one lord, one kyng, and one prynce, whych is almyghtye God, that more reioyseth at the quyete conuersation of manye Cytezens together, then of theyr exyle and banyshement. By whose precepts to be ruled, and to obeye hys iustye, is very hygh lybertye.

Hast thou forgotten the old lawe of thy Citie ? wherein it is establisshed for a law that who soeuer had determinyd 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 inward disposition of thy mynd. I do not requyre the walles of thy librari deckyd with Iuorye 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 esteemed. And Certes Boecius, thou hast sayd and declared the truth of thy dedes done for the common vtiltie 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 hast 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 forgyng 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 comē people that knew it. Thou hast much blamed the acte of the vniuste senate, and hathe lamented for my blame, and hou hast bewayled the losse of thy good name. Laste of all thou hast complayned vpon fortune, that rewardes be not equally distrybuted to men accordyng to their desertes. And in the ende of thy furyous meter, thou hast prayed that the same peace of the dyuyne purueyans 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 appereþ nowe: Therefor 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 growen vnto

an hard swellynge, by softe handelynge of lenytyue medycynes may be dissolved and made more apte to suffer the vyolence of stronger remedyes.

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, whē the fieldes sowndyng wyth the blusterynge cold wynd named Aquilo, bryngyth fourth no flowers at all. Nor let any man loke to gather grapes in the sprynge tyme called Ver, when al thinges do begyn fyrst to budde and grow. For the god of wyne called Bachus (after the faynyng of poetes) bryngethe forth his fruytes, that is to say: grapes rather in Autumpne, whych is the end of sommer. For God hathe appoynted the tymes of the year, and hathe directed them every one to hys proper offyce and hath so establyshed them, that he wyll not suffer them to be altred, y^t the tyme ordeined for one offyce, shall serue for a nother. The thing therfore that chaungethe hys due order, neuer hath good ende thereof.

PHIL.

O Boecius, before I geue the any medycine, tell me fyrst whether thou wylte suffer me to demaūd of the certayne quessytions 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 answer 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 puruiaunce? B. Truly I say y^t I neuer thought by any maner of means that suche certayne thynghes should be rulyd by the folyshe happye 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 euē 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 ordinaunce. But O, I do gretly wondre why thou art sycke for

so moch as thou art set in so good opinion. Neuertheles, let us serche deper : I do thynke that some thyng is yet amysse with the, but I cannot tell what it is. Saye to me Boecius (for as moch as thou doutiste 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 awnswere the to the same question. PHIL. I was not deceyued in that I sayd som thyng 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 knownen and haue answered, that God is the begynnyng of al thinges. PHIL. Then howe maye it be that (synce thou knowest the begynnyng of all thynges) thou knowest not the ende of the same? But such be the maners of troubles, and such be theyr strengthe that they maye cause a man to forgette partelye, but cannott 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? PHI. Canste thou tell than what thyng a man is? BOECI. Askiste me thys? 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 thyng? BOE. None other thyng. PHIL. Nowe knowe I another great cause of thy disease. Thou haste forgotten to knowe thy selfe, 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 selfe 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 thynkest that euyll men and wicked be myghtye and happye. And why so? because thou hast forgotten by what meanes the worlde is gouernyd. And thou thynkest that these mutaciōs and chaunces of fortune, dowanderwythout anye gouernoure. Whyche be the greate causes not onelye of syckenes, but also of vtter 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 gouernaūce in that thou beleuyst that it is not gouerned by the folishe chaunces of fortune, but subiect to goddes ordynaunce. Therfore feare not, for of this lytle sparke of truth, the lyuely heate shall reuyue & recouer his olde strength agayne. But forasmuche 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 opinions and errours, 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 medycynes. 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 truethe.

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 styrred 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 knoledge of the treuth, 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 thinges do reygne.

Here endeth the fyrste Booke.

THE SECOND BOKE.

BOECIUS.

AFTER this phylosophy held her peace a lytel whyle, and then she by a modeste styllnes perceyuing me, dylygent and intentyfe to heare her speake : said as folowethe. PHIL. Forasmuche as I haue knownen 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 beyng chaungyd as thou surmysest, hath chaunged and turnyd the disposition of thy mynde. I do wel know the manyfolde deceytes of the sayde fortune, for so long she vsyth hyr famylier flatterye, with them whom she intendethe to deceyue, vntyl she hathe ouerthrownen 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 remembraunce. For thou were wonte to re-rebuke wyth sharpe wordes the same fortune both beyng present and flatteryng, and thou didest argue or dispute agaynste her wyth sentences, drawen out of my doctryne or informaciō: But truly euery sodein mutacion or chaūge 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 pleasaunt thynge, 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-

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 straunge thinge. If thou dost thynke that fortune is turned agaynst the: thou art therin deceyued, for she is not chaunged, these were her maners alwayes, this is her proper nature, to be nowe prosperous and nowe contrarye. And she hathe rather kept her owne nature and constancy abouthe in this her mutabylite. Truelye she was alwaies such when she flattred the, & deceyued the, with the delite of false profyte. Thou hast knownen the doubtfull countenaunce of that blynde goddes fortune, which although she do hyde her selfe vnto some men, in promysyng them prosperyte: hath shewed her selfe many festlye and holye as she is to the, that is to saye: inconstaūt. If thou allow her: vse her maners, and cōplain not. If thou feare her falsehed: 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 quyvetnes and reste. But certes she hath forsaken the, as she hath done other. For neuer man yet was sure of her. Accomptest thou that thynge 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 mornynge? Therfore syns that fortune can not be retayned as a man wolde haue her, and when she departeth she maketh men carefull, what other thynge is slipperye fortune but a certain token of wretchednes to come? And it is not sufficiente to beholde the thinge presente, but it is wysedome to consyder the ende of all thynges, & the chaungyng from one thynge to another, maketh that the threatnynges of fortune are not to be fearid, nor her flatterynges to be desyryd. Moreouer thou oughtest to suffer paciently all thinges y¹ 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

for thy lady : thynkest thou not that thou doeste her wronge therein ? And that by thy impacyence thou makest her wrouth and angrye ? Whom thou canste not chaunge other wyse then she list her selfe. If thou commytte the sayles of thy shypes, 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 scarse or baren, so that it is not in thy powre, to order & rule the yeare as thou lystethe. Lyke wyse thou haste submytted thy selfe to fortunes gouernaunce, therfore it behoueth the to obeye the maners of her beyng thy lady and mystres. Certes thou laborest to staye her tournynge whele. O, thou sole of al foles mortall, if fortune begā to be stedefaste and not mutable, she myght not be called fortune.

PHYL.

When y^t fortune with her prouderyght hande, causyth mutatyon aswel of aduersytie as of prosperytie. And when she is caryed aboue as the boylyng floud named eurype. Then she beyng cruell deposyth kynges, that sometyme were fearefull to other : & exalteth the pore & simple, that were subdued and ouercome. 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 strēgth. She sheweth a great bost or fayre face to her seruantes that gapeth for worldlye thinges, when a man is sene ouerthrownen and exaltdyng in one howre. These be the wonderous workes of fortune, when a man shalbe vp and doun in a shorte tyme, that is now in auctorytie and nowe not estemed or abiecte.

Euripe is a
flode of the sea
that floweth
dyuersly some
time this way
and anon, that
that way clen
contrary.

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 thynge, 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 clayme 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 receyued the all naked, without any thyng, and cherisshed the with myne owne goodes, and was redye to norishe the more mekely of mine owne gentlenes, & I endued the with aboundaunce, & with the beaute of all thinge y^t I had, which thinges 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 thyne. Thou hast no iust cause to complaine as though thou haddest loste thy goodes vtterly. Therfore why mournyst thou? I haue done the no wronge. Ryches, Honour, and suche lyke, be myne owne, and they beyng my seruautes, do knowe me for their ladye and mystres, they do come wyth me, and do go awaye wthy me. I dare boldlye 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 lawefull for the yere 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 ragine, with floudes and stormes. Shoulde the insaciate couetuusnes 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 whele rounde aboute, that neuer cessith. I do reioise to chañg low thynges, that is to say: Aduersitie, with high things, y^t is to sai, prosperytie. Clyme upon my whele if thou wilt but upon this conditiō, that thou shalte 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 fyre 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 kynge of Persyens, whom he had taken prysoner and captyue.

What other thynge causyth the exclamacion, and lamentacion of tragedies? 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 younge man) that there laye in the entrye at Jupyters house two tunnes of wyne, the one full of good wine, thother ful of euil wine, of the whyche euery man (that entred) must nedes tast? What cause hast thou to complayne, if thou hast taken more parte of the good (that is to say) of prosperite then of aduersite? And what and I amnot clene gone frō the? What and my vnstedefastnes 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.

Tragedie is a wryting bla-mynge vyses, whiche do begyn with prosperytie & ende with myserie.

Jupiters house is the worlde the two tunnes of wyne, betokeneth prosperite and aduersitie, whereof all y' lyue in y^e worlde muste neades tast.

FORTUNE SPEAKETH.

If that Fortune (whom the gentils do call the goddes of plenty) woulde geue wyth a full horne, that is to sai abundauntlye, as much ryches as the water of the sea turnyth vppe grauell, when it is tossed and mouid with the ragynge wyndes. And would geue asmuche Ryches as there be starres, shynynge in the firmamēt in a clere bright nyght, when the sterres do appere and shyne. And woulde neuer wynthdrawe her hands, but powre downe and geue ryches continuallye: yet for al that mākynde would not cesse wepynge and cōplayning. And although that god, that is so ryche of gold, would 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 thē, as they had gotten nothinge. Suche is their insaciate couetus, deuouring that, y^t they haue gottē and euer gapyng, redy to receyue more and more. Therefore, what brydel can holde to any stedefast endc, the gredye couytuousnes of men? when 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

The ful horne is a fable sygnyfyeng plentie, or prosperite. For Harcules wrastlyng with Achileus (whiche was transformed into a bul) tooke hym by the horne and brake it and filled it full of apples and swete flowers, and dyd sacryfyc therwith too fortune, and so when it is ful, it is taken for prosperite, and whē it is emptie it is taken for aduersitie.

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 hyrselue after thys maner before sayde, Certes thou haddest nothinge to answeare 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 thynge that fortune hath sayde be goodly, and made swete with the pleasure of Rhetorike and musike, and then onely they delyghte 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 medycyns 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 prosperiteye? I do passe ouer, and nede not shew howe that the noble men of the Cytie of Rome, whyche were Consulles, toke charge of the, beynge an orphan withoute father and mother, and that thou were chosen and elect into the affnite of Princes of y^e Cytie. And thou begannyst rather to be dere and welbeloued, then a neyghboure, 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 besydes this (I am disposed to passe ouer commen thynge) I doo not speake of the dygnityes that thou haddest in thy youth, whych are denied 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 aboundinge or hepe of thy

prosperities. So that if any fruit of worldly and trāsitorye thinges, myght be accountyd felycytye, 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 assēble 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 prayssynges, dyddyst deserue glory of wytte and eloquence, when that thou (syttynge in the middes of thy two sonnes beyng consules) diddyst satysfye and please the expectatyon of the multytude of the people that was abouthe the, wyth tryumphante laude and prayse of vyctorye?

Thou then (as I thynke) diddest 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 pryuete 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 thyselfe therfore vnhappye, by cause those thinges be gone that semyd happye & good: yet thou oughteste not to esteme thy selfe a wretche or an abiecte. For the thinges that nowe semē vnhappye and sorowfull, do passe awaye. Arte thou the fyrst that art be com a sodeine geste into the shadowe of thys lyfe, or thynkest y^u that ther is any certayntie or stedfastnes in worldelye thynges? When y^t the swyft hour of deth taketh awaye the same man, that is to saye Mans lyfe? For althoughe there is seldom any hope that the goddys 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.

PHIL.

When the sonne begynnythe to send or geue forthe hys lyghte, with his bryght glysteryng red charetes, then the bryghte daye sterre, beyng obscuryd, dymmed, or dullyd in her beautie and countenaunce, becommeth pale and wan, & loseth her cleare lyght, by the greate bryghtenes of the sonne. And when the woode waxethe freshe, gaye, and redde with rosye or redde flowers, in the fyrist sommer season, with the blowyng of the warme wynde named Zephirus: If the cloudaye wynde named Auster do begynne to blowe boysteouslye and roughelye: then the beautie of the freshe flowers do clene vanysh 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 manyfest and establyshed by gods law, perdurable, that nothyng gotten or engendred, is alwayes stedefaste and stable.

BOE.

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

PHIL. But what though y^t thou sufferest ponishmēt of false opinion, thou mayste not impute the same to the lacke of thynges, as though thou haddest nothyng. For thou hast many thynges lefte yet. For yf the vaine name of causall prosperetye, 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^e by gods grace vnspotted and inuyolate, mayst thou

ryghtfullye complayne vpon the myschaunce of fortune, hauynge stylly 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 wouldest be redye to ieopard thy lyfe if nede were, he beyng a man fautles, is sorye for thy iniurys.

Thy wyfe also lyueth, both sober of wytte, and excellent in clenys of chastite, and shortely to conclude all her vertues, she is lyke her father Symachus. She lyueth, I saye, to the, and she beyng wary of her lyfe, kepyth her lyfe for thy sake, being ouercome with wepynge, and sorowe, for lacke of the. In the whyche one thyng I must nedes graūt that thy felicitie is mynyshed.

What shall I saye of thy two sonnes beyng Consulles, in whom there shynyth the wysedome of theyr father, and of theyr graundefather, as muche as is possyble to be in chylders of theyr age, but yet the cheyfe cure of al men lyuyng is to conserue theyr owne lyfes. O thou man yf thou remember thy selfe, the goodes that thou hast yet remaynynge, do make the happye. Whyche goodes, no man douthtyth, but that they be derer and more to be estemyd, then thy owne lyfe. Therefore nowe wype thy eyes and wepe no more, for fortune is not all agaynst 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 soever thynges be, or howsoever 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^e best goods stylly. But I maye not suffer thy delyces or tendernes, 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 pleaseyd wyth some parte of hys estate or degré? 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 stylly wyth him. For

although one man hath abounding and plentye of monye, yet he lackyth another thynge that is to saye, he is ashamed of his ignobility, that he is no gentylman borne. And another man is well knownen for a gentyll man, but yet he is so nedye & poore that he had leuer be vnownken of his gentyles bloude. Another hathe both abounding of goodes, and is noble, and yet he bewaylethe hys chaste lyfe, that he may not marye a wyfe. Another is happily maried and hathe no chyldren, and gathereth treasure for a straunge heyre. Another is happye wyth chyldren, but he beyng sorowful for the synnes and offences of hys sonne or doughter, wepyth. Therfore no man (for the most parte) is contentyd wyth hys estate or degré of fortune. For euerye man hath some thinge, that (being not prouyd) he knoweth not, or beyng prouyd, he ferythe. And adde thereto that euerye welthye man hath such delycate felynge, that (except he hath all thynges at his commaundement) he is so impacient in aduersitie, that he is ouerthrownen, and dysplesyd wyth euery lytel thynge. And very small things they be in aduersytie, that draweth awaye the cheyfe perfection of prosperite from them that be mooste fortunate. How many men (thinkest thou) wolde thynke them selfe nexte vnto heauen, y^t is to saye: welthy, yf that they myghte 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 abiect, but he that iudgeth hymself so. And contrary wyse, all fortune is good to hym that is contēted. What man is he that is so welthy, but wold wishe to chaūge his estate, when he is not contēted therwithall? How moch bytternes 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.

There be two
maners of filycie
the one is
a quyet mynde
in this lyfe na-
turall, & the
same is vnprefyte,
the other
is in the lyfe
euerlastynge,
and the same
is perfyte.

Therfore, it appereth howe wretched is the prosperite of mortall thynges, which do not alwayes contynue with theym 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 thynge more precious to the, then thyne owne selfe.

Thou wylt awnswere & say naye. Then yf that thie mynde

be quyet and hoole, thou shalt possesse the thyngē that thou woldest not lese at any tyme, nor fortune can take it from the. And to thentent that thou mayst knowe, that felicitie can not stand in fortunes thinges, or worldly things, y^u maist thus gather and vnderstand therof. If that felicitie be the souereygne bountie or goodnes of nature, lyuyng by reason, truly that can not be souerayne good, that maye be taken awaye by any meanes : but that thyngē is more excellent, that can not be taken awaye. Than it is playne that vnstedfastnes of fortune maye not attayne to receyue beatytude, that is to say : perfyte felicitie.

More ouer, that man, that this tomblynge or rollynge vnperfytē felicitie, or goodnes, caryeth aboue, 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 ignorāūce ? And if he knoweth that it is mutable, then he oughte to feare y^t he loose not that thyngē that he dowlēt̄h 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 esteme it, thē is it of smale valour that a man can take in good worthe, whē it is lost. And for bycause I know, that thou thy selfe art the man, to whō 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 worldlye thynges, make men blessed, whiche when it is paste & ended, can not make theym wretched.

Whosoeuer is wyse and stedefast, and would appoyn̄t hymselfe a firme and suer sete or house that wyll not be ouerthrownen wyth the troblous blastes of the winde named Euras, and careth howe to auoyde the sea threatnyng with his floudes. Let hym

The toppe of
the hyll, sygni-
fyeth prospe-
rytie.
The fell wynde
Auster sygny-

syeth enuy,
and the power
of Noble men
that assaute th
hygh prospe
rite. The
moyst grauell
of sande, syg
nyfeth pouer
tie whiche can
not safre the
slyding wayte
that is to saye,
indygencie, &
nede of thinges
necessarie.

The lowe
rocke signifi
eth the meane
lyfe.

forsake and not buylde vpon the toppe of an high hyll nor vpon
the moyst grauell or sandes. For the fell wynde named Auster
troubleth the hyll top. And the moist grauell or sand will beare
no slydyng wayghte. Therefore yf thou wylte fle and auoyde
the perylous chaūces of pleasaunt dwellyng: Remember cer
tainely to fasten & buylde thy house vpon a low rocke. For
then althoughe the wynde beinge troubelsome wythe his ouer
tourning blastes troubleth the sea, thou beinge happye and
quyetly set in a lowe vallye of suertye and defence shalt leade
a clere lyfe, caryng nothing for the furious ayer or wynde.

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

PHIL.

But forasmuche as the medycynes, of my resonis aforesayd, do
begyn to enter into the, I do now thynke it tyme to vse more
stronger medycins that is to say: stronger reasons. Come of
and harken vnto me. If that y^e gifts of fortune were not brytell,
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 precyous? or by the that vsyst
them? whether is y^e more precious of these, y^t is to say riches
golde, or a great hepe of monye gathered together? Certes,
ryches shynethe more and causeth more prayse to be geuen vnto
men in dystrubutinge, then in horedynge vp and keping of y^e
same. For the couitousnes of them that kepe it: causeth them
to be hated, and the liberalitie of them that do dystribute it,
maketh them renomyd and to haue an honest reporte. If the
thing that is conveyed and delyuered from one to another, maye
not remayne stylly with any manne? Then is moneye a precyous
thyng, when it is conveyed from one to another by the vse of
gyfte, and cessyth to be kepte stylly 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 shoulde haue nede ther of. Also one hole voyce sylleth at one tyme the eares of muche 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 nedys ryches, whych many men cannot haue al hole together to them selfe: And commethe to no man without impoueryshyng other. Do the shynynge 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 shynynge, it is the clerenes and beautie of the stones & not of mens eyes. Wherfore I doo maruayle greatlye at men, that they shoulde so wonder at theym, and desyre to haue them. What thyng is there that (wantynge mouynge of the soule and ioynynge of membres of the bodye to gyther as these stones doo want) semyth goodly to a lyuing & reasonable creature. Whiche precious stones (albeit that they gather vnto thē selfe 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 beyng subiecte and put vnder mans dignitie or gouernaūce. Do not ȳ 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? Darest thou reioyce, and glory in the shynynge of any of theym? Arte thou decked with the flowers of Veer which is the sprynge time, when somer fyrst begynneth? Do thy plentuousnes, increase by sommer fruytes? What, art thou rauysshed with vayne ioyes? what, dost thou embrase straūge goodes for thyne owne? Fortune can neuer make the same goodes thyne, y^e the nature of thynges hath made none of thyne, or estrange to the. As the fruites of the earth, ought to be y^e foode of beastes, and not thyne. But yf thou wylt gyue nature that she nedeth, and replenish her to ȳ ful, then is it no nede for the to seke

for the abundaūce of fortune, for nature is contentyd with verye lytle thynges. And yf thou wylte choke nature wyth to muche, eyther y^t thou geuyst wilbe vnplesaunt, or hurtfull unto the. Thynkyst thou thy selfe goodly or more to be estemed for thy gay apparell? Of the whych yf the beattie thereof be fresh and pleasaūt to behold: I woulde rather maruayle at the substaunce therof, or the craft of the workman that made it, then at the. Do a longe rowe of seruauntes goyng 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 vehemēt greuous bourden to the, beyng 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: wherfore 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 bycause they semyd precyous vnto the, therefore thou haddyst leuer accompte them for thy owne ryches. But what thynge desyrest thou with so greate exclamatyon of fortune.

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

And trewe it is that many thinges they haue nede of, that haue muche. And contrarye wyse they haue lytell nede, that mesuryth theyr aboundsaunce and desyre with necessitie of nature, and not with theyr insaciate couitouslynes, that is to saye, that couetythe no more but that is cōuenient 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 condycion of thynges be so chaungid that mā 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 thē, you creaturs that be lyke vnto god by your reason or soul: do seke ſt̄ beauty of your excellent nature, in the lowist or meanist things that is to saye: in worldelye goodes, as though that they were better thē your reason, that is moſte bewtyfull, 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 thynge, but you doo thruste downe your dignytye emongest al low thynges, estemyng them more then your ſelfe.

For yf euery good thynge, is more precyous then the thynge that is owner therof, when that you do iudge the vyleſt thyngeſ (as worldly goodes) to be your goodes, thē do you ſubmyttere your ſelues vnder them. Which certes happethe not withoute a cauſe, for ſuche is thee naturall condycion of man, that then onely he excelleth all other thynges, when he knoweth hymſelfe, and when he knoweth not hymſelfe, then he is taken amoungte beaſtes, as a beaſte.

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 mankynde, howe great is thiſ thy errour, 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 hymſelfe: thē be those things Praised and not he. For the thynge that is hydde and coueryd with the ſame shynynge things, remainyth ſtſyll in hys fylthyneſ. And I denye that the thinge is good, that hurtyth hym that hath it. Doo I make a lye or ſaye otherwyſe than I thynke? Thou wylte ſay naye. Certes, ryches hath often tymes hurt them that had it forasmuche as euerye wycked man is more gredye and desyrous of other mēs 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 tēporal riches now, thou feryst the ſharp ſpeare and ſworde, where as if thou haddeſt entred and walkyd in the way or path of thys lyfe, as a wayefarynge manne pore and without monye: thou mayſte ſyng before the theſe without feare of robbing and without herte of ſpere & ſwerde. O precious felicitie of Ryches temporal,

This is spoken
Ironice, that
is to ſaye,
there is no felici-
tie in riches.

which whan thou hast gotten it, thou canst not be sure thercof & kepe it.

There he .ivii.
ages of the
worlde, after
the cōmon say-
enge of the
Poetes. The
fyrste was of
gold whē men
were symple,
good, and con-
tent with a
lytle. The se-
cond was syl-
uer when men
beganne to be
sōtell and in-
uentife, of tyl-
lage of howses,
and planted
vneyardes.
The thyrde,
was of brasse
whē mē began
to be angrie,
& to hepe
vp to the selfe,
and to exclude
others. And
yē fourth is of
yron, when all
malyce and
coueytousnes
raygneth, and
neyther sayth,
nor charytie.

Ethna is an
hyll in the sea,
that enuer bren-
neth most fer-
vently, and
nener cesseth,
nor wasteth,
or dymynissh-
eth.

The first age of mā was much happye that was contented with such as ſ fields brought forth without labor of man, and was not hurte wyth great excesse of metes & drynkes, they were wont to satysfyte theyr long hunger wyth lytell acorns of the oke, that is to say, they sought not for deynetye meates, and knewe howe 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 colour wyth the bloude of shell fyfhes of Tyre, a countrey where there be manye suche fyfhes, but were contentyd wyth such colors as the shepe did bere. They could then be contentyd to take holesom slepes vpon 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 curyous howses. Then had no straunger or merchaunt sailed on the seas with ship nor sene straunge costes to cōuey their merchaundise to diuers countries and places. Thē ſ̄ cruel trompets of warre made no noyse to cal men to battel, nor shedyng of bloud with mortal hate had imbrewid the fearefull armour, that is to say: then was there no warre. What crewell enemye would fyrst moue war 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 feruently 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 dygged 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 shoulde happen vnto any wycked man they do as much hurte as the brenning

hyll Ethna with all his flames of fyer, brastyng out of the same. And no deluge or flode that drownyth the countries doth so much annoiauce. Truly I thynke y^u haff not forgotten that youre forefathers the Romaines dyd couet to put downe the rule and auctoritie of Consuls for theyr pryme, which rule of Consules was the begynnnyng of their lybertye, whyche foresayd Romaynes before that, dyd put awaye from the cytye the name of kynges, for the lyke pryme.

But certes yf power and dignytye be geuen vnto good folkes (as it seldome happeth) what goodnes is in dignytye and power, but onelye the goodnes of them that vse them. Soo it commeth to passe that honor commeth not to vertu by dignytyes but it cometh to dignitie by vertue of them that vse the dignitie. But what is that same your noble powr that ye so much desyre and loke for? Doo you not consyder the ertly bestes ouer whome you seme to haue premynence? If thou sawest a mouse emongest other myse chalēgging 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 onelye vnto the bodey. For yf 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, oftentimes kylleth. Certes howe may a mā execute Iustyce vpon another, but vpon hys bodey, or vpon fortune, that is to saye: vpon hys goodes and possessyon.

Mayst thou at anye tyme rule or commaunde a fre thought? Mayst thou remoue the mynde or thought that cleuyth to it selfe, by good reason, from the state of her owne quyetnes? When a certayne Tyrant thought once to cōpell with ponyshment and tormentes, a certayne fre man called a philosopher to accuse other men of confederacye of treason had & moued agaynst the saide Tyraunt: the sayd philosopher did bite of his owne toungue, and did cast it into the face of the cruelly tyraunt. Soo that the tormentes that the cruelly 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

Ignoraut folke,
do judge after
their owne
affection, or
desyre, and
not accord-
yng to the
trueth.

There be two
maners of dig-
nityes, &
power, one
consysteth in
thynges tem-
poral, wherin
is no felycicie,
for they be
transitorye.
The other, is
spyrtyuall,
whiche stand-
eth in lern-
yng, & vertu,
y^t cannot
be ouercom w^t
vyce, adul-
terie, or pros-
pertye, &
therin is
fylsytie.

Honour is not
dewe to any
person for his
dignytie, but
for his vertue.

The mynde or
thought of mā
is fre, frō mās
iudgemente,
& ponysh-
ment.

The wyse mā
is neuer ouer-
come with
ponysshement.

he was lykewyse kylled of Hercules, beinge then his geste. Regulus, a noble consull (whiche had cast into bandes, or chaines many prysoneſ that he had takē in the batteyle of the Cartthagynens) was at the laste taken hym ſelue, and his handes boūde in chaynes, by theym that he hadde taken before tyme, of the Cartagyens. Thynkeſt thou, that he is myghtye, that can do no thyng to another, but ſuch as he may do the like to him? Moreouer, yf there were any naturall or good thyngē in dygnytie and power, they wolde neuer come to wycked, and euyll folke. For thyngē contraryous, be not wonte to agre, & associate theymſelue togyther. And nature dysdayneth that contrary thyngē, be ioyned or copled togyther.

Dygnytes
power aucto-
rytie ryches
nor any goods
of fortune or
temporall, be
good of theym-
ſelf, but by the
that do vſe the
well, and that
is properly
good wherof
no euyll en-
ſueth but re-
ſysteth euyll,
as a good man
wyll do no
euyll, a stronge
man is not
weke & a
ſwyfie man is
ſwyft.

Ryches power
auctorytie &
all the goodes
of fortune, be
wrong named
for richessaint-
eth not couey-
tousnes, power
can not rule
itſelfe, nor dig-
nytie maketh
a man digne
or worthy, nor
honoure mak-
eth a man
honorable.
But vertue
maketh a man
worthy and
honorable.

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 ſelue, by their owne nature, syns they be contented, to contynew with wycked folke.

Whiche thyng, I may moſt worthely iudge by the ſame dygnytie, and power of all the giftes of fortune, that doo chaunge moſte abundauntlye, to many wycked and shrewed folke. Of the which gooddes of fortune, one thyngē I thynke oughte also to be conſideryd, that no man dowtyth 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 muſicians, physyke phisicions and rethoryke makyth retricyons. For euery natural thing workyth his owne propertie, & is not mingled with any effects contrary to the ſame, but of it ſelue putthy awaye and reſysteth thyngē contraryous to it ſelue. And Ryches cannot satysfy the Ragyng aueryſe and couitousnes of men, nor power or dignytie contentyth or ruleth a myghtye man, whome inordynate ambition or desire of much honor holdyth boūd in stronge chaynes. And dygnyties geuen vnto wycked folke, do not make them worthy, but ſhewethe and declareth them rather vnworthy. And whye ſoo? For you men do reioyſe in thyngē that appere otherwyſe then they be indeſte, ye geue and attribute to them wronge names, that be eaſily repreuid by their effect and dedes. So that Riches ought not be called ryghtfully riches, nor power called iuſtly power, nor dygnitie well called dignite. For nether of the ſame cause any man to be contentyd, but euer desyrouſ of more the like thinges. And fynally I maye lyke wyſe ſay of all the gyſtes 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 knowē what hurte kynge Nero dyd in his tyme, he brennid y^e noble Citie of Rome, he slewe all the fathers the counsalors and senators, he in his wodenes, slewe his owne brother. He imbrewed or bathed hym selfe in his mothers bloude whome he kylled. He beholdyng evry 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 as a huge, her goodlye dead corpus. Yet he rulyd wyth his scepter royall, all the people, whome the Sonne dydde shine vpon, or geue lyght vnto, from the fartheste 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. vii. cold sters do oppresse with colde, that is to saye: all the Northe. And he lykewyse rulyd all them that the wynde called Nothus beyng vyonent, dryeth with his heate brolynge 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 chaūce as often as a wycked swerde or power is ioyned to crewell madnes, that is to saye wycked crueltye ioyned with auctoritye.

Nero brenned the Cytie of Rome to lerne therby, howe the Cytie of Troy brēned. He killed his brother to thē tent he hym selfe myghte raygne, without any doubt of hym, he kyllid his mother and ripped her belye, to se the place wherin he was conceyued and laye.

The malice or goodnes of a man is best shewed when a man is in aucthorystie.

BOECIUS.

Then I saye O Phylosophy, thou knowest that the desyre of mortall and transitorye thynges, 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 forgottē 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 renowme

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 learnyd by the demonstra-
tions of astronomy, that all the circuite or compasse of the earthe
is by reason, as a pricke or lytle tytle in respect to the compasse
of heuē that is to say : of the syrmament. Or yf all the earth
wer compared to the gretnes of the celestiall globe or compasse,
it should be iudged as nothyng in respecte thereeof. Of the
whyche earthe or worlde being so lytell a thynge, scarse the
fourth parte thereof is inhabyted, of lyuyng creatures that we do
know, as thou haste learned of Ptolome that prouyth the same.
And if thou haddyst abatyd in thy mynde from thys forthe part,
howe muche the seas and marshe groundes do contayne, and
lykewyse y^e quantitie of the dry wast grounds, the woodes,
desertes and sands : then shuld there remayne scarsly a very
little place for men to inhabyte in. Therefore you mē being
inuironed or compassed within the lest part of the sayd prycce
or tytle, of the erth, do you thinke that your fame or renowne 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 maners
and of sondry reason of lyuyng doo inhabyte and dwell in thys
lytell compasse 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 marchaūdise. For in the time of Marcus
Tullius (as he hymselfe in a certayne Booke dothe wryte) the
fame and renoune of the cōmen welth of Rome had not passed
or come than vnto the hyll named Cacarus, and yet was Rome
an olde Cytte and fearyd of the parthiens & of other inhaby-
tyng there aboue. Seyst thou not nowe in howe narrowe and
lytell romyth is the glory and fame brought that thou goyst
aboue 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 cytte of Rome, coulde not
come ? And what sayest thou to thys, that the maners and lawes
of dyuers people do not accorde emonge them selfe, so that the
same thynge that some do prayse, other do dispraise and iudg
worthy of ponyshīmet, whereby it commeth to passe that yf any

The Sirians
do take it for
a prayse, to
eat theyr
parētes, when
they be dead,
rather then
wormes
should. 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 euerye manne therefore be contented to haue an honeste prayse and reporte emongest hys neyghboures. And lette the sayde immortall fame and glorye shute vp close within the bondes of people of one nation where thou dwellest.

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 mēs fame and glorye do sumwhat profytte, 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 thynke to get vnto your selfe an immortall and perdurable name when you do thynke vpon the fame to come, or that youre fame shall endure alwayes 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 continuaunces of thy fame? For if one momēt 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 noumber of yeares, and as manye more, howe manye soeuer 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 selfe. But noo comparyson coulde euer be made of thynges that haue no ende, to thynges, that haue an ende. And soo it happeth, though that fame be never so longe of tyme as thou canst thynke, yf thou compare it with the tyme euerlastynge, it semeth not onely verye lytell, but also none at all. But you thincke that you know nothyng well done, or that you can do nothyng 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 sayinges, and leue clerely 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
he is .lx. yeaeres
olde and bren
hym.

pacientlye all wronges done vnto hym. The man that named hymselfe a phylosopher, suffered and tooke pacyence a lytell whyle, and after he had receyued rebukes of the tyraunte, he at the last struying and impacyent, sayde vnto the tyraunt: knowst thou not that I am a phylosopher? Then the tyraunte answered and sayde roughlye: 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 glorye 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 oure reason denyeth to beleue) then is there no glorye at al, when there is no man to whome glorye is sayde to belonge. And if the soule (hauynge knowledge of it selfe and delyuered from the person of the earthly body and beyng also fre) goeth to heuē. Do it not dyspyse all erthly thinges, and beyng in heuen, dothe shee not reioyse that she is seperate from all worldelye busynes, that is to saye: caryth nether for glory, renoune, riches, power, dygnytie nor aucthorytie of thys worlde.

PHILOSOPHI.

Who so euer with hasty thought, desyreth only glory, and renoune, and beleueth that it is y^e cheyfest thynge, that can be desyred. Let hym beholde the partes of heauen or fyrment, both large and open, or apparāt, and lykewyse the small and narrowe compasse of the earth, and compare them together, and then he shalbe asshamed, of his gloriye, 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 tongues.

Fabricius was
a noble con-
sull, of Rome,
and so fayth-
full, that beyng
a Captayne
agaynst Kyng
Pyrus,
neyther golde,
nor syluer,
could corrupt
him, to be

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 noughe by such hygh gloriye 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? what is become of Brutus, and of wyse Cato? A lytell and smale fame of them yet remaynyng declarereth their vayne name in a fewe letters. And although we haue knownen 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 therfore as men vnknoen when you be dede, and your fame doth not make you to be knownen. If that you do thynke 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.

false to Rome.
Brutus, was a
famous con-
sull of Rome,
which did
many thinges
for libertie
and iustice,
for y^e shame
done to
Lucretia.
And he fought
manny bat-
tayles for y^e
Romaynes.
Cato, was a
wyse and
virtuous man.
There be
here noted
two deathes,
one of the
body, another
of worldly
fame, which
dyeth with the
body, therfore
it is not to be
desyred, but
verteue neuer
dyeth.

A mans frend
is knownen
best, in aduersytie,
and not
in prosperitie.

PHYLOSOPHY.

But that thou shalte not thynke y^t I wyll hold cruell battaile against fortune. Thou shalte vnderstande that the same false and sotyll fortune sometyme deseruyth some goodnes at mens handes, at such tyme as she do openly shewe her selfe and vncouer her face, by shewyng her falsehed or aduersitie, and declarereth 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 scarse expresse the sentece with my wordes. For I do thynke that euyl fortune do more profytte men then good fortune. For when she semethe good and gentyll with prosperitie and welth the she lyeth falsely.

But euyll fortune is alwayes trewe, when she sheweth her selfe mutable by her vnstedfastnes. Good fortune deceyueth, and euill fortune teachyth. Good fortune byndeth wyth the beawtye of her goodes the harteres or thoughtes of them that hath them. Euyll fortune vnyndeth mens harteres and thoughtes by knowlege of her frayle felycicie. And thou seist good fortune proude prodigall and not knoinge herselfe, Euyll fortune is sober meke and wise, by exercise of her aduersitie. Furthermore good fortune wyth her flatterynge drawethe men that be wauerynge, from felycicie or perfytte good whych is god. Euyll fortune for the most parte brygethe men agayne to perfyt felycicie, draweth them as yt were with a hoke. Doeste thou esteme this for a smale thynge? that this sharp and euyll fortune, hath shewed vnto y^e very myndes and thoughts of thy faithfull frendes? The sayde euyll fortune hath dyscouered vnto the both the open playne and doutefull countenaunce of thy felowes. Good fortune going

Good fortune
maketh a man
forgette bothe
God, and
hymselfe, by
reason of pros-
peritie.
Euyl fortune,
maketh a man
to know both
God, and
hymselfe, by
aduersytie,
and so to come
to vertue and
dyspise the
worlde.

from the, toke awaye her owne frends, and left the thyne owne frendes, and none of hers. When thou were in prosperite and ryche as thou thoughteste thy selfe to be, what woldyste thou haue geuen to haue knownen this thynge all hole together, that is to saye: thy frend from thy foe? Cesse thou nowe therefore to complayne for the losse of thy worldely ryches, sincē thou hast found thy trewe frendes whych 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 þe due seasons of the yere to come successyuely accordyng to their nature.

The seedes be
the Elementēts,
of whom all
naturall
thynges do
come, as all
herbes do
come of sedes,
and al bodyes
mixed, do
come of the
Elementes.

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 þe sonne in hys bryghte golden chariote, bryngeth forth the clere freshe daye. And that the mone gourerne the nyght that the sterre Hesperus, called the euening 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 thys dyuine or godly loue shuld slacke the brydell, that is to saye: shuld take no cure to gourerne, whatsoeuer thynge now louyth together, and agreith, would be at contynual varyance and dyscorde, and would striue to dystroye and lose the engyn of þe world that kepyth them in mutuall amite, in their goodlye ordynate mouinges.

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

Here endeth the second boke.

THE THIRDE BOKE.

BOECIUS.

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 conforte of werye myndes,
howe much haste thou cheryshed me with the grauitie of thy
sentences, and with the pleasauntenes of thysyngynge. 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 stylly
makynge no noyse and herkenyng, receyuydest my wordes. And
that I had expected or reuocate 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 re-
ceyued inwardly: they taste swetely. But for by cause thou
sayest thou art so desyrous to here them, Oh howe muche
woudyste thou brene with desyre, yf thou knewest whether I
wold lede the.

BOE: I saye, whyther woudyste thou leade me. PHIL: To
the trewe felicitie, 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 felicitie.

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 felyctie, that is better knownen to the, that after thou haste 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 simlytude and beawtie of the same trew felicitie.

Fyrste vyce
must be
auoyded, from
a mā before,
that vertue
can entre.

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, þ 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 þ day sterre called Lucifer hath chased awaye the darkenes of the nyght. Thē the bryght daye ledyth fourthe the shinyng horser of the sonne, that is to sai; after the darke nyght the clere day shineth more plesaunt. So lykewyse thou fyrst beholdyng false goods, that is to saye: false felyctie of worldely things begynne thou to wythdrawe thy neck from the yoke of the sayd false felicitie or worldely thynges. And after that, trewe goodes, that is to saye: vertue, or trewe felicite wyll enter the better into thy mynde.

BOECIUS.

Then Phylosophy lokynge donnewarde a litle, and remembrynge 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.

The dyffyn-
tion of per-
fyte felyctie.

P: All þ cure of mortal folk howe manye maners of wayes soeuer they do labour and trauell, yet they all do laboure (althoughe it be by dyuers and sondry meanes) to come vnto one ende of felyctie, or blessednes. Truely that thynge is good (whyche when a man hath obtayned it) that nothyng can be desyred ferther besydes it, which thinge certes is the soueraygne good of all thynges, and contayneth in it selfe all good thynges.

To the whych good thynge yf any thyng shoulde be awaye or wantyng : it cannot be sufferaigne and perfyt good, for by cause som thing is left behynd or forgottē that maye be desyred. Therfore it appereth ſ felicitie is a perfyt state by gatheryng together of all good thynges. The same perfytte state, or felicitie (as I haue sayde) al mē lyuynge do labor to optayne and gette dyuers wayes. For the desyre of felycitty or blessednes, is naturally plantyd in mens myndes and hartes, but that wandryng error ledyth them out of the way to false gods, that is to say : worldlye thynges, of the whyche men, some (certes thynkyng that the perfytte felycitie and goodnes is to haue nede of nothyng) doo laboure to habounde in ryches.

Other men (iudging good that thynge, that is most worthy honour) do stryue to be honorable emongest their citizens and neyghbours after they haue gotten honors. There be other that do dertermyne that soueraygne felycitty 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 whome fame semeth perfytte felycitie and goodnes, do make haste to optayne a gloryous name by feates of warre or armes, or by the meanes of peace makynge.

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 aboūdaūce of corporal pleasure. Also ther be some men that do chaunge or ioine the endes and causes of thynges one wylth 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 thynge, may not be acountyd emonges the goods of fortune, (whych consysteth in worldly and trāſtory 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 delyghte. And truely it is mete to referre al goodes temporall, and transitorye, vnto ſ other goodes of for-

They that do
erre from per-
fyte felycitie,
do take these,
v. thynges for
it, as ryches,
honoure,
power, glorie,
and pleasure,
whiche be the
false goodes of
fortune.

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

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

Riches,
power,
honour,
glorie, plea-
sure, and all
other transy-

torye goods,
or pleasures
temporal be
the goodes of
fortune.

Felicite is
adiudged of
dyuers men,
in diuers
goodes of
fortune ac-
cordinge to
theyr seuerall
dysposycions.

They seke
felycytie, and
blyssednes, yt
seke suffy-
saunce, enyn
so, they y^t

tune, abouenamed. For strength and gretnes of bodye semeth to geue powre : fayrenes and swyftnes, to geue glory and prayse : and helthe of bodye, to geue pleasure, and delyght. In all whych thynges it apperyth that blessednes and felicitye is desyred. For that thynge that anye man requyreh or desyreh aboue all other thynges, 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 other thynges. 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 thynges truelye the Epicurus onelye considering and beholding, estemid cōsequentlye with hymselfe, that plesure 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 hys iudgment. 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 imperfecte and dull memorye drownyd in desyre of worldely goodes, wandryng as a dronken man that knoeth not whych way to go home to hys house. Seme they to erre and goo oute of the waye that labouryth to haue ynoughē and to haue nede of nothyngē? noo truelye. Certes there is nothyngē that more performeth and geueth blessednes then a plenteous estate of al goods hauyng ynough hymselfe of his owne and nede of none other mans, Do they erre from felicitie, that do thynke that thynge moste worthy reuerence and honor y^t is best? No truely: For that thing is not vyle and to be dyspysed that the entente of all men lyuyng (almoste) laboureth to optayne. Is not power, to be nombrēd in ryches? What ells? Is the thynge to be estemyd weke and feble without strength, that semethe to be more worthye and stronger then all other thyngs? no truely. Is glory fame and renoune nothyng estemyd? no not so. For it cannot be denied but that all thynge, that is most excellent, semythe to be moste gloryous, and clere. For it is manyfest that blessednes is not carefull and sadde, nor subiect to doloures, 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 delytethe a man to haue, and to enioye as hys owne. And these be the thynges that menne woulde wisshe 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 haue suffisans, reuerēce, 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 sekynge it is lyghtly shewed, and euydentlye 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 forall that in louynge and desyryng the ende of good and blessednes, they do agre and be of one mynde and iudgemente.

seke for riches
dygnite, rule,
glory, fame,
renome, and
delyte for
suffisiaūce :
they do seke
therin fely-
cite and
blessednes.
For felicite
is suffysaunce,
and wanteth
nothyng, for
yf it dyd want
anythinge, it
wanteth suf-
fysaūce and
consequēly it
could not be
called iustly
felycycie.

PHILOSOPHY.

It pleaseſt me to ſhew, with a ſownyng ſonge, vpon ſoſte 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 keþeth in and fastenyth all thynges with a fast and ſure knot, that cannot be loosed. Althoughe the lions of Libia, hauing goodly chaines aboue their neckes doo take mete at their mayſters handes. And althoughe they feare their cruelle mayſter and be wont to ſuffer beating, yet if the bloud of beaſtes that the ſame lyons haue deuoured 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 fyrtle 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 fyrtle kylle their mayſter, that kept the. Likewise the ſyngynge byrde that ſyngeth vpon the hygh bowghes in the woode, if ſhe be taken and put into a ſtrayte cage, although the diligente cure of men delytyng in her, geueth her ſwete drinkes and dyuers meates wyth plesaunt labour : yet yf ſhe chaūſe to escape out of the ſtrayt cage and ſeith the plesant shadowes of the woodes, beyng ſorye of her ſtrayt kepyng, ouerthrowith 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 crooked boweth downe the toppe, but whē the hand

of him that boweth it, letteth it go at lybertye, it holdethe the toppe vpright 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 westerne 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 reioyseth at theyr returne to their owne nature. And nothyng hath any other prescribed order but that onelye that hath ioyned the begynnnyng to the ende. And hath so establisched 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 begynnnyng and the verye ende of true felicitie, although you do se it by a thynne or slender imagination or fantasye. And therfore your naturall intent and purpose ledeth you to the true good or blessednes, and much error withdraweth 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 thynges can brynge a man anye suche thinge that hath suffisaunce and wantyth nothyng at all. For then I wold thynke that some men were blessed and happye by opteyning 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: worldely goodes cannot do the things that they do promysse, 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 euery wronge done emongest all those abundaunt 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: Dyddyst not thou want some thyng that thou woldest haue had, or thou haddest sōthing that thou wouldest not haue hadde?

BOE: I saye it is euen soo.

PHIL: Then thou desyreddeste to haue the thyng that thou dyddest lack, and to lacke that thou haddest.

Ryches can
not gyue
suffisaunce,
but bryngeth
in nede of
some thyng,
and so ther is
no perfyte
felycite in
ryches.

BOE : I saye I do confesse no lesse.

PHIL : Then there nedeth some thyngē that euery man desyretē, that is to saye : Then euery man hath nede. BOE : I graunt that euery man laketh. PHIL : Then he that hath nede of anye thingē, is not thoroughly suffised and contented. BOE : I saye the same. P: So then thou lackeddest suffisaūce, when thou haddyst aboundinge 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 mony by his owne nature and kynde hath nothyngē 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 ells whence commethe all these complayntes in courtes, butt hat mony is taken awaye, from folke agaynst theyr wyll, eyther by force or by crafte and deceyte. BOE : I saye it is so.

PHIL : Than euerye man shal haue nede of some outwardē 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, thē men do thinke it is. For ſ̄ ryches that were thought to make men to haue suffisaunce 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 hungrye ? Canne not ryche men be thurstye ? Doo the members and lymes of ryche men, fele no wynter colde ? But thou wylte saye that ryche men haue Inoughe, to slacke theyr hūger 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 gaping and desyryng riches, might be satisfied with riches, then it behoueth that there remayne and be such a nede and indigence, that may be fulfylled and

Nature is suffysed with a lytle, but couetousnes can never be satisfied.

satysfyed. But I holde my peace and wyll not tell that a lytell thyng suffyseth nature, but nothyng is Inouge or suffyseth couetousnes. 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 ynough or suffysaunce.

Thoughe a couetous ryche man, had a ryuer euer flowynge golde contynually, and dyd neuer cese, yet coulde it neuer staunche or satysfy his gredy couetousnes. And although he had as many precyous stones of the red sea, as his necke coulde beare, And althoughe he doth eare hys fruytfull felde with an hundrede oxen, yet thys gredy and insaciablie cure of couetousnes, 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 reverenc
gyuen to another for a testymonye of his vertue Aristo .4. Eticorum.

Reuerēce is a decent, and cōuenyente gratytude or thankes Tullius.

Decoratus was a mā put in offyce, by kyng Theodoryke, to rule the cōmenaltie whiche was an euyll man, a

But, do dignities make him honorable and reuerend, that hath them? Is there such vertue in dignyties, 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 dignyties should so often happen vnto wycked and vitious men. For whyche thinge Catulus that was a vertuous wise mā in Rome (Seinge Nonius a vicyous man, syttinge in the place of dignitie and iudgmente) called hym a swellynge full of corruption (that is to saye) a man hauyng 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 dignities bryngeth to wicked folke? Truelye the vnworthines or malyce of them shuld lesse appere, yf they were not honored. O Boecius myghtist thou be brought to so greate perylls, 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 iudge them, worthy reuerēce for their honors, whō I deme vnworthy to haue such honors. But yf thou sawest a man ful of wysdome, myghtest thou thynke him, vnworthy of reuerence, or of the wysdom that he hath?

BOE : No truely.

PHYLO : Certes dygnyties be properly incident to vertue. And vertue gyueth dygnyties 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 worthye 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 consydered. For yf a man be so moche the lesse estemed, bycause he is dyspysed of many? When that dygnytie can not make euyll men reuerende: then dygnitie maketh ſ̄ euil folke, be rather dyspraysed, then praysed, which dispayſe dignytie sheweth to many. And truely not without a cause. For the wycked do reuenge them ſelue 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 dygnyties, vnderſtande thus. If a man had vsed to haue moch dygnytie in the Cōſul ſhip, and by chaūce came emongſt ſtraunge nacions, ſhulde his honoure of the consull ſhyp, make him to be honoured amonget the ſtraungers? But and yf this honoure, were a naturall geſte to dygnyties, they myght neuer ceaſe any where, amonget people frō doyng theyr offyce and dutie, as the fyre in euery countrye neuer 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 ſelue, but mans false and vayne opinion cauſeth it: anone when they come there vnto them that eſtēme not the ſame dygnyties, theyr honours immedyatlē vanyshe awaye and ceaſe. But thou maist ſay, ſ̄ it is ſo amonget ſtraūge nacions. Do not the dygnyties endure alwaies amonget thē, where they first began? Underſtand no. Trulye the dygnyte of the prefactory, was ſomtyme a great power, amonqe the Romaynes, which nowe is nothyng els, but a vayne name, and the dygnytie of the ſenatours, that ſomtime was eſtēmed an hyghe honoure is nowe a great burden or charge. And yf a man had the offyce to take hede of corne and other vytayle of the people, he was taken for a greate man. Nowe what is lesse eſtēmed then the ſaid prouoſtſhip? Certes as I ſayde a lytell before, the thynge that hath no proper beawtye, or worſhype of it ſelue, receyueth ſome tyme renoune and ſome tyme loſeth renoune by meaneſ of the uſage of the thinge. If therefore dignities cannot

promotor or
an accuser,
and for that,
Boecius wold
not be asſo-
ciate with
hym.
Honour
foloweth
vertue.
4. Eticorum.
euyl people
be worthy no
honoure.

Virtue maketh
a gentylman,
or noble man,
and not power,
or ryches.

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, yct 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 roumes, of dignities in courtes. Who therefore would thynke and take such honours or roumes of dignytes good that such wretches do geue? vnderstd no man.

It is called
irreuerent
setes and
romes, y^t
wycked men
do gyue.

No man lyueth
alwayes in felici-
tie, but
sometyme,
he taysteth of
aduersytie.

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

PHILOSOPHY.

Can kingdomes 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^t 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 ynough 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 diminishe felicitye, 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 remaynyng, ouer whome euerye Kynge 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 meanes it must nedes be, that there is in kynges more wretchednes and infelicite: then blessednes and felycitetie. A certayne Tyraunte that hadde experiance of the peryll of his

estate and fortune, dyd declare and shewe the feare and dreade
of his kyngedom by the terrores of a sworde hangynge ouer
the heade of one of hys famylyer frendes. What is therefore
this power that cannot put awaye the bytinge of carefulnes, nor
auoid the prickings of feare. Certes these kynges woulde fayne
lyue safely and sure, but they cā not. Maye they therefore from
henceforthe reioyse of theyr power? Doest thou iudge hym
myghtye whom thou seyst would do that thynge that he cā not
do? Doest thou esteme him myghtye that hath many men of
armes, aboute hym? That more fearythe them that feareth
him? how semeth he myghtye that is put in the handes of hys
seruauntes? For what shal I say of them that be in the fauour
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 auauns whē it flourished and was in
prosperiteie.

Kynge Nero constrainyd Seneke his familiar maister that
taughte hym, to chose what death he woulde dye. Antonius,
commaunded Papinon, that hadde bene longe a valiaunt man in
y^e court, to be slayne with the swordes of knyghtes. And both of
them, that is to saye: Senecke, and Papinon, would haue for-
saken and haue yelded vp their power and auctoritie 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 auctoritie and
power of kynges ruleth men redye to fall, and in suche indig-
nation, nether of them, that is to saye: of Senecke and Papinon,
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 cannest not eschewe it. Be they more thy frendes
at nede, that fortune, and not vertue getteth? But surelye whom
good fortune maketh thy frende, euyll fortune maketh thine
enemye and foe. And certes what pestylence is stronger to
hurt, then a famylyer enemye or so? Understand surely none
at al.

lyer asked
him whi he
was not mery:
therupon he
made a ban-
ket, and
caused his
famylyer to
syt therat, and
a naked swerd
hangynge ouer
his head, by a
small threde.

The man
seyng the
swerd could
not be mery
for feare, to
whō Dionysius
sayde such is
my life, euer
in feare, yet
y^u thoughteste
it happy, and
suche is the
lyfe of kinges,

awyses in
feare of some
evil chafice,
for in hyest
Auctorytie, is
moste iobardy.
this Dionysus
feared so
muche Bar-
bours that his
dawghters
were taughe
to shane hym,
and to clyppe
his heare.

Senecke was
a famous
learned man,
and taught
Kynge Nero
in his chylde-
hode.

Papinius was
one most in
fauoure with
the tyrant
Anthonius
Themporoure.

PHILOSOPHY.

He is myghty
that can subdu
sensualtie 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
beyōde the
same Ilād.

Glorye is a
common fame
with laud and
praye.

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

A foole setteth
his mynd,
vpō glorye, a
wise man,
vpōn his con-
science.

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

He that wylbe myghtie, must subdue and mayster his cruelle
desirs and appetytes, and may not put his necke vnder (as one
ouercome) to ȳ foule raygnes 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
estemed.

PHILOSOPHY.

But how deceyueable is glory oftētymes, whervpon (not with-
oute cause) a certayne poete (that vsed to make dities) cried oute
and sayde. O glory glorye, emongeste 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
ȳ be praysed vnworthelye, ought to be ashamed of their prayse,
whyche prayses if they be iustly deserued, what thinge hath it
augmentyd to the conscience of a wise mā, 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 foul 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 thynge,
I do not thynke the fauour or prayse of the people worthye to
be remembred, that commeth not by wyse and iuste iudgement,
nor firmlye 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 renoune 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 auncetours. And if laude and praysynge maketh nobilitie or gentelesse, then muste they be nedes noble and gentyll, that be praysed. Therfore another mans glory, nobilitie, or gentelles, maketh not the noble or gentle, yf thou haue no nobilitie or gentlesse of thy selfe, commynge by thine owne desrites. But Certes yf ther be any good in noblesse or gentles, I thynke it semeth to be as a thynge of necessitie ioyned to noblesse and gentles, that they do not degenerate or vary from the vertue of their noble, or gentle progenitours and auncestours.

of blode,
thankē thy
parentes. If
thou be ver-
tuous, prayse
God. If thou
be ryche,
thāke fortune.

PHILOSOPHY.

Al mankynde lyuynge 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 geuethe all thynges, he gaue to the sonne his beames, he gaue to the mone her hornes, ȳ is, to be sharp at both endes in ȳ wane, he gaue vnto mankynde the earth, and the sterres vnto the firmament, he inclosed 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 begynnyng, that is to saye, from God. Whye then do you bost your selfe of your kinred and auncetors. For yf you beholde God, your begynnyng and maker, then is there none degenerate, that is to say vnnable or vngentell of byrthe, except he forsake God, hys begynnynge, geuing hymselfe to vyses.

Nobylytie, is
an excellencye,
taken from the
fyrste begyn-
nyng, that is
to saye : from
God that
gyueth the
soule to the
mortall body.

PHILOSOPHY.

But what shall I saye of corporall plesures, the desire whereof is full of carefulnes, and the satisfyenge thereof is ful of payne and sorow, how great sycknes and intollerable dolours be these pleasures wonte to bryngē to the bodyes of suche as do vse them, as a certayne fruyte of such wyckednes, of the whyche pleasures, what delectacion their motions and effectes haue, I know not. For whosoeuer wil remēber hymselfe of his pleasurs, 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 fulfull their bodelye plesure. The reioysynge also of wyfe and chyldren should be honest, but it is

A harlot asked Demosthenes the Philoso-pher a.c. talētes, for once to com-panye with her carnaly, but he lokīg vpwarde to-warde heauen sayde, he wuld not bye so gret paine so deare.

There be two maner of plea-sures, the one intellectuall,

that consisteth
in heauenlye
thinges, the
other is tem-
porall, that
cōsisteth, i
worldly, and
transytorie
thynges.

The father
and mother,
be carefull for
theyr Chyl-
dren, yf they be
good, for fear
of euil, yf they
bee not good,
they be sorye
for theyr euyll.

Lecherye is a
shorte pleasure
bryngynge in
longe payne,
for it dis-
troyeth vertue,
it shortheneth
the life, and
commonly dys-
troy the bodye
and shortheneth
the lyfe.

He that is full
of mony, is
violent to
other, from
whom he had
it.

He that
foloweth plea-
sures of the

said much agaynst nature and kynde, that some haue had chyldren ȳ haue ben tormentors to their parentes, but I doo not knowe howe many of the whiche chyldren, howe bytynge and carefull euery conditiō is, it is no nede to shewe the, that hast proued it al redy. Nor yet to moue the beinge carefull nowe for the same. In whych thing I do allowe the sentens of my dysciple Euripydis that sayde, he is happye by mischaunce that hath no chyldren.

Al pleasure temporall hathe thys thinge in it. That is to saye. It vexeth and troubleth all thē that vse it, which prickes or sorowe. And it is like to the stingyne of bees fleyng aboue. After that the bee hath put out his swete honye, he fleyth and stingeth with ouerlonge paine the hartes of thē that be stinged. That is asmuch to sai, as the anguyshe and Payne that foloweth after temporal pleasure, is farre longer, then the pleasure thereof. Or as a man woulde saye: for a lytle pleasure, longe Payne. Or thus: the honye is not somuche delycyous and sweete, but the Payne of stynging of a bee, is much more dolorous, to hym that tastethe bothe.

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 perylls and euyls, they be wrapped, I will shew you shortlie. Certes what thynge of these folowing is without peryll. Thou shalte not goo aboue 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 geueth 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 layingne in awayte of them that be inferiors to the? If thou aske glory, thou being troubled wyth euery aduersitie, cānest not be quyet. And if thou woldest lede a voluptuouse lyfe, euery mā wold dispise the and cast in thy teth, the thiraldome 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 selfe, that is to saye: aboue reason,

howe lytell and frayle possessyon do they labour for? Cannyst thou exell the elephantes in greatenes, or the bulles in strengthe? mayste thou surmoūt the tyger in swiftnes? loke vpon the space and compasse of the firmamēt the stedfastnes and swyftenes thereof, and than cesse to wonder at these vile inferior worldly thinges. Whych fyrment certes is not rather to be wondred at for these thynges, but for the self same reson wherby it is gouerned. But howe swyftly passyng away and transitorye and howe fletynge and more swyfster fadyng awaye, is the beawty of the body, thē ſ̄ mutabilitie or chaūge of the sommer flowers. And (as Aristotle sayth) if that men had eyes as quick as a beast named Lynx, ſoo that their sighte myghte ſe thorowe or penetrate the bodies that they doo ſee, ſhould not that bodye of Alcibiades that was mooste fayre without fourthe, ſeme moft foule within to them that ſawe ſ̄ in trayles, or inner partes thereof? And ſo therefore thy owne nature cauſethe 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, whatſoever it be that thou meruaileſt at, or ſo eſtemest, maye be deſſolued and clene takē awaye, with the heate of a feuer, that laſteth but three dayes. Of all whyche thyngs before ſayd, a man may gather breyfely that these worldely thynges, that cannot perfourme the goodnes that they promes or ſeme to haue in thē nor be yet perſytte by hepyng vppe of goodes they (I ſay) be not as ways and pathes to bryng men to felicitye and bliſſidnes, nor can make men happy or blessed.

body is ſer-
uant of his
body.

Alcibiades was
the fayref
woman that
coulde be ſeen,
in Aristotelles
tyme, in ſo
moche that his
ſcolers
broughte her
to Arystotell,
to loke vpon,
and bebolede.

A feuſ of thre
daies is a pefi-
lent feuſ, that
for the mooste
parte, kylleth
the patient in
that ſhort
time.

PHYLOSOPIHY.

Alas, alas, what ignoraunce ledethe wandrингe wretches in a wronge waye clene contrary frō 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 fyſh 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 ebbyngeſ, crekes, and cauerneſ in the flouds of the ſea, and which ſhore of the ſea is full of whyte perles, or whych ſhore aboundith moft with a ſhell fyſhe, that

serueth to dye red purple with all. And whyche costes of the see hath abounding 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, ^t surmounteth 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 wyshe that they myght know 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 dignities, nor glory with nobilitie or g \hat{e} tes, 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 clyste, 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 perfytte. For that thinge, that by nature is symple plaine and inseperable, mans errorre 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 say nay.

PH: Trulye thou sayest well, for if there be anye thing that in any matter is of weke power, in that behalfe, it is nedefull that it wanteth and lacketh the helpe of som other.

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 suffisaunce, and power be, are to be dispysed, or

contrarye wyse, that they be most worthy reuerence aboue all thinges. 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 thynge. BOE: Let vs adde them together as one thynge, yf we wyll confesse the truthe. PHIL: What thynkest thou than, dooste thou iudge that to be an obscure and ignoble thynge, that is suffyasunt, myghty and reuerend, or els right clere and excellent by al fame and renoune? And consider also whether that thinge, that hath nede of nothyng, that is moste myghtye, that is most worthy honor (as it is afore graūted) 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 graunt that glory and renoune nothyng differethe 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 thynge moste ioyfull.

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

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

Gladnes is a
quyetnes, or
cōtentacion of
a mans appet-
ite, or desyre
in anye good
thyng that he
hath gotten.

BOE: I saye it must nedes be euen so.

PHIL: Then the selfe same thynge 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 thynge that hath no partes, they nether gette anye porcion of the thynge, nor yet the selfe same thynge that they desyre. BOE: I saye after what maner do men deuyde the thynges. PHI: He that seketh ryches, to auoyde and defende pouertie, he laboureth not

He that de-
sireth moch
one thynge

onelye amongeste other worldlye thynges : Semeth to dyspysē al other, but onelye that he so feruentlye desyrethe, and yet he hath nede of manye other thynges, that be necesarie to hym.

to get power, but had leuer be accounted nedē vyle and pore, and also forgo and lose many naturall pleasures, then he wold lose the mony that he hath gotten. But by this meanes 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 desyretē power, spendeth and wasteth riches, dispiseth pleasures and honoure 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 necessarye, and is bitten or greued wyth care and anguyshe. And when he cannot put awaye these thyngs, he cesseth and is not myghtye, whych is ſ̄ thing that he mooste cheyfely desyred. And lykewyse a man may reson and speake of honors, glorye, and pleasuers, as of power, and suffysaunce. For when euerye one of them is the ſelfe 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 thē 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 ſingulerly, of all thynges that are to be desyred.

Bo: I saye I confesse the ſame and nothyng can be ſayde more true then that.

PHIL: Therefore haste thou bothe the forme and the causes of false felicitie. Nowe turne the inwardre 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 euident, and it were to a blyndman, and thou dyddyst ſhew the ſame trewe and perfyt felicitie a lytell before, when thou dyddyste laboure to ſhewe me the causes of false felicitie. For (except I be deceyued) the ſame is the treue and perfyt felicitie or blessednes that perfourmeth in mā ſuffiſance power, reuerence, noblesſe, and gladnes. And that thou mayſte knowe that I do perceyue the ſame inwardely I do confesse vndoubtedlye that the ſame is the

Perfyte fely-
cicie, or
blyſſednes.

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 thynge, and not dyuers thynges in substaunce, that is to say, suffysaunce, power, reuerence, noblesse, and ioye or gladnes. PHYL: O my chyld Boece I perceue thou art happye or blessed in thyss opinion, yf thou wylte put thereto this, that I shal say.

BOE: I saye what is that.

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

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

PHIL: Therfore these worldlye thynges, that is to saye worldelye suffisaunce, power reuerēce nobles and pleasures, semethe to geue vnto men the symylitudes or lykenes, of true good, or ells to geue certaine vnperfyt 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 knownen whyche is the same verye true and perfytte felicitie, and whyche fayneth, or disymulythe 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 thynge I saye, I greatlye 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 þ 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, euen thus as foloweth.

PHILOSOPHY.

O Father and maker of heuen, and erth, that gouerneth the worlde wyth thy perpetual prouidence, And causeth þ 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 flowingfletynge or wauerynge matter. But the inward forme of thy inestimable goodnes, withoute enuye or malyce, hath moued the thereto frely. Thou bryngest forthe al thinges from thy godly example aboue, beyng moste fayre of all other, beryng in thy remembraunce the goodly hole worlde, accordyng to the lykenes, as it was conceiued, and formed in thy thought before thou commaundeste the sayde worlde, (beyng made perfyt) to hold absolutely 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 fyre 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 speres, that is to say. The spre that fyrst moueth, and the spre of the planettes. And the same soule or planetes returned agayne, goethe into it selfe by intelligence, whiche is one operacion, and compassesthe the profounde and depe thought by knowyng of God, whych is another operacion. And so it mouethe the heuen by like ymage or intelligēce whyche is the thirde operation.

The lyghte
Cartis, be the
sterres, or
reason, or vn-
derstandingy,
that shulde
guyde the
Soule.

Beastes trees,
or plantes, be
of fesse lyfe,
th̄ mannes
soule, that is
immortall, and
all the other be
mortal.

The soule is a

Thou bryngest forth the soules of men, and the lesse lyues, that is to saye, lyuyng brute beastes, and all growyng things by lyke maner and causes. And shapest 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 whyche soules of mankynde, when they be conuertyd vnto the, by thy benyngne or gentle law thou causest them so to retourn, by thy turnyng fyre, of charitable loue.

O father, graunt that mans thought maye ascende vp into that

strayte and noble sete of hygh and perfytte goodnes, and graunt that it maye fynde the foūtaine 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 cleare and resplendaunte, and a quyet rest to meke myndes and thoughtes.

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

dyuyne thyng,
and had her
begynnynge
fyrst in heauen
of god, frō
whom all
Godly thinges
do come.
God is oure
berer to grace,
our leder from
erroure, to
truethe.

PHILOSOPHY.

For by cause thou hast sene whiche is the forme of perfytte good, and whych also is the forme of imperfette 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 perfit 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 thynge 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? euery thyng that is called vnparfytte, the same is taken vnprefit by diminishing of ȳ thing that is perfytte. Whereby it commeteth to passe, that yf (in any kynde of thynge) any thing is sene to be vnparfytte, therin, it is necessary that somthyng be also parfytte. For yf parfection be taken awaye, certes it cannot be imagyned from whence that thynge is, that is adiudged vnparfytte. For the nature of thynges toke neuer any begynnynge of thynges dymynished and vnparfittē but procedyngē 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 vnprefyte 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 whē 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 seeme 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 infynyty, or wythoute ende, we muste graunte the hyghe God to be full of soueraygne and perfytte good. And we haue confyrmēd and establyshed before, that perfit good is true felicitie or blessednes. Therfore it muste nedes be, that trewe felycitie, or blissednes: 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 fymelye, and howe holy thou mayst proue, that we haue sayde, that the hyghe 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 outwardē 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 sholdyst thinke that God hymselfe and the blessednes of God be of dyuers distyncte substāunce and not vnite all in one or of one onely substāunce? 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 receyueth it. But I do confessē 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 diuers thynges, that is to say, God and soueraygne good. Farthermore the thinge that differeth from euery thing, the same is not the verye same thyng, that it differeth from. So that the thing that diffreth from soueraygne good, is not by nature of it selfe, the same soueraygne good. But it were a wycked thyng or wronge so to thynke of that thinge, that is to say: of God, that

excelleth and passethe all other in goodnes. For always 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 substāuce soueraygne good.

BOE: I saye it is wel concluded.

PHIL. But it is graunted before that soueraygne good, is perfytte felycitie and blessednes.

B: I saye no lesse but it is euen soo.

PHIL: Therfor it behoueth to confesse that God is the same soueraygne good. B: I saye I can not auoyde, the reson before alledged. And I do perceyue that thys thyng shewed of them, is a very consequence to the thyngs. PHIL: Beholde now whether thys thyng maye be proued hereafter more firmly, that two soueraign good thynges that dyffer one from another, may not be. For it apperethe that the goodes that dyffer of them selfe, can not be all one thyng : Therefore nether of them canne be perfytte when that one of them hath nede of the other. But it is manyfest that the same, that is vnperfytte, is not soueraygne and perfytte. 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 felicitie. BOE: I saye that by thys meanes nothyng may 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 brynge in thynges, that they call apparaunces after they haue shewed their propositions) euē 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 þ men be made blessed by optaining of the diuinitie. And as men be made iuste by obtaynyng of Iustice, and wyse by obteynyng of wysedome : So by lyke reson it behoueth that men þ 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 dyuinitie, no thyng letteth, or prohibyteth, but there be many Goddess.

BOE: I saye this is a gaye, and a precious thyng, whether thou woldest call it apparens, or a conclusion. PH: And certes

The Prophet
sayth.
Ye be al gods,

and the sones, or chyldren of the hyest, nothyng is fayrer, or more goodly then this thyng, that reason perswaded 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 doubte, whether all these thynges do ioyne togyther, as it were one body of blyssednes, by certayne diuersytic, or varyete of partes, or membres, or whether there be any one thyng, of them that of it self 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 iudged that blissednes is good. BOE: I say we haue thought it souerayne good. PHIL: It behoueth that thou adde souerayne good to all these thinges that folowe. For blissednes, is sufferayne suffysaunce, the same is soueraygne power, the same is soueraygne reuerence, the same is soueraigne clerenes, and the same is demed to be soueraygne pleasure. BOE: What then? PHIL: Be all these thynges, that is to saye: suffysaunce, power, and the other thynges, as it were membres of blissednes? or whether be they all referred vnto good, as vnto the chyfe of them. BO: I say, I perceiue well what thou proposyst 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 blyssednes: then shoulde they dyffer one from another. For suche is the nature of partes, that dyuers partes or mēbres 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 mēbre, which can not be. BOE: I say it is, no doute, but I loke for the resydue of thy question that remaineth. P: Truelye it is manyfest 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 coniecture of reuerence, noblesse, and plesure or delyghte. Then is soueraygne good the effecte and cause of all thynges that are to be desyred. For that thinge that hath no good in it self nor symyltude 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 thynges be desyred, for the cause and loue of good, they be not desyred rather of al mē, thē 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 contēde or say any thing to the contrarye.

PHIL: But we haue shewed before that God and perfet bles-sednes 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 thyng.

PHYLOSOPHY.

Come hether to gether all ye that be taken wyth the wycked chaynes of deceyfull pleasure of erthlye thynges dwellyng in your myndes here, that is to say: in perfytte 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 geueth, or the floud Hermus with his shynyng banke, or the floud 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 clere the sight or vnderstandingy 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 noryshed the same in her low cauernes. But the shynynge wherewith the heuen is gouernyd and continueth in strength and forse, putteth away the darke ruyne and decay of

Tagus is a
flore in
spayne that
hath grauell
or sand like
golde.

Hermus is a
flore in Asia
hauing grauell
and baks lyke
gold.

Indus is a
flore 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 saime by very good reason, so that the thynges, that be concluded a lytle before, do yet remayne in thy mynde.

BOECIUS: I saye they shall remayne. PH: 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, hauyng nede of nothyng? But we haue shewed before, that then it is trewe and perfyt good when that all the sayd thynges 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 thynges that are to be desyred. BOE: I saye it is declared alredy, and no man maye doughte thereof.

PHIL: Then the thynges 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 thynges 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 substauencc of such thynges, whose effecte is not naturally dyuers.

BOE: I saye I cannot denye it. P: Hast thou not knownen the that euery 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 beastes, 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 yvntrie 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
mankynede, 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 whosoeuer woulde serche other
thynges, after the same maner it wyl appere, y euery thyng 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 w̄ my self
many thynges, yet it semeth that it is none other thyng, then
thou hast saide. PHI: Therfore is there any thyng, 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 beastes that haue any nature
to wyll or not to wyll: I fynde nothing (excepte it be compelled
by outwarde vvolence) that forsaketh the intente or desyre to
lyue, and hastyth of fre wyll to dye. For euery beaste labourethe
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 felyng
at al as bestes haue. PHIL: Certes thereof 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 sprynge in the feldes, other in
the mountaynes, other in the marish, and other do cleue to the
rockes 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 geueth to euerye thinge, that thyng 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 noryshynge from their rotes, as though they had mouthes
fastened in the earthe, and spredeth their nourishyng by the
pyth, by the wod and by the barke? And what wylt thou saye:

that the softest thynge suche as the pyth of tre is, in the myddest, is defended wyth a certayne hardnes of the wode, and the barke is sette vttermoste of all, agaynst the intemperaunce 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 euery of them desyre (by lyke reson) to kepe that is hys owne? wherfore els doth lightnes bere vpward the flames of the fyer, and grauitie or heuynes presse downe the erth but that the same places and mouings do best agre so, for euery of them. And furthermore euery thyng, kepeth that 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 easlye deuided or broken a sonder. But veryly, the thynges that be soft and lyquyd, as the ayer and the water, do lyghtly geue place to any thyng that deuydeth them, but yet they do quyckely come together and ioygne vnto the partes, from the whyche 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 knowledge, but of the natural intencion of thynges, euen as it is that we do digest meates, that we haue eten without thynkyng 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 begynnynges and instyncte workes of nature. For certes the wyll often tymes embraseth death, when that causes cōpelleteth the same, whiche death nature feareth. And contrarywyse, other whyles the wyll compelleth vnto the thyng, that nature alwaies desireth, that is the worke of generacion, wherby onelye the contynuaunce of mortall thynges, endureth. And this loue or appetyte that euerye thynge hathe to it selfe, procedeth not, nor cometh of the mocion of the soule: but by naturall intencion. For the prouydence, or wysdom of God, hath giuen vnto thynges that he hath creat this, that is to saye: a great cause to con-

tynewe stylle, in as moche as they desyre naturally to lyue as longe as they may. Wherfore there is nothyng that thou nedest to doubte in any maner, for all thynges that be: desyreth naturally stedfast dwellyngs, and to eschewe distruption. BOE: I confesse that I do se nowe without any doubte, 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 dystroyed: certes there shulde remayne no beyng to any thyng.

BOECIUS: I saye, it is trewe. PHI: Therfore al things 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 descriybe and decerne thus, the same good is the thinge 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 whervnto all thynges, draweth, that thyng 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? PHIL: 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 thyng 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 opynions, let hym reuolve and thynke in hym selfe, the lyght of his inward 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 thought,

Trew vnſtā-
dyng is in
the mynd,
aloughue it
be made
darke, by the
affectes of the
body, so longe
as they both

be ioynded together, but when the bodye is dede the mind or soule knoweth al thynges without anye let. Lyke as a candell lyghte vnder a bushel can not lyghte any ferther thē the bussel but when the bussell is taken away then the lyght of the cādell lightheth al aboute.

Memorye and vnder-standinge 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 ignoraunce hath hydde, shal appere more euident 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 styrred by the wynd of doctryne 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 aske you any thynge, excepte the noryshyne and grounde of ryght or reson lay hidde in your depe hart thought or mynde. And if the muse or wysedome of Plato soundeth truth, euery forgetfull man recordeth the thing that he lerned before. The meanyng is this. He that wyll knowe the truthe let hym ioyne his reson of the inwarde mynde to the outewarde thinge, and let hym reuolve 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 outewarde thinge. For Plato sayth, that mannes soule knoweth all thynges, but the bodye causeth it to forgette, and by studye and exercysē 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 knownen before, and saith also that the effectes of the bodye blyndethe the soule.

BOECIUS.

The thynges y^t were remembred the secōd time were that god is the ende of all thynges and soueraign good whyche were forgottē by the darknes and affectes or desire of the bodye.

Thē said I, I graunt wel vnto Plato. For thou remembrest me the secōd tyme of these thyngs. Fyrst y^u remembrest me that I lost my memory, by the contagious coniunction of the body and soule. And afterwarde when I was oppressed 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 althoughe I se now what thou purposeste, yet I desyre to here it more plainlye of the.

PHIL: Thou thoughtest it no doughte, a lytle before that this worlde is gouerned by God.

BOE: Certes I thynke it no dought nor neuer wyll, and I wil shew the shortly by what resones I am brought to it. Thys worlde colde neuer be brought into one forme of soo dyuers contrarye partes, excepte that there were one that ioyned together such dyuers thynges. And the same dyuersitie of nature so varieng one from another woulde seperate and deuyde a sunder, 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 fourth, so certainly, nor shewe so ordinary mouinges, in places, times, effect spaces, and qualities, except ther were one that remayned alwayes stedefast, and dysposed and ordryd the same varieties and chaunges of thyngs. 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 commenly vsed of al folke. PHIL: Then whyles thou art of that opiniō, I think I haue lytle els to do, but that thou beinge sure of felycyyte and blessednes, mayst go se thy countraye safe and sound. But let vs beholde the thynges that we purposed before. Haue I not nombred suffysaunce in felycitetie 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 gouerne 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 dysposeth all thyngs by the same good. And if he whō 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 stedefast and withoute corruption. BOE: I say I agre syrmely thereto, and I sawe a lytle before (that thou were aboute to saye so) althoughe it were by a slender suspencion or imagynacion. PHI: I do beleue, and certes I do thynke thou ledest nowe thy eyes more stedefastlye 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 gouerneth all thynges wyth the keye of

Ordynary
mouynges be
taken for
goyng of the
son, nere or
farre of from
places whō he
goeth in a
crooked circle
and also the
varyance of y^e
night and
daye some
tyme long som
tyme short.
Effect is taken
for the ebbynge
and flowyng,
of the waters.
Space is takē
for the
planettes, nere
or farre of.
Qualities be-
taken, for
heat, colde,
drye, and
moyste,

his goodnes, and that all the same things that I haue taught, do make haste by naturall intencion to come to good, maye it be doughted but they be gouerned wyllyngly? 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 vnruley thinges that draweth peruersly backwarde, or stubbournelye, and no comforde of obedyent 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 thynge dyd laboure agaynst God, myght it any thynge auayle, at laste agaynst hym, whom we haue graunted to be almyghtie 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 thynke not that any thynge 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 fooles (that do reprehende and rebuke some tyme great thynges that toucheth goddes myghtie work) may 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 deposid and dystroyed them, as it was mete and worthy, but wylte thou that we knit togither the same resonis? 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 weyuynge or knyttyng together a meruaylous subtile labyrinth by thy reasons, that haue no ende lyke a rounde compas, by the

whych subtil resonys, thou goeste oute where thou dyddeste enter, and where thou diddest enter or goo in, thou goeste oute? And thou foldyst together maruaylous compassyng rounde resonys of the symple or pure dyuinite. For a lytel before thou begynnyng at blessednes saydest that the same was souerayne good, which blessednes thou saydest was set in God. And also thou saydest that God was souerayne good and full of felicitie, 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 substaunce of God, and of blessednes. And thou saidest 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 gouernaunces of hys bountiousnes, and that al thynges obeyeth hym, howe vyoilent soeuer they be, and thou saydest 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 inwardre and proper or famlyer probation. PHI: Then I do not mocke saieth 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 substaunce, that it falleth and slydethe not into outward or straunge thynges nor receyueth any outward or straung thynge into it selfe, but as the phylosopher Permenides saith of the substauice of God. Thou ledest all the multitude of thynges in a cyrcle, that is to saye: the deuyne substaunce turnyth the mouynge worlde of thynges round lyke a compas whiles that the same substauice kepereth it selfe stedfast and immouable. And if I haue stirred resonys, not taken from without, but set within the compas of the thynge that we treate of, there is nothynge that thou shouldeste meruaile at since thou hast lerned with Plato (saying) that the words ought to be conuenient and agreing to the thinges, whereof they be spoken, or whereof men do speke.

PHYLOSOPHY.

Happye or blessed is he that maye se the shynynge foun-
tayne, or well of good, that is to say, God. And happye 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 sybyll 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 prysone, to werye such as laboure to gette out of y^e same.

Compassyng resonys be such, that they depende, one vpō another, so that a proporcion cō-
cluded in one reason, is the begynnyng of the other conclusyon.

Euerye talke ought to be accordyng to the matter that is talked.

Orpheus was a harper, that played most sweetly, as the Poetes do fayne, and his wyfe was named Eurydycen, whiche dyed vpon the styngyng of a serpent, as she fled by a medo, from a shoperd named Aristeus that pursued her to deflower her, and she wente to hell, after she was dead, as the Poetes do fayne.

Xion is turmented in hell with a tur-nyng whele, and of him came al gyautes, suche is the fable. Tantalus is one that standeth in water to the chynne, and hath Apples hangyng at his mouthe, and yet is redy to die for lacke of meate, and drynke. Ticins, is turmented with a Grype, euer terynge and fretyng his maw or lyuer.

that somtyme was sory for the death of his wife after that he had caused (with hys weping and dolorous songes) the renning waters to stand styll 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 pleased 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 thynge, could not comfort there mayster Orpheus. He complaynyng vpon the cruell goddes, wente to the houses of hell, and there he tempering his melodious songes, wyth y^e swete sounding stringes of his harp syngeth mourningly al that he had taken and drawē out of the cheyse 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 permitt and suffer hym. And pitiouslye moued hell. And instantly desyred the lordes infernall with his swet and humble prayer to haue restitution of his wyfe agayne. The porter of hel, called Cerbarus, with his three hedes, beyng ouercome with that new melodye wondred greatlye. 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 turnyng whele dyd not cast downe the heade of Xion. Then Tantalus (that was almooste consumed, with longe thrysste 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 (hauyng compassyon) sayd, we be ouercome, let us geue vnto Orpheus hys wyfe to beare hym compayne that he hath well bought with his song. But a lawe or condition, shall restrayne our gyfste, that is to saye: vpon this condicion, so that it shall not be lawefull 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 constrainyd 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
thynges, doo turne theyr eyes of reson, and vnderstandyng from
heuenly thinges 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 thinges) he loseth it
agayne.

Here endeth the thyrd boke.

THE FOURTH BOOKE.

BOECIUS.

WHEN Phylosophye (after that she hadde kept the reuerence, of her countenaunce and grauitie of her spekyng) had songe these thynges softly and swetely. Then I (that had not vterly forgotten my inwardre 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, euen the same thinges that thy owne wordes haue spoken hetherto, haue appered vnto me inuincible, aswell for there deuine speculacion as for thy reson. And the same very thinges that thou shewedst me, althoughe I had forgotten them for sorow of the wronge that was done to me, yet for all that they were not vnto me vterly unknownen. But thys is the cheifeste cause of my gryfe and sorowe, that where as the ruler of all thynges is good, why be there any euiles, or why do euiles passe vnponyshed ? Whyche thyng 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

house of such 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 author) that good mē be alwais mighty, and euyll men always abiect and vnmyghty or weke, and that vyses be neuer vnponyshed, nor vertue vnrewarded, and that felicitie and blessednes happeth 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 omytted and ouerpassed that I thynke mete to omit and passe ouer, I wyll shewe vnto the, the waye that maye bryng 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 reuert and turne into thy countrye safe and sounde, by my leding, by my path way and by my steppes.

As a byrde by
the fethers
flyeth in
height, and
riseth vp, so
by vertue
reason and
wysdom, the
soule, or
mynde of man,
ryseth into the
contemplacion
of good whiche
is God.

PHYLOSOPHY.

Certes I haue swyft fethers that is to say: vertue and wyse-dome, that ascendeth 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 waxethe hote by the swyfte mouinge of the firmament, vntyll it resyste into the houses or places of the sterres, and ioyneth her wayes wyth the sonne, or foloweth the iourney of the colde old man, that is to say, of the Planet Saturne. And the sayde mind beyng a knyght of the shynynge 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 sterry heuen, in all places, where as the shynynge 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 vpper-mooste heuen or fyrmament. And presseth downe the backes of the swyfte ayry firmamente, optaynynge myght of the reuerend lyght, that is to saye : of God. There, that is to saye : beyonde the hyest firmament, the lorde of kynges holdeth his scepter, that is to saye : his empire, and temperith the rules or gouernementes of the whole worlde. And he beynge the shynynge iudge 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 : vnto the knoledge of GOD, after thou hast forsaken all worldly thynges, thou wouldest saye vnto me I do remember this is my coûtraye, here was I borrie, 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 behynde, that is to saye : worldly thynges. Then thou shalte see these cruell tyrauntes, 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 behoueth 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 euill is manifest. And when the frayltie of euyll shewethe it selfe, then the stedefastnes of good is perceyued. But to thintent that more credite shoulde be geuen to my saying, I will procede by both wayes (confirmynge the thynges that be proposed) now on the one parte, and nowe on thother parte. There be two thynges or prynciples, wherin standeth the effect of all menes actes and dedes, that is to saye : wyl, and power. Of the whych if eyther of them fayle, there is nothyng that can be done. For if that wyl fayleth none effect is

We haue no
contynuall
dwellynge in
this worlde,
but in heauen
from whence
the soule
came that God
created.

done. For no manne taketh in hand to doo the thynge that he will not do. And if power be away wyll is 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 doughted in any maner. PHIL: Truelye yf thou se anye man to haue done that he woulde doo, doughest 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 do, he is to be iudged vnmyghtye and weke. BOE: I saye I confesse the same. PHIL: Remembrest thou by the former resones, that it is gathered or concluded, 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 felycicie or blessednes is the same good, and after the same maner desyred, 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 euyll doo laboure to come to good, without any difference of intent. BOE: I say the same, it is a very consequence. PHI: 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 euen so. PHIL: Then when that both the good and the euyll folke desyreth good, yf the good folke obtayneth the good and the euill 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 consyder 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 perfourmeth the same thynge by offyce of nature or naturallye, and the other may not do the same by naturall offyce, or naturallye, but foloweth hym that perfourmeth the offyce naturallye, but yet by a nother wayes, or meane, then is conueniente for nature, and dooeth not fulfyll or perfourme the purpose, whych of these two iudgeth thou to be mooste myghtye? BOECIUS. Althoughe I do conjecture

To recorde, is
to brynge to
remembrance
a thynge that
is forgotten.

what thou woldeste saye, yet I desyre to heare it moore fullye of the.

PHIL: Then, wilt thou denye that the mouing 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, doughtest 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 beyng 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 iustelye 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 thinges, 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 graunted, it is necessarye, that good folke be myghtye and euyll folke vnmyghtye and weake. PHIL: Thou sayest right, and it is a sygne or iudgement that nature is recouered in the and resisteth the dyssease, 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 thynge that ther natural intencyon ledeth, and in a maner almost compelleth the. And what yf that the same wycked folke shoulde lache this so grete and al most inuincible helpe of nature. Consider also how lytle 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, wherin 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:

euen so it behoueth that thou do iudge 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 wicked 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 couitousnes, ouerthroweth them being clene turnyd frō good. And they be also frayle by intemperaunce of vice, that cannot resist vyce, and whether they (knowynge and wyllyng) do forsake the good and be turnyd vnto vyses ? Ye truely, And by thys meanes they cesse not onelye to be myghtye and stronge, but also they cesse vtterly 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 graunted that vicious and wicked folke be wycked, but I cannot confesse that they be absolutely with out any dyuersitie as they were before they were vicious. 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, shewethe evidentlye that they maye do ryght nought. For as I haue gathered and proued a lytle before that euyll is nought or nothyng, whē that the euyll folke may onely do euil, 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 þy wycked may do nought, I haue defyned and determyned a lytel before that nothyng is more myghty then soueraygne good. BOE: I saye it is so. PHIL: But þy same soueraygne good can do no euyll. BOE: No forsooth. 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 euyll. BO: I say would to God they coulde not. PHIL: Now then when that he that is myghtye in good thynges may doo all thynges, but they that be myghtye in euyll 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 proue thys 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 þy 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 possibilytye to doo euyll, may not be referred vnto good, that is to say, to God.

Therfore euyll 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 vnmyghtye 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 fulfyll 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 kynghes, 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 tyrauntes bere inwardly in ther mynde strayte chaynes or bondes of wickednes.

For on the one parte lecherye casteth downe theyr hartes, wyth her gredy venom or poisō, on the other part the ragyng wrath or anger ſt̄ stereth vppe the floudes of veracion, tormenteth theyr myndes.

Also sorowe and heuines werieth them when they be caught or fallen into any mischaūce or elles vayne slypperye hope greueth them. Therefore when thou seyst one hed that is to say one prynce suffersoo many passions and trybulacions. Then doeth not he the thynge that he desyreth, seyng ſt̄ he is ouerthrownen w̄ so many wicked lords that is to sai: w̄ so many vyces, ſt̄ haue rule ouer him. The meaning of thys myter is thys If that a man myght se and perceyue with his corporall eyes, the inwardre hartes and myndes of prynces, whom he seyth outwardlye syttinge in their chayres of estate and maiestie garnysshed with purple and glistering gold, hauyng grete power and auctoritie, 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 conseqūēce that they be vnmyghte 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 euery thynge is done, the ſelue same thynge, ſemethe wel to be the reward of the ſame thing. As yf a man do ren in a furlonge ſpace for a crowne, the crowne is ſt̄ reward for the whych the rennyng is. And in like maner I haue shewed before, that felicitie or blessednes is the ſelue 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 ſeparated from good folke. And he ſhall not be callcd ryghtfully good, that lacketh goodnes, wherefore men well

The lecherous people be like a sowē y^t more delitith to wallowe in the myre then in a faire fountaine or water spryngē.

manered and vertuous, neuer loseth their rewardes. Therefore howe muche soeuer wycked folke waxe mad agaynst 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 anye other then of themselves, truly he that gaue them such goodnes, or some other person myght take it from them. But forasmuch as to euery man his owne proper goodnes is his rewarde then euery 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 litle before, and vnderstand it thus. When y^e sayd good is felicitie or blessedncs, 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 dimnisshest, and no wickednes defaceth. And syncе it is thus that good folke neuer fayle of reward, then a wyse man may not doughte of the contynall and inseperable Payne of wycked folke. For when that good and euyll, Payne and rewarde, be contrarye one to another, then the things that we se to happen as a rewarde of good, the same thynge beyng contrarye must nedes be the ponyshmente of the euyll 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 euyll.

Therefore if the same euyll folke will esteme and praise themselfe, may they seme to be without ponishmēt: which euyl folke not onely extreme wyckednes of all euyll 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 litle before that euery thynge that is, is one. And the same one, is good, so the consequence to the same is, that euery thing that is certes the same semethe to be good.

Therefore by this meanes, what soeuer thynge fayleth and is

not good, it cessyth to be, or it is not. Whereby it cometh to passe that euyll folke cesseth to be the same that they were. But the same other fourme of manes body sheweth yet that wycked folke, haue bene men, and certes beyng turnyd into malyce or wyckednes, they haue lost the nature of man. But whē that goodness onely may exalte eurye 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 happeneth 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 rauener of other mennes goodes, thou mayst saye that he is lyke a woulfe. And if a man be cruel, and troubelous, and exercyseth hys toungue 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 distempryd, and wexeth wode for anger, it semeth that he do beare 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 thyng 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 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 dyuers figures of beastes, the one had the face of a bore, another was chaunged into a Lyon of Maremoryke, a coūtrye so called, dyd growe with tethe and clawes like a Lion. Another was chaūged into a woulf, and howled in stede of wepyng. Another walked aboute the house, as meke

There be two
vertues of
knowlege in
man, one is
vnderſtādinge
wherby we be
made like vnto
god : the other
is our sensys
whiche when
they obey not
reson makth
men like vnto
beasts.

Circis was a
womā that by
enchauntment
made drynkes
with herbes
y^t turned such
as dranke
therof, into
dyuers formes
of beastes for
the fygure of
the body only,
but yet ther
myndes were

not chaunged,
but remayned
as they were
before.

as a tigre of India. And although the power of Mercury, the God, whych is called the byrde of Archady, hauyng ptytie vpon the duke Ulixes, beyng compassed aboute with dyuers euylles, hath delyuered 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, sauynge that theyr mynde remayned as it was first, vnchaunged and bewayled the monstrus chaunge of þ body. O light hand of the goddes Circes that chaungeth the bodyes into the fourme of beastes, whyche is a smale thynge in respecte of the chaung 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 chaūg 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 vyses or synnes draweth menne vnto them more strongly, then the enchaūtmentes of Circes, and goeth thorowe or percyth mens hertes. 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 chaūged into beastes, by þ 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 lawefull for them, as it shalbe shewed in place conueniente. But yet if the selfe same thynge (that is thoughte to be lawefull 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 reuealed and shewed. For it semeth perchaunce incredible to some folke, that it behoueth that wycked folke be more vnhappye when they haue accomplished ther desyres, then

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

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

BOECI: I saye I graunt the same, but I herteley desyre that the wycked folke (forsakynge the power to do euyll) maye sone lacke the sayde thre folde myschye. 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 destrucyon, truelye hathe appoynted them an ende of theyr wretchednes.

For yf wyckednes makethe wycked folke then must he nedes be most wycked that longest is wycked. Whyche foresayde wycked folke I would iudge most vnhappye or caytyfe, 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 apperethe 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 iudgetest well in this, but he that thynketh it a harde thyng to agre to the conclusion, it behoueth hym to shew eyther that some false thyng hath gone before, or ells he must shewe that the conferrynge of propositions is not effectuall or maketh no force of a necessary conclusion, Or els yf he graunt the thinges precedent there is no cause at all, whye that he should complayne vpon the argument. For thys thyng that I shall say now shall no lesse seme maruaylous, but is soo necessarye to be concluded, of the thinges that be concluded before.

BOE: I saye, tell me what is it?

PHIL: Certes the sayd wycked folke be more happye and

To wyll to do euyll is worse, then to haue myghte to do euyll. But when myghte is ioyned to wyll, then foloweth the effecte, and then the myghte is worse then the wyll.

blessed that be ponyshed for their desertes, then yf no ponyshment of right do chastyce them at all. And I do not intend thys now, for that any man myght thynke that the wycked maners of men be corrected by ponishment, and that they be brought to the ryght waye for feare of ponishment, nor for that their Payne and ponyshment 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, thē for 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 myserye 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 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 ſame 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 ponishment that they suffer, whych is good, by reason of iustyce. And there is in the same wicked folke (when they be vnponyshed) some other euyll, that is to saye: the lacke of ponyshment, whyche lacke of ponyshmēt (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 wrongfullie perdoned and delyuered from ponyshment, then when they be ponyshed by iust judgement. And so it is manyfest that it is ryght to ponshe 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 thinges be consequences, to the thyngs that be concluded a lytell before. But I praye the tell me, dost thou thynke that any ponyshment is lefte for the soule after that the body is dede?

PHIL. Ye truelye and that very great ponishment, of the whyche soules I thynke 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 hytherto that thou myghtest know, y^e the myght and power of wycked folke (that semed to the most vnworthy) is no myght nor power. And that the wycked folke that y^u complaynest vpon that they were vnpunyshed, thou sawest dyd neuer wāt 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, shortelye to be ended. And that thou myghtest perceyue that it is not long, and that y^e 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 iust ponyshment, be more wycked then when they be ponyshed by iust iudgemente. And to thys 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 iudgements 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 euen so. For the commen people cannot lift vp their eyes (that be vsed to darkenes) vnto y^e 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 desyres, they do iuge that eyther the power of the wycked agaynst good folke, or their escapynge 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 applyed thy selfe to the most excellent and beste thynges. But if thou hast turnyd thy mynde vnto euyll thinges, 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

By the lawe
eternall all
things ought
to be in dewe
ordre as the
good to be re-
warded, and
the euyll to be
punysshed.

The cōmon
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 comen people whych (I haue shewed) be like vnto beastes? What woldest thou say yf that a man had vtterly 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 common people woulde not beleue the thynge that I shall saye, whyche 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 fayne 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 iudge, whether wouldest thou thynke hym worthy ponyshement that hathe done wrong, or he that hath suffered wrōg? BOE. I saye I woulde not doute but I would satisfye and contente hym that hath suffered wronge with the ponyment of hym that dyd the wrong. PHI. Then it semethe 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 wrong but of hym that doeth the wrong. BOE. Certes the orators do contrarye for they do labour to moue the iudge, 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 broughte (not with angre, but rather with merciful accusers) vnto judgemente, as sycke folke be broughte vnto the physicion, that the iudge 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 lawefull for them to se by any chyn or clifte the vertue and goodnes that they haue loste, and that they shoulde expulse the vlyenes of theyr synnes, by tormētes of paynes, to optayne some recompence of theyr goodnes) woulde not esteme thys for ponyshments, but wold forsake the diligence of suche oratours and defenders, and commyt them selfe holy to the accusars and to the judges. Whereby it happeth that hatred hath no place emongeste wise mē. For who hateth good folk but he be a very fole? And he hath no wyt that hateth wicked folke. 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, euē so much the more are they not to be hated, but to be pitied whose myndes wickednes greaueth, that is more fierse and cruell, than any syckenes of the body.

Wyse men
ought not hate
euyll men, but
to study to
bringe theym
to goodnes.
As the
Phisicion
laboureith too
make the
sycke hoole.

PHYLOSOPHY.

What pleasure haue you, to stere vp so great hatred, and so buslyte 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 darteres, bycause theyr maners be dyuers, and agre not togyther? Truly, the quarell and cause of crueltie is not suffycent 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 folk. 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 banisshedd 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 florysse in welth. So certes after this maner, that is to say: by riches honour and power, the offyce of a wyse man, is estemed more clere, and more assured of wysdom, then when felyctye or blyssednes of gouernours or rulers, is scattered or deuyded, as it were emonges the commē people next adioynynge as subiectes. Sythe that namely pryon, lawe, and other tormentes of lawefull paynes, do rather appertayne vnto myschious cytisens for whome they were ordeyned, then for good folke. Therfore I do greatly maruayle, why these thynges folowyng be turnyd 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 such a wrongfull confusion. For I woulde lesse meruail yf that I thought that al thynges were myngyd together with chaunce of fortune. But now God the gouernoure of all thynges increseth my meruaylynge, syth that he geueth often tymes plesaunt thynges to good folke, and sharpe thynges to euil folk: and contraryewyse he geuethe harde thynges to good folke, and to wycked folke theyr desyres, except the cause be knownen what difference is betwene goddes doynges, and fortunes chaunces. PHILOSO. It is no meruayle at all though people thinketh that there is somethinge folishe and confuse, when the reason of Gods ordynaunce is not knownen. But althoughe thou knowest not the cause of so grete a disposition, yet doute thou not but all thynges be well gouerned, forasmuche as god the good gouernor, attempereth and gouerneth the world vnyuersall.

PHILOSOPHYE.

He speaketh
after y^e maner
of the Poetes
faynyng, or
after the
sayeng of the
ignoraunt
people, that
doo thynde
that y^e sters do
drownethym
selfe in the
sea, whē they
seme too fall.

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 firmament. And likwyse he (that knowethe not whye the hornes 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 þ 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 whych is there belles, with many strokes or knockes at all the foresaid thinges. But no man wondrethe when þ 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 hete of the sonne, for in this it is euydent to perceyue the causes thereof. But in the former examples, the secret causes trobleth mēs 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 clodye and derke errore of ignorauance cesse, and lerne the causes of suchे chaunces. And thē certes, they shal no more seme meruailous vnto the.

BOECIUS.

I saye it is euen 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 reasones 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 philosophye smylynge a lytle thereat, sayd: thou requyrest me to shewe the, the greteste thinge of all thynges that maye be requyred, wherevnto scarse any thinge is left sufficente to resolute the same. For the matter that thou askest is such, that one dought beyng determyned, other doughtes innumerable do ryse vp thereof, as the heades 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 simplicitie 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

Hydra, was a
serpent in
maiishe
ground, in
Lerna y^t had
many heads,
and yf one
were cut of,
thre other
heads
sprange vp of
the same,
whiche ser-
pente, Her-

cules slewe, as appereth in Cronycles.

The thynges that Philosophy spake before, were dyryued of this principle, that god is persye good, and the end of all things, and the thinges that Philosophy now entendeth to speake, be dyryued of this principle, that god is the begynnynge of all effectes.

The dyffynction of prouidence.

The dyffynction of destynye.

parte of thy medicine, for the to know these thynges, although I haue lytle leasure to do it, yet I wyl endeuer my selfe to declare somewhat thereof. But if the swetenes of the versys or metyr of musycke, do delyght the any thyng at all, thou must defer and put of a lytle that delyght, vntyll I shall forme certayne resoness ioyned in order, together for that purpose. BOE: I say do what it please the. PHIL. Then spake phylosophy thus as one that began to speake by another principle. The generacion of all thynges, and the procedynges of natures mutabilitie, and all other thynges that moueth 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 conceyued 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 prouydence is the same deuyne or godly reason that is established in the soueraine hygh pryncipe of al thynges, which godly resō diisposeth and apointeth al things. But destinie is a disposicion, cleuyng vnto mutable or temporal thinges, by which dispositiō, prouidēce knitteth al things in order. For prouidēce 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 explycation or declaracion of temporall order, that appertayneth vnto destynye, being vnite or knytte together, in the syght of gods thought, is called prouydence or ordynaunce. But the vnitng of such ordynaunce temporall, beyng deuyded and shewed in successyon of tymes, may be called destinie. Which destinie and prouydence, althoughe 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 prouidence. For lyke as a workeman conceyuing in his mynde the forme or fashyon of the thyng that he is about to make, moueth and goeth aboute thefecte of his worke, and ledeth by temporal or bodily ordy-

naunces the thing that he had conceyued symply and presently
in his thought, euen so certainelye god by his prouidence or
ordinaunce disposest and ordrythe singulerly and fyrmely al
thynges that be to be done. But he mynstreth dyuersly and
temporally the same thynges by destynye that he hath disposed
or appoyned to be done. Then whether that destynye be exer-
cised by certaine godly spryrts, attending vpon gods prouidence,
or by the soule, or by nature, holye seruyng god, or by the celes-
tiall mouinge or constellacion of sterres, or by the vertue of
Aungels, or by the dyuers craftes and soteltyes of deuylls, or by
anye of them, or by them all, the order of destinie is accom-
plished and done. Certes it is manyfest that gods prouidence
is a stedefast and symple or pure forme or maner, of thynges to
be done.

Prouyndce
ferther
dyffyned.

But destynye, 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 vnder gods
prouidence and ordynaunce. To the whyche prouidence or ordyn-
aunce destynye is subiecte it selfe. But some thynges that be
subiecte and put vnder godes prouidence, and ordynaunces, doo
excell and passe the order of destynye. Truely the thinges that
be fixed and knyt faste nyghe to the godhed, do excell the order
of mouable destynye, for as circles or wheles that do turne them
selfe about one self centyr or poynte, the innermost circle next
vnto the centyr or poynt, cometh and ioyneth next of al vnto
that which is a lone in the myddell, and is as it were a certayne
centyr or pointe to the other circles or wheles, that be set and
placyd aboute, and be turned without the centre or poynt. And
the vttermost cyrkle 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 poynte. But yf there
be any thinge that knytte the and vnyttethe it selfe, to the same
myddell centyr, or poynte, it is driuen into simplicitie, that is to
sai : into a thinge pure and alone of it self, constant and im-
mouable, and ceasseth to be seperate or to go at libertye. And
so by lyke reason the thynge that departeth or goeth awaye
ferthest from the fyrist thought of God, is wrapped with greater
bandes of destynye. And soo much more is any thynge fre from
distinye, as it is nere the same centyr, or poynte of thynges, that

Destyny
ferther
dyffyned.

is to saye nere vnto god. And yf the thyng do cleue firmely to the hygh thought of GOD without mouing, truely it passeth the necessitie and power, of destinie.

Therefore like comparison or diuersitie as is betwene reasonyng, and vnderstandyng, and betwene the thinge engendred and the thyng that is, and betwene tyme and eternitie, and betwene the circle, and the middle centyr or poynt, euen so is the mouable order of destynye vnto the stedefast simplicitie or puritie, or gods prouidence and ordynaunce. The same order of destenyne moueth heuen and the sterres, and tempereth the elementes together emongest them self and chaūgeth them by enterchaungeable mutacions. And the same order of destynye renueth all thynges, growinge, springing and fallyng by lyke progressions of frutes and of sedes, that is to saye, of all beastes and growing thinges.

And thys order of destenyne 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 begynnynge 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 rasshely, if that restrainyd not : wherby it happeth that although all thyngs seeme confuse, darke, and troublesome to you that be not able to consyder thys order of things : the proper maner of gods prouidence directynge it selfe to good, disposeth and ordereth all thyngs. 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 aboun-dauntlye befor) do seke for good, but that wycked errour do peruer, 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 begynnynge, 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 desyre, and sometyme the thynges that they hate and abhorre. Do men now liue in such perfection of mynde that suche folk as they do iudge to be good or euil

Ther be two
maners of
destynye, one
consysteth in
worldly
thinges, that
bee mutable,
and the other
dependeth
vpon goddes
prouidence,
whiche is con-
staunt, and not
mutable.

A mā that
kylleth him
self, preten-
deth good to
hym selfe, to
auoyd the
trouble of his
mynd, este-
myng a short
deathe of the
bodye, better
then a trouble-
some life here.

Mens iudge-
mentes be vn-
perfyte to

must nedes be suche as they doo iudge them ? But mens iudgements in this thyngē do vare and not accorde. For the same folke that some mē do esteme worthy reward, other agayne do deme to be worthy of ponyshmente. But let vs graunt that some mā 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 condiciōs of the bodye ? Certes is not this lyke a myracle vnto a man that knowethe not, whye that swete thynges agree well to hole folke, and bytter thinges to sycke folk ? Also why some sycke folk be heled with gentle medicines, and other sick folke with sharp medicines. But the phisicion that knoweth bothe the maner and temperaunce of helthe and syckenes, meruayleth not therat. But what other thyngē semethe to be the helth of mens mindes and thoughts, but onely vertue ? and what other thyngē semeth ſicknes of mens myndes and thoughts, 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 beholdeþ and loketh downe from the high towre of his prouidence, he knowethe what is conueniente and meete for euerye man, and geueth to euerye manne the thing that he knoweth is mete for him. Nowe hereof commethe thys notable myracle of the order of destinie, when that god (that knoweth all thynges) doeth the thyngē that the ignoraunte people do wonder at. For to speake a fewe thynges of the profounde depenes of the godhed that mans resonne, may attayne vnto, the same man that thou demyst iust and kepyng equitye, and ryght, semeth contrarye to Gods prouidence that knoweth all thynges. And certes my familier felowe Lucan declareþ, that the cause victorius, plesyth the gods, and the cause that is ouercome pleaseth Plato. Therefore what soeuer thinge thou seist donne here in this world contrary to the knowledge and expectacion of the ignoraunte folk, it is the ryght order of thynges, but to thy iudgement, it is a peruers confusion of thynges. But admyt that some man is so well learned or instructed, ſ̄ both gods iugement, and mās iugement do agre in him together as one, but yet ſ̄ 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

judge the
secrete causes
of goddes
ordinacne
and workes.

God knoweth
thee thoughte
of man, and
the Phisician
knoweth the
complexion,
And men
knoweth not
what is good,
or euyll for
men, because
they knowe
not who is
good, nor who
is euyll, as
touchyng
the Soule.

God fauered Job, that aduersytie shuld not hurte his pacience.

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 perfitt in al vertues, holy and nere vnto god, so that gods prouidence woulde demie it wronge þ he shulde be touched with any aduersitie, in so much that he will not suffer him to be vexed wþ any infyrmite 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 man from aduersitie. And often tymes it happith that the cheyf thynge þ be to be done, be geuen vnto good folke, that the wyckednes abounding in euyl folke, shold be oppressid. And god dystributeth and geueth to some folke nowe good, nowe euyll thinges, accordyng to the qualitie of theyr mind. And some good folke he greueth with aduersitie, leste that they should waxe proude, of long prosperitie. And other folke he sufferethe to be vexed with harde thynge, that thereby they may confyrme the vertues of their mynde, by the vse and exercysse of pacience. Some folke doo feare more then they ought to feare, þ thing that they maye well suffer. And other dispisethe more then they oughte, the thyng that they cannot suffer, and god ledethe them into experiance of them selfe, that is to saye : makethe them to knowe themselfe by aduersities. And manye haue optayned a worshypfull fame of thys worlde by the meanes of a glorious deth. And some that coulde not be ouercome by ponishment, haue shewed example vnto other, that vertue cannot be ouercome by aduersitie. And therc is no dout but that all these thynge be done ryghtfully, and ordynately, for the goodness of them, for whome they seme to happen. For certes where as sometyme aduersities, 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 meruaylethe, for all men doo thynke 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

The pacience of Job, was confyrmed by ponishment.

S. Thomas fered to go preche in India.

Saint Peter sayd, he wold not forsake God, to dye therfore.

The martirs optayned a honorable name by theyr death and passyon.

prosperitie whych men doo se often tyme serue y wycked folke. In whych thing I thynke also the same to be ordeyned by god, that some mans nature is perchaunce so ouerturnyng and importunate vnto wyckednes, that the pouertie of his houshold may rather prouoke hym to stèle, 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 leste perchaunce the losse of the same prosperitie whiche is pleasaunt vnto hym, should turne hym to sorowe and heuines, 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 vnworthelye gotten hathe ouer thrownen other into iust destruction accordelye. Some be permittet to haue power to ponysh, for that it shuld be an occasion of continuaunce of exercyse in vertue to good folke, and a ponyshment to the wycked folke. For as there is no concorde or agremente 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 selfe by theyr wyckednes, that rendith their conscience, and doo often tymes suche thynges, 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 moued 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 thyngs be good) when he in vsynge of those euyles, choseth oute thefecte of some goodnes, that is to say, when god turneth euyll to good. For order bindeth together all thynges, soo that what thyng 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 folyshnes, or oute 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

God causeth
wickednes to
make the
wicked good.

before all worldes. And certes it is not lawfull for men eyther to comprehend 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 whyles that he hastethe to retayne and kepe the thynges that he hath made into his similytude and lykenes, that is to saye: in goodnes, he excludeth all wyckednes from the bondes of hys commenaltye of thys world, by order of necessite of destenie : whereby it happeth, that the euyl that men do thynke 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, w^t the wayte of thys diffcilte question, and also weryed with the prolixitie or length of my reason, lokest for som swetenes of verses or metyr. Therfore take thys drafte, whereby when thou arte refreshed, and stronger, thou mayst ascende into hier questions.

Many thynges
seme euyl to
mans judge-
mēt that be
good to gods
prouydence
y^t dysposeth
all things for
the beste.

PHILOSOPHY.

Phylosophye
speaketh after
the maner of
the Poetes
which do fain
that the sters
and sonne
drowneth
them selues in
the seas.

If thou wylt behold wyselye 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 cōpas 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) couetethe to drenche hys flames in the same sea, seinge other sterres to be drowned therin. 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 loue euerlastynge of gods prouidence, makethe the enterchaungeable courses of the sterres. And by suche mutuall concorde, troublesome warre and varians, is expulsed from the mouths of the sterres, that is to saye : from the regions celestiall that beareth the sterres. Also this concord tempereth the foure elementes by equal maners that the moist elements that stryuueth with the dry elementes, doo geue place and suffer the drye planetes at certayne tymes. And that the cold elementes agre with the hote

planetes. And that the fier beinge the lyghtest elemēt, 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 geueth swete sauours. And ȳ hote sommer ripeth the corne. And the Autumne (loded w̄ appells) cometh again. And the droppynge rayne moisteth the wynter. This temperans of gods prouidence, norysheth and bringeth forth all thynges, that bearethe lyfe in the world. The same temperaunce taking awaye the thynges that be made, hydeth them and bereueth them of there beinge, 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 vnmouable hymselfe, and rulethe all thynges, and turneth and moderateth the orders of thynges, being of himselfe a kynge by his wyse gouernaunce, a lord by power of creatyng all thynges, the fountayne of all goodnes, the begynnyng of al thynges, the lawe binding all thynges, and the wise iudge, of equitie and iustyce, rewarding euery man accordyng to his desert, which god moueth al thynges to go fourth, and likewise restraining al things stoppith th̄ from their course, and establissheth for a tyme, thinges mutable and wanderynge by their nature. And except that god callyng backe the ryght progressions and groundes of thynges, constraineth and reuocateth al thynges againe into a due compas and course, the thinges that the stedefast order of his prouidence nowe contayneth, beinge seperate from the fountayne of their begynnyng, shoulde fayle and come to nouȝt. Thys fountayne is the continual loue of all thynges that haue life. And all thinges desireth to be kept w̄ 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.

The sterres
haue no vertue
by theyr selfe,
but by god,
and be as ser-
uantes obe-
dyente at
goddes wyll,
and com-
aundeniente.

All thynges
be ruled and
gouerned by
god in comp-
pas, so that
of seedes,
spryngeth
fourth herbes
and of the
herbes, seedes,
and lykewyse
of the fyre
spryngeth
ayre, and of
the ayre fyre
agayne.

PHILOSOPHYE.

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 dout. 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 exercyse good folke, or for thintente to ponyshe and correcte euyll folke. And so all fortune is good that appereth eyther to be iuste or profytabel. BOE. I saye it is a verye true reason. And yf I do consider the prouidence of god, or destinye whych thou taughtest a lytle before, thy sentence is knyt together with stronge resonis. 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 vse of the people. BOE. I saye do as it shall please the. PHI. Dost thou not iudge all thyng good that profyteth. BOE. Yes. P. The fortune that dothe exercyse 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 exerciseth, 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. PHILOSOPHI. But what sayest thou, of plesaunte fortune, that is geuen to good folke for rewarde, doo the commē people iudge the same wicked fortune? BOE. No truelye, 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 folke by iuste ponyshment, do the commen people esteme it good. BOE. I saye that they do iudge the same most wretched of all thynges that maye be thought. PHI. Take hede therefore lest that we folowynge the opinion of the commen people, haue not concluded a thyng gretely, not to be thought of them. BOE. What is that. P. Certes of these thinges that are graunted it fortuneth that of them that be other in professing of vertue, or in thencrese 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

All maner of fortune re-
wardeth exer-
ciseth or cor-
recteth, and
if it be referred
to God, it is
good, and yf
it be referred
to any other
thig it is good
or euell, ac-
cording as it
is felte and
taken.

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 ouercome 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 conflycyt 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 stedefast 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 (yf it do not exercyse the good folke, or correct and chastyce the wicked folke) it greueth or ponysheth.

Vertue consisteth in y^e myddle betwene .ii. vices that be extreme, for aduersitie putteth a man in desperation, prosperite causeth presumption and boldenes.

PHILOSOPHY.

Agamēnon the sonne of Atrydes beyng aduenger of wronges, done vnto his brother Menelaus the kynge, held warre tenne yeares together agaynste the Troyans, and the citie of Troye, and dyd reuenge (with destruction) the chambers of his sayde brother Menelaus defiled, that is to say: he reuenged the rauishynge of hys brothers wyfe, named Queene Helayne, that was taken awaye by Parys and by hym carnally knownen, whych Helaine was kept vp in his brothers chamber. Whyles that the said Agamēnon desired to sprede and sette fourth the Sayles and Nauye of the grekes. And bought or optayned prosperous wyndes (that before were contrarye vnto him) with the bloud of his owne doughter, kylled for a sacryfyse vnto the goddes for the same, he putteth of the fatherlye loue, that he bare to hys sayde doughter, and the pryst being sad or sory, to sacryfyce her (as y custome then was) cutteth her throte for to haue a prosperous wynde of the goddes in y iourney or viage, against Priamus, and the Troyans. Ulixes named Itacus lamented that he had lost his felowes, whome the

Paris the son
Kynge Priamus of Troy,
stale awaye
Quene Helayne, the wife
of Kyng Menelaus, and
kept her as
his concubyne,
for y^e whiche
began the
battell betwixt
the Grekes,
and the Troyans,
soo that
Troye was distroyed and
the Troyans.

Whē y^e wynd
was agaynste
the Grekes,
and wolde not
serue theyr
shippes: Agamēnon dyd
sacryfyse his
owne doughter, vnto Diana
the goddes to
haue a good
and prosperous wind.

Ulixes a Greke
commynge
from the seage
of Troy, was
taken, and his
felowes de-
voured by
Polyphemon,
a Gyaunte
hauyng but
one eye.
The Centaures,
were halfmen,
half Beastes.
The Byrdes
were named
Harpies
hauyng Vyr-
gyns faces and
dystroyed the
cōtrye about
them.
Cerbarus was
porter of a
place called
hell, and dyd
hurte the
coātrye al
about.
Diomede is a
gyaunt that
kylled men,
and made his
hors eate
them. Hydra
was a serpente
hauyng
manye heade,
and whā one
was cut of,
another
sprange vp.
Achelous
was a flood y^t
could chaūge
it selfe into
a Bull with
one horne,
and intodyuers
other formes.
Antheus was
a gyaūt, that
beynge werye
with fighting
wold recouer
strengthe by
touching ye
groūd.
Cacus was a
gyaunt that
robbed, and
dystroyed the
countrye.

cruell giaunt Poliphemus, lying in his greate caue, or den, had deuoured and swallowed downe into his empty bely. Neuertheles Ulixes beyng wrothe 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 trauayles he toke in hys tyme, for he ouercame the proude Centaures, he kyllled the cruell Lyon, and toke awaye hys skynne, he strake and droue awaye the byrdes with hys arrowes, he toke awaye the golden apples from the dragon, with the hed of metall, that watched and kepte them. He drue Cerbarus frō hel with a threfolde chayne. He ouercame Diomede and gaue his fleshe vnto his cart horse for meate, he slew the serpent Hidra and brent 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 gyaūt Antheus on the costes of Libie. And also Cacus y^t gret monster, that trobled the kyng Euander. The same Hercules slew y^t huge bristled bore, that fouled the shoulders of hym with his fome, whych shulders 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 way 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 plesures or ease, whye do you turne your backes and forsake vertuous trauayle, to resist vice with vertue, for the man that hath ouercome the plesures, and desyres of the worlde, 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 auctoritie most worthy. And I do proue 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 knownen, 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 straunge 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 affyrme 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 settethe

Nothing com-
meth of no-
thinge, in
comparson
to a pertyculer
cause that
supposeth a
matter, but
in comparson
to God, whiche
is the cause
vniuersall of
all thynges, it
is otherwyse
for he made
al things of
nothing.

The diffini-
ciō of hap or
chaūce of
fortune.

all thinges wisely in good order? For it is a true saying, that nothyng, is of nougħt, whych saying no olde manne hath denied at any time, howe be it they haue not put the same proposucion 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 yf any thyng shold come of nothyng, it shuld seeme to be rysen of nougħt. 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 say: that chaunce shuld come of sodayne mouing without any coniunction, or knyting of causes.

BOE. I saye what than? Is there nothing that may iustely be called eyther chaunce or fortune? Or is there anye thyng (although the commen people, knoweth it not) whervnto those wordes of chaunce and fortune do agre. PHI. My Arystotle speketh thereof, in his boke of phisike, and defynethe the same both bryfely and nere the truthe, by reson. 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 digginge the grounde for thentent to tyll the felde, fyndethe a pece of gold dygged vp, certes the same is thoughte to come by chaunce. But yet it commethe not of nougħte. For it hathe proper causes, whereof the fyndyng 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 commethe, by causes metyng and encountryng 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 tylled 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 vnlokēd for, commynge of causes, that be done for some other thyng or purpose. But the same fatal order procedyng from the ineuytable knytyng together, or coniunction 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 spryne vp together as one fountayne, out of the holownes or rockes of the hylles, or bankes of the countrye of Achemeny called Perthie, where as the people doo fyght fleyng and do cast darteres backeward, and stycketh them in the brests of their enemyes that do pursue them. And a none they the sayde floudes doo deuide them selfe 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 flowing 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 flowing 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 purveyaunce.

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 euen 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 constrainethe and kepethe in the mocions or effectes of mans thought ? PHI. Certes there is libertie of fre wyll and there was neuer any resonable nature, that is to saye : naturall vnderstanding but it had lybertye of fre wyll. For the thyng that hath reson naturally, hath iudgement whereby it maye deserue 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 selfes in the contemplacion of goddes mynde and wyll, and they be lesse free when they slyde into bodyes humayne, that is to saye, whē they behold worldly thyngs. And they be yet lesse fre, when they be gathered together into erthly mēbers 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 understandyng. For after that they haue turned away ther eyes of reason and vnderstandingyng frō the light of the hygh and perfyt truth, to inferor and darke thynges, that is, to worldelye, 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 prysioners, 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 thynges predestinate, according to their desertes, seith all thynges and hereth all thynges.

PHILOSOPHYE.

Homere a man of swete eloquēce 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) perceethe 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 withe a more difficulte dought then I was before.

PHI. 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 deceyued, 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 deceyued) hath before knownen and perceiued. For if they might be wrested or altered 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 dissolve 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 vnknownen vnto goddes prouidence.

And by the same meanes it behouethe, that thys thyng, that is concluded of chaunce, slydeth into the cōtrary 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 thinges that ar to come, be purueyed or foresene of god. As though men serched for what cause pre-science is, whether it be the cause of necessitie of euerye thinge

to come, or whether the necessitie of thinges 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 chaüce of thynges before knownen, is necessarye, howe soever the ordre of causes standeth. All though that it semeth not, that prescience or forknowledge bryngeth in necessytie of betydyng, or happyng of thynges to come. For yf anye man sytteth, it behoueth that the opinion of hym is true that thinkethe that he sytteth. And lykewyse agayne on the other parte, yf the opynyon be true of anyc man, that for bycause he setteth it must nedes be of necessitie, that he sytteth, then is there necessytie in both. For in the one is necessitie to sytte, and certes in the other is necessitie of truthe. But anye man sytteth not therefore, for bycause the opinion of hys sytting is true. But rather the opynyon of syttinge is trewe : for that it chaüced 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 notwithstandingyng there is a commen necessitie in both. So then it apperyth to make lyke reasons of gods prouidence and of thinges to come.

For although things be therfore puruayed, bycause they be to come, yet certes they happen not therefore because they be purueyed. Neuertheles it behoueth of necessitie that eyther things 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 things be thoughte or sayd to be the cause of the high prescience or fore knowledge of God. But what other thinge is it to thynke that god purueyeth thynges to come therefore, bycause they be to betyde or come, then to thinke that the thyngs, that sometyme haue chaunced, be the cause of the high prouidence or purueyance 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 ſame thing is. And so when I haue knowē that any thing shall happen, it behoueth of necessitie that the same thing come to passe. So then it folowethe, that the chaunce of things knownen before they chaunce, cannot be eschewed or auoyded. Ferthermore 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

Origene, dyd
Saint Paule to
the Romanes
sayth.
Anye thynge
shall not bee
therfore, bi-
cause God
knew it shuld
be, but because
it shuld be,
therfore god
knewe it be-
fore it was
done.

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 knownen before that it shall come, for as scyence or knowledge, is not myngled wyth falshed, euen so the thyngē 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 euery thyng be euen so as science or knowledge comprehendeth 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 thyngē shall come, that is also possyble not to come or happen, he is deceyued, which thing 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 shal 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 comprehendeth nothyng certayne ne stable? Or what dyfferethe thys fore knowledge from the folyshe prophecy of Thiresy the profysiar that sayd: whatsoeuer I shall say, eyther it shalbe, or it shall not be? Or els what is the dyuine prouydence better than mans opinion, if it demeth thyngs vncertayne as men doo, of whose iudgement 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 assuredly shall come.

Wherefore there is no libertie in the counsayles and actes of mankynde, that the deuyne thoughte (that loketh vpon all things without error of falshed) knytteth and byndethe 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 thē in vayne, rewardes be ordeyned for good folke, and ponyshment, for wycked folke when that no fre and voluntary mouyng of mans thought, or corage hath deserued the same rewarde or payne. And the same thyng shoulde then seme most wycked, that nowe is iudged most iust and best, that is to say ether to ponshe wycked folke or to reward good folke, the whych folke ther owne proper wyll hath not enforcyd, to eyther one or other,

Thyresyus was
.vii. yeres a
man and .vii.
yeares a wo-
man, and
knewe the
pleasures of
bothe. And
Inno for his
iudgements of
women, made
hym blynde,
and Iupiter
made hym to
prophesye.

The know-
ledge of God,
is euer certain
and trewe.

All vertues
and vyses do
spryngē of fre
electiō of good
and euyll, and
ponysshement
and rewarde,
cōmeth for y^e
fre acte of
good or euyll,
and yf fre wyll
be taken away.

then is there
noo fre elec-
tion, nor act
nor dede.

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 vyses nor vertues, but rather a myxte and indiscrete confusyon 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 lawefull for mans counsails or wylles to do nothyng, that is to sai that mankynde hath no power to wil or do any thyng but as it is constrainyd. And so it cometh to passe that all our vyses be referred vnto god the author of al good thinges, that is to say, then god is to be blamed for our vyses 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 altered knytteth together al things that men desyre. 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 rewarde of gods grace, and that is onely the way that is to vnderstand, by hope and prayer, wherby 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 seperate and vnioyned from hys fountayne or begynnnyng whych is god, doo fayle and come to nougħt, 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 mynged will not be coupled together. Is there any discorde or varyance in true thynges. They do cleaue together certayne and syrme one with another. But mans mynde, drowned and

ouercome wyth the blynde members of the body, cannot (by the fyer or lyght of the soule oppressed by the bodye) knowe the subtyll coniunction or ioynynge 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 thynge, that she (beyng carefull) desyreteth to knowe? Who desyreteth or laboureth to knowe the thynges that he knowethe all redye? And if the mynde knowethe not the thynge that it desyreteth, 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, wisshest or desirest 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 thynge founde and is ignoraunt of the same? But when the soule loketh vpon the profounde hygh thought, that is to say: vpon god, then it knoweth the summe or effecte and all thynges together vnyuersall and particular. 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 vniversall knowledge of thyngs, and leseth ſ peculiar 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 vtterly 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 remembraunce 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 reserued and kept styll 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 dyuynacions, and thou thy selfe hast, long and vtterly sought for the same but yet it hath not ben any wher suffycyently and firmlye determinyd of any of you at this day. And ſ peculiar cause of ſ darkenes or diffycultie therof, is for that the mouyng of mans reason can not be applyed vnto the symplicitie, or purenes of goddes

prouydence, that is to saye : mans reason can not comprehend the thyng that god seyth. Whiche prouydēce of God, yf it myght be thought, or compassed by mans wyt, then were it vitterlye 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 thynkest that the reason of them that do assoyle this, is not good nor effectuall. The which reason, or solucion iudgeth that lybertie of fre wyll can not be let by prescience or fore knowledge for by cause it supposeth that prescyence is not the cause of necessytye in things to come, takest thou any other argumente of necessitie of thynges to come, els where, but that the thyngs that be knownen cannot fayle, but com to passe? Therfore yf prescience or fore knowledge of thyngs to come putteth no necessytye in thynges to come (as thou thy selfe diddest confesse a litle before) what, is there any cause that voluntarye determinacions or actes of thynges be compelled to certayne happenes or chaunces? That thou mayst the better vnderstand by way of example what may folow, let vs suppose that there is no prescience, should therfore the thyng (inasmuch as belōgeth thereto) that commeth of fre wyll, be constrainyd to come by necessytye.

BOE. No. PHI. Then lette vs suppose agayne that there is prescience, but that it putteth no necessytye in thyngs to come, then (as I suppose) the same lybertie of wyll shall remayne hoole and fre from all necessytye. But thou wylt say that although presciēce is no cause of necessytye in thynges to come : yet it is a sygne that they be to come by necessytye. Therfore by this meanes althoughe prescyens had neuer ben : yet it may appere that chaūces of thinges 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 happenethe by necessitie, that it maye appere that prescience or foreknowledge, is the sygne of thys necessytye or els yf there be no necessytye, the same prescience maye not be the sygne of the thyng, that is not.

But nowe it apperethe that the profē of thys (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

The sygne that wyne is in any place to sell, is not the cause of sellynge but a sygne of sellynge.

be purveyed to com. As though we do beleue that the thinges
þ 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 thyngē thou mayst easely perceiue by this
example, we do se manye thynges with our eies whyles they are
in doyngē, as those thynges whyche 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 moued by compulsion of our eyes,
or by lokyng on.

PHI. Than the thinges whych (when men doo them) haue no
necessitie that men do them. And the same thynges be to come
withouthe necessitie, before they be done. Wherfore ther be some
thinges to come whose commynge is quyte and fre from any
necessitie. For certes I thynke no man will say thys that those
thinges that nowe be, were not fyrste before they were done.
And the same thinges although men hadde knownen them before,
yet haue they fre chaunces. For as the knowledg of thinges
presente, bringeth in no necessitie to thinges that men do, euen
soo prescience or fore knowledge of thinges to come, bryngeth
in no necessitie to those thyngs that are to come. But thou
sayest that the same thinge is to be doughted, whether there
maye be anye prescience or fore knowledge of such thynges as
haue none necessarye chaunces. For they seme to disagre or
varye, that is to vnderstande of prescience and thinges to come.
For thou thynkest that yf thynges be knownen before they come,
þ of necessitye, they must folowe and come. And, yf there be no
necessitie, they might not be knownen before. And thou thinkest
that nothing may be comprehended, by prescience, or foreknowle-
dge of god, but it be certayne. And if those thynges that
haue vncertayne chaunces be purveyed as thynges certayne, thou
takest that for to be some ambyguitie or doughte of opinion, and
not for the truthe of scyence or knowledge. For thou beleuest
that it is agaynst the hole effectes of science or knowledge
to iudge a thyng otherwayes then the thinge is, and in thys thou
doest erre. The cause of whiche errorre is that all thinges that
any man hath knownen, he thinketh that it is knownen by the

strength and nature onely of those things that be knownen, whych 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 thē 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 syght 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 moued about the same roundnes, comprehendeth and holdethe the roundnes therof by the partes therof. Also the ouewarde sensys, beholdeth the manne him selfe after one maner, imaginacion after another maner, reson after another sorte, and the deuine intellygence or vnderstandyng, beholdeth hym farre otherwyse. For the ouewarde 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 vniuersall cōsideracion the same kind and nature of man, that is in all perticuler partes, naturallye. But the eye of intellygence, or vnderstandyng 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 consydered, that the hyghe strengthe for to comprehend thynges cōprehendeth 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 beholde 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 thyng, after it hath conceyued the fourme, it iudgeth and decerneth certaynelye all thyngs that be vnder the fourme, that is to say, all thynges ſ̄ be in man. But yet it comprehendeth or knoweth the same forme after such maner, ſ̄ it can not be knownen to any of ſ̄ lower powers, ſ̄ 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 thyng vnyuersall) vsethe nether imaginacion, nor outewarde wyt, yet it comprehendeth thynges imaginable and sensible. For this reason is the thyng that defyneth the vniuersal thyng, of the thing conceyued thus. Man is a two fotedde beast and resonable, whych knowlege when it is vnyuersall, yet euerye man knoweth that man is a thyng imagynable and sensyble. Whych thing reason considereth not, by imaginacion, or wytte, but by a reasonable conceyuyng thereof. And also imaginacion (although it taketh begynning of wit to see and to make dyuers sygures, of thynges) yet it knoweth all thynges, sensyble wythout the wyt, not by sensyble reason of iudgynge, but by reason, imagynable. Seyst thou not therfore that all thynges, in knowyng doo vse rather theyr owne proper faculte and power, then the power or faculte of thynges, that be knownen. And that not without cause. For when euerye iudgement is the acte of hym that iudgeth, it behoueth that euery man performe hys worke and purpose, not by any forayne or straunge power or facultie, but by his owne proper power, and strength.

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 say : philosophers, Stoicians, that were very darke or obscur in theyr sentences, the whyche 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, whē 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 suffryng 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 powers of
the soule be
actife, or
doyng and
not passyue,
or suffryng al
thonghe they
seme to be
dull vntyl they
be stered by
outewarde
thynges.

The mynde,
or wyt is pas-
sive by reson
of possible
understanding
and yet more
actiu in un-
derstanding
then passive
of outward
bodys, and
the cause of
vnderstādings
oughte not to
be attrubuted
to outwardre
thinges: as
the Stoicience
thoughte and
intended.

decerneth al thynges and beholdeth al thynges pertyculerlye? Or whence is the strength of our myndes that deuydeth al knownen thynges and gatherethe together thynges that be deuyded? And from whence commeth the power that choseth both wayes, that is to say: to ioine and to deuyde? Or whence is the power that otherwhyles lifteth up our hed or mynde to hygh thynges, and otherwhyles goethe downe or fallethe 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 efficiente or actyfe, whych is farre stronger then the cause pacient or sufferyng, and receyueth more the fygurres and similytudes of the matter imprinted 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 mouyng the power, and strength of the mynde, or wyt to worke. As when the lyght stryketh or touchethe the eyes, or a voice sounding in þ ears, then the power of the mynde, beynge sterred vp, callynge vnto lyke mouynges, the kyndes of thynges, that it holdeth within it selfe, applyeth and ioyneth the same kyndes to the sayde outwardre Images, fygures, or symylytudes, 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.

Yf mans
mynde in
knowyng,
foloweth her
owne mouyng,
and not the
mouing of the
thyng that is
knownen: moch-
more goddes
prouidence
foloweth her
owne proper
mouyng in
knowledge,
and not the
mouinges of
the thing that
it knoweth.

But yf in sensyble or felynge bodyes, the obiecte, or outwardre qualyties, 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 strēgh of the actyfe or workyng mynde, which prouoketh and sterreth the acte or worke of the mynde in it selfe, and exciteth and moueth 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 iudgethe by hys owne proper strength the passion subiecte to the bodye, much more the thinges 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 iudgingyng, outwardre obiects or qualities, 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 substancies. For the sensys or wytte beyng onely destitute or baren of other knowledge, commeth to lyuyng thynges immouable, as vnto oysters and such lyke shell fyshes of the sea, that be noryshed cleuynge vnto 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 vnto mankynde, as intellygence or vnderstandingyng appertaineth onely unto the deuyne nature.

Whereby it folowethe that 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 agaynst reason, saying that the same vnyuersall thyng that reason thynketh to see, and beholde in it selfe, is nothyng at all. For they do saye, that the thyng that is sensyble and imaginable, maye not be vnyuersall. Therfore eyther the iudgement of reason is true, and that nothyng is sensyble, or that because that reason knoweth that many thynges be subiect to wyt, and imaginacyon, a man would thynke that the conceyuyng of reason were false and vain whyche conceyuyng of reason consydereth the thyng that is sensyble and synguler, as a thyng vniuersal. And yf that reason would aunswere on the contrarye parte vnto these thynges, that is to saye: vnto wyt and imaginacion, saying that she beholdeth ſt thing that is sensyble, and the thing that is imagynable, by the meanes of vnyuersall thynges, and that they, that is to say: wyt and imagynacyon maye not attayne vnto the knowledghe of the thing that is vniuersall by cause theyr knowledge can not passe the bodylye fygures. And would also saye that for the knowledge of thynges, men ought to beleue and credyte rather the more fyrme and perfyt judgement of things in stryfe. Than in suche controuersy, would not we (that haue the power, as well of reason as imagynation and wyt) 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 inferiuors
to reason, and
all thre be in-
feriuors to
diuyne intelli-
gens.

The power
of the soule
that hathe
mooste know-
ledge is mooste
excellent.

For (as thou diddest saye) if that some thynges seme not to haue certayne and necessarye chaunces, they cannenor be knownen 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 commeth by necessitie. Therefore yf we maye haue suche iudgemente of the dyuyne 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 thynke that it were ryght and mete, that mans reson should submyt it selfe and geue place, to the deuyne thought. Wherefore yf we may, let vs be lyft vp or let vs ryse vppe by dilygente consideracion into the toppe of that hyghe dyuyne 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 hygh 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.

If knowldg
should follow
the power of
the thyng that
is knownen and
not the power
of the thyng
that knoweth,
then as mans
reason, know-
eth vncer-
tainly thyngs
to come: euen
so shoulde the
dyuyne intel-
ligence.

But bycause
gods prouide-
nace passeth
mans intelly-
gence, or
reason: ther-
for it know-
eth certayn
that thyng,
that mans
reason can not
attayne vnto
but is vncer-
tainye of.

PHYLOSOPHY.

By howe greate dyuersytie of shapes and figures, do the beastes go vpon the ground. For some haue straite bodies (as serpentes and al crepynge 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 snayles. 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 beastes that delyghteth 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 beastes although thou seyst that they do varye and dyffer in theyr varyable fourns and shapes that is to saye: although they be of dyuers kyndes and fashyons, yet their faces beyng bowed downewarde towarde the grounde, may shewe theyr bestyall,

heuy, and dul sences or wits. But mankynde alone lyfteth vp hys hye toppe or head and being light, standeth with a vpryght bodye and beholdeth the earth vnder hym. Therefore excepte thou beyng all worldly, arte euyll aduySED, or oute of thy ryghte mynde, the vpryght stature or fygure of thy bodye warneth the, or putteth the in remembraunce that thou seke heauen with thy vpryghte 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.

For as moche as mans body is straite vp toward heauen, yf thee mynde therof shuld not be lyft vp in helenly cōtēplacion, the bodye shoulde seme more worthye then the soule.

PHYLOSOPHY.

Therfore forasmuch as it is shewed a lytell before, that all that is knownen, is not knownen 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 substāice, that we may know what is the nature of the scyence or knowledge. Truely the comon iudgement or opinion of all reasonable creatures, is that god is eterne, let vs thē consyder what is eternitie. For ſ̄ hal declare openly to vs bothe the dyuine nature, and also the dyuine science or knowledge. Therfore eternitie is the possessyon of lyfe interminable, being hole and all together parfytt, whiche appereth more euydent by comparison of example of temporall thynges. For whatsoeuer thing lyueth in tyme, the same thing beyng present, procedethe and goeth fourth from thynges paste, vnto thynges to come. And nothyng is establyshed in tyme, that may comprehend together the last space of hys lyfe, for it hath not yet ouerturned the time of tomorrow, and it hath now lost ſ̄ tyme of yester daye. And truely ye liue no more in the lyfe of thys present day then in that same mouable and transitorye moment. Therfore whatsoeuer thyng suffereth condicion or successyon of time temporal although it neuer began to be nor cesseth to be, (as Aristotle judged of the world) and although the lyfe and the continuaunce thereof were extended or stretched forth wyth tyme infynyte, yet for all that it is no such thyng that by ryghte it maye be iudged eternall. For it dothe not embrace altogether the space of hys lyfe, althoughe it endurethe infynitelye or time

The dyffyny-
cion eternitie.

Somethyng
is eterne, and
in eterntie,
and the very
eterntie as
god.
Somethyng
be eterne, and
in eterntie,
and be not y^e
same etern-
tie, as Aun-
gelles whiche
be substantias
seperate.

Somethyng bee eterne, not in eternytie, nor be not eternytie, as mouing, time, and the worlde.

Another diffynacion of eter-
nitie.

God is not older (thē things y^t be made) by quantytie of time, but by prosperytie of pure nature alone. And so god is before y^e worlde by his owne pure nature, and not by antiquitetie of tyme.

The infynite mouing of tē-
poral thinges do folowe as
much as they may the state
of eternytie, but it can not
folowit wholy, for temporal
stat is successyuelly 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 whatsoueuer thynge doth comprehend 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 y^t time past, hath escaped, the same thing mai ryghtfully be called eterne. And it behouethe that the same eterne thynge be alwayes presente with it selfe, and myghtye or stronge alwayes to assiste it selfe, wanting nothyng, and to haue alwayes present the infynyte continuance of mouable tyme. Whereof some men do thinke a myssse, whyche (when they do heare y^t Plato thought that this worlde had no begynnyng of tyme nor shuld haue any ende) thought by thys meanes, the worlde to be made coeterne 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 al the presence of lyfe intermynable, is another thynge. Whyche thynge is manifeste, proper, or appertaynyng to the dyuine thoughte. For God semethe not older then thynges that be made, by quantytie of tyme, but rather by properte of hys symple or pure nature. For this infynite mouynge of temporall thynges folowethe thys presente state of immouable lyfe, whyche is eterne. And when it may not fayne or counteruayle the selfe same, and be made equal 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 infinite quantytie of tyme to come, and of tyme past, so that when it cannot posses together the hole fulnes of his life by this menes, 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 fulfyl, attayne vnto, nor expresse, but byndeth it selfe to some maner presence of thys lytle swyft and transytorye momente of tyme. The presence of thys instant tyme, for because it beareth a maner ymage or similitude of the euerlasting being of god, to whatsoeuer thinges it happeth, it geueth the thing that they seme to be. And for bycause the presence of suche moment of tyme might not continue, it toke quycly 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 embrace and

holde in taryng. Therefore yf we (in folowynge Plato) wyll put worthy and conueent names to thinges, let vs say then that god is eterne, and that the worlde is perpetuall. Then for bycause that euerye iudgement comprehendeth þ things that be subiect to it after his owne nature that is to say, accordyng to the nature of the knownen. Then is there alwayes in god an eterne and present state. And his scyence or knowledge, that ouer goeth all mouynge of tyme temporall, remayneth in symplicitie, or purite of hys owne presence, embrasyng and compassynge the infynyte spaces of the tyme past, and of the time to come, consydereth all thyngs 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 thynges, thou shalt not iudge it to be prescience as of thynges to come, but more rightly science or knowledge of thinges instaunt or present that neuer faylethe. Wherefore it is not called preuydence but rather prouydence, as establisshed farre of from lowe thinges, and beholdeth all thinges as it were from the highe toppe of all thynges.

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

Therefore what askeste thou that those thynges be doone by necessytie, that be apprehended in the syghte of God? When that men makethe not those thynges of necessytie that they se done in there sight? Doo thy syghte geue or inforce any neces-
sitie to those thynges that thou seyst present before the? BOE.
No. PHI. Truelye if there be any worthy comparyson 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 thynges present with his eterne sight wher-
fore this dyuine prescience, chaūgeth not the nature and pro-
pertye of thynges, as touching necessite or chaūce of them, but beholdeþ such thynges 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 iudgement of thynges, but by one syght of hys thoughte he knowethe thynges 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 iudge the one to be voluntarye, the other to be necessary. So than the deuyne

Prouydence
and precience
supposest
some thing to
come. Prouy-
dence sup-
posest all
thynges pre-
sent in syghte.

All things to
god be present
and nothyng
to com nor
past as it is
to men.

sight beholding 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 cōfyrmed 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 chouse but come to passe, muste betyde and chaunce by necessytie, and that thou constraine and bynde me to thys name or worde of necessite: certes I do knowledge and confesse a thyng of perfytte truthe, but scarselye 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 dyuyn 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 condicinal, as yf thou knowest that any man do walke, it is necessary that he do walke. For the same thinge that anye man hath knownen to be, maye none other wyse be, then it is knownen to be? But thys condicion draweth not with it, the same symple necessitie. For the proper nature of thys condycyonall necessitie, maketh not thys necessitie, but the addyng to of the condycyon 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, althoughe 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 diuyn syght, be made necessarye by the condycyon, of the deuine knowledge: but when they be considered by them selfe, withoute the deuyne 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 necessarye, when for the condition of the deuine science or knoledge, they doo happen by all maner waies in the likenes of necessitie, or as though they came of necessitie. This is the difference, y^e is shewed by those things that I declared a lytle before, that is to say, the sonne rysyng 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 necessytye to be done, that is to saye: the sonne rysyng: but not the other, that it is to say: the manne goyng. Soo truelye those things that god hath presēte, without dought they be. But of them, the one, that is to say the son rysyng, 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 selfe, 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^e wylte say, it is put in my power, to chaunge my purpose, I wyl auoyd gods purueians, whē I shal chaunge those things y^e gods purneyance knew before shuld be. And I wyll 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 auoid the diuine prescience, or fore knowledge. Euen as thou cannest not fle from the syght of the present eye, y^e lokyth on the, although thou turne thy selfe into dyuers accions or doynges, of thyne owne fre wyll. What wylte thou say now, mayst thou say vnto me shal not the deuyne knoledge be chaūged after my disposition, or as I am chaunged, as when I will nowe this one thynge, and now another thing? semeth not the deuine knowledge like wyse to alter and chaunge her courses and stedes of knowing: BOE. No forsooth. PHI. For the deuyne 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 thinkeste) hys stedes or courses, to know

now thys, and nowe that, but alwayes remaynyng stedefast without chaungynge, seith before and comprehendeth at one twynckelyng of an eye, al mutacions or chaunges. Whych presence of gods syght to embrase and se all thyngs, god hath not receyued of þ chaunce of thinges 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 knowledege. For this power of knowledege embraseth all thinges, by his present knowlege 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 constrainyd by any meanes. And the wycked lawes do not set fourth rewardes 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 rewardes 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 cōtynue 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.

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