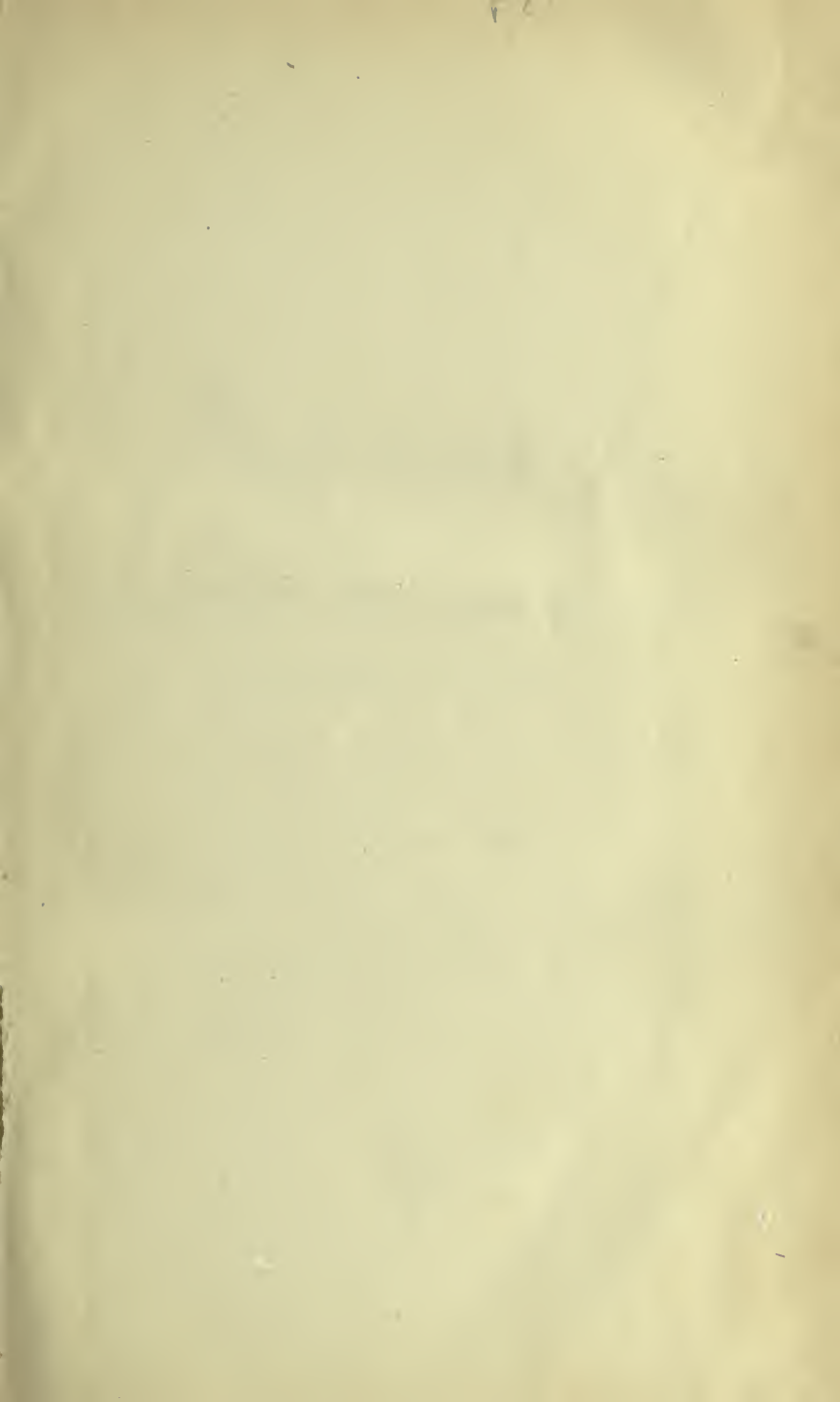


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Chaucer's Translation
of
Boethius's "De Consolatione
Philosophie."

Early English Text Society.

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Chaucer's Translation

of

Boethius's "De Consolatione
Philosophiæ."



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3

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INTRODUCTION.

WHEN master hands like those of Gibbon and Hallam have sketched the life of *Boethius*, it is well that no meaner man should attempt to mar their pictures. They drew, perhaps, the most touching scene in Middle-age literary history,—the just man in prison, awaiting death, consoled by the Philosophy that had been his light in life, and handing down to posterity for their comfort and strength the presence of her whose silver rays had been his guide as well under the stars of Fortune as the mirk of Fate. With Milton in his dark days, Boece in prison could say,—

‘I argue not
Against Heaven’s hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty’s defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.’

For, indeed, the echoes of Boethius, Boethius, rang out loud from every corner of European Literature. An Alfred awoke them in England, a Chaucer, a Caxton would not let them die; an Elizabeth revived them among the glorious music of her reign.¹ To us, though far off, they come with a sweet sound. ‘The angelic’ Thomas Aquinas commented on him, and many others followed the saint’s steps. Dante read him, though, strange to say, he speaks of the

¹ Other translations are by John Walton of Osney, in verse, in 1410 (Reg. MS. 18, A 13), first printed at Tavistock in 1525, and to be edited some time or other for the E. E. T. S. An anonymous prose version in the Bodleian. George Coluile, alias Coldewel, 1556; J. T. 1609; H. Conningesbye, 1664; Lord Preston, 1695, 1712; W. Causton, 1730; Redpath, 1785; R. Duncan, 1789; anon. 1792 (Lowndes).

Consolation as 'a book not known by many.'¹ Belgium had her translations—both Flemish² and French³; Germany hers,⁴ France hers,⁵ Italy hers.⁶ The Latin editors are too numerous to be catalogued here, and manuscripts abound in all our great libraries.

No philosopher was so bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of Middle-age writers as Boethius. Take up what writer you will, and you find not only the sentiments, but the very words of the distinguished old Roman. And surely we who read him in Chaucer's tongue, will not refuse to say that his full-circling meed of glory was other than deserved. Nor can we marvel that at the end of our great poet's life, he was glad that he had swelled the chorus of Boethius' praise; and 'of the translacioun of Boece de Consolacioun,' thanked 'oure Lord Ihesu Crist and his moder, and alle the seintes in heuen.'

The impression made by Boethius on Chaucer was evidently very deep. Not only did he translate him directly, as in the present work, but he read his beloved original over and over again, as witness the following list, incomplete of course, of passages from Chaucer's poems translated more or less literally from the *De Consolatione*:

I. LOVE.

Wost thou nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That who schal yeve a lover eny lawe,
Love is a grettere lawe, by my pan,
Then may be yeve to (of) eny erthly man?

(*Knightes Tale, Aldine Series*, vol. ii. p. 36, 37.)

But what is he þat may zeue a lawe to loueres. loue is a gretter lawe and a strengere to hym self þan any lawe þat men may zeuen.

(*Chaucer's Prose Translation*, p. 108.)

Quis legem det amantibus?

Major lex amor est sibi.—(Boeth., lib. iii. met. 12.)

¹ Dante, in his *Convito*, says, "Misimi a legger quello non conosciuto da molti libro di Boezio, nel quale captivo e discacciato consolato s'avea."

² Printed at Ghent, 1485.

³ By Reynier de Seinct Trudon, printed at Bruges, 1477.

⁴ An old version of the 11th cent., printed by Graff, and a modern one printed at Nuremberg, 1473.

⁵ By Jean de Méung, printed at Paris, 1494.

⁶ By Varchi, printed at Florence, 1551; Parma, 1798.

II. A DRUNKEN MAN.

A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he not¹ which the righte wey is thider.

(*Knightes Tale*, vol. ii. p. 39.)

Ryzt as a dronke man not nat² by whiche pape he may retourne home to hys house.—(Chaucer's Trans., p. 67.)

Sed velut ebrius, domum quo tramite revertatur, ignorat.

(Boeth., lib. iii. pr. 2.)

III. THE CHAIN OF LOVE.

The firste moevere of the cause above,
Whan he first made the fayre cheyne of love,
Gret was theeffect, and heigh was his entente ;
Wel wist he why, and what therof he mente ;
*For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the watir, the eyr, and eek the lond
In certeyn boundes, that they may not flee.*

(*Knightes Tale*, p. 92.)

That þe world with stable feith / varieth acordable chaungynges // þat the contraryos qualite of elementz holden amonge hem self aliaunce perdurable / þat phebus the sonne with his goldene chariet / bryngeth forth the rosene day / þat the mone hath commaundement ouer the nyhtes // whiche nyhtes hesperus the eue sterre hat[h] browt // þat þe se gredy to flouen constreyneth with a certeyn ende hise floodes / so þat it is nat l[e]ueful to stretche hise brode termes or bowndes vp-on the erthes // þat is to seyn to couere alle the erthe // Al this a-cordaunce of thinges is bownden with looue / þat governeth erthe and see / and [he] hath also commaundementz to the heuenes / and yif this looue slakede the brydelis / alle thinges þat now louen hem to-gederes / wolden maken a batayle contynuely and stryuen to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde / the which they now leden in acordable feith by fayre moeuynge // this looue halt to-gideres poeples / ioygned with an hooly bond / and knytteth sacrament of maryages of chaste looues // And loue enditeth lawes to trewe felawes // O weleful weere mankynde / yif thilke loue þat governeth heuene governed yowre corages /—(Chaucer's *Boethius*, bk. ii. met. 8.)

Quod mundus stabili fide
Concordes variat vices,
Quod pugnantia semina
Fœdus perpetuum tenent,
Quod Phœbus roseum diem
Curru provehit aureo,
Ut quas duxerit Hesperus

¹ The Harl. MS. reads *not nat*, to the confusion of the metre.

² = ne wot nat = knows not.

Phœbe noctibus imperet,
 Ut fluctus avidum mare
 Certo fine coerceat,
 Ne terris liceat vagis
 Latos tundere terminos ;
Hanc rerum seriem ligat,
Terras ac pelagus regens,
Et cælo imperitans amor.
 Hic si fræna remisertit,
 Quicquid nunc amat invicem,
 Bellum continuo geret :
 Et quam nunc socia fide
 Pulcris motibus incitant,
 Certent solvere machinam.
 Hic sancto populos quoque
 Junctos fœdere continet,
 Hic et conjugii sacrum
 Castis nectit amoribus,
 Hic fidis etiam sua
 Dictat jura sodalibus.
 O felix hominum genus,
 Si vestros animos amor,
 Quo cælum regitur, regat.—(*Boeth.*, lib. ii. met. 8.)

Love, that of erth and se hath governaunce !
 Love, that his hestes hath in hevене hye !
 Love, that with an holsom alliaunce
 Halt peples joyned, as hym liste hem gye !
 Love, that knetteth law and compaignye,
 And couples doth in vertu for to dwelle !

(*Troilus & Cryseyde*, st. 243, vol. iv. p. 296.)

That, that the world with faith, which that is stable
 Dyverseth so, his stoundes concordynge ;—
 That elementz, that ben so discordable,
 Holden a bond, perpetually durynge ;—
 That Phebus mot his rosy carte forth brynge,
 And that the mone hath lordschip overe the nyghte ;—
 Al this doth Love, ay heryed be his myght !

That, that the se, that gredy is to flowen,
 Constreyneth to a certeyn ende so
 Hise flodes, that so fiersly they ne growen
 To drenchen erth and alle for everemo ;
 And if that Love aught lete his brydel go,
 Al that now loveth asonder sholde lepe,
 And lost were al that Love halt now to kepe.

(*Ibid.* st. 244, 245.)

IV. MUTABILITY DIRECTED AND LIMITED BY AN IMMUTABLE AND
DIVINE INTELLIGENCE.

That same prynce and moevere eek, quod he,
Hath stabled, in this wrecched world adoun,
Certeyn dayes and duracioun
To alle that er engendrid in this place,
Over the whiche day they may nat pace,
Al mowe they yit wel here dayes abregge;

.
Than may men wel by this ordre discerne
That thilke moevere stabul is and eterne.

.
And therfore of his wyse purveaunce
He hath so wel biset his ordenaunce,
That spices of thinges and progressiouns
Schullen endure by successiouns
And nat eterne be, withoute any lye.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 92, 93.)

þe engendrynge of alle þinges quod she and alle þe progressiouns of muuable nature. and alle þat moeneþ in any manere takiþ hys causes. hys ordre. and hys formes. of þe stablenesse of þe deuyne þouzt [and thilke deuyne thowht] þat is yset and put in þe toure. þat is to seyne in þe heyzt of þe simplicité of god. stablisþ many manere gyses to þinges þat ben to don.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, bk. iv. pr. 6, p. 134.)

V. THE PART IS DERIVED FROM THE WHOLE, THE IMPERFECT
FROM THE PERFECT.

Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
That every partye dyryveth from his hool.
For nature hath nat take his bygynnyng
Of no partye ne cantel of a thing,
But of a thing that parfyt is and stable,
Descendyng so, til it be corumpable.

(*Knights Tale*, vol. ii. p. 92.)

For al þing þat is cleped inperfit . is proued inperfit by þe amenusynge of perfeccioun . or of þing þat is perfit . and her-of comeþ it . þat in euery þing general . yif þat . þat men seen any þing þat is inperfit . certys in þilke general þer mot ben somme þing þat is perfit. For yif so be þat perfeccioun is don away . men may nat þinke nor seye fro whennes þilke þing is þat is cleped inperfit . For þe nature of þinges ne token nat her bygynnyng of þinges amenused and inperfit . but it procediþ of þingus þat ben al hool . and absolut . and descendþ so doune in-to outerest þinges and in-to þingus empty and wiþ-oute fruyt .

but as I haue shewed a litel her byforne . þat yif þer be a blisfulnesse þat be frele and vein and inperfit . þer may no man doute . þat þer nys som blisfulnesse þat is sad stedfast and perfit.—(bk. iii. pr. 10, p. 89.)

Omne enim quod imperfectum esse dicitur, id deminutione perfecti imperfectum esse perhibetur. Quo fit ut si in quolibet genere imperfectum quid esse videatur, in eo perfectum quoque aliquod esse necesse sit. Etenim perfectione sublata, unde illud, quod imperfectum perhibetur, extiterit, ne fingi quidem potest. *Neque enim ab diminutis inconsummatisque natura rerum cepit exordium, sed ab integris absolutisque procedens in hæc extrema atque effæta dilabitur.* Quod si, uti paulo ante monstravimus, est quædam boni fragilis imperfecta felicitas, esse aliquam solidam perfectamque non potest dubitari.—(*Boeth.*, lib. iii. pr. 10.)

VI. GENTILITY.

For gentilnesse nys but renomé
Of thin auncestres, for her heigh bounté
Which is a straunge thing to thy persone.

(*The Wyf of Bathes Tale*, vol. ii. p. 241.)

For if þe name of gentilesse be referred to renoun and clernesse of linage. þan is gentil name but a foreine þing.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 78.)

Quæ [nobilitas], si ad claritudinem refertur, aliena est.

(*Boethius*, lib. iii. pr. 6.)

VII. NERO'S CRUELTY.

No teer out of his eyen for that sighte
Ne cam; but sayde, a fair womman was sche.
Gret wonder is how that he couthe or mighte
Be domesman on hir dede beauté.

(*The Monkes Tale*, vol. iii. p. 217.)

Ne no tere ne wette his face, but he was so hard-herted þat he myȝte ben domesman or iuge of hire dede beauté.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 55.)

Ora non tinxit lacrymis, sed esse
Censor extincti potuit decoris.

(*Boethius*, lib. ii. met. 6.)

VIII. PREDESTINATION AND FREE-WILL.

In 'Troylus and Cryseyde' we find the following long passage taken from Boethius, book v. prose 2, 3.

Book iv. st. 134, vol. iv. p. 339.

- (1) Syn God seth every thyng, out of doutaunce,
And hem disponeth, thourgh his ordinaunce,

In hire merites sothely for to be,
As they shul comen by predesteyné

136

- (2) For som men seyn if God seth al byforne,
Ne God may not deseived ben pardé !
Than moot it fallen, theigh men hadde it sworne,
That purveyaunce hath seyn befor to be,
Wherfor I seye, that, from eterne, if he
Hathe wiste byforn our thought ek as oure dede,
We have no fre choys, as these clerkes rede.

137

- (3) For other thoughte, nor other dede also,
Myghte nevere ben, but swich as purveyaunce,
Which may nat ben deceyved nevere moo,
Hath feled byforne, withouten ignoraunce ;
For if ther myghte ben a variaunce,
To wrythen out fro Goddes purveyinge,
Ther nere no prescience of thyng comyng ;

138

- (4) But it were rather an opinyon
Uncertein, and no stedfast forseynge ;
And certes that were an abusyon
That God shold han no parfit clere wetyng,
More than we men, that han douteous wenyng,
But swich an erreure upon God to gesse
Were fals, and foule, and wikked corsednesse.

139

- (5) They seyn right thus, that thyng is nat to come,
For that the prescience hath seyne byfore
That it shal come ; but they seyn that therfore
That it shal come, therfor the purveyaunce
Woot it bifore, withouten ignoraunce.

140

- (6) And in this manere this necessité
Retourneth in his part contrarye agayn ;
For nedfully byhoveth it not to be,
That thilke thynges fallen in certeyn
That ben purveyed ; but nedly, as they seyne,
Bihoveth it that thynges, which that falle,
That thei in certein ben purveied alle.

141

- (7) I mene as though I labourede me in this,
To enqueren which thyngge cause of whiche thyngge be ;
- (8) As, whether that the prescience of God is
The certein cause of the necessité
Of thynges that to comen ben, pardé !
Or, if necessité of thyngge comyngge
Be cause certein of the purveyinge.

142

- (9) But now nenforce I me nat in shewyngge
How the ordre of causes stant ; but wel woot I
That it bihoveth that the bifallyngge
Of thynges, wiste bifor certeinly,
Be necessarie, al seme it nat therby
That prescience put fallyngge necessaire
To thyngge to come, al falle it foule or faire.

143

- (10) For, if ther sit a man yonde on a see, [scat]
Than by necessité bihoveth it,
That certes thyn opinioun soth be,
That wenest or coniectest that he sit ;
And, further over, now ayeinwarde yit,
Lo right so is it on the part contrarie,
As thus,—nowe herkene, for I wol nat tarie :—

144

- (11) I sey, that if the opinion of the
Be soth for that he sit, than seye I this,
That he moot sitten by necessité ;
And thus necessité in either is,
For in hym nede of sittyngge is, ywis,
And in the, nede of soth ; and thus forsoth
Ther mot necessité ben in yow bothe.

145

- (12) But thow maist seyne, the man sit nat therefore,
That thyn opinioun of his sittyngge sothe is ;
But rather, for the man sat there byfore,
Therfor is thyn opinioun soth, ywys ;
And I seye, though the cause of soth of this
Cometh of his sittyngge, yet necessité
Is interchaunged both in hym and the.

146

- (13) Thus in the same wyse, out of doutaunce,
I may wel maken, as it semeth me,
My resonyng of Goddes purveiaunce,
And of the thynges that to comen be ; . . .

147

- (14) For although that for thyng shal come, ywys,
Therfor it is purveyed certeynly,
Nat that it cometh for it purveied is ;
Yet, natheles, bihoveth it nedfully,
That thyng to come be purveied trewly ;
Or elles thynges that purveied be,
That they bitiden by necessité.

148

- (15) And this sufficeth right ynough, certeyn,
For to distruye oure fre choys everydele.

(1) Quæ tamen ille ab æterno cuncta prospiciens providentiæ cernit intuitus, et suis quæque meritis prædestinata disponit. . . . (*Boethius*, lib. v. pr. 2.)

(2) Nam si cuncta prospicit Deus neque falli ullo modo potest, evenire necesse est, quod providentia futurum esse præviderit. Quare si ab æterno non facta hominum modo, sed etiam consilia voluntatesque prænoscit, nulla erit arbitrii libertas ;

(3) Neque enim vel factum aliud ullum vel quælibet existere poterit voluntas, nisi quam nescia falli providentia divina præsenſerit. Nam si res aliorum, quam provisæ sunt detorqueri valent, non jam erit futuri firma præscientia ;

(4) Sed opinio potius incerta ; quod de Deo nefas credere iudico.

(5) Aiunt enim non ideo quid esse eventurum quoniam id providentia futurum esse prospexerit ; sed e contrario potius, quoniam quid futurum est, id divinam providentiam latere non possit.

(6) Eoque modo necessarium est hoc in contrariam relabi partem ; neque enim necesse est contingere quæ providentur, sed necesse est quæ futura sunt provideri.

(7) Quasi vero quæ cuiusque rei causa sit,

(8) Præscientiane futurorûm necessitatis an futurorum necessitas providentiæ, laboretur.

(9) At nos illud demonstrare nitamur, quoquo modo sese habeat ordo causarum, necessarium esse eventum præscitarum rerum, etiam si præscientia futuris rebus eveniendi necessitatem non videatur inferre.

(10) Etenim si quispiam sedeat, opinionem quæ eum sedere conjectat veram esse necesse est : at e converso rursus,

(11) Si de quopiam vera sit opinio quoniam sedet eum sedere necesse est. In utroque igitur necessitas inest : in hoc quidem sedendi, at vero in altero veritatis.

(12) Sed non idcirco quisque sedet, quoniam vera est opinio : sed hæc potius vera est, quoniam quempiam sedere præcessit. Ita cum causa veritatis ex altera parte procedat, inest tamen communis in utraque necessitas.

(13) Similia de providentia futurisque rebus ratiocinari patet.

(14) Nam etiam si idcirco, quoniam futura sunt, providentur : non vero ideo, quoniam providentur, eveniunt : nihilo minus tamen a Deo vel ventura provideri, vel provisa evenire necesse est :

(15) Quod ad perimendam arbitrii libertatem solum satis est.

(lib. v. pr. 3.)

See *Chaucer's Boethius*, pp. 154-6.

IX. THE GRIEF OF REMEMBERING BYGONE HAPPINESS.

For, of fortunes scharp adversité,
The worste kynde of infortune is this,
A man to han ben in prosperité,
And it remembren, when it passed is.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 226, vol. iv. p. 291.)

Sed hoc est, quod recolentem me vehementius coquit. Nam in omni adversitate fortunæ infelicissimum genus est infortunii, fuisse felicem.¹—
(*Boethius*, lib. ii. pr. 4.)

X. VULTURES TEAR THE STOMACH OF TITYUS IN HELL.

———Syciphus in Helle,
Whos stomak fowles tyren everemo,
That hyghten volturis.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, book i. st. 113, p. 140.)

þe fowel þat hyzt voltor þat etiþ þe stomak or þe giser of ticius.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 107.)

XI. THE MUTABILITY OF FORTUNE.

For if hire (Fortune's) whiel stynte any thinge to torne
Thanne cessed she Fortune anon to be.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. i. st. 122, p. 142.)

If fortune bygan to dwelle stable. she cesed[e] þan to ben fortune.

(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 32.)

¹ Cf. Dante, *Inferno*, V. 121.

Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria; e ciò sa 'l tuo Dottore.

(Compare stanzas 120, 121, p. 142, and stanza 136, p. 146, of 'Troilus and Cryseyde' with pp. 31, 33, 35, and p. 34 of Chaucer's Boethius.)

At omnium mortalium stolidissime, si manere incipit, fors esse desistit.—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 1.)

XII. WORLDLY SELYNESSE

Imedled is with many a bitternesse.
 Ful angwyschous than is, God woote, quod she,
 Condicion of veyn prosperité!
 For oither joies comen nought yfeere,
 Or elles no wight hath hem alwey here.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 110, p. 258.)

þe swetnesse of mannes welefulnesse is yspranid wiþ many[e] bitter-
 nesses.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 42.)

—ful anguissous þing is þe condicioun of mans goodes. For
 eyþer it comeþ al to-gidre to a wyzt. or ellys it lasteþ not perpetuely.
 (*Ib.* p. 41.)

Quam multis amaritudinibus humanæ felicitatis dulcedo respersa
 est!—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 4.)

Anxia enim res est humanorum conditio bonorum, et quæ vel nun-
 quam tota proveniat, vel nunquam perpetua subsistat.—(*Ib.*)

O, brotel wele of mannes joie unstable!
 With what wight so thow be, or how thow pleye,
 Oither he woot that thow joie art muable,
 Or woot it nought, it mot ben on of tweyen:
 Now if he woot it not, how may he seyen
 That he hath veray joie and selynesse,
 That is of ignoraunce ay in distresse?

Now if he woote that joie is transitorie,
 As every joie of worldly thyng mot fle,
 Thanne every tyme he that hath in memorie,
 The drede of lesyng maketh hym that he
 May in no parfyte selynesse be:
 And if to lese his joie, he sette not a myte,
 Than semeth it, that joie is worth ful lite.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 111, 112, vol. iv. p. 258.)

(1) What man þat þis toumblyng welefulnesse leediþ, eiþer he woot
 þat [it] is changeable. or ellis he woot it nat. And yif he woot it
 not. what blisful fortune may þer be in þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce.

(2) And yif he woot þat it is changeable. he mot alwey ben adrad
 þat he ne lese þat þing. þat he ne douteþ nat but þat he may leesen it.

. For whiche þe continual drede þat he haþ ne suffriþ hym nat to ben weleful. Or ellys yif he leese it he wene[þ] to be dispised and forleten hit. Certis eke þat is a ful lytel goode þat is born wiþ euene hert[e] whan it is loost.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, pp. 43, 44.)

(1) Quem caduca ista felicitas vehit, vel scit eam, vel nescit esse mutabilem. Si nescit, quænam beata sors esse potest ignorantie in cæcitate?

(2) Si scit, metuat necesse est, ne amittat, quod amitti posse non dubitat; quare continuus timor non sinit esse felicem. An vel si amiserit, negligendum putat? Sic quoque perexile bonum est, quod æquo animo feratur amissum.—(*Boethius*, lib. ii. prose 4.)

XIII. FORTUNE.

———Fortune

That semeth trewest when she wol bigyle,

And, when a wight is from hire whiel ithrowe,
Than laugheth she, and maketh hym the mowe.

(*Troilus and Cryseyde*, bk. iii. st. 254, vol. iv. p. 299.)

She (Fortune) vseþ ful flatryng familiarité wiþ hem þat she enforceþ to bygyle.—(*Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 30.)

. She lauþeþ and scorneþ þe wepyng of hem þe whiche she haþ maked wepe wiþ hir free wille Yif þat a wyȝt is seyn weleful and ouerþrowe in an houre.—(*Ib.* p. 33.)

In book v., stanza 260, vol. v. p. 75, Chaucer describes how the soul of Hector, after his death, ascended 'up to the holughnesse of the seventh sære.' In so doing he seems to have had before him met. 1, book 4, of *Boethius*, where the 'soul' is described as passing into the heaven's utmost sphere, and looking down on the world below. See *Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 110, 111.

Ætas Prima is of course a metrical version of lib. ii. met. 5.

Hampole speaks of the wonderful sight of the Lynx; perhaps he was indebted to *Boethius* for the hint.—(See *Boethius*, book 3, pr. 8, p. 81.)

I have seen the following elsewhere:

(1) Value not beauty, for it may be destroyed by a three days' fever.
(See *Chaucer's Boethius*, p. 81.)

(2) There is no greater plague than the enmity of thy familiar friend.
(See *Chaucer's translation*, p. 77.)

Chaucer did not English Boethius second-hand, through any early French version, as some have supposed, but made his translation with the Latin original before him.

Jean de Méung's version, the only early French translation, perhaps, accessible to Chaucer, is not always literal, while the present translation is seldom free or periphrastic, but conforms closely to the Latin, and is at times awkwardly literal. A few passages, taken haphazard, will make this sufficiently clear.

Et dolor ætatem jussit inesse suam. And sorow hap comaunded his age to be in me (p. 4).

Et ma douleur commanda a vieillesse
Entrer en moy / ains quen fust hors ieunesse.

*Mors hominum felix, quæ se nec dulcibus annis
Inserit, et mæstis sæpe vocata venit.*

þilke deef of mèn is welful þat ne comeþ not in 3eres þat ben swete (i. *mirie*). but comeþ to wrecches often yclepid. (p. 4.)

On dit la mort des homes estre eureuse
Qui ne vient pas en saison plantureuse
Mais des tristes moult souuent appellee
Elle y affuit nue / seche et pelee.

Querimoniam lacrymabilem. Wepli compleynte (p. 5). Fr. ma complainte moy esmouuant a pleurs.

Styli officio. Wiþ office of poyntel (p. 5). Fr. (que ie reduisse) par escript.

Inexhaustus. Swiche . . . þat it ne myzt[e] not be emptid (p. 5). Fr. inconsumptible.

Scenicas meretriculas. Comune strumpetis of siche a place þat men clepen þe theatre (p. 6). Fr. ces ribaudelles fardees.

Precipiti profundo. In ouer-þrowyng depnesse (p. 7).

[L]As que la pensee de lomme
Est troublee et plongie comme
En abisme precipitee
Sa propre lumiere gaste.

Nec peruetusta nec incelebris. Neyþer ouer-oolde ne vnsolempne (p. 11). Fr. desquelz la memoire nest pas trop ancienne ou non recitee.

Inter secreta otia. Among my secre restyng whiles (p. 14). Fr. entre mes secrettes et oyseuses estudes.

Palatini canes. þe houndys of þe palays (p. 15). Fr. les chiens du palais.

Masculæ prolis. Of þi masculyn children (p. 37). Fr. de ta lignie masculine.

Ad singularem felicitatis tuæ cumulum venire delectat. It deliteþ me to comen now to þe singuler vphepyng of þi welefulnesse (p. 37). Fr. Il me plait venir au singulier monceau de ta felicite.

Consulare imperium. Emperie of consulers (p. 51). Fr. lempire consulaire.

Hoc ipsum brevis habitaculi. Of þilke litel habitacle (p. 57). Fr. de cest trespetit habitacle.

Late patentes plagas. þe brode shewyng contreys (p. 60).

QViconques tend a gloire vaine

Et le croit estre souueraine

Voye les regions patentes

Du ciel

Ludens hominum cura. þe pleiyng besines of men (p. 68).

Si quil tollist par doulz estude

Des hommes la sollicitude . . .

Hausi cælum. I took heuene (p. 10). Fr. ie . . . regarday le ciel.

Certamen aduersum præfectum prætorii communis commodi ratione suscepi. I took strif azeins þe prouost of þe pretorie for comune profit (p. 15). Fr. ie entrepris lestrif a lencontre du prefect du parlement royal a cause de la commune vtilite.

At cuius criminis arguimur summam quæris? But axest þou in somme of what gilt I am accused? (p. 17). Fr. Mais demandes tu la somme du pechie duquel pechie nous sommes arguez?

Fortuita temeritate. By fortunouse fortune (p. 26). Fr. par fortuite folie.

Quos premunt septem gelidi triones. Alle þe peoples þat ben vndir þe colde sterres þat hyzten þe seuene triones (p. 55). Fr. ceulx de septentrion.

Ita ego quoque tibi veluti corollarium dabo. Ryzt so wil I zeue þe here as a corolarie or a mede of coroune (p. 91). Fr. semblablement ie te donneray ainsi que vng correlaire.

In stadio. In þe stadie or in þe forlonge (p. 119). Fr. ou (for au) champ.

Conjecto. I coniecte (p. 154). Fr. ie coniecture.

Nimum . . . aduersari ac repugnare videtur. It semeþ . . . to repugnen and to contrarien gretly. Fr. Ce semble chose trop contraire et repugnante.

Universitatis ambitum. Envirounyng of þe vniuersite (p. 165). Fr. lauironnement de luniuersalite.

Rationis universum. Vniuersite of resoun (p. 165). Fr. luniuersalite de Raison.

Scientiam nunquam deficientis instantiæ rectius æstimabis. þou shalt demen [it] more ryztfully þat it is science of presence or of instaunce þat neuer ne fayleþ (p. 174). Fr. mais tu la diras plus droitement et mieulx science de instante presentialite non iamais defaillant mais eternelle.

Many of the above examples are very bald renderings of the original, and are only quoted here to show that Chaucer did not make his translation from the French.

Chaucer is not always felicitous in his translations:—thus he translates *clavus atque gubernaculum* by *keye* and a *stiere* (p. 103), and *compendium* (gain, acquisition) by *abreggyng* (abridging, curtailment), p. 151. Many terms make their appearance in English for the first time,—and most of them have become naturalized, and are such as we could ill spare. Some few are rather uncommon, as *gouvernaile* (gubernaculum), p. 27; *arbitre* (arbitrium), p. 154. As Chaucer takes the trouble to explain *inestimable* (inæstimabilis), p. 158, it could not have been a very familiar term.

Our translator evidently took note of various readings, for on p. 31 he notes a variation of the original. On p. 51 he uses *armurers* (= armures) to render *arma*, though most copies agree in reading *arva*.

There are numerous glosses and explanations of particular passages, which seem to be interpolated by Chaucer himself. Thus he explains what is meant by the *heritage of Socrates* (p. 10, 11); he gives the meaning of *coemption* (p. 15); of *Euripus* (p. 33); of the *porch* (p. 166).¹ Some of his definitions are very quaint; as, for instance, that of Tragedy—‘*a dité of a prosperité for a tyme þat endiþ in wrechednesse*’ (p. 35). One would think that the following definition of Tragedian would be rather superfluous after this,—‘*a maker of dites þat hyzten (are called) tregedies*’ (p. 77).

Melliflui . . . oris Homerus

is thus quaintly Englished: *Homer wiþ þe hony mouþe, þat is to seyn. homer wiþ þe swete dites* (p. 153).

¹ See pages 39, 50, 61, 94, 111, 133, 149, 153, 159.

The present translation of the *De Consolatione* is taken from Additional MS. 10,340, which is supposed to be the *oldest* manuscript that exists in our public libraries. After it was all copied out and ready for press, Mr Bradshaw was kind enough to procure me, for the purpose of collation, the loan of the Camb. University MS. Ii. 3. 21, from which the various readings at the foot of the pages are taken.

Had I had an opportunity of examining the Cambridge MS. carefully throughout before the work was so far advanced, I should certainly have selected it in preference to the text now given to the reader. Though not so ancient as the British Museum MS., it is far more correct in its grammatical inflexions, and is no doubt a copy of an older and very accurate text.

The Additional MS. is written by a scribe who was unacquainted with the force of the final *-e*. Thus he adds it to the preterites of strong verbs, which do not require it; he omits it in the preterites of weak verbs where it is wanted, and attaches it to passive participles (of weak verbs), where it is superfluous. The scribe of the Cambridge MS. is careful to preserve the final *-e* where it is a sign (1) of the definite declension of the adjective; (2) of the plural adjective; (3) of the infinitive mood; (4) of the preterite of weak verbs; (5) of present participles;¹ (6) of the 2nd pers. pret. indic. of strong verbs; (7) of adverbs; (8) of an older vowel ending.

The Addit. MS. has frequently *thilk* (singular and plural), and *-nes* (in *wrechednes*, &c.), when the Camb. MS. has *thilke*² and *-nesse*.

For further differences the reader may consult the numerous collations at the foot of the page.

If the Chaucer Society obtains that amount of patronage from the literary public which it deserves, but unfortunately has yet not succeeded in getting, so that it may be enabled to go on with the great work which has been so successfully commenced, then the time may come when I shall have the opportunity of editing the Camb. MS. of Chaucer's *Boethius* for that Society, and lovers of Early English Literature will have two texts instead of one.

¹ In the *Canterbury Tales* we find participles in *-yngē*.

² It is nearly always *thilkē* in the *Canterbury Tales*.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION.

THE last of the ancients, and one who forms a link between the classical period of literature and that of the middle ages, in which he was a favourite author, is Boethius, a man of fine genius, and interesting both from his character and his death. It is well known that after filling the dignities of Consul and Senator in the court of Theodoric, he fell a victim to the jealousy of a sovereign, from whose memory, in many respects glorious, the stain of that blood has never been effaced. The *Consolation of Philosophy*, the chief work of Boethius, was written in his prison. Few books are more striking from the circumstances of their production. Last of the classic writers, in style not impure, though displaying too lavishly that poetic exuberance which had distinguished the two or three preceding centuries, in elevation of sentiment equal to any of the philosophers, and mingling a Christian sanctity with their lessons, he speaks from his prison in the swan-like tones of dying eloquence. The philosophy that consoled him in bonds, was soon required in the sufferings of a cruel death. Quenched in his blood, the lamp he had trimmed with a skilful hand gave no more light; the language of Tully and Virgil soon ceased to be spoken; and many ages were to pass away, before learned diligence restored its purity, and the union of genius with imitation taught a few modern writers to surpass in eloquence the Latinity of Boethius.—(Hallam's *Literature of Europe*, i. 2, 4th ed. 1854.)

The Senator Boethius is the last of the Romans whom Cato or Tully could have acknowledged for their countryman. As a wealthy orphan, he inherited the patrimony and honours of the Anician family, a name ambitiously assumed by the kings and emperors of the age; and the appellation of Manlius asserted his genuine or fabulous descent from a race of consuls and dictators, who had repulsed the Gauls from the Capitol, and sacrificed their sons to the discipline of the Republic. In the youth of Boethius the studies of Rome were not totally abandoned; a Virgil is now extant, corrected by the hand of a consul; and the professors of grammar, rhetoric, and jurisprudence, were maintained in their privileges and pensions by the liberality of the Goths. But the erudition of the Latin language was insufficient to satiate his ardent curiosity; and

Boethius is said to have employed eighteen laborious years in the schools of Athens, which were supported by the zeal, the learning, and the diligence of Proclus and his disciples. The reason and piety of their Roman pupil were fortunately saved from the contagion of mystery and magic, which polluted the groves of the Academy, but he imbibed the spirit, and imitated the method, of his dead and living masters, who attempted to reconcile the strong and subtle sense of Aristotle with the devout contemplation and sublime fancy of Plato. After his return to Rome, and his marriage with the daughter of his friend, the patrician Symmachus, Boethius still continued, in a palace of ivory and [glass] to prosecute the same studies. The Church was edified by his profound defence of the orthodox creed against the Arian, the Eutychian, and the Nestorian heresies; and the Catholic unity was explained or exposed in a formal treatise by the *indifference* of three distinct though consubstantial persons. For the benefit of his Latin readers, his genius submitted to teach the first elements of the arts and sciences of Greece. The geometry of Euclid, the music of Pythagoras, the arithmetic of Nicomachus, the mechanics of Archimedes, the astronomy of Ptolemy, the theology of Plato, and the logic of Aristotle, with the commentary of Porphyry, were translated and illustrated by the indefatigable pen of the Roman senator. And he alone was esteemed capable of describing the wonders of art, a sun-dial, a water-clock, or a sphere which represented the motions of the planets. From these abstruse speculations, Boethius stooped, or, to speak more truly, he rose to the social duties of public and private life: the indigent were relieved by his liberality; and his eloquence, which flattery might compare to the voice of Demosthenes or Cicero, was uniformly exerted in the cause of innocence and humanity. Such conspicuous merit was felt and rewarded by a discerning prince: the dignity of Boethius was adorned with the titles of consul and patrician, and his talents were usefully employed in the important station of master of the offices. Notwithstanding the equal claims of the East and West, his two sons were created, in their tender youth, the consuls of the same year. On the memorable day of their inauguration, they proceeded in solemn pomp from their palace to the forum amidst the applause of the senate and people; and their joyful father, the true Consul of Rome, after pronouncing an oration in the praise of his royal benefactor, distributed a triumphal largess in the games of the circus. Prosperous in his fame and fortunes, in his public honours and private alliances, in the cultivation of science and the consciousness of virtue, Boethius might have been styled happy, if that precarious epithet could be safely applied before the last term of the life of man.

A philosopher, liberal of his wealth and parsimonious of his time, might be insensible to the common allurements of ambition, the thirst of gold and employment. And some credit may be due to the asseveration of Boethius, that he had reluctantly obeyed the divine Plato, who enjoins every virtuous citizen to rescue the state from the usurpation of vice and ignorance. For the integrity of his public conduct he appeals to the

memory of his country. His authority had restrained the pride and oppression of the royal officers, and his eloquence had delivered Paulianus from the dogs of the palace. He had always pitied, and often relieved, the distress of the provincials, whose fortunes were exhausted by public and private rapine; and Boethius alone had courage to oppose the tyranny of the Barbarians, elated by conquest, excited by avarice, and, as he complains, encouraged by impunity. In these honourable contests his spirit soared above the consideration of danger, and perhaps of prudence; and we may learn from the example of Cato, that a character of pure and inflexible virtue is the most apt to be misled by prejudice, to be heated by enthusiasm, and to confound private enmities with public justice. The disciple of Plato might exaggerate the infirmities of nature, and the imperfections of society; and the mildest form of a Gothic kingdom, even the weight of allegiance and gratitude, must be insupportable to the free spirit of a Roman patriot. But the favour and fidelity of Boethius declined in just proportion with the public happiness; and an unworthy colleague was imposed to divide and control the power of the master of the offices. In the last gloomy season of Theodoric, he indignantly felt that he was a slave; but as his master had only power over his life, he stood without arms and without fear against the face of an angry Barbarian, who had been provoked to believe that the safety of the senate was incompatible with his own. The Senator Albinus was accused and already convicted on the presumption of *hoping*, as it was said, the liberty of Rome.

“If Albinus be criminal,” exclaimed the orator, “the senate and myself are all guilty of the same crime. If we are innocent, Albinus is equally entitled to the protection of the laws.” These laws might not have punished the simple and barren wish of an unattainable blessing; but they would have shown less indulgence to the rash confession of Boethius, that, had he known of a conspiracy, the tyrant never should. The advocate of Albinus was soon involved in the danger and perhaps the guilt of his client; their signature (which they denied as a forgery) was affixed to the original address, inviting the emperor to deliver Italy from the Goths; and three witnesses of honourable rank, perhaps of infamous reputation, attested the treasonable designs of the Roman patrician. Yet his innocence must be presumed, since he was deprived by Theodoric of the means of justification, and rigorously confined in the tower of Pavia, while the senate, at the distance of five hundred miles, pronounced a sentence of confiscation and death against the most illustrious of its members. At the command of the Barbarians, the occult science of a philosopher was stigmatized with the names of sacrilege and magic. A devout and dutiful attachment to the senate was condemned as criminal by the trembling voices of the senators themselves; and their ingratitude deserved the wish or prediction of Boethius, that, after him, none should be found guilty of the same offence.

While Boethius, oppressed with fetters, expected each moment the sentence or the stroke of death, he composed in the tower of Pavia the

Consolation of Philosophy; a golden volume not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or Tully, but which claims incomparable merit from the barbarism of the times and the situation of the author. The celestial guide, whom he had so long invoked at Rome and Athens, now condescended to illumine his dungeon, to revive his courage, and to pour into his wounds her salutary balm. She taught him to compare his long prosperity and his recent distress, and to conceive new hopes from the inconstancy of fortune. Reason had informed him of the precarious condition of her gifts; experience had satisfied him of their real value; he had enjoyed them without guilt; he might resign them without a sigh, and calmly disdain the impotent malice of his enemies, who had left him happiness, since they had left him virtue. From the earth, Boethius ascended to heaven in search of the SUPREME GOOD; explored the metaphysical labyrinth of chance and destiny, of prescience and free-will, of time and eternity; and generously attempted to reconcile the perfect attributes of the Deity with the apparent disorders of his moral and physical government. Such topics of consolation, so obvious, so vague, or so abstruse, are ineffectual to subdue the feelings of human nature. Yet the sense of misfortune may be diverted by the labour of thought; and the sage who could artfully combine in the same work the various riches of philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, must already have possessed the intrepid calmness which he affected to seek. Suspense, the worst of evils, was at length determined by the ministers of death, who executed, and perhaps exceeded, the inhuman mandate of Theodoric. A strong cord was fastened round the head of Boethius, and forcibly tightened till his eyes almost started from their sockets; and some mercy may be discovered in the milder torture of beating him with clubs till he expired. But his genius survived to diffuse a ray of knowledge over the darkest ages of the Latin world; the writings of the philosopher were translated by the most glorious of the English kings, and the third emperor of the name of Otho removed to a more honourable tomb the bones of a Catholic saint, who, from his Arian persecutors, had acquired the honours of martyrdom and the fame of miracles. In the last hours of Boethius, he derived some comfort from the safety of his two sons, of his wife, and of his father-in-law, the venerable Symmachus. But the grief of Symmachus was indiscreet, and perhaps disrespectful; he had presumed to lament, he might dare to revenge, the death of an injured friend. He was dragged in chains from Rome to the palace of Ravenna; and the suspicions of Theodoric could only be appeased by the blood of an innocent and aged senator.—Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, 1838, vol. vii. p. 45—52 (without the notes).

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- 2 Hic dum mecum tacitus.
- 3 Heu *quam* precipiti.
- 4 Set medicine inquit tempus.
- 5 Tunc me discussa.
- 6 Haut ¹ aliter tristicie. 1 MS. hanc.
- 7 Quisquis composito.
- 8 Sentis ne inquit.
- 9 O stelliferi conditor orbis.
- 10 Hic ubi continuato dolore.
- 11 Cum phebi radijs.
- 12 Primum igitur pateris rogacionibus.
- 13 Nubibus atris condita.

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

LIBER SECUNDUS.

- 1 Postea paulisper ² conticuit. 2 MS. lilper.
- 2 Hec cum superba.
- 3 Uellem autem pauca.
- 4 Si quantas rapidis.
- 5 His igitur si *et* pro se.

- 6 Cum primo polo.
- 7 Tunc ego uera inquam.
- 8 Contraque.
- 9 Quisquis ualet perhennem cantus.
- 10 Set cum rationum iam in te.
- 11 Felix in mirum iam prior etas.
- 12 Quid autem de dignitatibus.
- 13 Nouimus quantos dederat.
- 14 Tum ego scis inquam.
- 15 Quicumque solam mente.
- 16 Set ne me inexorabile.
- 17 Quod mundus stabile fide.

EXPLICIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

LIBER TERCIVS.

- 1 Iam tantum illa.
- 2 Qui serere ingenium.
- 3 Tunc defixo paululum.
- 4 Quantas rerum flectat.
- 5 Uos quoque terrena animalia.
- 6 Quamuis fluenter diues.
- 7 Set dignitatibus.
- 8 Quamuis se tirio.
- 9 An uero regna.
- 10 Qui se ualet esse potentem.
- 11 Gloria uero quam fallax.
- 12 Omne hominum genus in terris.
- 13 Quid autem de corporibus.
- 14 Habet hoc uoluptas.
- 15 Nichil igitur dubium est.
- 16 Heu que miseros tramite.
- 17 Hactenus mendacio formam.
- 18 O qui perpetua.
- 19 Quoniam igitur qui scit.
- 20 Nunc omnes pariter.
- 21 Assencior inquam cuncta.

- 22 *Quisque profunda.*
 23 *Tunc ego platoni inquam.*
 24 *Felix qui poterit.*

EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIVS.

LIBER QVARTVS.

- 1 *Hec cum philosophia.*
 2 *Sunt etenim penne.*
 3 *Tunc ego pape inquam.*
 4 *Quos uides sedere celsos.*
 5 *Uides ne igitur quanto.*
 6 *U[e]la naricij ducis.*
 7 *Tunc ego fateor inquam.*
 8 *Quid tantos iuuat.*
 9 *Huic ego uideo inquam.*
 10 *Si quis arcturi¹ sydera.*
 11 *Ita est inquam.*
 12 *Si uis celsi iura.*
 13 *Iam ne igitur uides.*
 14 *Bella bis quinis.*

EXPLICIT LIBER QVARTVS.

INCIPIT LIBER QVINTVS.

- 1 *Dixerat oracionis que cursum.*
 2 *Rupis achemenie.*
 3 *Animaduerto inquam.*
 4 *Puro clarum lumine.*
 5 *Tamen ego en inquam.*
 6 *Que nam discors.*
 7 *Tamen illa uetus.*
 8 *Quondam porticus attulit.*
 9 *Quod si in corporibus.*
 10 *Quam uarijs figuris.*
 11 *Quoniam igitur uti paulo ante.*

EXPLICIT LIBER QVINTVS ET VLTIVS.



¹ MS. arcturi.

[* fol. 3 b.]

* LIBER PRIMUS.

[The fyrste
Metur.]

INCIPIT LIBER BOICII DE CONSOLACIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi.

Boethius deplores
his misfortunes
in the following
pathetic elegy.

Allas I wepyng am constreined to bygyne vers of
sorouful matere. ¶ þat whilom in florysching
studie made delitable ditees. For loo rendyng muses

4 of poetes enditen to me þinges to be writen. and drery
vers of wrecchednes weten my face wiþ verrey teers.

¶ At þe leest no drede ne myzt[e] ouer-come þo muses.

7 þat þei ne weren felawes and folweden my wey. þat is
to seyne when I was exiled. þei þat weren glorie of
my youzth whilom weleful and grene conforten now þe
sorouful werdes of me olde man. for elde is comen vn-
warly vpon me hasted by þe harmes þat I haue. and

12 sorou haþ comaunded his age to be in me. ¶ Heeres
hore ben schad ouertymelyche vpon myne heued. and
þe slak[e] skyn trembleþ vpon myn emty body. þilk[e]

deef of men is welful þat ne comeþ not in zeres þat
ben swete (.i. mirie.) but comeþ to wrecches often

17 yclepid.

¶ Allas allas wiþ how deaf an cere deep cruel
tourneþ away fro wrecches and naieþ to closen wep-
yng eyen. ¶ While fortune vnfeifful fauored[e] me

wiþ lyzte goodes (.s. temporels.) þe sorouful heure þat

22 is to seyne þe deep had[de] almost dreynt myne heued.

¶ But now for fortune clowdy haþ changed hir dis-
ceyuable chere to me warde. myn vnpitouse lijf draweþ
a long vnagreable dwellynges in me. ¶ O ze my

ypalage
antithesisLaments his
immature old
age.Death turns a
deaf ear to the
wretched.When Fortune
was favourable
Death came near
Boethius,but in his
adversity life is
unpleasantly
protracted.

- 1 of—MS. of of.
2 florysching—floryssynge
3 rendyng—rendynge
4 be—ben
5 wrecchednes—wrecched-
nesse
teers—teeres
6 leest—leeste
myzt[e] ouer-come—myhte
ouercomen
8 seyne when—seyn when
9 youzth—MS. þozt, C. yowthe
10 sorouful werdes—sorful
wierdes [i. fata]
12 sorou—sorwe

- 12 haþ—MS. haþe
be—ben
13 hore—hoore
ben—arn
myne—myn
14 slak[e]—slake
vpon—of
emty—emptyd
þilk[e]—thilke
15 welful—welcful
comeþ not—comth nat
16 .i. mirie—omitted
17 tourneþ—torneth
naieþ—nayteth
wepyng—wepynge

- 20 While—Whil
fauored[e]—fauorede
21 lyzte—lyhte
.s. temporels—omitted
sorouful heure—sorwful
howre
22 seyne—seyn
had[de]—hadde
myne—myn
23 haþ—MS. haþe
changed hir disceyu-
able—chaungd hyre de-
ceyuable
24 vnpitouse lijf—vnpictous
lyf

frendes what or wherto auainted[e] 3e me to be weleful : for he þat haþ fallen stood not in stedfast degree.

Why did his friends call him happy ? He stood not firm that hath thus fallen.

HIC DUM MECUM TACITUS.

IN þe mene while þat I stille recorded[e] þise þinges wip my self. *and* markede my wepli compleynte wip

[The firste prose.]
29

office of poyntel. I saw stondyng aboue þe heyzt of my heued a woman of ful greet reuerence by semblaunt

Philosophy appears to Boethius,

hir eyen brennyng *and* clere seing ouer þe comune myzt of men. wip a lijfly colour *and* wip swiche vigoure *and* strenkeþ þat it ne myzt[e] not be emptid. ¶ Al

like a beautiful woman,
33

were it so þat sche was ful of so greet age. þat men ne wolde not trowe. in no manere þat sche were of oure

and of great age.
36

elde. þe stature of hir was of a doutous iugement. for sumtyme sche constreyned[e] *and* schronk hir seluen lyche to þe comune mesure of men. *and* sumtyme it semed[e] þat sche touched[e] þe heuene wip þe heyzte

Her height could not be determined,
40

of hir heued. and when sche hef hir heued heyer sche perced[e] þe selue heuene. so þat þe syzt of men loking was in ydel. ¶ Hir cloþes weren maked of ryzt delye predes *and* subtil crafte of perdurable matere. þe wyche

for there were times when she raised her head higher than the heavens.
44

cloþes sche hadde wouen wip hir owen hondes : as I knew wel affir by hir selfe. declaryng *and* schewyng to me þe beaute. þe wiche cloþes a derkenes of a forleten and dispised elde had[de] duskid *and* dirkid as it is wont to dirken by-smoked ymages. ¶ In þe ne-

Her clothes were finely wrought and indissoluble,
47

but dark and dusky, like old besmoked images.

26 *auainted[e]*—*auaintede*
be—*ben*

27 *haþ*—MS. *haþo*
not—*nat*

stedfast—*stidefast*

28 *In þe mene*—omitted

recorded[e]—*recordede*

30 *saw*—MS. *sawe*, C. *sawh*
stondyng aboue, C. *stond-*
ing abouen

heyzt—*heyhte*

my—*myn*

31 *greet*—*gret*

32 *brennyng*—*brennynge*

clere seing—*cleer seyng*

33 *swiche*—*swych*

34 *strenkeþ*—*strengthe*

it — *emptid* — *it myhte*

nat ben emted

34 *Al*—*alle*

36 *wolde*—*trowe*—*wolden*

nat trowen

37 *iugement*—*iuggement*

38 *sumtyme*—*somtyme*

constreyned[e] — *con-*

streynede

schronk — MS. *schronke*,

C. *shronk*

39 *lyche*—*lyk*

40 *semed[e]*—*semede*

touched[e]—*towchede*

41 *when*—*whan*

hef—MS. *heued*, C. *hef*

heyer—*hyere*

42 *perced[e]*—*percede*

syzt—*syhte*

lokyng—*lookyuge*

44 *crafte*—*craft*

45 *wouen*—MS. *wonnen*, C.

wouen

owen hondes — *owne*

handes

46 *knew*—MS. *knewe*, C.

knewh

selfe declaryng — *self de-*

clarynge

schewyng—*shewyng*

47 *derkenes*—*dirknesse*

forleten—*forletyn*

48 *dispised*—*despised*

had[de] duskid — *hadde*

duskid

dirkid—*derked*

49 *by-smoked*—*the smokede*

neperest[e]—*nethcrest*

On the lower hem
of her garment
was the letter Π
and on the
upper Θ.

perest[e] hem or bordure of þese cloþes men redder
ywouen in swiche a gregkysche .P. þat signifiþ þe lijf
actif. And abouen þat *lettre* in þe hey3est[e] bordure

53 a grekysche T. þat signifiþ þe lijf contemplatif.

Between the
letters were
steps like a
ladder.

¶ And by-twene þese two *lettres* þere weren seien de-
grees nobly wrouzt in manere of laddres. By wyche

56 degrees men myzt[en] clymbe fro þe nepemast[e] *lettre*

Philosophy's
garments were
tattered and
torn, and pieces
had been carried
violently off.

to þe ouermast[e]. ¶ Naþeles hondes of sum men
hadde korue þat cloþe by vyolence and by strenkeþ.

¶ And eueryche man of hem hadde born away syche

60 peces as he myzte geet[e]. ¶ And forsoþe þis forsaide

In her right hand
she bore her
books, and in her
left a sceptre.

woman ber bookes in hir ryzt honde. and in hir lefte
honde sche ber a ceptre. ¶ And when sche sau3 þese

poetical muses aprochen aboute my bedde. and endyt-

64 yng wordes to my wepynges. sche was a lytel ameued

Philosophy bids
the Muses leave
Boethius,

and glowed[e] wiþ cruel eyen. ¶ Who quod sche haþ

suffred aprochen to þis seek[e] man þise comune strum-
petis of siche a place þat *men clepen þe theatre.

[* fol. 4.]

68 ¶ þe wyche only ne asswagen not his sorowes. wiþ no

as they only
increase his
sorrow with their
sweet venom.

remedies. but þei wolde fede and norysche hem wiþ
swete venym. ¶ Forsoþe þise ben þo þat wiþ þornes

and prykkynge of talent3 or affeccious wiche þat

72 ben no þing frutefyng nor profitable destroyen þe

They may
accustom the
mind to bear
grief, but cannot
free it from its
malady.

cornes plenteouse of frutes of reson. ¶ For þei
holden þe hertes of men in usage. but þei ne delyuere

not folk fro maladye. but if 3e muses hadde wiþdrawen

50 þese—thise
51 swiche—omitted
gregkysche—grekysche
signifiþ—syngnifieth
52 hey3est[e]—heyeste
54 by-twene þese—bytwixen
thise
þere—ther
seien—seyen
55 nobly wrouzt—nobely y-
wrought
wyche—whiche
56 myzt[en] clymbe—myhten
clymbyn
nepemast[e]—nethereste
57 ouermast[e]—vppereste
sum—some
58 hadde korue—hadden
koruen

58 cloþe—cloth
strenkeþ—strengthe
59 born—MS. borne, C. born
away syche—away swiche
60 geet[e]—geten
forsaide—forseide
61 ber—MS. bere, C. bar
bookes—smale bookes
honde—hand
lefte honde—left hand
62 ber—MS. bere, C. baar
sau3 þese—say thise
63 bedde—bed
endytng—enditynge
64 ameued—amoued
65 glowed[e]—glowede
hath—MS. hape, C. hath
66 seek[e]—sike
þise—the

66 strumpetis—strompetes
67 siche—swich
clepen—clepyn
68 only ne—nat only ne
not his—nat hise
no—none
69 wolde fede—wolden feeden
norysche hem—norysyn
lym
72 ben—ne ben
frutefyng—fructefyng
73 cornes plenteouse—corn
plentyuous
74 þe and ne—both omitted
75 not—nat
if 3e—MS. if þe, C. yif ye
hadde—hadden

fro me wiþ 3oure flateries. any vnkonnyng *and* vnprofit-
able man as men ben wont to fynde comunely amonges
þe peple. I wolde wene suffre þe lasse greuonsly.
¶ For-why in syche an vnprofitable man myne ententes
weren no þing endamaged. ¶ But 3e wiþdrawen me
þis man þat hap ben norysched in studies or scoles of
Eleaticis *and* of achademicis in grece. ¶ But goþ now
raþer away 3e meremaydenes wyche ben swete til it
be at þe laste. *and* suffreþ þis man to be cured *and*
heled by myne muses. þat is to say by notful sciences.
¶ And þus þis compaygnie of muses I-blamed casten
wroþely þe chere adounward to þe erþe *and* schewyng
by redenesse hir schame þei passeden sorowfully þe
þreschefolde. ¶ And I of whom þe syzt ploned in
teres was derked so þat I ne myzt[e] not knowe what
þat woman was of so imperial auctorite. ¶ I wex al
a-besid *and* astoned. *and* caste my syzt adoune in to þe
erþe. *and* bygan stille forto abide what sche wolde dor
afterwarde. ¶ þo come sche nere *and* sette hir down
vpon þe vterrest[e] corner of my bedde. *and* sche by-
holdyng my chere þat was cast to þe erþe heuy *and*
greuous of wepyng. compleinede wiþ þise wordes þat I
schal sey þe perturbacioun of my þouzt.

Philosophy is
deeply grieved,
because they have
not seduced one
of the profane,

80
but one who has
been brought up
in Eleatic and
Academic studies.

84
She bids the
ayrens begone.

87
Blushing for
shame they pass
the threshold.

91
Boethius is
astonished at the
presence of the
august dame.

95
Philosophy
expresses her
concern for
Boethius.

98

HEU QUAM PRECIPITI MERSA PROFUNDO.

Alas how þe þouzt of man dreint in ouer þrowyng
depnesse dulleþ *and* forletip hys propre clere-
nesse. myntyng to gone in to foreyne derknesses as
ofte as hys anioius bisines wexip wiþ-ouen mesure.

[The 2de Metur.]

Drowned in
the depth of cares
the mind loses
its proper
clearness.

76 *vnkonnyng*—vnkunnynge
78 *peple*—poeppe
79 *syche*—swliche
myne—myn
80 *weren*—ne weeren
3e—ye
81 *hap*—MS. hape, C. hath
ben—be
scoles—schoolles
82 *goþ*—MS. goþe, C. goth
83 *wyche*—whiche þat
85 *say*—seyen
85 *notful*—noteful

86 *I-blamed*—Iblamyd
87 *wroþely*—wrothly
adounward—downward
88 *redenesse*—rednesse
sorowfully—sorwfully
89 *þreschefolde*—thresshfold
syzt—syhte
90 *derked*—dyrked
myzt[e]—*knowe*—myhte
nat—known
91 *wex*—wax
92 *a-besid*—abaysshed
caste—cast

92 *adoune in to*—down to
93 *don*—MS. done
95 *vterrest[e] corner*—vt-
tereste cornere
bedde—bed
97 *compleinede*—com-
pleyn[de]
98 *sey*—seyen
101 *gone*—goon
102 *bisines*—bysynesse
ouen—owte

Man in his freedom knew each region of the sky,

the motions of the planets, and was wont to investigate the causes of storms,

the nature and properties of the seasons,

and the hidden causes of nature.

But now, alas, he is constrained to keep his face to the ground.

Philosophy addresses Boethius.

103 *worldly*—wordely
104 *sumtyme*—whilom
105 *gone*—goon
106 *papes*—paathes
sau3—sawh
ly3tnesse—lythnesse
sunne—sonne
sau3—MS. sue, C. sawgh
107 *wyche*—which
108 *risorses*—recourses
111 *seche*—seken
sounyng—sownyng

þat is dryuen to *and* fro wiþ worldly wyndes. ¶ þis man þat sumtyme was fre to whom þe heuene was open
105 *and* knowen *and* was wont to gone in heuenelyche papes. *and* sau3 þe ly3tnesse of þe rede sunne. *and* sau3 þe sterres of þe colde moone. *and* wyche sterre in heuene vseþ wandryng risorses yflit by dyuerse speres. ¶ þis man ouer comere hadde *comprehendid* al þis by noumbre. of accountyng in astronomye. ¶ And ouer þis he was wont to seche þe causes whennes þe sounyng wyndes moeuen *and* bisien þe smoþe water of þe see. *and* what spirit turneþ þe stable heuene. *and* whi þe sterre ryseþ oute of þe reede eest. to falle in þe westren waves. and what attempriþ þe lusty houres of þe fyrste somer sesoun þat hizteþ *and* apparaileþ þe erþe wiþ rosene floures. ¶ And who makeþ þat plenteuouse autumpne in fulle 3eres fletip wiþ heuy grapes. ¶ And eke þis man was wont to telle þe dyuerses causes of nature þat weren yhid.
121 ¶ Allas now lieþ he emptid of ly3t of hys þou3t. *and* hys nekke is *pressid* wiþ heuy cheynes *and* bereþ his chere enclined adoune for þe greet[e] wey3t. and is
124 constreyned to loke on foule erþe.

SET MEDICINE INQUIT TEMPUS.

[The ij^{de} prose.]

More need of medicine than of complaint.

Philosophy addresses Boethius.

But tyme is now *quod* sche of medicine more þen of compleynte. ¶ Forsoþe þen sche entenyng to me warde wiþ al þe lokyng of hir eyen saide. ¶ Art
128 not þou he *quod* sche þat sumtyme I-norschid wiþ my mylke *and* fostre[d] wiþ my meetes were ascaped *and* comen to corage of a perfit man. ¶ Certys I 3af þe

114 *ryseþ oute*—aryseth owt
falle—fallen
115 *westren*—westrene
116 *fyrste*—fyrst
119 *eke*—ek
120 *dyuerses*—diuerse
yhid—MS. yhidde
121 *lieþ*—lith
emptid—emted
123 *adoune*—adown
greet[e] wey3t — grete
weyhte

124 *loke*—*foule*—looken on the fool
125, 126 *þen*—than
127 *al*—alle
saide—seyde
128 *sumtyme*—whilom
I-norschid — MS. I-norschide, C. noryssed
129 *fostre[d]*—fostered
my—myne
130 *Certys*—Certes
3af, yaf.

syche armures þat 3if þou þi self ne haddest first caste
hem away. þei schulden haue defendid þe in sykernesse 132
þat may not be ouer-comen. ¶ Knowest þou me not.
* Why art þou stille. is it for schame or for astonynge. [° fol. 4 b.]
It were me leuer þat it were for schame. but it semeþ
me þat astonynge haþ oppressed þe. ¶ And whan
sche say me not oonly stille. but wip-uten office of 137
tonge *and* al doumbe. sche leide hir honde softely vpon
my brest *and* seide. ¶ Here nis no peril *quod* sche.
¶ He is fallen in to a litargie. whiche þat is a comune
sekenes to hertes þat ben desceiued. ¶ He haþ a litel 141
forzeten hym self. but certis he schal lyztly remembre
hym self. ¶ 3if so be þat he haþ knowen me or now.
and þat he may so done I wil wipe a litel hys eyen.
þat ben derked by þe cloude of mortel þinges ¶ þise
wordes seide sche. and wip þe lappe of hir garment 146
yplitid in a frounce sche dried[e] myn eyen þat were
ful of þe wawes of my wepynges. and dries up his
tears.

TUNC ME DISCUSSA.

þus when þat nyzt was discussed *and* chased away. [The 3^{de} Metarr.]
derknesses forlesten me. *and* to myn eyen repeyre
azeyne her firste strenkeþ. and ryzt by ensample as
þe sonne is hid when þe sterres ben clustred. þat is to
sey when sterres ben couered wip cloudes by a swifte
wynde þat hyzt chorus. *and* þat þe firmament stont
derked by wete ploungy cloudes. and þat þe sterres not
apperen vpon heuene. ¶ So þat þe nyzt semeþ sprad 156
vpon erþe. ¶ Yif þan þe wynde þat hyzt borias
Her touch dispels
the darkness of
his soul,
just as the heavy
vapours, that
darken the skies
and obscure the
sunlight, are
chased away by
the north wind,

131 *syche*—swiche
3if—yif
caste—C. cast
132 *away*—away
schulden haue—sholden
han
133 *not be*—nat ben
Knowest þou—knowestow
134 *art þou*—artow
136 *haþ*—MS. haþe
138 *tonge*—tunge
doumbe—dowmb
honde—hand

139 *Here*—her
140 *litargie whiche*—litarge
which
141 *sekenes*—sykenesse
141, 143 *haþ*—MS. haþe
144 *done*—doon
wil wipe—wol wypen
146 *garment*—garnement
147 *dried[e]*—dryede
were—weeren
148 *ful*—fulle
149 *when*—whan
150 *myn*—myne

150 *repeyre*—repeyrede
151 *azeyne*—omitted
her firste—hir fyrst
152 *hid*—MS. hidde, C. hid
when—whan
153 *sey*—seyn
when—whan
154 *hyzt*—heyhte
chorus—MS. thorus
stont—MS. stonde, C. stant
157 *þan*—þanne
wynde—wynd
hyzt—hyhte

158 sent out of þe kaues of þe contre of Trace betiþ pis
causing the return
of the hidden day,
when the sun
smites our won-
dering sight with
his sudden light.
nyzt. þat is to seyn chasiþ it away *and* descouereþ þe
closed day. ¶ þan schineþ phebus yshaken wiþ
sodeyne lyzt *and* smyteþ wiþ hys bemes in meruelyng
162 eyen.

1 MS. hanc.

HAUT¹ ALITER TRISTICIE.

[The 3^de prose.]
The clouds of
sorrow being dis-
pelled, Boethius
recollects the
features of his
Physician,

whom he dis-
covers to be
Philosophy.

Ryzt so *and* none oþer wyse þe cloudes of sorowe
dissolued *and* don away. ¶ I took heuene. *and*
receyuede mynde to knowe þe face of my fyciscien.
¶ So þat I sette myne eyen on hir *and* festned[e] my
lokyng. I byholde my norice philosophie. in whos
houses I hadde conuersed *and* haunted fro my zouþe.

169 *and* I seide þus. ¶ O þou maistresse of alle uertues
He addresses her. descendid fro þe souereyne sete. Whi art þou comen
in to þis solitarie place of myn exil. ¶ Art þou comen

172 for þou art mad coupable wiþ me of fals[e] blames.
She expresses her
concern for him, ¶ O *quod* sche my norry scholde I forsake þe now. *and*
scholde I not parte wiþ þe by comune trauaille þe charge
þat þou hast suffred for envie of my name. ¶ Certis

176 it nar[e] not leueful ne sittyng to philosophie to leten
and tells him that
she is willing to
share his misfor-
tunes. wiþ-uten compaignie þe wey of hym þat is innocent.
¶ Scholde I þan redoute my blame *and* agrisen as þouþ

179 þer were byfallen a newe þing. q. d. non. ¶ For
She fears not any
accusation, as if
it were a new
thing. trowest þou þat philosophi be now alþerfirst assailed
in perils by folk of wicked[e] maneres. ¶ Haue I not

stryuen wiþ ful greet strife in olde tyme byfore þe
For before the age
of Plato she con-
tended against
folly, age of my plato azeins þe foolhardines of foly *and*

184 eke þe same plato lyuyng. hys maistre socrates
and by her help
Socrates tri-
umphed over an
unjust death. deserued[e] victorie of vnryztful deep in my presence.
¶ þe heritage of wyche socrates. þe heritage is to seyne

158 *sent*—isent
160 *þan*—thanne
161 *sodeyne*—sodeyn
163 *none oþer*—non oother
sorowe—sorwe
165 *knowe*—knowen
166 *myne*—myn
festned[e]—fastnede
170 *fro*—from
170, 171 *art þou*—artow

172 *mad*—MS. made, C. mak-
fals[e]—false [ed]
174 *parte*—parten
176 *nar[e]*—nere
sittyng—sittinge
178 *þan*—thanne
179 *þing*—thing
q. d. non—omitted
180 *trowest þou*—trowestow
alþerfirst—alderfirst

181 *wicked[e]*—wikkede
182 *strife*—strif
183 *azeins*—ayenis
foolhardines—foolhardi-
nesse
foly—folie
184 *eke*—ek
185 *deserued[e]*—desseruede
186 *wyche*—the which
seyne—seyyn

þe doctrine of þe whiche socrates in hys oppinioun of Of the inheritance
 felicite þat I clepe welfulnesse ¶ Whan þat þe people of Epicureans
 of epicuriens *and* stoyciens *and* many oþer enforceden and Stoics wanted
 hem to go rauische eueryche man for his part þat is 190 to get a part.
 to seyne. þat to eueryche of hem wolde drawn to þe Philosophy with-
 defence of his oppinioun þe wordes of socrates. ¶ þei stood them,
 as in *partie* of hir preye todrowen me crynge *and* whereupon they
 debatynge þer azains. *and* tornen *and* torenten my cloþes 194 tore her robe,
 þat I hadde wouen wiþ myn handes. *and* wiþ þe and, departing
 cloutes þat þei hadden arased oute of my cloþes. þei with the shreds,
 wenten away wenyng þat I hadde gon wiþ hem euery 194
 dele. In whiche epicuryens *and* stoyciens. for as 198 imagined that
 myche as þer semed[e] somme traces *and* steppes of Thus, clothed they had got
 myne habit. þe folye of men wenyng þo epicuryens with her spoils, possession of her.
and stoyciens my *familers peruertede (.s. *persequendo*) many: [° fol. 5.]
 somme þoruþ þe errour of þe wikked[e] or vnkunn- 202
 yng[e] multitude of hem. ¶ þis is to seyne for þei Philosophy
 semeden philosophres: þei weren pursued to þe deep adduces
 and slayn. ¶ So yif þou hast not knowen þe exilynge examples of wise
 of anaxogore. ne þe empoyseyng of socrates. ne þe men, who had
 tourmentþ of zeno for þei [weren] straungers. ¶ 3it laboured under
 myztest þou haue knowen þe senectiens *and* þe Canyos 206
and þe sorancis of wyche folk þe renoun is neyþer ouer difficulties on
 oolde ne vnsolempne. ¶ þe whiche men no þing ellys account of being
 ne brouzt[e] hem to þe deep but oonly for þei weren her disciples.
 enfourmed of my maneres. *and* semeden moste vnlyke 210
 to þe studies of wicked folk. ¶ And forþi þou auztest
 not to wondre þouþ þat I in þe bitter see of þis lijf be 214

189 *welfulnesse* — weleful-
 189 *oþer*—oother [nesse]
 190 *go*—gon
eueryche—euerich
 191 *seyne*—seyn
to—omitted
eueryche—euerich
 194 *tornen*—read coruen, C.
 koruen
 195 *wouen*—MS. *wonnen*, C.
 wouen
 196 *arased*—arraced
 197 *gon*—MS. *gone*, C. *gon*
 198 *aele*—del
 199 *myche*—moche

199 *semed[e]*—semede
and—or
 200 *myne*—myn
wenyng—MS. *weyng*, C.
 weninge
 202 *þoruþ*—thorw
wikked[e]—wikkede
vnkunnynge—vnkuun-
 203 *seyne*—seyn þat [yng
 204 *semeden*—semede
pursued—MS. *pursuede*,
 C. *pursued*
 205 *slayn*—MS. *slayne*, C.
 slayn
 207 [*weren*]—weeren

208 *myztest þou haue* —
 myhtestow han
 209 *sorancis*—sorans
wyche—which
is—nis
 210 *oolde*—MS. *colde*, C. *old*
 211 *brouzt[e]*—browhte
 212 *enfourmed* — MS. *vn*-
 fourmed, C. *enformyd*
my—myne
vnlyke—vnlyk
 213 *wicked folk* — wikkede
auztest—owhtest [foolke]
 214 *wondre*—wondren
bitter—bittre

It is the aim of
Philosophy to
displease the
wicked,

who are more to
be despised than
dreaded, for they
have no leader.

If Philosophy is
attacked by the
wicked, she re-
tires within her
fortress,

leaving the enemy
busy among the
useless baggage,
and laughing to
scorn such hunt-
ers of trifles.

[The ferthe
Metur.]

He who hath
triumphed over
fate, and remained
insensible to the

changes of For-
tune, shall not be
moved by storms,
nor by the fires
of Vesuvius,
nor by the fiercest
thunderbolts.

Fear not the
tyrant's rage.

He who neither
fears nor hopes

216 *displese*—displezen
217 *wikked[e]*—wikkede
schreus—shrewes
218 *oost*—glossed *acies* in C.
grete—gret
219, 222 *leder*—ledere
220 *flityng*—flectyng
lyzly—lythly
yf—yif
221 *azeynest*—ayenis
222 *to*—*rychesse*, to
dere hise rycheses gy-
toure—towr
224 *hey3*—heye

fordryuen wip tempestes blowyng aboute. in þe whiche
tempeste þis is my most purpos þat is to seyn to dis-
217 plese to wikked[e] men. ¶ Of whiche schreus al be
þe oost neuer so grete it is to dispysse. for it nis gouerned
wip no leder of resounce. but it is rauysched only by
220 flityng errour folyly and lyztly. ¶ And if þei somtyme
makyng an ost azeynest vs assaile vs as strengere. oure
leder draweþ to gedir hys rychesse in to hys toure.
and þei ben ententif aboute sarpulers or sachels vn-
profitable forto taken. but we þat ben hey3 abouen syker
225 fro al tumulte and wode noise. ben stored and enclosed
in syche a palays. whider as þat chateryng or anoying
folye ne may not attayne. ¶ We scorne swiche
rauiners and honters of foulest[e] þinges.

QUISQUIS COMPOSITO.

Who so it be þat is clere of vertue sad and wel ordinat
of lyuyng. þat haþ put vnderfote þe prowed[e]
wierdes and lokip vpryzt vpon eyþer fortune. he may
232 holde hys chiere vndiscomfited. ¶ þe rage ne þe manace
of þe commoeuyng or chasyng vpwarde hete fro þe
botme. ne schal not moeue þat man. ne þe vnstable
mountaigne þat hyzt veseus. þat wircheþ oute þoru3
236 hys broken[e] chemineys smokyng fires. ¶ Ne þe wey
of þonder lyzt þat is wont to smyte hey3e toures ne
schal not mouene þat man. ¶ Wherto þen wrecches
drede 3e tyrauntes þat ben wode and felownes wip-outen
ony strenkeþ. ¶ Hope after no þing ne drede nat. and

225 *al*—alle
ben—omitted
stored—warnestored
226 *syche*—swich
þat—omitted
227 *scorne*—schorne
228 *rauiners*—þinges—
rauyneres & henteres of
fowleste thinges
229 *clere*—cleer
230 *lyuyng*—leuyng
haþ—MS. haþe
vnderfote—vndir-foot
prowed[e]—prowde

231 *may*—*chiere*—may his
cheere holde
232 *manace*—manesses
233 *þe*—þe see
235 *hyzt*—hihte
veseus—MS. vesenus
wircheþ—writith
236 *broken[e]*—brokene
smokyng—smokyng
237 *smyte*—smyten
238 *Wherto þen*—wharto
thanne
239 *felownes*—ony—felo-
nous withowte any

so schalt þou desarmen þe ire of þilke vnmyzty tyraunt. for anything disarms the tyrant.
¶ But who so þat quakyng dredeþ or desireþ þing þat He whose heart
nis not stable of his ryzt. þat man þat so doþ haþ cast fails him, yields
away hys schelde *and* is remoued fro hys place. *and* his arms,
enlaceþ hym in þe cheyne wiþ whiche he may be 245
drawen. own fetters.

SENTIS NE INQUIT.

Felest þou *quod* sche þise þinges *and* entren þei ouzt [The verthe
in þi corage. ¶ Art þou like an asse to þe harpe. Philosophy seeks
Whi wepest þou whi spillest þou teres. ¶ Yif þou to know the
abidest after helpe of þi leche. þe byhoueþ discouere þi malady of
wounde. ¶ þo .I. þat hadde gadered strenkeþ in my Boethius
corage answered[e] *and* seide. *and* nedep it zitte *quod* complains of
.I. of rehersyng or of amonicioun. *and* scheweþ it not Fortune's
ynou3 by hym self þe scharpnes of fortune þat wexeþ unrelenting
woode a3eynes me. ¶ Ne moeueþ it nat þe to seen þe rage.
face or þe manere of þis place (.i. prisoun.). ¶ Is þis Is not she moved,
þe librarie wyche þat þou haddest chosen for a ryzt he asks, with the
257 aspect of his
prison?
certeyne sege to þe in myne house. ¶ þere as þou His library, his
desputest of[te] wiþ me of þe sciences of þinges touch- habit, and his
ing diuinitee *and* touchyng mankynde. ¶ Was þan countenance are
myn habit swiche as it is now. was þan my face or all changed.
261
my chere swiche as now. ¶ Whan I souzt[e] wiþ þe
secretys of nature. whan þou enfourmedest my maners
and þe resoun of al my lijf. to þe ensauple of þe ordre 264
of heuene. ¶ Is nat þis þe gerdoun þat I referre to þe
to whom I haue be obeisaunt. ¶ Certis þou enfour- Is this, he asks,
medist by þe mouþe of plato þis sentence. þat is to the reward of his
seyne þat *commune* þinges or comunabletes weren fidelity?
Plato (de Rep. v.)
says that those
Commonwealths

241 *schalt þou desarmen*—
shaltow deseruien
243 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth
haþ—MS. hape, C. hath
cast—MS. caste, C. cast
244 *schelde*—sheld
remoued fro—remwed
from
245 *whiche*—the which
be—ben
247 *Felest þou*—Felistow
ouzt—awht

248 *art þou*—artow
249 *wepest þou*—wepistow
spillest þou—spillestow
252 *answered[e]*—auswer-
ede
255 *woode*—wood
257 *wyche*—which
258 *myne house þere*—myn
hows ther
259 *desputest of[te]*—des-
putedest ofte
260 *þan*—thane

261 *it and þan*—both omitted
261, 262 *swiche*—swich
262 *souzt[e]*—sowhte
263 *secretys*—secret3
my—MS. me, C. my
264 *al*—alle
265 *gerdoun*—gerdouns
266 *enfoumedist*—conform-
edest
267 *mouþe*—mowht
268 *comunabletes*—comuna-
litees

are most happy
that are governed
by philosophers,
or by those who
study to be so.
[* fol. 5 b.]

blysfyl yif þei þat hadn studied al fully to wisdom
gouerneden þilke þinges. or ellys yif it so by-felle þat
þe gouernours *of communalites studieden in grete wis-

272 domes. ¶ þou saidest eke by þe mouþe of þe same

The same Plato
urged philoso-
phers to take
upon them the
management of
public affairs,

plato þat it was a necessarie cause wyse men to taken
and desire þe gouernaunce of comune þinges. for þat þe
gouernementes of comune citees y-left in þe hondes of

276 felonous *tourmentours* Citizenis ne scholde not brynge
inne pestilence and destruccioun to goode folk. ¶ And

lest it should fall
into the hands of
unprincipled
citizens.

þerfore I folowynge þilk auctoritee (.s. platonis). desiryng

279 to put[te] furþe in excusoun and in acte of comune

Boethius declares
that he desired to
put in practice
(in the manage-
ment of public
affairs) what he
had learnt in his
retirement.

administracioun þo þinges þat .I. hadde lerned of þe
among my secre restyng whiles. ¶ þou and god þat

put[te] þee in þe þouztis of wise folk ben knowen wiþ
me þat no þing brouzt[e] me to maistrie or dignite: but

284 þe comune studie of al goodenes. ¶ And þer-of comeþ

He sought to do
good to all, but
became involved
in discord with
the wicked.

it þat by-twixen wikked folk and me han ben greuouse
discordes. þat ne myzten not be releseþ by prayeres.

¶ For þis libertee haþ fredom of conscience þat þe wrapþe

288 of more myzty folk haþ alwey ben despised of me for

Consciousness of
integrity made
him despise the
anger of the most
powerful.

saluacioun of ryzt. ¶ How ofte haue .I. resisted and
wiþstonde þilk man þat hyzt[e] conigaste þat made

alwey assautes azeins þe propre fortunes of poure feble

292 folke. ¶ How ofte haue .I. zitte put of. or cast out

He opposed
Conigastus,
and put a stop to
the doings of
Triguilla.

hym trigwille prouost of þe kynges hous boþe of þe
wronges þat he hadde bygon[ne] to done and eke fully

performed. ¶ How ofte haue I couered and defended

296 by þe auctorite of me put azeins perils. þat is to seine put

He put his au-

myne auctorite in peril for þe wreched pore folke. þat

270 *by-felle*—byfille
271 *in grete wisdomes*—to
geten wysdom
272 *eke*—ek
275 *comune*—omitted
y-left—MS. ylefte, C. yleft
276 *Citizenis*—citesenes
brynge inne—bryngen in
278 *þerfore*—therfor
þilk—thilke
desiryng—desired
279 *put[te] furþe*—putten

forth
280 *þo*—thilke
282 *put[te]*—putte
283 *brouzt[e]*—ne browhte
284 *þe*—omitted
al goodenes—alle good-
nesse
comeþ—comth
287, 288 *haþ*—MS. haþe
289 *saluacioun*—sauacioun
290 *þilk*—thilke
hyzt[e]—hyhte

290 *conigaste*—MS. coniu-
gaste
292 *ofte*—ofte ek
zitte—omitted
294 *bygon[ne]*—bygunne
done—don
295 *couered*—MS. couerede,
C. couered
296 *put*—MS. putte, C. put
seine—seyn
297 *myne*—myn

þe couetise of straungeres vnpunysched tourmentid alwey
 wiþ myseses *and* greuauces oute of noumbre. ¶ Neuer
 man drow me 3itte fro ryzt to wrong. When I say þe
 fortunes *and* þe rychesse of þe people of þe prouinces
 ben harmed eyþer by priue rauynes or by comune
 tributis or cariages. as sory was I as þei þat suffred[e]
 þe harme. *Glosa.* ¶ Whan þat theodoric þe kyng of
 gothes in a dere 3ere hadde hys gerneris ful of corne
and comaundede þat no man ne schold[e] bie no corne
 til his corne were solde *and* þat at a dere greuous pris.
 ¶ But I withstod þat ordinaunce *and* ouer-com it
 knowyng al þis þe kyng hym self. ¶ Coempcioun þat
 is to seyn comune achat or bying to-gidere þat were
 establised vpon poeple by swiche a manere imposicioun
 as who so bouzt[e] a busshel corn he most[e] 3eue þe
 kyng þe fifte part. *Textus.* ¶ Whan it was in þe
 soure hungry tyme þere was establised or cried greuous
and inplitable coempcioun þat men seyn wel it schulde
 greetly tourmentyn *and* endamagen al þe prouince of
 compaigne I took strif azeins þe prouost of þe pretorie
 for comune profit. ¶ And þe kyng knowyng of it I
 ouercom it so þat þe coempcioun ne was not axed ne
 took effect. ¶ Paulyn a counseiller of Rome þe rychesse
 of þe whyche paulyn þe houndys of þe palays. þat is to
 seyn þe officeres wolde han deuoured by hope *and*
 couetise. ¶ 3it drow I hym out of þe Iowes .s. faucibus
 of hem þat gapeden. ¶ And for as myche as þe peyne
 of þe accusacioun aiuged byforn ne scholde not sodeynly
 henten ne punischen wrongfully Albyn a counseiller of

thority in peril
 for the defence of
 poor folk.

I never deviated,
 he says, from the
 path of justice.

302

I felt for those
 that were wrong-
 fully oppressed.

306

310

313

I opposed success-
 fully Coemption
 in Campania.

316

I saved Paulinus
 out of the hands
 of the hounds of
 the palace
 (*Palatini canes*).

321

324

I defended
 Albinus against
 Cyprian.

298 *vnpunysched*—vnpunys-
 sed
 299 *myseses*—myseyses
 300 *drow*—MS. drowe, C.
 weth drowh
 3itte—yit
 wrong—wronge
 301 *rychesse*—richesses
 þe (2)—omitted
 302 *harmed eyþer*—harmyd
 or amenused othwer
 303 *tributis*—tributz
suffred[e]—suffreden

304 *harme*—harm
 305 *3ere*—yer
 305 *hys*—hise
 305, 306, 307 *corne*—corn
 306 *schold[e]* *bie*—sholde
 byen
 308 *But I withstod*—Boece
 withstood (MS. with-
 stode)
 com—MS. come, C. com
 311 *swiche*—swich
 312 *bouzt[e]*—bowhte
busshel—bossel

312 *most[e]* *3eue*—moste yeue
 315 *inplitable*—vnplitable
seyn—sayen
 319 *ouercom*—MS. ouer-
 come, C. ouer com
 320 *counseiller*—consoler
rychesse—rychesses
 321 *whyche*—which
 322 *wolde*—wolden
 323 *drow*—MS. drowe, C.
 drowh
 324 *myche*—moche
 326 *punischen*—punisse

- Rome. I put[te] me azenis þe hates *and* indignaciouns
 328 of þe accusour Ciprian. ¶ Is it not þan ynought yseyn
 þat I haue purchased greet[e] discordes azeins my self.
 but I aughte be more assured azenis alle oþer folk þat
 for þe loue of ryztwisnesse .I. ne reserued[e] neuer no
 332 þing to my self to hem ward of þe kynges halle .s. officers.
 by þe whiche I were þe more syker. ¶ But þoruþ þe
 same accusours accusyng I am condempned. ¶ Of
 þe noubre of whiche accusours one basilus þat som-
 tyme was chased out of þe kynges seruce. is now com-
 337 pelled in accusyng of my name for nede of foreine
 moneye. ¶ Also opilion *and* Gaudencius han accused
 me. al be it so þat þe Iustice regal hadde sumtyme demed
 340 hem hoþe to go in to exil. for her treccheries *and* fraudes
 wiþ-uten noubre. ¶ To whiche iugement þei wolde
 not obeye. but defended[e] hem by sykernesse of holy
 houses. *þat is to seyne fledden in to seyntuaries. *and*
 whan þis was aperceiued to þe kyng. he comaunded[e]
 but þat þei voided[e] þe citee of Rauenne by certeyne
 day assigned þat men scholde merken hem on þe for-
 347 heued wiþ an hoke of iren *and* chasen hem out of toun.
 ¶ Now what þing semeþ þe myzt[e] be lykned to þis
 cruelte. For certys þilk same day was receyued þe ac-
 cusyng of my name by þilk[e] same accusours. ¶ What
 may be seid herto. haþ my studie *and* my konnyng
 352 deserued þus. or ellys þe forseide dampnacioun of me.
 made þat hem ryztful accusours or no (q.d. non).
 ¶ Was not fortune asshamed of þis. [Certes alle hadde
 nat fortune ben asshamyd] þat innocence was accused.
 3it auzt[e] sche haue had schame of þe filþe of myn ac-

For the love of
justice I forfeited
all favour at
Court.

Boethius makes
mention of his
accusers, Basilus,
Opilio, Gauden-
tius,

[* fol. 6.]

men who had
been commanded
to leave the city
on account of
their many
crimes.

But, on the day
this sentence was
to be executed,
they accused him,
and their testi-
mony against
him was accepted.

Fortune, if not
ashamed at this,
might at least
blush for the
baseness of the
accusers.

327 put[te]—putte
 328 yseyn—MS. yseyne
 329 greet[e]—grete
 330 aughte be—owhte be the
 oþer—oothre
 333 by þe whiche—by which
 þoruþ þe—thorw tho
 335 whiche—the whiche
 one—oon
 somtyme—whilom
 339 sumtyme—whilom
 340 go—ron
 her—hir

341 wiþ-uten—withowte
 wolde not—nolden nat
 342 defended[e]—defendedy
 by—by the
 343 seyne—seyne
 seyntuaries—sentyuare
 344 was—omitted
 comaunded[e]—comaun-
 dede
 345 voided[e]—voidede
 certeyne—certeyn
 346 men—me
 merken—marke

347 hoke of iren—hoot yren
 348 þe—omitted
 myzt[e] be—myhte ben
 349 þilk—þilke
 350 þilk[e]—þilke
 351 be—ben
 seid—MS. seide, C. seyð
 haþ—MS. habe
 354, 355 [Certes—*assha-*
 myd]—from C.
 356 auzt[e]—owte
 haue had—han had, MS.
 hadde

accours. ¶ But axest þou in somme of what gilt .I. 357

am accused. men seyne þat I wolde sauē þe compaignie of þe senatours. ¶ And desirest þou to here in what manere .I. am accused þat I scholde han disturbed þe accusour to beren lettres. by whiche he scholde han maked þe senatours guilty azeins þe kynges Real maieste. ¶ O meistresse what demest þou of þis. schal .I. forsake þis blame þat I ne be no schame to þe (q. d. non). ¶ Certis .I. haue wold it. þat is to seyne þe sauuacioun of þe senat. ne I schal neuer leten to wilne it. and þat I confesse and am a-knowe. but þe entent of þe accusour to be destourbed schal cese. ¶ For schal I clepe it a felonie þan or a synne þat I haue desired þe sauuacioun of þe ordre of þe senat. and certys 3it hadde þilk same senat don by me þoru3 her decretz and hire iugementys as þou3 it were a synne or a felonie þat is to seyne to wilne þe sauuacioun of hem (.s. senatus). ¶ But folye þat lieth alwey to hym self may not change þe merit of þinges. ¶ Ne .I. trowe not by þe iugement of socrates þat it were leueful to me to hide þe soþe. ne assent[e] to lesynges. ¶ But certys how so euer it be of þis I put[te] it to gessen or preisen to þe iugement of þe and of wise folk. ¶ Of whiche þing al þe ordinaunce and þe soþe for as moche as folk þat ben to comen aftir oure dayes schollen knowen it. ¶ I haue put it in scripture and remembraunce. for touching þe lettres falsly maked. by whiche lettres I am accused to han hooped þe fredom of Rome. What apperteneþ me to speken þer-of. Of whiche lettres þe fraude hadde ben schewed apertly if

Boethius says he is accused of trying to save the Senate, and of having embarrassed an informer against the Senate.

362

365

It is true that he tried to save the Senate, for he has and will have its best interests always at heart.

369

373

(Folly cannot change the merit of things.)

376

380

Boethius determines to transmit an account of his prosecution to posterity.

385

357 axest þou—axestow

358 seyne—seyne
sauē—saue

359 desirest þou—desires
thow

here—hereen
362 maked—MS. maken, C.
makyd

363 demest þou—demestow

365 wold—MS. wolde, C.

wold

366 seyne—seyne

367 þat—omitted

am—I am

368 þe—ben

369 it—it thanne

þan—omitted

371 þilk—þilke

372 her—hir

hire—hir

372 þou3—þough

373 or—and

seyne—seyne

374 lieth—MS. lieþe, C. lieth

377 assent[e]—assente

381 schollen—shellen

382 and—and in

385 spoken—speke

of—lettres—C. omits

386 if—yif

Boethius says that he could have defeated his accusers had he been allowed the use of their confessions.

I hadde had libertee forto han vsed *and* ben at þe confessioun of myn accusours. ¶ Þe whiche þing in alle nedys haþ grete strenkeþ. ¶ For what oþer fredom may men hopen. Certys I wolde þat some oþer fredom

391 myzt[e] be hoped. ¶ I wolde þan haue answered by þe wordes of a man þat hyzt[e] Canius. for whan he was accused by Gayus Cesar Germeins son þat he (*canius*) was knowyng *and* consentyng of a coniuracioun maked azeins hym (.s. Gaius). ¶ Þis Canius answered[e]

But there is now no remains of liberty to be hoped for.

396 þus. ¶ Yif I had[de] wist it þou haddest not wist it. In whiche þing sorwe haþ not so dyled my witte þat I pleyne oonly þat schrewed[e] folk apparailen folies azeins vertues. ¶ But I wondre gretly how þat

It is not strange that the wicked should conspire against virtue.

400 þei may performe þinges þat þei had[de] hoped forto done. For why. to wylne schrewednesse þat comeþ paraenture of oure defaute. ¶ But it is lyke to a monstre *and* a meruaille. ¶ How þat in þe present

The will to do ill proceeds from the defects of human nature.

404 syzt of god may ben acheued *and* performed swiche þinges. as euery felonous man haþ conceyued in hys þouzt azeins innocent. ¶ For whiche þing oon of þi familers not vnskilfully axed þus. ¶ 3if god is. whennes comen wikked[e] þinges. *and* yif godne is whennes

It is a marvel how such evil acts can be done under the eye of an Omniscient God.

409 comen goode þinges. but al hadde it ben leueful þat felonous folk þat now desiren þe bloode *and* þe deef of alle goode men. *and* eke of al þe senat han wilned to gone destroien me. whom þei han seyn alwey batailen

If there be a God, whence proceeds evil? If there is none, whence arises good?

413 *and* defenden goode men *and* eke al þe senat. 3it hadde I not desserued of þe fadres. þat is to seyne of þe senatours þat þei scholde wilne my destruccioun.

387 *had*—MS. hade, C. had
388 *myn*—myne
389 *haþ*—MS. haþe, C. hath
grete—gret
what—omitted
390 *some*—som
391 *myzt[e]* *be*—myhte ben
þan haue—þanne han
392 *hyzt[e]*—hyhte
394 *maked*—ymaked
395 *answered[e]*—answeredre
396 *had[de]*—hadde

397 *whiche*—which
sorwe—sow
haþ—MS. haþe
witte—wit
398 *schrewed[e]*—shrewede
399 *folies*—felonies
vertues—vertu
400 *had[de]*—han
401 *done*—don
comeþ—comth
402 *lyke to a*—lyk a
404 *syzt*—syhte

405 *haþ*—MS. haþe
406 *innocent*—innocent3
whiche—which
408 *wikked[e]*—wykkede
410 *bloode*—blod
411 *eke*—ek
412 *gone*—gon *and*
seyn—seyen
413 *eke*—ek
414 *seyne*—seyen
415 *scholde*—sholden

¶ þou remembrest wele as I gesse þat whan I wolde don or *seyn any þing. þou þi self alwey present reweledest me. ¶ At þe citee of verone whan þat þe kyng gredy of comune slauzter. caste hym to transporten vpon al þe ordre of þe senat. þe gilt of his real maieste of þe whiche gilt þat albyn was accused. wiþ how grete sykernesse of peril to me defended[e] I al þe senat. ¶ þou wost wel þat I seide soþe. ne I auainted[e] me neuer in preysyng of my self. ¶ For alwey when any wyzt resceiueþ *precieuse* renoun in auautyng hym self of hys werkes: he amenusiþ þe secre of hys conscience. ¶ But now þou mayst wel seen to what ende I am comen for myne innocence. I receiue peyne of fals felonie in gerdoun of verray vertue. ¶ And what open *confessioun* of felonie had[de] euer iugis so accordaunt in cruelte. þat is to seyne as myne accusyng haþ. ¶ þat oþer errour of mans witte or ellys *condicioun* of fortune þat is vncerteine to al mortal folk ne submytted[e] summe of hem. þat is to seyne þat it re cheyned[e] summe iuge to han pitee or compassioun. ¶ For al þou3 I had[de] ben accused þat I wolde brenne holy houses. *and* strangle prestys wiþ wicked swerde. ¶ or þat .I. had[de] grayped deef to alle goode men algatis þe sentence scholde han punysched me present confessed or conuict. ¶ But now I am remewed fro þe Citee of rome almost fyue-hundreþ þousand pas. I am wiþ outen defence dampned to *proscripcioun* *and* to þe deef. for þe studie *and* bountees þat I haue done to þe senat. ¶ But o wel ben þei worþi of mercye (as who seiþ nay.) þer myzt[e] neuer

Boethius defends the integrity of his life.
[* fol. 6 b.]
He defended the Senate at Verona.

420

422

He spake only the truth, and did not boast.

(Boasting lessens the pleasure of a self approving conscience.)

427

But as the reward of his innocence he is made to suffer the punishment due to the blackest crime.

432

Had he been accused of a design to burn temples, massacre priests, he would have been allowed to confront his accusers.

440

But now this is denied him, and he is proscribed and condemned to death.

444

416 *wel*—wel
417 *don*—MS. done, C. doon
seyn—seyen
418 *þe* (1)—omitted
419 *slauzter*—slawhtre
420 *transporten vpon* —
transport vp
422 *grete*—gret
defended[e]—deffendede
423 *seide soþe*—seye soth
424 *auainted[e]*—auaintede

425 *when*—whan
precieuse—presious
429 *in*—for
430 *vertue*—vertu
431 *had[de]*—hadde
432 *seyne*—seyn
myne—myn
haþ—MS. haþe
433 *witte*—wit
uncerteine—vncerteyn
434 *al*—alle

434 *submytted[e]*—submit-
435 *seyne*—seyn [tede
cheyned[e]—enclinede
436 *had[de]*—hadde
438 *wicked*—wykkede
had[de]—hadde
441 *almost*—almest
442 *þousand*—MS. þousas
wiþ outen—withowte
444 *done*—doon
445 *myzt[e]*—myhte

- 446 *zit non of hem ben conuicte. Of swiche a blame as*
myn is of swiche trespas myn accusours seyen ful wel
þe dignitee. þe wiche dignite for þei wolde derken it
wiþ medelyng of some felonye. þei beren me on honde
 450 *and lieden. þat I hadde polute and defouled my con-*
science wiþ sacrelege. for couetise of dignite. ¶ And
certys þou þi self þat art plaunted in me chacedest oute
þe sege of my corage al couetise of mortal þinges. ne
 454 *sacrilege ne had[de] no leue to han a place in me byforne*
þine eyen. ¶ For þou drouppedest euery day in myn
eeres and in my þouzt þilk comaundement of pictogoras.
þat is to seyne men schal seruen to god. and not to
 458 *goddess. ¶ Ne it was no couenaunt ne no nede to*
taken helpe of þe foulest spirites. ¶ I þat þou hast
ordeyned or set in syche excellence þat [þou] makedest
 461 *me lyke to god. and ouer þis þe ryzt clene seere*
chaumbre of myn house. þat is to seye my wiþ and þe
compaignie of myn honeste frendis. and my wyues
fadir as wel holy as worþi to ben reuerenced þoruþ
 465 *hys owen dedis. defenden me of al suspeccioun of syche*
blame. ¶ But o malice. ¶ For þei þat accusen me
taken of þe philosophie feipe of so grete blame. ¶ For
þei trowen þat .I. haue had affinite to malyfice or en-
chauntementz by cause þat I am replenished and ful-
 470 *filled wiþ þi techynges. and enformed of þi maners.*
¶ And þus it sufficeþ not only þat þi reuerence ne auayle
me not. but 3if þat þou of þi fre wille raper be blemished
wiþ myne offensioun. ¶ But certys to þe harmes þat I
 474 *haue þere bytydeþ zit þis encrece of harme. þat þe*

Boethius says
that his enemies
accused him of
sorcery.

He affirms that
he has always
followed the
golden maxim of
Pythagoras,—
επιου Οεπ.

His family and
friends could clear
him from all sus-
picion of the
crime of sorcery.

Because he has
given himself up
to Philosophy,
his enemies accuse
him of using un-
lawful arts.

446 *ben*—be
swiche—swich
447 *myn (both)*—myne
swiche—whiche
seyen—sayen
448 *wolde*—wolden
449 *some*—som
beren—baren
on honde—an hand
450 *polute*—polut
451 *sacrelege*—C. has sor-
cerie as a gloss to sacri-
lege
453 *al*—alle

454 *had[de]*—hadde
byforne—byforne
455 *drouppedest*—dropped-
est
myn—myne
456 *þilk*—þilke
457 *seyne*—scyn
seruen—serue
god—godde
459 *helpe*—help
spirites—spirite
460 *set*—MS. sette, C. set
syche—swiche
[*þou*]—thow

461 *lyke*—lyk
462 *house*—hows
seye—scyn
463 *myn*—my
465 *owen*—owne
of al—from alle
syche—swich
467 *philosophie*—philosophre
feipe—feyth
grete—gret
468 *had*—MS. hadde, C. had
473 *myne*—myn
474 *þere*—ther
harme—harm

gessinge *and* þe iugement of myche folk ne loken no 475
 þing to þe[de]sertys of þinges but only to þe auenture
 of fortune. ¶ And iugen þat only swiche þinges ben Most people
 purueied of god. whiche þat temporel welefulnesse imagine that that
 commendip. *Glosa.* ¶ As þus þat yif a wyzt haue only should be
 prosperite. he is a good man *and* worþi. to haue þat 480 undertaken with
 prosperite. and who so haþ aduersite he is a wikked prudent foresight
 man. *and* god haþ forsake hym. *and* he is worþi to whiche is crowned
 haue þat aduersite. ¶ þis is þe opinioun of somme with success.
 folke. **and* þer of comeþ þat good gessyng. ¶ Fyrste of
 al þing forsakeþ wrecches certys it greueþ me to þink[e] 485
 ryzt now þe dyuerse sentences þat þe poeple seiþ of
 me. ¶ And þus moche I seye þat þe laste charge of 487
 contrarious fortune is þis. † þat whan þat ony blame is [† fol. 7.]
 laid vpon a caytif. men wenen þat he haþ deserued þat
 he suffreþ. ¶ And I þat am put away from goode men Boethius laments
and despoiled from dignitees *and* defoulid of my name the loss of his
 by gessyng haue suffred torment for my goode dedis. 492 dignities and
 ¶ Certys me semeþ þat I se þe felonus couines of reputation.
 wikked men abounden in ioie *and* in gladnes. ¶ And The wicked, he
 I se þat euery lorel shapiþ hym to fynde oute newe says, sin with
 fraudes forto accusen goode folke. and I se þat goode 496 impunity,
 men ben ouerþrowen for drede of my peril. ¶ and
 euery luxurious *tourmentour* dar don alle felonie vn-
 punished *and* ben excited þerto by ziftes. and innocent; 499
 ne ben not oonly despoiled of sykernesse but of de- while the inno-
 fence *and* þefore me list to crien to god in þis manere. cent are deprived
 of security, protection, and
 defence.

O STELLIFERI CONDITOR ORBIS.

O þou maker of þe whele þat bereþ þe sterres. whiche [The fifthe metur.]
 þat art fastned to þi perdurable chayere. *and* Author of the
 starry sky, Thou,

475 *myche*—moche
 476 þe[de]sertys—the desert; 3
 479 *Glosa*—glose
 480 *good*—MS. goode, C.
 good
 haue—han
 481 so—omitted in C.
 481, 482 *hap*—MS. haþe
 483 *haue*—han

484 *Fyrste*—fyrst
 485 *al*—alle
 þink[e]—thiuke
 488 *ony*—any
 489 *laid*—MS. laide, C. leyd
 haþ—MS. haþe
 490 *put*—MS. putte, C. put
 491 *from*—of
 494 *abounden*—habownden

494 *gladnes*—gladnesse
 495 *oute*—owt
 496 *accusen*—accuse
 497 *ben*—beth
 501 *manere*—wise
 502 *whele*—whel
 whiche—whiche
 503 *fastned*—yfastned
 chayere—chayer

seated on high,
turnest the
spheres, and
impose laws
upon the stars
and planets.

turnest þe heuene wiþ a rauyssyng sweighe *and* con-
streinest þe sterres to suffren þi lawe. ¶ So þat þe
mone somtyme schyning wiþ hir ful hornes metyng

507 wiþ alle þe bemes of þe sonne. ¶ Hir broþer hideþ þe

The sun obscures
the lesser lights,
and quenches
even the moon's
light.

sterres þat ben lasse. *and* somtyme whan þe mone
pale wiþ hir derke hornes approcheþ þe sonne. leesith
hir lyztes. ¶ And þat þe cuesterre esperus whiche

511 þat in þe first[e] tyme of þe nyzt bryngeþ furþe hir

Thou raisest
Hesperus to usher
in the shades of
night, and again
causest him to be
the harbinger of
day, whence his
name Lucifer.

colde arysynges comeþ eft azeynes hir vsed cours. *and*
is pale by þe morwe at þe rysyng of þe sonne. and is
þan cleped lucifer. ¶ þou restrainest þe day by shorter
dwelling in þe tyme of colde wynter þat makeþ þe

516 leues to falle. ¶ þou diuidest þe swifte tides of þe

Thou controllest
the changing
seasons of the
year.

nyzt when þe hote somer is comen. ¶ þi myzt at-
tempre[þ] þo variauntz sesons of þe zere. so þat
zephurus þe deboneire wynde bringeþ azein in þe first[e]

520 somer sesoun þe leues þat þe wynde þat hyzt[e] boreas
haþ reft away in autumpne. þat is to seyne in þe laste

523 turus saw ben waxen hey[e] cornes whan þe sterre

All nature is
bound by thy
eternal law.

sirius eschaufeþ hym. ¶ þere nis no þing vnbounde
from hys olde lawe ne foreleteþ hym of hys propre estat.

526 ¶ O þou *gouernour* gouernyng alle þinges by certeyne

Why, then, leavest
thou man's ac-
tions uncon-
trolled?

ende. why refusest þou oonly to gouerne þe werkes of
men by dewe manere. ¶ Whi suffrest þou þat slid-

Why should
fickle fortune be
allowed to work
such mighty
changes in the
world?

ying fortune turneþ to grete vtter chaungynges of þinges.
so þat anioius peyne þat scholde duelly punisshe fel-
ouns punissitz innocentz. ¶ And folk of wikked[e]

532 maneres sitten in heize chaiers. *and* anoienge folk

504 *sweighe*—sweyh
constreinest, MS. con-
treinest, C. constreynest
506 *hir*—here
508 *lasse*—lesse
510 *esperus whiche*—hes-
perus which
511 *first[e]*—fyrste
furþe—forth
512 *eft*—est
514 *restrainest*—MS. re-
streinest
516 *to*—omitted
518 *attempre[þ]* þo—atemp-

reth the
518 *sesons*—sesoun
zere—yer
519 *wynde bringeþ*—wynd
brengeth
520 *wynde*—wynd
hyzt[e]—hihte
521 *reft*—MS. reft, C. reft
seyne—seyn
522 *hyzt*—hihte
arcturus—MS. ariturus
523 *saw*—MS. saweþ, C.
sawgh
hey[e]—hyye

524 *hym*—hem
þere—ther
þing—thinge
525 *from*—fram
foreleteþ hym of—foreleet-
heth þe werke of
527 *refusest þou*—refows-
estow
529 *to*—þinges—so grete
entrechaungynges of
thynges
531 *punissitz*—punysshe
wikked[e]—wykkede
532 *heize*—heere

treden *and* þat vnryztfully in þe nekkes of holy men. 533

¶ And vertue clere *and* schynyng naturely is hid in dirke dirkenesses. *and* þe ryztful man berip þe blame *and* þe peyne of þe felowne. ¶ Ne þe forsweryng ne

The wicked are prosperous, while the righteous are in adversity.

536

þe fraude couered *and* kembd wip a fals colour ne a-noyep not to schrewes. ¶ þe whiche schrewes whan hem lyst to vsen her strengþe þei reioisen hem to putten vndir hem þe souerayne kynges. whiche þat

540

poepel wip[outen] noumbre dreden. ¶ O þou what so euer þou be þat knyttes[t] alle bondes of þinges loke on þise wrecched[e] erþes. we men þat ben nat a foule party but a faire party of so grete a werke we

O thou that bindest the disagreeing elements, look upon this wretched earth,

544

ben turmentid in þe see of fortune. ¶ þou governour wipdraw *and* restreyne þe rauyssinge flodes *and* fastne *and* forme þise erþes stable wip pilke [bonde] wip whiche þou governest þe heuene þat is so large.

and, as thou dost govern the spacious heavens, so let the earth be firmly bound.

HIC UBI CONTINUATO DOLORE.

Whan I hadde wip a continuel sorwe sobbed or broken out þise þinges sche wip hir chere peisible *and* no þing amoeued. wip my compleyntes seide þus.

[The fyfthe prose.] Philosophy consoles Boethius.

551

whan I say þe quod sche sorweful *and* wepyng I wist[e] on-one þat þou were a wrecche *and* exiled. but I wist[e] neuer how fer þine exile was : zif þi tale ne hadde schewed it to me. but certys al be þou fer fro þi

555

contre. þou nart * nat put out of it. but þou hast fayled of þi weye *and* gon amys. ¶ *and* yif þou hast

[* fol. 7b.]

leuer forto wene þan þou be put out of þi contre. þan hast þou put oute þi self rapen þen ony oþer wyzt hap.

She speaks to him of his country.

¶ For no wyzt but þi self ne myzt[e] neuer haue don

560

533 in—oon
534 *and*—omitted
536 Ne þe forsweryng—Ne forswerynge
537 kembd—MS. kembde, C. kembd
541 wip[outen]—withowtyn
542 knyttes[~~e~~]^t—knytttest
543 wrecched[e]^t—wrecchede
544 a (2)—omitted

545 þe—this
546 wipdraw — MS. wipdrawe, C. withdraw
þe—thei
547 forme—ferme [bonde]—from C.
wip—by
550 broken—borken
552 wist[e]^t—wyste
553 on-one—anon
554 wist[e]^t—wyste

554 fer—ferre
555 ne hadde—nadde
557 gon—MS. gone, C. gon
558 leuer—leuere
558, 559 put—MS. putte, C. put
559 hap—MS. hape
560 myzt[e]^t—myhte haue—han don—MS. done, C. don

- 561 þat to þe. ¶ For 3if þou remembre of what contre þou
 She reminds him art born. it nis not gouerned by emperoures. ne by
 that he is a citi- zent of a country
 not governed by a
 giddy multitude,
 but *εις κοιναν*
εστιν, εις
βασιλευς. of athenes. ¶ But o lorde *and* o kyng *and* þat is god
 þat is lorde of þi contree. whiche þat reioiseþ hym of
- 566 þe dwellyng of hys Citezenis. *and* not forto putte hem
 in exile. Of þe whiche lorde it is a souerayne fredom
 to be gouerned by þe bridel of hym and obeie to his
 iustice. ¶ Hast þou forzeten þilke ryzt olde lawe of þi
- 570 Citee. in þe whiche Citee it is ordeyned *and* establissed
 þat what wyzt þat hap leuer founden þer inne hys sete
 or hys house. þen ellys where : he may not be exiled
- 573 by no ryzt fro þat place. ¶ For who so þat is contened
 in-wiþ þe paleis [*and* the clos] of þilke Citee. þer nis
 no drede þat he may deserue to ben exiled. ¶ But
 who þat letteþ þe wille forto enhabit[e] þere. he for-
 leteþ also to deserue to ben Citezein of þilke Citee.
- 577 ¶ So þat I seye þat þe face of þis place ne amoeneþ me
 Philosophy says nat so myche as þine owen face. Ne .I. ne axe not
 she is moved more by the looks
 of Boethius than
 by his gloomy
 prison. raþer þe walles of þi librarie apparailled *and* wrouzt
 wiþ yvory *and* wiþ glas þan after þe sete of þi þouzt.
- 582 In whiche I putte nat somtyme bookes. but .I. putte
 Books are to be þat þat makeþ bookes worþi of pris or precious þat is
 valued on account to sein þe sentence of my books. ¶ *And* certainly of
 of the thoughts they contain. þi decertes by-stowed in *commune* good. þou hast seid
 soþe but after þe multitude of þi goode dedys. þou hast
 seid fewe. *and* of þe vnhonestee or falsnesse of þinges
- 588 þat ben opposed azeins þe. þou hast remembred þinges
 þat ben knowe to alle folk. and of þe felonies *and*
 Boethius has fraudes of þine accusours. it semeþ þe haue I-touched
 rightfully and briefly recounted
 the frands of his
 accusers. it forsoþe ryztfully *and* schortly. ¶ Al myzten þo

562 *born*—MS. borne, C. |
 born
 566 *hys*—hise
 putte—put
 563 *be*—ben
 571 *hap*—MS. hape
 572 *house*—hows
 574 [*and*—*clos*—]—from C.

576 *wille*—wyl
 enhabit[e]—enhabyte
 578 *seye*—sey
 amoeneþ—moueth
 579 *myche*—mochel
 owen—owne
 ne (2)—omitted
 582 *putte* (*both*)—put

582 *somtyme*—whilom
 585 *decertes*—desertes
 seid—MS. seide, C. seyde
 586 *soþe*—soþh
 587 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyde
 588 *opposed*—aposyd
 589 *knowe*—knowyn

same þinges bettere *and* more plentiuously be couth 592
 in þe mouþe of þe poeple þat knoweþ al þis. ¶ þou
 hast eke blamed gretly *and* compleyned of þe wrongful
 dede of þe senat. ¶ And þou hast sorwed for my
 blame. *and* þou hast wepen for þe damage of þi re-
 nounne þat is appaired. *and* þi laste sorwe eschaufed
 azeins fortune *and* compleinest þat gerdouns ne ben not
 euenliche zolde to þe desertes of folk. *and* in þe lattre
 ende of þi woode muse þou priedest þat þilke pees þat
 gouerneþ þe heuene scholde gouerne þe erþe ¶ But
 for þat many tribulaciouns of affeccions han assailed 602
 þe. *and* sorwe *and* Ire *and* wepyng todrawen þee
 dyuersely ¶ As þou art now feble of þouzt. myztyer
 remedies ne schullen not zit touchen þe for whiche
 we wil[e] vsen somedel lyzter medicines. So þat þilk[e]
 passiouns þat ben woxen harde in swellyng by per-
 turbacioun folowyng in to þi þouzt mowen woxe esy
and softe to receyuen þe strenkeþ of a more myzty *and*
 more egré medicine by an esier touchyng.

Thou hast, said
 Philosophy, be-
 wailed the loss
 of thy good name,
 597

thou hast com-
 plained against
 Fortune, and
 against the
 unequal distribu-
 tion of rewards
 and punishments.

Strong medicines
 are not proper for
 thee now, dis-
 tracted by grief,
 anger, and
 sadness.

607

Light medicines
 must prepare
 thee for sharper
 remedies.

610

CUM PHEBI RADIIS GRAUE CANCRI SIDUS ENESTUAT.

Whan þat þe heuy sterre of þe cancre eschaufþ by
 þe beme of phebus. þat is to seyne whan þat phebus
 þe sonne is in þe signe of þe Cancre. Who so zeueþ
 þan largely hys sedes to þe feldeþ þat refuse to re-
 ceiuen hem. lete hym gon bygyled of trust þat he
 hadde to hys corn. to acorns or okes. yif þou wilt
 gadre violettz. ne go þou not to þe purper wode whan
 þe felde chirkyngre agriseþ of colde by þe felnesse of
 þe wynde þat hyzt aquilon. ¶ Yif þou desirest or 619

[The sixte
 metur.]

He who sows his
 seed when the
 sun is in the
 Sign of Cancer,
 must look for no
 produce.

615

Think not to in-
 gather violets in
 the wintry and
 stormy season.

592 *be couth*—MS. be couthes,
 C. ben cowth
 596 *wepen*—wopen
 597 *laste*—last
eschaufed—eschaufede
 598 *not*—omitted
 599 *zolde*—yolden
 602 *many*—manye
 604 *myztyer*—myhtyere
 605 *whiche*—which

606 *wil[e]*—wol
lyzter—lyhtere
þilk[e]—þilke
 607 *harde*—hard
 608 *folowyng*—Flowyng
woxe—wexen
 610 *esier*—esyere
 612 *beme*—beemes
seyne—seyn
 614 *hys*—hise

614 *refuse*—refusen
 615 *after hem C. adds* [s.
 corn]
lete hym gon (MS. gone)—
 lat hym gon
 616 *or*—of
wilt gadre—wolt gadery
 618 *felde*—feeld
felnesse—felnesses
 619 *hyzt*—hyhte

If you wish for wine in autumn let the tendrils of the vine be free in the spring.

wolt vsen grapes ne seke þou nat wip a glotonus hande to streine *and* presse þe stalkes of þe vine in þe first somer sesoun. for bachus þe god of wyne hæþ raper zeuen his 3iftes to autumpne þe latter ende of somer.

[* fol. 8.]

To every work God assigns a proper time, nor suffers anything to pass its bounds. Success does not await him who departs from the appointed order of things.

¶ God tokeniþ *and* assigneþ *þe tymes. ablyng hem to her *propre* offices. ¶ Ne he ne suffreþ not stoundes whiche þat hym self hæþ deuided *and* constreined to be medeled to gidre ¶ And forþi he þat foreletþ certeyne ordinaunce of doynge by ouerþrowyng wey. he ne hæþ no glade issue or ende of hys werkes.

PRIMUM IGITUR PATERIS ROGACIONIBUS.

[The syxte prose.]

Philosophy proposes to question Boethius.

First wolt þou suffre me to touche *and* assaie þe stat of þi þouzt by a fewe demaundes. so þat I may vnderstonde what be þe manere of þi curacioun. ¶ Axe

633 me *quod* .I. atte þi wille what þou wilt. *and* I schal answeze. ¶ Þo saide sche þus. wheþer wenest þou *quod* sche þat þis worlde be gouerned by foolisshe happes

P. Is the world governed by Chance?

636 *and* fortunes. or elles wenest þou þat þer be in it any gouernement of resoun. Certes *quod* .I. ne trowe not in no manere þat so certeyne þinges scholde be moeued by fortunouse fortune. but I wot wel þat god maker

B. By no means. The Creator presides over his own works.

640 *and* mayster is gouernour of þis werk. Ne neuer nas 3it day þat myzt[e] putte me oute of þe soþenesse of þat sentence. ¶ So is it *quod* sche. for þe same þing

I shall never swerve from this opinion.

643 songe þou a lytel here byforne *and* byweyledest *and* bywepdest. þat only men weren put oute of þe cure of god. ¶ For of alle oþer þinges þou ne doutest nat þat þei nere gouerned by reson. but how (.i. pape.).

P. Yes! Thou didst say as much when thou didst declare man alone to be destitute of divine care. Still thou seemest to labour under some defect even in this conviction.

I wondre gretly certes whi þat þou art seek. siþen þou art put in to so holesom a sentence. but lat vs seken

620 *hande*—hond
622 *hab*—MS. hæþe
625 *her propre*—heere *pro-*
pres
not—nat the
626 *hab*—MS. hæþe
627 *be medeled*—ben I-medled
628 *certeyne*—certeyn

629 *hab*—MS. hæþe
630 *wolt þou*—woltow
stat—estat
633 *atte*—at
wilt—wolt
635 *worlde*—world
foolisshe—foolyssh
636 *fortunes*—fortunows

638 *scholde*—sholden
639 *wot*—MS. wote, C. woot
641 *myzt[e] putte*—myhteput
644 *put*—MS. putte
645 *doutest*—dowtedest
646 *how*—owh
647 *seek siþen*—syke syn
648 *put*—MS. putte, C. put

depper. I coniecte þat þere lakkeþ I not what. but 649

sey me þis. siþen þat þou ne doutest nat þat þis worlde
be gouerned by god ¶ wiþ swycche gouernailes takest

Tell me how the
world is
governed.

þou hede þat it is gouerned. ¶ vnneþ quod .I. knowe 652

.I. þe sentence of þi questioun. so þat I ne may nat
zit answeren to þi demaundes. ¶ I nas nat deceiued

B. I do not
thoroughly com-
prehend your
question.

quod sche þat þere ne faileþ sumwhat. by whiche þe
maladie of perturbacioun is crept in to þi þouzt. so
as þe strengþe of þe paleys schynyng is open. ¶ But

P. I was not
deceived, then,
when I said
there was some
defect in thy
sentiment.

seye me þis remembrest þou ouzt what is þe ende of
þi þinges. whider þat þe entencioun of al kynde tendep.

Tell me what is
the chief end of
all things; and
whither all
things tend.

¶ I haue herd told it somtyme quod .I. but drery- 660

nesse haþ dulled my memorie. ¶ Certys quod sche

þou wost wel whennes þat alle þinges ben comen and 662

proceded. I wot wel quod .I. and answered[e] þat

B. God is the
beginning of all
things.

god is þe bygynnyng of al. ¶ And how may þis be

quod sche þat siþen þou knowest þe bygynnyng of

P. How, then, art
thou ignorant of
their end?

þinges. þat þou ne knowest not what is þe endyng of

þinges. but swiche ben þe customes of perturbaciouns. 667

and þis power þei han. þat þei may moeue a man fro

But it is the
nature of these
perturbations
(which thou
endurest) to un-
settle men's
minds.

hys place. þat is to seyne from þe stablenes and per-

feccioun of hys knowyng. but certys þei may not al

arace hym ne alyene hym in al. ¶ But I wolde þat

671

þou woldest answer to þis. ¶ Remembrest þou þat

Dost thou re-
member that
thou art a man?

þou art a man ¶ Boice. ¶ Whi scholde I nat remem-

B. Certainly I do.

bre þat quod .I. Philosophie. ¶ Maiste þou not telle

P. What is man?

me þan quod sche what þing is a man. ¶ Axest not

B. If you ask me
whether I am a
rational and
mortal creature,
I know and con-
fess I am.

me quod I. wheþir þat be a resonable best mortel. I

P. But dost thou
not know that
thou art more
than this?

wot wel and I confesse wel þat I am it. ¶ Wistest

þou neuer zit þat þou were ony oþer þing quod she.

649 *depper*—deppere
not what—not nere what

650 *siþen*—syn
worlde—world

651 *takest þou*—takestow

658 *seye*—sey
remembrest þou — re-
membrestow

ouzt—omitted

659 *al*—alle

660 *herd told*—MS. herde
tolde

herd told it—herd yt toold

661 *haþ*—MS. haþe

663 *proceded*—procedeth

answered[e]—answerede

664 *þe*—omitted

al—alle

665 *siþen*—syn

668 *fro*—owt of

669 *seyne from*—seyn fro

672 *Remembrest þou*—Re-
membresthow

674 *Maiste þou*—Maysthow

675 *þan*—þanne

þing—þing

Axest—Axestow

677 *Wistest þou*—wystest-
how

678 *þing*—þing

- B. No. No *quod* .I. now wot I *quod* she oper cause of þi
680 *maladie and þat ryzt grete* ¶ þou hast left forto
knowe þi self what þou art. þoru3 whiche I haue pley-
nelyche knowen þe cause of þi *maladie*. or ellis þe
P. Now I know the principal cause of thy dis-
temper.
683 entre of recoueryng of þin hele. ¶ Forwhy for þou
art *confounded wip forzetyng of þi self*. forþi sorwest
þou þat þou art exiled of þi *propre goodes*. ¶ And
for þou ne wost what is þe ende of þinges. for[þi] demest
[þou] þat *felonous and wikked men ben myzty and weleful*
for þou hast forzeten by whiche *gouernementz þe worlde*
689 is gouerned. ¶ Forþi wenest þou þat þise *mutaciouns*
of fortune fleten wip *outen gouernour*. þise ben grete
causes not oonly to *maladie*. but certes grete causes to
deep ¶ But I þanke þe auctour *and þe makere of*
heele þat nature haþ not al forleten þe. *and I haue*
694 g[r]ete norissinges of þi hele. *and þat is þe soþe sen-*
tence of gouernaunce of þe worlde. þat þou byleuest
þat þe *gouernynge of it nis nat subgit ne vnderput*
to þe folie *of þise *happes auenterouses*. but to þe
resoun of god ¶ And þer fore doute þe noþing. For
of þis litel spark þine heet of lijf schal shine. ¶ But
700 for as muche as it is not tyme zitte of fastere remedies
¶ And þe nature of þou3tes disseiued is þis þat as ofte
as þei casten aweye soþe opyniouns: þei cloþen hem in
fals[e] opyniouns. [of whiche false opyniouns] þe derknesse
of *perturbacioun wexeþ vp*. þat comfoundeþ þe verray
insyzt. *and þat derkenes schal* .I. say somewhat to
maken þinne *and wayk by lyzt and meenelyche re-*
medies. so þat after þat þe derknes of desseyuyng
desyrynges is don away. þou mow[e] knowe þe schyn-
yng of verray lyzt.
- I have some hope of thy recovery since thou believest that the world is
[* fol. 8 b.] under Divine Providence, for this small spark shall produce vital heat.
- But as this is not the time for stronger remedies, and because it is natural to embrace false opinions so soon as we have laid aside the true, from whence arises a mist that darkens the understanding, I shall endeavour therefore to dissipate these vapours so that you may perceive the true light.

630 *hast left*—MS. haste
lefte, C. hast left
631 *knowe*—knowen
pleynelyche knowen —
pleynly fwonde [=]
founde]
634 *sorwest þou*—sorwistow
636 *for[þi] demest [þou]* —
For thy demesthow
637 *wikked*—MS. wilked, C.

wykkyd
638 *worlde*—world
639 *wenest þou*—wencstow
690 *outen*—owte
693 *haþ*—MS. haþe
al—alle
694 *þi*—thin
696 *vnderput*—vndyrputte
697 *to* (2)—omitted
698 *fore*—for

698 *noþing*—nothinge
699 *spark þine heet*—sparke
700 *muche*—meche [thin hete
702 *aweye*—away
703 [*of*—*opyniouns*—]—from
705 *insyzt*—insyhte [C.
say—assaye
706 *lyzt*—lyhte
708 *don*—MS. done
mow[e]—mowe

NUBIBUS ATRIS CONDITA.

PE sterres couered wip blak[e] cloudes ne mowen
geten a doun no lyzt. 3if þe trouble wynde þat
hyzt auster stormyng *and* walwyng þe see medleþ þe
heete þat is to seyne þe boylyng vp from þe botme 713
¶ þe wawas þat somtyme weren clere as glas *and*
lyke to þe fair[e] bryzt[e] dayes wipstant anon þe
syztes of men. by þe filþe *and* ordure þat is resolued.
and þe fletyng streme þat royleþ doun dyuersely fro
heyze mountaignes is arestid *and* resisted ofte tyme
by þe encountrynge of a stoon þat is departid *and* 719
fallen from some roche. ¶ And forþi yif þou wilt
loken *and* demen soþe wip clere lyzt. *and* holde þe
weye wip a ryzt pape. ¶ Weyue þou ioie. drif fro þe
drede. fleme þou hope. ne lat no sorwe *aproche*. þat is
to sein lat noon of þise four passiouus ouer come þe.
or blynde þe. for cloudy *and* dirke is pilk þouzt *and*
bounde with bridles. where as þise þinges regnen. 726

[The seuende
Metyr.]
Black clouds
obscure the light
of the stars.
713
If the south wind
renders the sea
tempestuous, the
waves, fouled
with mud, will
lose their glassy
clearness.
719
If thou wouldst
see truth by the
clearest light,
pursue the path
of right.
Away with joy,
fear, hope, and
sorrow.
Let none of these
passions cloud
thy mind.
Where these
things control,
the soul is bound
by strong fetters.

EXPLICIT LIBER PRIMUS.

INCIPIIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

POSTEA [PAU]LISPER CONTICUIT.

After þis she stynte a litel. *and* after þat she hadde
gadred by atempre stillenesse myn attencioun she 728
seide þus. ¶ As who so myzt[e] seye þus. After þise
þinges she stynt[e] a lytel. *and* whanne she aper-
ceiued[e] by atempre stillenesse þat I was ententif to
herkene hire. she bygan to speke in þis wyse. ¶ Yif 732

[The fyrst prose.]
Philosophy ex-
horts Boethius
not to torment
himself on
account of his
losses.

710 blak[e]—blake
712 stormyng—turnyng
713 from—fro
714 somtyme—whilom
715 lyke—lyk
fair[e]—wipstant (MS.)
wipstante)—fayre cleere
dayes *and* brihte with-
stand

716 syztes—syhtes
717 streme—strem
718 heyze—hy
720 from some—fram som
wilt—wolt
721 soþe—soth
clere—cleer
holde—holden
722 weye—wey

722 pape—paath
724 come—comen
725 blynde—blende
pilk—thilke
727 she (2)—I
729 myzt[e] seye—myhte seyn
730 stynt[e]—stynte
732 hire—here

- 733 I *quod* she haue vnderstonden *and* knowe vtterly þe causes *and* þe habit of þi maladie. þou languissed *and* art deffeted for talent *and* desijr of þi raper fortune.
- Thou art, she says, affected by the loss of thy former fortune.
- 736 ¶ She þat ilke fortune only þat is changed as þou feinst to þe ward. haþ peruerted þe clerenesse *and* þe astat of þi corage. ¶ I vnderstonde þe felefolde colour *and* deceites of þilke merueillous monstre fortune. and how she vseþ ful flatryng familiarite wiþ hem
- It hath perverted thy faculties. I am well acquainted with all the wiles of that Prodigy (*i. e.* Fortune).
- 741 þat she enforceþ to bygyle. so longe til þat she confounde wiþ vnsuffreable sorwe hem þat she haþ left
- 743 in despeir vnpurueyed. ¶ *and* if þou remembrest wel þe kynde þe maners *and* þe desert of þilke fortune. þow shalt wel knowe as in hir þou neuer ne haddest ne hast ylost any fair þing. But as I trowe I shal not
- Though she has left thee, thou hast not lost anything of beauty or of worth.
- 747 grety trauaile to don þe remembren of þise þinges.
- ¶ For þou were wont to hurtlen [*and* despysen] hir wiþ manly wordes whan she was blaundissinge *and* presente *and* pursewedest hir wiþ sentences þat were
- Thou wert once proof against her allurements.
- 751 drawn oute of myne entre. þat is to seyne out of myn informacioun ¶ But no sudeyne mutacioun ne bytideþ nat wiþ outen a maner chaungyng of curages. and so is it byfallen þat þou art departed a litel fro þe pees of þi þouzt. but now is tyme þat þou drynke *and* atast[*e*] some softe *and* delitable þinges. so þat whan þei ben entred wiþ inne þe. it mow make weye to strenger drynkes of medycynes. ¶ Com nowe furþe þat goþ oonly þe ryzt wey whil she forsakeþ not myne estatutz. ¶ *And* wiþ Rethorice com forþe musice a
- But sudden change works a great alteration in the minds of men, hence it is that thou art departed from thy usual peace of mind. But with some gentle emollients I shall prepare thee for stronger medicines. Approach then, Rhetoric, with thy persuasive charms, and therewith let Music also draw near.
- 762 damoysel of oure house þat syngeþ now lyzter moedes

733 knowe vtterly—knownen
owtrelly
734 languissed—languyssesst
737 hab—MS. haþe
738 astat—estat
felefolde—felefold
739 colour—colours
deceites (MS. decrites) —
deceytes
merueillous—meruayles
742 hab—MS. haþe
743 if—yif

746 any (MS. my)—any
þing—thinge
747 trauaile—travaylen
don—do
remembren of—remenbre
on
748 [*and* despysen]—from C.
749 was—omitted
750 were—weren
751 myne—myn
seyne—sayn
752 sudeyne—sodeyn

753 outen—owte
757 inne—in
mow — weye — mowe
maken wey
758 strenger—strengere
Com nowe furþe — MS.
Come; C. Com now forth
760 goþ—MS. goþe
761 com—MS. come, C. com
762 house—hows
lyzter—lyhtere

or *prolaciouns* now heuyer. *what ayleþ þe man. what [° fol. 9.]
 is it þat haþ cast þe in to murnyng *and* in to wepyng. 764
 I trow[e] þat þou hast sen some newe þing *and* un-
 couþe. ¶ þou wenest þat fortune be chaunged azeins
 þe ¶ But þou wenest wrong. yif þou [þat] wene. But thou art
 Alwey þo ben hire maners. she haþ raþer [kept] as to 768
 þe ward hire *propre* stablenes in þe chaungyng of hyre
 self. ¶ Ryzt swyche was she whan she flatered[e]
 þe. *and* desseiued[e] þe wiþ vnleueful lykynges of
 false welefulnesse. þou hast now knowen *and* ataynt
 þe doutous or double visage of þilke blynde goddesse
 fortune. ¶ She þat zit couereþ hir *and* wympleþ hir
 to oþer folk. haþ shewed hir euerydel to þe. ¶ 3if
 þou approuest hir *and* þenkest þat she is good. vse 776
 hir maners *and* pleyne þe nat. ¶ And if þou agrisest
 hir fals[e] trecherie. dispise *and* cast aweye hir þat
 pleyeþ so harmefully. for she þat is now cause of so
 myche sorwe to þe. sholde be to þe cause of pees *and* 780
 [of] ioie. ¶ she haþ forsaken þe forsoþe. þe whiche
 þat neuer man may be syker þat she ne shal forsake
 hym. *Glose.* ¶ But napeles some bookes han þe text
 þus. For soþe she haþ forsaken þe ne þer nis no man 784
 syker þat she ne haþ not forsaken. ¶ Holdest þou
 þan þilke welefulnesse *precieuse* to þe þat shal passen.
and is present fortune derworþi to þe. whiche þat nis
 not feiþful forto dwelle. *and* whan she goþ aweye þat
 she bryngeþ a wyzt in sorwe ¶ For syn she may nat
 be wiþholden at a mans wille. she makeþ hym a wrecche
 when she departeþ fro hym. ¶ What oþer þing is 791

Thou thinkest
that Fortune is
changed towards
thee.

But thou art
deceived.

In this misad-
venture of thine
she hath pre-
served her con-
stancy in
changing.

772

You have seen
the double face
of this blind
divinity.

776

If thou dost
abhor her perfidy
cast her off, for
her sports are
dangerous.

780

784

Is that happiness
which is so
transient ?

Is the attendance
of Fortune so dear
to thee, whose
stay is so uncer-
tain, and whose
removal causes
such grief ?

763 *prolaciouns* — probasy-
ons
heuyer — heuyere
ayleþ — eyleth
 765 *trow[e]* — trowe
sen — MS. sene, C. seyn
some — som
þing — thinge
uncouþe — vnkowth
 766 *azeins* — ayein
 767 *wenest* — weenes
 [þat] — C. that
 768 *haþ* — MS. haþe
 [kept] — from C.

769 *stabilenes in þe* — stabyl-
nesse standeth in the
 770 *swyche* — swich
 771 *vnleueful* — vnlefful
 775 *haþ* — MS. had, C. hat
 776 *good* — MS. goode, C. god
 777 *agrisest* — MS. agrised, C.
 agrysyst
 778 *fals[e]* — false
 780 *myche* — mochel
 781 [of] — from C.
haþ — MS. haþe
 783 *text* — texte
 784 *haþ* — MS. haþe

785 *forsaken* — forsake
Holdest þou — holdestow
 786 *þan* — thanne
precieuse — presyes
 787 *derworþi* — dereworthe
whiche — which
 788 *feifful* — feythfull
gob — MS. goþe
aweye — away
 790 *mans* — mannys
 791 *when* — wan
þing — thinge

What is she
(Fortune) but the
presage of future
calamity?

fitting fortune but a manere shewyng of wrychednesse
794 þat is to comen. ne it ne suffriþ nat oo[n]ly to loken
of þing þat is present byforne þe eyen of man. but
wisdom lokeþ *and* mesureþ þe ende of þinges. *and* þe
796 same chaungyng from one to an oþer. þat is to seyne

Her mutability
should make men
neither fear her
threats nor desire
her favours.

fro aduersite to prosperite makeþ þat þe manaces of
fortune ne ben not forto dreden. ne þe flatrynges of
hir to ben desired. ¶ þus atte þe last it byhoueþ þe
to suffren wiþ euene wille in pacience al þat is don
801 inwiþ þe floor of fortune. þat is to seyne in þis worlde.

If you submit to
her yoke you
must patiently
endure her
infictions.

¶ Syþen þou hast oones put þi nekke vnder þe zokke
of hir. for if þou wilt write a lawe of wendyng *and* of
dwellyng to fortune whiche þat þou hast chosen frely

Impatience will
only embitter
your loss.

805 to be þi lady ¶ Art þou nat wrongful in þat *and*
makest fortune wrope *and* aspere by þin impacience.
and zit þou mayst not chaungen hir. ¶ Yif þou com-
mittest [*and*] bitakest þi sayles to þe wynde. þou shalt

You cannot
choose your port
if you leave your
vessel to the
mercy of the
winds.

be shouen not pider þat þou woldest(:) but whider þat
þe wynde shoueþ þe ¶ Yif þou castest þi seedes in þe

You have given
yourself up to
Fortune; it be-
comes you there-
fore to obey her
commands.

811 feldeþ þou sholdest haue in mynde þat þe zeres ben
oþer while plenteuous *and* oþer while bareyne. ¶ þou
hast bytaken þiself to þe gouernaunce of fortune.

Would you stop
the rolling of her
wheel?

and forþi it byhoueþ þe to ben obeisaunt to þe manere
of þi lady. *and* enforecest þou þe to aresten or wiþ-
stonden þe swyftnesse *and* þe sweyes of hir tournyng

Fool! if Fortune
once became
stable she would
cease to exist.

whele. ¶ O þou fool of alle mortel fooles if fortune
bygan to dwelle stable. she cesed[e] þan to ben fortune.

793 *suffriþ*—suffiseth
794 *of þing*—on thyng
byforne—MS. byforne by-
forne
man—a man
795 *mesureþ*—amesureth
796 *from one*—fram oon
seyne—seyne
797 *fro*—from
to—into
799 *atte þe last*—at the laste

801 *seyne*—seyne
worlde—world
802 *Syþen*—Syn
zokke—yoke
803 *if*—yif
write—wryten
804 *whiche*—which
805 *lady*—ladye
Art þou—Artow
806 *wrope*—wroth
þin—thine

807 *chaungen*—chaunge
808 [*and*]—from C.
809 *pider*—thedyr
whider—whedyr
811 *haue*—han
814 *manere*—maneres
815 *and*—omitted
wiþstonden—withholden
816 *sweyes*—swey3
818 *cesed[e]*—cesede

HEC CUM SUPERBA.

Whan fortune wiþ a proude ryzt hande haþ turnid
hir chaungyng stoundes she fareþ lyke þe maners
of þe boillyng eurippe. *Glose.* Eurippe is an arme of
þe see þat ebbith *and* flowiþ. *and* somtyme þe streme
is on one syde *and* somtyme on þat oþer. *Texte* ¶ She
cruel fortune kasteþ adoune kynges þat somtyme weren
ydred. *and* she deceiuable enhaunseth vp þe humble
chere of hym þat is discomfited. *and* she neyþer hereþ
ne reccheþ of wrecched[e] wepynges. *and* she is so harde
þat she lauzeþ *and* scorneþ þe wepyng of hem þe whiche
she haþ makid wepe wiþ hir free wille. ¶ þus she
pleyþ *and* þus she preueþ hir strengþe *and* sheweþ a
grete wondre to alle hir seruauantz. ¶ Yif þat a wyzt
is seyn weleful *and* ouerprowe in an houre.

[The fyrst metur.
Fortune is as in-
constant as the
ebb and flow of
Eurippus.

822

She hurls kings
from their
thrones, and
exalts the cap-
tive.

826

She turns a deaf
ear to the tears
and cries of the
wretched.

Thus she sports
and boasts her
power and pre-
sents a marvel
to her servants
if, in the space of
an hour, a man is
hurled from
happiness into
adversity.

832

VELLEM AUTEM PAUCA.

Certis I wolde plete wiþ þee a fewe þinges vsynge
þe wordes of fortune tak heede now þi self. yif þat
she axeþ ryzt. * ¶ O þou man wher fore makest þou
me gilty by þine euerydayes pleynynges. what wronges
haue I don þe. what goodes haue I byrest þe þat weren
þine. stryf or plete wiþ me by fore what iuge þat þou
wilt of þe possessioun of rycchesse or of dignites ¶ And
yif þou maist shewe me þat euer any mortal man haþ
receyued any of þese þinges to ben his in propre. þan
wol I graunt[e] frely þat [alle] þilke þinges weren þine
whiche þat þou axest. ¶ Whan þat nature brouzt[e] þe
forþe out of þi moder wombe. I receyued[e] þe naked

[The secunde
prose.]

Philosophy ex-
postulates with
[" fol. 9 b.]
Boethius in the
name of Fortune.

Why do you
accuse me (For-
tune) as guilty?

What goods or
advantages have
I deprived you
of?

840

Can you prove
that ever any
man had a fixed
property in his
riches?

You came naked
into the world,

819 *proude*—prowd
hande—hand
haþ—MS. haþe
820 *lyke*—lik
821 *arme*—arm
822 *streme*—stream
823 *one*—o
824 *adoune*—adown
somtyme—whilom
825 *ydred* (MS. *yðredde*)—
humble—vmbale [ydrad
827 *reccheþ*—rekkeþ

827 *wrecched[e]*—wrecchede
harde—hard
828 *lauzeþ*—lyssheth
wepung—wepynge
830 *strengþe*—strengthes
833 *plete*—pleten
834 *tak*—MS. take, C. tak
835 *makest þou*—makes thow
836 *wronges*—wrouge
837 *don*—MS. done, C. don
byrest—MS. byreste, C.
byrest

838 *stryf*—MS. stryue, C. stryf
plete—pleten
by fore—by forn
839 *wilt*—wolt
rycchesse—rychesses
840 *shewe*—shewyn
euer—euer
haþ—MS. haþe
841 *þese*—tho
his—hise
842 *graunt[e]*—graunte
[*alle*]—from C.

and I cherished you *and* nedy of al þing. *and* I norysshed[e] þe wiþ my rychesse. *and* was redy *and* ententif þoruþ my fauour to

847 sustene þe. ¶ And þat makeþ þe now inpatient azeins

and encompassed you with affluence.

Now that I have a mind to withdraw my bounty, be thankful and complain not.

me. *and* I envirounde þe wiþ al þe habundaunce *and* shynyg of al goodes þat ben in my ryzt. ¶ Now it

lykeþ me to wiþ drawe myne hande. þou hast had grace as he þat haþ vsed of foreyne goodes. þou hast no ryzt to pleyne þe. as þouþ þou haddest vtterly lorn alle þi

853 þinges. whi pleyneþ þou þan. I haue don þe no wrong.

Riches and honours are subject to me. They are my servants, and come and go with me.

Ricches honoures *and* swyche oþer þinges ben of my ryzt. ¶ My seruauntes knowen me for hir lady. þei comen wiþ me *and* departen whan I wende. I dar wel

affermen hardyly. þat yif þo þinges of whiche þou

858 pleyneþ þat þou hast forlorn hadde ben þine. þou ne

Shall I alone be forbidden to use my own right? Doth not heaven give us sunny days and obscure the same with dark nights?

Is not the earth covered with frost as well as with flowers?

haddest not lorn hem. ¶ shal I þan only be defended to vse my ryzt. ¶ Certis it is leueful to þe heuene to

make clere dayes. *and* after þat to keuere þe same dayes wiþ derke nyztes. ¶ þe erþe haþ eke leue to appaiaile

þe visage of þe erþe now with floures *and* now wiþ fruyt. *and* to confounde hem somtyme wiþ raynes *and*

865 wiþ coldes. ¶ þe see haþ eke hys ryzt. to be som-

The sea sometimes appears calm, and at other times terrifies us with its tempestuous waves.

Shall I be bound to constancy by the covetousness of men?

tyme calme *and* blaundyshing wiþ smoþe water. *and* somtyme to be horrible wiþ wawes *and* wiþ tempestes.

¶ But þe couetyse of men þat may not be stauched shal it bynde me to be stedfast. syn þat stedfastnesse is vnkouþ to my maneres. ¶ Swyche is my strengþe.

871 *and* þis pley. I pley[e] continuely. I tourne þe whirlyng

I turn my rolling wheel and amuse myself with exalting what

whele wiþ þe tournyng cercle ¶ I am glade to chaunge þe lowest to þe heyeste. *and* þe heyeste to þe loweste.

845 *al þing*—alle things

norysshed[e]—noryssede.

846 *rychesse*—rychesses

848, 849 *al*—alle

848 *habundaunce*—aboundaunce

850 *wiþ*—hande—withdrawen myn hand

had—MS. hadde, C. had

851 *haþ*—MS. haþe

852 *vtterly*—outrely

lorn—MS. lorne, C. for lorn

853 *don*—MS. done, C. don

854 *Ricches*—Rychesses

853 *forlorn*—MS. forlorne, C. forlorn

859 *lorn*—MS. lorne, C. lorn

860 *vse*—vsen

861 *keuere þe*—coeueryn tho

862 *derke*—dirk

erþe—yer

haþ—MS. haþe

864 *confounde*—confownden

865 *haþ*—MS. haþe

866 *calme*—kalm

867 (2nd) *wiþ*—omitted

869 *stedfast*—stidefast

stedfastnesse—stidefastnesse

870 *vnkouþ*—MS. vnkouþe, C. vnkowth

Swyche—Swych

871 *pley[e]*—pleye

872 *whele*—whele

glade—glad

chaunge—chaungyn

worpe vp yif þou wilt. so it be by þis lawe. þat þou
ne holde not þat I do þe wronge þou; þou descende
doun whanne resoun of my pleye axeþ it. Wost þou
not how Cresus kyng of lyndens of whiche kyng Cirus
was ful sore agast a litel byforne þat þis rewlyche
Cresus was cau3t of Cirus and lad to þe sijn to be
brent. but þat a reyne descended[e] doun from heuene
þat rescowed[e] hym ¶ And is it out of þi mynde how
þat Paulus consul of Rome whan he hadde take þe
kyng of perciens weep pitou[s]ly for þe captiuitee of þe
self[e] kyng. What oper þinges bywaylen þe criinges of
Tragedies. but only þe dedes of fortune. þat wiþ an
vnwar stroke ouerturneþ þe realmes of grete nobley
¶ *Glose.* Tragedie is to seyne a dite of a prosperite for
a tyme þat endiþ in wrechednesse. Leredest nat þou
in grek whan þou were 3onge þat in þe entre or in þe
seler of Iuppiter þer ben couched two tunnes. þat on
is ful of good þat oper is ful of harme. ¶ What ryzt
hast þou to pleyne. yif þou hast taken more plenteuously
of þe goode syde þat is to seyne of my rycchesse and
prosperites. and what eke. yif I be nat departed fro þe.
What eke. yif my mutabilitee 3iueþ þe ryztful cause of
hope to han 3it better þinges. ¶ Napeles desmaie þe
nat in þi þou3t. and þou þat art put in comune realme
of alle : ne desijr[e] nat to lyue by þine oonly propre ryzt.

was low, and
bringing down
what was high.
Ascend if you
will, but come
down when my
sport requires it.

878

Know you not
the history of
Cresus and of
Paulus Æmiliius ?

883

What else does
the weeping
muse of Tragedy
deplere but the
overthrow of
kingdoms by
the indiscrimin-
ate strokes of
Fortune ?

Did you not learn
whilst a youth,
that at the gates
of Jove's palace
stand two vessels,
one full of bless-
ings, the other of
woes ?

What if you have
drunk too deep of
the first vessel ?

894

My mutability
gives thee hope
of happier days.

Desire not to be
exempted from
the vicissitudes of
humanity.

SI QUANTAS RAPIDIS.

þou3 plentee þat is goddesse of rycches hielde adoun
wiþ ful horn. and wiþdraweþ nat hir hand. ¶ As
many recches as þe see turneþ vpwardes sandes whan it

[the secunde
metur.]

Though Plenty,
from her teeming
horn, poured
down as many

874 *worpe*—worth
wilt—wolt

876 *doun*—adoun
whanne—wan
pleye—pley

Wost þou—wistesthow
877 *kyng* (1)—the kyng

lyndens—lydyens

878 *byforne*—byforn

880 *reyne descended*[e] —

rayn descendede

880 *from*—fro

881 *rescowed*[e]—rescowede

882 *take*—takyn

885 *an*—a

886 *þe*—omitted

887 *seyne*—seyn

890 *tunnes*—tonnes

891 *harme*—harm

892 *hast þou*—hasthow

893 *seyne*—seyn

rycchesse—rychesses

894 *I be nat*—I ne be nat al

896 *better*—betere

898 *lyue*—lyuen

þine—thin

899 *rycches*—rychesses

901 *recches*—rychesses

vpwardes—vpward

riches on the world as there are sands on the sea-shore, or stars in heaven, mankind would not cease to complain. [* fol. 10.]

is moeued wiþ rauysshing blastes. or ellys as many rycches as þer shynen bryzt[e] sterres on heuene on þe sterry nyzt. 3it for al þat mankynde nolde not cesce to woþe wrecched[e] pleyntes. ¶ And al be it so *þat god receyueþ gladly her prayers *and* zeueþ hem as ful large muche golde *and* apparaileþ coueytous folk wiþ noble or clere honours. 3it semeþ hem haue I-gete noþing. but alwey her cruel ravyne deuourynge al þat þei han geten shewiþ oþer gapinges. þat is to seye gapen *and* desiren 3it after moo rycchesse. ¶ What brideles myzten wiþholde to any certeyne ende þe desordene coueitise of men ¶ Whan euere þe raper þat it fletip in large 3iftis: þe more ay brenneþ in hem þe þrest of hauyng. ¶ Certis he þat quakyng *and* dredeful weneþ

906
910
916

Though Heaven may grant every desire, they will still cry for more.

What rein can restrain unbound-ed avarice ?

He who thinks himself poor, though he be rich, doth truly labour under poverty.

HIIS IGITUR SI PRO SE.

[The thrydde prose.]

¶ Fortune spake thus to you, you could not defend your complaint.

þerfore yif þat fortune spake wiþ þe for hir self in þis manere. For soþe þou ne haddest [nat] what þou myzttest answeere. and if þou hast any þing wherwiþ. þou mayist ryztfully tellen þi compleynt. ¶ It

921

byhoueþ þe to shewen it. *and* .I. wol zeue þe space to tellen it. ¶ Certeynely *quod* I þan þise ben faire þinges *and* enoyntid wiþ hony swetnesse of rethorike *and* musike. *and* only while þei ben herd þei ben delicouse. ¶ But to wrecches is a deppere felyng of harme. þis is to seyn þat wrecches felen þe harmes þat þei suffren more greuously þan þe remedies or þe delites

928

of þise wordes mowe gladen or comforten hem. so þat

B. What you have said is very specious, but such discourses are only sweet while they strike our ears.

They cannot efface the deep impressions that misery has made in the heart.

902 *rauysshing*—rauysynge
903 *rycches*—rychesses
bryzt[e]—bryhte
on (1)—in
904 *nyzt*—nyhtes
905 *woþe wrecched[e]*—weþe
wrecchede
906 *her*—hir
ful—fool
907 *muche*—mcche
folk—men

908 *haue*—hauen
I-gete—I-getyn
909 *her*—hir
910 *seye*—seyn
911 *rychesse*—rychesses
912 *wiþholde*—wytholden
certeyne—certeyn
914 *þrest*—þurst
915 *dredeful*—dredful
916 *lyueþ*—leueth
918 [*nat*]—from C.

919 *if*—yif
920 *mayist*—mayst
tellen—defendyn
921 *zeue*—yeuyn
922 *þan*—þanne
ben—bet (= beth)
923 *swetnesse*—swetnesse
924 *while*—whil
herd—MS. herde
926 *harme*—harm
928 *mowe*—mowen

whan þise þinges stynten forto soun[e] in eres. þe sorwe 929

þat is inset greueþ þe þouzt. Ryzt so is it *quod* she.

¶ For þise ne ben zit none remedies of þi maladie. but

þei ben a manere norissinges of þi sorwe zit rebel

azeyne þi curacioun. ¶ For whan þat tyme is. I shal

moue swiche þinges þat percen hem self depe. ¶ But

napeles þat þou shalt not wilne to leten þi self a

wrecche. ¶ Hast þou forzeten þe noumbre *and* þe

manere of þi wefulnessse. I holde me stille how þat

þe souerayn men of þe Citee token þe in cure *and*

kepyng whan þou were orphelyn of fadir *and* modir.

and were chosen in affinite of princes of þe Citee.

¶ And þou bygunne raþer to ben leef *and* deere þan 941

forto ben a neyþbour. þe whiche þing is þe most pre-

ciouse kynde of any propinquitee or aliaunce þat may

ben. ¶ Who is it þat ne seide þou nere ryzt weleful 944

wiþ so grete a nobley of þi fadres in lawe. ¶ *And* wiþ

þe chastite of þi wijf. *and* wiþ þe oportunitie *and*

noblesse of þi masculyn children. þat is to seyne þi

sones *and* ouer al þis me lyst to passe of comune þinges. 948

¶ How þou haddest in þi þouzt dignitees þat weren

warned to olde men. but it deliteþ me to comen now to

þe singular vphepyng of þi wefulnessse. ¶ Yif any

fryt of mortal þinges may han any weyþte or price of 952

wefulnessse. ¶ Myzttest þou euere forzeten for any

charge of harme þat myzt[e] byfallen. þe remembraunce

of pilke day þat þou sey[e] þi two sones maked conse-

seillers. *and* ylad to gidre from þin house vndir so gret

assemble of senatours. *and* vndir þe blyþenness of poeple. 957

and whan þou say[e] hem sette in þe court in her

P. So it is indeed; for my arguments are not designed as remedies, but as lenitives only.

When time serves, I will administer those things that shall reach the seat of your disease.

But you are not among the number of the wretched.

I shall not speak of your happiness in being provided for (in your orphanage) by the chief men of the city;

nor of your noble alliance with Festus and Symmachus;

944

nor of your virtuous wife, and manly sons.

Can you ever forget the memorable day that saw your two sons invested with the dignity of Consuls?

929 *soun[e]*—sowne

930 *inset*—MS. *insette*, C. inset

932 *sorwe*—sorwes

933 *azeyne*—ayein

934 *moue swiche*—moeue swych

938 *souerayn*—souerane

942 *neyþbour*—neysshebour

944 *nere*—were

945 *nobley*—nobleye

fadres—fadyr-is

947 *seyne*—seyn

948 *lyst*—lyste

passe of—passen the

949 *þouzt*—yowthe

950 *warned*—werned

952 *fryyt*—frute

price—pris

953 *Myzttest þou*—myhtes-

thow

954 *harme*—harm

myzt[e] *byfallen*—mylito

befalle

955 *sey[e]*—saye

956 *from*—fro

gret—MS. *grete*, C. *gret*

958 *say[e]*—saye

sette—set

her—heere

When in the circus you satisfied the expectant multitude with a triumphal largess?

chaires of dignites. ¶ Þou rethorien or pronouncere of kynges preysinges. deseruedest glorie of wit *and* of eloquence. whan þou sitting bytwix þi two sones con-

963 abydyng of multitude of poeple þat was sprad about þe wip large praysynge *and* laude as men syngen in victories. þo 3aue þou wordes of fortune as I trowe. þat is to seyne. þo feffedest þou fortune wip glosynge wordes *and* desseiuedest hir. whan she accoied[e] þe *and* norsshed[e] þe as hir owen delices. ¶ Þou hast

By your expressions you flattered Fortune, and obtained from her a gift which never before fell to any private person.

969 had of fortune a zifte þat is to seyng swiche gerdoun þat she neu[er]e 3af to præue man ¶ Wilt þou þerfore leye a rekenyng wip fortune. she haþ now twynkeled first vpon þe wip a wykked eye. ¶ Yif þou considere þe noumbre *and* þe manere of þi blysses. *and* of þi sorwes. *þou maist nat forsake þat þou nart 3it blysfyl. For if þou þerfore wenest þi self nat weleful for þinges

Will you therefore call Fortune to account?

She now begins, I own, to look unkindly on you; but if you consider the number of your blessings,

[* fol. 10 b.] you must confess that you are still happy.

976 þat þo semeden ioyful ben passed. ¶ Þer nis nat whi þou sholdest wene þi self a wrecche. for þinges þat now semen soory passen also. ¶ Art þou now comen firste

These evils that you suffer are but transitory.

979 a sodeyne gest in to þe shadowe or tabernacle of þis lijf. or trowest þou þat any stedfastnesse be in mannis þinges. ¶ Whan ofte a swifte houre dissolueþ þe same man. þat is to seyne whan þe soule departiþ fro þe body. For al þou3 þat yelde is þer any feiþ þat fortunous þinges willen dwelle. 3it napeles þe last[e] day of a mannis lijf is a manere deef to fortune. *and* also to pilke þat haþ dwelt. *and* þerfore what wenist þou þar recche yif þou forlete hir *in* deyng or ellys þat she fortune forlete þe *in* fleenge away.

Can there be any stability in human affairs, when the life of man is exposed to dissolution every hour?

The last day of life puts an end to Prosperity.

What matters it then, whether you by death leave it, or it (Fortune) by flight doth leave you?

961 *bytwix*—bytwyen
962 *hyzt*—hihte
963 *of* (I)—of the
about—abowten
964 *wip*—with so
965 *3aue*—MS. þan, C. yaue
of—to
966 *seyne*—seyng
967 *accoied[e]*—acyoyede
968 *norsshed[e]*—noryssede
owen—owne
þou — *of* — thow bar
away of

969 *had*—MS. hadde
swiche—swich
970 *preue*—pryue
971 *leye*—lye
haþ—MS. haþe
972 *wykked*—wyckede
973 *blysses*—blysse
974 *forsake*—forsakyn
nart—art
blysfyl—blyseful
978 *soory*—sorye
firste—fyrst
979 *sodeyne*—sodeyn

979 *shadowe*—shadwe
980 *stedfastnesse*—stedefast-
981 *swifte*—swyft [nesse
dissolueþ—dyssoluede
983 *al þou3 þat*—al þat
though
fortunous—fortune
984 *willen dwelle*—wolen
last[e]—laste [dwellyn
986 *haþ*—MS. haþe
wenist þou—weenestow
987 *þar recche*—dar recche
988 *away*—away

CUM PRIMO POLO.

Whan phebus þe sonne bygynneþ to spreden his clere-
nesse with rosene chariettes. þan þe sterre ydimmyd
paleþ hir white cheres. by þe flamus of þe sonne þat
ouer comeþ þe sterre lyzt. ¶ þis is to seyn whan þe
sonne is risen þe day sterre wexiþ pale and lesiþ hir
lyzt for þe grete bryztnesse of þe sonne. ¶ Whan þe
wode wexeþ redy of rosene floures in þe first somer
sesoun þoruþ þe breþe of þe wynde Zephirus þat wexeþ
warme. ¶ Yif þe cloudy wynde auster blowe felliche.
þan goþ away þe fayrnesse of þornes. Ofte þe see is
clere and calme wiþoute moeuynge floodes. And ofte
þe horrible wynde aquilon moeueþ boylyng tempestes
and ouer whelweþ þe see. ¶ Yif þe forme of þis worlde
is so [zeelde] stable. and yif it tourniþ by so many
entrechaungynges. wilt þou þan trusten in þe trublynge
fortunés of men. wilt þou trowen in flittyng goodes.
It is certeyne and establissed by lawe perdurable þat no
þing þat is engendred nys stedfast no stable.

[The .iij. Metur.]
The stars pale be-
fore the light of
the rising sun.

993
Westerly winds
deck the wood
with roses, but
easterly winds
cause their
beauty to fade.

997
Now the sea is
calm, and again
it is tempestuous.

1000
If all things thus
vary, will you
trust in transitory
riches?

1004
All here below is
unstedfast and
unstable.

TUNC EGO UERA INQUAM.

þAnne seide I þus. O notice of alle uertues þou
seist ful soþe. ¶ Ne I may nat forsake þe ryzt[e]
swifte cours of my prosperitee. þat is to seine. þat
prosperitee ne be comen to me wondir swiftly and
soone. but þis is a þing þat gretly smertiþ me whan it
remembreþ me. ¶ For in alle aduersitees of fortune þe
most vnsely kynde of contrariouse fortune is to han
ben weleful. ¶ But þat þou quod she abaist þus þe
tourment of þi fals[e] opinioun þat maist þou not ryzt-

[The ferthe prose.]
B. I cannot deny
my sudden and
early prosperity.

1010
It is the remem-
brance of former
happines that
adds most to
man's infelicity.

P. Recollect that
you have yet
much affluence.

989 his—hyr
990 þan—thanne
991 flamus—flambes
995 redy—rody
 rosene—rosyn
997 warme—warm
998 goþ—MS. goþe, C. goth
 fayrnesse—fayrenesse
999 clere—cleer
 calme—kalm

1000 wynde—wynd
1001 whelweþ—weluceth
1002 [zeelde]—from C.
1003, 1004 wilt þou—wolphow
1003 þan—thanne
 trublynge—towmblynge
1004 in flittyng—on flet-
1005 It is—is it [tyuge
1006 no—ne
 stable—estable

1008 soþe—soth
 Ne I may—Ne I ne may
1009 seine—seyn
1011 a—omitted
 gretly—gretely
1012 aduersitees—aduersyte
1013 most—mooste
1014 abaist—abyest
1015 tourment—tourmentz
 fals[e]—false

fully blamen ne aretten to þinges. as who seiþ for þou hast zitte many habundaunces of þinges. ¶ *Textus.*

1018 For al be it so þat þe ydel name of auenterouse welefulnesse moeueþ þe now. it is leueful þat þou rekene *with* me of hōw many[e] þinges þou hast zit plentee.

What you esteemed most precious in your happy days, you still retain,

¶ And þefore yif þat þilke þing þat þou haddest for most precious in alle þi rycchesse of fortune be kept to þe by þe grace of god vnwemmed *and* vndefouled.

and ought therefore not to complain.

1023 Mayst þou þan pleyne ryztfully vpon þe myschief of fortune. syn þou hast zit þi best[e] þinges. ¶ Certys zit

1026 lyueþ in goode poynt þilke precious honour of mankynde. ¶ Symacus þi wyues fadir whiche þat is a man maked al of sapience *and* of vertue. þe whiche

Symmachus, dear to you as life,

1029 man þou woldest b[i]en redely wiþ þe pris of þin owen lijf. he byweyleþ þe wronges þat men don to þee. *and* not for hym self. for he liueþ in sykernesse of any

is safe and in health.

Your wife Rusticiana is also alive,

sentence put azeins hym. ¶ And zit lyueþ þi wif þat is attempre of witte *and* passyng oþer women in clenness

1034 of chastitee. and for I wol closen shortly her bountes

and bewails her separation from you.

she is lyke to hir fadir. I telle þe welle þat she lyueþ looþ of hir life. *and* kepþ to þee onoly hir goost. *and* is al maat *and* ouer-comen by wepyng *and* sorwe for

1038 desire of þe ¶ In þe whiche þing only I mot graunten

Why need I mention your two sons, in whom so much of the wit

[* fol. 11.] and spirit of their sire and grand-sire doth shine?

And since it is the chief care of man to preserve life; you are still

þat þi welefulnesse is amenused. ¶ What shal I seyn eke of þi two sones conseillours of whiche as of children of hir age þer shineþ *þe lyknesse of þe witte of

hir fadir *and* of hir eldefadir. and siþen þe souereyn cure of alle mortel folke is to sauen hir owen lyues.

¶ O how weleful art þou þou; þou knowe þi goodes.

1016 seiþ—MS. seipe, C. seyh

1017 zitte—yit

1019 leueful—leefful

1020 many[e] þinges—manye grete thinges

1022 alle—al

1023 þe by—the yit by

1024 myschief—meschef

1025 best[e]—beste

1026 lyueþ—leueth

good—good

1027 whiche—which

1028 al—alle

1028 of (2)—omitted

1029 b[i]en—byen

owen—owne

1030 byweyleþ—bewayleth

don—MS. done, C. don

1031 liueþ—leueth

1033 witle—wyt

women—wymmen

1034 shortly—shortely

1035 lyke—lik

welle—wel

1036 hir life—this lyf

1037 maat—maad

1038 whiche—weche

1039 amenused—amenyssed

seyn—(MS. seyne) seyn

1041 lyknesse—lykenesse

witte—wyt

1042 and (1)—or

eldefadir—eldyr fadyr

siþen—syn

1043 folke—folk

1044 art þou þou;—arthow

yif

¶ But zitte ben þer þinges dwellyng to þe wardes þat no man douteþ þat þei ne ben more derworþe to þe þen þine owen lijf. ¶ And forþi drie þi teres for zitte nys nat eueriche fortune al hateful to þe warde. ne ouer greet tempest haþ nat zit fallen vpon þe. whan þat þin ancras cliue fast[e] þat neiþer wole suffre þe comfōrt of þis tyme present. ne þe hope of tyme comynge to passen ne to fallen. ¶ And I preie quod I þat fast[e] mot[en] þei holden. ¶ For whiles þat þei halden. how so euere þat þinges ben. I shal wel fleten furþe and eschafen. ¶ But þou mayst wel seen how greet[e] apparailes and aray þat me lakkeþ þat ben passed away fro me. ¶ I haue sumwhat auanced and forþered þe quod she. if þat þou anoie nat or forþenke nat of al þi fortune. As who seiþ. ¶ I haue somwhat comforted þe so þat þou tempest nat þe þus wiþ al þi fortune. syn þou hast zit þi best[e] þinges. ¶ But I may nat suffre þin delices. þat pleinst so wepyng. and anguissous for þat oþer lakkeþ somwhat to þi welefulnesse. ¶ For what man is so sad or of so perfit welefulnesse. þat he ne stryueþ or pleyneþ on some half azeine þe qualitee of his estat. ¶ For whi ful anguissous þing is þe condicioun of mans goodes. ¶ For eyþer it comeþ al to gidre to a wyzt. or ellys it lasteþ not perpetuely. ¶ For som man haþ grete rychesse. but he is ashamed of hys vngentil lynage. and som man is renowned of noblesse of kynrede. but he is enclosed in so grete angre for nede of þinges. þat hym were leuer þat he were vnknowe. and som man habundeþ boþe in rychesse and noblesse. but zit he bywaileþ hys chast[e]

most happy in the possession of blessings which all men value more than life. Dry up thy tears, thou hast still present comfort and hope of future felicity.

1050

B. I hope these will never fail me.

1054

But do you not see how low I am fallen?

P. I should think that I had made progress if you did not repine so at your fate.

It grieves me to hear you complain while you possess so many comforts.

1062

Every one, however happy, has something to complain of.

1065

The condition of human enjoyment is anxious; for either it comes not all at once, or makes no long stay when it does come.

One man is very wealthy, but his birth is obscure.

Another is conspicuous for nobility of descent, but is surrounded by indigence.

A third is blest with both ad-

1045 *But zitte*—for yit
dwellyng—dwellyd
wardes—ward
1046 *þat*—than
derworþe—derworthe
ben þine—than thin
1047 *zitte*—yit
1049 *haþ*—MS. haþe
þin—thyne
1050 *cliue fast[e]* — cleuen
faste
wole suffre—wolen suffren

1052 *fallen*—faylen
1052 *fast[e] mot[en]* — faste
moten
1053 *holden*—halden
1054 *furþe*—forth
1055 *mayst*—mayste
greet[e]—grete
1058 *forþenke*—forthinke
1061 *best[e]*—beste
suffre þin—suffren thi
1063 *oþer*—ther
1064 *perfit*—parfyt

1065 *or*—and
some half azeine — som
halue ayen
1067 *mans*—mannes
comeþ al—comth nat al
1068 *lasteþ*—last
perpetuely—perpetuei
1069 *rychesse*—Rychesses
1070 *renomed*—renowned
1072 *angre for*—Angwysse
leuer—leuere
1074 *chast[e]*—caste [of]

vantages, but is unmarried.
This man is happy in a wife, but is childless, while that other man has the joy of children, but is mortified by their evil ways.
Thus we see that no man can agree easily with the state of his fortune.

lijf. for he haþ no wijf. ¶ and som man is wel *and* selyly maried but he haþ no children. *and* norissheþ his ricchesse to þe heires of straunge folk. ¶ And som man is gladded wiþ children. but he wepiþ ful sory for þe trespas of his son or of his douȝtir. ¶ and for þis þer accordeþ no wyȝt lyȝtly to þe condicioun of his fortune. for alwey to euery man þere is *in* mest somewhat

1082 þat vnassaieþ he ne wot not or ellys he dredieþ þat he haþ assaied. ¶ *And* adde þis also þat euery weleful man haþ a wel delicat felyng. ¶ So þat but yif alle þinges fallen at hys owen wille for he impacient or is nat vsed to han none aduersitee. an-oone he is þrowe

The senses of the happy are refined and delicate, and they are impatient if anything is untoward.

The happiness of the most fortunate depends on trifles.

1089 blisfulnesse fro hem þat ben most fortunat. ¶ How many men trowest þou wolde demen hem self to ben almost in heuene yif þei myȝten atteyne to þe leest[e] partie of þe remenaunt of þi fortune. ¶ þis same place þat þou clepist exil is contre to hem þat enhabiten here. *and* forþi. Noþing wrecched. but whan þou wenest it ¶ As who seiþ. þouȝ þi self ne no wyȝt ellys nys no wrecche but whan he wenep hym self a

How many would think themselves in heaven if they had only a part of the remnant of thy fortune!
Thy miseries proceed from the thought that thou art miserable.
Every lot may be happy to the man who bears his condition with equanimity and courage.

1097 wrecche by reputacioun of his corage.

CONTRAQUE.

1098 **A**nd aȝeinwarde al fortune is blisful to a man by þe agreablete or by þe egalite of hym þat suffreþ it.

When patience is lost then a change of state is desired.

¶ What man is pat. þat is so weleful þat nolde chaungen his estat whan he haþ lorn pacience. þe swetnesse of

1102 mannes welefulnesse is yspranid wiþ many[e] bitternesse.

1075, 1076 *haþ*—MS. haþe
1076 *maried*—ymaryed
his—hise
1077 *ricchesse*—Rychesses
heires—cyres
folk—foolkys
1080 *þer*—þer ne
1081 *mest*—omitted
1082 *vnassaieþ*—vnassaied
wot—MS. wote, C. wot

1083, 1084 *haþ*—MS. haþe
1084 *wel*—ful
1085 *fallen*—byfalle
wille—wyl
1086 *none*—non
an-oone—Anon
þrowe—throwen
1087 *adoüne*—adoun
1090 *wolde*—wolden
1095 *it*—hyt

1095 *who*—ho
1096 *no*—a
1098 *aȝeinwarde al*—aȝeinward alle
1099 *it*—hyt
1101 *whan*—what
haþ—MS. haþe
lorn—MS. lorne, C. lost
1102 *yspranid*—spraynyd
bitternesse—beternesses

þe whiche welefulnesse al þouȝ it seme swete *and* ioyeful to hym þat vseþ it. ȝit may it not be wiþ-holden þat it ne goþ away whan it wol. ¶ þan is it wel sen how wrecched is þe blisfulnesse of mortel þinges. þat neiþer it dwelliþ perpetuel wiþ hem þat euery fortune receyuen agreablyly or egaly. ¶ Ne it ne deliteþ not in al. to hem þat ben anguissous. ¶ O ye mortel folkes what seke *ȝe þan blisfulnesse oute of ȝoure self. whiche þat is put in ȝoure self. *Error and folie confoundep ȝow* ¶ I shal shewe þe shortly. þe poynt of souereyne blisfulnesse. Is þer any þing to þe more *precious* þan þi self ¶ þou wilt answeze nay. ¶ þan if it so be þat þou art myȝty ouer þi self þat is to seyn by tranquillitee of þi soule. þan hast þou þing in þi power þat þou noldest neuer lesen. ne fortune may nat by-nyme it þe. *and* þat þou mayst knowe þat blisfulnesse [ne] may nat standen in þinges þat ben fortunous *and* temperel. ¶ Now vndirstonde *and* gadir it to gidir þus yif blisfulnesse be þe souereyne goode of nature þat liueþ by resoun ¶ Ne þilke þing nis nat souereyne goode þat may be taken away in any wyse. for more worþi þing *and* more digne is þilke þing þat may nat be taken away. ¶ þan shewiþ it wele þat þe vnstablenesse of fortune may nat attayne to receyue verray blisfulnes. ¶ And ȝit more ouer. ¶ What man þat þis toumblyng welefulnesse leediþ. eiper he woot þat [it] is changeable. or ellis he woot it nat. ¶ And yif he woot it not. what blisful fortune may þer be in þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce. and yif he woot þat it is changeable. he mot alwey ben adrad þat he ne lese þat þing. þat he ne douteþ nat but þat he may leesen

How much is human felicity embittered!

It will not stay with those that endure their lot with equanimity, nor bring comfort to anxious minds.

1109

Why then, O [* fol. 11 b.] mortals, do ye seek abroad for that felicity which is to be found within yourselves? Nothing is more precious than thyself.

If thou hast command over thyself, Fortune cannot deprive thee of it.

1117

Happiness does not consist in things transitory.

1121

If happiness be the supreme good of nature, then that thing cannot be it which can be withdrawn from us.

Instability of fortune is not susceptible of true happiness.

He who is led by fading felicity, either knows that it is changeable or does not know it.

If he knows it not, what happiness has he in the blindness of his ignorance?

If he knows it is fleeting he must be afraid of losing

1104 *hym*--hem
it--hyt
be--ben
1105 *goþ*--MS. geþe
wol--woole
sen--MS. sene
1107 *dwelliþ*--dureth
1109 *folkes*--folke
1110 *oute*--owt

1112 *shortly*--shortely
1114 *wilt*--MS. wilte, C. wolt
if--yif
1117 *by-nyme*--be-neme
1118 *blisfulnesse* [ne] --
blyssefulnesse ne
1120 *to gidir*--to gidere
1121, 1122 *souereyne goode*--
souereyn good

1125 *wel*--wel
1126 *receyue*--resseyuen
1129 [*it*]-from C.
it--hyt
1130 *be*--ben
1131 *blyndenesse* -- blynd-
nesse

it, and this fear
will not suffer
him to be happy.

1136 it. ¶ As whoo seiþ he mot ben alwey agast lest he
leese þat he wot wel he may leese. ¶ For whiche þe
continuel drede þat he haþ ne suffriþ hym nat to ben
weleful. ¶ Or ellys yif he leese it he wene to be
dispised *and* forleten hit. ¶ Certis eke þat is a ful
lytel goode þat is born wiþ euene hert[e] whan it is
1140 loost. ¶ þat is to seyne þat men don no more force.

Since thou art
convinced of the
soul's im-
mortality, thou
canst not doubt
that if death puts
an end to human
felicity, that all
men when they
die, are plunged
into the depths of
misery.

of þe lost þan of þe hauynge. ¶ And for as myche as
þou pi self art he to whom it haþ ben shewid *and* proued
by ful many[e] demonstraciouns. as I woot wel þat þe
soules of men ne mowen nat dien in no wise. and eke
syn it is clere. *and* certeyne þat fortunous welefulnesse
endiþ by þe deef of þe body. ¶ It may nat ben douted

But we know that
many have
sought to obtain
felicity,
by undergoing
not only death,
but pains and
torments.

How then can
this present life
make men truly
happy, since
when it is ended
they do not be-
come miserable?

1147 þat yif þat deef may take away blysfulnesse þat al þe
kynde of mortal þingus ne descendip in to wrecched-
nesse by þe ende of þe deef. ¶ And syn we knowen
wel þat many a man haþ souzt þe fruit of blisfulnesse
nat only wiþ suffryng of deef. but eke wiþ suffryng of
peynes *and* tourmentes. how myzt[e] þan þis present
lijf make men blisful. syn þat whanne þilke self[e]
lijf is endid. it ne makeþ folk no wrecches.

* MS. ualet.

QUISQUIS UOLET * PERHENNEM CAUTUS.

[The ferthe
metur.]

He who would
have a stable and
lasting seat must
not build upon
lofty hills; nor
upon the sands,
if he would escape
the violence of
winds and waves.

1160 What maner man stable *and* war þat wil founden hym
a perdurable sete *and* ne wil not be cast doune
wip þe loude blastes of þe wynde Eurus. *and* wil dispise
þe see manassyng wip floodes ¶ Lat hym eschewe to
bilde on þe cop of þe mountayngne. or in þe moyste
sandis. ¶ For þe fel[le] wynde auster tourmentep þe cop
of þe mountayngne wip alle his strengþes. ¶ *and* þe

1134 *it*—hyt
seiþ—MS. *seibe*, C. *seyth*
1135 *wot*—MS. *wote*, C. *wot*
leese (2)—leese it
whiche—which
1136 *haþ*—MS. *habe*
1137 *ellys*—omitted
wene—weneth
1138 *hit*—omitted
1139 *goode*—good
born—MS. *borne*, C. *born*
hert[e]—herte

1140 *seyne*—seyn
don—MS. *done*, C. *do*
force—fors
1142 *haþ*—MS. *habe*
1143 *many[e]*—manye
1144 *mowen*—mowe
dien—deyen
1145 *clere*—cleer
certeyne—certeyn
1147 *al*—alle
1150 *haþ*—MS. *habe*
fruit—frut

1152 *myzt[e]*—myhte
1153 *make*—maken
self[e]—selue
1155, 1156, 1157 *wil*—wole
1156 *be cast*—MS. *be caste*,
C. *ben cast*
1157 *wynde*—wynd
1158 *eschewe*—eschewen
1160 *fel[le]*—felle
1161 *his*—hise

lowe see sandes refuse to beren þe heuy wey3te. *and* 1162

forþi yif þou wolt flee þe perilous auenture þat is to
seine of þe worlde ¶ Hauē mynde certeynly to ficchyn
þi house of a myrie site in a lowe stooñe. ¶ For al
þou3 þe wynde troubling þe see þondre wiþ ouer-
þrowynges ¶ þou þat art put in quiete *and* welful by
strengþe of þi palys shalt leden a cleer age. scornynge
þe wodenesses *and* þe Ires of þe eir.

If thou wilt flee
perilous fortune,
lay thy founda-
tion upon the
firmer stone, so
that thou mayst
grow old in thy
stronghold.

1169

SET CUM RACIONUM IAM IN TE.

But for as moche as þe norýssinges of my resouns [The fyfthe prose.]

descenden now in to þe. I trowe it were tyme to
vsen a litel strengere medicynes. ¶ Now vñdirstonde
here al were it so þat þe 3iftis of fortune nar[e] nat
brutel ne *trans*itorie. what is þer in hem þat may be
þine *in any tyme. or ellis þat it nys foule if þat it be
considered *and* lokid perfitely. ¶ Richesse ben þei
precious by þe nature of hem self. or ellys by þe
nature of þe. What is most worþi of rychesse. is it
nat golde or myzt of moneye assembled. ¶ Certis
þilke golde *and* þilke moneye shineþ *and* 3eueþ better
renoun to hem þat dispenden it. þen to þilke folke þat
mokeren it. For auarice makeþ alwey mokeres to be
hated. *and* largesse makeþ folke clere of renoun
¶ For syn þat swiche þing as is *trans*fered from o
man to an oþer ne may nat dwellen wiþ no man.

It is now time to
use stronger me-
dicines, since
lighter remedies
have taken effect.
What is there in
the gifts of For-
tune that is not
vile and despici-
able?
[* fol. 12.]

1176

Are riches
precious in them-
selves, or in men's
estimation?

What is most
precious in them,
quantity or
quality?

Bounty is more
glorious than
niggardliness.

Avarice is always
hateful, while
liberality is
praise-worthy.

1185

Certis þan is þilke moneye precious. whan it is *trans*-
lated in to oþer folk. *and* styntep to ben had by
vsage of large 3euyng of hym þat haþ 3euen it. *and*
also yif al þe moneye þat is ouer-al in þe world were

Money cannot be
more precious
than when it is
dispensed liber-
ally to others.

If one man's cof-
fers contained all

1162 *lowe*—lavse
see—omitted

refuse—refusen
wey3te—wyhte

1163 *flee*—fleen

1164 *seine*—seyñ

1165 *þi*—thin

lowe stooñe—lowh stoon

1167 *welful*—weleful

1169 *wodenesses* — wood-

nesses

1172 *strenger*—strengere

vñdirstonde—vñdyrstond

1173 *nar[e]*—ne weere

1174 *be þine*—ben thyn

1175 *foule*—fowl

1176 *Richesse*—Rychessis

1178 *rychesse*—rychesses

1179, 1180 *golde*—gold

1180 *better*—betere

1181 *þen*—thanne

1182 *mokeres*—mokereres

1183 *folke clere*—folk cler

1184 *swiche*—swich

from—fram

1187 *styntep*—stenteth

1188 *haþ*—MS. haþe

1189 *world*—worlde

the money in the world, every one else would be in want of it.

1192 *pat* is to seyn wip-oute amenusyng fulfilleþ to gyder þe heryng of myche folke. but Certys þoure rycchesse ne mowen nat passen vnto myche folk wip-oute amen-

Riches cannot be dispensed without diminution.

1195 *ussyng* ¶ And whan þei ben apassed. nedys þei maken hem pore *pat* forgon þe rycchesses. ¶ O streite *and* nedye clepe I þise rycchesses. syn *pat* many folke [ne] may nat han it al. ne al may it nat comen to on man wip-oute pouerte of al oper folke. ¶ And þe shynyng

O the poverty of riches, that cannot be enjoyed by many at the same time, nor can be possessed by one without impoverishing others!

1200 of gemmes *pat* I clepe precieuse stones. draweþ it nat þe eyen of folk in to hem warde. *pat* is to seyne for þe beaute. ¶ For certys yif þer were beaute or bounte in shynyng of stones. þilke clerenesse is of þe stones hem self. *and* nat of men. ¶ For whiche I wondre gretly *pat* men merueilen on swiche þinges. ¶ For whi what þing is it *pat* yif it wanteþ moeuyng *and*

The beauty of precious stones consists only in their brightness, wherefore I marvel that men admire that which is motionless, lifeless, and irrational.

1207 *ioynture* of soule *and* body *pat* by ryzt myzt[e] semen a faire creature to hym *pat* haþ a soule of resoun. ¶ For al be it so *pat* gemmes drawn to hem self a litel of þe laste beaute of þe worlde. þoruþ þe entent of hir creatour *and* þoruþ þe distinccioun of hem self. zit for as myche as þei ben put vndir þoure excellence.

Precious stones are indeed the workmanship of the Creator, but their beauty is infinitely below the excellency of man's nature.

1213 þei han not desserued by no weye *pat* 3e shullen merueylen on hem. ¶ And þe beaute of feeldes deliteþ it nat mychel vnto þow. *Boyce.* ¶ Whi sholde it nat deliten vs. syn *pat* it is a ryzt fayr porcioun of þe ryzt fair werk. *pat* is to seyn of þis worlde. ¶ And ryzt

Doth the beauty of the field delight thee?

B. Why should it not? for it is a beautiful part of a beautiful whole.

Hence, we admire the face of the sea, the heavens,

so ben we gladed somtyme of þe face of þe see whan it is clere. And also merueylen we on þe heuene *and*

1190 *al*—alle
1191 *al hool*—omitted
1193 *myche folke*—moche folke
rychesses—rychesses
1194 *myche*—moche
1196 *forgon*—MS. forgone
1197 *þise*—this
rychesses—rychesse
[ne]—from C.
1198 *on*—o
1199 *wip-oute*—with-owten

1199 *al*—alle
folke—folke
1200 *precieuse*—presyous
1201 *in*—omitted
ward—ward
seyne—seyn
1202 *beaute* (1)—beautes
For—but
1203 *in*—in the
1204 *whiche*—which
1207 *ioynture*—ioyngture
1208 *faire*—fayr

1208 *hap*—MS. hape
1210 *laste*—last
worlde—world
1212 *myche*—mochel
1213 *desserued*—MS. desseyued, C. desseruyd
weye—wey
shullen—sholden
1215 *mychel*—mochel
1217 *fair werk*—fayre werke
worlde—world
1219 *clere*—cler

on þe sterres. *and* on þe sonne. *and* on þe mone. *Philosophie.* ¶ Apperteineþ quod she any of pilke þinges to þe. whi darst þou glorifie þe in þe shynynge of any swiche þinges. Art þou distingwed *and* embelised by þe spryngyng floures of þe first somer sesoun. or swellip þi plente in fruytes of somer. whi art þou rauyshed wiþ ydel ioies. why embracest þou straunge goodes as þei weren þine. Fortune shal neuer maken þat swiche þinges ben þine þat nature of þinges maked foreyne fro þe. ¶ Syche is þat wiþ-ouren doute þe fruytes of þe erþe owen to ben on þe norssinge of bestes. ¶ And if þou wilt fulfille þi nede after þat it suffiseþ to nature þan is it no nede þat þou seke after þe superfluite of fortune. ¶ For wiþ ful fewe þinges *and with* ful lytel þing nature halt hire appaied. *and* yif þou wilt achoken þe fulfilling of nature wiþ superfluites ¶ Certys pilke þinges þat þou wilt þresten or pouren in to nature shullen ben vnicyeful to þe or ellis anoies. ¶ Wenest þou eke þat it be a fair þinge to shine wiþ dyuerse cloþing. of whiche cloþing yif þe beaute be agreable to loken vpon. I wol merueylen on þe nature of þe matere of pilke cloþes. or ellys on þe werkeman þat wrouzt[e] hem. but al so a longe route of meyne. makip þat a blisful *man. þe whiche seruauntes yif þei ben viciouſ of condiciouns it is a greet charge *and* a destruccioun to þe house. *and* a greet enmye to þe lorde hym self ¶ *And* yif þei ben goode men how shal straung[e] or foreyne goodenes ben put in þe noumbre of þi rycchesse. so þat by alle þise forseide þinges. it is clerly shewed þat neuer none of pilke þinges þat þou accountedest for þin goodes nas nat þi goode. ¶ In þe whiche þinges yif þer be no beaute to ben desired.

as well as the sun, moon, and stars. P. Do these things concern thee? darest thou glory in them?

1223

Do the flowers adorn you with their variety?

Why embracest thou things wherein thou hast no property?

Fortune can never make that thine which the nature of things forbids to be so.

The fruits of the earth are designed for the support of beasts.

If you seek only the necessities of nature, the affluence of Fortune will be useless.

Nature is content with a little, and superfluity will be both disagreeable and hurtful.

1236

Does it add to a man's worth to shine in variety of costly clothing? The things really to be admired are the beauty of the stuff or the workmanship of it.

Doth a great retinue make thee happy?

If thy servants be vicious, they are

[* fol. 12 b.]

a great burden to the house, and pernicious enemies to the master of it.

If they be good, why should the probity of others be put to thy account?

Upon the whole, then, none of those enjoyments which thou didst consider as thy own did ever properly belong to thee.

1222 darst þou glorifte —
darsthow gloryfyen
1225 in—in the
1229 Syche—Soth
1230 on—to
1231, 1235, 1237 wilt—wolt

1238 shullen—shollen
1239 fair—fayre
1240 whiche—which
1242 werkeman—werkman
1246 house—hows
lorde—lord

1248 goodenes—goodnesse
1250 shewed—I-shewyd
none—oon
1251 þin—thine
goode—good

If they be not desirable, why shouldst thou grieve for the loss of them?

If they are fair by nature, what is that to thee? They would be equally agreeable whether thine or not.

They are not to be reckoned precious because they are counted amongst thy goods, but because they seemed so before thou didst desire to possess them.

What, then, is it we so clamorously demand of Fortune?

Is it to drive away indigence by abundance?

But the very reverse of this happens, for there is need of many helps to keep a variety of valuable goods. 1268

They want most things who have the most.

They want the fewest who measure their abundance by the necessities of nature, and not by the superfluity of their desires.

Is there no good planted within ourselves, that we are obliged to go abroad to seek it?

Are things so changed and inverted, that god-like man should think that he has no other worth but what he derives from the possession of inanimate objects? Inferior things are satisfied with their own endowments, while man (the image of God) seeks to adorn his nature

whi sholdest þou be sory yif þou leese hem. or whi sholdest þou reioysen þe to holden hem. ¶ For if þei ben fair of hire owen kynde. what apperteneþ þat to þe. for as wel sholde þei han ben faire by hem self. þouþ þei weren departid from alle þin rycchesse. ¶ For why faire ne precioüs ne weren þei nat. for þat þei comen amonges þi rycchesse. but for þei semeden fair *and* precious. þefore þou haddest leuer rekene hem amonges þi rycchesse. but what desirest þou of fortune wiþ so greet a noyse *and* wiþ so greet a fare ¶ I trowe þou seke to dryue away nede wiþ habundaunce of þinges. ¶ But certys it turneþ to 3ow al in þe contrarie. for whi certys it nedieþ of ful many[e] helpynges to kepen þe dyuersite of preciose ostelmentz. and soþe it is þat of many[e] þinges han þei nede þat many[e] þinges han. *and* aþeyneward of litel nedieþ hem þat mesuren hir fille after þe nede of kynde *and* nat after þe outrage of couetyse ¶ Is it þan so þat ye men ne han no propre goode. I-set in 3ow. For whiche 3e moten seken outwardes 3oure goodes in foreine *and* subgit þinges. ¶ So is þan þe condicioun of þinges turned vpso down. þat a man þat is a deuyne beest by merit of hys resoun. þinkeþ þat hym self nys neyþer fair ne noble. but if it be þoruþ possessioun of ostelmentes. þat ne han no soules. ¶ And certys al oþer þinges ben appaied of hire owen beautes. but 3e men þat ben semblable to god by 3oure resonable þouþt desiren to apparaille 3oure excellent kynde of þe lowest[e] þinges. ne 3e ne vndirstonde nat how gret a wrong 3e don to 3oure creatour. for he wolde þat man kynde were moost worþi *and* noble of

1255 *fair—fayre*

hire owen—hyr owne

1256 *sholde—sholden*

self—selue

1257 *þin rycchesse—thyne*

rychesses

1259 *amonges—amonge*

1259, 1261 *rychesses—Rych-*

esses

1259 *fair—fayre*

1260 *leuer rekene—leuere*

rekne

1262 *greet (2)—grete*

1265, 1267 *many[e]—manye*

1267 *soþe—soth*

1272 *outwardes—owtward*

1276 *fair—fayre*

if—yif

1278 *hire owen—hir owne*

1281 *ne (2)—omitted*

vndirstonde—vndyrstond-

yn

1282 *gret—MS. grete, C. gret*

any oþer erþely þinges. and 3e þresten adoun 3oure dignitees by-neþen þe lowest[e] þinges. ¶ For if þat al þe good of euery þing be more preciouser þan is þilk þing whos þat þe good is. syn 3e demen þat þe foulest[e] þinges ben 3oure goodes. þanne summytten 3e and putten 3oure self vndir þo foulest[e] þinges by 3oure estimacioun. ¶ And certis þis bitidiþ nat wiþ out 3oure desert. For certys swiche is þe condicioun of al man kynde þat oonly whan it haþ knowyng of it self. þan passeþ it in noblesse alle oþer þinges. and whan it forletip þe knowyng of it self. þan it is brouzt byneþen alle beestes. ¶ For-why alle oþer [leuyng] beestes han of kynde to knowe not hem self. but whan þat men leten þe knowyng of hem self. it comeþ hem of vice. but how brode sheweþ þe error and þe folie of 3ow men þat wenen þat ony þing may ben apparailled wiþ straunge apparaillement; ¶ but for-soþe þat may nat be don. for yif a wyzt shyneþ wiþ þinges þat ben put to hym. as þus. yif þilke þinges shynen wiþ whiche a man is apparailled. ¶ Certis þilke þinges ben commendid and preised wiþ whiche he is apparailled. ¶ But napeles þe þing þat is couered and wrapped vndir þat dwelleþ in his filþe. and I denye þat þilke þing be good þat anoyeþ hym þat haþ it. ¶ Gabbe I of þis. þou wolt seye nay. ¶ Certys rycchesse han anoyed ful ofte hem þat han þe rycchesse. ¶ Syn þat euery wicked shrew and for hys wickednesse þe more gredy aftir oþer folkes rycchesse wher so euer it be in any place. be it golde or

with things infinitely below him, not understanding how much he dishonours his Maker. God intended man to excel all earthly creatures, yet you debase your dignity and prerogative below the lowest beings. In placing your happiness in despicable trifles, you acknowledge yourselves of less value than these trifles, and well do you merit to be so esteemed. Man only excels other creatures when he knows himself. When he ceases to do so, he sinks below beasts.

1297

Ignorance is natural to beasts, but in men it is unnatural and criminal. How weak an error is it to believe that anything foreign to your nature can be an ornament to it. If a thing appear beautiful on account of its external embellishments, we admire and praise those embellishments alone. The thing covered still continues in its natural impurity. I deny that to be a good which is hurtful to its owner. Am I deceived in this? You will say no; for riches have often hurt their possessors. Every wicked man desires

1284 oþer erþely — oothre
wordly
þresten—threste
1285 by-neþen—by-nethe
if—yif
*1286 good—MS. goode, C.
good
þing—thinge
preciouser—presyos
þilk þing—þilke thinge
1287 þe (2)—tho
1288 summytten—submitten
1289 self—seluen

1289 foulest[e]—fowleste
1290 bitidiþ—tydeth
1291 out—owte
desert—desertes
1292 al—alle
1293 self—selue
1294 it is—is it
1296 [leuyng]—from C.
hem—hym
1297 þat—omitted
1298 comeþ—comth
1299 þing—thinge
1302 put—MS. putte, C. put

1303 whiche—which
1306 filþe—felthe
1307 þing—thinge
good—MS. goode, C. good
1308 hab—MS. hape
1309 rycchesse—Rychesses
þe—tho
1310 rycchesse—Rychesses
shrew—shrewe
1311 rycchesse—rychesses
1312 golde—gold

[* fol. 13.]
another's wealth,
and esteems him
alone happy who
is in possession
of riches.
You, therefore,
who now so much
dread the instru-
ments of assassina-
tion, if you had
been born a poor
wayfaring man,
might, with an
empty purse,
have sung in the
face of robbers.
O the transcen-
dent felicity of
riches! No
sooner have you
obtained them,
than you cease to
be secure.

precious stones. *and* wenip hym *only most worpi þat
haþ hem ¶ þou þan þat so besy dredest now þe swerde
and þe spere. yif þou haddest entred in þe pape of þis
lijf a voide wayfaryng man. þan woldest þou syng[e]
byfore þe þeef. ¶ As who seiþ a poure man þat bereþ
no rycchesse on hym by þe weye. may boldly syng[e]
byforne þeues. for he haþ nat wher-of to ben robbed.
¶ O preciouſe *and* ryzt clere is þe blyſfulnesse of
mortal rycchesse. þat whan þou hast geten it. þan hast
þou lorn þi syke[r]nesse.

FELIX IN MIRUM PRIOR ETAS.

[The fyrthe
metur.]
Happy was the
first age of men.
They were con-
tented with what
the faithful earth
produced.
With acorns they
satisfied their
hunger.
They knew not
Hypocras nor
Hydromel.

They did not dye
the Serian fleece
in Tyrian purple.

They slept upon
the grass, and
drank of the
running stream,
and reclined
under the shadow
of the tall pine.
No man yet
ploughed the deep,
nor did the mer-
chant traffick with
foreign shores.

Blyſful was þe first age of men. þei helden hem
apaied wiþ þe metes þat þe trewe erþes brouzten
furþe. ¶ þei ne destroyed[e] ne desceyued[e] not hem
self wiþ outrage. ¶ þei weren wont lyztly to slaken
her hunger at euene wiþ acornes of okes ¶ þei ne
couþe nat medle þe zift of bacus to þe clere hony.
þat is to seyn. þei couþe make no piment of clarre.
ne þei couþe nat medle þe brizt[e] flies of þe contre
of siriens wiþ þe venym of tirie. þis is to seyne. þei
couþe nat dien white flies of siriens contre wiþ þe
blode of a manar shelfyſſhe. þat men fynden in tyrie.
wiþ whiche blode men deien purper. ¶ þei slepen
holesom slepes vpon þe gras. and dronken of þe rynn-
nyng watres. *and* laien vndir þe shadowe of þe heyze
pyne trees. ¶ Ne no gest ne no straunger [ne] karf
zit þe heyre see wiþ oores or wiþ shippes. ne þei ne

1314 *haþ*—MS. haþe, C. hat
besy—bysy
swerde—sward
1315 *pape*—paath
1316 *wayfaryng*—wayferynge
syng[e]—syng
1317 *byfore*—by-forn
seiþ—MS. seiþe, C. seyth
poure—pore
bereþ—berth
1318 *boldly syng[e]*—boldely
syng
1319 *haþ*—MS. haþe
1320 *precious*—precyos
clere—cler
1321 *rychesse*—rychesses

1322 *lorn*—MS. lorne, C. lorn
1324 *erþes*—feeldes
1325 *furþe*—forth
destroyed[e]—dystroyede
1327 *her*—hyr
at—MS. as, C. at
euene—euen
1328 *couþe*—cowde
medle—medly
zift—yifte
clere—cleer
1329 *couþe*—cowde
of—nor
1330 *couþe*—cowde
brizt[e] flies—bryhte fleeces
1331 *siriens*—Seryens

1331 *seyne*—seyn
1332 *couþe*—cowde
dien—deyen
flies—flezes
1333 *blode*—blood
shelfyſſhe—shyllefyssh
1334 *blode*—blood
1335 *holesom*—holson
rynnnyng watres—rynn-
nyng watres
shadowe—shadwes
heyze—heyre
1337 *pyne*—pyn
no (2)—omitted
[ne]—from C.
karf—karue

hadden seyne zitte none newe strondes to leden mer-
chaundyse in to dyuerse contres. ¶ þo weren þe cruel
clariouns ful whist *and* ful stille. ne blode yshed by
egre hate ne hadde nat deied zit armurers. for wherto
or whiche woodenesse of enmys wolde first moeuen
armes. whan þei seien cruel woundes ne none medes
ben of blood yshad ¶ I wolde þat oure tymes sholde
turne azeyne to þe oolde maneres. ¶ But þe anguissous
loue of hauyng brennep in folke moore cruely þan þe
fijr of þe Mountaigne of Ethna þat euer brennep.
¶ Allas what was he þat first dalf vp þe gobets or
þe weyztys of gold couered vndir erþe. *and* þe precious
stones þat wolden han ben hid. he dalf vp precious
perils. þat is to seyne þat he þat hem first vp dalf. he
dalf vp a precious peril. for-whi. for þe preciousnesse
of swyche hap many man ben in peril.

1339

The warlike trumpet was hushed and still. Bloodshed had not yet arisen through hateful quarrels. Nothing could stimulate their rage to engage in war, when they saw that wounds and scars were the only needs. O that those days would come again! The thirst of wealth torments all; it rages more fiercely than Ætna's fires. Cursed be the wretch who first brought gold to light.

1352

It has since proved perilous to many a man.

QUID AUTEM DE DIGNITATIBUS ET CETERA.

But what shal I seyne of dignitees *and* of powers.
þe whiche [ye] men þat neiþer knowen verray dig-
nitee ne verray power areysen hem as heye as þe
heuene. þe whiche dignitees *and* powers yif þei come
to any wicked man þei don [as] greet[e] damages *and*
distruccioun as doþ þe flamme of þe Mountaigne
Ethna whan þe flamme wit walwiþ vp ne no deluge
ne doþ so cruel harmes. ¶ Certys ye remembriþ wel
as I trowe þat þilke dignitee þat men clepiþ þe em-
perie of consulers þe whiche þat somtyme was by-
gynnyng of fredom. ¶ þoure eldres coueiteden to han
don a-vey þat dignitee for þe pride of þe conseilers.

[The sixte prose.]
But why should I discourse of dignities and powers which (though you are ignorant of true honour and real power) you extol to the skies? When they fall to the lot of a wicked man, they produce greater calamities than the flaming eruption of Ætna, or the most impetuous deluge. You remember that your ancestors desired to abolish the Consular government (the commencement of the Roman liberty),

1339 *hadden seyne zitte*—
hadde seyn yit
1341 *whist*—hust
blode yshed—blod I-shad
1343 *whiche woodenesse*—
whych wodnesse
1344 *seien*—say
1346 *turne azeyne*—torne
ayein
1347 *folke*—folk
1348 *þe*—omitted

1348 *euere*—ay
1351 *hid*—MS. hidde, C. hydd
1352 *seyne*—seyn
he (2)—omitted
1354 *swyche*—swych thinge
hap—MS. hape
ben—be
1355 *seyne*—seye
1358 *come*—comen
1359 *don*—MS. done, C. don
[as] *greet[e]*—as grete

1360 *distruccioun*—destruc-
ciouns
doþ—MS. doþe, C. doth
flamme—flaambe
1361 *flamme*—flawambe
wit—omitted
1362 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth
1363 *clepiþ*—clepyn
1364 *whiche*—whych
somtyme—whilom
1366 *for*—MS. of, C. for

because of the pride of the Consuls; as their ancestors before for the same consideration had suppressed the title of King.

¶ And ryzt for þe same pride 3oure eldres byforne þat tyme hadden don away out of þe Citee of rome þe kynges name. þat is to seien. þei nolden haue no lenger no kyng ¶ But now yif so be þat dignitees

1371 *and* powers ben 3euen to goode men. þe whiche þing is ful 3elde. what agreable þinges is þer in þo dignitees. or powers. but only þe goodenes of folk þat vsen hem.

Virtue is not embellished by dignities, but dignities derive honour from virtue. But what is this power, so much celebrated and desired? What are they over whom you exercise authority?

¶ And þerfore it is þus þat honour ne comeþ nat to vertue for cause of dignite. but a3einward. honour comeþ to dignite by cause of vertue. but whiche is 3oure derworþe power þat is so clere *and* so requerable

1378 ¶ O 3e erþelyche bestes considere 3e nat ouer whiche þing þat it semeþ þat 3e han power. ¶ Now yif þou say[e] a mouse amongus *oþer myse þat chalenged[e] to hymself ward ryzt *and* power ouer alle oþer myse. how gret scorne woldest þou han of hit. ¶ *Glosa.* ¶ So fareþ it by men. þe body haþ power ouer þe body.

If thou sawest a mouse assuming [* fol. 13 b.] command over other mice, wouldest thou not almost burst with laughter? What is more feeble than man, to whom the bite of a fly may be the cause of death?

¶ O 3e erþelyche bestes considere 3e nat ouer whiche þing þat it semeþ þat 3e han power. ¶ Now yif þou say[e] a mouse amongus *oþer myse þat chalenged[e] to hymself ward ryzt *and* power ouer alle oþer myse. how gret scorne woldest þou han of hit. ¶ *Glosa.* ¶ So fareþ it by men. þe body haþ power ouer þe body.

1383 For yif þow loke wel vpon þe body of a wyzt what þing shalt þou fynde moore frele þan is mannes kynde. þe whiche ben ful ofte slayn wiþ bytynge of smale flies. or ellys wiþ þe entryng of crepyng wormes in to þe priuetees of mennes bodyes. ¶ But wher shal men fynden any man þat may exercen or haunten any ryzt vpon an oþer man but oonly vpon hys body. or ellys vpon þinges þat ben lower þen þe body. whiche I clepe fortunous possessiouns ¶ Mayst þou euer haue any comaundement ouer a fre corage ¶ Mayst þou remuen fro þe estat of hys propre reste. a þouzt þat is cleuyng to gider in hym self by stedfast resoun. ¶ As somtyme a tiraunt wende to confounde a freeman of

1368 *don*—MS. done, C. don
1369 *seien*—seyen
1370 *lenger*—lengere
kyng—kyunge
1371 *whiche*—which
1373 *folk*—foolkys
1374 *comeþ*—comth
1375, 1376 *vertue*—vertu
1376 *comeþ*—comth
by—for
whiche—which

1378 ¶ O 3e erþelyche bestes considere 3e nat ouer whiche þing þat it semeþ þat 3e han power. ¶ Now yif þou say[e] a mouse amongus *oþer myse þat chalenged[e] to hymself ward ryzt *and* power ouer alle oþer myse. how gret scorne woldest þou han of hit. ¶ *Glosa.* ¶ So fareþ it by men. þe body haþ power ouer þe body.

1383 For yif þow loke wel vpon þe body of a wyzt what þing shalt þou fynde moore frele þan is mannes kynde. þe whiche ben ful ofte slayn wiþ bytynge of smale flies. or ellys wiþ þe entryng of crepyng wormes in to þe priuetees of mennes bodyes. ¶ But wher shal men fynden any man þat may exercen or haunten any ryzt vpon an oþer man but oonly vpon hys body. or ellys vpon þinges þat ben lower þen þe body. whiche I clepe fortunous possessiouns ¶ Mayst þou euer haue any comaundement ouer a fre corage ¶ Mayst þou remuen fro þe estat of hys propre reste. a þouzt þat is cleuyng to gider in hym self by stedfast resoun. ¶ As somtyme a tiraunt wende to confounde a freeman of

1387 ¶ But how can any man obtain dominion over another, unless it be over his body, or, what is inferior to his body,—over his possessions, the gifts of Fortune? Can you ever command a free-born soul? Can you disturb a soul consistent with itself, and knit together by the bond of reason?

1377 *derworþe*—derworthe
clere—cleer
1378 *whiche*—which
1379 *han*—MS. hanne, C.
han
1380 *say[e]*—saye
mouse amongus—mouse amonges
myse—mus;
1382 *scorne*—scorn
1383 *haþ*—MS. haþe

1385 *mannes*—man
1386 *þe*—slayn—the whiche men wel ofte ben slayn
1388 *mennes bodyes*—mannes body
1391 *lower*—lowere
whiche—the which
1395 *stedfast*—stidfast
1396 *somtyme*—whylom

corage ¶ *And wende to constreyne hym by tourment* 1397
 to maken hym dyscoueren *and acusen folk þat wisten*
 of a coniuacioun. whiche I clepe a confederacie þat
 was cast azeins þis tyraunt ¶ *But þis free man boot* Have you not
read how Anax-
archus bit off his
tongue and spat
it in the face of
Nicoreon ?
 of hys owen tunge. *and cast it in þe visage of pilke*
 woode tyraunte. ¶ *So þat þe tourmentz þat þis*
 tyraunt wende to han maked matere of cruelte. þis 1403
 wyse man maked[e it] matere of vertues. ¶ *But what*
 þing is it þat a man may don to an oþer man. þat he
 ne may receyue þe same þing of oþer folke *in* hym
 self. or þus. ¶ *What may a man don to folk. þat folk* 1407
 ne may don hym þe same. ¶ *I haue herd told of*
 busirides þat was wont to sleen hys gestes þat her-
 burghden in hys hous. and he was slayn hym self of
 ercules þat was hys gest ¶ *Regulus had[de] taken in*
 bataile many men of affrike. and cast hem in to fet-
 teres. but sone after he most[e] zine hys handes to
 ben bounden *with* þe cheynes of hem þat he had[de]
 somtyme ouercomen. ¶ *Wenest þou þan þat he be*
 myzty. þat may nat don a þing. þat oþer ne may don
 hym. þat he doþ to oþer. *and* zit more ouer yif it so
 were þat þise dignites or poweres hadden any propre
 or naturel goodnesse in hem self neuer nolden þei
 comen to shrewes. ¶ *For contrarious pinges ne ben*
 not wont to ben yfelawshipped togidres. ¶ *Nature re-*
 fuseþ þat contra[r]ious pinges ben yioigned. ¶ *And so*
 as I am in certeyne þat ryzt wikked folk han dignitees
 ofte tymes. þan sheweþ it wel þat dignitees *and* powers
 ne ben not goode of hir owen kynde. syn þat þei suf-
 fren hem self to cleuen or ioynen hem to shrewes.
 ¶ *And certys þe same þing may most digneliche Iugen*

Have you not
read how Anax-
archus bit off his
tongue and spat
it in the face of
Nicoreon ?

What is it that
one man can do
to another that
does not admit of
retaliation ?

Busiris used to
kill his guests,
but at last him-
self was killed
by Hercules, his
guest.

Regulus put his
Carthaginian
prisoners in
chains, but was
afterwards
obliged to submit
to the fetters of
his enemies.

Is he mighty that
dares not inflict
what he would
upon another for
fear of a requital ?
If powers and
honours were
intrinsically good,
they would never
be attained by
the wicked.

An union of
things opposite
is repugnant to
nature.

But as wicked
men do obtain
the highest
honours, it is
clear that honours
are not in them-
selves good,
otherwise they
would not fall to
the share of the
unworthy.

1399 *whiche*—which
1401 *owen*—owne
1406 *receyue*—resseyuen
oper—oother
1408 *herd told*—MS. herde
tolde, C. herd told
1409 *hys*—hise
herburghden — herber-
weden

1410 *slayn*—sleyn
1411 *had[de]*—hadde
1413 *most[e]*—moste
1414 *bounden*—bownde
cheynes — MS. þeues, C.
cheynes
had[de]—hadde
1415 *somtyme*—whylom
1416 *þat*—þing—that hath

no power to don a thinge
oper—oother
1417 *hym*—in hym
doþ—MS. doþe, C. doth
to oper—in oother
1421 *togidres*—to-gidres
1423 *certeyne*—certain
1424 *tymes*—tyme
1425 *owen*—owue

The worst of men have often the largest share of Fortune's gifts. We judge him to be valiant who has given evidence of his fortitude.

1432 So music maketh a musician, &c.

The nature of everything consists in doing what is peculiar to itself, and it repels what is contrary to it.

Riches cannot restrain avarice. Power cannot make a man master of himself if he is the slave of his lusts.

Dignities conferred upon base men do not make them worthy, but rather expose their want of merit.

Why is it so? 'Tis because you give false names to things. You dignify riches, power, and
[* fol. 14.] honours, with names they have no title to.

1450

In fine, the same may be said of all the gifts of Fortune, in which nothing is desirable, nothing of natural good in them, since they are not always allotted to good men, nor make them good to whom they are attached.

and seyen of alle þe ȝiftis of fortune þat most plenteuously comen to shrewes. ¶ Of þe whiche ȝiftys I trowe þat it auȝt[e] ben considered þat no man doutiþ þat he nis strong. in whom he seeþ strengþe. and in whom þat swiftnesse is ¶ Soþe it is þat he is swyfte.

Also musyk makeþ musiciens. and fysik makeþ phisiciens. and rethorik rethoriens. ¶ For whi þe nature of euery þing makip his propretee. ne it is nat entermedled wip þe effectis of contrarious þinges.

¶ And as of wil it chaseþ oute þinges þat to it ben contrarie ¶ But certys rycchesse may nat restreyne auarice vnstaunched ¶ Ne power [ne] makeþ nat a

man myȝty ouer hym self. whiche þat vicious lustis holden destreined wip cheins þat ne mowen nat ben vnbounden. and dignitees þat ben ȝeuen to shrewed[e] folk nat oonly ne makip hem nat digne. but it sheweþ raper al openly þat þei ben vnworþi and vndigne.

¶ And whi is it þus. ¶ Certis for ȝe han ioye to clepen þinges wip fals[e] names. þat beren hem al in þe contrarie. þe whiche names ben ful ofte reproued by þe effect of þe same þinges. so þat *þise ilke rycchesse ne auȝten nat by ryȝt to ben cleped rycchesse. ne whiche power ne auȝt[e] not ben cleped power. ne whiche dignitee ne auȝt[e] nat ben cleped dignitee.

¶ And at þe laste I may conclude þe same þinge of al þe ȝiftes of fortune in whiche þer nis no þing to ben desired. ne þat hap in hym self naturel bounte.

¶ as it is ful wel sene. for neyþer þei ne ioygnen hem nat alwey to goode men. ne maken hem alwey goode to whom þei ben y-ioigned.

1429 *whiche*—which

1430 *auȝt[e]*—owhte

1432 *Soþe*—soth
swyfte—swyft

1435 *is*—nis

1436 *effectis*—effect

1437 *oute*—owt

1441 *ben*—be

1442 *shrewed[e]*—shrewede

1446 *fals[e]*—false

al—alle

1447 *whiche*—which

1449 *auȝten*—owhten

rycchesse—rychesses

1450 *whiche*—swich

auȝt[e]—owhte

1451 *whiche*—swich

auȝt[e]—owht

1453 *al*—alle

1454 *hap*—MS. hape

1455 *sene*—I-scene

NOUIMUS QUANTOS DEDERAT.

WE han wel knowen how many greet[e] harmes *and* destrucciouns weren doñ by þe Emperoure Nero.

[The sixte Metur-]
We know what
ruin Nero did.
1459

¶ He letee brenne þe citee of Rome *and* made slen þe *senatours*. and he cruel somtyme slou3 hys broþer. *and* he was maked moyst wiþ þe blood of hys modir. þat is to seyn he let sleen *and* slitten þe body of his modir to seen where he was conceiued. *and* he loked[e] on euery half vpon hir colde dede body. ne no tere ne wette his face. but he was so hard herted þat he myzt[e] ben domesman or Iuge of hire dede Beaute. ¶ And 3itte

He burnt Rome,
he slew the con-
script fathers,
murdered his
brother, and
spilt his mother's
blood.

He looked un-
moved upon his
mother's corpse,
and passed judg-
ment upon her
beauty.

1467

neuerþeles gouerned[e] þis Nero by Ceptre al þe peoples þat phebys þe sonne may seen comyng from his outerest arysyng til he hidde his bemes vnder þe waves. ¶ þat is to seyne. he gouerned[e] alle þe peoples by Ceptre imperial þat þe sonne goþ aboute from est to west ¶ And

Yet this parricide
ruled over all
lands, illumined
by the sun in his
diurnal course,
and controlled
the frozen regions
of the pole.

1472

eke þis Nero goueyrende by Ceptre. alle þe peoples þat ben vnder þe colde sterres þat hyzten þe seuene triones. þis is to seyn he gouerned[e] alle þe poeples þat ben vnder

1475

þe partics of þe norþe. ¶ And eke Nero gouerned[e] alle þe poeples þat þe violent wynde Nothus scorchiþ *and* bakiþ þe brennyng sandes by his drie hete. þat

He governed, too,
the people in the
torrid zone.

1478

is to seyne. alle þe poeples in þe souþe. [but yit ne myhte nat al his heye power torne the woodnesse of this wykkyd nero / Allas it is greuous fortune it is]. as ofte as wicked swerde is ioyned to cruel venym. þat is to sein. venimous cruelte to lordshipe.

But yet Nero's
power could not
tame his ferocious
mind.

It is a grievous
thing when
power strength-
ens the arm of
him whose will
prompts him to
deeds of cruelty.

1458 greet[e]—greta
1460 letee—let
1461 somtyme slou3—whilom
slow
1463 let—lette
1464 where—wher
1465 half—halue
1466 myzt[e]—myhte
1467 hire—hyr
1468 neuerþeles—nathels
gouerned[e]—gouernede

1468 al—alle
1469 from—fram
outerest—owtereste
1470 hidde—hide
1471 seyne—seyn
1472 gob—MS. goþe, C. goth
1473 goueyrende—gouernyd
1474 triones—tyryones
1475 gouerned[e]—gouernede
1476 parties—party
norþe—north

1476 gouerned[e] — gouern-
ede
1477 wynde—wynd
scorchiþ—scorklith
1479 seyne—seyn
souþe—sowth
1479-81 [but—it is]—MS.
has: but ne how greuous
fortune is
1482 swerde—swerd

[The seunde
prose.]

B. Thou knowest
that I did not
covet mortal and
transitory things.

I only wished to
exercise my
virtue in public
concerns, lest it
should grow
feeble by in-
activity.

P. A love of
glory is one of
those things that
may captivate
minds naturally
great, but not
yet arrived at
the perfection of
virtue.

But consider how
small and void of
weight is that
glory.

Astronomy
teaches us that
this globe of earth
is but a speck
compared with
the extent of the
heavens,
and is as nothing
if compared with
the magnitude
of the celestial
sphere.

Ptolemy shows
that only one-
fourth of this
earth is inhabited
by living crea-
tures.

Deduct from this
the space occupied
by seas, marshes,
lakes, and deserts,
and there remains
but a small pro-
portion left for the
abode of man.

1487 *desired[e]*—desyre
1489 *wex olde*—wax old
1492 *whiche*—which
speke—spekyn
1496 *tollen*—MS. tellen, C.
tollen

1497 *ful[le]*—fulle
1501 *al prise*—alle prys
1505 *seye*—seyen
1507 *wolde*—woldyn
alle—al
[ne]—from C.

1510 *lerned*—ylernd
1512 *pouzte*—thowht
myche—moche
1513 *[the]*—from C.
1514 *myche space*—moche
spaces

TUM EGO SCIS INQUAM.

HAnne seide I þus. þou wost wel þiself þat þe
couetise of mortal þinges ne hadden neuer lord-
shipe of me. but I haue wel desired matere of þinges
to done. as who seip. I desired[e] to han matere of
gouernaunce ouer comunalites. ¶ For vertue stille ne
sholde not elden. þat is to seyn. þat list þat or he wex
1490 olde ¶ His uertue þat lay now ful stille. ne sholde
nat *perisse* vnexercised in gouernaunce of comune.
¶ For whiche men myzten speke or writen of his
goode gouernement. ¶ *Philosophie*. ¶ For soþe *quod*
she. *and* þat is a þing þat may drawen to gouernaunce
swiche hertes as ben worþi *and* noble of hir nature.
but napeles it may nat drawen or tollen swiche hertes as
ben y-brouzt to þe ful[le] perfeccioun of vertue. þat is
to seyn couetyse of glorie *and* renoun to han wel
administred þe comune þinges. or doon goode decertes
1500 to profit of þe comune. for se now *and* considere how
litel *and* how voide of al prise is þilke glorie. ¶ Cer-
teine þing is as þou hast lerned by demonstracioun of
astronomye þat al þe envyronyng of þe erþe aboute
ne halt but þe resoun of a prykke at regard of þe gret-
nesse of heuene. þat is to seye. þat yif þat þer were
maked comparisoun of þe erþe to þe gretnesse of
1507 heuene. men wolde Iugen in alle þat erþe [ne] helde
no space ¶ Of þe whiche litel regioun of þis worlde
þe ferþe partie is enhabitid wiþ lyuyng beestes þat
we knowen. as þou hast þi self lerned by tholome þat
prouith it. ¶ yif þou haddest wiþ drawen *and* abated
in þi þouzte fro þilke ferþe partie as myche space as þe
see *and* [the] mareys contenen *and* ouergon *and* as
myche space as þe regioun of droughte ouerstrecchþ.

pat is to seye sandes *and* desertes wel vnneþ sholde 1515

þer dwellen a ryzt streite place to þe habitacioun of [fol. 14 b.]

men. *and* 3e þan þat ben environed *and* closed wip And do you, who are confined to the least point of this point, think of nothing but of blazing far and wide your name and reputation? What is there great in a glory so circumscribed? 1522

inne þe leest[e] prikke of pilk prikke þenke 3e to manifesten 3oure renoun *and* don 3oure name to ben born forþe. but 3oure glorie þat is so narwe *and* so streyt yprongen in to so litel boundes. how myche conteinþe it in largesse *and* in greet doynge. *And* also 1522

sette þis þer to þat many a nacioun dyuerse of tonge *and* of maneres. *and* eke of resoun of hir lyuyng ben Even in this contracted circle, there is a great variety of nations, to whom not only the fame of particular men, but even of great cities, cannot extend. 1529

enhabitid in þe cloos of pilke litel habitacle. ¶ To þe whiche naciouns what for difficulte of weyes. *and* what for diuersite of langages. *and* what for defaute of vnusage entercomunyng of marchauandise. nat only þe names of singler men ne may [nat] stretchen. but eke 1529

þe fame of Citees ne may nat stretchen. ¶ At þe last[e] Certis in þe tyme of Marcus tulyus as hym self writeþ in his book þat þe renoun of þe comune of Rome ne hadde nat 3itte passed ne cloumben ouer þe mountaigne þat hyzt Caucasus. *and* 3itte was pilk beyond Mount Caucasus. 1535

tyme come wel wexen *and* gretly redouted of þe parthes. 1535

and eke of oþer folk enhabityng aboute. ¶ Sest þou nat þan how streit *and* how compressed is pilke glorie þat 3e trauailen aboute to shew *and* to multiplie. May þan þe glorie of a singlere Romeyne stretchen pider as þe fame of þe name of Rome may nat clymben ne passen. ¶ *And* eke sest þou nat þat þe maners of diuerse folk *and* eke hir lawes ben discordaunt amonge hem self. so þat pilke þing þat sommen iugen worþi of preysynge. oþer folk iugen þat it is worþi of torment. ¶ *and* þer of comeþ þat þou 3 a man delite hym in 1545

How narrow, then, is that glory which you labour to propagate. Shall the glory of a Roman citizen reach those places where the name even of Rome was never heard? Customs and institutions differ in different countries.

What is praise-worthy in one is blame-worthy in another.

¶ *and* þer of comeþ þat þou 3 a man delite hym in 1545

1515 *seye*—seyne
1516 *streite*—streyt
1517 *þan*—thanne
1518 *inne*—in
 leest[e]—leste
 pilk—thilke
 þenke 3e—thinken ye
1520 *born forþe*—MS. borne,
 C. born, forth

1520 *narwe*—narwh
1521 *streyt*—streyte
 myche—mochel
1522 *conteinþe*—coueyteth
1525 *habitacle*—MS. habit-
 ache, C. habytacule
1529 [nat]—from C.
1531 *last[e]*—lasto
1532 *writeþ*—writ

1533 *hadde*—hadden
 3itte—omitted
1534 *hyzt*—hyhte
 pilk—thikke
1535 *wexen*—waxen
1536 *Sest þou*—sestow
1538 *shew*—shewe
1539 *singlere*—singler
1545 *comeþ*—comth it

It is not the interest of any man who desires renown to have his name spread through many countries. He ought, therefore, to be satisfied with the glory he has acquired at home. But of how many personages, illustrious in their times, have the memorials been lost through the carelessness and neglect of writers. But writings do not preserve the names of men for ever.

1557 But perhaps you suppose that you shall secure immortality if your names are transmitted to future ages. If you consider the infinite space of eternity you will have no reason to rejoice in this supposition. If a *moment* be compared with 10,000 years, there is a proportion between them, though a very small one. But this number of years, multiplied by whatever sum you please, vanishes when compared with the infinite extent of eternity. There may be comparison between finite things, but none between the infinite and finite. Hence it is, that Fame (however lasting), compared with eternity, will seem absolutely nothing.

preysyng of his renoun. he ne may nat in no wise bryngen furþe ne spreden his name to many manere peoples. ¶ And þefore euery maner man auzte to ben paied of hys glorie þat is puplissed among hys owen neyþbores. ¶ And þilke noble renoun shal be restreyned wip-inne þe boundes of o maner folk but how many a man þat was ful noble in his tyme. haþ þe nededy and wrecched forzetyng of writers put oute of mynde and don away. ¶ Al be it so þat certys þilke writynges profiten litel. þe whiche writynges longe and derke elde doþ awaye boþe hem and eke her autours. but 3e men semen to geten 3ow a perdurablete whan 3e þenke þat in tyme comyng 3oure fame shal lasten. ¶ But naþeles yif þou wilt maken comparisoun to þe endeles space of eternite what þing hast þou by whiche þou maist reioysen þe of long lastyng of þi name. ¶ For if þer were makid comparysoun of þe abidyng of a moment to ten þousand wynter. for as myche as boþe þo spaces ben endid. ¶ For 3it haþ þe moment some porcioun of hit al þouz it a litel be. ¶ But naþeles þilke self noubre of 3eres. and eke as many 3eres as þer to may be multiplied. ne may nat certys be comparisound to þe perdurablete þat is een[de]les. ¶ For of þinges þat han ende may be mad comparisoun [but of thinges that ben with-owtyn ende to thinges þat han ende may be makid no comparysoun]. ¶ And for þi is it al þouz renoun of as longe tyme as euer þe lyst to þinken were þouz by þe regard of eternite. þat is vnstauncheable and infinit. it ne sholde nat oonly semen litel. but pleinliche ryzt nouzt. ¶ But 3e men certys ne konne

1547 *furþe*—forth
manere—maner
1543 *þefore*—ther-for
auzte—owhte
1549 *paied*—apayed
hys owen—hise owne
1550 *neyþbores*—nesshebours
be—ben
1552 *haþ*—MS. haþe [put owt]
1553 *put* (MS. *putte*) oute—

1556 *derke*—derk
doþ awaye—MS. doþe, C.
doth a-wey
her autours—hir actorros
1557 *3e*—yow
semen—semetn
1558 *comyng*—to comyng
1559 *wilt*—wolt
1560 *whiche*—which
1563 *myche*—mochel

1564 *þo*—the
haþ—MS. haþe
some—som
1566 *self*—selue
1567 *be* (2)—ben
1568 *een[de]les*—endeles
1569 *mad*—MS. made, C.
makid
[but — comparysoun] —
1573 *by*—to [from C.]

don no þing aryȝt. but ȝif it be for þe audience of poeple. *and* for ydel rumours. *and* ȝe forsaken þe grete worþinesse of conscience *and* of vertue. *and* ȝe seken ȝoure gerdouns of þe smale wordes of strange folke. ¶ Haue now here *and* vndirstonde in þe lyȝtnesse of whiche pride *and* veyne glorie. how a man scorned[e] festiually *and* myrily swiche vanite. somtyme þere was a man þat had[de] assayed wiþ striuyng wordes an oþer man. ¶ þe whiche nat for vsage of verrey vertue. but for proude veyne glorie had[de] taken vpon hym falsly þe name of a philosopher. ¶ þis raper man þat I speke of þouȝt[e] he wolde assay[e] where he þilke were a philosopher or no. þat is to seyne yif he wolde han suffred lyȝtly in pacience þe wronges *þat weren don vnto hym. ¶ þis feined[e] philosophre took pacience a litel while. *and* whan he hadde receiued wordes of outeage he as in stryuyng aȝeine *and* reioysyng of hym self seide at þe last[e] ryȝt þus. ¶ vndirstondest þou nat þat I am a philosophre. þat oþer man answered[e] aȝein ful bityngly *and* seide. ¶ I had[de] wel vndirstonden [yt]. yif þou haddest holden þi tonge stille. ¶ But what is it to þise noble worþi men. For certys of swyche folk speke .I. þat seken glorie wiþ vertue. what is it quod she. what atteiniþ fame to swiche folk whan þe body is resolued by þe deef. atte þe last[e]. ¶ For yif so be þat men dien in al. þat is to seyne body *and* soule. þe whiche þing oure resoun defendiþ vs to byleuen þanne is þere no glorie in no wyse. For what sholde þilke glorie ben. for he of whom þis glorie is seid to be nis ryȝt nouȝt in no wise. 1605 *and* ȝif þe soule whiche þat haþ in it self science of

But yet you do good from no other view than to have the empty applause of the people, foregoing the pleasures of a good conscience in order to have the insignificant praises of other people. This silly vanity was once thus ingeniously and pleasantly rallied. A certain man, who had assumed the name of a philosopher through a love of vain-glory, was told by a man of humour that he could prove he was a philosopher by bearing patiently the injuries offered him.
[* fol. 15.]

1590

After counterfeiting patience for a while, the sophist said to the other, 'You must surely confess that I am a philosopher.'

'I might have believed it,' said the other, 'had you held your tongue.' What advantage is it to great and worthy men to be extolled after death?

1600

If body and soul die, then there can be no glory; nor can there be when he (to whom it is ascribed) does not exist.

1605

1580 *whiche*—swych
1581 *scorned[e]*—scornede
1582 *swiche*—swych
somtyme—whilom
1583 *had[de]*—hadde
1584 *whiche*—which
proude—prowd
1586 *speke*—spak
1587 *þouȝt[e]*—thowhte

1587 *assay[e]*—assaye
1588 *seyne*—seyn
1590 *feined[e]*—feynede
1592 *aȝeine*—ayein
1593 *last[e]*—laste
vndirstondest þou — vn-
dyrston dow
1594 *answered[e]*—answerde
1595 *had[de]*—hadde

1596 [yt]—from C.
1601 *last[e]*—laste
1602 *seyne*—seyn
1604 *for* (2)—whan
1605 *þis*—thilke
seid—MS. seide, C. scyd
nouȝt—nawht
1606 *haþ*—MS. hape

But if the soul
is immortal when
it leaves the body,
it takes no
thought of the
joys of this
world.

goode werkes vnbounden fro þe prisoun of þe erþe
wendeþ frely to þe heuene. dispiseþ it nouzt þan alle
erþely occupaciouns. *and* beyng in heuene reioiseþ þat
it is exempt from alle erþely þinges [as wo seith /
1611 thanne rekketh the sowle of no glorye of renown of this
world].

QUICUMQUE SOLAM MENTE.

[The 7th Metre.]
Let him who
seeks fame, think-
ing it to be the
sovereign good,
look upon the
broad universe
and this circum-
scribed earth;
and he will then
despise a glorious
name limited to
such a confined
space.

Who so þat wiþ ouerþrowyng þouzt only sekeþ glorie
of fame. *and* wenip þat it be souereyne good
¶ Lete hym loke vpon þe brode shewyng contreys of
þe heuen. *and* vpon þe streite sete of þis erþe. *and*
he shal be ashamed of þe ences of his name. þat may
nat fulfille þe litel compas of þe erþe. ¶ O what
coueiten proude folke to listen vpon hire nekkes in
1619 ydel *and* dedely 3ok of þis worlde. ¶ For al þou3
[þat] renoune y-spradde passyng to ferne poeples goþ
by dyuerse tonges. *and* al þou3 grete houses *and* kyn-
redes shyne wiþ clere titles of honours. 3it napeles
1623 deep dispiseþ al heye glorie of fame. *and* deep wrappeþ
to gidre þe heye heuedes *and* þe lowe *and* makeþ egal
and euene þe heyest[e] to þe lowest[e]. ¶ where
wonen now þe bones of trewe fabricius. what is
now brutus or stiern Caton þe þinne fame 3it lastyng
1629 of hir ydel names is markid wiþ a fewe lettres. but
al þou3 we han knowen þe faire wordes of þe fames of
hem. it is nat 3euen to knowe hem þat ben dede *and*
consumpt. Liggip þanne stille al vtterly vnknowable
ne fame ne makeþ 3ow nat knowe. *and* yif 3e wene
to lyuen þe lenger for wynde of 3oure mortal name.
1635 whan o cruel day shal rauyshe 3ow. þan is þe secunde
deep dwellyng in 3ow. *Glosa.* þe first deep he clepip

Will splendid
titles and renown
prolong a man's
life?

In the grave
there is no dis-
tinction between
high and low.

Where is the good
Fabricius now?
Where the noble
Brutus, or stern
Cato?

Their empty
names still live,
but of their
persons we know
nothing.

Fame cannot
make you known.

1608 *nouzt þan*—nat thanne
1610 *from*—fro
1610—1612 [*as* — *world*]—
from C.
1615 *Lete*—Lat
loke—looken
1616 *sete*—Cyte
1617 *be*—ben

1619 *vpon*—vp
1620 *and dedely*—in the dedly
1621 *y-spradde*—ysprad
[*þat*]—from C.
ferne—MS. serue, C. ferne
goþ—MS. goþe, C. goth
1622 *and* (2)—or
1623 *shyne*—shynen

1623 *clere*—cler
1624 *al*—alle
1626 *heyest[e]*—heyoste
lowest[e]—loweste
1628 *stiern*—MS. sciern, C.
stierne
1632 *consumpt*—consumpte
1634 *lenger*—longere

here þe departynge of þe body *and* þe soule. ¶ and þe secunde deef he clepþ as here. þe styntyng of þe renoune of fame.*

It will be effaced by conquering Time, so that death will be doubly victorious.

* The next three chapters are from the Camb. MS.

[SET NE ME INEXORABILE CONTRA.]

BVt for-as-mochel as thow shalt nat wenen *quod* she þat I bere vntretable batayle ayenis fortune // yit som-tyme it by-falleth þat she desseyuable desserueth to han ryht good thank of men // *And* þat is whan she hire self opneth / *and* whan she descouereþ hir frownt / *and* sheweth hir maneres *par-aenture* yit vndirstondeþ thow nat þat .I. shal seye // it is a wondyr þat .I. desyre to telle / *and* forþi vnnethe may I. vnpleyten my sentence *with* wordes for I. deme þat contraryos fortune profiteth more to men than fortune debonayre // For al-wey whan fortune semeth debonayre than she lyeth falsly in by-hetyng the hope of wefulnessse // but forsothe *contraryos* fortune is alwey sothfast / whan she sheweth hir self vnstable thorw hyr chaungynge // the amyable fortune desseyueth folk / the contrarye fortune techeth // the amyable fortune byndeth *with* the beaute of false goodys the hertes of folk þat vsen hem / the contrarye fortune vnbyndeth hem by þe knowynge of freele wefulnessse // the amyable fortune maysthow sen alwey wyndynge *and* flowynge / *and* euere mysknowynge of hir self // the contrarye fortune is a-tempre *and* restreynyd *and* wys thorw excersyse of hir aduersyte // at the laste amyable fortune *with* hir flaterynges draweth mys wandryng men fro the souereyne good // the contraryos fortune ledith ofte folk ayein to sothfast goodes / *and* haleth hem ayein as *with* an hooke / weenesthow thanne þat thow owhtest to leten this a lytel thing / þat this aspre *and* horrible fortune hath discoueryd to the / the thowhtes of thy trewe frendes // For-why this ilke for-

[The viij prose.] 'But do not believe,' said Philosophy, 'that I am an implacable enemy to Fortune. This inconstant dame sometimes deserves well of men, when she appears in her true colours. And what I say may perhaps appear paradoxical. That is, that adverse fortune is more beneficial than prosperous fortune.'

1650

The latter lies and deceives us, the former displays her natural inconstancy.

That deceives us, this instructs us; that, by a fallacious show of good, enslaves the mind; this, by the knowledge of her fickleness, frees and absolves it.

The one is wavering and incapable of reflection, the other is staid and wise through experience of adversity.

Lastly, prosperous fortune leads men astray. Adversity teaches them wherein real happiness consists.

It renders us no inconsiderable service in enabling us to recognize our true friends.

1668

1669 tune hath departyd *and* vncoueryd to the bothe the
certeyn vysages *and* ek the dowtos visages of thy
felawes // whan she departyd away fro the / she took

1672 away hyr frendes *and* lafte the thyne frendes // now
whan thou were ryche *and* weleful as the semede / *with*
how mochel woldesthow han bowht the fulle know-
ynge of this // þat is to seyn the knowynge of thy
verray frendes // now pleyne the nat thanne of Rychesse
.I.-lorn syn thou hast fowndyn the moste presyos kynde
of Rychesses þat is to seyn thy verray frendes.

At what price
would you not
have bought this
knowledge in
your prosperity ?

Complain not,
then, of loss of
wealth, since
thou hast found
infinitely greater
riches in your
true friends.

QUOD MUNDUS STABILI FIDE.

[The viij Metur.]
This world, by
an invariable
order, suffers
change.
Elements, that by
nature disagree,
are restrained by
concord.

THat þ^e world *with* stable feith / varieth acordable
chaungynge // þat the contraryos qualite of elementz
holden amonge hem self aliaunce perdurable / þat phebus
the sonne *with* his goldene chariet / bryngeth forth the
rosene day / þat the mone hath commaundement ouer the

1684 nyhtes // whiche nyhtes hesperus the eue sterre hat browt //
þat þ^e se gredey to flowen constreyneth *with* a certeyn ende
hise floodes / so þat it is nat l[e]ueful to stretche hise

The sea is thus
kept within its
proper bounds.

1687 brode termes or bowndes vp-on the erthes // þat is to seyn
to couere alle the erthe // Al this a-cordaunce of thinges
is bownden *with* looue / þat gouerneth erthe *and* see / *and*
hath also commaundementz to the heuenes / *and* yif
this looue slakede the brydelis / alle thinges þat now

This concord is
produced by love,
which governeth
earth and sea,
and extends its
influence to the
heavens.

If this chain of
love were broken
all things would
be in perpetual
strife, and the
world would go
to ruin.

Love binds
nations together,
it ties the nuptial
knot, and dictates
binding laws to
friendship.

Men were truly
blest if governed
by this celestial
love!

louen hem to gederes / wolden maken a batayle contyn-
uely *and* stryuen to fordoon the fasoun of this worlde /
the which they now leden in acordable feith by fayre
moeuynges // this looue halt to gideres poeples Ioygned
with an hooly bond / *and* knytteth sacrement of mar-
yages of chaste looues // And loue enditeth lawes to
trewe felawes // O weleful weere mankynde / yif thilke
loue þat gouerneth heuene gouerned[e] yowre corages /

EXPLICIT LIBER 2^{us}.

INCIPIT LIBER 3^{us}

IAM CANTUM ILLA FINIERAT.

By this she hadde endid hire songe / whan the swetnesse
of hire ditee hadde thowr perced me þat was desirous
of herkninge / and .I. astoned hadde yit streyhte myn
Eres / þat is to seyn to herkne the bet / what she wolde
seye // so þat a litel here after .I. seyde thus // O thow
þat art souereyn comfort of Angwissos corages // So thow
hast remounted and norysshed me with the weyhte of thy
sentenses and with delit of thy syngynge // so þat .I. trowe
nat now þat .I. be vnpariygal to the strokes of fortune / as
who seyth. I. dar wel now suffren al the assautes of for-
tune and wel deffende me fro hyr // and tho remedies
whyche þat thow seydest hire byforn weren ryht sharpe
Nat oonly þat .I. am nat agrysen of hem now // but .I. de-
siros of herynge axe gretely to heeren tho remedies //
than seyde she thus // þat feelede .I. ful wel quod she //
whan þat thow ententyf and styлле rauysshedest my
wordes // and .I. abood til þat thow haddest swych habyte
of thy thought as thow hast now // or elles tyl þat .I.
my self had[de] maked to the the same habyt / which
þat is a moore verray thinge // And certes the remenaunt
of thinges þat ben yit to seye / ben swyche // þat fyrst
whan men tasten hem they ben bytynge / but whan
they ben resseyuyd with-inne a whyht than ben they
swete // but for thow seyst þat thow art so desirous to
herkne hem // wit[h] how gret brennyng woldesthow
glowen / yif thow wystem whyder .I. wol leden the //
whydyre is þat quod .I. // to thilke verray welefulnesse
quod she // of whyche thyng herte dremeth // but
for as moche as thy syhte is ocupied and distorbed / by
Imagynasyon of herthely thynges / thow mayst nat yit
sen thilke selue welefulnesse // do quod .I. and shewe

[The fyrste prose.]
Philosophy now
ended her song.
I was so charmed
that I kept a
listening as if
she were still
speaking.

At last I said,
O sovereign com-
forter of dejected
minds, how much
hast thou re-
freshed me with
the energy of thy
discourse,
so that I now
think myself
almost an equal
match for For-
tune and able to
resist her blows.
I fear not, there-
fore, thy reme-
dies, but earnestly
desire to hear
what they are.

1713

P. When I per-
ceived that, silent
and attentive, you
received my
words, I expected
to find such a
state of mind in
you, or rather, I
created in you
such an one.
What remains to
be said is of such
a nature that
when it is first
tasted it is
pungent and un-
pleasant, but
when once swal-
lowed it turns
sweet, and is
grateful to the
stomach.
But because you
say you would
now gladly hear,
with what desire
would you burn
if you could
imagine whither
I am going to
lead you?
B. Whither is
that, I pray?
P. To that true
felicity, of which
you seem to have
but a faint fore-
taste.

But your sight is clouded with false forms, so that it cannot yet behold this same felicity.

B. Show me, I pray, that true happiness without delay.

P. I will gladly do so at your desire, but I will first describe that false cause (of happiness), so that you may be better able to comprehend the exact model.

* Here the Add. MS. begins again.

[The fyrst metur.] He who would sow seed must first clear the ground of useless weeds, so that he may reap an abundant harvest. Honey tastes all the sweeter to a palate disgusted by offensive flavours.

The stars shine all the clearer when the southern showery blasts cease to blow.

When Lucifer has chased away the dark night, then Phœbus mounts his gay chariot.

So you, beholding the false felicity, and withdrawing your neck from the yoke of earthly affections, will soon see the sovereign good.

[The 2^de prose.] Philosophy, with a serious air, and appearing to recollect herself, and to rouse up all her faculties, thus began.

All the cares and desires of men seek one end—happiness.

[* fol. 15 b.]

me / what is thilke verray welefulnesse / .I. preye the
with-howte tarynge // þat wole .I. gladly don *quod* she /
for the cause of the // but .I. wol fyrst marken the by
wordes / and I wol enformen me to enformen the //
thilke false cause of blyfulnesse þat thow more know-
est / so þat whan thow hast fully by-holden thilke false
goodes and torned thyne eyen to þat oother syde / thow
mowe knowe the clernesse of verray blyfulnesse //]

*QUI SERERE INGENIUM.

¶ Who so wil sowe a felde plentiuous. lat hym first
delyuer it of þornes and kerue asondre wiþ his hooke
þe bushes and þe ferne so þat þe corne may comen heuy
of eres and of greins. hony is þe more swete yif mouþes
han firste tastid sauoures þat ben wikke. ¶ þe sterres
shynen more agreably whan þe wynde Nothus letiþ his
ploungy blastes. and aftir þat lucifer þe day sterre hap
chased away þe derke nyzt. þe day þe feirer lediþ þe
rosene horse of þe sonne. ¶ Ryzt so þou byholdyng
first þe fals[e] goodes. bygynne to wiþdrawe þi nek[ke]
fro þe zok of erpely affeccions. and afterwarde þe
verrey goodes shollen entre in to þi corage. 1750

TUNC DEFIXO PAULULUM.

þ^O fastned[e] she a lytel þe syzt of hir eyen and wiþ-
drow hir ryzt as it were in to þe streite sete of hir
þouzt. and bygan to speke ryzt þus. Alle þe cures
quod she of mortal folk whiche þat trauaylen hem in
many manere studies gon certys by diuerse weies.
¶ But napeles þei enforced hem *to comen oonly to on

1734 *wol*—H. shalle
1739 *wil*—wole
felde—feeld
1740 *delyuer*—delyuere
of—fro
hooke—hook
1741 *bushes*—bosses
ferne—fern
corne—koru
1743 *firste*—fyrst

1743 *wikke*—wyckyd
1744 *wynde*—wynd
his—hise
1745 *hap*—MS. hape
1746 *feirer*—fayrere
1747 *horse*—hors
Ryzt—And Ryht
1748 *fals[e]*—false
bygynne—bygyn
wiþdrawe—with drawen

1748 *nek[ke]*—nekke
1749 *afterwarde*—after-
ward
1750 *entre*—entren
1751 *fastned[e]*—fastnede
wiþdrow—MS. wiþ-
drown, C. with drowh
1752 *sete*—Cyte
1756 *enforced*—enforsen

ende of blisfulnesse [And blyshfulnesse] is swiche a goode þat who so haþ geten it he ne may ouer þat no þing more desire. and þis þing for soþe is þe souereyne good þat containþ in hym self al manere goodes. to þe whiche goode yif þere failed[e] any þing. it myzt[e] nat ben souereyne goode. ¶ For þan were þere som goode out of þis ilke souereyne goode þat myzt[e] ben desired. Now is it clere and certeyne þan þat blisfulnesse is a perfit estat by þe congregacioun of alle goodes. ¶ þe whiche blisfulnesse as I haue seid alle mortal folke enforen hem to geten by dyuerse weyes. ¶ For-whi þe couetise of verray goode is naturely y-plaunted in þe hertys of men. ¶ But þe myswandryng errour mysledþ hem in to fals[e] goodes. ¶ of þe whiche men some of hem wenen þat souereyne goode is to lyue wiþ outen nede of any þing. and traueilen hem to ben habundaunt of rycchesse. and some oþer men demen. þat souerein goode be forto be ryzt digne of reuerences. and enforen hem to ben reuerenced among hir neyþbours. by þe honours þat þei han ygeten ¶ and some folk þer ben þat halden þat ryzt heyze power to be souereyn goode. and enforen hem forto regnen or ellys to ioignen hem to hem þat regnen. ¶ And it semet to some oþer folk þat noblesse of renoun be þe souerein goode. and hasten hem to geten glorious name by þe artes of werre or of pees. and many folke mesuren and gessen þat souerein goode be ioye and gladnesse and wenen þat it be ryzt blisful [thyng] to ploungen hem in uoluptuous delit. ¶ And þer ben folk þat enterchaungen þe causes and þe endes

True happiness is that complete good which, once obtained, leaves nothing more to be desired. It is the sovereign good, and comprehends all others. It lacks nothing, otherwise it could not be the supreme good. Happiness is, therefore, that perfect state, in which all other goods meet and centre. It is the object which all men strive after. A desire of the true good is a natural instinct, but error misleads them to pursue false joys.

1769

Some, imagining the supreme good to consist in lacking nothing, labour for an abundance of riches; others, supposing that this good lies in the reverence and esteem of their fellow men, strive to acquire honourable positions.

There are some, again, who place it in supreme power, and seek to rule, or to be favoured by the ruling powers. There are those who fancy fame to be the height of happiness, and seek by the arts of war or peace to get renown.

Many there are who believe nothing to be better than joy and gladness, and think it delightful to plunge into luxury.

1757 [And blyshfulnesse] —
goode—good [from C.
1758 so—so þat
haþ—MS. haþe
1759 souereyne—souereyn
1760 al—alle
goode—good
1761 þere—ther
failed[e]—faylyde
myzt[e]—myhte
souereyne goode—souereyn
good
1762 þan—thanne
þere—ther

1762 goode—good
souereyne—souereyn
1763 goode—good
myzt[e]—myhte
1764 certeyne—certein
1766 seid — MS. seide, C.
folke—foolk [seyd
1767 goode—good.
1769 fals[e]—false
1770 souereyne goode is —
souereyn good be
1771 lyue wiþ outen—lyuen
with owte
1772 rycchesse—Rychesses

1773 some—som
goode be—good ben
1774 be—ben
1775 neyþbours—nesshebers
1776 halden—holden
1777 heyze—heyh
to—omitted
goode—good
1780 goode—good
1781 or—and
1782 folke—folk
goode—good
1783 be—by
1784 [thyng]—from C.

Some there are who use these causes and ends interchangeably, as those who desire riches as a means of getting power; or who desire power in order to get money or renown. In all they do they have a particular end in view. Nobility and popular favour are sought after by some in order to become famous. By others, wives and children are only desired as sources of pleasure. Friendship must not be reckoned among the goods of fortune, but among those of virtue, for it is a very sacred thing. All else are desired either for the power or pleasure they afford.

1802

The goods of the body fall under the same predicament. Strength and a good stature seem to give power and worthiness. Beauty and swiftness give glory and fame; and health gives delight. In all these happiness alone is sought. What a man most wishes for, that he esteems the supreme good, which, as we have defined, is happiness. Thou hast now before thee a view of human felicity (falsely so called), that is, riches, honours, power, glory, and delight, which last *Epicurus*

of pise forseide goodes as þei þat desiren rycchesse to han power *and* delices. Or ellis þei desiren power forto han moneye or for cause of renoun. ¶ In pise þinges *and* in swyche oþer þinges is tourned al þe entencioun of desirynges *and* [of] werkes of men. ¶ As þus. ¶ Noblesse *and* fauour of poeple whiche þat 3iueþ as it semeþ a manere clernesse of renoun. ¶ *and* wijf *and* children þat men desiren for cause of delit *and* mirinesse. ¶ But forsoþe frendes ne shollen nat ben rekened among þe goodes of fortune but of vertue. for it is a ful holy manere þing. alle pise oþer þinges forsoþe ben taken for cause of power. or ellis for cause of delit. ¶ Certis now am I redy to referen þe goodes of þe body to pise forseide þinges abouen. ¶ For it semeþ þat strengþe *and* gretnesse of body 3euen power *and* worþinesse. ¶ *and* þat beaute *and* swiftnesse 3euen noblesse *and* glorie of renoun. *and* hele of body semeþ 3iuen delit. ¶ In alle pise þingus it semeþ oonly þat blisfulnesse is desired. ¶ For-whi pilke þing þat euery man desireþ moost ouer alle þinges. he demieþ þat be þe souereyne goode. ¶ But I haue diffined þat blisfulnesse is þe souereyne goode. for whiche euery wyzt demieþ þat pilke estat þat he desireþ ouer alle þinges þat it be þe blisfulnesse. ¶ Now hast þou þan byforne [thy eyen] almost al þe purposed forme of þe welfulness of mankynde. þat is to seyne rycchesse. honours. power. glorie. *and* delitz. þe whiche delit oonly considered Epicurus Iuged *and* establissed. þat delit is þe souereyne goode. for as myche as alle oþer þinges as hym pouzt[e] by-refte away ioie *and* myrþe from þe herte. ¶ But I retourne a3eyne to þe studies of meen.

1786 *rycchesse*—rychesses
1787 *delices*—delytes
1789 *oþer*—oother
al—alle
1790 [of]—from C.
1794 *shollen*—sholden
1795 *þe*—tho
1796 *oþer*—oother
1801 *swiftnesse*—sweftnesse
1803 *3iuen*—MS. 3iueþ, C.

yeuen
1806, 1807 *souereyne goode*—
souereyn good
1807 *whiche*—whych
1809 *þe*—omitted [for
þan byforne—thane by-
1810 [thy eyen]—from C.;
MS. has 3euen a3eyne
almost—almost
welfulnesse—welfulnesse

1811 *seyne rycchesse*—seyne
Rychesses
1814 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good
myche—moche
oþer—oother
1815 *pouzt[e]*—thowhte
from—fram
1816 *a3eyne*—aycyn

of whiche men þe corage alwey rehersiþ *and* seekeþ þe souereyne goode of alle be it so þat it be wiþ a derke memorie [but he not by whiche paath]. ¶ Ryzt as a dronke man not nat by whiche pape he may retourne home to hys house. ¶ Semeþ it þanne þat folk folyen *and* erren þat enforen hem to haue nede of no þing ¶ Certys þer nys non oþer þing þat may so weel *perfourny* blisfulnesse as an estat plenteuous *of alle goodes þat ne haþ nede of none oþer þing. but þat it is suffisant of hym self. vnto hym self. and foleyen swyche folk þanne. þat wenen þat þilk þing þat is ryzt goode. þat it be eke ryzt worþi of honour *and* of reuerence. ¶ Certis nay. for þat þing nys neyþer foule ne worþi to ben dispised þat al þe entencioun of mortel folke trauaille forto geten it. ¶ And power auzt[e] nat þat eke to be rekened amonges goodes what ellis. for it nys nat to wene þat þilke þing þat is most worþi of alle þinges be feble *and* wiþ out strengþe *and* clernesse of renoun auzte þat to ben dispised. ¶ Certys þer may no man forsake þat al þing þat is ryzt excellent *and* noble. þat it ne semeþ to be ryzt clere *and* renowned. ¶ For certis it nedip nat to seie. þat blisfulnesse be anguissous ne dreri ne subgit to greuances ne to sorwes. syn þat in ryzt litel þingus folk seken to haue *and* to vsen þat may deliten hem. ¶ Certys þise ben þe þinges þat men wolen *and* desyren to geten. and for þis cause desiren þei ryches. dignites. regnes. glorie *and* delices ¶ For þerby wenen þei to han suffisaunce honour power. renoun *and* gladnesse. ¶ þanne is it goode. þat men seken þus by so many dyuerse studies. In whiche desijr it may lyztly be shewed.

considered as the sovereign good. I now return to the inclinations and pursuits of mankind.

1820

Their minds are bent upon the chief good, and are ever seeking it with a darkened understanding, like a

drunken man,

[* fol. 16.]

who cannot find his way home. Do they go astray who strive to keep themselves from want?

By no means.

No state is happier than that in which a man is above want, and independent of others.

Are they guilty of folly that seek esteem and reverence?

No; for that is not contemptible for which all men strive.

Is not power to be reckoned amongst desirable goods?

Why not? For

that is not an insignificant good which invests a man with authority and command.

Fame also is to be regarded, for everything excellent is also shining and renowned.

We hardly need say that happiness is not an unjoyous and melancholy state, for in the pursuit

of the smallest matters men seek only pleasure.

Hence it is that

mankind seek

riches, &c., because

by them they hope to get

independence,

honour, &c.

However varied

1818 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good
of—omitted
alle—al
derke—dirkyd
1819 [*but—paath*—from C.
1820 *dronke*—dronken
pape—paath
1821 *home*—hym

1823 *perfourny*—performe
1825 *hap*—MS. hape
none—nou
1827 *pilk*—thilke
1828 *goode*—good
1829 *foule*—fowl
1830 *al*—welneyh alle
1831 *trauaille*—trauaylen
auzt[e]—owhte

1832 *be*—ben
1834 *out*—owte
1835 *auzte*—owhte
1836 *al*—alle
1837 *be*—ben
clere—cleer
1843 *ryches*—Rychesses
1846 *goode*—good
1847 *be*—ben

their desires,
happiness is their
sole pursuit.
However various
men's opinions
are respecting
happiness, all
agree in pursuing
it as the end of
their actions and
desires.

[The 2^de Metur.]
I will now sing
of Nature's laws,
by which the
universe is
governed.

how grete is þe strengþe of nature. ¶ For how so þat
men han dyuerse sentences *and* discordyng algates men
accordyn alle in lyuyng þe ende of goode. 1850

QUANTAS RERUM FLECTAT.

[I likeþ me to shew[e] by subtil songe wiþ slakke *and*
delitable soun of strenges how þat nature myzty en-
clineþ *and* flitteþ gouernementz of þinges ¶ *and* by
whiche lawes she purueiable kepþ þe grete worlde. *and*

1855 how she bindyngre restreineþ alle þingus by a bonde þat

[j] The Punic lion
submits to man,
and dreads the
keeper's lash;

may nat be vnbounden. ¶ Al be it so þat þe liouns of
þe contree of pene beren þe fair[e] cheines. *and* taken
metes of þe handes of folk þat zeuen it hem. *and*

1859 dreden her sturdy maystres of whiche þei ben wont

yet, if he once
taste blood,

to suffren [betinges]. yif þat hir horrible mouþes ben bi-
bled. þat is to sein of bestes deuoured. ¶ Hir corage
of tyme passeþ þat haþ ben ydel *and* rested. repaireþ
azein þat þei roren greuously. *and* remembre on hir

his savage in-
stincts revive,

1864 nature. *and* slaken hir nekkes from hir cheins vn-

and his keeper
falls a victim to
his fury.

bounden. and hir maistre first to-teren wiþ bloody toþe
assaieþ þe woode wrappes of hem. ¶ þis is to sein þei

[ij]
If the caged bird
though daintily
fed, gets a sight
of the pleasant
grove where she
was wont to sing,

freten hir maister. ¶ And þe Iangland brid þat syngþ
on þe heye braunches. þis is to sein in þe wode *and*
after is inclosed in a streit cage. ¶ al þouz [þat] þe

1870 pleiyng besines of men zeueþ hem honied[e] drinkes

she will spurn
her food, and
pine for the
beloved woods,

and large metes. wiþ swete studie. ¶ zit napeles yif
þilke brid skippyngre oute of hir streite cage seeþ þe

agreable shadewes of þe wodes. she defouleþ wiþ hir
fete hir metes yshad *and* sekeþ mournyng oonly þe
wode *and* twitriþ desiryngre þe wode wiþ hir swete

[iij]
The sapling, bent
down by a mighty

voys. ¶ þe zerde of a tree þat is haled adoun by myzty

1848 *grete*—gret
1849 *algates*—Allegates
1850 *goode*—good
1851 *shew[e]*—shewe
1854 *whiche*—MS. swiche, C.
whyche
worlde—world
1856 *be*—ben
vnbounden—vnbownde

1857 *fair[e]*—fayre
1860 [*beinges*]—from C.
1862 *passeþ*—passed
1864 *from*—fram
vnbounden—vnbownde
1865 *to-teren*—to-torn
toþe—toth
1867 *Iangland*—Iangelyngre
1869 *streit*—sreylt

1870 *pleiyng*—MS. pleinyng,
C. pleyngre
besines—bysynesse
honied[e]—honyede
1872 *oute*—owt
1873 *agreable*—agreables
1874 *fete*—fete
1875 *twitriþ*—twiterith

strengþe bowiþ redely þe crophe adoun. but yif þat þe hande of hym þat it bente lat it gon azein. ¶ An oon þe croph. lokeþ vp ryȝt to heuene. ¶ þe sonne phebus þat failleþ at euene in þe westrene wawes retorniþ azein eftsones his cart by a priue pape þere as it is wont aryse. ¶ Alle þinges seken azein in to hir propre cours. and alle þinges reioisen hem of hir retournynge azein to hir nature ne noon ordinaunce nis bytaken to þinges but þat. þat haþ ioignyng þe endynge to þe bygynnyng. and haþ makid þe cours of it self stable þat it chaungeþ nat from hys propre kynde. 1887

VOSQUE TERRENA ANIMALIA.

* (Ertis also 3e men þat ben erþeliche bestes dremen alwey [yowre bygynnyng] al þouȝ it be wiþ a pinne ymaginacioun. and by a maner þouȝt al be it nat clerly ne perfityly 3e looken from a fer til pilk verray fyn of blisfulnesse. and þerfore þe naturel entencioun ledeþ 3ow to pilk verray good ¶ But many manere errours mistourniþ 3ow þer fro. ¶ Considere now yif þat be þilke þinges by whiche a man wenþ to gete hym blysfulesse. yif þat he may comen to pilke ende þat he wenþ to come by nature ¶ For yif þat moneye or honours or þise oþer forseide þinges bryngen to men swiche a þing þat no goode ne faille hem. ne semeþ faille. ¶ Certys þan wil I graunt[e] þat þei ben maked blisful. by þilke þinges þat þei han geten. ¶ but yif so be þat þilke þinges ne mowe nat perfourmen þat þei by-heten and þat þer be defaute of many goodes. ¶ Sheweþ it nat þan clerely þat fals beaute of blisfulnesse is knowe and a-teint in þilke þinges. ¶ First and forward þou þi self þat haddest

hand, will resume its natural position as soon as the restraining force is removed. [iii]

Though the sun sets in the western main at eve, yet by a secret path he takes his wonted journey toward the east. All things pursue their proper course, obedient to the source of order.

Hence, throughout the world entire stability is found, for all things, having fulfilled their appointed course, return from whence they came.

[The 3^de prose.]

[* fol. 16 b.]

O earthly animals, you have an indistinct perception of your beginning, and you have ever the true end of felicity in view, but your natural instincts are perverted by many errors.

1893

Can men obtain the end they have in view by the means they usually employ in the pursuit of happiness?

If riches and honours and the like make men happy, so that they shall want for nothing, then happiness may be procured by these acquisitions.

1901

But if these things cannot make good what they promise, if there still be something to be desired, then they are delusions, and the felicity after all is a counterfeit.

1877 *crophe*—crop
1878 *hande*—hand
bente—bent
1880 *failleþ*—falleth
1881 *cart*—carte
a—omitted
pape—paath
1883 *of*—MS. of of
1885 *haþ*—MS. haþe

1885 *ioignyng*—Ioyned
1886 *haþ*—MS. haþe [from C.
1889 [*yowre bygynnyng*]
al—MS. as, C. Al
1891 *from*—fram
til pilk—to thylke
1892 *þe*—omitted
1893 *pilk*—thylke
1895 *be*—by

1896 *gete*—geten
1899 *swiche*—swych
goode—good
1900 *wil*—wole
graunt[e]—kraunte
1904 *many*—manye
clerely—clerly
fals—false
1905 *knowe*—knowen

In your prosperity were you never annoyed by some wrong or grievance?

1910

B. I must confess that I cannot remember ever being wholly free from some trouble or other.

P. That was because something was absent which you did desire, or something present which you would fain be quit of.

B. That's quite true.

P. Then you did desire the presence of the one and the absence of the other?

B. I confess I did.

P. Every man is in need of what he desires.

B. Certainly he is.

P. If a man lack anything can he be supremely happy?

B. No.

P. Did you not in your abundance want for somewhat?

B. What then if I did?

P. It follows that riches cannot put a man beyond all want, although this was what they seemed to promise.

Money may part company with its owner, however unwilling he may be to lose it.

B. I confess that's true.

P. It ought to be confessed when every day we see might prevailing over right.

From whence springs so much litigation, but from this, that men seek to re-

haboundaunces of ryccresses nat long agon. ¶ I axe zif þat in þe haboundaunce of alle pilk[e] ryccresses þou^w were neuer anguissous or sory in þi corage of any wrong or greuauunce þat by-tidde þe on any syde.

¶ Certys quod I it remembreþ me nat þat euere I was so free of my þouzt. þat I ne was al-wey in anguyshe of somwhat. þat was þat þou lakkedest þat þou noldest han lakked. or ellys þou haddest þat þou noldest han had. ryzt so is it quod I þan. desiredest þou þe presence of þat oon and þe absence of þat oþer. I graunt[e] wel quod .I. for soþe quod she þan nedip þer somwhat þat euery man desireþ. 3e þer nedip quod I.

¶ Certis quod she and he þat hap lakke or nede of a wyzt nis nat in euery way suffisaunt to hym self. no quod .I. and þou quod she in alle þe plente of þi ryccesse haddest pilke lak of suffisaunce. ¶ what ellis quod .I. ¶ þanne may nat ryccesse maken þat a man nis nedy. ne þat he be suffisaunt to hym self. and þat was it þat þei byhyzten as it semep. ¶ and eke certys I trowe þat þis be gretly to consydere þat moneye ne hap nat in hys owen kynde þat it ne may ben by-nomen of hem þat han it maugre hem. ¶ I by-knowe it wel quod I ¶ whi sholdest þou nat by-knowen it quod she. whan euery day þe strengere folke by-nymen it fram þe febler maugre hem. ¶ Fro whennes comen ellys alle þise foreine compleintes or quereles of pletyngus. ¶ But for þat men axen azeine her moneye þat hap be by-nomen hem by force or by gyle. and alwey maugre hem. ¶ Ryzt so it is quod I. þan quod she hap a man nede to seken hym foreyne helpe by whiche he may defende hys moneye. who may say nay

1908 *pilk[e]*—thylke1913 *þat*—*lakkedest*—And was nat *þat* quod she for þat the lakked som-what1915 *had*—MS. hadde, C. had1917 *graunt[e]*—graunte1919 *hap*—MS. hape*a wyzt*—awht1921 *alle*—al1922 *ryccesse*—Ryccesses
lak—lakke1923 *ryccesse*—Ryccesses1927 *hap*—MS. hape*owen*—owne1930 *strenger folke by-nymen*

—strengere folk by-nemyn

1931 *fram*—fro1931 *febler*—febelere
Fro—For1933 *azeine*—ayein1934 *hap*—MS. hape*be*—ben1936 *hap*—MS. hape*helpe*—help1937 *say*—sey

quod .I. ¶ Certis *quod* she *and* hym nedip no helpe yif he ne hadde no moneye þat he myzt[e] leese. ¶ þat is doutles *quod* .I. þanne is þis þing turned in to þe contrarie *quod* she ¶ For rycchesse þat men wenen sholde make suffisaunce. þei maken a man raþer han nede of foreine helpe. ¶ whiche is þe manere or þe gise *quod* she þat rycches may dryuen away nede. ¶ Riche folk may þei neiþer han hungre ne prest. þise rycche men may þei feele no colde on hir lymes in wynter. ¶ But þou wilt answeere þat rycche men han y-nou3 wher wiþ þei may staunchen her hunger. *and* slaken her prest *and* don away colde. ¶ In þis wise may nede be confortyd by rycchesses. but certys nede ne may nat al outerly be don away. for þou3 þis nede þat is alwey gapyng *and* gredy be fulfilled wiþ rycchesses. *and* axe any þing zit dwelleþ þanne a nede þat myzt[e] ben fulfilled. ¶ I holde me stille *and* telle nat how þat litel þing suffiseþ to nature. but certys to auarice ynou3 ne suffiseþ no þinge. *¶ For syn þat rycchesse ne may nat al don away nede. but rycchesse maken nede. what may it þanne be þat 3e wenen þat rycchesses mowen 3euen 3ow suffisaunce.

1959

QUAMUIS FLUENTER DIUES.

Al were it so þat a rycche couetous man hadde riuer fletyng alle of golde 3itte sholde it neuer staunche hys couetise. ¶ And þou3 he hadde his nekke I-charged wiþ precieuse stones of þe rede see. *and* þou3 he do erylle his felde plentiuos wiþ an hundreþ oxen neuere ne shal his bytyng bysynesse forleten hym while he

cover their own of which they have been unjustly deprived?

1940

B. Nothing is more true.

P. Then a man needs the assistance of others in order to keep his riches. If he had no money to lose he would not stand in need of this help?

B. That is beyond all doubt.

P. Then the very reverse of what was expected (from riches) takes place? For riches add to a man's necessities. Tell me how do riches drive away necessity? Are not rich men liable to hunger, thirst, and cold? You will say that the rich have wherewithal to satisfy these wants. By riches judgemen may be alleviated, but they cannot satisfy every want.

[* fol. 17.]

Even if gaping and greedy necessity be filled with riches, yet some cravings will remain. A little suffices for nature, but avarice never has enough.

If riches, then, add to our wants, why should you think that they can supply all your necessities?

[The 3^d Metur.]

The rich man, had he a river of gold, would never rest content.

Though his neck be loaded with precious pearls, and his fields be covered with in-

1938 *nedip no helpe*—nedede non help
1939 *myzt[e]*—myhte
1940 *doutles*—dowteles
1941 *rycchesse*—Rychesses
1943 *helpe*—help
whiche—whych
1944 *ryches*—Rychesse
dryuen—dryue
1945 *hungre*—hungry
prest—thurst

1946 *þei*—the
colde—coold
in—on
1947 *wilt answeere* — wolt
Answeren
y-nou3—y-now
1948 *prest*—thurst
1949 *colde*—coold
1950 *nat*—omitted
1951 *outerly*—vtrely
1953 *myzt[e] ben*—myhte be

1957 *rycchesse*—Rychesses
1960 *riuer*—a Ryuer
1961 *alle*—al
golde—gold
3itte—yit
staunche—staunchyn
1962, 1963 *þou3*—thow
1964 *erylle*—Ere
hundreþ—hundred
1965 *while*—whyl

numerable herds,
yet shall unquiet
care never forsake
him; and at his
death his riches
shall not bear
him company.

1 Read *dignitates*.

[The 4th prose.]

It may be said
that *dignities*
confer honour on
their possessors.
But have they
power to destroy
vice or implant
virtue in the
heart?

So far from ex-
pelling vicious
habits, they only
render them more
conspicuous.

Hence arises the
indignation when
we see dignities
given to wicked
men.
Hence Catullus'
resentment
against Nonius,
whom he calls
the botch, or im-
postume of the
State.

1980

The deformities
of wicked men
would be less
apparent if they
were in more ob-
scure situations.
Would you free
yourself from
peril by accepting
a magistracy
along with De-
coratus a buffoon
and informer?

1987

Honours do not
render undeserv-
ing persons
worthy of esteem.

If you find a man
endowed with
wisdom you

1966 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte

shal—shol

1967 *dede*—ded

1968 *make*—maken

1969 *grete*—gret

1972 [*ne*]—from C.

ben—be

1972, 1973 *wikkednesses* —

wykkynesse

1973 *to*—omitted

shaw[en]—shewen

1974 *comeþ*—comth

lyueþ. ne þe lyzt[e] rychesses ne shal nat beren hym
compaignie whanne he is dede. 1967

SET DIGNITATIBUS.¹

Bvt dignitees to whom þei ben comen make þei hym
honorable *and* reuerent. han þei nat so grete strengþe
þat þei may putte vertues in þe hertis of folk. þat vsen
þe lordshipes of hem. or ellys may þei don away þe
vices. Certys þei [ne] ben nat wont to don away wikked-
nesses. but þei ben wont raþer to shew[en] wikked-
nesses. *and* þer of comeþ it þat I haue ryzt grete des-
deyne. þat dignites ben zeuen ofte to wikked men.
¶ For whiche þing catullus clepid a consul of Rome þat
hyt nonius postum. or boch. as who seiþ he clepiþ
hym a congregacioun of uices in his brest as a postum
is ful of corrupcioun. al were þis nonius set in a

chayere of dignitee. Sest þou nat þan how gret vylenye
dignitees don to wikked men. ¶ Certys vnworþines of
wikked men sholde ben þe lasse ysen yif þei nere re-
nomed of none honours. ¶ Certys þou þi self ne
myzttest nat ben brouzt wiþ as many perils as þou
myzttest suffren þat þou woldest bere þi magistrat wiþ
decorat. þat is to seyn. þat for no peril þat myzt[e] bi-
fallen þe by þe offence of þe kyng theodorik þou noldest
nat ben felawe in gouernaunce *with* decorat. whanne
þou say[e] þat he had[de] wikkid corage of a likerous
shrewe *and* of an acusor. ¶ Ne I ne may nat for swiche
honours Iugen hem worþi of reuerence þat I deme *and*
holde vnworþi to han þilke same honours. ¶ Now yif
þou saie a man þat were fulfilled of wisdom. certys þou

1974 *grete desdeyne* — gret
desdaign

1976 *whiche*—which

1977 *hyzt*—hyhte

nonius—MS. vonnus, C.

nomyus

boch—MS. boþe, C. boch

clepiþ—clepyd

1979 *nonius*—MS uonnus, C.

nomyus

set—MS. sette, C. set

1980 *Sest þou*—Sesthow

1980 *þan*—thanne

vylenye—fylonye [ynesse

1981 *vnworþines*—vnworth-

1982 *ben*—be

ysen—MS. ysene, C. I-sene

1984 *many*—manye

1985 *bere*—beren

1986 *myzt[e]*—myhte

1987 *þe* (2)—omitted

1988 *whanne*—whan

1989 *say[e]*—saye

had[de]—hadde

ne myztest nat demen þat he were vnworþi to þe honour. or ellys to þe wisdom of whiche he is fulfilled. No *quod* .I. ¶ Certys dignitees *quod* she appertienen properly to vertue. *and* uertue transporteþ dignite anon to þilke man to whiche she hir self is conioigned. ¶ And for as moche as honours of poeple ne may nat maken folk digne of honour. it is wel seyn clerly þat þei ne han no propre beaute of dignite. ¶ And 3it men auzten take more hede in þis. ¶ For if it so be þat he is most out cast þat most folk dispisen. or as dignite ne may nat maken shrewes worþi of no reuerences. þan makeþ dignites shrewes more dispised þan preised. þe whiche shrewes dignit[e] scheweþ to moche folk ¶ *and* for soþe nat vnpunished. þat is forto sein. þat shrewes reuengen hem azeinward vpon dignites. for þei zelden azein to dignites as gret gerdoun whan þei byspotten *and* defoulen dignites wiþ hire vyleneie. ¶ And for as moche as þou mow[e] knowe þat þilke verray reuerence ne may nat comen by þe shadewy *transitorie* dignitees. vndirstonde now þis. yif þat a man hadde vsed *and* hadde many manere dignites of consules *and* were comen *perauenture* amonges straunge naciouns. sholde þilke honour maken hym worshipful *and* redouted of straunge folk ¶ Certys yif þat honour of poeple were a naturel 3ifte to dignites. it ne myzte neuer cesen nowher amonges no maner folke to done hys office. ¶ Ryzt as fire in euery contre ne stinteþ nat to enchaufen *and* *to ben hote. but for as myche as forto be holden honorable or reuerent ne comeþ nat to folk of

deem him worthy of respect and of the wisdom which he professes.

B. I could not do otherwise.

P. Virtue has her proper worth, which she ever transfers to her votaries.

Honours conferred by the populace do not make men worthy of them, for they have no intrinsic merit to bestow.

Dignities conferred upon shrews only make their vices the more conspicuous. — Nor do dignities themselves escape without injury; for worthless men take their revenge upon them, and defile them by their contagious villainies.

2009

These shadowy honours have nothing in their nature to procure respect; for if a man, having borne the honours of the consulate, should go among barbarians would this honour gain him their respect?

2016

If respect were an attribute of honour it would infallibly bring esteem everywhere, just as heat is ever an attribute of fire.

[* fol. 17 b.]

Honours arise from the false

1994 *demen*—deme
1995 *whiche*—which
1996 *quod she*—omitted
1997 *vertue*—vertu
uertue—vertu
1998 *whiche*—whych
2000 *clerly*—MS. clerkly, C. clerly
2002 *auzten* — *hede* — owhten taken mor heed
2002-3 *For*—*dignite*—For yif so be þat a wykkyd whyght be so mochel the fowlere *and* the moore

owt cast þat he is despised of most folk so as dignete
2004-2007 *maken* — *soþe*—maken shrewes digne of Reuerence the whych shrewes dignete sheweth to moche fook thanne makith dignete shrewes rather so moche more despised than preyed *and* forsothe
2003 *zelden*—yilden
2009 *byspotten*—by-spetten

2010 *hire*—hyr
2011 *moche*—mochel
mow[e]—mowe
2012 *þe shadewy* — thyse shadwy
2013 *vndirstonde* — vndyr-*pis*—thus [stond
2014 *hadde*—had
2018 *3ifte*—yift
2019 *folke*—foolk
done—don
2021 *enchaufen* — eschaufen
2021 *myche*—mochel
2022 *be*—ben

opinions of men, and vanish when they come among those who do not esteem them, that is, among foreign nations.

hir propre strengþe of nature. but only of þe fals[e] opinioun of folk. þat is to sein. þat wenen þat dignites maken folk digne of honour. An on þerfore whan þat þei comen þer as folk ne knowen nat þilke dignites.

2027 Do they always endure in those places that gave birth to them?

The Prætorate was once a great honour, but now it is only an empty name and a heavy expense.

What is more vile than the office of the superintendency of provisions?

That which hath no innate beauty must lose its splendour or value according as popular opinion varies concerning it.

If dignities cannot confer esteem, if they become vile through filthy shrews, if they lose their lustre by the change of times, if they become worthless by the change of popular opinion, what beauty do they possess which should make them desirable, or what dignity can they confer on others?

her honours vanissen away and þat on oon. but þat is a-mong straung folk. maist þou sein. but amongus hem þat þei weren born duren þilke[e] dignites alwey.

¶ Certys þe dignite of þe prouostrie of Rome was somtyme a grete power. now is it no þing but an ydel name. and þe rente of þe senatorie a gret charge. and yif a whiȝt somtyme hadde þe office to taken he[de] to þe vitales of þe poeple as of corne and what oþer þinges he was holden amonges grete. but what þing is more nowe out cast þanne þilke prouostrie ¶ And as I haue seid a litel here byforne. þat þilke þing þat haþ no propre beaute of hym self reseceyueþ somtyme pris and shynynge and somtyme lesiþ it by þe opinioun of vsaunces. ¶ Now yif þat dignites þanne ne mowen nat maken folk digne of reuerence. and yif þat dignites wexen foule of hir wille by þe filþe of shrewes. ¶ and yif þat dignites lesen hir shynynge by chaungyng of tymes. and yif þei wexen foule by estimacioun of poeple. what is it þat þei han in hem self of beaute þat auȝte ben desired. as who seiþ none. þanne ne mowen þei ȝiuen no beaute of dignite to none oþer. 2047

QUAMUIS SE TIRIO.

[The 4th Metur.] Nero, though invested with the purple and adorned with pearls, was hated by all men.

Al be it so þat þe proude nero wiþ al his woode luxurie kembed hym and apparaild hym wiþ faire purpers of Tirie and wiþ white perles. Algates ȝitte throf he

2023 fals[e]—false
2024 þat (2)—omitted
2027 her—hyr
vanissen—vanessen
2028 a-mong—amonges
straung—straunge
but—ne
2029 þat—ther
duren þilk[e]—ne duren
nat thylke
2030 somtyme—whylom

2031 grete—gret
2032 þe (2)—omitted
2033 somtyme—whylom
þe—MS. þe þe
2034 corne—corn
what—omitted
2035 more nowe—now more
2036 cast—MS. caste, C. cast
2037 seið—MS. seide, C. seyð
here byforne—her by-form
haþ—MS. haþe

2042 filþe—felthe
2043 þat—omitted
2046 auȝte—owhte
none—non
2047 þei—MS. ȝe, C. they
none—non
2048 al (2)—alle
2049 kembed—kembde
apparaild—MS. apparail
en. C. a-paraylede
2050 ȝitte—yit

hateful to alle folk ¶ þis is to seyn þat al was he by- 2051
hated of alle folk. ¶ 3itte þis wicked Nero hadde gret
lordship *and* 3af somtyme to þe dredeful senatours þe
vnworshipful setes of dignites. ¶ vnworshipful setes
he clepiþ here fore þat Nero þat was so wikked 3af þo
dignites. who wolde þanne resonably wenen þat blisful-
nesse were in swiche honours as ben 3euen by vicious 2057
shrewes.

Yet he had lord-
ship, and gave to
the senators the
dishonoured seats
of dignity.
Who then can
think that felicity
resides in honours
given by vicious
shrews?

AN UERO REGNA.

[The 5th prose.]

Bvt regnes *and* familiarites of kynges may þei maken a
man to ben myzty. how ellys. ¶ whanne hir
blisfulnesse dureþ perpetuely but certys þe olde age of
tyme passeþ. *and* eke of present tyme now is ful of en-
saamples how þat kynges þat han chaunged in to
wrechednesse out of hir welefulnesse. ¶ O a noble þing
and a cler þing is power þat is nat founden myzty to
kepe it self. ¶ And yif þat power of realmes be auctour
and maker of blisfulnesse. yif þilke power lakkeþ on
any side. amenusiþ it nat þilke blisfulnesse *and* bryngeþ
in wrechednesse. but yif al be it so þat realmes of man-
kynde stretchen broode. 3it mot þer nede ben myche
folk ouer whiche þat euery kyng ne haþ no lordshipe
ne comaundement ¶ *and* certys vpon þilke syde þat
power failleþ whiche þat makieþ folk blisful. ryzt on þat
same side nounpower entriþ vndirneþ þat makeþ hem
wreches. ¶ In þis manere þanne moten kynges han
more porcioun of wrechednesse þan of welefulnesse.
¶ A tyraunt þat was kyng of sisile þat had[de] assaied
þe peril of his estat shewid[e] by similitude þe dredes
of realmes by gastnesse of a swerde þat heng ouer þe
heued of his familier. what þing is þan þis power þat

P. Do kingdoms
and a familiarity
with princes
make a man
mighty?

B. Why should
they not if they
are durable?

P. Past ages, as
well as the pre-
sent, furnish us
with many ex-
amples of princes
who have met
with dismal re-
verses of fortune.
O then how noble
and glorious a
thing is power
that is too weak
to preserve itself!
If dominion
brings felicity,
then misery will
follow if it be de-
fective.

But human rule
has its limits,
therefore wher-
ever power ceases
there impotence
enters, bringing
misery along
with it.

2074

Kings, therefore,
have a larger por-
tion of misery
than of felicity.

Dionysius of
Sicily, conscious
of this condition,
exhibited the
fears and cares of
royalty by the
terror of a naked
sword hanging

2053 *lordship*—lorshippe
3af somtyme—yaf whylom
dredeful—reuerenc3
2055 *fore*—for; 3af—yaf
2060 *myzty*—MS. vnmyzty,
C. myhty
2062 *passeþ*—passed
of (2)—omitted

2063 *kynges þat han* —
kynges ben
2066 *kepe*—kepen
2067 *maker*—makere
2069 *yif*—yit
realmes—the Reaumes
2070 *stretchen*—streichchen
myche—moche

2071 *haþ*—MS. haþe
2073 *whiche*—whyeh
2074 *vndirneþ*—vndyr-nethe
2077 *had[de]*—hadde
2078 *shewid[e]*—shewede
2079 *realmes*—Reaumes
swerde—sward
heng—MS. henge, C. heng

over the head of his friend and flatterer Damocles. What then is this thing called

[* fol. 18.]

Power, which cannot do away with care or fear? Men would live in security but cannot, and yet they glory in their power. Is he powerful who cannot do what he wishes? Is he a mighty man who goes surrounded with an armed guard, to terrify those whom he himself fears, and whose power depends solely upon his numerous retinue? Why need I enlarge upon the favourites of princes having thus displayed the imbecility of kings! Their prosperity is affected by the caprice of their fortunate masters as well as by the adversity to which

2098

they are incident. Nero only allowed his master Seneca to choose the manner of his death. Antonius (Caracalla) commanded Papinian to be slain by the swords of his soldiers. Yet both would have given up all they possessed. Seneca begged for poverty and exile. But relentless fortune precipitated them to destruction, and did not permit them to choose their fate. What then is Power, which terrifies its possessors, and which cannot be got rid of at pleasure? No advantage is to be gained by friend-

may nat don away þe bytynges of besines ne eschewe þe prikkes of drede. and certys 3it wolden þei lyuen *in sykernesse. but þei may nat. and 3it þei glorifien hem in her power ¶ Holdest þou þan þat þilk[e] man be myzty þat þou seest þat he wolde don þat he may nat don. ¶ And holdest þou þan hym a myzty man þat haþ envired hise sydes wiþ men of armes or seruauntes *and* dredeþ more [hem] þat he makeþ agast. þen þei dreden hym. *and* þat is put in þe handes of hise seruauntz. for he sholde seme myzty but of familiers [or] seruauntz of kynges. ¶ what sholde I telle þe any þing. syn þat I my self haue shewed þe þat realmes hem self ben ful of gret feblenesse. þe whiche familiers certis þe real power of kynges in hool estat *and* in estat abated ful [ofte] þroweþ adoun. ¶ Nero constrained[e] his familier *and* his maistre seneca to chesen on what deep he wolde deien. ¶ Antonius comaundid[e] þat knyztis slown wiþ her swerdis Papinian his familier whiche Papinian had[de] ben long tyme ful myzty a-monges hem of þe courte. and 3it certis þei wolde boþe han renounced her power. of whiche [two] senek enforced[e] hym to 3iuen to Nero his rychesses. *and* also to han gon in to solitarie exil. ¶ But whan þe grete weyzt. þat is to sein of lordes power or of fortune draweþ hem þat sholden falle. neyþer of hem ne myzt[e] do þat he wolde. what þing is þanne þilke power þat þou3 men han it þat þei ben agast. ¶ *and* whan þou woldest han it þou nart nat siker. ¶ And yif þou woldest forleten it þou mayst nat eschewen it. ¶ But wheþir swiche men ben frendes at nede as ben conseiled by fortune *and* nat by vertue. Certys swiche

2081 *besines*—bysynesse

2083 *3it*—yif

glorifien—gloryfye

2084 *þilk[e]*—thylke

2087 *haþ*—MS. haþe

envired—enuyrowneðe

2088 [*hem*]—from C.

2089 *þen*—than

2091 [*or*]—from C

2092 *realmes*—Reames

2093 *feblenesse*—feblesse

2094 *real*—Ryal

2095 [*ofte*]—from C.

constrained[e] — com-

2096 *his* (1)—hyr [streynede

seneca—Senek

2097 *comaundid[e]* — com-

2098 *her*—hyr [aundede

2099 *whiche*—which

had[de] ben long — þat

hadde ben longe

2100 *courte*—court

wolde—wolden

2101 [*two*]—from C.

enforced[e]—enforcede

2102 *3iuen*—yeuen

his—hyse

2104 *weyzt*—weyhte

2105 *sholden*—sholen

2106 *myzt[e]*—myhte

folk as weleful fortune makeþ frendes. contrarious fortune makeþ hem enmyse. ¶ And what pestilence is more myzty forto anoye a wizt þan a familier enemy.

QUI SE UALET¹ ESSE POTENTEM. [1^o Read *uole*]

Who so wolde ben myzty he mot daunten hys cruel corage. ne put[te] nat his nekke ouercomen vnder þe foule reines of lecherie. for al be it so þat þi lordship[e] strecche so fer þat þe contre Inde quakþ at þi comaundement. or at þi lawes. and þat þe leest isle in þe see þat hyzt tile be þral to þe ¶ 3it yif þou mayst nat puten away þi foule derk[e] desijres and dryuen oute fro þe wreched compleyntes. Certis it nis no power þat þou hast. 2123

GLORIA UERO QUAM FALLAX.

But glorie how deceiuable and how foule is it ofte. for whiche þing nat vnskillfully a tregedien þat is to sein a maker of dities þat hyzten tregedies cried[e] and seide. ¶ O glorie glorie *quod* he. þou nart no þing ellys to þousandes of folkes. but a gret sweller of eres. for many[e] han had ful gret renoun by þe fals[e] opinioun of poeple. and what þing may ben þouzt fouler þen swiche preisyng for þilk[e] folk þat ben preised falsly. þei moten nedes han shame of hir preisynges. and yif þat folk han geten hem þank or preisyng by her desertes. what þing haþ þilk pris echid or encresed to þe conscience of wise folk þat mesuren hire good. not by þe rumour of þe poeple. but by þe soþfastnesse of conscience. and yif it seme a fair þing a man to han encresid and sprad his name. þan folweþ

ship based on prosperity instead of virtue. Adversity will turn this sort of friendship into enmity. And what greater plague can there be than the enmity of thy familiar friend? [The 5th Metatr.] He who would obtain sovereign power must obtain conquest over himself, and not yield to his passions. Though your dominion extended from India to Thule, yet if thou art tormented by care thou hast no real power.

[The 6th prose.]

How deceptive and deformed a thing is glory! Well did the Tragedian exclaim—
ὠδὸφα δόξα
μυριασι δὴ
βροτῶν, οὐδὲν
ἐγγῶσι βίοντος
ἀγκισσας μέγαν,
for the undeserving have been crowned with glory and renown by popular and erring opinion. What can be more infamous than renown founded on the prejudices of the vulgar? Those that are undeservedly praised ought to blush for shame. If a wise man gets well-merited praise it does not add to his felicity. If it be a good thing to spread

2115 *wolde ben*—wole be
2116 *put[te]*—putte
2117 *lordship[e]*—lordshype
2119 *comaundement* — co-
maundement;
leest isle—last ile
2120 *hyzt*—hyhte
2121 *puten*—putten
derk[e]—dyrke

2122 *oute*—owt
2124 *foule*—fowl
2125 *whiche*—whyche
2126 *maker*—makere
cried[e]—cryde
2127 *he*—she
2128 *sweller*—swellere
2129 *many[e]*—manye
had—MS. hadde, C. had

2129 *fals[e]*—false
2130 *fouler*—fowlere
2131 *þen*—thanne
þilk[e]—thylke
2133 *or*—of
2134 *haþ*—MS. haþe
þilk—thylke

abroad one's fame, it must be dishonourable not to do so. But a good name cannot penetrate everywhere, and the most illustrious names must be unknown to the greatest part of the world.

The favour of the people is worth but little as it is seldom judicious and [* fol. 18 b.] never permanent. How empty and transitory are titles of nobility!

2150

Gentility is wholly foreign to renown, and to those who boast of noble birth. Nobility is fame derived from the merits of one's ancestors.

If praise can give nobility they are noble who are praised.

Then if thou hast no nobility of thy own, thou canst not derive any splendour from the merits of others.

If there be any good in nobleness of birth, it consists alone in this, that it imposes an obligation upon its possessors not to degenerate from the virtues of their ancestors.

[The 6th Metre.]

All men have the same origin.

They have one father and one king, who gave the moon her horns, and adorned the sun with his rays. The same gave the earth to man

it. þat it is demed to ben a foule þinge yif it ne be ysprad ne encresed. but as I seide a litel her byforne. þat syn þer mot nedes ben many folk to whiche folk þe renoun of a man ne may nat comen. it byfalleþ þat he þat þou wenest be glorious *and* renommed. semip in þe nexte parties of þe erþe to ben wiþ out glorie. *and* wiþ out renoun. ¶ *and* certis amonges þise þinges I ne trowe nat þat þe pris *and* grace of þe poeple nis neiþer worþi *to ben remembrid ne comeþ of wise iugement. ne is ferm *perdurably*. ¶ But now of þis name of gentillesse. what man is it þat ne may wel seen how veyne *and* how flittyng a þing it is. ¶ For if þe name of gentillesse be referred to renoun *and* clernesse of linage. þan is gentil name but a for[e]ine þing. þat is to sein to hem þat glorifien hem of hir linage. ¶ For it semeþ þat gentillesse be a maner preysynge þat comeþ of decert of auncestres. ¶ *And* yif preysynge makeþ gentillesse þan moten þei nedes be gentil þat ben preysed. For whiche þing it folweþ. þat yif þou ne haue no gentillesse of þi self. þat is to sein pris þat comeþ of þi deserte foreine gentillesse ne makeþ þe nat gentil. ¶ But certis yif þer be any goode in gentillesse. I trowe it be in al oonly þis. þat it semeþ as þat a maner necessitee be imposed to gentil men. for þat þei ne sholden nat outraien or forliuen fro þe uertues of hire noble kynrede. 2163

OMNE HOMINUM GENUS IN TERRIS.

Al þe linage of men þat ben in erþe ben of semblable burþe. On al one is fadir of þinges. On alone minyst[r]eþ alle þinges. ¶ He ʒaf to þe sonne hys bemes. he ʒaf to þe moone hir hornes. he ʒaf þe men to þe erþe. he ʒaf þe sterres to þe heuene. ¶ he encloseþ

2139 *foule þinge*—fowl thing2140 *ne—and*
byforne—byform2144 *parties*—partye*erþe*—Erthes
out—owte2145 *out*—owhte2148 *ferm*—ferme2149 *veyne*—veyn2150 *if*—yif2154 *comeþ of*—comth of the2157 *whiche*—which2158 *pris*—preys*comeþ*—comth2160 *goode*—good*in* (2)—omitted2161 *maner*—maiere2166 *hys*—hyse2167 *hir*—hyse

wif membres þe soules þat comen fro hys heye sete.
¶ þanne comen alle mortal folk of noble seed. whi
noyzen 3e or bosten of 3oure eldris ¶ For yif þou
look[e] 3oure bygynyng. and god 3oure auctour and
3oure makere. þan is þer no forlyued wyzt but 3if he
norisse his corage vnto vices and forlete his propre
burþe. 2175

QUID AUTEM DE CORPORIBUS.¹

But what shal I seie of delices of body. of whic[h]e
delices þe desiringes ben ful of anguisse. and þe
fulfillinges of hem ben ful of penaunce. ¶ How grete
sekenesse and how grete sorwes vnsuffrable ryzt as a
manere fruit of wickednesse ben þilke delices wont to
bryngen to þe bo[d]ies of folk þat vsen hem. ¶ Of
whiche delices I not what ioye may ben had of hir
moeuyng. ¶ But þis woot I wel þat who so euere wil
remembren hym of hys luxuries. he shal wel vndir-
stonde. þat þe issues of delices ben sorowful and sory.
¶ And yif þilke delices mowen make folk blisful. þan
by þe same cause moten þise bestes ben clepid blisful.
¶ Of whiche bestes al þe entencioun hastep to fulfille
hire bodyly iolyte. and þe gladnesse of wijf [and]
children were [an] honest þing. but it haþ ben seid.
þat it is ouer myche azeins kynde þat children han ben
founden tormentours to hir fadres I not how many.
¶ Of whiche children how bityng is enery condicioun.
It nedep nat to tellen it þe þat hast or þis tyme assaied
it. and art 3it now anguyssous. In þis approue I þe
sentence of my disciple Euridippus. þat seide þat he
þat haþ no children is weleful by infortune. 2197

and adorned the
sky with stars.
He breathed into
man the breath of
life.
All men spring
from this illustri-
ous source.
Why then do they
boast of pedigree?
He alone is
ignoble who sub-
mits to vice and
forgets his noble
origin.

[¹ Read *corporis
voluptatibus.*]

[The 7th prose.]
But what shall I
say with respect
to sensual plea-
sures, the de-
sire of which is
full of anxiety,
and the enjoy-
ment of them full
of repentance?
What diseases
and intolerable
pains (the merited
fruits of vice) are
these delights
wont to bring
upon those who
enjoy them!
I am unable to
see what joy is to
be found in the
gratification of
them
The remembrance
of criminal in-
dulgence brings
with it bitter
remorse.
If such things
make men happy,
then may brutes
attain to felicity,
since by their in-
stinct they are
urged to satisfy
their bodily de-
lights.
A wife and chil-
dren do not
always bring hap-
piness, for some
have found tor-
mentors in their
own offspring.
I approve of this
opinion of Eurip-
ides, that he
who is childless
is happy in his
misfortune.

2169 *fro hys*—fram hyse
2170 *seed*—sede
2171 *bosten*—MS. voscen, C.
bosten
2172 *look[e]*—loke
2173 *is*—nis
2176 *delices*—delites
body—bodye
2177 *anguisse*—Angwyssh
2178 *grete*—gret

2179 *sekenesse*—sykenesse
grete sorwes—gret soruwes
2180 *fruit*—frut
2182 *had*—MS. hadde, C.
had
2183 *wil*—wole
2184 *hys*—hyse
2185 *sorowful*—sorwful
sory—sorye
2186 *make*—makyn

2189 [and]—from C.
2190 [an]—from C.
haþ—MS. haþe
seid—MS. seide, C. seyð
2191 *myche*—mochel
2192 *many*—manye
2196 *Euridippus*—Eury-
dypys; read Euripides
2197 *haþ*—MS. haþe

HABET HOC UOLUPTAS.

[The 7^{de} Metur.]

Pleasure leaves a pain behind it.

2199

The bee gives us agreeable honey, but try to hold it, and it quickly flies, leaving its sting behind.

Euery delit hap þis. þat it anguisseþ hem wiþ prikkes þat vsen it. ¶ It resemblip to þise flying flies þat we clepen been. þat aftre þat þe bee hap shed hys agreeable honies he fleep away *and* styngeþ þe hertes of hem þat ben ysmyte wiþ bytynge ouer longe holdynge. 2202

NICHIL IGITUR DUBIUM EST.

[The 8^{the} prose.]

It appears then that happiness is not to be found in the above-mentioned external things.

[* fol. 19.]

These false ways are perplexed with many evils, as I shall presently show thee. Do you want to amass wealth, then you must take it from your neighbours.

Would you shine in dignities, then you must beg for them and disgrace yourself by a humiliating supplication.

If power be your ambition, you expose yourself to the snares of inferiors.

Do you ask for glory, to be distracted by vexations and so lose all security.

Do you prefer a voluptuous life? Think then that all men will despise him who is a thrall to his body.

They build upon a weak foundation that place bodily delights above their own reason.

Can you surpass the elephant in bulk, or the bull in strength?

Now nis it no doute þan þat þise weyes ne ben a maner mysledynge to blisfulnesse. ne þat þei ne mowe nat leden folke þider as þei byheten to leden hem. ¶ But wiþ how grete harmes þise *forseide weyes ben enlaced. ¶ I shal shewe þe shortly. ¶ For whi yif þou enforcest þe to assemble moneye. þou most by-reuen hym his moneye þat hap it. and yif þou wilt shynen wiþ dignites. þou most bysechen *and* supplien hem þat ziuen þo dignitees. ¶ And yif þou coueitest by honour to gon by-fore oper folk þou shalt defoule þi self by humblesse of axing. yif þou desiryst power. þou shalt by awaites of þi subgitz anoyously be cast vndir many periles. axest þou glorie þou shalt ben so destrat by aspre þinges þat þou shalt forgone syker-nesse. ¶ And yif þou wilt leden þi lijf in delices. euery whiþt shal dispisen þe *and* forleten þe as þou þat art þral to þing þat is ryzt foule *and* brutel. þat is [to] sein seruauzt to þi body. ¶ Now is it þan wel yseen how lytel *and* how brutel possessioun þei coueiten þat putten þe goodes of þe body abouen hire owen resoun. ¶ For mayst þou sourmounten þise olifuntz in gretnesse or weyzt of body. Or mayst þou ben strengre þan þe bole. Mayst þou ben swifter þan þe tigre. biholde þe

2198 *Euery*—MS. Oquery, C.

Every

2198, 2200 *hap*—MS. haþe*shed hys*—shad hyse2203 *nis*—is2204 *mysledynge* — mysled-
ynges2205 *folke*—folk2208 *enforcest* — MS. en-
forced, C. enforcest2209 *hap*—MS. haþe2209 *wilt*—wolt2211 *ziuen*—yeuen2212 *gon*—MS. gone, C. gon*by-fore*—byforu*shalt*—shal2213 *by*—thorw2214 *by*—be*be*—ben2216 *destrat*—MS. destralle,
C. destrat*forgone*—forgoon2217 *wilt*—wolt2218 *whiþt*—wyht2219 *foule*—fowl

[to]—from C.

2220 *yseen*—seen2221 *brutel*—brotel2222 *owen*—owne2224 *weyzt*—weyhty*strenger*—strengere2225 *swifter*—swyftere*biholde*—by-hold

spaces *and* þe stableness *and* þe swyfte cours of þe
 heuene. *and* stynte somtyme to wondren on foule
 þinges. þe whiche heuene certys nis nat raper for þise
 þinges to ben wondred vpon. þan for þe resoun by
 whiche it is gouerned. but þe shynynge of þi forme þat
 is to seien þe beaute of þi body. how swiftly passyng is
 it *and* how transitorie. ¶ Certis it is more flittyng
 þan þe mutabilite of floures of þe somer sesoun. For so
 as aristotil telleþ þat yif þat men hadden eyen of a
 beest þat hizt lynx. so þat þe lokyng of folk myzt[e]
 percen þoruþ þe þinges þat wiþstonden it. who so lokid
 þan in þe entrailes of þe body of alcibiades þat was
 ful fayr in þe superfice wiþ oute. it shulde seme ryzt
 foule. *and* for þi yif þou semest faire. þi nature ne
 makip nat þat. but þe desceiuance of þe fieblesse of þe
 eyen þat loken. ¶ But preise þe goodes of þi body as
 moche as euer þe list. so þat þou know[e] algates þat
 what so it be. þat is to seyn of þe goodes of þi body
 whiche þat þou wondrest vpon may ben destroyed or
 dessolued by þe hete of a feure of þre dayes. ¶ Of
 alle whiche forseide þinges I may reducen þis shortly in
 a somme. ¶ þat þise worldly goodes whiche þat ne
 mowen nat ziuen þat þei byheten. ne ben nat perfit by
 þe congregacioun of alle goodes. þat þei ne ben nat
 weyes ne papes þat bryngen men to blysfulnesse ne
 maken men to ben blysful.

Art thou swifter
 than the tiger?
 Behold the im-
 mense extent of
 the heavens and
 cease to admire
 vile or lesser
 things.
 Admire what is
 still more admir-
 able, the consum-
 mate wisdom that
 governs them.
 How fleeting is
 beauty!
 It fades sooner
 than the vernal
 flowers.
 For, as Aristotle
 says, if a man
 were lynx-eyed
 and could look
 into the entrails
 of Alcibiades (so
 fair outwardly)
 he would find all
 foul and loath-
 some.
 2238

Thy nature does
 not make thee
 seem beautiful,
 but the imperfect
 view of thy ad-
 mirers.
 Prize bodily
 perfections as
 much as you will,
 yet a three days'
 fever will de-
 stroy them.

2246

Worldly goods do
 not give what
 they promise, do
 not comprise
 every good, are
 not the paths to
 felicity, nor can
 of themselves
 make any one
 happy.

2251

HEU QUE MISEROS TRAMITE.

Alas whiche folie *and* whiche ignoraunce mysledip
 wandryng wrecches fro þe pape of verrey good.
 ¶ Certis 3e ne seken no golde in grene trees. ne 3e ne

[The 8th Metur.]
 Alas! how
 through folly and
 ignorance do men
 stray from the
 path of true
 happiness!

2227 *styn*te—stynt
 2228 *whiche*—whyh
 2230 *whiche*—wyh
 2231 *seien*—seyn
 2234 *as*—omitted
 2235 *hizt*—hyhte
myzt[e]—myhte
 2237 *alcibiades*—MS. alcidi-
 2238 *fayr*—fayre

2238 *þe*—omitted
shulde—sholde
 2239 *foule*—fowl
faire—fayr
ne—omitted
 2240 *desceiuance of þe*
fieblesse—deceyuable or
 the feblesse
 2242 *moche*—mochel

2242 *know[e]*—knowe
 2243 *þe*—omitted
þi body whiche—the body
 whyh
 2247 *a*—omitted
 2252 *whiche (both)*—whyh
 2253 *pape*—paath
good—goode
 2254 *golde*—gold

Ye do not seek
gold upon trees
nor diamonds
from the vine.
Ye lay not your
nets to catch fish
upon the lofty
hills.
The hunter goes
not to the Tyr-
rene waters to
hunt the roe.
Men know where
to look for white
pearls, and for the
fish that yields the
purple dye.

2263

They know where
the most delicate
of the finny race
abound and where
the fierce sea-urchin
is to be found.
But where the
Sovereign Good
abides blinded
mortals never
know, but plunge
into the earth
below to look for
that which has its
dwelling in the
heavens.

[* fol. 19 b.]
What doom do the
silly race deserve?
May they pursue
such false joys,
and having ob-
tained them, too
late find out the
value of the true.

gadren [nat] precious stones in þe vines. ne 3e ne
hiden nat 3oure gynnes in hey3e mountaignes to kachen
fisshe of whiche 3e may maken ryche festes. and yif
3ow lykeþ to hunte to roos. 3e ne gon nat to þe foordes
of þe water þat hyzt tyrene. and ouer þis men knowen
wel þe crikes and þe cauernes of þe see yhidd in þe
floodes. and knowen eke whiche water is most plentiuous
of white perles. and knowen whiche water habundeþ
most of rede purple. þat is to seyen of a maner shel-
fisshe with whiche men dien purple. and knowen
whiche strondes habounden most of tendre fisshes or
of sharpe fisshes þat hyzten echynnys. but folk suffren
hem self to ben so blynde þat hem ne recchiþ nat to
knowe where pilk[e] goodes ben yhidd whiche þat þei
coueiten but ploungen hem in erþe and seken þere
pilke goode þat sourmounteþ þe heuene þat bereþ þe
sterres. ¶ what *preyere may I make þat be digne to
þe nice pouztis of men. but I preye þat þei coueiten
ryches and honours so þat whan þei han geten þo
false goodes wiþ grect trauayle þat þerby þei mowe
knowen þe verray goodes. 2275

HACTENUS MENDACIS FORMAM.

[The 9th prose.]

P. I have ben
describing the
form of counter-
feit happiness, and
if you have con-
sidered it at-
tentively I shall
proceed to give
you a perfect view
of the true.

B. I now see that
there is no suffi-
ciency in riches, no
power in royalty,
no esteem in
dignities, nor
nobility in re-

IT suffisip þat I haue shewed hider to þe forme of
false wilfulnesse. so þat yif þou look[e] now clerely
þe ordre of myn entencion requeriþ from hennes forþe
to shewen þe verray wilfulnesse. ¶ For quod .I. (b) [I.]
se wel now þat suffisaunce may nat comen by richesse. ne
power by realmes. ne reuerence by dignitees. ne gentil-
esse by glorie. ne ioye by delices. and (p) hast þou wel
knowen quod she þe cause whi it is. Certis me semeþ

2256 *hey3e*—the hye
kachen—kachehe
2257 *fisshe*—fyssh
2258 *hunte*—honte
roos—Roos
2259 *hyzt*—hyhte
2260 *crikes*—brykes
yhidd—MS. yhidde, C. I-
hyd
2261, 2262 *whiche*—whych

2263 *shelfisshe*—shelle fysh
2264, 2265 *whiche*—whych
2264 *dien*—deyen
2265 *of*—with
2266 *echynnys*—MS. eth-
ynnys, C. Echynnys
2268 *yhidd*—MS. yhidde, C.
I-hydd
2270 *goode*—good
2271 *make*—maken

2273 *ryches*—Rychesse
2277 *wilfulnesse*—weleful-
nesse
look[e]—loke
clerely—clerly [nesse
2279 *wilfulnesse*—weleful-
For—For-sothe
[I.]—from C.
2280 *richesse*—Rychesses
2281 *realmes*—Reames

quod .I. þat .I. se hem ryzt as þouȝ it were þoruȝ a litel clifte. but me were leuer knowen hem more openly of þe. Certys quod she þe resoun is al redy ¶ For þilk þing þat symply is on þing wiþ outen ony diuision. þe errour and folie of mankynde departeþ and diuidiþ it. and mislediþ it and transporteþ from verray and perfit goode. to goodes þat ben false and imperfit. ¶ But seye me þis. wenest þou þat he þat haþ nede of power þat hym ne lakkeþ no þing. Nay quod .I. ¶ Certis quod she þou seist aryzt. For yif so be þat þer is a þing þat in any partie be fieble of power. Certis as in þat it most[e]. nedes be nedy of foreine helpe. ¶ Riȝt so it is quod .I. Suffisaunce and power ben þan of on kynde ¶ So semeþ it quod I. ¶ And demyst þou quod she þat a þing þat is of þis manere. þat is to seine suffisaunt and myȝty auȝt[e] to ben despised. or ellys þat it be ryzt digne of reuerences abouen alle þinges. ¶ Certys quod I it nys no doute þat it nis ryzt worþi to ben reuerenced. ¶ Lat vs quod she þan adden reuerence to suffisaunce and to power ¶ So þat we demen þat þise þre þinges ben alle o þing. ¶ Certis quod I lat vs adden it. yif we willen graunten þe soþe. what demest þou þan quod she is þat a dirke þing and nat noble þat is suffisaunt reuerent and myȝty. or ellys þat is ryzt clere and ryzt noble of celebrete of renoun. ¶ Considere þan quod she as we han grauntid her byforne. þat he þat ne haþ ne[de] of no þing and is most myȝty and most digne of honour yif hym nedid any clernesse of renoun whiche clernesse he myȝt[e] nat graunten of hym self. ¶ So þat for lakke of þilke clernesse he myȝt[e] seme febler on any syde or þe

noun, nor joy in carnal pleasures. I have a glimpse of the cause of all this, but I should like a more distinct view. P. The cause is obvious—for that which is by nature one and indivisible human ignorance separates and divides, and reverses the true order of things. Does that state which needs nothing stand in need of power? B. I should say no. P. Right! That which wants power needs external aid. B. That is true! P. Sufficiency and power therefore are of one nature. B. It seems so indeed.

2297

P. Are power and sufficiency to be despised? Are they not rather worthy of universal respect? B. They are doubtless highly estimable. P. Add respect to sufficiency and power, and consider all three as one and the same thing. B. I see no objection to that view. P. But can that be the obscure and ignoble which possesses three such attributes? is it not noble and worthy of a shining reputation? He who is most powerful and worthy of renown—if he lack fame which he cannot give to himself, must (by this defect) seem in some measure more weak and abject. He that is sufficiently mighty and esteemed will have necessarily

2287 þilk—thylke
on—o
2290 goode—good
2291 seye—sey
hab—MS. haþe
2294 fieble—feblers
2295 most[e]—mot
2296 helpe—help
2297 on—o

2298 demyst þou—demesthow
2299 seine—seyn
auȝt[e]—owhte
2300 reuerences—Reuerence
2302 nis ryzt—is ryht
2304 alle—al
2305 willen—wolen
2306 dirke—dyrk
2308 clere—cler

2308 of celebrete—by celebrete
2310 haþ—MS. haþe
2312 whiche—whyche
myȝt[e]—myhte
2314 clernesse—clernesse
myȝt[e]—myhte
febler—the feblers

an illustrious name. *B.* I cannot deny it, for reputation seems inseparable from the advantages you have just mentioned.

P. Therefore Renown differs in no wise from

2320

the three above-mentioned attributes. And if any one then stands in need of no external aid, can have all he wants, and is illustrious and respected—is not his condition very agreeable and pleasant?

B. I cannot conceive how such a one can have grief or trouble. *P.* It must then be a state of happiness; and we may also affirm that sufficiency, power, nobility, differ only in name, but

2330

not in substance. *B.* It is a necessary consequence. *P.* The depravity of mankind then divides that which is essentially indivisible; and, seeking for a part of that which has no parts, they miss the entire thing

[* fol. 20.]

which they so much desire.

2338

B. How is that? *P.* He that seeks riches in order to avoid poverty, is not solicitous about power; he prefers meanness and obscurity, and denies himself many natural pleasures that he may not lessen his heaps of pelf.

more outcaste. *Glosa.* *pis* is to seyne nay. ¶ For who so *pat* is suffisaunt myzty *and* reuerent. clernesse of renoun folweþ of þe forseide þinges. he haþ it alredy of hys suffisaunce. boice. I may nat quod I denye it. ¶ But I mot graunten as it is. *pat pis þing* be ryzt celebrable by clernesse of renoun *and* noblesse. ¶ *pan* folweþ it quod she *pat* we adden clernesse of renoun to þe þre forseide þinges. so *pat þer* ne be amonges hem no difference. *and pis* is a consequente quod .I. *pis þing pan* quod she *pat* ne haþ no nede of no foreine þing. *and pat* may don alle þinges by his strengþes. *and pat* is noble *and* honourable. nis nat *pat* a myrie þing *and* a ioyful. boice. but wenest quod I *pat* any sorow myzt[e] comen to *pis þing pat* is swiche. ¶ Certys I may nat þinke. *P.* ¶ *panne* moten we graunt[e] quod she *pat pis þing* be ful of gladnesse yif þe forseide þinges be soþe. ¶ And also certys mote we graunten. *pat* suffisaunce power noblesse reuerence *and* gladnesse ben only dyuerse bynames. but hir substaunce haþ no diuersite. Boice. It mot nedely be so quod .I. *P.* pilke þinge *pan* quod she *pat* is oon *and* simple in his nature. þe wikkednesse of men departiþ it *diuidiþ it. *and* whan þei enforcen hem to gete partie of a þing *pat* ne haþ no part. þei ne geten hem neiþer þilk[e] partie *pat* nis none. ne þe þing al hole *pat* þei ne desire nat. .b. In whiche manere quod .I. *p.* pilke man quod she *pat* sekeþ rychesse to fleen pouerte. he ne trauayleþ hym nat to for to gete power for he haþ leuer ben dirk *and* vile. *and* eke wiþdraweþ from hym selfe many naturel delitz for he nolde lesen þe moneye *pat* he haþ as-

2315 *seyne*—seyn
2317 *haþ*—MS. haþe
2324 *haþ*—MS. haþe
2325 *his*—hyso
2326 *myrie*—mery
2327 *wenest*—whennes
2328 *sorow myzt[e]*—sorwe myhte
2329 *graunt[e]*—graunte
2331 *be*—ben

2331 *also certys*—certes also
2333 *haþ*—MS. haþe
2334 *nedely*—nedly
2335 *þinge*—thing
2337 *gete*—geten
2338 *haþ*—MS. haþe
 þilk[e]—thilke
2339 *none*—non
 hole—hool
2340 *whiche*—whych

2341 *rychesse*—Rychesses
 fleen—MS. sleen, C. fleen
2342 *leuer*—leuer
2343 *vile*—vyl
 selfe—self
2344 *delitz*—delices
 lesen—lese
 haþ—MS. haþe

sembled. but certis in þis manere he ne getiþ hym nat suffisaunce þat power forlet iþ. *and* þat moleste prekeþ. *and* þat filþe makeþ outcaste. *and* þat derknesse hideþ. and certis he þat desireþ only power he wast iþ *and* scatriþ rychesse *and* dispiseþ delices *and* eke honour þat is wiþ out power. ne he ne preiseþ glorie no þing. ¶ Certys þus seest þou wel þat many þingus failen to hym. for he haþ somtyme faute of many necessites. *and* many anguysses biten hym ¶ *and* whan he may nat don þo defautes away. he forletet þ to ben myzty. *and* þat is þe þing þat he most desireþ. *and* ryzt þus may I make semblable resouns of honours *and* of glorie *and* of delices. ¶ For so as euery of þise forseide þinges is þe same þat þise oþer þinges ben. þat is to sein. al oon þing. who so þat euer sekeþ to geten þat oon of þise *and* nat þat oþer. he ne getet nat þat he desireþ. *Boice.* ¶ what seist þou þan yif þat a man coueiteþ to geten alle þise þinges to gider. *P.* Certys quod she .I. wolde seie þat he wolde geten hym souereyne blisfulnes. but þat shal he nat fynde in þo þinges þat .I. haue shewed þat ne mowe nat zeuen þat þei byheten. *boice.* Certys no quod .I. ¶ þan quod she ne sholden men nat by no weye seken blyfulnesse in swiche þinges as men wenen þat þei ne mowe zeuen but o þing senglely of alle þat men seken. I graunt[e] wel quod .I. ne no soþer þing ne may nat ben said. *P.* ¶ Now hast þou þan quod she þe forme *and* þe causes of false welefulnesse. ¶ Now turne *and* flitte þe eyen of þi þouzt. for þere shalt þou seen an oon þilk verray blyfulnesse þat I haue byhyzt þee. *b.* Certys quod .I. it is cler *and* opyn. þouzt þat it were to a blynde man. *and* þat shewedest þou me [ful wel] a

He who lacks power, is pricked with trouble, and rendered an outcast and obscure by his sordid ways, does not possess sufficiency. He who only aims at power squanders his riches, and despises delights and honours unaccompanied by power. Such a one must be subject to many anxieties. And when he cannot get rid of these evils he ceases to have what he most desired—power. In the same way honour, glory, and pleasure, are all inseparable; he that seeks one without the other will fail to obtain his desires. *B.* What then if a man should desire to gain them all at once? *P.* He would then indeed
2361

desire perfect felicity—but can he ever expect to find it in the acquisitions above mentioned, which do not perform what they promise? *B.* No, surely! *P.* Then happiness is not to be sought in these things which are falsely supposed capable of satisfying our desires? *B.* I confess it, and nothing can be more truly affirmed than this. Turn your mind's eye upon the reverse of all this *false felicity* and you will perceive *the true happiness.* *B.* It is very clear, and I had a complete view of it when you explained to me the causes of its counterfeit.

2346 *prekeþ*—prykketh
2347 *derknesse*—dyrknesse
2349 *scatriþ*—schatereth
delices—delyc3
2350 *wiþ out*—with owte
2351 *many*—manye
2352 *hap*—MS. hape

2352 *faute*—defaute
2353 *may*—ne may
2354 *don*—MS. done, C. don
2356 *make*—maken
2357 *forseide*—MS. sorseide
2363 *souereyne*—souereyn
2365 *mowe*—mowen

2368 *wenen*—wene
mowe—mowen
2370 *graunt[e]*—graunte
soþer—sothere
2371 *said*—MS. saide, C. sayd
2376 [*ful wel*]—from C.

True felicity consists in a state of sufficiency, of power, and honour—as well as of a shining reputation and every desirable pleasure: and I must confess that true felicity is that which is bestowed by these advantages, as they are in reality all one and the same.

P. O my nursling, how happy are

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you in this conviction, provided you add but one limitation.

B. What is that? P. Thinkest thou that any thing in this world can confer this happiness? (the sovereign good).

B. I think not; for nothing can be desirable beyond such a state of perfection.

P. These imperfect things above mentioned only confer the shadow of the supreme good, or at most only an imperfect felicity, but they cannot bestow true and perfect happiness.

B. I quite agree with you.

P. Then, knowing the difference between true and false felicity you must now learn where to look for

2401

this supreme felicity.

P. But, as Plato

[* fol. 20 b.]

says that even in the least things the Divine assistance ought to be implored, what ought we do, to render us worthy of so important a discovery as the true source and seat of the sovereign good?

lytel her byforne. whan þou enforcedest þe to shewe me þe causes of þe false blyfulnessse ¶ For but yif I be bygiled. þan is pilke þe verray perfit blisfulnessse þat perfitly makip a man suffisaunt. my3ty. honourable noble. and ful of gladnesse. and for þou shalt wel knowe þat I haue wel vndirstonden þise þinges wip inne myne herte. I knowe wel pilke blisfulnessse þat may verrayly zeuen on of þe forseide þinges syn þei ben al oon .I. knowe douteles þat pilke þing is þe fulle of blyfulnessse. P. O my nurry quod she by þis oppinioun quod she I sey[e] þat þou art blisful yif þou putte pis þer to .þat I shal seine. what is þat quod .I. ¶ Trowest þou þat þer be any þing in þis erpely mortal toublyng þinges þat may bryngen þis estat. Certys quod I trowe it nat. and þou hast shewed me wel þat ouer pilke goode þer is no þing more to ben desired. P. þise þinges þan quod she. þat is to seyne erpely suffisaunce and power. and swiche þinges eyþer þei semen likenessse of verray goode. or ellys it semep þat þei zeuen to mortal folk a maner of goodes þat ne ben nat perfit. ¶ But pilke goode þat is verray and perfit. þat may þei nat zeuen. boice. I. accorde me wel quod .I. þan quod she for as moche as þou hast knowen whiche is pilke verray blisfulnessse. and eke whiche pilke þinges ben þat lien falsly blisfulnessse. þat is to seyne. þat by desceit semen verray goodes. ¶ Now byhouep þe to knowen *whennes and where þou mouwe seek[e] pilke verray blisfulnessse. ¶ Certys quod I þat desijr I gretly and haue abiden longe tyme to herkene it. ¶ But for as moche quod she as it likeþ to my disciple plato in his book of in thimeo. þat in ry3t lytel þinges men sholde bysechen þe helpe of god. ¶ what iugest þou þat be

2377 byforne—by-forn

2378 blyfulnessse — MS. blydenesse, C. blyfulnessse

2395 of—omitted

2336 nurry—norye

2377 sey[e]—seye

2388 seine—seyn

2399 þis—thise

2390 nat—nawht

2393 seyne—sey

2395 zeuen—yeue

2397 goode—good

2399 whiche—which

2401 seyne—seyn

2402 knowen—knowe

2403 seek[e]—seke

2405 herkene—herknen

2407 sholde—sholden

2408 bysechen—by-shechen

helpe—help

[now] to done so þat we may deserue to fynde þe sete of þilke souereyne goode. *B.* ¶ Certys quod .I. I. deme þat we shulle clepen to þe fadir of alle goodes. ¶ For wiþ outen hym nis þer no þing founden aryzt. þou seist a-ryzt quod she. and bygan on-one to syngen ryzt þus.

O QUI PERPETUA.

O þou fadir creatour of heuene *and* of erþes þat gouernest þis worlde by perdurable resoun þat comaundist þe tymes for to gon from tyme þat age had[de] bygynnyng. þou þat dwellest þi self ay stedfast *and* stable *and* ʒiuest alle oþer þinges to ben moeued. ne forein causes necesseden þe neuer to compoune werke of floterynge mater. but only þe forme of souereyne goode y-set wiþ inne [þe] wiþ outen envie þat moeued[e] þe frely. þou þat art alþerfairest beryng þe faire worlde in þi þouzt. formedest þis worlde to þe likkenesse semblable of þat faire worlde in þi þouzt. þou drawest alle þinges of þi souereyne ensampler. *and* comaundedist þat þis worlde perfitlyche ymaked haue frely *and* absolut hyse perfit parties. ¶ þou byndest þe elementz by noumbres proporcionables. þat þe colde þinges mowen accorde wiþ þe hote þinges. *and* þe drye þinges wiþ þe moyst þinges. þat þe fire þat is purest ne fleye nat ouer heye. ne þat þe heynesse ne drawe nat adoun ouer lowe þe erþes þat ben plounged in þe watres. ¶ þou knytttest to-gidre þe mene soule of treble kynde moenyng alle þinges. *and* diuidest it by membres accordyng. ¶ And whan it is þus diuided it haþ assembled a moenyng in two roundes. ¶ It goþ to tourne

B. Let us invoke the Father of all things. You are right, said Philosophy, and thus she sang:—
O Father and Maker of heaven and earth, by whose eternal reason the world is governed, and by whose supreme [The 9th Metur.] command Time flows from the birth of ages, Thou, firm and unchanged thyself, makest all things else to move! Thy sovereign will to floating matter gave its various forms, impelled by no exterior causes, but by the Idea of the
2419

Best in thy great mind conceived void of malice. Fairest thyself bearing the world's figure in thy thought, thou didst create the world after that prototype, and dost draw all things from the image of the fair Supreme, and dost command that this world should have perfect parts. By harmonious measures thou dost bind fast the elements, so that there is no discordance between things cold and hot, or between the moist and the dry. That the fire may not fly too high, and that weight may not press the earth and water lower than they are now placed, thou didst join the Middle Soul (of a three-fold nature) moving all things, and then by agreeing

2409 [now]—from C.
2410 souereyne goode—verray good
2411 shulle—shollen to—omitted
2413 on-one—anon
2415 worlde—world
2416 from—age—from syn þat age
had[de]—hadde
2417 stedfast—stedefast

2418 oþer—oother
2419 forein—foreyne werke—werk
2420 souereyne goode—souereyn good
2421 y-set—MS. y-sette, C. Iset
wiþ inne—with in [þe]—the
wiþ outen—with owte
moeued[e]—moeuede

2422 alþerfairest — alder-fayrest
2422-24-26 worlde—world
2423 likkenesse—lyknesse
2426 *and* absolut—C. omits
2427 hyse—hys
2430 stre—fyr
fleje—fle
2431 drawe—drawen
2435 hap—MS. hape
2436 goþ—MS. goþe

numbers didst resolve it. When that is done, cut into two orbs, it moves about returning to itself, and then encompassing the profound mind doth by that fair idea turn the heaven. Thou by such causes dost raise all souls and lesser lives, and adaptest them to their light vehicles. Thou sowest them in heaven and earth, and they return to thee by thy kind law like a recoiling flame. O Father, elevate our souls and let them behold thy august throne. Let them behold the fountain of all good. Dispel the mists of sense, remove the weights of earth-born cares, and in thy splendour shine (in our minds). For thou art ever clear, and to the [The 10th prose.] good art peace and rest. He who looks on thee beholds beginning support, guide, path and goal, combined! Now that thou hast had a faithful representation of future felicity as well as of the true happiness, I shall show thee in what the Perfection of Happiness consists. Our best plan will be to inquire whether there be in nature such a good as thou hast lately defined, lest we be deceived by the vanity of Imagination and be carried beyond the truth of the matter subjected to our inquiry.

azein to hym owen self. *and* environep a fulle deep pouzt. *and* tournip þe heuene by semblable ymage. þou by euenlyk causes enhaunsest þe soules *and* þe lasse liues *and* ablynge hem heye by lyzt[e] cartes. þou sewest hem in to heuene *and* in to erþe. *and* whan þei ben conuertid to þe by þi benigne lawe. ¶ þou makest hem retorne azeine to þe by azein ledyng fijr. ¶ O fadir yif þou to þi pouzt to stien vp in to þi streite sete. *and* graunte [hym] to enviroune þe welle of good. *and* þe lyzte yfounde graunte hym to ficchen þe clere syztes of hys corage in þe. ¶ *And* scatre þou *and* to-breke [thow] þe weyztēs *and* þe cloudes of erþely heuynesse. *and* shyne þou by þi bryztnes. for þou art clernesse þou art peisible to debonaire folke. ¶ þou þi self art by-gynnyngē. berere. ledere. paþ *and* terme to loke on þe [þat] is oure ende. *Glose.* 2452

QUONIAM IGITUR QUI SCIT.¹ [1 Read que sit.]

FOR as moche þan as þou hast seyn. whiche is þe forme of goode þat nys nat perfit. *and* whiche is þe forme of goode þat is perfit. now trowe I þat it were goode to shewe in what þis perfeccioun of blisfulnesse is set. *and* in þis þing I trowe þat we sholden first enquere forto witen yif þat any swiche manere goode as pilke goode þat þou hast diffinissed a lytel her byforne. þat is to seine souereyne goode may be founden in þe nature of þinges. For þat veyne ymaginacioun of pouzt ne desceiue vs nat. *and* putte vs oute of þe sopefastnesse of pilke þinge þat is summyttid to vs. þis is to seyne. but it may nat ben denyed þat pilke goode ne is. ¶ *and* þat it nis ryzt as a welle of alle goodes. ¶ For

2437 *owen*—C. omits
2438 *tournip*—MS. *tournipe*
2439 *euenlyk*—euene lyke
2440 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte
2442 *benigne*—bygynnyngē
2444 *yif*—yiuē
 þi *streite*—the streyte
2445 [hym]—from C.
2446 *lyzte*—lyht

2448 [thow]—from C.
2449 *bryztnes*—bryhtnesse
2451 *paþ*—MS. *paþe*; *paath*
2452 [þat]—that
2453 *whiche*—which [good
2454 - 55 - 56 - 58 - 59 *goode*—
2454 *whiche*—whyh
2457 *set*—MS. *sette*, C. *set*
2460 *seine*—seyne

2460 *souereyne goode*—scue-
 reyn good
 be founden—ben fownde
2461 *veyne*—veyn
2463 *þis is to seyne*—C. omits
2464 *denyed*—MS. *deuoyd*-
 ed, C. *denyed*
 goode—good
2465 *of*—MS. of of

al þing þat is cleped *inperfit*. is proued *inperfit* by þe amenusyng of *perfeccioun*. or of þing þat is *perfit*. and her of comeþ it. þat in euery þing general. yif þat. þat men seen any þing þat is *inperfit* *certys in þilke general þer mot ben *somme* þing þat is *perfit*. ¶ For yif so be þat *perfeccioun* is don away. men may nat þinke nor seye fro whennes þilke þing is þat is cleped *inperfit*. ¶ For þe nature of þinges ne token nat her bygynnyng of þinges amenused and *inperfit*. but it procediþ of þingus þat ben al hool. and absolut. and descendeþ so doune in to outerest þinges and in to þingus empty and wiþ oute fruyt. but as I haue shewed a litel her byforne. þat yif þer be a blisfulnesse þat be frele and vein and *inperfit*. þer may no man doute. þat þer nys som blisfulnesse þat is sad stedfast and *perfit*. b. þis is concludid quod I fermely and soþefastly. P. But considere also quod she in wham þis blisfulnesse enhabiteþ. þe commune acordaunce and conceite of þe corages of men proueþ and graunteþ þat god prince of alle þingus is good. ¶ For so as no þing ne may ben þouzt better þan god. it may nat ben douted þan þat [he þat] no þing is better. þat he nys good. ¶ Certys resoun sheweþ þat god is so goode þat it proueþ by verray force þat *perfit* goode is in hym. ¶ For yif god ne is swiche. he ne may nat ben prince of alle þinges. for certis som þing possessyng in hym self *perfit* goode sholde ben more þan god. and [it] sholde seme þat þilke þing were first and elder þan god. ¶ For we han shewed apertly þat alle þinges þat ben *perfit*. ben first or þinges þat ben *inperfit*. ¶ And for þi for as moche as [that] my resoun or my proces ne go nat away wiþoute an ende. we ouzt[e] to graunten þat þe souereyne god is ryzt ful of

The sovereign good does exist, and is the source of all other good. When we say that a thing is *imperfect* we

[* fol. 21.] assert that there is something else of its kind *perfect*. Nature takes not her origin from things diminished and imperfect; but, proceeding from an entire and absolute substance, descends into the remotest and most fruitless things. If there be an imperfect and fading felicity there must also be one stable and perfect. But now consider wherein this felicity resides. That God is the governor of all things is proved by the universal opinion of all men. For since nothing may be conceived better

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than God, then He who has no equal in goodness must be good. Reason clearly demonstrates (1) that God is good, and (2) that the sovereign good exists in him. If it were not so He could not be the Ruler of all things, for there would be some other being excelling him who possesses the supreme good and who must have existed before Him. And we have already shown that the perfect precedes the imperfect; wherefore, that our reasonings may not run on with infinity, we must confess that the Supreme God is full of perfect and consummate good.

2466 *al þing*—alle thing
2468 *her of comeþ*—ther of comht
2470 *somme*—som
2471 *don*—MS. done, C. don
2473 *token*—took
2475 *hool*—hoole
2476 *doune*—down

2477 *wiþ oute fruyt*—with owten frut
2490 *stedfast*—stydefast
2491 *fermely*—MS. fennely, C. fermely
soþefastly—sothfastly
2496 [*he þat*]—from C.
is better—nis bettere

2488-89-91 *goode*—good
2489 *swiche*—swych
2492 [*it*]—from C.
seme—semen
2493 *elder*—eldere
2495 [*that*]—from C.
2496 *proces*—processes
2497 *ouzt[e]*—owen

And as we have seen that the perfect good is true happiness, it follows that the true felicity resides in the Supreme Divinity. But let us see how we can firmly and irrefragably prove that the Supreme God contains in his own nature a plenitude of perfect and consummate good. If you think that God has received this good from without, then you must believe that the giver of this

2508 good is more excellent than God the receiver. But we have concluded that there is nothing more excellent than God. But if this supreme good is in Him by nature, and is nevertheless of a different substance, we cannot conceive, since God is the author of all things, what could have united these two substances differing one from another. Lastly, a thing which essentially differs from another cannot be the same with that from which it is supposed to differ. Consequently, what in its nature

2522 differs from the chief good cannot be the supreme good. But it would be impious and profane thus to conceive of God, since nothing can excel Him in goodness and worth.

souereyne *perfit* goode. and we han establissed þat þe souereyne goode is verrey blisfulnesse. þan mot it nedes ben [þat verray blysfulnesse is] yset in souereyne god. *B.* þis take I wel *quod* .I. ne þis ne may nat be wiþseid in no manere. ¶ But I *preie* þe *quod* she see now how þou mayst preuen holily and wiþ-ouTEN corrupcioun þis þat I haue seid. þat þe souereyne god is ryzt ful of souereyne goode. [In whych manere *quod* I.] wenest þou ouzt *quod* she þat þis prince of alle þinges haue ytake pilke souereyne good any where þan of hym self. ¶ of whiche souereyne goode men proueþ þat he is ful ryzt as þou myztest þinken. þat god þat hap blisfulnesse in hym self. and þat ilke blisfulnesse þat is in hym were diuers in substaunce. ¶ For yif þou wene þat god haue receyued pilke good oute of hym self. þou mayst wene þat he þat 3af pilke good to god. be more goode þan is god. ¶ But I am byknowen and confesse and þat ryzt dignely þat god is ryzt worþi abouen alle þinges. ¶ And yif so be þat þis good be in hym by nature. but þat it is diuers from [hym] by wenyng resoun. syn we speke of god prince of alle þinges feyne who so feyne may. who was he þat [hath] conioined þise diuers þinges to-gidre. and eke at þe last[e] se wel þat o þing þat is diuers from any þing. þat pilke þing nis nat þat same þing. fro whiche it is vndirstonden to ben diuers. þan folweþ it. þat pilke þing þat by hys nature is dyuers from souereyne good. þat þat þing nys nat souereyne good. but certys þat were a felonous corsednesse to þinken þat of hym. þat no þing nis more worþe. For alwey of alle þinges. þe nature

2498 *goode*—good
2499 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good
2500 [þat—is]—from C.
yset—MS. ysette, C. set
2501 be—ben
wiþseid—MS. wiþseid, C. withseid
2503 *wip-ouTEN*—with-owte
2504 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð
2505 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good

reyn good
2505 [En—I]—from C.
2506 *ouzt*—awht
2507 *þan of*—owt of
2508 *whiche*—whych
souereyne goode—souereyn good
2509 *hap*—MS. hape
2510 *þat ilke*—thilke
2511 *were*—weren
2514 *goode*—worth

2517 *from*—fro
[hym]—from C.
2518 *feyne*—faigne
2519 *feyne*—feigne
[hath]—from C.
2520 *last[e]*—laste
2521 o—a
2522 *whiche*—whych
2524 *from*—fro
2527 *nis*—is

of hem ne may nat ben better þan his byggyning.
¶ For whiche I may concluden by ryȝt uerray resoun.
þat þilke þat is bygynnyng of alle þinges. þilke same
þing is good in his substaunce. *B.* þou hast seid ryȝt-
fully quod .I. *P.* But we han graunted quod she þat
souereyne good is blysfulnes. þat is soþe quod .I. þan
quod she mote we nedes graunten *and* confessen þat
þilke same souereyne goode be god. ¶ Certys *quod
.I. I ne may nat denye ne wiþstonde þe resouns pur-
posed. and I see wel þat it folweþ by strengþe of þe
premisses. ¶ Loke nowe quod she yif þis be proued
[yit] more fermely þus. ¶ þat þer ne mowen nat ben
two souereyne goodes þat ben diuerse amo[n]ges hem
self. þat on is nat þat þat oþer is. þan [ne] mowen
neiper of hem ben *perfit*. so as eyþer of hem lakkip to
opir. but þat þat nis nat *perfit* men may seen apertly
þat it nis nat souereyne. þe þinges þan þat ben
souereynely goode ne mowen by no wey ben diuerse.
¶ But I haue wel conclude þat blisfulnesse *and* god ben
[the] souereyne goode. For whiche it mot nedes be þat
souereyne blisfulnesse is souerey[ne] dyuynite. ¶ No
þing quod I nis more soþefast þan þis ne more ferme by
resoun. ne a more worþi þing þan god may nat ben
concluded. *P.* vpon þise þinges þan quod she. ryȝt as
þise geometriens whan þei han shewed her *proposiciouns*
ben wont to bryngen in þinges þat þei clepen *porismes*
or *deklaraciouns* of forseide þinges. ryȝt so wil I ȝeue
þe here as a corolarie or a mede of coroune. For whi.
for as moche as by þe getyng of blisfulnesse men ben
makid blysful. *and* blisfulnesse is diuinite. ¶ þan is
it manifest *and* open þat by þe getyng of diuinite men
ben makid blisful. ryȝt as by þe getyng of iustice . . .

In fact, nothing can exist whose nature is better than its origin. We may therefore conclude that the Author of all things is really and substantially the supreme Good. *B.* Most rightly said!

P. But you have owned that true felicity is the sovereign good; then you must also

[* fol. 21 b.] grant that God is that true felicity.

B. Your conclusions follow from your premises.

P. Let us see whether we cannot prove this more convincingly by considering it in this view, that there cannot be two sovereign goods which differ in themselves.

For it is plain that of the goods that differ one cannot be what the other is; wherefore neither of them

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can be perfect where one wants the other. That which is not perfect cannot be the supreme good.

Neither can the chief good be essentially different. But it has been shown that God and happiness are the chief good, wherefore

the sovereign felicity and the Supreme Divinity are one and the same.

Following then the examples of geometers who deduce their consequences

from their propositions, I shall deduce to thee something like a corollary as follows:—Because by the attainment of felicity men become happy, and

2523 *better*—bette
2529 *whiche*—whych
2531 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð
2533 *soþe*—soth
2534 *mote*—moten
2539 *[yit]*—from C.
2541 *is* (1)—nis

2541 *oper*—othre
[*ne*]—from C.
2546 *conclude*—concluded
2547 [*the*] from C.
goode—good *be*—ben
2549 *soþefast*—sothfast
ferme—MS. forme, C.

ferme
2552 *proposiciouns*—MS. *proporsious*, C. *proposicions*
2553 *porismes*—MS. *poeismes*, C. *porysmes*
2554 *wil*—wole

as felicity is the same as Divinity itself, therefore by the attainment of Divinity men are made happy. But as by the participation of justice or of wisdom men become just or wise, so by partaking of Divinity they must necessarily, and by parity of reason, become gods.

Every happy man then is a god. But by nature there is only *One*; but by participation of Divine essence there may be many gods. But as happiness seems to be an assemblage of many things, ought we not to consider whether these several things constitute conjointly the body of

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happiness, or whether there is not some one of these particular things that may complete the substance or essence of it, and to which all the rest have a relation?

B. Illustrate this matter by proper examples.
P. As you grant that happiness is a good, you may say the same of all the other goods; for perfect sufficiency is identical with supreme felicity; so is supreme power, likewise high rank, a shining reputation, and perfect pleasure. What say you, then; are all these things, sufficiency, power, and the rest, to be considered as constituent parts of felicity? or are they to be referred to the sovereign good as their source and principal?

and by þe getyng of sapiencie þei ben maked wise. ¶ Ryzt so nedes by þe semblable resoun whan þei han getyn diuinite þei ben maked goddys. þan is euery blisful man god. ¶ But certis by nature. þer nys but oon god. but by þe participaciouns of diuinite þere ne letteþ ne disturbeþ no þing þat þer ne ben many goddes. ¶ þis is quod .I. a faire þing *and* a precious. ¶ Clepe it as þou wolt. be it corolarie or porisme or mede of coroune or declarynges ¶ Certys quod she no þing nis fairer. þan is þe þing þat by resoun sholde ben added to þise forseide þinges. what þing quod .I. ¶ So quod she as it semeþ þat blisfulnesse contenib many þinges. it were forto witen wheþir [þat] alle þise þinges maken or conioignen as a maner body of blysfulnesse by diuersite of parties or [of] membris. Or ellys yif any of alle þilke þingus be swyche þat it acomplise by hym self þe substaunce of blisfulnesse. so þat alle þise oþer þinges ben referred and brouzt to blisfulnesse. þat is to seyne as to þe chief of hem. ¶ I wolde quod I þat þou makedest me clerly to vndirstonde what þou seist. *and* þat þou recordest me þe forseide þinges. ¶ Haue I nat iuged quod she. þat blisfulnesse is goode. zis forsoþe quod .I. *and* þat souereyne goode. ¶ Adde þan quod she þilke goode þat is maked blisfulnes to alle þe forseide þinges. ¶ For þilke same blisfulnesse þat is demed to ben souereyne suffisaunce. þilke self is souereyne power. souereyne reuerence. souereyne clernesse or noblesse *and* souereyne delit. what seist þou þan of alle þise þinges. þat is to seyne. suffisaunce power *and* þise oþer þinges. ben þei þan as membris of blisfulnesse. or ben þei referred *and* brouzt to souereyne good. ¶ Ryzt as alle þinges þat ben brouzt to þe chief of hem.

2563 *oon*—o
2564 *letteþ*—let
2566 *faire*—fayr
2567 *porisme*—MS. pousme,
C. porisme
2572 [*þat*]—from C.
2573 *maner*—manere
by—be

2574 [*of*]—from C.
2575 *swyche*—swych
2576 *oþer*—oother
2577 *seyne*—seyn
2578 *chief*—chef
2581 *goode zis*—good ys
2582 *souereyne goode*—souereyn good

2583 *goode*—good
2585 *self*—selue
2588 *þise*—C. omits
seyne—seyn
2589 *oþer*—oother
2591 *brouzt*—MS. wrouzt, C. browht

b. I vndirstonde wel quod .I. what þou purposest to seke. but I desijr[e] to herkene þat þou shewe it me.
p. Take now þus þe discressioun of þis questioun quod she. yif al þise þinges quod she weren membris to felicite. þan weren þei diuerse þat oon fro þat oþer.
 ¶ And swiche is þe nature of parties or of membris. þat dyuerse membris compounen a body. ¶ Certis quod I it haþ wel ben shewed her byforne. þat alle þise þinges ben alle on þing. þan ben þei none membris quod she. for ellys it sholde seme þat blisfulnesse were conioigned *al of one membre alone. but þat is a þing þat may nat ben doon. þis þing quod .I. nys nat doutous. but I abide to herkene þe remenaunt of þe questioun. þis is open and clere quod she. þat alle oþer þinges ben referred and brouzt to goode. ¶ For þefore is suffisaunce required. For it is demed to ben good. and forþi is power required. for men trowen also þat it be goode. and þis same þing mowe we pinken and coueiten of reuerence and of noblesse and of delit. þan is souereyne good þe soume and þe cause of alle þat auzt[e] be desired. forwhi þilke þing þat wiþ-holdeþ no good in it self ne semblaunce of goode it ne may nat wel in no manere be desired ne required. and þe contrarie. For þouþ þat þinges by hir nature ne ben nat goode algates yif men wene þat þei ben goode zit ben þei desired as þouþ [þat] þei were verrayly goode. and þefore is it þat men auzten to wene by ryzt þat bounte be souereyne fyn and þe cause of alle þinges þat ben to requeren. ¶ But certis þilke þat is cause for whiche men requeren any þing. ¶ it semeþ þat þilke same þing be most desired. as þus yif þat a wyzt wolde ryde for cause of hele. he ne desireþ nat so mychel þe

B. I see what you are aiming at, and I am desirous to hear your arguments.

P. If all these things were members of felicity, they would differ one from another, for it is the property of diverse parts to compose one body. But it has been well shown that all these things are the same and do not differ—therefore they are not parts, for if they were, happiness might be made up of one member—which is absurd and impossible.

B. This I doubt not, but I desire to hear the sequel.

P. All the things above-mentioned must be tried by

2607

Good, as the rule and square.

Sufficiency, power, &c., are all desired, because they are esteemed a good. Good is the cause why all things are desired.

For that which contains no good, either in reality or appearance, can never be desired. On the contrary, things not essentially good are desired because they appear to be real goods.

Hence, Good is esteemed as the cause and end of all things that we desire.

That which is the cause of our desiring any thing is itself what we chiefly want. If a man desire to ride on account of health—it is not the ride he wants so much as its salutary effects.

2593 *desijr[e] to herkene*—desire for to herkne
 2594 *Take*—tak
 2596 *fro*—from
 2597 *swiche*—swhych
 2600 *on þing*—othing
 2602 *one*—on
 2603 *ben doon*—be don

2604 *herkene*—herknen
 2605 *clere*—cler
oþer—oothre
 2606 *goode*—good
 2609 *goode*—good
mowe—mowen
 2617 [*þat*]—from C.
were verrayly — weeren

verraylyche
 2618 *þefore*—therfor
auzten—owhten
 2619 *alle*—alle the
 2620 *whiche*—whych
 2623 *mychel*—mochel

Since all things are sought after for the sake of God, they cannot be more desirable than the good itself. It has been shown that all the aforesaid things are only pursued for the sake of

2629

happiness—hence it is clear that good and happiness are essentially the same.

B. I see no cause to differ from you.

P. It has been proved that God and happiness are identical and inseparable.

B. That is true.

Therefore the substance of God is also the same as that of the Supreme Good.

[The 10th Metur.]

Come hither, all ye that are captives—bound and fettered with the chains of earthly desires;—come to this source of goodness, where you shall find rest and security.

[Chaucer's gloss

2642

upon the Text.¹ Not the gold of Tagus or of Hermus, nor the gems of India, can clear the mental sight from vain delusions, but rather darken it. Such sources of our delight are found in the earth's gloomy caverns,—but the bright light that rules the heavens dispels the darkness of the soul. He who has seen this light will confess that the beams of the sun are weak and dim.

moeuyng to ryden as þe effect of his heele. Now þan syn þat alle þinges ben required for þe grace of good. þei ne ben [nat] desired of alle folk more þan þe same good ¶ But we han graunted þat blyfulnessse is þat þing for whiche þat alle þise oþer þinges ben desired. þan is it þus þat certis only blisfulnessse is required *and* desired ¶ By whiche þing it sheweþ clerely þat good *and* blisfulnessse is al oone *and* þe same substaunce. ¶ I se nat quod I wher fore þat men myzt[en] discorden in þis. *p.* *and* we han shewed þat god *and* verrey blyfulnessse is al oon þing ¶ þat is soþe quod .I. þan mowe we conclude sikerly þat þe substaunce of god is set in þilke same good *and* in noon oþer place. 2636

NUNC OMNES PARITER ETC.

○ Comeþ alle to-gidre now 3e þat ben ycauzt *and* ybounde wiþ wicked[e] cheines by þe deceiuable delit of erþely þinges inhabytynge in 3oure þouzt. here shal ben þe reste of 3oure laboures. here is þe hauene stable in peisible quiete. þis al oone is þe open refut to wreches. *Glosa.* þis is to seyn. þat 3e þat ben com-bred *and* deceyued wiþ worldly affeccions comeþ now to þis souereyne good þat is god. þat is refut to hem þat wolen come to hym. *Textus.* ¶ Alle þe þinges þat þe ryuere Tagus 3iueþ 3ow wiþ his golden[e] grauels. or ellys alle þe þynges þat þe ryuere hermus. 3iueþ wiþ his rede brynke. or þat yndus 3iueþ þat is nexte þe hote *partie* of þe worlde. þat medeleþ þe grene stones (smaragde) wiþ þe white (margarits). ne sholde nat cleren þe lokyng of 3oure þozt. but hidden raþer 3oure blynde corages wiþ *inne* hire dirkenesse ¶ Alle þat likeþ 3ow here *and* excitip *and* moeueþ 3oure þouztes.

2624 *moeuyng*—moeuyngē

2626 [nat]—from C.

2628 *oper*—ootherē

2630 *clerely*—clerly
good *and* blisfulnessse—of
good *and* of blyfulnessse

2631 *oone*—oon

2632 *myzt[en]*—myhten

2634 *oon*—oo

2634 *soþe*—soth

2635 *mowe*—mowen

2636 *set*—MS. sette, C. set

2638 *wicked[e]*—wyckyde

2639, 2640 *here*—her

2640 *hauene*—MS. heuene,
C. hauene

2641 *al oone*—allone

2643 *worldy*—worldely

2645 *come*—comyn

2646 *golden[e] grauels*—
goldene grauayles

2647 *þynges*—MS. rynges, C.
things

hermus—MS. herinus, C.
herynus

2648 *nexte*—next

2649 *worlde*—world

þe erþe haþ noryshed it in hys lowe caues. but þe shynyng by þe whiche þe heuene is gouerned *and* whennes þat it haþ hys strengþe þat chaseþ þe derke ouerþrowyng of þe soule. ¶ And who so euer may knowen þilke lyzt of blisfulnesse. he shal wel seine þat þe white bemes of þe sonne ne ben nat cleer. 2659

ASSENCIOR INQUAM CUNCTA. Boice.

I assent[e] me *quod* .I. For alle þise þinges ben strongly bounden wip ryzt ferme resouns. how mychel wilt þou preisen it *quod* she. yif þat þou knowe what þilke goode is. I wol preise it *quod* I by price wip outen ende. ¶ yif it shal bytyde me to knowe also to-gidre god þat is good. ¶ certys *quod* she þat shal I do þe by verray resoun. yif þat þo þinges þat I haue conclude[d] a litel her by *forne dwellen oonly in hir first[e] grauntyng. Boice. þei dwellen graunted to þe *quod* .I. þis is to seyne as who seiþ .I. graunt þi forseide conclusiouns. ¶ Haue I nat shewed þe *quod* she þat þe þinges þat ben requered of many folke. ne ben nat verray goodes ne perfit. for þei ben diuerse þat oon fro þat oþer. *and* so as eche of hem is lakkyng to oþer. þei ne han no power to bryngen a good þat is ful *and* absolute. ¶ But þan atte arst ben þei verray good whan þei ben gadred to-gidre al in to a forme *and* in to oon wirchyng. so þat þilke þing þat is suffisaunce. þilk same be power *and* reuerence. *and* noblesse *and* mirþe. ¶ And forsoþe but alle þise þinges ben alle o same þing þei ne han nat wher by þat þei mowen ben put in þe noumbre of þinges. þat auzten ben requered or desired. *b.* ¶ It is shewed *quod* .I. ne her of may þer no man douten. *p.* þe þinges þan *quod* she þat ne

B. I assent, and am convinced by the force of your arguments.

P. But how greatly would you value it, did you fully know what this good is?

B. I should value it infinitely if at the same time I might attain to the knowledge of God, who is the sovereign good.

[The 11 prose.]

P. I shall elucidate this matter by incontrovertible reasons if thou wilt grant me those things which I have before laid down as conclusions.

B. I grant them all.

P. Have I not shown that the things which the majority of mankind so eagerly [* fol. 22 b.] pursue are not

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true and perfect goods, for they differ from one another; and because where one of them is absent the others cannot confer absolute happiness (or good)? Have I not shown, too, that the true and chief good is made up of an assemblage of all the goods in such a way, that if sufficiency is an attribute of this good, it must at the same time possess

2678

power, reverence, &c. If they be not one and the same, why should they be classed among desirable things?

While these things differ from one another they are not goods;

2654, 2656 *hap*—MS. haþe
2654 *hys*—hyse
2656 *chaseþ þe derke* — es-
chueth the dyrke
2657 *euer*—C. omits
2658 *seine*—seyn
2660 *assent[e]*—assente
2662 *mychel*—mochel

2663 *goode*—good
2664 *price*—prys
2669 *is*—omitted
seyne—seyn
2671 *folke*—folkes
2673 *oþer*—oother
eche—ech
2675 *absolute*—absolut

2675 *atte arst*—at erste
2676 *al*—alle
2676 *a*—O
2677 *to*—omitted
wirchyng—wyrkyng
2678 *þilk*—þilke
2681 *put*—MS. putte, C. put
auzten—owhten

but as soon as they become one then they are made goods.—

Do not they owe their being good to their unity?

B. So it appears.
P. Do you confess that everything that is good becomes such by the participation of the sovereign good or no?

B. It is so.

P. Then you must own that unity and good are the same (for the substance of those things must be the same, whose effects do not naturally differ). *B.* I cannot gainsay it.
P. Do you not perceive that everything which exists is permanent so long as it preserves its unity—but as soon as it loses this, it is dissolved and annihilated?

2700

B. How so?

P. In the animal creation as long as the soul and the body are united and conjoined in one, this being is called an animal or beast, but when the union is dissolved by the separation of these, the animal perishes and is no longer a beast. The same may be said of man and all other things; they subsist while unity is preserved, but as soon as that is destroyed the things themselves lose their existence.

B. I believe we should find this true in every case.

P. Is there anything which acts naturally that forgoes this desire of existence and wishes for death and corruption?

ben none goodes whan þei ben diuerse. *and* whan þei bygynnen to ben al o þing. þan ben þei goodes. ne comiþ it hem nat þan by þe getyng of unite þat þei ben maked goodes. *b.* so it semeþ *quod* .I. but alle þing þat is good *quod* she grauntest þou þat it be good by participacioun of good or no. ¶ I graunt[e] it *quod* .I. ¶ þan mayst þou graunt[en] it *quod* she by sembleable resoun þat oon *and* good ben o same þing. ¶ For of þinges [of] whiche þat þe effect nis nat naturely diuerse nedys þe substaunce mot ben o same þinge. I ne may nat denye it *quod* I. ¶ Hast þou nat knowen wel *quod* she. þat al þing þat is haþ so longe his dwellyng *and* his substaunce. as longe is it oone. ¶ but whan it forletiþ to ben oone it mot nedis dien *and* corruppe to-gidre. ¶ In whiche manere *quod* .I. ¶ Ryzt as in beestes *quod* she. whan þe soule *and* þe body ben conioigned in oon *and* dwellen to-gidre it is cleped a beest. *and* whan hire vnite is destroyed by disseuerance þat oon fram þat oþir. þan sheweþ it wel þat it is a dede þing. *and* þat it is no lenger no beste. *and* þe body of a wyzt while it dwelleþ in oon forme by coniunccioun of membris it is wel seyn þat it is a figure of mankynde. *and* yif þe partyes of þe body ben [so] diuide[d] *and* disseuered þat oon fro þat oþir þat þei destroien vnite. þe body forletiþ to ben þat it was by-forne. ¶ And who so wolde renne in þe same manere by alle þinges he sholde seen þat wiþ outen doute euery þinge is in his substaunce as longe as it is oon. *and* whan it forletiþ to ben oon it dieþ *and* perissiþ. *boice.* whan I considre *quod* I many þinges I see noon oþer. ¶ Is þer any þing þanne *quod* she þat in as moche as it lyueþ naturely. þat forletiþ þe appetit or talent of

2684 none—no

2685 al o—alle oon

2686 comiþ—comth

2689 graunt[e]—graunte

2690 mayst þou graunt[en]

mosthow graunten

2692 [of]—from C.

2695 al—alle

hap—MS. hape

2696, 2697 oone—oon

2698 whiche—which

2703 dede—ded

lenger—lengere

beste—beest

2704 while—whil

oon—oo

2706 [so] diuide[d]—so de-
uydyd

2709 so—omitted

2713 many—manye

hys beynge. *and* desireþ to come to deeþ *and* to corrupcioun. ¶ yif I considere *quod* I þe beestes þat han any manere nature of willynge or of nillynge I ne fynde no þing. but yif it be constreyned fro wiþ out forþe. þat forletip or dispiseþ to lyue *and* to duren or þat wole his þankes hasten hym to dien. ¶ For euery beest trauallyþ hym to defende *and* kepe þe sauuacioun of lijf. *and* escheweþ deeþ *and* destruccioun. b. but certys I doute me of herbes *and* of trees. þat is to seyn þat I am in a doute of swiche þinges as herbes or trees þat ne han no felyng soule. ne no naturel wirchynges seruyng to appetite as beestes han wheþer þei han appetite to dwellen *and* to duren. ¶ Certis *quod* she ne þer of þar þe nat doute. ¶ Now look vpon þise herbes *and* þise trees. þei waxen firste in swiche place as ben couenable to hem. in whiche place þei ne mowen nat some dien ne dryen as longe as hire nature may defenden hem. ¶ For some of hem waxen in feldes *and* some in mountaignes. *and* opir waxen in mareis. [*A leaf lost here, and supplied from C.*] 2735 [*and* oothre cleuyn on Roches / *and* soume waxen plentyuos in sondes / *and* yif þat any wyht enforce hym to beryn hem in to oother places / they wexen drye // For nature yeueth to euery thing þat / þat is conuenient to hym *and* trauallyth þat they ne dye nat as longe as they han power to dwellyn *and* to lyuen // what woltow seyn of this / þat they drawen alle hyr norysshynges by hyr rootes / ryht as they haddyn hyr Mowthes I.-plounged with in the erthes / *and* shedyn by hyr maryes (i. medullas) hyr wode *and* hyr bark / *and* what woltow seyn of this þat thilke thing / þat is ryht softe as the marye (i. sapp) is / þat is alwey hidd in the feete al with inne *and* þat it is defendid fro with owte by the stidefastnesse of wode // *and* þat the vttereste bark is put ayenis the des-

B. I do not find any creature endowed with volition, which, of itself and without constraint, renounces or despises life and self-preservation or willingly hastens to destruction. But with regard to herbs and trees, I am doubtful whether

2722 ther I ought to have the same opinion of them, for they have no sensitive soul, nor any natural volition like animals. P. There is no cause for doubt in respect to these. Herbs and trees first choose a convenient place to grow in, where, agreeably to their respective natures, they are sure to thrive, and are in no danger of perishing; for some grow on plains, some on mountains, &c.; and if you try to transplant them, they forthwith wither and die. To everything that vegetates, nature gives what is needful for its subsistence, and takes care that they should not perish before their time. Need I tell you that plants are nourished by their roots (which are so many mouths hid in the earth), and diffuse strength throughout the whole plant, as through their marrow? And further, it is admirably contrived that the pith, the most tender part of plants, is hid in the middle of the trunk, surrounded with hard and solid wood, and with an outer coat of bark to ward off the storms and weather.

2718 willynge—wylnynge
or—and
2719 þing—beest
out forþe—owte forth

2720 lyue—lyuen
2723 of lijf—of hys lyf
2726 soule—sowles
2727 appetite—appetites

2729 look—loke
2730 waxen firste—wexen
2733, 2734 some—som [fyrst
2734 opir—oothre

Admire, too,
the diligence

2751
of nature in propagating plants by a multiplicity of seeds, which are as a foundation for a building, not to remain for a time, but as it were for ever. Things inanimate incline to what is most suitable to their beings, and to preserve continuance. For why should the flame mount upwards by lightness, and the earth tend towards its centre by gravity

2761
(weight), unless these motions were agreeable to their respective natures? What ever is agreeable to the nature of a thing preserves it. So what is contrary to its nature destroys it. Dense bodies, such as stones, resist an easy separation of parts; whereas the particles of liquid or flowing things, such as air and water, are easily separated and soon reunited.

2771
Fire avoids and utterly refuses any such division. I am not now treating of the voluntary motion of a conscious soul, but of the natural intention and instinct. We swallow our meat without thinking of it, and we draw our breath in sleep without perception. The love of life in animals is not derived from an intellectual will, but from natural principles

2781
implanted in them. For the will, induced by powerful reasons,

tempraunce of the heuene / as a defendowr myhty to suffren harm / and thus certes maystow wel sen / how gret is the diligence of nature / For alle thinges renouelen and pupllisen hem with seed .I.-multiplied / ne ther nis no man þat ne wot wel þat they ne ben ryht as a fundament and edyffice for to duren / nat only for a tyme / but ryht as for to duren perdurablely by generacyoun // and the thinges ek þat men wenen ne hauen none sowles / ne desire they nat ech of hem by sem[bl]able resoun to kepyn þat that is hirs / þat is to seyn þat is acordynge to hyr nature in conseruacioun of hyr beyng and enduryng // For wher for elles berith lythnesse the flaumbes vp / and the weyhte presseth the erthe a-doun // but For as moche as thilke places and thilke moeuynges ben couenable to euerich of hem // and forsothe euery thing kepith thilke þat is acordynge and propre to hym // ryht as thinges þat ben contraries and enemys corompen hem // and yit the harde thinges as stoones clyuen and holden hyr partyes to gydere ryht faste and harde / and deffenden hem in withstondenge þat they ne departe nat lyhtly a twyne // and the thinges þat ben softe and fletynge as is water and Eyr they departyn lyhtly // and yeuen place to hem þat brekyn or deuyden hem // but natheles they retornen sone ayein in to the same thinges fro whennes they ben arraced // but fyr [fleeth] and refuseth alle deusyoun / ne I. ne trete nat heere now of weleful moeuynges of the sowle þat is knowynge // but of the naturel entencioun of thinges // As thus ryht as we swolve the mete þat we resseyuen and ne thinke nat on it / and as we drawn owre breth in slepyng þat we wite it nat whil we slepyt // For certes in the beestys the loue of hyr lyuynges ne of hyr beeinges ne comth nat of the wilnynges of the sowle // but of the bygynnyngis of nature // For certes thorw constreynyng causes / wil desireth and embraceth ful

2753 *pupllisen*—H. *publis-*
shen)

2755 *edyffice*—MS. *edyfite*

2755 *a tyme*—H. *oon*) *tyme*

2758 *that*—H. *omits*

hirs—H. *his*

2774 [fleeth]—from H.

2775 *weleful*—H. *wilfulle*

2779 *slepyt*—H. *slepen*

ofte tyme / the deth þat nature dredith // that is to seyn
 as thus that a man may ben constreynyd so by som
 cause that his wil desireth and taketh the deth which
 þat nature hateth *and* dredeth ful sore // And som tyme
 we seeth the contrarye / as thus that the wil of a wight /
 destorbeth *and* constreyneth þat þat nature desireth / *and*
 requereth al-vey // that is to sein the werk of generacioun /
 by the whiche generacioun only / dwelleth *and* is sus-
 tenyd the longe durablete of mortal things // And thus
 this charite and this Loue þat euery thing hath to hym
 self ne comth nat of the moeuynge of the sowle / but of
 the entencioun of nature // For the puruyance of god
 hat yeuen to thinges þat ben creat of hym / this þat is
 a ful gret cause / to lyuen *and* to duren / for which they
 desiren naturelly hyr lyf as longe as euer they mowen //
 For w[h]ych thou maist nat drede by no manere / that
 alle the thinges / that ben anywhere / that they ne re-
 queren naturelly / the ferme stableness of *perdurable*
 dwellynge / *and* ek the eschuyng of destruccyon // B //
 now confesse I. wel *quod* I. that I. see wel now certeynly /
 with owte dowtes / the thinges that whylom semeden
 vncerteyn to me / P. // but *quod* she thilke thyng þat
 desireth to be *and* to dwellyn *perdurablely* / he desireth
 to ben oon // For yif þat that oon weere destroyed // certes
 beinge ne shulde ther non dwellyn to no wiht // that
 is soth *quod* I. // Thanne *quod* she desirin alle thinges
 oon // .I. assente *quod* .I. // *and* I haue shewyd *quod* she
 that thilke same oon is thilke that is good // B // ye for-
 sothe *quod* I. // Alle thinges thanne *quod* she requyren
 good // And thilke good thanne [þow] maist descryuen
 ryht thus // Good is thilke thing þat euery wyht de-
 sireth // Ther ne may be thowht *quod* .I. no moore
 verray thing / for either alle thinges ben referred *and*
 browht to nowht / *and* floteryn with owte gouernour

sometimes
 chooses and em-
 braces death, al-
 though nature
 dreads and abhors
 it. And, on the
 contrary, we see
 that concupi-
 sence (by which
 alone the human
 race is perpetu-
 ated) is often re-
 strained by the
 will. Self-love
 possessed by every
 creature is not the
 2791

product of voli-
 tion, but proceeds
 from a natural in-
 pression or inten-
 tion of nature.
 Providence has
 implanted in all
 created things an
 instinct, for the
 purpose of self-
 preservation, by
 which they desire
 to prolong exist-
 ence to its utmost
 limits. Doubt not,
 therefore, that
 everything which
 2799

exists desires ex-
 istence and avoids
 dissolution.

B. You have made
 those things per-
 fectly plain and in-
 telligible, which be-
 fore were obscure
 and doubtful.

P. That which de-
 sires to subsist
 desires also to
 retain its unity
 for if this be taken
 away it cannot
 continue to exist.

2807

B. That is very
 true!

P. All things then
 desire one thing—
 unity.

B. They do.

P. Unity then is
 the same as good.

B. Yes.

P. Thus all
 things desire good
 —and it is one

2813

and the same good
 that all creatures
 desire.

B. Nothing is
 more true. For
 either all things
 must be reduced
 to nothing (or
 have no relation

2798 *seeth*—H. seen)
wil—H. wille
 2792 *And*—H. as

2796 *hat*—H. haue
 2800 *the*—H. þo
 2806 *perdurablely*—H. per-

durably
 2807 *destroyed*—H. destrued
 2811 *thilke* (1)—H. ilke

to anything else), and, destitute of a head, float about without control or order; or if there be anything to which all things tend, that must be the supreme good. P. I rejoice greatly, my dear pupil, that you so clearly apprehend this truth, of which but just now you were ignorant.

2825

B. What was that?

P. The *End of all things*. And this is what every one desires; but we have shown that *good* is the thing desired by all, therefore *Good* is the *End of all things*.

2832

despoiled of oon / as of hir propre heued / or elles yif ther be any thinge / to which þat alle thinges tenden *and* hyen / that thing moste ben the souereyn good of alle goodes / P /. thanne seyde she thus // O my norry *quod* she I haue gret gladnesse of the // For thow hast fished in thin herte the myddel sothfastnesse // that is to seyn the prykke // but this thing hath ben descouered to the / in that thow seydst þat thow wystem nat a lytel her by-forn // what was that *quod* I. // That thow ne wystem nat *quod* she whych was the ende of thinges // and Certes that is the thing þat euery wiht desireth // and for as mochel as we han gaderid / *and* comprehendyd that good is thilke thing that is desired of alle / thanne moten we nedes confessun / that good is the fyn of alle thinges.

QUISQUIS PROFUNDA MENTE.

[The. 11. Metrum.]

He who seeks truth with deep research and is unwilling to go wrong, should collect his slumbering thoughts, and turn the inner light upon the soul itself.

The knowledge that he seeks without he will find treasured up in the recesses of the mind.

2841

The light of Truth will disperse Error's dark clouds, and shine forth brighter than the sun. [Chaucer's gloss.]

2847

WHO so that sekith soth by a deep thought And coueyteth nat to ben deseyuyd by no mys-weyes // lat hym rollen *and* trenden with Inne hym self / the Lyht of his inward syhte // And lat hym gadere ayein enclynynge in to a compas the longe moeuynges of hys thowhtes / And lat hym techen his corage that he hath enclosed *and* hyd / in his tresors / al þat he compaseth or sekith fro with owte // And thanne thilke thing that the blake cloude of errour whilom hadde y-couered / shal lyhten more clerly thanne phebus hym self ne shyneth // Glosa // who so wole seken the dep[e] grunde / of soth in his thowht / *and* wol nat be deceyuyd by false proposiciouns / that goon amys fro the trouthe // lat hym wel examine / *and* rolle with inne hym self the nature *and* the propretes of the thing // and lat hym yit eft sones examine *and* rollen his thowhtes by good deliberacioun

2818 heued or elles—H. hede
or els
2820 hyen—H. hyen) to
moste—H. must

2838 his—H. bis
that—H. and þat
2841 blake—H. blak
hadde y-couered—H. had

couered
2842 lyhten—H. light
2843 dep[e]—C. dep, H. depe
2847 thing—H. bynges

or that he deme // and lat hym techen his sowle that it 2849
 hat by naturel pryncyplis kyndeliche y-hyd *with* in
 it self alle the trowthe the whiche he ymagynith to ben [Chaucer's gloss]
 in thinges *with* owte // And thanne alle the dyrknesse of
 his mysknowynge shal seen more euydently to [pe]
 syhte of his vnderstondynge thanne the sonne ne semyth 2854
 to [pe] syhte *with* owte forth / For certes the body
 bryngynge the weyhte of foryetynge / ne hath nat chasyd
 owt of yowre thowhte al the clernesse of yowre knowyng //
 For certeynly the seed of sooth haldith *and* clyueth
with in yowre corage / *and* it is a-waked *and* excited by
 the wynde *and* by the blastes of doctryne // For where
 for elles demen ye of yowre owne wyl the ryhtes whan
 ye ben axed // but yif so were *pat* the noryssynges of
 resoun ne lyuede .I.-plowngyd in the depthe of yowre
 herte // this [is] to seyn how sholden men demen *pe*
 sooth of any thing *pat* weere axed / yif ther neere a
 Roote of sothfastnesse *pat* weere yplowngyd *and* hyd in 2861
 the nature[l] pryncyplis / the whiche sothfastnesse
 lyued *with* in the depnesse of the thowght // *and* yif
 so be *pat* the Muse *and* the doctryne of plato syngyth
 sooth // al *pat* euery whyht lerneth / he ne doth no
 thing elles thanne but recordeth as men recordyn thinges
pat ben foryetyng. 2866
 2872

For when the body enclosed the soul and cast obliuion o'er its powers it did wholly exterminate the heaven-born light. The germs of truth were latent within, and were fanned into action by the gentle breath of learning.

Were not truth implanted in the heart, how could man distinguish right from wrong?

So, if what Plato taught is true, 'to learn is no other than to remember what had been before forgotten.'

TUM EGO PLATONI INQUAM. *Med 35 § 2*

¶ Hanne seide I thus // I acorde me gretly to plato / for
 thow remenbrist *and* recordist me these thinges yit]
 * *pe* seconde tyme. *pat* is to seyn. first whan I lost[e] my
 memorie by *pe* contagiouȝ coniunccioun of *pe* body wip
pe soule. *and* eftsones afterward whan I lost[e] it con-
 founded by *pe* charge *and* by *pe* burden of my sorwe.
 ¶ And þan sayde she þus. ¶ If þou look[e] quod she
 firste *pe* þinges *pat* þou hast graunted it ne shal nat

[The .12. prose.]
 B. I am quite of Plato's opinion, for you have now a second time recalled these things * [Addit. MS. 10,340, fol. 23.] to my remembrance which had been forgotten, first by the contagious union of soul and body, and afterwards by the pressure of my afflictions.
 P. If you will reflect upon the con-

2363 *depthe*—H. *depe*
 2364 [*is*]—from H.
sholden—H. *shulde*

2367 *nature*[l]—H. *naturelle*
 2375, 2377 *lost*[e]—*loste*
 2378 *burden*—*burdene*

2879 *look*[e]—*looke*
 2880 *firste*—*fyrst*

cessions you have already made, you will soon call to mind that truth, of which you lately confessed your ignorance.

B. What is that?

P. It was, by what power the world is governed.

B. With regard to that, I own I confessed my ignorance, but though I now remorsefully see what you in-
sist upon, yet I wish for further explanation from you.

P. You acknowledged a little while ago that this world was governed by God?

B. I still cling to this opinion, and will give you my reasons for this belief. The discordant elements of this world

2895

would never have assumed their present form unless there had been a wise Intelligence to unite them; and even after such a union, the joining of such opposites would have disunited and ruined the fabric made up of them, had not the same conjoining hand kept them together. The order that reigns throughout nature could not proceed so regularly and uniformly if there were not a Being, unchangeable and steadfast, to order and dispose so great a diversity of changes. This Being, the creator and ruler of all things, I call God.

P. As thy sentiments on these

ben ryzt feer þat þou ne shalt remembren þilke þing þat þou seidest þat þou nistest nat. what þing quod I. ¶ by whiche gouerment quod she þat þis worlde is gouerned. Me remembriþ it wel quod I. and I confesse wel þat I ne wist[e] it nat ¶ But al be it so þat I see now from afer what þou purposest ¶ Al gates I desire zit to herkene it of þe more pleynely. ¶ þou ne wendest nat quod she a litel here byforne þat men sholden doute þat þis worlde is gouerned by god. ¶ Certys quod I ne zitte doute I it nauzt. ne I nil neuer wene þat it were to doute. as who seiþ. but I wot wel þat god gouerneþ þis worlde. ¶ And I shal shortly answer þe by what resouns I am brouzt to þis. ¶ þis worlde quod I of so many dyuerse and contrarious parties ne myzten neuer han ben assembled in o forme. but yif þere ne were oon þat conioigned so many[e] diuerse] þinges. ¶ And þe same diuersite of hire natures þat so discordeden þat oon fro þat oþer most[e] departen and vnoignen þe þinges þat ben conioigned. yif þere ne were oon þat contened[e] þat he haþ conioigned and ybounde. ne þe certain ordre of nature ne sholde. nat brynge furþe so ordinee moeuyng. by places. by tymes. by doynge. by spaces. by qualites. yif þere ne were oon þat were ay stedfast dwellynge. þat ordeyned[e] and disposed[e] þise diuersites of moeuynges. ¶ and þilke þinge what so euer it be. by whiche þat alle þinges ben maked and ylad. I clepe hym god þat is a worde þat is vsed to alle folke. þan seide she. syn þou felest þus þise þinges quod she. I trowe þat I haue lytel more to done. þat þou myzty of

2833 *whiche*—which

gouernment—gouernment

worde—wordyl

2835 *wist[e]*—wiste

2837 *pleynely*—pleynly

2838 *here byforne*—her by-
forne

2839 *worlde is*—world nis

2890 *zitte doute* — yit ne

dowte

nil—nel

2832 *wot*—MS. wote, C. wot

2892, 2894 *worlde*—world

2893 *answere*—answren

2894 *many*—manye

2895 *myzten*—myhte

2896 *þere*—þer

many[e]—manye

2897 [*diuerse*]—from C.

hire—hir

2898 *most[e]*—moste

2900 *þere*—þer

contened[e]—contenede

haþ—MS. haþe

2902 *furþe*—forth

ordinee moeuyng—ordene

moeuynges

2904 *þere*—þer

stedfast—stidefast

2905 *ordeyned[e]*—ordeynede

disposed[e]—disponede

2907 *whiche*—which

ben—be

ylad—MS. yladde, C. I-ladd

2908 *worde*—word

folke—foolke

wilfulnesse hool *and* sounde ne se eftsones þi contre.
¶ But lat vs loken þe þinges þat we han purposed her-
byform. ¶ Haue I nat noumbred *and* seid quod she
þat suffisaunce is in blisfulnesse. *and* we han accorded
þat god is *and* þilke same blisfulnesse. ¶ yis forsoþe quod
I. *and* þat to gouerne þis worlde quod she. ne shal he
neuer han nede of none helpe fro wiþoute. for ellys yif
he had[de] nede of any helpe. he ne sholde not haue
[no] ful suffisaunce. 3is þus it mot nedes be quod I.
¶ þan ordeyneþ he by hym self al oon alle þinges quod
she. þat may nat ben denied quod I. ¶ And I haue
shewed þat god is þe same good. ¶ It remembreþ me
wel quod I. ¶ þan ordeineþ he alle þinges by þilke
goode quod she. Syn he whiche we han accorded to
ben good gouerneþ alle þingus by hym self. *and* he is a
keye *and* a stiere by whiche þat þe edifice of þis worlde
is ykept stable *and* wiþ oute corrupynge ¶ I accorde
me gretly quod I. *and* I aperceiuede a litel here byform
þat þou woldest seyne þus. Al be it so þat it were by
a þinne suspecion. I trowe it wel quod she. ¶ For as
I trowe þou leedest nowe more ententify þine eyen to
loken þe verray goodes ¶ but napeles þe þinges þat I
shal telle þe zit ne sheweþ nat lasse to loken. what is
þat quod I. ¶ So as men trowen quod she *and* þat
ryztfully þat god gouerneþ alle þinges by þe keye of his
goodnesse. ¶ And alle þise same þinges as I [haue]
tauzt þe. hasten hem by naturel entencion to comen
to goode þer may no man douten. þat þei ne ben
gouerned uoluntariely. *and* þat þei ne conuerten [hem]
nat of her owen wille to þe wille of hire ordenour. as
þei þat ben accordyng *and* enclinyng to her gouernour

points are so just
I have but little
more to do—for
thou mayest be
happy and secure,
and revisit thy
own country. But
let us reflect a
little more upon
these matters.
Did we not agree
that *Sufficiency* is
of the nature of
true happiness?
And have we not
seen that God is
that true felicity,
and that He needs
no external aid
nor instruments?
For if he should,
he would not be
self-sufficient.
And he directs all
things by himself
alone?

B. It cannot be
gainsaid.
P. I have shown
that God is the
chief good; God
must, therefore, di-
rect and order all
things by *good*,
since he governs
them by himself,
whom we have
proved to be the
supreme good,
2928

and he is that
helm and rudder,
by which this ma-
chine of the world
is steadily and se-
curely conducted.
B. I entirely agree
to this, and partly
anticipated your
remarks. P. I
believe it; for your
eyes are now more
intent upon these
great truths re-
lating to true
felicity; but what
I am going to say is
not less open to
your view.

B. What is that?
P. As we believe
that God governs
all things by his
goodness, and that
all things have a
natural tendency
towards the *good*,
can it be doubted
but that they all
voluntarily sub-

2911 *wilfulnesse* — weleful-
nesse
2912 *han*—ha
2913 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð
2916 *worlde*—world
2917 *none helpe*—non help
2918 *had[de]*—hadde
 helpe—help
2919 [no]—from C.
2920 *al oon*—allone

2921 *ben denied*—be denyed |
2924, 2926 *whiche*—which
2925 *ben*—be
2926 *worlde*—world
2928 *gretly*—gretely
 here—her.
2929 *seyne*—seye
2931 *nowe*—now
2932 *napeles*—nat[h]les
2935 *ryztfully*—MS. on ryzt-

fully
2936 [*haue*]—from C.
2938 *goode*—good
2939 [*hem*]—from C.
2940 *nat*—omitted
 her—hir
 owen—owne
 wille (both)—wil
 hire—hyr
2941 *her*—hyr

[* Fol. 23 b.]
mit to the will
and control
of their ruler?
B. It cannot be
otherwise. There
would be no safety
for those who
obey, if the discord
of a portion were
allowed. P. Is
there anything
that follows the

2948

dictates of nature
that seeks to
counteract the will
of God? B. No.
P. If there should
be any such, it
could not pre-
vail against
him, who is su-
premely happy
and consequently
omnipotent.
Then there is
nothing that
either will or can
withstand this
supreme good?
B. Nothing,
certainly.

P. It is then the
supreme good that

2958

governs and
orders all things'
powerfully and
benignly.
B. I am delighted
with your *conclu-
sions*, but much
more with your
language; so that
fools may be
ashamed of their
objections to the
divine govern-
ment.

[Chaucer's gloss.]
P. You have read
the Poets' fables,

2966

how the Giants
stormed heaven—
how they were re-
pulsed and
punished accord-
ing to their
deserts; but may
we not compare
our reasons to-
gether, for by so
doing some clear
spark of truth may
shine forth?

2943 *realme*—Reaume
seme—semen
2945 *pere*—ther
2947 *gone a zeyne*—goon ayein
2948 *enforced[e]*—enforcede
myzt[e]—myhte
auayle—auaylen
2949 *a zeyns*—a-yenis
2951 *outerly*—owtrely
myzt[e]—myhte
auaylen—MS. *aualeyne*,

and her kyng. ¶ It mot nedys be so quod. I. * ¶ For
þe realme ne sholde not seme blisful zif þere were a zok
of mysdrawynges in diuerse parties ne þe sauynge of
obedient þinges ne sholde nat be. þan is þere no þing
quod she þat kepib hys nature: þat enforceþ hym to
gone a zeyne god. ¶ No quod. I. ¶ And if þat any þing
enforced[e] hym to wipstonde god. myzt[e] it auayle at
þe laste a zeyns hym þat we han graunted to ben al
myzty by þe ryzt of blisfulnesse. ¶ Certis quod I al
outerly it ne myzt[e] nat auaylen hym. þan is þere no
þing quod she þat eyþer wol or may wipstonde to þis
souereyne good. ¶ I trowe nat quod. I ¶ þan is
þilke þe souereyne good quod she þat alle þingus
gouerneþ strongly and ordeyneþ hem softly. þan seide I
þus. I delite me quod I nat oonly in þe endes or in þe
somes of [the] resouns þat þou hast concludid and
proued. ¶ But þilke wordes þat þou vvest deliten me
moche more. ¶ So at þe last[e] foolles þat somtyme
renden greet[e] þinges auzten ben asshamed of hem
self. ¶ þat is to seyne þat we foolles þat reprehenden
wickedly þe þingus þat touchen goddes gouernaunce we
auzten ben asshamed of oure self. As I þat seide god
refuseþ oonly þe werkes of men. and ne entremetiþ nat
of hem. p. þou hast wel herd quod she þe fables of þe
poetes. how þe geauntes assailden þe heuene wip þe
goddess. but for soþe þe debonaire force of god disposed[e]
hem so as it was worþi. þat is to seyne distroied[e] þe
geauntes. as it was worþi. ¶ But wilt þou þat we
ioygnen togedre þilke same resouns. for perauenture of
swiche coniunccioun may sterten vp some faire sperkele
of soþe ¶ Do quod I as þe list. wenest þou quod she

C. auaylen
hym—hem
pere—ther
2952 *wol*—wole
wipstonde—with-stondyn
þis souereyne—his soue-
2955 *softly*—softitely [reyn
2957 *somes*—somme
[the]—from C.
2959 *last[e]*—laste
2960 *greet[e]*—grete

2960, 2963 *auzten*—owhten
2961 *seyne*—seyn
2965 *of hem*—of it
herd—MS. herde, C. herd
2967 *disposed[e]*—desposede
2968 *seyne distroied[e]*—seyn
destroyede
2971 *swiche*—swych
some—som
2972 *soþe*—soth
list—liste

þat god ne is almyȝty. no man is in doute of it. Certys quod I no wyȝt ne defendiþ it if he be in hys mynde. but he quod she þat is al myȝty þere nis no þing þat he ne may do. þat is soþe quod I. May god done yuel quod she. ¶ Syn þat he ne may not done yuel þat may done alle þinges. scornest þou me quod. I. or ellys pleyest þou or deceiuest þou me. þat hast so wouen me wiþ þi resouns. þe house of didalus so entrelaced. þat it is vnable to ben vnaced. þou þat oþer while entrest þere þou issest and oþer while issest þere þou entrest. ne fooldest þou nat to gidre by replicacioun of wordes a maner wondirful cercle or enviroynyng of symplidite deuyne. ¶ For certys a litel her byforne whan þou bygunne atte blisfulnesse þou seidest þat it is souereyne good. and seidest þat it is set in souereyne god. and þat god is þe ful[le] blisfulnesse. for whiche þou ȝaf[e] me as a couenable ȝifte. þat is to seyne þat no wyȝt nis blisful. but yif he be good al so þer wiþ and seidest eke þat þe forme of goode is þe substaunce of god. and of blisfulnesse. and seidest þat þilke same oone is þilke same goode þat is requered and desired of al þe kynde of þinges. and þou proeuedest in disputyng þat god gouerneþ alle [the] þinges of þe worlde by þe gouernementys of bountee. and seydest þat alle þinges wolen ybeyen to hym. and seidest þat þe nature of yuel nis no þing. and þise þinges ne shewedest þou nat wiþ no resouns ytake fro wiþoute but by proues in cercles and homelyche knowen. ¶ þe whiche proeues drawn to hem self hir feiþ and hir accorde eueriche [of] hem of oþer. þan seide she þus. I ne scorne þe nat ne pleye ne desseyue

B. As you please.
P. Is God omnipotent?
B. No one doubts it.

P. If he is almighty, there are, then, no limits to his power?

B. He can doubtless do all things.

P. May God do evil? B. No.

P. Is evil nothing, since God, who is almighty, cannot do it?

B. Dost thou mock me or play with me, leading me with thy arguments into an inextricable labyrinth, and enclosing me in a wonderful circle of Divine Simplicity? For thou didst first begin with happiness, and didst say that it was the sovereign good, and that it resided in God; then, that God was that Good and the

2989
perfection of happiness; and, hence, thou didst infer that nobody could be happy unless he became likewise a God. Again, thou saidst that the very form of good was the substance whereof God and happiness were composed, and that it was the object and desire of all things in nature. Thou didst prove that God rules the world by his goodness, and that all things willingly obeyed him; and that evil has no existence. These truths you established by forcible and natural arguments, and by no strained and far-fetched reasons.

2989
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2973 is (1)—be
man—omitted
is (2)—nis
2974 defendiþ—dowteth
2975 þere—ther
2976 do—C. omits
soþe—soth
done—don
2978, 2979 done—don
2980 wouen—MS. wonnen, C.

wouen
2981 house—hows
2983 þere (both)—ther
2987 atte—at
2988 set—MS. sette, C. set
2989 ful[le]—fulle
whiche—which
ȝaf[e]—yaue
ȝifte—yift
seyne—seyn

2992, 2994 goode—good
2993 oone—oon
2994 al—alle
2996 [the]—from C.
2998 ybeyen—obeyen
2999 no (2)—none
3000 ytake—1-taken
3001 homelyche—hoornlich
3002 eueriche—euerich
[of]—from C.

P. I have not deduced you, for by the Divine aid we have accomplished our chief task. I have proved to you that it is an essential property of the Divine nature not to go out of itself, nor to receive into itself anything extraneous. Parmenides says of the Deity that *God is like a well-rounded sphere.*

3012

[* fol. 24.]

He causes the moving globe to revolve, but is himself immovable. If I have chosen my arguments from the subjects within range of our discussion, do not let that surprise you, for, as Plato has taught us, there ought to be an alliance between the words and the subject of discourse.

þe. but I haue shewed to þe þinge þat is grettest ouer alle þinges by þe 3ifte of god þat we some tyme prayden ¶ For þis is þe forme of [the] deuyne substaunce. þat is swiche þat it ne slydeþ nat in to outerest foreine þinges. ne ne rec[e]yueþ no strange þinges in hym. but ryzt as parmaynws seide in grek of þilke deuyne substaunce. he seide þus þat þilke deuyne substaunce torneþ þe worlde and þilke cercle moeueable of þinges while þilke dyuyne substaunce kepþ it self wiþ outen moeuyng. þat * is to seyne þat it ne moeuiþ neuere mo. and zitte it moeueþ alle oþer þinges. but na-þeles yif I [haue] stered resouns þat ne ben nat taken fro wiþ oute þe compas of þe þinge of whiche we treten. but resouns þat ben bystowed wiþ inne þat compas þere nis nat whi þat þou sholde[st] merueylen. sen þou hast lerned by þe sentence of plato þat nedes þe wordes moten ben cosyne to þo þinges of whiche þei speken. 3020

FELIX QUI POTERIT. ET CETERA.

[The .12. Metur.]

Happy is he that hath seen the lucid spring of truth! Happy the man that hath freed himself from terrestrial chains! The Thracian poet, consumed with grief for the loss of his wife, sought relief from music. His mournful songs drew the woods along; the rolling rivers ceased to flow; the savage beasts became heedless of their prey; the timid hare was not aghast at the hound. But the

Blisful is þat man þat may seen þe clere welle of good. Blisful is he þat may vnbynde hym fro þe bonde of heuy erþe. ¶ þe poete of trace [orpheus] þat somtyme hadde ryzt greet sorowe for þe deep of hys wijf. aftir þat he hadde makid by hys wepely songes þe wodes meueable to rennen. and hadde ymakid þe ryueres to stonden stille. and makid þe hertys and hyndes to ioignen dredles hir sides to cruel lyouns to herkene his songe. and had[de] makid þat þe hare was nat agast of þe hounde whiche þat was plesed by hys songe. so þat whane þe most[e] ardaunt loue of hys wijf brende þe

3004 þe þinge—the the thing

3005 3ifte—yift
some tyme prayden —
whilom preyeden

3006 [the]—from C.

3007 swiche—swich

3009 parmaynws -- a par-
manides

3011 worlde—world

3012 while—whil

wiþ outen—with owte

3013 seyne—seyn

3014 zitte—vit

oþer—oother

3015 [haue]—from C.

3016 whiche—which

3017 wiþ inne—with in

3020 cosyne—MS.conceyued,
C. cosyne

þo—þe

whiche—which

3022 vnbynde—vnbyndyn

3022 bonde—bondes

3023 [orpheus]—from C.

somtyme—whilom

3024 sorowe—sorwe

3028 dredles—dredles

to herkene—forto herkuen

3029 had[de]—hadde

3030 þat (2)—omitted

3031 most[e]—moste

entrailes of his brest. ne þe songes þat hadde ouer comen alle þinges ne myzten nat assuage hir lord orpheus. ¶ He pleyned[e] hym of þe godes þat weren cruel to hym. he wente hym to þe houses of helle and þere he tempred[e] hys blaundissyng songes by re-sounyng of hys strenges. ¶ And spak and song in wepyng alle þat euer he hadde reseuyed and laued oute of þe noble welles of hys modir calliope. þe goddesse. and he song wijþ as mychel as he myzt[e] of wepyng. and wijþ as myche as loue þat doubled[e] his sorwe myzt[e] zeuen hym and teche hym in his seke herte. ¶ And he commoeuede þe helle and requered[e] and souzte by swete preiere þe lordes of soules in helle of relesyng. þat is to seyne to zelden hym hys wif. ¶ Cerberus þe porter of helle wijþ his þre heuedes was cauzt and al abaist for þe new[e] songe. and þe þre goddeses furijs and vengerisse of felonies þat tourmenten and agasten þe soules by anoye wexen sorweful and sory and wepen teres for pitee. þan was nat þe heued of Ixione ytourmented by þe ouerþrowing whele. ¶ And tantalus þat was destroyed by þe woodnesse of longe þrust dispiseþ þe flodes to drynke. þe fowel þat hyzt volor þat etijþ þe stomak or þe giser of ticius is so fulfilled of his songe þat it nil etyn ne tyren no more. ¶ Atte þe laste þe lorde and Iuge of soules was moeued to misericordes and cried[e] we ben ouer comen quod he. yif[e] we to orpheus his wijf to bere hym compaignye he haþ welle I-bouzt hir by his faire songe and

songs that did all things tame, could not allay their master's ardent love. He bewailed the cruelty of the gods above, and descended to Pluto's realm.

3036

There he struck his tuneful strings and sang, exhausting all the harmonious art imparted to him by his mother Calliope.

In songs dictated both by grief and love, he implored the infernal powers to give him back his Eurydice.

3044

Cerberus, Hell's three-headed porter, stood amazed; the Furies, tormentors of guilty souls, did weep;

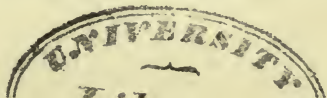
3049

Ixion, tormented by the revolving wheel, found rest; Tantalus, suffering from a long and raging thirst, despised the stream; and the greedy vulture did cease to eat and tear the growing liver of Tityus. At length Pluto himself relented, crying out, 'We are overcome! Let us give him back his wife, he hath well won her by his song.'

3032 hadde—hadden
3033 assuage—asswagen
lorde—lord
3034 pleyned[e]—pleynede
godes—heuene goodes
3035 wente—MS. wenten, C.
wente
3036 tempred[e] hys—tem-
prede hise
3037 of hys—C. omits
spak—MS. spakke, C. spak
song—MS. songe, C. soonge
3038 alle—al
3039 oute—owt
goddesse—goddess
3040 song—MS. songe, C.

soonge
mychel—mochel
3041 myche—mochel
doubled[e]—dowblede
3042 myzt[e]—myhte
zeuen—yeue
teche—thechen
in—herte—omitted
3043 commoeuede—MS. com-
aunded, C. commoeuede
3044 souzte—by-sowhte
3045 zelden—yilden
3046 his—hise
3047 cauzt—MS. cauzte, C.
cawht
new[e] songe—newe song

3049 anoye — sorweful —
anoy woxen soruful
3050 þan—tho ne
3051 whele—wheel
3053 þrust—thurst
hyzt—hihte
3054 fulfilled—fulfyld
3055 songe—song
3056 Atte—At
lorde—lord
3057 cried[e]—cryde
3058 yif[e]—yiue
3059 haþ—MS. haþe
welle—wel
faire—C. omits
songe—song



But we will lay this injunction upon him. Till he escape the infernal bounds, he shall not cast a backward look.³ But, who shall give a lover any law? Love is a greater law than may be given to any earthly man. Alas! having left the realms of night, Orpheus cast a look behind and lost his too-much-loved Euridice. This fable belongs to all you, whose minds would view the Sovereign Good.

For he who fixes his thoughts upon earthly things and low, must lose the noble and heaven-imparted Good.

his ditee. but we wil putten a lawe in þis. *and* couen-
aunt in þe 3ifte. þat is to seyne. þat til he be out of
helle yif he loke byhynden hym [þat] hys wijf shal
comen azeine to vs ¶ but what is he þat may zeue a
lawe to loueres. loue is a gretter lawe *and* a strengere to
hym self þan any lawe þat men may zeuen. ¶ Allas
whan Orpheus *and* his wijf were al most at þe termes of
þe nyzt. þat is to seyne at þe last[e] boundes of helle.
Orpheus loked[e] abakwarde on Erudice his wijf *and*
lost[e] hir *and* was deed. ¶ þis fable apperteineþ to
3ow alle who so euer desireþ or sekiþ to lede his þouzte
in to þe souereyne day. þat is to seyne to clerenes[se]
of souereyne goode. ¶ For who so þat euere be so ouer
comen þat he fycche hys eyen in to þe put[te] of helle.
þat is to seyne who so setteþ his þouztes in erþely
þinges. al þat euer he haþ drawn of þe noble good
celestial he lesiþ it whan he lokeþ þe helles. þat is to
seyne to lowe þinges of þe erþe.

EXPLICIT LIBER TERCIVS.

[* fol. 24 b.]

* INCIPIIT LIBER QUARTUS.

HEC CUM PHILOSOPHIA DIGNITATE VULTVS.

[The 1^{ma} prose.]

When P. with grace and dignity had poured forth her songs, I, not quite quit of my load of grief, interrupted her as she was continuing her discourse.

3062 All your dis-
courses, O my
conductress to the

Whanne philosophie hadde songen softly *and* delita-
bly þe forseide þinges keypyng þe dignitee of hir
choere in þe wey3te of hir wordes. I þan þat ne hadde
nat al outerly forzetten þe wepyng *and* mournyng
þat was set in myne herte for-brek þe entencioun of hir
þat entended[e] 3itte to seyne oþer þinges. ¶ Se quod
I. þou þat art gideresse of verray lyzte þe þinges þat þou

3060 wil putten—wol putte
3062 byhynden—by-hynde
[þat]—from C.
3063 to—vn-to
3064 gretter—gret
3066 were al most—weren
almest
3067 last[e]—laste
3068 loked[e] abakwarde—

lookede abakward
3069 lost[e]—loste
3070 þouzte—thowht
3071 clerenes[se]—clernesse
3072 souereyne goode—soue-
reyn god
3073 put[te]—putte
3074 setteþ—sette
3075 haþ—MS. haþe

3078 softly—softely
3080 choere in—cheere *and*
3082 set—MS. sette, C. set
myne—Myn
for-brek—MS. for-breke, C.
Forbrak
3083 entended[e]—entendede
3084 lyzte—lyht

hast seid [me] hider to ben to me so clere *and* so shewyng by þe deuyne loking of hem *and* by þi resouns þat þei ne mowe nat ben ouercomen. ¶ And þilke þingus þat þou toldest me. al be it so þat I hadde som tyme fo[r]zetten hem for [the] sorwe of þe wronge þat hap ben don to me. 3it nabeles þei ne were nat alouterly vnknewen to me. but þis same is namly a gret cause of my sorwe. þat so as þe gouernoure of þinges is goode. yif þat yuelys mowen ben by any weyes. or ellys yif þat yuelys passen wiþ outen punyssheinge. þe whiche þinge oonly how worþi it is to ben wondred vpon. þou considerest it weel þi self certeynly. but 3itte to þis þing þere is an oþer þing y-oiigned more to ben ywondred vpon. ¶ For felonie is emperisse *and* flowreþ ful of rychesse. and vertues nis nat al oonly wiþ outen medes. but it is cast vndir *and* fortroden vndir þe feet of felonous folk. *and* it abieþ þe tourmentes in sted of wicked felouns ¶ Of al[le] whiche þing þer nis no wyzt þat [may] merueyllen ynou3 ne compleyne þat swiche þinges ben don in þe regne of god þat alle þinges woot. and alle þinges may *and* ne wool nat but only goode þinges. ¶ þan seide she þus. certys *quod* she þat were a grete meruayle *and* an enbaissynge wiþouten ende. *and* wel more horrible þan alle monstres yif it were as þou wenest. þat is to sein. þat in þe ryzt ordeyne house of so mochel a fader *and* an ordenour of meyne. þat þe vesseles þat ben foule *and* vyle sholde ben honoured *and* heried. and þe precious uesteles sholde ben defouled *and* vyle. but it nis nat so. For yif þe þinges

true light! have been very clear and unanswerable, both by the divine testimony which they carry along with them, and by thy irrefragable arguments. Through the oppression of grief I had forgotten these truths, but was not wholly ignorant of them. The principal cause of my trouble is this—that, whilst the absolute Ruler of all things is goodness itself, evil exists and is allowed to pass unpunished. This, to say the least, is astonishing.

3097

Moreover, while *vice* flourishes *virtue* is not only unrewarded, but trampled under foot by base and profligate men, and suffers the punishment due to impiety. Here is cause for wonderment, since such things are possible under the government of an omniscient and omnipotent God, who wills nothing but what is the best.

3107

P. It were indeed, not only marvellous, but also horribly monstrous, if, in the well-regulated family of so great a master, the worthless vessels should be honoured and the precious ones be despised:—but it is not so. For if

3035 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seid
[me]—from C.
3086 þi—the
3087 *mowe*—mowen
3088 *som tyme*—whilom
3089 [the]—from C.
wronge—wrong
hap—MS. hape
3090 *don*—MS. done, C. don
were—weeren
3091 *namly*—namely
3092 *goode*—good
3094 *wiþ outen*—with owte

3095 *þinge*—thing
3097 *pere*—ther
ben ywondred—be wondred
3098 *flowreþ*—MS. folweþ, C. flowrith
3099 *rychesse*—Rychesses
vertues—vertu
wiþ outen—with owte
3101 *in sted*—in stide
3102 *wicked*—wikkede
al[le]—alle
þing—thinges

3103 [may]—from C.
3104 *don*—MS. done, C. doon
3105 *wool*—wole
goode—good
3107 *grete*—gret
enbaissynge—enbasshinge
3108 *alle*—al
3109 *ordeyne house*—ordence
hows
3111, 3113 *vyle*—vyl
3112 *heried*—he heried
sholde—sholden
3113 *þe*—tho

the conclusions we have come to, be sound and irrefragable, we must confess that under God's rule the good are always powerful and mighty, and the wicked weak and contemptible; that vice never passes unpunished, nor virtue goes unrewarded; that happiness attends good men, and misfortune falls to the lot of the wicked. These and many other truths of like nature shall be proved to thee, and shall put an end to thy complaints, and strengthen thee with firmness and solidity. Having shown you a picture of true felicity, and wherein it resides, I shall now trace out the way which will lead you to your home. I will give your soul wings to soar aloft, so that all tribulation being removed, you may, under my guiding, by my road, and with my vehicle, return whole and sound into your own country.

[The fyrste metur.]
I have nimble wings that enable the mind to rise from earth to heaven, to leave the clouds behind, to pass the region of perpetual flame, and to reach the starry mansion, journeying either by Phœbus'

3139

pat I haue concluded a litel here byforne ben kept hool and vnaced. þou shalt wel knowe by þe auctorite of god. of þe whos regne I speke þat certys þe good[e] folk ben alwey myzty. and shrewes ben alwey yuel and feble. ne þe vices ben neuere mo wiþ outen peyne: ne þe vertues ne ben nat wiþ outen mede. and þat blisfulnesses comen alwey to goode folke. and infortune comeþ alwey to wicked folke. ¶ And þou shalt wel knowe many[e] þinges of þis kynde þat sholle cessen þi pleyntes. and stedfast þe wiþ stedfast saddenesse. ¶ And for þou hast seyn þe forme of þe verray blisfulnesse by me þat [haue] somtyme I-shewed it þe. And þou hast knowen in whom blysfulnesse is set. alle þinges I treted þat I trowe ben nessessarie to put[te] furþe ¶ I shal shewe þe. þe weye þat shal brynge þe azeine vnto þi house and I shal ficche feþeres in þi þouzt by whiche it may arysen in heyzte. so þat al tribulacioun don away. þou by my gidyng & by my pape and by my sledes shalt mowen retourne hool and sounde in to þi contre. 3132

SUNT ETENIM PENNE. ET CETERA.

I Haue for soþe swifte feþeres þat surmounten þe heyzt of þe heuene whan þe swifte þouzt hap cloþed it self. in þo feþeres it dispiseþ þe hat[e]ful erþes. and surmounteþ þe heyzenesse of þe greet[e] eyir. and it seiþ þe cloudes by-hynde hir bak and passeþ þe heyzt of þe regioun of þe fire þat eschaufiþ by þe swifte moeuyng of þe firmament. til þat she a-reisþ hir in til þe houses þat

3114 here byforne—her by-
forn
kept—MS. kepte, C. kept
3116 good[e]—goode
3117 alwey (2)—feble — al-
wey owt cast and feble
3118, 3119 wiþ outen — with
owte
3119 vertues—vertuus
3122 many[e]—manye
sholle cessen — shollen
cesen
3123 stedfast — stedfast—
strengthyn the with
stidfast

3124 seyn — MS. seyne, C.
seyn
3125 [haue]—from C.
somytyme—whilom
3126 set—MS. sette, C. I-set
3127 put[te] furþe — putten
forth
3128 weye—wey
brynge—bryngen
þi house—thin hows
3129 ficche—fycchen
3130 arysen—areysen
don—MS. done, C. ydoñ
3131 pape—paath
shalt mowen—shal mowe

3132 sounde—sownd
3133 heyzt of þe heuene —
heyhte of heuene
3134 hap—MS. hape
3136 heyzenesse — eyir —
Roundnesse of the grete
ayr
seiþ—seth
3137 hir—his
3138 fire—Fyr
eschaufiþ—MS. eschaufiþe
3139 she—he
hir—hym

beren þe sterres. *and* ioygneþ hir weyes wiþ þe sonne
phebus. *and* felawshipeþ þe weye of þe olde colde
saturnus. *and* she ymaked a knyzt of þe clere sterre.
þat is to seyne þat þe soule is maked goddys knyzt by
þe sekyng of treuþe to comen to þe verray knowlege of
god. *and* þilke soule renne[þ] by þe cercele *of þe sterres
in alle þe places þere as þe shynnyng nyzt is depeynted.
þat is to seyne þe nyzt þat is cloudeles. for on nyztes þat
ben cloudeles it semeþ as þe heuene were peynted wiþ
dyuerse ymages of sterres. *and* whan þe soule haþ gon
ynouþ she shal forleten þe last[e] poynt of þe heuene.
and she shal pressen *and* wenden on þe bak of þe swifte
firmament. *and* she shal ben maked perfit of þe drede-
fulle clerenesse of god. ¶ þere haldeþ þe lorde of kynges
þe ceptre of his myzt *and* attempereþ þe gouernementes
of þis worlde. *and* þe shynnyng iuge of þinges stable in
hym self gouerneþ þe swifte carte. þat is to seyne þe
circular moeuynge of [the] sonne. *and* yif þi weye ledeþ
þe aþeyne so þat þou be brouzt þider. þan wilt þou seye
now þat þat is þe contre þat þou requeredest of whiche þou
ne haddest no mynde. but now it remembreþ me wel
here was I born. here wil I fastne my degree. here wil
I dwelle. but yif þe lyke þan to loken on þe derkenesse
of þe erþe þat þou hast for-leten. þan shalt þou seen þat
þise felonous tyrauntes þat þe wrecched[e] poeple dredeþ
now shule ben exiled from þilke faire contre.

radiant path, or
accompanying
cold and aged
Saturn, or riding,
3142

as a soldier, with
Mars. [Chaucer's
Gloss.] Through
every sphere she
(the mind) runs

[* fol. 25.]
where night is
most cloudless and
where the sky is
decked with stars,
until she reaches
the heaven's
utmost sphere—
then pressing on
she shall be pre-
pared to see the
true Source of
Light, where the
great King of
kings bears his
mighty sceptre,
and holds the
reins of the
universe. Here
the great Judge,
standing in
shining robes,
firmly guides his
winged chariot,
and rules the
tumultuous affairs
of the world.

If you at length
shall arrive at
this abode, you
will say this is
my country—here
I was born—and
here will I abide.

3161

And should you
deign to look on
the gloomy earth,
you'll see those
tyrants, the fear
of wretched folk,
banished from
those fair realms.

3140 *hir*—his
3141 *weye*—wey
 þe—*saturnus*—MS. sa-
 turnus þe olde colde
3142 *saturnus*—*saturnis*
 she—he
3143 *soule*—thowght
3144 *treuþe*—trowthe
 knowlege—knochele
3145 *soule*—thoght
3146 *depeynted*—painted
3149-50 *and whan*—*she snal*

—*and* whanne he hath
I-doon there I-nowh he
shal
3149 *haþ*—MS. haþe
3150 *þe last[e]*—*heuene*—
 the laste heuene
3151-2 *she*—he
3152-3 *of þe*—*of god*—of the
 worshipful lyht of god .
3153 *þere haldeþ*—ther halt
3155 *þis worlde*—the world
3156 *carte*—cart or wayn

3157 [*the*]—from C.
3159 *whiche*—which
3161 *here* (1, 2, 3)—her
 born—MS. borne, C. born
 wil (1)—wol
 wil (2)—wole
3162 *lyke*—liketh
 derkenesse—dyrknesses
3164 *wrecched[e]*—wrecch-
 ede
3165 *shule*—shollen
 from—fro

TUNC EGO PAPE INQUAM, ET CETERA.

[The 2^o prose.]

B. Ah! thou promisest me great things indeed!—but without delay, satisfy the expectations you have raised.

P. You must first be convinced that the good are always strong and powerful and the wicked destitute of strength. These assertions do

3173

mutually demonstrate each other. For since good and evil are contrary, if good be powerful evil must be impotent. And if the frailty of evil is known, the strength and stability of good must also be known to you. But to convince you I shall proceed to prove it from both these principles, establishing these truths, by arguments drawn first from one of these topics and then from the other. Two things are necessary to every action—the Will and the Power; if either be wanting, nothing can be effected. A man can do nothing without the concurrence of his will, and if power faileth the will is of no effect.

Hence, if you see a person desirous

3191

of getting what he cannot procure, you are sure he lacks power to obtain it. And if you see another do what he had a mind to do, can you doubt

PAnne seide I þus. [owh] I wondre me þat þou by-hetest me so grete þinges. ne I ne doute nat þat þou ne mayst wel performe þat þou by-hetest. but I preie þe only þis. þat þou ne tarie nat to telle me þilke þinges þat þou hast meoued. first quod she þou most nedes knowen. þat good[e] folk ben al wey strong[e] and myzty. and þe shrewes ben feble and desert and naked of alle strengþes. and of þise þinges certys eueryche of hem is declared and shewed by oþer. ¶ For so as good and yuel ben two contraries. yif so be þat goode be stedfast. þan sheweth þe fieblesse of yuel al openly. and yif þou knowe clereþ þe freelnesse of yuel. þe stedfastnesse of goode is knowen. but for as moche as þe fey of my sentence shal be þe more ferme and haboundaunt. I wil goon by þat oon wey and by þat oþer and I wil conferme þe þinges þat ben purposed now on þis side and now on þat syde. ¶ Two þinges þer ben in whiche þe effect of alle þe dedes of man kynde standiþ. þat is to seyn. wil and power. and yif þat oon of þise two fayleþ þere nis no þing þat may be don. for yif þat wil lakkeþ þere nys no wyzt þat vndirtakeþ to done þat he wol not don. and yif power fayleþ þe wille nis but in ydel and stant for nauzt. and þer of comeþ it þat yif þou se a wyzt þat wolde geten þat he may nat geten. þou mayst nat douten þat power ne fayleþ hym to hauen þat he wolde. ¶ þis is open and clere quod I. ne it may nat ben denyed in no manere. and yif þou se a wyzt quod she. þat haþ don þat he wolde don þou nilt nat douten þat he ne haþ had power to done it. no quod. I. and in þat. þat euery wyzt may. in þat þat men may holden

3166 [owh]—from C.

3171 good[e]—goode

strong[e]—stronge

3172 desert—dishert

3173 eueryche—euerich

3175 goode—good

3176 stedfast—stidefast

3177 freelnesse—frelenesse

stedfastnesse — stidefast-

nesse

3178 goode—good

3180 oon—oo

wil (2)—wole

3185-6 þere—ther

3185 don—MS. done, C. don

3186 done—don

3187 wille—wil

3188 comeþ—comht

3189 mayst—MS. mayste, C. mayst

3191 clere—cler

3192 denyed—denoyed

3193-4 haþ—MS. haþe

3193 don (both)—MS. done,

C. doon

3194 had—MS. hadde, C. had

done—doon

hym myzty. as who seip in as moche as a man is myzty to done a ping. in so moche men halden hym myzty. and in þat þat he ne may. in þat men demen hym to ben feble. I confesse it wel quod I. Remembriþ þe quod she þat I. haue gadred *and* shewed by forseide resouns þat al þe entencioun of þe wil of mankynde whiche þat is lad by diuerse studies hastiþ to comen to blisfulnesse. ¶ It remembreþ me wel quod I þat it hath ben shewed. *and* recorderþ þe nat þan quod she. þat blisfulnesse is pilke same goode þat men requeren. so þat whan þat blisfulnesse is required *of alle. þat goode [also] is required *and* desired of al. It recorderþ me wel quod I. for haue it gretly alwey ficche[d] in my memorie. alle folk þan quod she goode *and* eke badde enforcen hem wiþ oute difference of entencioun to comen to goode. þat is a uerray consequence quod I. and certeyne is quod she þat by þe getyng of goode ben men ymaked goode. þis is certeyne quod. I. ¶ þan geten goode men þat þei desiren. so semeþ it quod I. but wicked[e] folk quod she yif þei geten þe goode þat þei desiren þei [ne] mowen nat ben wicked. so is it quod .I. ¶ þan so as þat oon *and* þat oþer [quod she] desiren good. *and* þe goode folk geten good *and* nat þe wicked folk ¶ þan nis it no doute þat þe goode folk ne ben myzty *and* þe wicked folk ben feble. ¶ who so þat euer quod I douteþ of þis. he ne may nat considre þe nature of pinges. ne þe consequence of resoun. and ouer þis quod she. ¶ yif þat þer ben two pinges þat han o same purpos by kynde. *and* þat one of hem pursueþ *and* performeþ pilke same ping by naturel office. *and* þat oþer ne may nat done þilk naturel office. but folweþ by oþer manere þan is couenable to nature ¶ Hym þat

that he had the power to do it?
B. No, surely.
P. A man, then, is esteemed powerful in respect of what he is able to do, and weak in relation to what he is unable to perform.
B. That is true.
P. Do you remember that I proved that the will of man, following different pursuits, seeks happiness only? Do you recollect too, that it has been shown that happiness is
[* fol. 25 b.] the supreme good of men—and all desire this good, since all seek happiness?
All men, then, good and bad, seek to acquire good? And it is certain that when men obtain good they become good?
3212

B. It is most certain.
P. Do good men, then, get what they desire?
B. It seems so.
P. If evil men obtain the good, they can be no longer evil?
B. It is so.
P. Since then both parties pursue the good, which only the virtuous obtain, we must believe that good men are powerful, and that the wicked are weak and feeble?
B. None can doubt this, save such as either consider not rightly the nature of things, or are incapable of comprehending the force of any reasoning.
P. If two beings have the same end in view—

3196 *as moche*—so moche
3197 *done*—doon
moche—mochel
halden—halt
3201 *whiche*—which
3202 *lad*—MS. ladde, C. lad
3203 *it hath ben*—MS. I herde

þe, C. it hath ben
3205-6 *goode*—good
3206 [*also*]—from C.
3207 *al*—alle
It—I—it nerecordeth me
nat quod I
3210-12(1)-15 *goode*—good

3214 *wicked[e]*—wikkede
3215 [*ne*]—from C.
3216 *mowen*—mowe
3217 [*quod she*]—from C.
3218 *wicked*—wikke (? wikke)
3220 *wicked*—wikkede
3226 *þilk*—þilke

and one of them accomplishes his purpose by the use of natural means, while the other not using legitimate means does not attain his end—which of these two is the most powerful?

B. Illustrate your meaning more clearly.

P. The motion of walking is natural to man? And this motion is the natural office of the feet? Do you grant this?

B. I do.
P. If, then, he who is able to use his feet walks, whilst another lacking this power creeps on his hands—surely he that is able to move naturally upon his feet is more powerful than he who

3243 cannot.

P. The good and bad seek the supreme good: the good by the natural means of virtue—the wicked by gratifying divers desires of earthly things (which is not the natural way of obtaining it). Do you think otherwise?

B. The consequence is plain, and that follows from what has been granted—that the good are powerful, while the wicked are feeble.

P. You rightly anticipate me; for it is a good sign, as physicians well know, when Nature exerts herself and resists the malady. But, as you are so quick of appre-

acomplisib hys purpos kyndely. and 3it he ne acomplisib nat hys owen purpos. wheþer of þise two demest þou for more myzty. ¶ yif þat I coniecte quod .I. þat þou wilt seye algates. 3it I desire to herkene it more pleynelly of þe. þou nilt nat þan denye quod she þat þe moeuement₃ of goynge nis in men by kynde. no for soþe quod I. ne þou ne doutest nat quod she þat þilke naturel office of goynge ne be þe office of feet. I ne doute it nat quod .I. þan quod she yif þat a wyzt be myzty to moeue and goþ vpon hys feet. and anoþer to whom þilke naturel office of feet lakkeþ. enforceþ hym to gone crepyngē vpon hys handes. ¶ whiche of þise two auzte to ben holden more myzty by ryzt. knyrt furþe þe remenaunt quod I. ¶ For no wyzt ne douteþ þat he þat may gone by naturel office of feet. ne be more myzty þan he þat ne may nat ¶ but þe souereyne good quod she þat is euenlyche purposed to þe good folk and to badde. þe good folke seken it by naturel office of uertues. and þe shrewes enforceen hem to geten it by dyuerse couetise of erþely þinges. whiche þat nis no naturel office to geten þilke same souereyne goode. trowest þou þat it be any oþer wyse. nay quod .I. for þe consequence is open and shewyngē of þinges þat I haue graunted. ¶ þat nedes goode folk moten ben myzty. and shrewes feble and vnmyzty. ¶ þou rennest aryzt byfore me quod she. and þis is þe iugement þat is to seyn. ¶ I iuge of þe ryzt as þise leches ben wont forto hopen of seke folk whan þei aperceyuen þat nature is redressed and wiþstondeþ to þe maladie. ¶ But for I see þe now al redy to þe vndirstandyngē I shal shewe þe more þilke and continuel resounz. ¶ For loke now

3229 *owen*—owne

3231 *wilt*—wolt
herkene—herkne

3232 *pleynely*—pleynly

denye—denoye

3233 *moeuement₃* — Moeuement

3237 *goþ*—MS. goþe

hys—hise

3238 *gone*—goon

3239 *hys*—hise

whiche—which

3240 *more*—the Moore

furþe—forth

3242 *gone*—gon

3245 *good*—goode

3246 *uertues*—vertuus

3247 *whiche*—which

3248 *goode*—good

3253 *byfore*—by-form

3254 *forto*—to

3255 *seke*—sike

how gretly shewiþ þe feblesse *and* infirmite of wicked folke. þat ne mowen nat come to þat hire naturel entencioun ledeþ hem. *and* zitte almost þilke naturel entencioun constreineþ hem. ¶ *and* what were to deme þan of shrewes. yif þilke naturel helpe hadde for-leten hem. ¶ þe whiche naturel helpe of entencioun goþ alwey byforne hem. *and* is so grete þat vnneþ it may be ouercomen. ¶ Considre þan how gret defaute of power *and* how gret feblesse þere is in grete felonous folk as who seiþ þe gretter þinges þat ben coueited *and* þe desire nat accomplissed of þe lasse myzt is he þat coueiteþ it *and* may nat acomplisse. ¶ *And* forþi philosophie seiþ þus by souereyne good. ¶ Sherewes ne requere nat lyzt[e] medes ne veyne gaines whiche þei ne may nat folwen ne holden. but þei faylen of þilke some of þe heyzte of þinges þat is to seyne souereyne good. ne þise wrecches ne comen nat to þe effect of souereyne good. *þe whiche þei enforcen hem oonly to geten by nyztes *and* by dayes. ¶ In þe getyn[g] of whiche goode þe strengþe of good folk. is ful wel ysen. For ryzt so as þou myztest demen hym myzty of goynge þat goþ on hys feet til he myzt[e] come to þilke place fro þe whiche place þere ne lay no wey forþer to be gon. Ryzt so most þou nedes demen hym for ryzt myzty þat getiþ *and* atteiniþ to þe ende of alle þinges þat ben to desire. by-zonde þe whiche ende þat þer nis no þing to desire. ¶ Of whiche power of good folk men may conclude þat wicked men semen to ben bareyne *and* naked of alle strengþe. For whi forleten þei vertues *and* folwen vices. nis it nat for þat þei ne knowen nat þe goodes.

hension, I shall continue this mode of reasoning. The weakness of the wicked is conspicuous—they cannot attain the end to which their natural disposition prompts and almost compels them; what would become of them without this natural prompting, so powerful and irresistible? Consider how great is the impotence of the wicked. (The greater the things desired, but unaccomplished, the less is the power of him that desires, and is unable to attain his end.) The wicked seek after no trivial things—which they fail to obtain; but they aspire in

3275
vain to the sovereign good, which they endeavour
[* fol. 26.]
day and night to obtain. The good attain the end of their desires, and therein their power is manifested. For as you deem him a good walker that goes to the end of his journey, so you must esteem him powerful that attains his desires, beyond which there is nothing to desire. Wicked men, then, are destitute of those powers which the good so amply possess. Wherefore do they leave virtue, and follow vice? Is it because they are ignorant of good?

3259 *wicked*—wikkede
3260 *come*—comyn
3261 *þilke*—þilke
3262 *deme*—demen
3263-4 *helpe*—help
3264 *whiche*—which
goþ—MS. goþe
3265 *grete*—gret
vnneþ—vnnethe
be ouercomen—ben ouercome
3267 *þere*—ther

grete—wikkede
3268 *þinges*—thing
ben—is
3271 *Sherewes ne requere*—
ne shrewes ne requeren
3272 *lyzt[e]*—lyhte
veyne—veyn
nat—omitted
3276 *whiche*—which
3277 *getyn[g]*—getinge
whiche goode—which good
3278 *ysen*—MS. and C. ysene

3279 *goþ*—MS. goþe
3280 *myzt[e]*—myhte
3281 *þere*—ther
lay—laye
forþer—forthere
be—ben
3283 *desire*—desired
3284 *þat*—omitted
3285 *whiche*—the which
þat—þat the
3286 *ben*—be

What is more weak and base than the blindness of ignorance? Or do they know the way they ought to follow, but are led astray by lust and covetousness? And so, indeed, weak-minded men are overpowered by intemperance, for they cannot resist vicious temptations. Do they willingly desert Good and turn to Evil? If they do so, they not only cease to be powerful, but even cease to exist. For those who neglect the common end of all beings, cease to exist. You may marvel that I assert that the wicked, the majority of the human race, have no existence—

3304 but it is, however, most true. That the wicked are bad I do not deny—but I do not admit that they have any real existence. You may call a corpse a dead man, but you cannot with propriety call it a man. So the vicious are profligate men, but I cannot confess they absolutely exist. That thing exists that preserves its rank, nature, and constitution, but when it loses these essentials it ceases to be. But, you may say that the wicked have a power to act, nor do I deny it; but their power is an effect of weakness. They can do evil, but this they could

¶ But what þing is more feble *and* more caitif þan is þe blyndenesse of ignoraunce. or ellys þei knowen ful wel whiche þinges þat þei auzten to folwen ¶ but lecherye *and* couetise ouerþroweþ hem mysturned. ¶ *and* certis so doþ distemperaunce to feble men. þat ne mowen nat wrastle azeins þe vices ¶ Ne knowen þei nat þan wel þat þei foreleten þe good wilfully. *and* turnen hem vilfully to vices. ¶ *And* in þis wise þei ne forleten nat oonly to ben myzty. but þei forleten al outerly in any wise forto ben ¶ For þei þat forleten þe comune fyn of alle þinges þat ben. þei for-leten also þerwiþ al forto ben. *and* perauenture it sholde semen to som folk þat þis were a merueile to seyne þat shrewes whiche þat contienen þe more *partie* of men ne ben nat. ne han no beynge. ¶ but napeles it is so. *and* þus stant þis þing for þei þat ben shrewes I denye nat þat þei ben shrewes. but I denye *and* sey[e] symplely *and* pleynly þat þei [ne] ben nat. ne han no beynge. for ryzt as þou myztest seyne of þe careyne of a man þat it were a ded man. ¶ but þou ne myztest nat symplely callen it a man. ¶ So graunt[e] I wel for soþe þat vicious folk ben wicked. but I ne may nat graunten absolutely *and* symplely þat þei ben. ¶ For þilk þing þat wiþ holdeþ ordre *and* kepiþ nature. þilk þing is *and* haþ beynge. but þat þing þat faileþ of þat. þat is to. seyne he þat forletiþ naturel ordre he for-letiþ þilk beyng þat is set in hys nature. but þou wolt sein þat shrewes mowen. ¶ Certys þat ne denye I nat. ¶ but certys hir power ne descendeþ nat of strengþe but of feblesse. for þei mowen don wickednesses. þe whiche þei ne myzten nat don yif þei myzten dwelle in þe forme *and*

3291. *auzten to folwen* —
owhten folwe
3293 *doþ*—MS. doþe, C. doth
3294 *wrastle*—wrastlen
3295 *vilfully*—wilsfully
3297 *outerly*—owtrely
3301 *seyne*—seyen
3304-5 *denye*—denoye

3305 *sey[e] symplely* — seye
sympeli
3306 [ne]—from C.
3307 *seyne*—seyen
3309 *graunt[e]*—graunte
3311-12 *þilk*—þilke
3312 *haþ*—MS. hape
3313 *þat* (1)—what

3313 *seyne*—seyen
3314 *þilk*—þilke
3315 *set*—MS. sette, C. set
3316 *denye*—denoye
3318 *don*—MS. done, C. don
3319 *myzten* (1)—myhte
dwelle—dwellin

in þe doynge of goode folke. ¶ And þilke power sheweþ ful euydently þat þei ne mowen ryzt nauzt. ¶ For so as I haue gadered *and* proued a lytel her byforn þat yuel is nauzt. *and* so as shrewes mowen oonly but shrewednesse. þis conclusioun is al clere. þat shrewes ne mowen ryzt nat to han power. and for as moche as þou vndirstonde whiche is þe strengþe þat is power of shrewes. I haue diffinised a lytel here byforn þat no þing nis so myzty as souereyne good ¶ þat is soþe quod .I. [*and* thilke same souereyn good may don non yuel // Certes no quod I] ¶ Is þer any wyzt þan quod she þat wenip þat men mowen don alle þinges. No man quod .I. but yif he be out of hys witte. ¶ but certys shrewes mowen doñ yuel quod she. ¶ 3e wolde god quod I þat þei ne myzten don none. þat quod she so as he þat is myzty to done oonly but good[e] þinges may don alle þinges. and þei þat ben myzty to done yuel[e] þinges ne mowen nat alle þinges. þan is þis open þing *and* manifest þat þei þat mowen don yuel ben of lasse power. and zitte to proue þis conclusioun þere helpeþ me þis þat I haue shewed here byforne. þat al power is to be noumbred amonge þinges þat men auzten requere. *and* haue shewed þat alle þinges þat auzten ben desired ben referred to good ryzt as to a manere heyzte of hyr nature. ¶ But for to mowen don yuel *and* felonye ne may nat ben referred to good. þan nis nat yuel of þe noumbre of þinges þat auzten. *be desired. but al power auzt[e] ben desired *and* required. ¶ þan is it open *and* cler þat þe power ne þe moeuyng of shrewes nis no powere. *and* of alle þise þinges it sheweþ wel þat

not do, if they retained the power of doing good. This power, then, clearly shows their impotence. For as evil is nothing, it is clear that while the wicked can only do evil they can do nothing. That you may understand the force of this power, I have proved that nothing is more powerful than the sovereign good. B. That is true. P. And that supreme good can do no evil? B. Certainly not. P. Is there any one who thinks that man can do all things? B. No sane man can think so. P. But men may do evil. B. I would to God they could not. P. Since he that can do good, can

3336 do all things, and he that has power to do evil cannot do all things, therefore the evil-doers are less powerful. Let me add too that power is one of the things to be desired, and that all such things are to be referred to the chief good (the perfection of their nature). But the power of doing evil has no relation to that Good, therefore it is not desirable; but as [* fol. 26 b.] all power is desirable, it is clear that the ability to do evil is not power. It clearly follows from this reasoning,

3320 *goode*—good
3324 *shrewednesse*—shrew-
ednesses
clere—cleer
3325 *nat*—power—nawht
ne han no power
3326 *whiche*—which
þat is—of this
3327 *here*—her
3328 *nis*—is
3329 *soþe*—soth

3329, 3330 [*and thilke* —
quod I]—from C..
3334 *don*—MS. done, C. don
none þat—non thanne
3335 *done*—doon
good[e]—goode
3336 *don*—MS. done, C. don
done—don
3337 *yuel[e]*—yuele
þis—it
3333 *don*—MS. done, C. don

3339 *zitte*—yit
þere—ther
3340 *shewed here byforne*—
Ishewed her by-forn
al—alle
3341 *amonge*—among
3344 *don*—MS. done, C. don
3346 *auzten be*—owhte ben
3347 *al*—alle
auzt[e]—owhte

that the good only are powerful while the vicious are feeble. And Plato's opinion is hereby verified that the *wise* only have the power to do what they desire; the wicked may follow the dictates of their lusts, but their great aim and desire, *i. e.* HAPPINESS, they can never attain. The wicked may gratify their desires, thinking to attain the chief good (for which they wish), but they can never possess it, for impiety and vice can never be crowned with happiness.

[The 13^{de} Metur.]
Whosoever might strip of their purple coverings, proud kings, who, surrounded by their guards,

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sit on lofty thrones, and whose stern looks wear fierce threatenings, and boiling breasts breathe fury; would see those mighty lords inwardly fettered, and tormented by lust, passion, grief, and delusive hopes.

3371

Since, then, so many tyrants bear sway over one head—that lord, oppressed by so many masters (*i. e.* vices), is weak and feeble, and his actions are not obedient to his will.

þe goode folk ben certeynly myzty. *and* þe shrewes ben douteles vnmyzty ¶ And it is clere *and* open þat þilke sentence of plato is uerray *and* soþe. þat seyb þat only wisemen may [doon] þat þei desiren. *and* shrewes mowen haunten þat hem lykeþ. but þat þei desiren þat is to seyne to comen to souereyne good þei ne han no power to acomplissen þat. ¶ For shrewes don þat hem list whan by þo þinges in whiche þei deliten þei wenen to atteyne to þilke good þat þei desiren. but þei ne geten ne atteynen nat þer to. ¶ for vices ne comen nat to blisfulnesse.

3360

QUOS UIDES SEDERE CELSOS.

Who so þat þe couertures of her veyn apparailles myz[e] strepen of þise proude kynges þat þou seest sitten on heyze in her chayeres glyteryng in shynyng purple envyrond wip sorweful armures manasyng wip cruel mouþe. blowing by woodnesse of herte. ¶ He sholde se þan þat ilke lordes beren wip inne hir corages ful streyte cheynes for lecherye tormentiþ hem on þat oon syde wip gredy venyms *and* troublable Ire þat araiseþ in hem þe floodes of troublinges tourmentiþ vpon þat oþer side hir þouzt. or sorwe halt hem wery or ycauzt. or slidyng *and* disseyuyng hope tourmentiþ hem. And þefore syn þou seest on heed. þat is to seyne oon tyraunt bere so many[e] tyrauntis. þan ne doþ þilk tyraunt nat þat he desiriþ. syn he is cast doune wip so many[e] wicked lordes. þat is to seyn wip so many[e] vices. þat han so wicked lordshipes ouer hym.

3377

3351 *clere*—cler
3352 *soþe*—soth
þat *seyþ*—MS. but siþe, C.
þat *seyth*
3353 [*doon*]
3355 *seyne*—seyn
3357 *whiche*—which
3361-63 *her*—hir
3362 *myz[e]*—myhte

3363 *heyze*—heygh
3364 *sorweful*—sorwful
3365 *mouþe*—Mowth
3366 *se*—seen
ilke—thilke
3368 *on*—in
3369 *hem*—hym
3371 *disseyuyng*—deceuy-
yng

3373 *seyne*—seyn
bere—beeren
3373-75-76 *many[e]*—manye
3373 *tyrauntis*—tyranys
3374 *doþ*—MS. doþe
þilk—thilke
3375 *doune*—down
wicked—wikkede
3376 *wicked*—wikkedly

VIDES NE IGITUR QUANTO.

Seest þou nat þan in how gret filþe þise shrewes ben
 S ywrapped. *and* wiþ whiche cleernesse þise good
 folk shynen. In þis shewep it wel þat to good folk ne
 lakkep neuer mo hir medes. ne shrewes ne lakken
 neuer mo *tourmentis*. for of alle þinges þat ben ydon
 þilke þing for whiche any þing is doon. it semeþ as by
 ryzt þat þilke þing be þe mede of þat. as þus. ¶ yif a
 man rennep in þe stadie or in þe forlonge for þe corone.
 þan lieþ þe mede in þe corone for whiche he rennep.
 ¶ And I haue shewed þat blisfulnesse is þilke same
 good for whiche þat alle þingus ben don. þan is þilke
 same good purposed to þe werkes of mankynde ryzt as
 a comune mede. whiche mede ne may ben disseuered
 fro good folk. for no wyzt as by ryzt fro þennes forþe
 þat hym lakkip goodnesse ne shal ben cleped good.
 For whiche þing folk of good[e] maneres her medes ne
 forsaken hem neuer mo. For al be it so þat sherewes
 waxen as wood as hem list azeynes good[e] folk. 3itte
 neuer þe les þe corone of wise men ne shal nat fallen
 ne faden. ¶ For foreine shrewednesse ne bynymep
 nat fro þe corages of good[e] folk hire propre honoure.
 but yif þat any wyzt reioiseþ hem of goodnesse þat þei
 had[de] taken fro wiþoute. as who seiþ yif [þat] any
 wyzt had[de] hys goodnesse of any oþer man þan of
 hym self. certys he þat 3af hym þilke goodnesse or
 ellys som oþer wyzt myzt[e] bynym[e] it hym. but for
 as moche as to euery wyzt hys owen propre bounte
 zeueþ hym hys mede. þan at arst shal he faylen of
 mede whan he forletip to ben good. *and* at þe laste so
 as alle medes ben requered for men wenen þat þei ben

[The iij.^{de} prose.]

See you not
 in how great and
 filthy a mire the
 wicked wallow?
 This is a proof
 that good folks
 do not go unre-
 warded, nor do
 the evil-doers
 escape punish-
 ment. Every ac-
 tion is done for a
 certain end, and
 that end is the re-
 ward of the action.
 But Happiness is
 that good for
 which all things
 are done. There-
 fore happiness is
 the reward which
 all the human
 race seek as the
 reward of their
 actions. This
 good is insepar-
 able from the vir-
 tuous, therefore
 virtue can never
 want its reward.
 Evil men may
 rage as they

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please against the
 good, but the
 crown of the wise
 shall not fall nor
 fade. The wicked-
 ness of another
 cannot deprive a
 virtuous soul of
 its own honour.
 If a man pride
 himself on the
 possession of an
 advantage recei-
 ved from
 another, he may
 be deprived of it,
 either by the
 giver or by others.
 But, as the re-
 ward of the
 virtuous is derived
 from virtue, a
 man cannot lose
 this need unless
 he ceases to be
 virtuous. Lastly,
 since a reward is
 desired because it
 is supposed to be
 a good, can we be-
 lieve that he who
 is capable of good
 is deprived of the
 recompense?

3379 *whiche*—which
 3380 *good*—goode
 3381 *ne* (2)—omitted
 3383 *whiche*—which
 3385 *forlonge*—forlong
 3386-88-90 *whiche*—which
 3391 *forþe*—forth
 3393 *whiche*—which

3393 *good[e]*—goode
 3395 *wood*—woode
 good[e]—goode
 3396 *les*—leese
 ne—omitted
 3398 *good[e]*—goode
 3399 *reioiseþ*—reioyse
 hem—hym

3399 *þei had[de]*—he hadde
 3400 [þat]—from C.
 3401 *had[de]*—hadde
 3402 *self*—MS. selk
 3403 *myzt[e] bynym[e]* —
 myhte be-nyme
 3404 *owen*—owne
 3406 *laste*—last

What reward shall he receive? Certainly the
[* fol. 27.] fairest and richest of all rewards. Call to mind that excellent corollary I have already given thee, and reason thus:— Since the supreme good is happiness, it follows that all good men are happy in as much as they are good; but if they are happy they must become as it were gods. The reward (*i. e.* divinity) of the righteous is such that no time can impair it, no power can diminish it, nor can any wickedness obscure it. Since, then, happiness belongs to good men, punishment inseparably attends the wicked. For since *good* and *evil* are con-

3424

traries, so are *rewards* and *punishments*. It is evident that rewards follow good actions, and punishments attend evil actions; then as virtue itself is the reward of the virtuous, so vice is the punishment of the vicious. He who is punished with pain and uneasiness knows that he is afflicted with evil. If, then, the wicked did rightly understand themselves they would perceive that they are not exempted from punishment. Since vice, the extreme and worst kind of evil, not only afflicts them, but infects and entirely

good[e]. who is he þat wolde deme þat he þat is ryzt myzty of goode were partles of mede. *and of what mede shal he be gerdoned. certys of ryzt faire mede and ryzt greet abouen alle medes. ¶ Remembre þe of þilk noble corolarie þat I 3af þe a lytel here byforne. and gadre it to gidre in þis manere. so as god hym self is blisfulnesse. þan is it clere and certeyn. þat alle good folk ben makid blisful for þei ben good[e]. and þilke folk þat ben blisful it accordiþ and is couenable to ben godde[s]. þan is þe mede of goode folk swiche. þat no day [ne] shal enpeyren it. ne no wickednesse shal endirken it. ne power of no wyzt ne shal nat amenusen it þat is to seyn to ben maked goddes. ¶ and syn it is þus þat goode men ne faylen neuer mo of hire medes. ¶ certys no wise man ne may doute of þe vndepartable peyne of shrewes. ¶ þat is to seyn þat þe peyne of shrewes ne departiþ nat from hem self neuer mo. ¶ For so as goode and yuel and peyne and medes ben contrarie it mot nedes ben þat ryzt as we seen by-tiden in gerdoun of goode. þat also mot þe peyne of yuel answer by þe contrarie partye to shrewes. now þan so as bounte and prowessse ben þe medes to goode folk. also is shrewednesse it self torment to shrewes ¶ þan who so þat euer is entecched and defouled wiþ yuel. yif shrewes wolen þan preisen hem self may it semen to hem þat þei ben wiþ outen partye of tourment. syn þei ben swiche þat þe [vtteriste wikkednesse / þat is to seyn wikked thewes / which þat is the] outereste and þe w[or]ste kynde of shrewednesse ne defouliþ nat ne enteechiþ nat hem oonly but infectiþ and enuenemyþ hem gretely ¶ And al so loke on shrewes þat ben þe

3408 *good[e]*—goode3409 *goode*—good3411 *greet*—grete3412 *here byforne*—her by-

form

3413 *god*—good3414 *is* (1)—his3414 *clere*—cleer3415 *good[e]*—goode3417 *godde[s]*—goddes3418 *swiche*—swich

3418 [ne]—from C.

3422 *endirken*—derken3422 *wise man*—wysman

þe—omitted

vndepartable—MS. vndir-

partable, C. vndepartable

3423 *of* (1)—of the3428 *answere*—answery

þe—omitted

3434 [etteriste—*is the*]—

from C.

3438 *gretely*—gretly

contrarie partye of goode men. how grete peyne felawshipeþ *and* folweþ hem. ¶ For þou hast lerned a litel here byforn þat al þing þat is *and* haþ beyng is oon. *and* pilke same oon is good. þan is þis consequence þat it semeþ wel. þat al þat is *and* haþ beyng is good. þis is to seyne. as who seiþ þat beyng *and* vnite *and* goodnesse is al oon. *and* in þis manere it folweþ þan. þat al þing þat faileþ to ben good. it styntiþ forto be. *and* forto haue any beyng. wher fore it is þat shrewes stynten forto ben þat þei weren. but pilke oþer forme of mankynde. þat is to seyne þe forme of þe body wiþ oute. shewiþ ȝit þat þise shrewes were somtyme men. ¶ wher fore whan þei ben peruerted *and* torned in to malice. certys þan han þei forlorn þe nature of mankynde. but so as oonly bounte *and* prowesse may enhawne euery man ouer oþer men. þan mot it nedes be þat shrewes whiche þat shrewednesse haþ cast out of þe condicioun of mankynde ben put vnder þe merite *and* þe deserte of men. þan bitidiþ it þat yif þou seest a wyȝt þat be transformed in to vices. þou ne mayst nat wene þat he be a man. ¶ For ȝif he [be] ardaunt in auarice. *and* þat he be a raunour by violence of foreine rychesse. þou shalt seyng þat he is lyke to a wolf. *and* yif he be felonous *and* wiþ out reste *and* exercise hys tonge to chidynges. þou shalt lykene hym to þe hounde. *and* yif he be a preue awaitour yhid *and* reioyseþ hym to rauysshe by wyles. þou shalt seyng hym lyke to þe fox whelpes. ¶ And yif he be distempre *and* quakiþ for ire men shal wene þat he bereþ þe corage of a lyoun. *and* yif he be dredeful *and* fleynge *and* dredeþ þinges þat ne auȝten nat ben dred. men

pollutes them. But contemplate the punishment of the wicked. You have been taught that *unity* is essential to being and is good—and all that
3443

have this unity are good; whatsoever, then, fails to be good ceases to exist. So that it appears that evil men must cease to be what they were. That they were once men, the outward form of the body, which still remains, clearly testifies. Wherefore, when they degenerate into wickedness they
3452

lose their human nature. But as virtue alone exalts one man above other men, it is evident that vice, which divests a man of his nature, must sink him below humanity. You cannot, therefore, esteem him to be a man whom you see thus transformed by his vices. The greedy robber, you will say, is like a *wolf*.
3461

He who gives no rest to his abusive tongue, you may liken to a *hound*. Does he delight in fraud and trickery? then is he like young *foxes*. Is he intemperate in his anger? then men will compare him to a raging *lion*. If he
3468

be a coward, he will be likened to

3439 *grete*—gret3441 *al*—alle*haþ*—MS. haþe3443 *al*—alle*haþ*—MS. haþe3446 *al*—alle3447 *haue*—hau3448 *stynten*—MS. styntent3450 *were somtyme*—weeren
whilom3452 *forlorn*—MS. forlorne,
C. forlorn3453 *as*—omitted*enhawne*—enhawsen3455 *whiche*—which*haþ*—MS. haþe3459 [*be*]—from C.3464 *yhid*—MS. yhidde, C.
I-hidd3465 *seyne*—seyng3468 *dredeful*—dredful3469 *ben*—to ben*dred*—MS. dredde, C.*dredd*

a *hart*. If he be slow, dull, and lazy, then is he like an *ass*. Is he fickle and inconsistent? Then is he like a *bird*. Doth he wallow in filthy lusts? Then doth he roll himself in the mire like a nasty *swine*. It follows, then, that he who ceases to be virtuous, ceases to be a man; and, since he cannot attain divinity, he is turned into a beast.

shal holde hym lyke to þe herte. *and* yif he be slowe *and* astoned *and* lache. he lyueþ as an asse. *and* yif he be lyzt *and* vnstedfast of corage *and* chaungeþ ay his studies. he is lickened to briddes. ¶ *and* yif he be plounged in foule *and* vnclene luxuries. he is wipholden in þe foule delices of þe foule soowe. ¶ þan folweþ it þat he þat forletip bountee *and* prowesse. he forletip to ben a man. syn he ne may nat passe in to þe condicioun of god. he is tourned in to a beest. 3478

[* fol. 27 b.]

* v[E]LA NARICI DUCIS.

[The 3^{le} Metur.]

Ulysses was driven by the eastern winds upon the shores of that isle where Circe dwelt, who, having entertained her guests with magic draughts, transformed them into divers shapes—one into a boar, another into a lion;

E vius þe wynde aryueþ þe sayles of vlixes duc of þe contre of narice. *and* hys wandryng shippes by þe see in to þe isle þere as Circe þe fayre goddessse douzter of þe sonne dwelleþ þat medlyþ to hir newe gestes drynkes þat ben touched *and* maked wip enchaumentz. *and* after þat hir hande myzty of þe herbes had[de] changed hir gestes in to dyuerse maneres. þat oon of hem is couered his face wip forme of a boor. þat oþer is chaunged in to a lyoun of þe contre of marmorike. *and* his nayles *and* his teþe waxen. ¶ þat oþer of hem is newliche chaunged in to a wolf. *and* howeliþ whan he wolde wepe. þat oþer goþ debonairly in þe house as a tigre of Inde. but al be it so þat þe godhed of mercurie þat is cleped þe bride of arcadie haþ had mercie of þe duc vlixes byseged wip diuerse yueles *and* haþ vnbounden hym fro þe pestilence of hys oosteresse algates þe rowers *and* þe maryners hadden by pis ydrawen in to hir mouþes *and* dronken þe wicked[e]

3486

3496

some into howling wolves, and others into Indian tigers.

But Mercury, the Arcadian god, rescued Ulysses from the Circean charms. Yet his mariners, having drunk of her infected drinks, were changed to swine, and fed on acorns.

3470 holde—holden

lyke—lyk

herte—hert

slowe—slowh

3472 vnstedfast—vnstidefast

his—hise

3475 þan—MS. pat, C. thane

3477 passe—passen

3479 aryueþ—aryuede

vlixes—MS. vluxies, C.

vlixes

3481 Circe—Circes

3483 enchaumentz—en-

chaumentz;

3484 hande—hand

of—ouer

3485 had[de]—hadde

gestes—MS. goostes, C.

gestes

3486 boor—boere

3488 his (1)—hise

his teþe—hise teth

3489 newliche—neweliche

3490 goþ—MS. goþe

3491 house—hows

3492 bride—bryd

hap—MS. haþe

3493 mercie—MS. mercurie,

C. mercy

3494 hap—MS. haþe

3495 oosteresse—oostesso

3496 wicked[e]—wikkede

many a noble arive hadde he be." (Cl. Parlyque. 3/60. 24. Morris)

drynkes þei þat were woxen swyne hadden by þis
chaunged hire mete of brede forto ete acorns of ookes. 3498

non of hir lymes ne dwelliþ wiþ hem hoole. but
þei han lost þe voys *and* þe body. Oonly hire þouzt
dwelleþ wiþ hem stable þat wepiþ *and* bywailiþ þe
monstruous chaungynge þat þei suffren. ¶ O ouer lyzt

All traces of the human form were lost, and they were bereft of speech. Their souls, unchanged, bewailed their dreadful fate.

hand. as who seiþ. ¶ O feble *and* lyzt is þe hand of
Circes þe enchaunteresse þat chaungeþ þe bodies of folk
in to bestes to regarde *and* to comparisoun of mutacioun
þat is makid by vices. ne þe herbes of circes ne ben nat
myzty. for al be it so þat þei may chaungen þe lymes
of þe body. ¶ algates zit þei may nat chaunge þe
hertes. for wiþ inne is ylid þe strengþe *and* þe vigour

O most weak, are Circe's powers compared with the potency of vice, to transform the human shape!

Circe's herbs may change the body, but cannot touch the mind, the inward strength of man.

3509

of men in þe secre toure of hire hertys. þat is to seyn
þe strengþe of resoun. but pilke uenymys of vices to-
drawen a man to hem more myztily þan þe venym of
circes. ¶ For vices ben so cruel þat þei percen *and*
þoruþ passen þe corage wiþ inne. *and* þouþ þei ne anoye
nat þe body. zitte vices wooden to distroien men by
wounde of þouzt. 3516

But vice is more potent than Circe's poisonous charms.

Though it leaves the body whole, it pierces the inner man, and inflicts a deadly wound upon the soul.

TUNC EGO FATEOR INQUAM.

þan seide I þus I confesse *and* am aknowe quod I. ne
I ne se nat þat men may seyn as by ryzt. þat
shrewes ne ben nat chaunged in to beestes by þe
qualite of hir soules. ¶ Al be it so þat þei kepen zitte
þe forme of þe body of mankynde. but I nolde nat of
shrewes of whiche þe þouzt cruel woodeþ alwey in to
destruccioun of good[e] men. þat it were leueful to hem
to done þat. ¶ Certys quod she ne it nis nat leueful
to hem as I shal wel shewen þe in couenable place.
¶ But napeles yif so were þat pilke þat men wenen ben

[Theferthe prose.]

B. I confess that vicious men are rightly called beasts. They retain the outward form of man, but the qualities of their souls prove them to be beasts. I wish, however, that the wicked were without the power to annoy and hurt good men.

P. They have no power, as I shall presently show you.

3526

3497 were woxen swyne —
weeren wexen swyn
3498 chaunged—Ichaunged
brede—bred
forto—MS. and forto
ete acorns—eten akkornes
3499 hoole—hool

3501 wepiþ—MS. kepiþ, C.
weepith
3502 monstruous—MS. mon-
stronous, C. Monstruous
3504 Circes—MS. Cirtes
folk—folkys [I-hydd
3509 yhid—MS. yhidde, C.

3515 wooden—MS. wolden,
C. wooden
3517 aknowe—aknowe it
3518 seyn—sayn
3523 good[e]—goode
3524 done—don
3526 ben—be

But were this power, which men ascribe to them, taken away from the wicked, they would be relieved of the greatest part of their punishment. The wicked are more unhappy when they have accomplished their evil designs than when they fail to do so. If it is a miserable thing to will evil, it is a greater unhappiness to have the power to execute it, without which power the wicked desires would languish without effect. Since, then, each of these three things (*i. e.* the will, the power, and the accomplishment of evil) hath its misery, therefore a three-fold wretchedness afflicts those who both will, can, and do commit sin.

3544

B. I grant it—but still I wish the vicious were without this misfortune.

[* fol. 28.]

P. They shall be despoiled of it sooner than you wish perhaps, or than they themselves imagine. In the narrow limits of this life, nothing, however tardy it appears, can seem to an immortal soul to have a very long duration. The great hopes, and the subtle machinations of the wicked, are often suddenly frustrated, by which an end is put to their wickedness. If vice renders

leueful for shrewes were bynomen hem. so þat þei ne myzten nat anoyen or don harme to goode men. ¶ Certys a gret party of þe peyne to shrewes shulde ben allegged *and* releued. ¶ For al be it so þat þis ne seme nat credible þing perauenture to somme folk zit mot it nedes be þat shrewes ben more wrecches *and* vnsely. whan þei may don *and* performe þat þei coueiten [than yif they myhte nat complyssen þat they coueyten]. ¶ For yif so be þat it be wrecchednesse to wilne to don yuel: þan is it more wrecchednesse to mowen don yuel. wiþ oute whiche moeuyng þe wrecched wille sholde languisshe wiþ oute effecte. ¶ þan syn þat eueryche of þise þinges haþ hys wrecchednesse. þat is to seyne wil to done yuel. *and* moeuyng to done yuel. it mot nedes be. þat þei (shrewes) ben constreyned by þre vnselynesses þat wolen *and* mowen *and* performen felonyes *and* shrewednesses. ¶ I accorde me *quod* I. but I desire gretely þat shrewes losten sone þilke vnselynesses. þat is to seyne þat shrewes were despoyled of moeuyng to don yuel. ¶ so shullen þei *quod* she. sonnere perauenture þen þou woldest *or sonnere þen þei hem self wenen to lakken mowynge to done yuel. ¶ For pere nis no þing so late in so short boundes of þis lijf þat is longe to abide. namelyche to a corage inmortal. Of whiche shrewes þe grete hope *and* þe heye compassyngus of shrewednesse is often destroyed by a sodeyne ende or þei ben war. *and* þat þing establiþ to shrewes þe ende of hir shrewednesse. ¶ For yif þat shrewednesse makeþ wrecches. þan mot he nedes be most wrecched þat lengest is a shrewe. þe whiche wiked shrewes wolde ydemen aldirmost vnsely *and*

3527 *for*—to3528 *myzten*—myhte*don*—MS. done, C. doon*harme*—harm3529 *gret*—MS. grete, C. gret3533-36 *don*—MS. done, C.

doon

3533-34 [*than*—*coueyten*]—

from C.

3537 *moeuyng*—mowynge3537 *wille*—wil3539 *haþ*—MS. haþe*seyne*—seyn3540 *done* (1)—doon*moeuyng* to done—Mow-

ynge to don

mot—MS. mote, C. mot3544 *gretely*—gretly3545 *seyne*—seyn*were*—weeren3545 *moeuyng*—mowynge3548 *wenen*—weeneto lakken — *yuel*—omit-

ted

3549 *pere*—ther

so (2)—the

3550 *longe*—long3552 *shrewednesse*—shrew-

ednesses

often—ofte

caytifs yif þat hir shrewednes ne were yfynished. at þe leste weye by þe outerest[e] deef. for [yif] I haue concluded soþe of þe vnselynesse of shrewednesse. þan shewep it clerely þat þilke shrewednesse is wiþ outen ende þe whiche is certeyne to ben perdurable. ¶ Certys quod I þis [conclusion] is harde *and* wonderful to graunte. ¶ But I knowe wel þat it accordeþ moche to [the] þinges þat I haue graunted her byforne. ¶ þou hast quod she þe ryzt estimacioun of þis. but who so euere wene þat it be an harde þing to acorde hym to a conclusioun. it is ryzt þat he shewe þat somme of þe premisses ben fals. or ellys he mot shewe þat þe colasioun of preposicionis nis nat spedful to a necessarie conclusioun. ¶ and yif it be nat so. but þat þe premisses ben ygranted þer nis nat whi he sholde blame þe argument. for þis þing þat I shal telle þe nowe ne shal not seme lasse wondirful. but of þe þinges þat ben taken al so it is necessarie as who so seiþ it folweþ of þat whiche þat is purposed byforne. what is þat quod I. ¶ certys quod she þat is þat þat þise wicked shrewes ben more blysfyl or ellys lasse wrecches. þat byen þe tourmentes þat þei han deserued. þan yif no peyne of Iustice ne chastied[e] hem. ne þis ne seye I nat now for þat any man myzt[e] þenk[e] þat þe maneres of shrewes ben coriged *and* chastised by veniaunce. *and* þat þei ben brouzt to þe ryzt wey by þe drede of þe tourment. ne for þat þei zeuen to oþer folk ensample to fleyen from vices. ¶ But I vndirstonde zitte [in] an oþer manere þat shrewes ben more vnsely whan þei ne ben nat punished al be it so þat þere ne ben had no resoun or lawe of correccioun. ne none ensample of lokinge. ¶ And what manere

men wretched, the longer they are vicious the longer must they be miserable. And they would be infinitely wretched if death did not put an end to their crimes. It is clear, as I have already shown, that eternal misery is infinite. B. This consequence appears to be just, but difficult to assent to. P. You think rightly; but if you cannot assent to my conclusion you ought to show that the premises are false, or that the consequences are unfairly deduced; for if the premises be granted, you cannot reject the inferences from them. What I am about to say is not less wonderful, and it follows
3574

necessarily from the same premises.

B. What is that? P. That the wicked who have been punished for their crimes, are happier than if justice had allowed them to go unpunished. I do not appeal to popular arguments, that punishment corrects vice, that the fear of chastisement leads them to take the right path, and that the sufferings of evil-doers deter others from vice, but I believe that guilty men, unpunished, become much more unhappy in another way.

3588

3558 *shrewednes* — shrewednesse
yfynished — fynished
 3559 *weye* — wey
outerest[e] — owtteryste
 [yif] — from C.
 3560 *soþe* — soth
 3561 *clerely* — cleerly
 3563 [conclusion] — from C.

3563 *harde* — hard
 3564 [the] — from C.
 3567 *harde* — hard
 3568 *fals* — false
 3573 *nowe* — now
 3575 *who so seiþ* — ho seyth
whiche — which
 3578 *byen* — a-byen
 3579 *chastied[e]* — chastysede

3580 *myzt[e]* — myhte
 3581 *þenk[e]* — thinko
 3584 *zeuen* — MS. zeuene, C.
 yeuen
fleyen — flien
 3585 *zitte* — yif
 [in] — from C.
 3588 *none* — non

B. In what way do you mean?

P. Are not good people happy, and evil folk miserable?

B. Yes.

P. If good be added to the wretchedness of a man, will not he be happier than another whose misery has no element of good in it?

B. It seems so.

P. And if to the same wretched being another misery be annexed, does not he become more wretched than he whose misery is alleviated by the participation of some good?

3602

B. He does.

P. When evil men are punished they have a degree of good annexed to their wretchedness, to wit, the punishment itself, which as it is the effect of justice is good. And when these wretches escape punishment something more of ill (*i. e.* exemption from punishment) is added to their condition.

B. I cannot deny it.

P. Much more unhappy are the wicked when they enjoy an unmerited impunity than when they suffer a lawful chastisement. It is just to punish evil-doers, and unjust that they should escape punishment.

[* fol. 28 b.]

B. Nobody denies that.

P. Everything, too, which is just

shal þat ben quod I. ouþer þan haþ ben told here byforn ¶ Haue we nat graunted þan quod she þat good[e] folk ben blysful. and shrewes ben wrecches. 3is quod I. [thanne quod she] 3if þat any good were added to þe wrecchenesse of any wyzt. nis he nat more blisful þan he þat ne haþ no medelyng of goode in hys solitarie wrecchednesse. so semeþ it quod I. and what seyst þou þan quod she of pilke wrecche þat lakkeþ alle goodes. so þat no goode nis medeled in hys wrecchednesse. and 3itte ouer alle hys wickednesse for whiche he is a wrecche þat þer be 3itte anoþer yuel anexid and knyt to hym. shal not men demen hym more vnsely þan pilke wrecche of whiche þe vnselynesse is re[le]ued by þe participacioun of som goode. whi sholde he nat quod I. ¶ þan certys quod she han shrewes whan þei ben punissed somewhat of good anexid to hir wrecchednesse. þat is to seyne þe same peyne þat þei suffren whiche þat is good by þe resoun of Iustice. And whan pilke same shrewes ascapen wiþ outen tourment. þan han þei somewhat more of yuel 3it ouer þe wickednesse þat þei han don. þat is to seye defaute of peyne. whiche defaute of peyne þou hast graunted is yuel. ¶ For þe desert of felonye I ne may nat denye it quod I. ¶ Moche more þan quod she ben shrewes vnsely whan þei ben wrongfully delyuered fro peyne. þan whan þei beþ punissed by ryztful vengeance. but þis is open þing and clere þat it is ryzt þat shrewes ben punissed. and it is wickednesse and wrong þat þei escapin vnpunissed. ¶ who myzt[e] denye *þat quod I. but quod she may any man denye. þat al þat is ryzt nis good. and also þe contrarie. þat alle þat is wrong nis

3599 ouþer—oother
haþ—MS. haþe

ben—be

told—MS. tolde, C. told

3591 good[e]—goode

3592 [thanne—she]—from

C.

3594 blisful—welfare

haþ—MS. haþe

3594-97 goode—good

3598 alle—al

whiche—which

3600 knyt—knytte

3601 re[le]ued—releued

3602 goode—good

3605 seyne—seyn

3606 whiche—which

3607 outen—owte

3609 don—MS. done

seye—seyn

3610 whiche—which

3611 desert—deserte

3614 beþ—MS. beþe, C. ben

3615 clere—cler

3617 myzt[e]—myhte

3618 is ryzt nis—MS. nis

ryzt is

3619 alle—al

nis wicked—is wykke

wicked. certys quod I pise þinges ben clere ynouȝ, and þat we han concludid a litel here byforne. but I preye þe þat þou telle me yif þou accordest to leten no tourment to þe soules aftir þat þe body is dedid by þe deþe. þis [is] to seyn. vndirstondest þou ouȝt þat soules han any tourment after þe deþe of þe body. ¶ Certis quod she ȝe and þat ryȝt grete. of whiche soules quod she I trowe þat somme ben tourmentid by asprenesse of peyne. and somme soules I trowe be exercised by a purging mekenesse. but my conseil nys nat to determyne of þis peyne. but I haue trauallyd and told it hider to. ¶ For þou sholdest knowe þat þe mowyng [i. myght] of shrewes whiche mowyng þe semeþ to ben. vnworþi nis no mowyng. and eke of shrewes of whiche þou pleynedest þat þei ne were nat punissid. þat þou woldest seen þat þei ne weren neuer mo wiþ outen þe torment of hire wickednesse. and of þe licence of mowyng to done yuel. þat þou preidest þat it myȝt[e] some ben endid. and þat þou woldest fayne lerne. þat it ne sholde nat longe endure. and þat shrewes ben more vnsely yif þei were of lenger duryng. and most vnsely yif þei weren perdurable. and after þis I haue shewed þe þat more vnsely ben shrewes whan þei escapen wiþ oute ryȝtful peyne. þan whan þei ben punissid by ryȝtful uengeaunce. and of þis sentence folweþ it þat þan ben shrewes constreynd atte laste wiþ most greuous tourment. whan men wene þat þei ne ben nat ypunissid. whan I considre þi resouns quod I. I. ne trowe nat þat men seyn any þing more verrely. and yif I tourne aȝeyn to þe studies of men. who is [he] to whom it sholde seme þat [he] ne sholde nat only leuen pise þinges. but eke gladly herkene hem. Certys quod

is good; and, on the contrary, whatsoever is unjust is evil.

B. These are just inferences from our former premises. But is there any punishment for the soul after death of the body?

P. Yes, and great ones too. Some punishments are rigorous and eternal. Others have a corrective and purifying force, and are of finite duration. But this is not to our purpose.

I want you to see that the power of the wicked is in reality nothing, that the wicked never go unpunished; that their licence to do evil is not of long duration, and that the wicked would be more unhappy if it were longer, and infinitely wretched if it were to continue for ever.

3639

After this I showed that evil men are more unhappy, having escaped punishment, than if justly chastised. Wherefore when they are supposed to get off scot-free they suffer most grievously.

B. Your reasoning appears convincing and conclusive. But your arguments are opposed to current opinions, and would hardly command assent, or even a hearing.

3621 here—her
3623 dedid—endyd
deþe—deth
3624 [is]—from C.
ouȝt—awht
3625 deþe—deth
3626 grete—gret
3628 be—ben

3629 determyne—determenye
3630 peyne—peynes
told—MS. tolde
3632 [i. myght]—from C.
3632-34 whiche—which
3633 eke—ek
3635 seen—seyn
3637 done—don

3638 myȝt[e]—myhte
fayne lerne—fayn lernen
3639 endure—dure
3645 atte—at the
laste—MS. past, C. laste
3647 resouns—resoun
3649-50 [he]—from C.
3651 eke—ek

P. It is so. For those accustomed to the darkness of error cannot fix their eyes on the light of perspicuous truth, like birds of night which are blinded by the full light of day. They consider only the gratification of their lusts, they think there is happiness in the liberty of doing evil and in exemption from punishment. Do you attend to the eternal law written in your own heart. Conform your mind to what is good, and you will stand in no need of a judge to confer a reward upon you—for you have it already in the enjoyment of the best of things (*i.e.* virtue). If you indulge in vice, you need no other

3668

chastisement—you have degraded yourself into a lower order of beings. The multitude doth not consider this. What then? Shall we take them as our models who resemble beasts? If a man who had lost his sight, having even forgotten his blindness, should declare that his faculties were all perfect, shall we weakly believe that those who retain their sight are blind? The vulgar will not assent to what I am going to say, though supported by conclusive arguments—to wit, that persons are more unhappy that do wrong

she so it is. but men may nat. for þei han hire eyen so wont to derkenesse of erþely þinges. þat þei may nat liften hem vp to þe lyzt of clere soþefastnes. ¶ But þei ben lyke to briddes of whiche þe nyzt lyztneþ hyre lookyng. and þe day blyndeþ hem. for whan men loken nat þe ordre of þinges but hire lustes and talentz. þei wene þat opir þe leue or þe mowynge to done wickednesse or ellys þe escaping wiþ oute peyne be weleful. but considere þe iugement of þe perdurable lawe. for if þou conferme þi corage to þe beste þinges. þou ne hast no nede to no iuge to ȝiuen þe pris or meede. for þou hast ioigned þi self to þe most excellent þing. and yif þou haue enclined þi studies to þe wicked þinges. ne seek no foreyn wrekere out of þi self. for þou þi self hast þrest þe in to wicked þinges. ryzt as þou myztest loken by dyuerse tymes þe foule erþe and þe heuene.

and þat alle oper þinges stynten fro wiþ oute. so þat þou [nere neyther in heuene ne in erthe] ne say[e] no þing more. þan sholde it semen to þe as by only resoun of lokyng. þat þou were in þe sterres. and now in þe erþe. but þe poeple ne lokeþ nat on þise þinges. what þan shal we þan approchen vs to hem þat I haue shewed þat þei ben lyke to þe bestes. (q. d. non) ¶ And what wilt þou seyne of þis ¶ yif þat a man hadde al forlorn hys syzt. and had[de] forȝeten þat he euer saw and wende þat no þing ne fayled[e] hym of perfeccioun of mankynde. now we þat myzten sen þe same þing wolde we nat wene þat he were blynde (q. d. sic). ne also ne accordeþ nat þe poeple to þat I shal seyne. þe whiche þing is susteyned by a stronge foundement of resouns. þat is to seyn þat more vnselely ben þei

3653 *derkenesse*—*derknesse*
3654 *clere soþefastnes*—*cleer soþfastnesse*
3655 *whiche*—*which*
3658 *opir*—*eyther*
done—*don*
3659 *escaping*—*schapyng*
3662 *to* (1)—*of*
3665 *foreyn*—*foreyne*
3666 *þrest*—*þryst*

3666 *wicked*—*wikke*
3669 [*nere*—*erthe*]—*from C.*
heuene—*C. heuene*
say[e]—*C. saye*
3672 *on*—*in*
3674 *lyke*—*lyk*
q. d.—*MS. quod*
3675 *wilt þou seyne*—*woltow seyn*
3676 *forlorn*—*MS. forlorne,*

C. for-lorn
syzt—*syhte*
had[de]—*hadde*
3677 *saw*—*MS. sawe, C. sawh*
fayled[e]—*faylede*
3678 *sen*—*MS. sene, C. sen*
3679 *þing*—*things*
q. d.—*MS. quod*
3681 *whiche*—*which*

þat don wrong to oþer folk. þen þei þat þe wrong suffren. ¶ I wolde heren þilke *same resouns quod I ¶ Deniest þou quod she þat alle shrewes ne ben worþi to han *tourment*. nay quod I. but quod she I am certeyne by many resouns þat shrewes ben vnsele. it accordeþ quod I. þan [ne] dowtest þou nat quod she þat þilke folk þat ben worþi of *tourment* þat þei ne ben wrecches. It accordeþ wel quod I. yif þou were þan quod she yset a Iuge or a knower of þinges. wheþer trowest þou þat men sholde *tourment*[e] hym þat haþ don þe wronge. or hym þat haþ suffred þe wronge. I ne doute nat quod I. þat I nolde don suffissaunt satisfaccioun to hym þat had[de] suffred þe wrong by þe sorwe of hym þat had[de] don þe wronge. ¶ þan semeþ it quod she þat þe doer of wrong is more wrecche þan he þat haþ suffred þe wrong. þat folweþ wel quod [I]. þan quod she by þise causes *and* by oþer causes þat ben enforced by þe same *roate* þat filþe or synne by þe propre nature of it makeþ men wrecches. *and* it sheweþ wel þat þe wrong þat men don nis nat þe wrecchenesse of hym þat receyueþ þe wrong. but þe wrecchednesse of hym þat doþ þe wronge ¶ but certys quod she þise oratours or aduocat; don al þe contrarie for þei enforecen hem to commoeue þe iuges to han pite of hem þat han suffred *and* resecyued þe þinges þat ben greuous *and* aspre. *and* zitte men sholden more ryztfully han pitee on hem þat don þe greuaunces *and* þe wronges. þe whiche shrewes it were a more couenable þing þat þe accusours or aduocat; not wroþe but pitous *and* debonaire ladden þe shrewes þat han don wrong to þe Iugement. ryzt as men leden seke folk to þe leche. for þat þei sholden seken out þe maladies of synne by

than those who suffer wrong. [* fol. 29.]
B. I would willingly hear your reasons.
P. Do you deny that every wicked man deserves punishment?
B. No, I do not.
P. I am satisfied that impious men are in many ways miserable.
B. They are so.
P. Then those that deserve punishment are miserable.
B. I admit it.
P. If you were a judge, upon whom would you inflict punishment?
upon the wrongdoer, or upon the injured?
B. I should not hesitate to punish the offender as a satisfaction to the sufferer.
P. Then you would deem the injuring person more unhappy than he who had been wronged?
B. That follows naturally.
P. From this then, and other reasons of like nature, it seems
3703
that vice makes men miserable, and an injury done to any man is the misery of the doer, and not of the sufferer.
But our advocates think differently—they try to obtain pity for those that have suffered cruelty and oppression; but the juster pity is really due to the oppressors, who ought, therefore, to be led to judgment as the sick are to the physician, not by angry but by merciful and kind accusers, so that,

3633 *don*—MS. done, C. don
oþer—oother
3633 [ne]—from C.
3691 *yset*—MS. ysette, C. yset
wheþer—omitted
3692 *tourment*[e]—torment-
3692-3 *haþ*—MS. haþe [en

3693 *wronge* (2)—wrong
3695 *had*[de]—hadde
3696 *had*[de]—hadden
wronge—wrong
3697 *doar*—doere
3698 *haþ*—MS. haþe
3699 [I]—from C.
3700 *ben*—ben of

3700 *roate*—Roote
3703-4 *but*—*wronge*—omitted
3704 *doþ*—MS. doþe
3711 *wroþe*—wroth
3712 *þe*—tho
don—MS. done, C. don
3713 *seke*—syke

by the physic of chastisement, they may be cured of their vices. I would not have the guilty defrauded by their advocates. Their duty is to accuse, and not to excuse offenders. Were

3720 if permitted the wicked to get a slight view of virtue's beauty, which they have forsaken, and could they be persuaded of the purifying effects of lawful chastisement, they surely would not consider punishment as an evil, but

3727 would willingly give themselves up to justice and refuse the defence of their advocates. The wise hate nobody, only a fool hates good men; and it is as irrational to hate the wicked. Vice is a sickness of the soul, and needs our com-

3734 passion, and not our hate, for the distempers of the soul are more deplorable than those of the body, and have more claims upon our compassion.

3740

[The ferthe
Metur.]

What frenzy causes man to hasten on his fate, that is, by war or by strife. If death is desired he de-

3715 *tourmentz*—torment
be (2)—omitted
3719 [to] *stelyn*—to seyn
3722 *sawen*—sawh
sholde—sholden
3723 [the]—from C.
3724 *auzten*—owhite

tourmentz. and by þis couenaunt eyþer þe entent of þe defendours or aduocat3 sholde fayle *and* cesen in al. or ellys yif þe office of aduocat3 wolde bettere *profiten* to men. it sholde be *tourned* in to þe habit of *accusacioun*. þat is [to] *s[e]lyn* þei sholden accuse shrewes. *and* nat excuse hem. *and* eke þe shrewes hem self. 3it it were leueful to hem to seen at any clifte þe vertue þat þei han forleten. *and* sawen þat þei sholde putten adoun þe filþes of hire vices by [the] *tourmentz* of peynes. þei ne auzten nat ryzt for þe *recompensacioun* forto geten hem bounte *and* prowess whiche þat þei han lost demene holden þat þilke peynes weren *tourmentes* to hem. *and* eke þei wolden refuse þe *attendaunce* of hir aduocat3 *and* taken hem self to hire iuges *and* to hir accusours. for whiche it bytideþ [þat] as to þe wise folk þer nis no place ylete to hate. þat is to seyn. þat hate ne haþ no place amonges wise men. ¶ For no wyzt wolde haten gode men. but yif he were ouer moche a sole. ¶ *and* forto haten shrewes it nis no resou. ¶ For ryzt so as languissing is *maladie* of body. ryzt so ben vices *and* synne *maladies* of corage. ¶ *and* so as we ne deme nat þat þei þat ben seek of hire body ben worþi to ben hated. but raþer worþi of pite. wel more worþi nat to ben hated. but forto ben had in pite ben þei of whiche þe þouztes ben constrained by felonous wickednesse. þat is more cruel þan any languissinge of body.

QUID TANTOS IUUAT.

What deliteþ it 3ow to exciten so grete moewynges of hatredes *and* to hasten *and* bisien [the] fatal *disposicioun* of 3oure deef wiþ 3oure *propre* handes. þat is to seyn by batailes or [by] *contek*. for yif 3e axen þe

3725-29 *whiche*—which
3729 *bytideþ*—MS. byndeþ,
C. bytidith
[þat]—from C.
3730 *ylete*—I-leten
3731 *haþ*—MS. hape
3732 *wolde*—nyl

3732 *moche*—mochel
3733 *sole*—fool
3736 *seek*—syke
3743 [the]—from C.
3745 [by]—from C.

deep it hastisiþ hym of hys owen wille. ne deep ne
tarieþ nat hys swifte hors. and [the] men þat þe ser-
pentz and þe lyouns. and þe tigre. and þe beere and þe
boore seken to sleen wiþ her teþe. 3it þilke same men
seken to sleen eueryche of hem oþer wiþ swerde. loo for
her maners ben * diuerse and discordaunt ¶ þei
moeuen vnryztful oostes and cruel batailes. and wilne
to perisse by enterchaungynge of dartes. but þe resoun
of cruelte nis nat ynouþ ryztful. wilt þou þan zelden a
couenable gerdoun to þe desertes of men ¶ Loue ryzt-
fully goode folk: and haue pite on shrewes. 3756

HINC EGO UIDEO INQUAM. ET CETERA.

þus see I wel quod I. eyþer what blisfulnesse or ellys
what vnselinesse is estab[li]ssed in þe desertys of
goode men and of shrewes. ¶ but in þis ilke fortune
of poeple I see somewhat of goode. and somewhat of
yuel. for no wise man haþ nat leuer ben exiled pore
and nedy and nameles. þan forto dwellen in hys Citee
and flouren of rychesses. and be redoutable by honoure.
and stronge of power for in þis wise more clerely and
more witnesfully is þe office of wise men ytretid whan
þe blisfulnes and [the] pouste of gouernours is as it
were yshad amonges poeples þat ben ney3boures and
subgitz. syn þat namely prisoun lawe and þise oþer
tourmentz of lawful peynes ben raþer owed to felonous
Citezeins. for þe whiche felonous Citezeins þo peynes
ben establissed. þan for goode folk. ¶ þan I merueile
me gretly quod I. whi [þat] þe þinges ben so mys en-
trechaunged. þat tourmentz of felounes pressen and
confounden goode folk. and shrewes rauyssen medes of

lays not to come.
Why do they who
are exposed to the
assaults of beasts
of prey and
venomous reptiles
seek to slay each
other with the
sword. Lo! their
manners and
opinions do not

[* fol. 29 b.]
accord, wherefore
they engage in
unjust wars, and
fiercely urge on
each other's des-
tiny. But this is
no just reason for
shedding blood.
Wouldst thou re-
ward each as he
deserves? Then
love the good as
they deserve, and
have pity upon
the wicked.

[The fyfthe prose.]

B. I see plainly
the nature of that
felicity which at-
tends the virtues
of the good, and of
the misery that
follows the vices of
the wicked. But
in Fortune I see a
mixture of good
and evil. The
wise man prefers
riches, &c., to

3763

poverty, &c. And
wisdom appears
more illustrious,
when wise men
are governors and
impart their
felicity to their
subjects; and
when imprison-
ment, torture, &c.,
are inflicted only
upon bad citizens.

3770

Why, then,
should things
undergo so un-
natural a change?

Why should the
worthy suffer and
the vicious re-

3746 *hastisiþ*—hasteth-
owen wille—owne wyl
3747 *[the]*—from C.
3749 *boore*—boor
teþe—teth
3750 *swerde*—sward
3751 *her*—hir
3752 *wilne*—wynnen
3753 *enterchaungynge*—en-

trechaungynge
3760 *goode*—good
3761 *haþ*—MS. haþe
nat—omitted
leuer—leuere
3762 *þan*—MS. þat, C. than
3763 *redoutable*—MS. re-
dentable, C. redowtable
3764 *stronge*—strong

3764 *clerely*—clerly
3766 *[the]*—from C.
3767 *ney3boures*—nesshe-
bors
3769 *lawful*—laweful
3771 *goode*—good
3772 *[þat]*—from C.

ceive the reward of virtue? I should like to hear the reason of so unjust a distribution. I should not marvel so much if *Chance* were the cause of all this confusion. But I am overwhelmed with astonishment when I reflect, that God the director of all things thus unequally distributes rewards and punishments. What difference is there, then, unless we know the cause, between God's proceedings and the operations of *Chance*? P. It is not at all surprising that you think you see irregularities, when you are ignorant of that order by which God proceeds. But, forasmuch as God, the good governor, presides over all, rest assured that all things are done rightly and as they ought to be done.

[* MS. arituri]
[The fyfthe
Metur.]

He who knows not that the Bear is seen near the Pole, nor has observed the path of Boötes, will marvel at their appearance.

3798

The vulgar are alarmed when shadows terrestrial obscure the moon's brightness, causing the stars to be displayed.

3775 *grete*—gret
3776 *to witen*—forto weten
3778 *troued[e]*—trowede
alle—al
3779 *were*—weeren
fortuouse—fortunous
3780 *myne*—myn
3781 *good[e]*—goode
3782 *quel*—yuelis
3783 *hardnesse*—hardnesses

vertue *and* ben in honours. *and* in grete estatis. and I desire eke to witen of þe. what semep þe to ben þe resoun of þis so wrongful a confusioun ¶ For I wolde wondre wel þe lasse yif I trowed[e] þat alle þise þinges were medeled by fortuouse hap. ¶ But now hepeþ *and* encreseþ myne astonyenge god governour of þinges. þat so as god zeueþ ofte tymes to good[e] men goodes *and* myrþes. *and* to shrewes yuel and aspre þinges. *and* zeueþ azeynewarde to goode folk hardnesse. *and* to shrewes [he] graunteþ hem her wille *and* þat þei desiren. what difference þan may þer be bitwixen þat þat god doþ. *and* þe hap of fortune. yif men ne knowe nat þe cause whi þat [it] is. it nis no merueile quod she þouz þat men wenen þat þer be somewhat folysche and confus whan þe resoun of þe order is vnknowe. ¶ But alle þouz þou ne know nat þe cause of so gret a disposicioun. napeles for as moche as god þe good[e] governour attempreþ *and* gouerneþ þe world. ne doute þe nat þat alle þinges ne ben doon aryzt. 3793

SI QUIS ARCTURI * SYDERA.

Who so þat ne knowe nat þe sterres of arctour ytourned neye to þe souereyne cōtre or point. þat is to seyne ytourned neye to þe souereyne pool of þe firmament *and* woot nat whi þe sterre boetes passeþ or gaderiþ his wey[n]es. *and* drencheþ his late flaumbes in þe see. *and* whi þat boetes þe sterre vnfoldiþ his ouer swifte arisynges. þan shal he wondren of þe lawe of þe heye eyre. *and* eke if þat he ne knowe nat why þat þe hornes of þe ful[le] moene waxen pale *and* infect by þe boundes of þe derke nyzt ¶ *and* how þe moene dirk

3784 [he]—from C.
wille—wyl
3785 *difference*—MS. differ-
3786 *doþ*—MS. doþe [ence
hap—happe
3787 [it]—from C.
it—ne it
3788 *confus*—confuse
3789 *alle*—al
3791 *good[e]*—goode

3793 *ne*—omitted
3794 *arctour*—MS. aritour
3795 *neye*—neygh
3796 *seyne*—seyn
neye—nygh
3797-99 *boetes*—MS. boeces,
C. boetes
3798 *his* (1)—hise
wey[n]es—weynes
3802 *ful[le]*—fullie

and confuse discourerþ þe sterres. þat she had[de] ycouered by hir clere visage. þe commune errour moeueþ folk and makip wery hir bacines of bras by þikke strookes. þat is to seyne þat þer is a maner poeple þat hyzt[e] coribandes þat wenen þat whan þe moone is in þe eclips þat it be enchauntid. and þefore forto rescowe þe moone þei betyn hire basines wiþ þikke strokes. ¶ Ne no man ne wondreþ whan þe blastes of þe wynde chorus betyn þe strondes of þe see by quakyng floodes. ne no man ne wondreþ whan þe weyzt[e] of þe snowe yhardid by þe colde. is resolued by þe brennyng hete of phebus þe sonne. ¶ For here seen men redyly þe causes. but þe * causes yhid þat is to seye in heuene trouble þe brestes of men. ¶ þe moeueable poeple is a-stoned of alle þinges þat comen selde and sodeynely in oure age. but yif þe troublly errour of oure ignorance departid[e] from vs. so þat we wisten þe causes whi þat swiche þinges bitiden. certys þei sholden cesse to seme wondres.

Thinking the eclipse the result of enchantment, they sought to destroy the charms by the tinkling of brazen vessels or cymbals. Yet none marvel when the north-west wind renders the sea tempestuous; nor when vast heaps of congealed snow are melted by the warm rays of the sun, because the causes are apparent.

3813
Things whose causes are unknown disquiet the human mind.

[* fol. 30.]

The fickle mob stands amazed at every rare or sudden phenomenon. Fear and wonder, however, soon cease when ignorance gives place to certain knowledge.

3822

ITA EST INQUAM.

þvs is it quod I. but so as þou hast zeuen or byhyzt me to vnwrappen þe hidde causes of þinges ¶ and to discoureren me þe resouns couered with dirknesses I preye þe þat þou diuise and Iuge me of þis matere. and þat þou do me to vndrestonden it. ¶ For þis miracle or þis wondre troubleþ me ryzt gretely. and þan she a litel [what] smylyng seide. ¶ þou clepest me quod she to telle þing. þat is grettest of alle þinges þat mowen ben axed. ¶ And to þe whiche questioun vnneþ[e]s is þere auzt ynow to lauen it. as who seiþ. vnneþes is þer suffisauntly any þing to answeere perfitly to þi questioun.

[The sixte prose; B. So it is. But as thou hast promised to unfold the hidden causes of things, and unveil things wrapt up in darkness: I pray thee deliver me from my present perplexity, and explain the mystery I mentioned to you. P. You ask me to declare to you the most intricate of all questions, which I am afraid can scarce be answered.

3833

3804 had[de]—hadde
3806 bacines—MS. batines
þikke—MS. þilke, C. thilke
3807 seyne—seyn
3808 hyzt[e]—hihte
3809 eclips—eclypse
3812 chorus—MS. thorus, C.
chorus
3813 snowe—sonwh = snowh

3815 here—her
redyly—redely
3816 yhid—MS. yhidde, C.
I-hid
seye—seyn
3817 trouble—trowblen
3820 departid[e] from — de-
partede fro
3823 byhyzt—by-hyhte

3824 hidde—hyd
3826 preye—preey
diuise—deuise
3827 do—don
3828 gretely—gretly
3829 [what]—from C.
3832 þere auzt—ther awht

For the subject is of such a kind, that when one doubt is removed, innumerable others, like the heads of the hydra, spring up. Nor would there be any end of them unless they were restrained by a quick and vigorous effort of the mind. The question whereof you want a solution embraces the five following points: 1. Simplicity, or unity of Providence. 2. The order and course of Destiny. 3. Sudden chance. 4. Prescience of God, and divine predestination. 5. Free-will. I will try to treat of these things:— Resuming her discourse as from a new principle,

3849

Philosophy argued as follows:— The generation of all things, every progression of things liable to change, and everything that moveth, derive their causes, order, and form from the immutability of the divine understanding. Providence directs all things by a variety of means. These means, referred only to the divine intelligence, are called Providence; but when contemplated in relation to the things which receive motion and order from them, are called Destiny. Reflection on the efficacy of the one and the other will soon

¶ For þe matere of it is swiche þat whan oon doute is determined *and* kut away þer wexen oþer doutes wiþ-
outen noumbre. ryzt as þe heuedes waxen of ydre þe
serpent þat hercules slou3. ¶ Ne þere ne were no
manere ne noon ende. but yif þat a wyzt constreined[e]
þo doutes. by a ryzt lyuely *and* a quik fire of þouzt. þat
is to seyn by^s vigour *and* strengþe of witte. ¶ For in
þis matere men weren wont to maken questiouns of þe
simplicite of þe purueaunce of god *and* of þe ordre of
destine. *and* of sodeyne hap. *and* of þe knowyng *and*
predestinacioun deuine *and* of þe lyberte of fre wille.
þe whiche þing þou þi self aperceiust wel of what weyzt
þei ben. but for as mochel as þe knowyng of þise
þinges is a manere porcioun to þe medicīne to þe. al be it
so þat I haue lytel tyme to don it. 3it naþeles I wole
enforcen me to shewe somewhat of it. ¶ but al þou3
þe norissinges of dite of musike deliteþ þe þow most
suffren. *and* forberen a litel of þilk delite while þat I
weue (contexo) to þe resouns yknyt by ordre ¶ As it likeþ
to þe quod I so do. ¶ þo spak she ryzt a[s] by an oþer
bygynnyn[ge] *and* seide þus. ¶ þe engendryng of alle
þinges quod she *and* alle þe progressiouns of muuable
nature. *and* alle þat moeueþ in any manere takiþ hys
causes. hys ordre. *and* hys formes. of þe stablenesse of þe
deuyne þouzt [*and* thilke deuyne thowht] þat is yset *and*
put in þe toure. þat is to seyne in þe heyzt of þe sim-
plicite of god. stablisþ many manere gyses to þinges þat
ben to don. ¶ þe whiche manere whan þat men loken
it in þilke pure clerenesse of þe deuyne intelligence. it
is ycleped purueaunce ¶ but whan þilke manere is re-

3834 swiche—wyche

oon—o

3835 wiþouten noumbre —
with-owte nowmbyr

3836 waxen—wexen

3837 þere—ther

3838 constreined[e] — con-

streynede

3839 lyuely—lyfly

3840 witte—wit

3843 hap—happe

3845 weyzt—wyht

3848 wole—wol

3850 þow—MS. now, C. þou

most suffren—MS. moste

to souereyne; C. most

suffren

3851 þilk—thilke

3853 þo—so

spak—MS. spake, C. spak

3853 a[s]—as

3856 alle—al

3858 [*and*—*thowht*]—from

C.

yset—MS. ysette, C. yset

3859 toure—towr

seyne—seyu

heyzt—heyhte

3861 don—done

3862 clerenesse—klenesse

ferred by *men* to þinges þat it moeuþ *and* disponeþ þan of olde men. it was cleped destine. ¶ þe whiche þinges yif þat any wyzt lokeþ wel in his þouzt. þe strengþe of þat oon *and* of þat oþer he shal lyztly mowen seen þat þise two þinges ben diuers. ¶ For *purueaunce* is þilke deuyne resoun þat is establissed in þe souereyne prince of þinges. þe whiche *purueaunce* disponiþ alle þinges. but destine is þe disposicioun *and* ordenaunce cleuyng to moeuable þinges. by þe whiche disposicioun þe *purueaunce* knyteþ alle þinges in hire ordres. ¶ For *purueaunce* embraceþ alle þinges to hepe. al þouþ þat þei ben dyuerse *and* al þouþ þei ben wiþ outen fyn. but destynie departeþ *and* ordeyneþ alle þinges singlerly *and* diuideþ. in moeuynges. in places. in formes. in tymes. departiþ [as] þus. so þat þe vnfolding of temporel ordenaunce assembled *and* ooned in þe loking of þe deuyne þouzt ¶ Is *purueaunce* *and* þilke same assemblynge. *and* oonyng diuided *and* vnfolden by tymes. lat þat ben called destine. *and* al be * it so þat þise þinges ben dyuerse. zitte napeles hangeþ þat oon on þat oþer. forwhi þe ordre destinal procediþ of þe simplicitie of *purueaunce*. for ryzt as a werkman þat aperceiueþ in hys þouzt þe forme of þe þing þat he wil make moeuþ þe effect of þe werke. *and* lediþ þat he had[de] loked byforne in hys þouzt symply *and* presently by temporel þouzt. ¶ Certys ryzt so god disponiþ in hys *purueaunce* singlerly *and* stably þe þinges þat ben to done. but he amynistreþ in many maneres *and* in dyuerse tymes by destyne. þilke same þinges þat he haþ disponed þan wheþir þat destine be excercised. eyþer by *somme* dyuyne spirites seruantez to þe deuyne *purueaunce*. or ellys by *somme* soule (*anima*

cause us to see their differences. Providence is the divine intelligence manifested in the disposition of worldly affairs. Destiny or Fate is that inherent estate or condition of movable things by means whereof Providence retains them in the order in which she has placed them. Providence embraces all things, although diverse and infinite; but Fate gives motion to every individual thing, and in the place and under the form appropriated to it. So that the explication of this order of things wrapt up in the divine intelligence is Providence; and being unfolded according to time and other circum-

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stances, may be called Fate.

Though these

[* fol. 30 b.]

things appear to differ, yet one of them depends on the other, for the order of Fate proceeds from the unity of Providence. For as a workman, who has formed in his head the plan of a work which he is desirous to finish, executes it afterwards, and produces after a time all the different parts of the model which he has conceived; so God in the plan of his Providence disposes everything to be brought about in a certain order and in a proper time; and afterwards, by the ministry of Fate,

3872 *cleuyng*—*cluyng*e3875 *wiþ outen fyn*—*Infynyte*3876 *singlerly*—*syngulerly*3877 *in* (3)—*MS. and, C. in*3878 *departiþ*—*omitted*[*as*]*—from C.*3878 *so þat*—*lat*3884 *on*—*of*3886 *wil*—*wol*3888 *had[de]*—*hadde**symply*—*symplely*3889 *þouzt*—*ordinaunce*3890 *singlerly*—*syngulerly*3890 *stably*—*stablye*3893 *haþ*—*MS. haþe*3894 *eyþer*—*owther**seruantez*—*MS. seru-
aunce*3895 *somme*—*som*

he accomplishes what he has planned, conformably to that order and that time. So then, however Fate be exercised, it is evident that things subject to Destiny are under the control of Providence, which disposes Destiny. But some things under Providence are exempt from the control of Fate; being stably fixed near to the Divinity himself, and beyond the movement of Destiny. For even, as among several circles revolving round one common centre, that which is innermost approaches nearest to the simplicity of the middle points, and is, as it were, a centre, round which the outward ones revolve; whilst the

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outermost, revolving in a wider circumference, the further it is from the centre describes a larger space—but yet, if this circle or anything else be joined to the middle point, it is constrained to be immovable. By parity of reason, the further anything is removed from the first intelligence, so much the more is it under the control of Destiny; and the nearer anything approaches to this Intelligence, the centre of all things, the more stable it becomes, and the less dependent upon Destiny.

mundi). or ellys by al nature seruyng to god. or ellys by þe celestial moeuynge of sterres. or ellys by þe vertue of aungels. or ellys by þe dyuerse subtilite of deueles. or ellys by any of hem. or ellys by hem alle þe destynal ordynaunce is ywouen or accomplished. certys it is open þing þat þe purueaunce is an vnmoeueable *and* symple forme of þinges to done. *and* þe moeueable bonde *and* þe temporel ordynaunce of þinges whiche þat þe deuyne simplicitie of purueaunce haþ ordeyned to done. þat is destine. For whiche it is þat alle þinges þat ben put vndir destine ben certys subgitz to purueaunce. to whiche purueaunce destine it self is subgit *and* vndir. ¶ But somme þinges ben put vndir purueaunce þat sourmounten þe ordinaunce of destine. *and* þo ben pilke þat stably ben yficched ney to þe first godhed þei sourmounten þe ordre of destinal moeuablite. ¶ For ryzt as cercles þat tournen aboute a same Centre or about a poynt. pilke cercle þat is inrest or moost wiþynne ioineþ to þe symplesse of þe myddel *and* is as it were a Centre or a poynt to þat oþer cercles þat tournen abouten hym. ¶ *and* pilke þat is outerest compased by larger envyronnyng is vnfolden by larger spaces in so mochel as it is forþest fro þe mydel symplitie of þe poynt. *and* yif þer be any þing þat knytteþ *and* felawshippeþ hym selfe to pilke mydel poynt it is constreyned in to symplitie. þat is to seyn in to [vn]moeueablete. *and* it ceseth to ben shad *and* to fletin dyuersly. ¶ Ryzt so by semblable resoun. pilke þinge þat departiþ firþest fro þe first þouzt of god. it is vnfolden *and* summittid to grettere bondes of destine. *and* in so moche is þe þing more free *and* lovs fro destyne as it axeþ *and*

3906 *al*—alle3907 *moeuyng*—moeuynges3900 *ywouen*—MS. ywonnen,
C. ywouten*or*—*and*3902 *bonde*—bond3904 *haþ*—MS. haþe3905 *whiche*—which3912 *as*—as of3913 *about*—a-bowte*inrest*—innerest3917 *larger* (1)—a large3918 *mochel*—moche*forþest*—ferthere3920 *selfe*—self

3921 [vn]moeueablete — vn-

moenablete

3922 *ceseth*—MS. fleþe, C.*cesith*3923 *þinge*—thing3924 *of*—MS. to, C. of3926 *lovs*—laus

holdeþ hym ner to pilke Centre of þinges. þat is to seyne god. ¶ and if þe þinge cleueþ to þe stedfastnesse of þe þouzt of god. and be wiþ oute moeuynge certys it sourmounteþ þe necessite of destyne. þan ryzt swiche comparisoun as [it] is of skilynge to vndirstondyng and of þing þat is engendred to þing þat is. and of tyme to eternite. and of þe cercle to þe Centre. ryzt so is þe ordre of moeueable destine to þe stable symplicite of purueaunce. ¶ pilke ordinaunce moeueþ þe heuene and þe sterres and attempreþ þe elymenz to gider amonges hem self. and transformeþ hem by enterchaungable mutacioun. ¶ and pilke same ordre neweþ azein alle þinges growyng and fallyng a-doune by sembleables progressiouns of seedes and of sexes. þat is to sein. male and female. and þis ilke ordre constreyneþ þe fortunes and þe dedes of men by a bonde of causes nat able to ben vnbounden (indissolubili). þe whiche destinal causes whanne þei passen oute fro þe bygynnynges of þe vnmoeueable purueaunce it mot nedes be þat þei ne be nat mutable. and þus ben þe þinges ful wel ygouerned. yif þat þe symplicite dwellynge* in þe deuyne þouzt sheweþ furþe þe ordre of causes. vnable to be I-bowed. and þis ordre constreyneþ by hys propre stablete þe moeueable þinges. or ellys þei sholde fleten folily for whiche it is þat alle þinges semen to be confus and trouble to vs men. for we ne mowe nat considere pilke ordinaunce. ¶ Napeles þe propre manere of euery þing dressyng hem to goode disponit hem alle. for þere nis no þinge don for cause of yuel. ne pilke þing þat is don by wicked[e] folk nis nat don for yuel þe whiche shrewes as I haue shewed [ful] plentiuously

And if we suppose that the thing in question is joined to the stability of the supreme mind, it then becomes immovable, and is beyond the necessity and power of destiny. As reasoning is to the understanding, as that which is produced to that which exists of itself, as time to eternity, as the circle to the centre, so is the movable order of Fate to the stable simplicity of Providence. Destiny rules nature. It controls the actions of men by an indissoluble chain of causes, and is, like their

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origin, immutable. Thus, then, are all things well conducted, since that invariable order of cause has its origin in the simplicity of the Divine mind, and by its inherent immutability ex-

[* fol. 31.]
ercises a restraint upon mutable things, and preserves them from irregularity. To those who understand not this order, things appear confused—nevertheless, the proper condition of all things directs and inclines it to their true good. For there is nothing done for the sake of evil, not eve by the wicked, who, in seeking for felicity, are led astray by crooked error.

3927 *ner*—*ner*
3928 *seyne*—*seyn*
þinge cleueþ — thing
clyueth
stedfastnesse — stydefastnesse
3930 *swiche*—*swych*
3931 [*it*]—from C.
3932 *to* (2)—MS. of, C. to

3937 *enterchaungable*—MS.
enterchaungyngable, C.
entrechangeable
3939 *a-doune*—*a-down*
sembleables—semblable
3942 *bonde*—*bond*
3943 *ben vnbounden*—*be vn-*
bounde
3944 *oute*—*owt*

3948 *furþe*—*forth*
3949 *I-bowed*—MS. vnbound-
en, C. I-bowed
3950 *sholde*—*sholden*
3951 *whiche*—*which*
3952 *moue*—*mowen*
3956 *wicked[e]*—*wykke*
3957 [*ful*]—from C.

But the order proceeding from the centre of supreme goodness does not mislead any. But you may say, what greater confusion can there be than that both prosperous and adverse things should at times happen to good men, and that evil men should at one time enjoy their desires and at another be tormented by hateful things. Are men wise enough to discover, whether those whom they believe to be virtuous or wicked, are so in reality? Opinions differ as to this matter. Some who are deemed worthy of reward by one person, are deemed unworthy by another. But, suppose it were possible for one to distinguish

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with certainty between the good and the bad? Then he must have as accurate a knowledge of the mind as one has of the body. It is miraculous to him who knows it not, why sweet things are agreeable to some bodies, and bitter to others; why some sick persons are relieved by lenitives and others by sharper remedies. It is no marvel to the leech, who knows the causes of disease, and their cures. What constitutes the health of the mind, but goodness? And what are its maladies, but vice? Who is the preserver of good,

seken goode. but wicked errour mystourniþ hem. ¶ Ne þe ordre comynge fro þe poynt of souereyne goode ne declineþ nat fro hys bygynnyng. but þou mayst sein what vnreste may ben a wors confusioun þan þat goode men han somme tyme aduersite. and somtyme prosperite. ¶ and shrewes also han now þinges þat þei desiren. and now þinges þat þei haten ¶ wheþer men lyuen now in swiche hoolnesse of þouzt. as who seiþ. ben men now so wise. þat swiche folk as þei demen to ben goode folk or shrewes þat it mot nedes ben þat folk ben swiche as þei wenen. but in þis manere þe domes of men discorden. þat þilke men þat somme folk demen worþi of mede. oþer folk demen hem worþi of tourment. but lat vs graunt[e] I pose þat som man may wel demen or knowen þe goode folk and þe badde. May he þan knowen and seen þilke inrest attemperance of corages. as it haþ ben wont to be said of bodyes. as who saiþ may a man speken and determine of attemperance in corages. as men were wont to demen or speken of complexiouns and attemperances of bodies (q' non). ne it [ne] is nat an vnlyke miracle to hem þat ne knowen it nat. ¶ As who seiþ. but is lyke a merueil or a miracle to hem þat ne knowen it nat. whi þat swete þinges [ben] couenable to some bodies þat ben hool and to some bodies bittre þinges ben couenable. and also whi þat some seke folk ben holpen with lyzt medicines [and some folk ben holpen with sharppe medicynes] but napeles þe leche þat knoweþ þe manere and þe attemperance of heele and of maladie ne merueileþ of it no þing. but what oþer þing semeþ hele of corages but bounte and prowesse. and what oþer þing semeþ maladie of corages but vices. who is ellys kepere of good or

3958-9 *goode*—good
3960 *declineþ*—MS. *enclineþ*,
C. *declynyth*
3961 *wors*—worse
3962 *somme tyme*—somtyme
3965 *swiche*—swych
3967 *goode*—good

3967 *mot*—moste
3971 *graunt[e]*—graunte
3973 *inrest*—Inneryste
3974 *haþ*—MS. *habe*
said—MS. *saide*, C. *scyd*
3975 *determine*—determinen
3978 [*ne*]—from C.

3978 *vnlyke*—vn-lyk
3979 *lyke*—lik
3981 [*ben*]—from C.
hool—hool
3984 [*and*—*medicynes*]—
from C.

dryuere away of yuel but god *gouernour and* leecher of pouztes. þe whiche god whan he haþ by-holden from þe heye toure of hys *purueaunce* he knoweþ what is couenable to euery wyzt. *and* lenep hem þat he wot [þat] is couenable to hem. Loo here of comeþ *and* here of is don þis noble miracle of þe ordre *destinal*. whan god þat alle knoweþ doþ swiche þing. of whiche þing [þat] vnknowyng folk ben astoned but forto *constreine* as who seiþ ¶ But forto *comprehende and* telle a fewe þinges of þe *deuyne depnesse* þe whiche þat mans *resoun* may vnderstonde. ¶ þilk man þat þou wenest to ben ryzt *Iuste and* ryzt kepyng of equite. þe contrarie of þat semeþ to þe *deuyne purueaunce* þat al woot. ¶ And *lucan* my familier telleþ þat þe victories cause liked[e] to þe *goddes and* causes ouercomen liked[e] to *catoun*. þan what so euer þou mayst seen þat is don in þis [world] vnhoped or vnwened. certys it is þe ryzt[e] ordre of þinges. but as to þi wicked[e] oppinioun it is a *confusioun*. but I suppose þat som man be so wel ypewed. þat þe *deuyne Iugement and* þe Iugement of mankynde accorden hem to gidre of hym. but he is so vnstedfast of corage [þat] yif any aduersite come to hym he wolde for-leten *perauenture* to continue *innocence* by þe whiche he ne may nat wipholden fortune. ¶ þan þe wise *dispensacioun* of god spareþ hym þe whiche *manere aduersite* *myzt[e] enpeyren. ¶ For þat god wil nat suffren hym to trauaile. to whom þat trauaylnis nat couenable. ¶ An oþer man is perfit in alle uertues. *and* is an holy man *and* neye to god so þat þe *purueaunce* of god wolde demen þat it were a felony þat he were touched wip any aduersites. so þat he ne

or the driver away of evil, but God, the physician of souls, who knows what is necessary for men, and bestows it upon them? From this source spring that great marvel—the order of *destiny*—wrought by the wisdom of God, and marvelled at by ignorant men. But, now let us notice a few things concerning the depth of the Divine knowledge which human reason may comprehend. The man you deem just, may appear otherwise to the omniscient eye of Providence. When you see apparent irregularities—unexpected and un-

4004 wished for—deem them to be rightly done. Let us suppose a man so well behaved, as to be approved of God and man—but not endowed with firmness of mind, so that the reverses of fortune will cause him to forgo his probity, since with it he cannot retain his prosperity. A wise Providence, knowing that adversity might destroy this man's integrity, averts from him that

[* fol. 31 b.] adversity which he is not able to sustain. Another man is thoroughly virtuous, and approaches to the purity of the deity—him Providence deems it an injustice to oppress by adversity, and therefore exempts

3991 *hap*—MS. *habe*
3993 *wot*—MS. *wote*, C. *wot*
3994 [þat]—from C.
3995 *don*—MS. *done*, C. *don*
miracle—MS. *mirache*, C.
miracle
ordre—MS. *ordre* of
3996 *alle*—al
doþ—MS. *doþe*

3996 *whiche*—which
3997 [þat]—from C.
3999 *mans*—mannes
4000 *pilk*—thilke
4004 *liked[e]* (*both*)—lykede
4005 *is don*—MS. is to don
4006—[*world*]—from C.
ryzt[e]—ryhte
4007 *wicked[e]*—wykkede

4010 *vnstedfast*—vnstydefast
4011 [þat]—from C.
wolde—wol
4015 *manere*—man
myzt[e]—myhte
4016 *wil*—wol
4018 *neye*—negh

him even from bodily disease. Providence often gives the direction of public affairs to good men, in order to curb and restrain the malice of the wicked. To some is given a mixture of good and evil, according to what is most suitable to the dispositions of their minds. Upon some are laid moderate afflictions, lest they wax proud by too long a course of prosperity. Others suffer great adversities that their virtues may be exercised, and strengthened by the practice of patience. Some fear to be afflicted with what they are able to endure. Others despise

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what they are unable to bear; and God punishes them with calamities, to make them sensible of their presumption. Many have purchased a great name by a glorious death. Others by their unshaken fortitude, have shown that virtue cannot be overcome by adversity. These things are done justly, and in order, and are for the good of those to whom they happen. From the same causes it happens, that sometimes adversity and sometimes prosperity falls to the lot of the wicked. None are surprised to see bad men afflicted—they get

wil nat suffre þat swiche a man be moeued wip any manere maladie. ¶ But so as seide a philosophre [the moore excellent by me]. þe aduersites comen nat (he seide in grec!) þere þat uertues han edified þe bodie of þe holy man. and ofte tyme it bitideþ þat þe somme of þinges þat ben to don is taken to good folk to gouerne. for þat þe malice habundaunt of shrewes sholde ben abatid. and god zeueþ and departiþ to oþer folk prosp[er]ites and aduersites ymedeled to hepe aftir þe qualite of hire corages and remordip som folk by aduersites. for þei ne sholden nat wexen proude by longe welefulnesse. and oþer folk he suffreþ to ben trauayled wip harde þinges. ¶ For þat þei sholden conferme þe vertues of corage by þe vsage and exercitacioun of pacience. and oþer folke dreden more þen þei auzten þe wiche þei myzt[en] wel beren. and pilke folk god ledip in to experience of hem self by aspre and sorweful þinges. ¶ And many oþer folk han bouzt honorable renoune of þis worlde by þe pris of glorious deþ. and som men þat ne mowen nat ben ouer-comen by tourment han zeuen ensample to oþer folk þat vertue ne may nat be ouer-comen by aduersites. ¶ and of alle þise þinges þer nis no doute þat þei ne ben don ryztfully and ordeinly to þe profit of hem to whom we seen þise þinges bitide. ¶ For certys þat aduersite comeþ some tyme to shrewes. and some tyme þat þei desiren it comeþ of þise forseide causes and of sorweful þinges þat bytyden to shrewes. Certys no man ne wondreþ. For alle men wenen þat þei han wel deserued it. and þei ben of wicked merite of whiche

4021 wil—wol
swiche—swych
4022 manere—bodyly
4022-3 [the—me]—from C.
4023 þe aduersites—nat
—omitted
4024 þere—omitted
4026 don—done
to (2)—MS. so
to good—gouerne—to
gouerne to goode folk

4028 oþer—oother
4030 som—some
4031 sholden—sholde
4033 conferme—confermen
4034 corage—corages
4036 myzt[en]—myhten
4037 hem—hym
sorweful—sorwful
4038 oþer—oother
4039 worlde—world
of (2)—of the

4041 oþer—oother
4046 comeþ—comth
some (both)—som
þat þei—MS. þei þat, C.
þat that they
4047 comeþ—comth
sorweful—sorwful
4050 wicked—wykkede
merite—MS. uerite, C.
meryte

shrewes þe *tourment* som tyme agastep oþer to done folies. *and* som tyme it amendeþ hem þat suffren þe *tourmentis*. ¶ And þe *prosperite* þat is zeuen to shrewes sheweþ a grete argument to good[e] folk what þing þei sholde demen of þilk wilfulnesse þe whiche *prosperite* men seen ofte serue to shrewes. in þe whiche þing I trowe þat god dispensiþ. for *perauenture* þe nature of som man is so ouerþrowyng to yuel *and* so vncouenable þat þe nedy pouerte of hys house-hold my3t[e] raper egren hym to done felonies. and to þe *maladie* of hym god puttiþ remedie to ziuen hym *rychesse*. *and* som oþer man byholdiþ hys conscience defouled wiþ synnes *and* mak iþ *comparisoun* of his fortune *and* of hym self ¶ and dred iþ *perauenture* þat hys blisfulnesse of whiche þe vsage is ioyful to hym þat þe lesynge of þilke blisfulnesse ne be nat sorweful to hym. *and* þefore he wol chaunge hys maneres. and for he dred iþ to lese hys fortune. he forlet iþ hys wickednesse. to oþer folk is welefulnesse yzeuen vnworþily þe whiche ouerþroweþ hem in to *destruccioun* þat þei han deserued. and to som oþer folk is zeuen power to punissen. for þat it shal be cause of *continuacioun* *and* exercisinge to good[e] folk. *and* cause of *tourment* to shrewes. ¶ For so as þer nis none alyauce bytwixe good[e] folke *and* shrewes. ne shrewes ne mowen nat accorden amonges hem self *and* whi nat. for shrewes discorden of hem self by her vices þe whiche vices al to renden her consciences. *and* don oft[e] tyme þinges þe whiche þinges whan þei han don hem. þei demen þat þo þinges ne sholde nat han ben don. for whiche þinge þilke souereyne *purueance* haþ maked oft[e] tyme

what they deserve. Their punishment, too, may cause amendment, or deter others from like vices. When the wicked enjoy felicity—the good should learn how little these external advantages are to be prized, which may fall to the lot of the most worthless. Another reason for dispensing worldly bliss to the wicked is, that indigence would prompt naturally violent and rapacious minds to commit the greatest enormities. Their disease God cures by the medicine of money. Some men will cease to do wrong for fear, lest their wealth be lost

4066

through their crimes. Upon others unmerited happiness is conferred, which at last precipitates them into deserved destruction. To some there is given the power of chastisement, in order both to exercise the virtues of the good and to punish the wicked. For as there is no alliance between good and bad, so neither can the vicious agree together. And how should they? Their vices make them at war with themselves, rending and tearing their consciences, and there is scarce anything they do, but what afterwards they disap-

4051 *oper*—oother
done—don
4052 *folies*—felonies
4054 *grete*—gret
good[e]—goode
4055 *sholde*—sholden
þilk—þilke
4056 *serue*—seruen
whiche—which
4057 *dispensiþ*—MS. dispis-

iþ, C. dispensith
4059 *my3t[e]*—myhte
4060 *done*—don
4061 *rychesse*—Rychesses
4065 *whiche*—which
4068 MS. wrongly inserts
welfulnesse after *wick-*
ednesse
4069-71 *oper*—oother
4073 *good[e]*—goode

4074 *none*—non
4075 *good[e]*—goode
4076 *accorden*—acordy
4078 *don*—MS. done, C. don
oft[e]—ofte
4079 *don*—MS. done, C. don
4080 *sholde*—sholden
whiche þinge—which thing
4081 *haþ*—MS. haþe
oft[e]—ofte

prove of. Hence arises a signal miracle brought about by Providence—that evil

[* fol. 32.] men have often made wicked men good.

For these latter having suffered injuries from the former, have become virtu-

ous, in order that they might not resemble those whom they so detested. It is only the Divine power that can turn evil to good, overruling it for his own purposes.

Nothing occurs by the caprice of chance in the realms of Divine Providence.

Since God is the governor of all things, it is not lawful to man to attempt to comprehend the whole of the Divine economy, or to explain it in words. Let it suffice to know that God orders all things for the best.

And while he retains things created after his own likeness conformably to his goodness, he banishes evil by the cause of destiny out of his empire.

So that those evils which you seem to see are only imaginary.

But you are exhausted and weary with the prolixity of my reasoning, and look for relief from the harmony of my verse.

[faire] miracle so þat shrewes han maked oftyne shrewes to ben good[e] men. for whan þat som shrewes * seen þat þei suffren wrongfully felonies of oþer shrewes þei wexen eschaufed in to hat[e] of hem þat anoiem hem. *and* retournen to þe fruit of uertue. when þei studien to ben vnlyke to hem þat þei han hated.

4088 ¶ Certys þis only is þe deuyne myzt to þe whiche myzt yueles ben þan good. whan it vseþ þo yueles couenably *and* draweþ out þe effect of any good. as who seiþ þat yuel is good oonly by þe myzt of god. for þe myzt of god ordeyneþ þilk yuel to good. For oon ordre enbrasip alle þinges. so þat what wyzt [þat] departip fro þe resoun of þe ordre whiche þat is assigned to hym. algates zit he slideþ in to an oþer ordre. so þat noþing nis leueful to folye in þe realme of þe deuyne purueaunce. as who seiþ no þing nis wiþouten ordinaunce in þe realme of þe deuyne purueaunce. ¶ Syn þat þe ryzt strong[e] god gouernip alle þinges in þis worlde for it nis nat leueful to no man to *comprehenden* by witte ne vnfolden by worde alle þe subtil ordinaunces *and* dis-

4102 *posicionous* of þe deuyne entent. for oonly it auzt[e] suffice to han loked þat god hym self makere of alle natures ordeynip *and* dressip alle þinges to good. while þat he hastip to wiphalden þe þinges þat he haþ maked in to hys semblaunce. þat is to seyn forto wipholden þinges in to good. for he hym self is good he chaseþ oute al yuel of þe boundes of hys communalite by þe ordre of necessite destinable. For whiche it folweþ þat yif þou loke þe purueaunce ordeynynge þe þinges þat men wenen ben haboundaunt in erþes. þou ne shalt not seen in no place no þing of yuel. ¶ but I se now þat

4082 [faire]—from C.
oftyne—omitted
4083 good[e]—goode
4085 hat[e]—hate
anoiem—anoiyeden
4087 studien—omitted
vnlyke—vnlyk
4088-90 good—goode
4092 þilk—þilke

4093 [þat]—from C.
4094 þe (2)—þilke
whiche—which
4096 realme—Reame
4099 strong[e]—stronge
worlde—world
4100 no—omitted
witte—wit
4101 worde alle—word al

4102 auzt[e]—owhte
4104 good while—goode wyl
4105 haþ—MS. haþe
4108 of (1)—fro
4109 whiche—which
4111 ben haboundaunt—ben
outraizous / or habownd-
ant

þou art charged wiþ þe wey3te of þe questiou[n] and
wery wiþ lengþe of my resoun. and þat þou abidest som
swetnesse of songe. tak þan þis drauzt and whan þou
art wel refreshed and refet þou shalt ben more stedfast
to stye in to heyere questiouns. 4117

Take, then, this draught, with which when refreshed, you may more strongly proceed to higher matters.

SI UIS CELSI IURA.

Yif þou wolt demen in þi pure þouzt þe ryztes or þe
lawes of þe heye þund[ere]re. þat is to seyne of god.
loke þou and bihold þe heyztes of souereyne heuene.
¶ þere kepen þe stæres by ryztful alliaunce of þinges
hir olde pees. þe sonne ymoœued by hys rody fire. ne
destourbiþ nat þe colde cercle of þe moone. ¶ Ne þe
sterre yclepid þe here. þat enclinþ hys rauyssynge
courses abouten þe souereyne heyzt of þe worlde. ne þe
same sterre vrsa nis neuer mo wasshen in þe depe
westernne see. ne coueitþ nat to dyzen hys flaumbes in
þe see of [the] occian. al þouz he see oþer sterres y-
plounged in to þe see. ¶ And hesperus þe sterre
bodþ and tellþ alwey þe late nyztes. And lucifer þe
sterre bryngeþ azeyne þe clere day. ¶ And þus makþ
loue enterchaungeable þe perdurable courses. and þus
is discordable bataile yput oute of þe contre of þe sterres.
þis accordaunce attempreþ by euene-lyke manere[s] þe
elementes. þat þe moyste þinges striuen nat wiþ þe
drye þinges. but 3iuen place by stoundes. and þat þe
colde þinges ioynen hem by feiþ to þe hote þinges. and
þat þe lyzt[e] fyre arist in to heyzte. and þe heuy erþes
aualen by her wey3tes. ¶ by þise same cause þe floury
yere 3eldep swote smellys in þe fyrste somer sesoun
warmynge. and þe hote somer dryeþ þe cornes. and

[The syxte Metur.]

If thou wouldst explore the laws of the high Thundrerer, behold the lofty heavens, where, bound by fixed laws, the stars keep their ancient peace. There the rosy Sun does not invade the moon's colder sphere. Nor doth the Bear stray from his appointed bounds, to quench his light in the western main. Vesper always makes its wonted appearance at eve.

4128

Lucifer ushers in the morn. So mutual love moves all things, and from the starry region banishes all strife. This concord in equal measures tempers the elements, so that the moist atoms war no more with the dry, nor heat with cold contends; but the aspiring flame soars aloft, while down the heavy earth descends. By these same causes the flowing year yields sweet smells in the warm spring-tide; the hot summer ripens the corn. Autumn comes crowned

4115 tak—MS. take, C. tak
4116 refet—refect
shalt ben—shal be
stedfast—stydefast
4118 þou wolt—þou wys wilt
4119 þund[ere]re — thon-
seyne—seyn [derere
4120 bihold—MS. biholde, C.
byhold [rody
4122 rody — MS. redy, C.

4122 fire—Fyr
4123 cercle—clerke
4125 courses—cours
heyzt—heyhte
4127 westernne—westrene
dyzen—decyn
4128 [the]—from C.
he see—MS. it sewe, C. he
see
oþer—oothre

4131 azeyne—ayein
4133 oute—owt
4134 euene-lyke manere[s]—
euenelyk maneres
4135 striuen—stryuyng
nat—omitted
4136 but—omitted
4138 lyzt[e] fyre arist—lyhte
fyr arysith
4140 yere—3er

with plenty, and winter wets the earth with showers.

These changes give life and growth to all that breathe; and at last by death efface whatever has had birth.

[* fol. 32 b.]
Meanwhile the

4148 world's Creator, the Source of all, the Lawgiver, the wise Judge, sits above equitably directing all things. Those things which have been set in motion by him are also checked and forced to move in an endless round, lest they go from their source, and become chaotic.

4157 This love is common to all things, and all things tend to good; so, urged by this, they all revert to that First Cause that gave them being.

[The seuende
prose.]

P. Do you see what follows from our arguments?

B. What is it?

P. That all fortune is good.

B. How can that be?

P. Since all fortune, whether prosperous or adverse, is for the reward of the good or the punishment of

autumpne comeþ aʒeyne heuy of apples. and þe fletyng reyne bydeweþ þe wynter. þis attemperaunce noryssiþ *and* brynggeþ furþe al þinge þat brediþ lyfe in þis worlde. ¶ and þilk same attemperaunce rauyssiþ hideþ *and* bynymeþ *and* drencheþ vndir þe last[e] depe alle *þinges yborn. ¶ Amonges þise þinges siteþ þe heye makere kyng *and* lorde. welle *and* bygynnyng. lawe *and* wise Iuge. to don equite *and* gouerniþ *and* enclinþ þe bridles of þinges. *and* þo þinges þat he stireþ to don by moeuynge he wiþdraweþ *and* arestiþ *and* affermiþ þe moeueable or wandryng þinges. ¶ For ʒif þat he ne clepiþ nat aʒein þe ryzt goynge of þinges. *and* ʒif þat he ne constreyned[e] hem nat eftesones in to roundnesse enclined þe þinges þat ben now continued by stable ordinaunce. þei sholde deperten from hir welle. þat is to sein from hir bygynnyng *and* failen. þat is to sein tournen in to nauzt. ¶ þis is þe commune loue of alle þinges. *and* alle þinges axen to be holden by þe fyn of good. For ellys ne myzten þei nat lasten yif þei ne come nat eftesones aʒeine by loue returned to þe cause þat haþ ʒeuen hem beyng. þat is to seyn to god. 4162

IAM NE IGITUR UIDES.

Seest þou nat þan what þing folweþ alle þe þinges þat I haue seid. what þing quod I. ¶ Certys quod she outerly þat al fortune is good. and how may þat be quod .I. ¶ Now vndirstand quod she so as [alle fortune wheyther so it be Ioyeful fortune / or aspre] fortune is ʒiuen eiþer by cause of gerdonyng or ellys of exercisyng of goode folk or ellys by cause to punissen.

4142 comeþ aʒeyne — comth
ayein

4143 reyne—reyn

4144 furþe al þinge—forth
alle thing

brediþ lyfe—berith lyf

4145 worlde—world

þilk—þilke

4146 last[e] depe—laste deth

4147 yborn—MS. yborne, C.

I-born

4148 lorde—lord

4149 wise—wys

4150 stireþ—sterith

don—gon

4151 þe—omitted

4153 clepiþ—klepede

4154 constreyned[e] — con-

streynede

roundnesse — Rownd-

nesses

4156 sholds—sholden

4158 tournen—torne

of—to

4150 be—ben

4161 eftesones aʒeine — eft
sones ayein

4162 haþ—MS. haþe

4163 þing—thinge

4165 outerly—al owtrely

al—alle

4166-7 [alle—aspre]—from

C.

4169 goode—good

or ellys to chastysen shrewes. ¶ þan is alle fortune good. þe whiche fortune is certeyne þat it be eiper ryztful or profitable. ¶ For soþe þis is a ful verray resoun quod I. and yif I considere þe purueaunce and þe destine þat þou tauzttest me a litel here byforne þis sentence is susteyned by stedfast resouns. but yif it like vnto þe lat vs noumbre hem amonges þilk[e] þinges of whiche þou seidest a litel here byforne þat þei ne were nat able to ben ywened to þe poeple. ¶ whi so quod she. for þat þe comune worde of men mysusiþ quod I. þis manere speche of fortune. and sein ofte tymes [þat] þe fortune of som wyzt is wicked. wilt þou þan quod she þat I proche a litel to þe wordes of þe poeple so it seme nat to hem þat I be ouer moche departid as fro þe vsage of man kynde. as þou wolt quod I. ¶ Demest þou nat quod she þat al þing þat profitiþ is good. 3is quod I. certis þilk þing þat exercisiþ or corrigiþ profitiþ. I confesse it wel quod I. þan is it good quod she. whi nat quod I. but þis is þe fortune [quod she] of hem þat eiper ben put in vertue and batailen azeins aspre þinges. or ellys of hem þat eschewen and declinen fro vices and taken þe weye of vertue. ¶ þis ne may nat I denye quod I. ¶ But what seist þou of þe myrye fortune þat is zeuen to good folk in gerdoun deuiniþ ouzt þe poeples þat it is wicked. nay forsoþe quod I. but þei demen as it soþe is þat it is ryzt good. ¶ And what seist þou of þat oþer fortune quod she. þat al þou3 it be aspre and restreiniþ þe shrewes by ryztful tourment. weniþ ouzt þe poeple þat it be good. nay quod I. ¶ But þe poeple demiþ þat it be most wrecched of alle þinges þat may ben þouzt. war now and loke wel quod she lest þat we in folwyng þe opynioun of poeple haue con-

the bad, all fortune is good which is either just or useful. But let us put this opinion among those positions which thou saidst were not commonly believed by the people.

P. Why so?
B. Because it is a common expression that *the fortune of such a one is bad*.

P. Do you wish me to conform for awhile to the language of the people, lest we should seem to depart too much from the popular mode of expression?

B. As you please.

P. Is everything profitable that is good?

B. Yes, certainly.

P. That which exercises or corrects is profitable?

4186

B. It is.

P. Therefore it is good? B. Yes.

P. This is the fortune of the virtuous who combat with adversity, or of those who, relinquishing vice, pursue the path of virtue?

B. It is.

P. The vulgar regard that prosperity which is bestowed as a reward on the good to be beneficial, and they believe those calamities by which the wicked are punished as the most miserable things that can be imagined. But in following the popular opinion, let us be aware of being involved in some new and incredible consequence.

4174 here byforne—her by-
forn
4175 stedfast—stydefast
4176 noumbre—nowmbren
þilk[e]—thilke
4177 here byforne—her by-
forn

4178 ywened—weened
4179 worde—word
4180 [þat]—from C.
4181 wicked—wykkede
4182 proche—aproche
4185 al—alle
4186 þilk—thilke

4188 [quod she]—from C.
4191 weye—wey
4193 deuiniþ—demyth
4194 ouzt—awht
4195 soþe—soth
4198 ouzt—awht
4199 be—is

B. What is that?
P. We have decided that the fortune of the virtuous or of those growing up in virtue must needs be good—but that the fortune of the wicked must be most wretched.

B. That's true, though none dare acknowledge it.

P. Why so?

The wise man ought not to be cast down, when he has to wage war with Fortune, no more than the valiant man ought to be dismayed on hearing the noise of the

[* fol. 83.]

battle. The dangers of war enable the one to acquire more glory, and the difficulties of the other aid him to confirm and im-

4217

prove his wisdom. Thus virtue, in its literal acceptation, is a power that, relying on its own strength, overcomes all obstacles. You, who have made so much progress in virtue, are not to be carried away by delights and bodily lusts. You must engage in a fierce conflict with every fortune—with adversity, lest it dismay you—with prosperity, lest it corrupt you. Seize the *golden mean* with all your strength. All below or above this line is a contemptible and a thankless felicity. The choice of fortune lies in your own hands, but remember that even adverse fortune, unless it exercises the

fessed *and* concluded þing þat is vnable to be wened to þe poeple. what is þat quod I. ¶ Certys quod she it folweþ or comeþ of þinges þat ben graunted þat alle fortune what so euer it be. of hem þat eyþer ben in possessioun of vertue. [or in the encre of vertu] or ellys in þe purchasyng of vertue. þat þilke fortune is good. ¶ And þat alle fortune is ryzt wicked to hem þat dwellen in shrewednesse. as who seiþ. *and* þus weneþ nat þe poeple. ¶ þat is soþe quod I. ¶ Al be it so þat noman dar confessen it ne byknowen it. ¶ whi so quod she. For ryzt as no strong man ne semeþ nat to abassen or disdaignen as *ofte tyme as he hereþ þe noise of þe bataile. ne also it ne semeþ nat to þe wyse man to beren it greuously as oft[e] as he is lad in to þe strif of fortune. for hoþe to þat on man *and* eke to þat oþer þilke difficulte is þe matere to þat oon man of encrese of his glorious renoun. *and* to þat oþer man to conferme hys sapience. þat is to seine þe asprenesse of hys estat. ¶ For þefore is it called uertue. for þat it susteniþ *and* enforceþ by hys strengþes þat it nis nat ouer-comen by aduersites. ¶ Ne certys þou þat art put in þe encrese or in þe heyzt of uertue ne hast nat comen to fleten wiþ delices *and* forto welken in bodyly lust. ¶ þou sowest or plauntest a ful egre bataile in þi corage azeins euery fortune. for þat þe sorweful fortune ne confounde þe nat. ne þat þe myrre fortune ne corruppe þe nat. ¶ Occupy þe mene by stedfast strengþes. for al þat euer is vndir þe mene. or ellys al þat ouer-passeþ þe mene despiseþ welefulnesses. ¶ As who seiþ. it is vicious *and* ne haþ no mede of hys trauaile. ¶ For it is set in þoure hand. as who seiþ it lieþ in þoure power what fortune þow is leuest. þat is to seyne good or uel. ¶ For alle fortune

4204 *comeþ*—comth
4206 [*or*—*vertu*] from C.
4208 *wicked*—wykkede
4210 *soþe*—soth
4211 *confessen*—confesse
4212 *no strong*—the stronge
4213 *abassen*—abayssen

4215 *oft[e]*—ofte
4219 *seine*—seyn
4223 *heyzt*—heyhte
4224 *welken*—wellen
4226 *confounde*—MS. con-
founded, C. confownde
4227 *Occupy*—Ocupye

4223 *stedfast*—stydefast
4230 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4231 *set*—MS. sette, C. set
4232 *lieþ*—lith
4233 *seyne*—seyn

þat semeþ sharpe or aspre yif it ne exercise nat þe good virtues of the
folk. ne chastisiþ þe wicked folk. it punisseþ. 4235 the good or chastises
the wicked, is a
punishment.

BELLA BIS QUENIS. ET CETERA.

ÞE wrekere attrides ¶ þat is to seyne agamenon þat
wrouzt[e] and continued[e] þe batailes by ten zere
recouered[e] and purged[e] in wrekyng by þe destruc-
cioun of troie þe loste chambres of mariage of hys broþer 4239

[The seuende
Metur.]

Atrides carried on
a ten years' war to
punish the licen-
tious Paris.

pis is to seyn þat [he] agamenon wan azein Eleine þat
was Menelaus wif his broþer. In þe mene while þat
pilke agamenon desired[e] to zeuen sailes to þe grek-
ysshe nauye and bouzt[e] azein þe wyndes by blode. he
vncloped[e] hym of pite as fader. and þe sory prest
ziueþ in sacrificyng þe wreched kuytting of þrote of þe
douzter. ¶ þat is to sein þat agamenon lete kuytten þe
þrote of hys douzter by þe prest. to maken alliaunce wiþ 4247

With blood
he purchased
propitious
gales for the
Grecian fleet, by
casting off all
fatherly pity, and
sacrificing his
daughter
Iphigenia to the
vengeance of
Diana.

hys goddes. and for to haue wynde wiþ whiche he
myzt[e] wende to troie. ¶ Itakus þat is to sein vlixies
bywept[e] hys felawes ylorn þe whiche felawes þe
fiers[e] pholifemus ligginge in his grete Caue had[de]
freten and dreint in hys empty wombe. but napeles
polifemus wood for his blinde visage zeld to vlixies ioie
by hys sorowful teres. þis is to seyn þat vlixes smot
oute þe eye of poliphemus þat stod in hys forhede. for 4255

Ulysses bewailed
his lost mates,
devoured by
Polyphemus,
but, having de-
scribed the Cyclop
of his sight, he
rejoiced to hear
the monster's
roar.

wepyng and blynde. ¶ Hercules is celebrable for hys
hard[e] trauaile he dawntede þe proude Centauris half
hors half man. and he rafte þe despoylyng fro þe
Centours;

Hercules is
renowned for his
many labours, so
successfully over-
come. He over-
threw the proud
Centours;

4234 sharpe—sharp
4236 seyne—seyn
4237 wrouzt[e]—wrowhte
continued[e]—continuede
zere—zer
4238 purged[e]—purgede
4240 [he]—from C.
wan—MS. wanne, C. wan
4242 desired[e]—desirede
4243 bouzt[e]—bowhte
blode—blod
4244 vncloped[e]—vnclothede
as—of
4245 kuytting—MS. kny-

tyng, C. kutyng
4246 lete—let
kuytten—MS. knydden, C.
kuttyn
4248 haue—han
4249 myzt[e] wende—myhte
wenden
4250 bywept[e]—by-wepte
ylorn—MS. ylorne, C. y-
lorn
4251 fiers[e]—feerse
had[de]—hadde
4253 zeld—yald
4254 sorowful—sorwful

4254 smot—MS. smote, C.
smot
4255 oute—owt
stod—MS. stode, C. stood
forhede—forehed
4256 saw—say
4258 hard[e] trauaile—harde
trauayles
dawntede—MS. dawnded,
C. dawntede
4259 half—MS. hals
rafte—byrafte
fro—from

he slew the Nemean lion and wore his skin as a trophy of his victory; he smote the Harpies with his arrows; he carried off the golden apples of the Hesperides, and killed the watchful dragon; he bound Cerberus with a threefold chain; he gave the body of proud Diomedes as food for the tyrant's horses;

he slew the serpent Hydra; he caused Achelous to hide his blushing head within his banks;

he left Antæus dead upon the [* fol. 33 b.] Lybian shore; he appeased Evander's wrath by killing Cacus;

he slew the Erymanthean boar;

and bore the weight of Atlas upon his shoulders.

These labours justly raised him to the rank of a god.

Go then, ye noble souls, and follow the path of this great example.

cruel lyoun þat is to seyne he slouȝ þe lyoun *and* rafte hym hys skyn. he smot þe brids þat hyȝten arpijs [in þe palude of lynne] wiþ certeyne arwes. he rauyssed[e] applis fro þe wakyng dragoun. *and* hys hand was þe more heuy for þe golde[ne] metal. He drouȝ Cerberus þe hound of helle by hys treble cheyne. he ouer-comer as it is seid hap put an vnmeke lorde fodre to hys cruel hors ¶ þis is to sein. þat hercules slouȝ diomedes *and* made his hors to etyn hym. and he hercules slouȝ Idra þe serpent *and* brend[e] þe venym. and achelaus þe flode defouled[e] in his forhede dreint[e] his shamefast visage in his strondes. þis is to sein þat achelaus couþe transfigure

4273 hym self in to dyuerse lykenesse. *and* as he fauȝt wiþ orcules at þe laste he turnid[e] hym in to a bole. and hercules brak of oon of hys hornes. *and* achelaus for shame hidde hym in hys ryuer. ¶ And [he] hercules *cast[e] adoun Antheus þe geaunt in þe strondes of libye. *and* kacus apaised[e] þe wrappes of euander. þis is to sein þat hercules slouȝ þe Monstre kacus *and* apaised[e] wiþ þat deef þe wrappe of euander. ¶ And þe bristled[e] boor marked[e] wiþ scomes þe sholdres of hercules. þe whiche sholdres þe heye cercle of heuene sholde þreste. *and* þe laste of his labours was þat he sustened[e] þe heuene vpon his nekke vnbowed. *and* he deserued[e] eftsones þe heuene to ben þe pris of his laste trauayle ¶ Goþ now þan ȝe stronge men þere as þe heye weye of þe grete ensample ledeþ ȝou. ¶ O nice

4288 men whi nake ȝe ȝoure bakkes. as who seiþ. ¶ O ȝe

4260 *seyne*—seyne
4261 *smot*—MS. smote, C. smot
4262 [in—lynne]—from C.
4263 *rauysed[e]*—rauysshede
4266 *seid*—MS. seide, C. sayd
hap—MS. hape
4267 *lorde*—lord
4269 *etyn*—freten
4270 *brend[e]*—brende

4270 *flode defouled[e]*—flood defowlede
4271 *forhede dreint[e]*—forhed dreynte
4273 *lykenesse*—lyknæsses
4274 *turnid[e]*—tornede
4275 *brak*—MS. brake, C. brak
hys—hise
4276 [he]—from C.
4278-80 *apaised[e]*—apaysede

4281 *bristled[e]*—brystlede
marked[e]—markede
4282 *cercle*—clorke
4283 *þreste*—thriste
4285 *deserued[e]*—deseruede
4286 *Goþ*—MS. Gope
þere—ther
4287 *weye*—wey
4288 *nake*—MS. make, C. nake

slowe *and* delicat men whi fley 3e aduersites. *and* ne
fyzten nat azeins hem by vertue to wynnen þe mede of
þe heuene. for þe erþe ouer-comen zeueþ þe sterres.
¶ þis is to seyne þat whan þat erþely lust is ouer-comen.
a man is makend worþi to þe heuene.

O ye slothful
ones, wherefore
do ye basely fly!

4291

He who conquers
earth doth gain
the heavens.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUARTUS.

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

DIXERAT ORACIONISQUE CURSUM.

She hadde seid *and* tourned[e] þe cours of hir resoun to
somme oþer þinges to ben tretid *and* to ben ysped.
þan seide I. Certys ryztful is þin amonestyng *and* ful
digne by auctorite. but þat þou seidest som tyme þat
þe questioun of þe deuyne purueaunce is enlaced wip
many oþer questiouns. I vndir-stonde wel *and* proue it
by þe same þinge. but I axe yif þat þou wenest þat hap
be any þing in any weys. *and* if þou wenest þat hap be
any [thing] what is it. þan quod she. I haste me to
zelden *and* assoilen þe to þe dette of my byheste *and*
to shewen *and* openen þe wey by whiche wey þou maist
come azein to þi contre. ¶ but al be it so þat þe þinges
whiche þat þou axest ben ryzt profitable to knowe.
zitte ben þei diuers somewhat fro þe pape of my purpos.
And it is to douten þat þou ne be makend weery by
mysweys so þat þou ne mayst nat suffise to mesuren þe
ryzt weye. ¶ Ne doute þe þer-of no þing quod I. for
forto-knowen pilke þinges to-gidre in þe whiche þinges
I delite me gretly. þat shal ben to me in stede of reste.
Syn it nis nat to douten of þe þinges folwyng whan
euery side of þi disputisoun shal be stedfast to me by
vndoutous feiþ. þan seide she. þat manere wol I don

[The fyrste prose.]

When Philo-
sophy had thus
spoken, and was
about to discuss
other matters I
interrupted her.
B. Thy exhorta-
tion is just and
worthy of thy
authority, but
thou saidst that
the question
of the Divine
Superintendence
or Providence is
involved with
many others—
and this I believe.

I am desirous,
however, of know-
ing whether
there be such a
thing as *Chance*,
and what thou
thinkest it is.
P. I haste to
fulfil my promise
and to show the
road to your own
country. But al-
though these
things you ques-
tion me about are
profitable to
know, yet they
lead us a little out
of our way. And
by straying from
the path you may
be too fatigued to
return to the
right road.

B. Don't be
afraid of that, for
it will refresh me
as much as rest
to know these
things in which I
am delightfully

4289 *slowe*—MS. slou3, C.slowe
fley—flee4292 *seyne*—seyn4294 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð

þe—by

4297 *som tyme*—whilom4298 *þe* (2)—thy4300 *þinge*—thing4302 [*thing*]*—*from C.4303 *zelden*—yilden*assoilen*—MS. assailen, C.

assoylen

byheste—byhest4304-6 *whiche*—which4306 *þen*—MS. bene4307 *pape*—paath4312 *stede*—styde4314 *disputisoun*—disputa-
cloun*be*—han ben*stedfast*—stydefast

interested.
P. I will then comply with thy requests. If we define Chance to be an event produced by an unintelligent motion, and not by a chain or connection of causes, I should then affirm that Chance is nothing and an empty sound. What room is there for folly and disorder where all things are restrained by order, through the ordinance of God? For it is a great truth that nothing can spring out of nothing. Now, if anything arises without the operation of a cause, it proceeds from nothing. But if this is impossible, then there can be no

4331

such a thing as Chance, as we have defined it.
B. Is there nothing, then, that may be called Chance or Fortune? Is there nothing (hid from the vulgar) to which these words may be applied?
P. Aristotle defines this matter with much precision and
[* fol. 34.] probability.
B. How?
P. So often as a man does anything for the sake of any other thing, and another thing than what he intended to do is produced by other causes, that thing so produced is called Chance. As if a man trench the ground for tillage

be. *and* bygan to speken ryzt þus ¶ Certys quod she yif any wyzt diffynisse hap in þis manere. þat is to seyn. þat hap is bytidynge y-brouzt forþe by foelyshe moeuynge. *and* by no knyttyng of causes. ¶ I con-ferme þat hap nis ryzt nauzt in no wise. and I deme al outerly þat hap nis ne dwelliþ but a voys. ¶ As who seiþ. but an ydel worde wiþ outen any significacioun of þing summittid to þat vois. for what place myzt[e] ben left or dwellynge to folie *and* to disordinaunce. syn þat god lediþ *and* streyniþ alle þinges by ordre. ¶ For þis sentence is verray *and* soþe þat no þinge ne haþ his beyng of nouzt. to [the] whiche sentence none of þise olde folk ne wiþseide neuere al be it so þat þei ne vndirstoden ne moeueden it nauzt by god prince *and* gynner of wirkyng. but þei casten as a manere foundement of subgit material. þat is to seyn of [the] nature of alle resoun. *and* 3if þat ony þinge is woxen or comen of no causes. þan shal it seme þat þilke þinge is comen or woxen of nouzt. but yif þis ne may nat ben don. þan is it nat possible þat þere haþ ben any swiche þing as I haue diffynissid a litel here byforne. ¶ How shal it þan ben quod I. nis þer þan no þing þat by ryzt may be cleped eyþer *happe* or ellis auenture of fortune. or is þer ouzt al *be it so þat it is hidd fro þe poeple to whiche þise wordes ben couenable. Myn aristotul quod she. in þe book of his phisik diffynisseþ þis þing by short resoun and neyze to þe soþe. ¶ In whiche manere quod I. ¶ As ofte quod she as men don any þing for grace of any oþer þing. *and* an oþer þinge þan þilke þing þat men ententen to doon bytideþ by som[e] causes it is ycleped *happe*. ¶ Ryzt as a man dalf þe erþe by

4317 *seyn*—seyng
4318 *forþe*—forth
4322 *worde*—word
4323 *myzt[e]*—myhte
4324 *left*—lefte
4325 *streyniþ*—constreynyth
4326 *soþe*—soth
no *þinge*—nothing
hap—MS. *habe*

4327 [*the*]—from C.
4330 *gynner*—bygynnere
4331 [*the*]—from C.
4332 *3if*—MS. 3it, C. yif
þinge—thing
4335 *þat*—*ben*—þat hap be
hab—MS. *habe*
swiche—swych
4338 *happe*—hap

4339 *hidd*—MS. hidde, C.
hidd
4340 *whiche*—which
4342 *neyze*—nehg
whiche—which
4343 *don*—MS. done, C. don
4344 *þinge*—thing
4345 *som[e]*—some
4346 *happe*—hap

cause of tylienge of þe felde. *and* fond þere a gobet of golde by-doluen. þan wenen folk þat it is fallen by fortunous bytydyng. but for soþe it nis nat for nauzt for it haþ hys propre causes of whiche causes þe cours vnforseyne and vnwar semip to han maked happe. ¶ For yif þe tilier in þe erþe ne delue nat in þe felde. and yif þe hider of þe golde ne hadde hidd þe golde in þilke place. þe golde ne had[de] nat ben founde. þise ben þan þe causes of þe abreggyng of fortune hap. þe whiche abreggyng of fortune hap comeþ of causes encountryng *and* flowyng to-gidre to hem selfe. *and* nat by þe entencioun of þe doer. ¶ For neiþer þe hider of þe gold. ne þe deluer of þe felde ne vndirstanden nat þat þe golde sholde han be founde. but as I seide. it bytidde *and* ran to-gidre þat he dalf þere as þat oþer hadde hidd þe golde. Now may I þus diffinissen happe. ¶ Happe is an vnwar bytydyng of causes assembled in þinges þat ben don for som oþer þinge. but þilke ordre procedyng by an vneshewable byndyng to-gidre. whiche þat descendþ fro þe wel of purueaunce þat ordeineþ alle þinges in hire places *and* in hire tymes makeþ þat þe causes rennen *and* assemblen to-gidre. 4368

and find gold, then this is believed to happen by chance, although it is not so. For if the tiller had not ploughed the field, and if the hider of the gold had not concealed it in that spot, the gold had not been found. These, then, are the causes of a fortuitous acquisition which proceeds from a conflux of encountering causes, and not from the intention of the doer. For neither the hider of the gold nor the husbandman intended or understood that the gold should be found. But it happened by the concurrence of these two causes that the one did dig where the other had hidden the money. Chance, then, is an unexpected event, by a concurrence of causes, following an action designed for a particular purpose. This concurrence of causes proceeds from that order which flows from the fountain of Providence and disposes all things as to place and time.

RUPIS ACHEMENIE.

Tigris [*and*] eufrates resoluen *and* spryngen of a welle in þe kragges of þe roche of þe contre of achemenye þere as þe fleenge [batayle] ficchþ hire dartes retournid in þe brestes of hem þat folwen hem. ¶ And sone afre þe same ryueres tigris *and* eufrates vniogyng *and* de-

[The fyrste Metur.] Where the flying Parthian doth pierce his pursuers with his shafts, there from the Achemenian heights flow the Tigris and Eufrates, but soon

4347 of (1)—to
fond — MS. fonde, C.
founde
4348 golde—gold
fallen—byfalle
4349 for (2)—of
4350 hap—MS. hape
hys—hise
4351 happe—hap
4352 tilier—tylyere
delue—dolue
4353 hider—hydere
golde—gold
hidd—MS. hidde

4353-4 golde—gold
4354 had[de]—hadde
4355 fortune—fortuit
whiche—which
4356 fortune—fortuit
comeþ—comth
4357 flowyng—MS. folwyng,
C. flowyng
selfe—self
4358 doer—doere
hider—hidere
4359 deluer—deluere
felde—feeld [en
vndirstanden—vndirstod-

4360 golde—gold
4361 hidd—MS. hidde, C.
hyd
4362 happe (both)—hap
4365 whiche—which
4366 descendþ—MS. defend-
ep, C. descendith
wel—welle
4369 [*and*]—from C.
a—oo
4371 [batayle]—from C.
4373 þe—tho

their streams divide and flow into separate channels. But should they unite again, in the impetuous stream, boats, ships, and trees would be all intermingled, whirled about; and blind Chance seems to direct the current's course. But the sloping earth, the laws of fluids, govern these things. So though Chance seems to wander unrestrained, it is nevertheless curbed and restrained by Divine Providence.

[The .2^de. prose.]

B. Is there any *free-will* in this chain of cohering causes? Or doth the *chain of destiny* constrain the motions of the human mind?
P. There is a freedom of the will possessed by every rational being. A rational being has judgment to judge of and discern everything. Of himself he knows what he is to avoid or to desire. He seeks what he judges desirable, and he shuns what he deems should be avoided. A rational being possesses, then, the liberty of choosing and rejecting. This liberty is not equal in all beings. In heavenly substances, as spirits, &c., judgment is clear, and the will is incorruptible, and has a ready and efficacious power of doing things which are desired.

[* fol. 34 b.]

parten hire watres. and yif þei comen to-gidre *and* ben assembled *and* clepid to-gidre in to o cours. þan moten þilke þinges fletyn to-gidre whiche þat þe water of þe entrechaungyng flode bryngeþ þe shippes *and* þe stokkes araced wiþ þe flood moten assemble. *and* þe watres ymedlyd wrappiþ or implieþ many fortunel happes or maneres. þe whiche wandryng happes naþeles þilke enclinyng lowenes of þe erþe. *and* þe flowyng ordre of þe slidyng water gouerniþ. ¶ Ryzt so fortune þat semeþ as [þat] it fletip wiþ slaked or vngouerned[e] bridles. It suffriþ bridles þat is to seyn to ben gouerned *and* passeþ by þilke lawe. þat is to sein by þe deuyne ordinaunce.

4386

ANIMADUERTO INQUAM.

þis vndirstonde I wel quod I. *and* accorde wel þat it is ryzt as þou seist. but I axe yif þer be any liberte or fre wil in þis ordre of causes þat cliuen þus to-gidre in hem self. ¶ or ellys I wolde witen yif þat þe destinal cheine constreiniþ þe moeueyng of þe corages of men. yis quod she þer is liberte of fre wille. ne þer ne was neuer no nature of resoun þat it ne hadde liberte of fre wille. ¶ For every þing þat may naturely vsen resoun. it haþ doom by whiche it discerniþ *and* demip every þing. ¶ þan knoweþ it by it self þinges þat ben to fleen. *and* þinges þat ben to desiren. *and* þilk þing þat any wyzt demeþ to ben desired þat axeþ or desireþ he *and* fleep [þilke] þing þat he trouep ben to fleen. ¶ wherfore in alle þinges þat resoun is. in hem also is libertee of willyng *and* of nillyng. ¶ But I ne ordeyne nat. as who seip. I ne graunte nat þat þis libertee be euene like in alle þinges. forwhi in þe souereyns deuynes substaunces. þat is to *seyn in spiritz ¶ Iugement is

4374 *to-gidre*—to-gyderes
4376 *whiche*—which
4377 *flode*—flood
4378 *assemble*—assemblyn
4380 *enclinyng*—declynyng
4381 *lowenes*—lownesse

4383 [þat]—from C.
vngouerned[e]—vngouern-
ede
4385 *þe*—þilke
4389 *or*—of
4390 *hem*—hym

4392 *yis*—MS. yif. C. yis
4392-94 *wille*—wil
4395 *whiche*—which
4397 *þilk*—þilke
4399 [þilke]—from C.

more clere *and* wil nat be corumped. *and* haþ myzt redy to speden þinges þat ben desired. ¶ But þe soules of men moten nedes ben more free whan þei loken hem in þe speculacioun or lokinge of þe deuyne þouzt. *and* lasse free whan þei sliden in to þe bodies. *and* zit lasse free whan þei ben gadred to-gidre *and* comprehendid in erþely membris. but þe last[e] seruage is whan þat þei ben zeuen to vices. *and* han yfalle fro þe possessioun of hire propre resoun ¶ For after þat þei han cast aweye hir eyen fro þe lyzt of þe souereyn soþfastnesse to lowe þinges *and* dirke ¶ Anon þei dirken by þe cloude of ignoraunce *and* ben troubled by felonous talentz. to þe whiche talentz whan þei approchen *and* assenten. þei hepen *and* encreesen þe seruage whiche þei han ioigned to hem self. *and* in þis manere þei ben caitifs fro hire propre libertee. þe whiche þinges napeles þe lokinge of þe deuyne purueaunce seeþ þat alle þinges byholdeþ *and* seeþ fro eterne. *and* ordeyneþ hem eueryche in her merites. as þei ben predestinat. *and* it is seid in grek. þat alle þinges he seeþ *and* alle þinges he hereþ. 4424

The souls of men must needs be more free when employed in the contemplation of the Divine Mind, and less so when they enter into a body, and still less free when enclosed and confined in earthly members; but the most extreme servitude is when they are given over to vice and wholly fallen from their proper reason. For at once they are enveloped by the cloud of ignorance and are troubled by pernicious desires, by yielding to which they aid and increase that slavery which they brought upon themselves, and thus even under the liberty proper to them, they remain captives. Yet the eye of Providence, beholding all things from eternity, sees all this and disposes according to their merit all things as they are predestinated. He, as Homer says of the sun, sees and hears all things.

PURO CLARUM LUMINE.

Homer wiþ þe hony mouþe. þat is to seyn. homer wiþ þe swete dities synged þat þe sonne is cleer by pure lyzt. napeles zit ne may it nat by þe inferme lyzt of hys bemes breken or percen þe inwarde entrailes of þe erþe. or ellys of þe see. ¶ so ne seeþ nat god makere of þe grete worlde to hym þat lokeþ alle þinges from on heye ne wiþstandiþ nat no þinges by heynesses of erþe. ne þe nyzt ne wiþstondeþ nat to hym by þe blake cloudes. ¶ þilke god seeþ in o strook of þouzt alle þinges þat ben or weren or schullen come. ¶ *and* þilke

[The 24th. Metur.] The sweet-tongued Homer sings of the sun's pure light. Yet the sun's beams cannot pierce into the inner bowels of the earth, nor into the depths of the sea. But God, the world's maker, beholding from on high, has his vision impeded neither by earth nor cloud. At a glance he sees all events, present, past, and future.

4405 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4411 *last[e]*—laste
4412 *fro*—from
4415 *cloude*—cloudes
4418 *whiche*—which

4423 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð
4425 *mouþe*—Mowth
4428 *percen*—MS. perten,
C. percen
inwarde—inward

4430 *worlde*—world
on heye—an hegh
4431 *nat*—omitted
4434 *schullen come*—shollen
comyn

God, then, that alone sees all things, may indeed be called the true Sun.

god for he lokeþ *and* seeþ alle þinges al oon. þou maist seyn þat he is þe verray sonne.

4436

[The .3^de. prose.]

B. I am distracted by a more difficult doubt than ever. God's foreknowledge seems to me inconsistent with man's free-will. For if God foresees all things, and cannot be deceived, then that which Providence hath foreseen must needs happen. If God from eternity doth foreknow not only the works, but the designs and wills of men, there can be no liberty of will—nor can there be any other action or will than that which a Divine and infallible Providence hath foreseen. For if things fall out

4451

contrary to such foreseeing, and are wrested another way, the prescience of God in regard to futurity would not be sure and unerring—it would be nothing but an uncertain opinion of them; but I take it to be impious and unlawful to believe this of God. Nor do I approve of the reasoning made use of by some. For they say that a thing is not necessarily to happen because God hath foreseen it, but rather because it is to happen it cannot be hid from the Divine Providence.

TAMEN EGO EN INQUAM.

þ An seide I now am I confounded by a more harde doute þan I was. what doute is þat *quod* she. ¶ For certys I coniecte now by whiche þinges þou art troubled. It semeþ *quod* I to repugnyn *and* to contrarien gretly þat god knoweþ byforn alle þinges. *and* þat þer is any fredom of liberte. for yif so be þat god lokeþ alle þinges byforn. ne god ne may nat ben desseiuid in no manere. þan mot it nedes ben þat alle þinges bytyden þe whiche þat þe purueaunce of god haþ sein byforn to comen. ¶ For whiche yif þat god knoweþ by-forn nat oonly þe werkes of men. but also hir conseils *and* hir willes. þan ne shal þer be no liberte of arbitre. ne certys þer ne may ben noon oþer dede ne no wille but þilke whiche þe deuyne purueaunce þat ne may nat ben desseiued haþ feled byforn ¶ For yif þat þei myzten wryþen away in oþer manere þan þei ben purueyed. þan ne sholde þer ben no stedfast prescience of þinge to comen but raþer an vncerteyn oppinioun. þe whiche þinge to trowen on god I deme it felonie *and* vnleueful. ¶ Ne I ne proeue nat þilk same resoun. as who seiþ I ne allowe nat. or I ne preise nat þilke same resoun by whiche þat som men wenen þat þei mowen assoilen *and* vnknytten þe knot of þis questioun. ¶ For certys þei seyn þat þing nis nat to come for þat þe purueaunce of god haþ seyn it byforne. þat is to comen but raþer þe contrarie. ¶ And þat is þis þat for þat þe þing is to comen þat þerfore ne may it nat ben hyd fro þe purueaunce of god.

4435 *al oon*—alone
4437 *harde*—hard
4445 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4446 *whiche*—which
4450 *wille*—wil
whiche—which þat

4451 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4453 *stedfast*—stydefast
4454-55 *þinge*—þing
4455 *on*—of
4456 *þilk*—þilke
4458 *whiche*—which

4459 *knot*—knotte
4461 *come*—comyn
haþ—MS. haþe
4464 *hyd*—MS. hydde, C.
hidde

**and* in þis manere þis necessite slydiþ aȝein in to þe contrarie *partie*. ne it ne byhoueþ [nat] nedes þat þinges bytiden þat ben ypurueid. [but it by-houeth nedes / þat things þat ben to comyn ben yporueyid] but as it were ytrauailed. as who seiþ. þat þilke answe^r proceediþ ryȝt as þouȝ men trauailden or weren bysy to enqueren þe whiche þing is cause of whiche þinges. as wheþer þe prescience is cause of þe necessite of þinges to comen. or ellys þat þe necessite of þinges to comen is cause of þe purueaunce. ¶ But I ne enforce me nat now to shewen it þat þe bytydyng of þinges y-wist byforn is necessarie. how so or in what manere þat þe ordre of causes haþ it self. al þouȝ þat it ne seme nat þat þe prescience brynge in necessite of bytydyng of þinges to comen. ¶ For certys yif þat any wyȝt sitteþ it byhoueþ by necessite þat þe oppinioun be soþe of hym þat coniectiþ þat he sitteþ. and aȝeinward. al so is it of þe contrarie. yif þe oppinioun be soþe of any wyȝt for þat he sitteþ it byhoueþ by necessite þat he sitte ¶ þan is here necessite in þat oon *and* in þat oþer. for in þat oon is necessite of sittyng. *and* certys in þat oþer is necessite of soþe but þerfore ne sitteþ nat a wyȝt for þat þe oppinioun of sittyng is soþe. but þe oppinioun is raþer soþe for þat a wyȝt sitteþ by-forn. and þus al þouȝ þat þe cause of soþe comeþ of [þe] syttyng. and nat of þe trewe oppinioun. Al gates zitte is per comune necessite in þat oon *and* in þat oþer. ¶ þus sheweþ it þat I may make semblable skills of þe purueaunce of god *and* of þinges to come. ¶ For al þouȝ for þat þat þinges ben to comen. þerfore ben þei purueid. nat certys for þei ben purueid. þerfore ne bytide þei nat. zit naþeles byhoueþ it by necessite þat eiþer þe þinges to comen ben ypurueied of god. or ellys þat þe þinges þat ben

[* fol. 35.]
Now by this reason necessity appears to change sides. For it is not necessary that the things which are foreseen should happen, but it is necessary that the things which are to befall should be foreseen. As if the question was, which was the cause of the other—*prescience* the cause of the necessity of future events, or the *necessity* the cause of the prescience of future events? But I will prove that, however the order of causes may stand, the event of things foreseen is necessary, although prescience doth not seem to impose a necessity upon future

4481
things to fall out. For if a man sit—the belief in the sitting is true; and, on the other hand, if the opinion is true of his sitting, he must needs sit. In both cases there is a necessity—in the latter that the person sits—in the former, that the opinion concerning the other is true. But the man does not sit because the opinion of his sitting is true, but the opinion is true because the action of his being seated was antecedent in time. So that although the cause of truth arises from the sitting, there is a common necessity in both. Thus may we reason concerning Providence and future events.

4466 [nat]—from C.
4467-8 [but—yporueyid]—
from C.
4471 þinges—thing
4477 haþ—MS. haþe
4480-82 soþe—soth

4486 soþe—sooth
4487 soþe—soth
4488 soþe—sooth
4489 soþe comeþ — sooth
comth
[þe]—from C.

4490 comune—MS. comme,
C. comune
4493 come—comyn
4494 to—omitted
4494-95 purueid—MS. pur-
ueide, C. purueyid

For allowing things are foreseen because they are to happen, and that they do not befall because they are foreseen, it is necessary that future events should be foreseen of God, or if foreseen that they should happen; and this alone is sufficient to destroy all idea of *free-will*. But it is preposterous to make the happening of temporal things the cause of eternal prescience, which we do in imagining that God foresees future events because they are to happen. And, moreover, when I know that anything exists, it is necessary for my belief that it should be. So

4513

also when I know that an event shall come to pass, it must needs happen. The event, therefore, of a thing foreseen must befall. Lastly, if a person judge a thing to be different to what it is—this is not knowledge, but a false opinion of it, and far from the true knowledge. If, therefore, a thing be so to happen that the event of it is neither necessary nor certain, how can any one foresee what is to happen? For as pure knowledge has no element in it of falsehood, so what is comprehended by true knowledge cannot be otherwise than as comprehended. Hence it is that true

purueied of god bitiden [.s.] by necessite. ¶ And þis þing oonly suffiseþ I-nouȝ to distroien þe fredome of oure arbitre. þat is to seyn of oure fre wille ¶ But now [certes] sheweþ it wel how fer fro þe soþe and how vp so down is þis þing þat we seyn þat þe bytydinge of temporel þinges is þe cause of þe eterne prescience. ¶ But forto wenen þat god purueiþ [the] þinges to comen. for þei ben to comen. what oþer þing is it but forto wene þat þilke þinges þat bitiden som tyme ben causes of þilke souereyne purueaunce þat is in god. ¶ And her-to I adde ȝitte þis þing þat ryȝt as whan þat I woot þat o þing is it byhoueþ by necessite þat þilke self þing be. and eke þat whan I haue knowe þat any þinge shal bitiden so byhoueþ it by necessite þat þilk[e] same þing bytide. so folweþ it þan þat þe bytydyng of þe þing Iwist by-forne ne may nat ben eschewed. ¶ And at þe last[e] yif þat any wyȝt wene a þing tō ben oþer weyes þan it is. it nys nat oonly vnscience. but it is deceiuable oppinioun ful diuerse and fer fro þe soþe of science. ¶ wherfore yif any þing be so to comen so þat þe bytydyng of it ne be nat certeyne ne necessarie. ¶ who may weten [byforne] þat þilke þing is to come. ¶ For ryȝt as science ne may nat be medelyd wiþ falsnesse. as who seiþ þat yif I woot a þing. it ne may nat be fals þat I ne woot it. ¶ Ryȝt so þilk þing þat is conceyued by science ne may [nat] ben noon oþer weyes þan [as] it is conceiued. For þat is þe cause whi þat science wantiþ lesyng. as who seiþ. whi þat wityng ne receyueþ nat lesyng of þat it woot. ¶ For it byhoueþ by necessite þat euery þinge [be] ryȝt as science comprehend iþ it to be. what shal I þan sein. ¶ In whiche manere knoweþ god byforne þe þinges to comen.

4498 [.s.]—from C.

4499 *fredome*—freedom4500 *wille*—wil

4501 [certes]—from C.

4504 *purueiþ*—MS. *purueiþe*

[the]—from C.

4506 *bitiden*—bytydden*som tyme*—whilom

4509 o—a

self—selue4510 *þinge*—thing4511 *þilk[e]*—thilke4513 *þinge*—thing4514 *last[e]*—laste4515 *nys*—is4518 *it*—hit

4519 [byforne]—from C.

4522 *fals*—false

4523 [nat]—from C.

ben—MS. by, C. ben4524 *þan [as] it is*—MS. þan

it is be

4527 [be]—from C.

4529 *whiche*—which

¶ yif þei ne be nat certeyne. ¶ For yif þat he deme þat þei ben to comen vneschewably. *and* so may be þat it is possible þat þei ne shullen *nat comen. god is desseiued. but nat only to trowen þat god is desseiued. but for to speke it wiþ mouþe it is a felonous syñe. ¶ But yif þat god woot þat ryzt so as þinges ben to comen. so shulle þei comen. so þat he wit[e] egaly. as who seiþ indifferently þat þinges mowen ben don or ellys nat don. what is þilke prescience þat ne comprehendþ no certeyne þinge ne stable. or ellys what difference is þer bytwixe þe prescience. *and* þilke iape-worþi dyuynge of Tiresie þe diuinour þat seide. ¶ Al þat I seie *quod* he eyþer it shal be. or ellys it ne shal nat be. Or ellis how moche is worþe þe diuyn prescience more þan þe oppinioun of mankynde yif so be þat it demeþ þe þinges vncerteyne as men don. of þe whiche domes of men þe bytydyng nis nat certeyne. ¶ But yif so be þat noon vncerteyne þinge may ben in hym þat is ryzt certeyne welle of alle þinges. þan is þe bytydyng certeyne of þilke þinges whiche he haþ wist byforn fermely to comen. For whiche it folweþ þat þe fredom of þe conсеils *and* of þe werkes of mankynde nis non syn þat þe þouzt of god seeþ alle þinges *with* outen *error* of falsnesse byndeþ *and* constreiniþ hem to a bitidyng by necessite. *and* yif [this] þing be on-is grauntid *and* receyued. þat is to seyn. þat þer nis no fre wille. þan sheweþ it wel how gret distruccioun *and* how grete damages þer folwen of þinges of mankynde. ¶ For in ydel ben þer þan *purposed* *and* byhyzt medes of goode folk. *and* peynes to badde folk. syn þat no moeuynge of free corage uoluntarie ne haþ nat deserued hem. þat is to seyn neiþer mede nor peyne. ¶ And it sholde seme þan þat þilke þinge is alþer worste whiche

knowledge cannot; err, because everything must precisely be what true knowledge [* fol. 35 b.] perceives it to be. What follows, then?

4534

How does God foreknow these uncertain contingencies?

For if he thinks that a thing will inevitably happen, which possibly may not, he is deceived—but this is sheer blasphemy.

4540

But if God discerns that just as things are to come they shall come; if he knows that they may or may not come, what sort of prescience is this, which comprehends nothing certain, nothing invariable? Or how does divine prescience differ from human opinion, if He hath an uncertain judgment of things, whereof the events are uncertain and unfixed?

4551

But if there can be no uncertainty in his knowledge, who is the source of all certainty; the event of all things which he foreknows must be fixed and inevitable.

Whence it follows that men have no freedom in their designs and actions; because the Divine Mind, endowed with an infallible foresight, constrains and binds them to a certain event.

4562

4534 *mouþe*—Mowth
4536 *shulle*—shullyn
wit[e]—wite
4538 *don*—MS. done, C. y-
doon
4543 *moche*—mochel

4543 *worþe*—worth
4549 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4550 *whiche*—which
4551 *mankynde*—man-kynd
4554 [*this*]—from C.
4555 *grauntid*—ygraunted

4558 *medes of*—Meedes to
4560 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4562 *alþer worste whiche*—
alderworst which

Rewards and punishments now deemed just and equitable, will be considered most unjust, when, it is allowed, that mankind are not prompted by any will of their own, to either virtue or vice, but in all their actions are impelled by a fatal necessity.

4570 Nor would there be such things as virtue or vice, but such a medley of the one and the other as would be productive of the greatest confusion. And from this it will follow—that since all order comes of Divine Providence, and that there is no freedom of the human will, that also our vices must be referred to the author of all good—which is a most impious opinion. Then is it useless to hope for anything from God, or to pray to him. For why should men do either, when all they can desire is irreversibly predestined? Hope and prayer being thus ineffectual, all intercourse is cut off between God and man.

4588 By reverent and humble supplication we earn divine grace, a most inestimable favour, and are able to associate with the Deity, and to unite ourselves to the inaccessible light.

þat is nowe demed. for alþer moste iuste and moste ryztful. þat is to seyn þat shrewes ben punyssed. or ellys þat good[e] folk ben ygerdoned. þe whiche folk syn þat þe propre wille [ne] sent hem nat to þat oon ne to þat oþer. þat is to seyn. neþer to good[e] ne to harme. but constreineþ hem certeyne necessite of þinges to comen. ¶ þanne ne shollen þer neuer ben ne neuer weren vice ne vertue. but it sholde raþer ben confusioun of alle desertes medlid wiþoute discreсион. ¶ And zitte þer folweþ an oþer inconuenient of þe whiche þer ne may ben þouzt ne more felonous ne more wikke. and þat is þis þat so as þe ordre of þinges is yledd and comeþ of þe purueaunce of god. ne þat no þing nis leueful to þe conseils of mankynde. as who seiþ þat men han no power to done no þing. ne wilne no þing. þan folweþ it þat oure vices ben referred to þe mak[er]e of alle good. as who seiþ þan folweþ it. þat god auzt[e] han þe blame of oure vices. syn he constreiniþ by necessite to don vices. þan nis þer no resoun to han hopen in god. ne forto preien to god. ¶ For what sholde any wyzt hopen to god. or whi sholde he preien to god. syn þat þe ordenaunce of destine whiche þat ne may nat ben enclined. knytteþ and streiniþ alle þinges þat men may desiren. ¶ þan sholde þere be don away þilke onoly alliaunce bytwixen god and men. þat is to seien to hopen and to preien. but by þe preis of ryztfulnesse and of veray mekenesse we deserue þe gerdoun of þe deuyne grace whiche þat is inestimable. þat is to sein þat it is so grete þat it ne may nat ben ful ypreised. and þis is onoly þe manere. þat is to seyen hope and prayeres. for whiche it semeþ þat [men] mowen speken

4563 *nowe*—MS. *newe*, C. *now*
alþer moste iuste—alder
 moost iust
moste—most
 4565-67 *good[e]*—goode
 4566 *wille*—wil
 [ne]—from C.
 4571 *wiþoute*—with-owten
 4573 *þouzt*—thoght

4574 *yledd*—MS. *yledde*, C.
 yled
 4575 *comeþ*—comth
 4577 *done*—doon
 4578 *mak[er]e*—makere
 4579 *auzt[e]*—owhte
 4584 *whiche*—which
 4588 *preis*—prys
ryztfulnesse—Rihtwesse-

nesse
 4589 *deserue*—desseruyne
 4590 *deuyne*—MS. *deuyne*s,
 C. *dyuyne*
 4590-93 *whiche*—which
 4591 *grete*—gret
 4593 [men]—from C.
speken—speke

wiþ god. *and* by resoun of supplicacioun ben conioigned to pilk clernesse þat nis nat approached no raper or þat men byseken it *and* emprenten it. And yif men ne wene [nat] þat [hope] ne preiers ne han no strengþes. by þe necessite of þinges to comen y-resceiued. what þing is þer þan by whiche we mowen be conioygned *and* clyuen to pilke souereyne prince of þinges. ¶ For whiche it byhoueþ by necessite þat þe lynage of mankynde as *þou songe a litel here byforne ben departed *and* vnioyned from hys welle *and* faylen of hys bygynnyng. þat is to seien god. 4604

If men believe that hope and prayer have no power because of the necessity of future events, by what other way can we be united, and hold fast to the sovereign Lord of all things?

4599

Wherefore mankind must be discovered and disunited from the source of its existence, and shrink from its beginning.

QUE NAM DISCORS

What discordable cause haþ to-rent *and* vnioyned þe byndyng or þe alliaunce of þinges. þat is to seyne þe coniuccioun of god *and* of man. ¶ whiche god haþ establissed so grete bataile bitwixen þise two, soþfast or verray þinges. þat is to sein bytwixen þe purueaunce of god *and* fre wille. þat þei ben synguler *and* diuided. ne þat þei ne wolen nat ben medeled ne coupled to-gidre. but þer nis no discorde to [tho] verray þinges. but þei cleuen certeyne al wey to hem self. but þe þouzt of man confounded *and* ouerþrowen by þe dirke membris of þe body ne may nat by fir of his dirk[ed] lokyng. þat is to seyn by þe vigour of hys insyzt while þe soule is in þe body knowen þe þinne subtil knyntynges of þinges. ¶ But wherfore eschaufiþ it so by so grete loue to fynden pilke note[s] of soþe y-couered. (*glosa*) þat is to sein wherfore eschaufiþ þe þouzt of man by so grete desir to knowen pilke notificaciouns þat ben yhidd vndir þe couertours of soþe. woot it ouzt pilke þinges

[The .3^{de}. Metur.] Say what discordant cause looseth the bonds of things?

4607

What power doth make these two great truths (i. e. Providence and Free-will) contend, which when separate are plain and clear, but united appear dark and perplexed?

4613

The mind of man encumbered by the earthly body, can never, with her cloudy sight, discover the subtle and close bonds of things.

4617

But why does man burn with ardour to learn the hidden notes of truth? Why gropes he for he knows not what? None seek to know what is known.

4595 *pilk*—thilke
4596 *emprenten*—impretrent
4597 [nat]—from C.
[hope]—from C.
4601 *whiche*—which
4602 *byforne*—by-forn
4605 *haþ*—MS. hape
4606 *seyne*—seyn
4607 *whiche*—which

4608 *haþ*—MS. hape
grete—gret
soþfast—soothfast
4610 *wille*—wil
4612 *discorde*—discord
[tho]—from C.
4613 *cleuen*—clyuen
4615 *dirk[ed]*—derkyd
4616 *while*—whil

4617 *knowen*—knowe
4619-21 *grete*—gret
note[s]—notes
4619 *soþe*—soth
4621 *yhidd*—MS. yhidde, C.
Ihyd
4622 *soþe*—sooth
þinges—thing

If he knows
them not, what
does he so blindly
seek ?

Who wishes for
things he hath
never known ?
Or if he seek,
where shall he
find them ?
Or if he find, how
shall he be sure
that he has found
what he sought
for ? The pure
soul that sees the
divine thought,
knows all the
secret chains of
things.

Yet, though now
hidden in its
fleshly members,
it hath some re-
membrance of its
pure state—it re-
tains the sums of
things, but has
lost their par-
ticulars. He who
seeks truth is not
in either circum-
stance (*i. e.* seek-
ing for what he
knows or knows
not), he knoweth
not all things,
nor hath he
wholly forgotten
all.

But he ponders
on what he
knows, that he
may add those
things that he
hath forgotten to
those that he
retains.

4625 [Glosa]—from C.
4630 *þinge*—thing
whiche—which
4631 *woot*—not
nat—nawht
4632 *couþe*—kowde
4634 [*þat*]—from C.
where—wher

þat it anguissous desirþ to knowe. as who seiþ nay.
¶ For no man ne trauaileþ forto witen þinges þat he woot.

4625 *and þerfore þe texte seiþ þus. ¶ [Glosa] Si enim anima ignorat istas subtiles connexiones. responde. unde est quod desiderat scire cum nil ignotum possit desiderare.*

¶ But who traua[i]leþ to wyten þinges y-knowe. and yif þat he ne knoweþ hem nat. what sekþ þilke blynde þouzt. what is he þat desirþ any þinge of whiche he woot ryzt nat. as who seiþ who so desirþ any þing nedis som what he knoweþ of it. or ellys he ne couþe

4633 nat desire it. or who may folwen þinges þat ne ben nat ywist ¶ and þouzt [*þat*] he seke þo þinges where shal he fynden hem. what wyzt þat is al vnknowynge *and* ignoraunt may knowe þe forme þat is yfounde. ¶ But

whan þe soule byholdeþ *and* seeþ þe heye þouzt. þat is to seyn god. þan knoweþ it to-gidre þe somme *and* þe singularites. þat is to seyn þe principles *and* eueryche by hym self. ¶ But now while þe soule is hidd in þe cloude *and* in þe derknesse of þe membris of þe body. it ne haþ nat al forzetten it selfe. but it wiþholdeþ þe

4643 somme of þinges *and* lesiþ þe singularites. þan who so þat sekeþ soþenesse. he nis in neiþer nouþir habit. for he not nat alle ne he ne haþ nat alle forzetten. ¶ But zitte hym remembriþ þe somme of þinges þat he wiþholdeþ *and* axeþ counseil *and* tretþ depelyche þinges ysein byforne. [Glosa] þat is to sein þe grete somme in hys mynde. [textus] so þat he mowe adden þe parties þat he haþ forzetten. to þilke þat he haþ wiþholden.

4635 *what*—MS. þat, C. what
vnknowynge—vnkunynge
4639 *eueryche*—euerych
4640 *while*—whil
þe—MS. þe þe
hidd—MS. hidde, C. hidde
4641 *derknesse*—derkenesse
4642 *haþ*—MS. haþe

selfe—self
4644 *nouþir habit*—nother
habite
4645 *alle (both)*—al
haþ—MS. haþe
4648 [Glosa]—from C.
4649 [textus]—from C.
4650 *haþ (both)*—MS. haþe

TAMEN ILLA UETUS INQUIT HEC EST.

Panne seide she. þis is quod she þe olde questioun of þe purueance of god. and marcus tulus whan he deuided[e] þe deuinaciouns. þat is to sein in hys booke þat he wroot of deuinaciouns. he moeued[e] gretly þis questioun. and þou þi self hast souzt it mochel and outerly and long[e]. but zit ne haþ it nat ben determined ne yspedd fermely and diligently of any of yow. ¶ And þe cause of þis derkenesse and [of this] difficulte is for þat þe moeuyng of þe resoun of mankynde ne may nat moeuen to. þat is to sein applien or ioynen to þe simplicitie of þe deuyne prescience. ¶ þe whiche symplicitie of þe deuyne prescience zif þat men [myhten thinken it in any manere / þat is to seyn / þat yif men] myzte pinken and comprehenden þe þinges as god seþ hem. þan ne sholde þer dwellen outerly no doute. þe whiche resoun and cause of difficulte I shal assaie at þe laste to shewen and to speden. ¶ whan I haue *firste [yspendyd / and] answered to þo resouns by whiche þou art ymoeued. ¶ For I axe whi þou wenest þat þilk[e] resouns of hem þat assoilen þis questioun ne ben nat spedeful ynouþ ne sufficient þe whiche solucioun or þe whiche resoun for þat it demip þat þe prescience nis nat cause of necessite to þinges to comen. þan ne wenep it nat þat fredom of wille be distourbed or ylett by prescience. for ne drawest þou nat argumentes from ellys where of þe necessite of þinges to comen. As who seip any oþer wey þan þus. but þat þilke þinge[s] þat þe prescience woot byforn [ne] mowen nat vnbitide. þat is to seyn þat þei moten bitide. ¶ But þan yif þat prescience ne putteþ no necessite to þinges to comen. as þou þi self

[The 4th prose.]
P. This is the old objection against Providence, so ably handled by Cicero in his *Book of Divination*; and you yourself have anxiously dis-
4655

cussed it. But neither of you have offered a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. The cause of this mystery is that the human understanding cannot conceive the simplicity of the divine prescience, for if it were possible to comprehend this, every difficulty would at once disappear. I shall, therefore, try to explain and solve this difficult
4665

question. I ask, then, why you do not approve the [* fol. 36 b.] reasoning of such as think—that Prescience does not obstruct the liberty of the will, because it is not the necessitating cause of future events? Do you draw an argument of the necessity of future events, from any other topic than this,—that those things which are foreknown must
4675

of necessity happen? If divine prescience imposes no necessity upon future things, must not the issue of things be voluntary, and man's will free and unconstrained?

4653 *deuided[e]*—deuynede booke—book
4654 *moeued[e]*—moeuede
4655 *souzt*—I-sowht
4656 *long[e]*—longe
haþ—MS. haþe
4657 *yspedd*—MS. yspedde, C. Isped
fermely—MS. feruently,

C. fermely
4658 *derkenesse*—dirknese [of this]—from C.
4662-3 [*myhten* — men] — from C.
4663 *myzte*—myhten
4667 *firste*—fyrst
4668 [*yspendyd and*]—from C.

4668 *þo*—the
whiche—which
4669 *art*—MS. arte
þilk[e]—þilke
4671 *spedeful*—spedful
4672 *whiche*—which
4674 *wille*—wyl
4677 *þinge[s]*—thinges

For argument sake let us suppose there is no prescience, would, then, the events which proceed from free-will alone be under the power of necessity?

E. No.

P. Let us, then, admit Prescience, but that it imposes no necessity on what is to happen; the freedom of the will would still remain entire and absolute. But although Prescience, you may say, is not the necessary cause of future events, yet it is a sign that they shall necessarily happen, and hence it follows that, although there

4695

were no prescience, future events would still be an inevitable necessity. For the sign of a thing is not really the thing itself, but only points out what the individual is. Wherefore, it must be first proved that everything happens by necessity before we can conclude that prescience is a sign of that necessity. For if there be no necessity, prescience cannot be the sign of that which has no existence. The assertion that nothing happens but by necessity, must be proved by arguments drawn from causes connected and agreeing with this necessity, and not from signs or foreign causes.

hast confessed it *and* byknown a litel herbyforne. ¶ what cause [or what] is it. as who seiþ þere may no cause be. by whiche þat þe endes (exitus) uoluntarie of þinges myzten be constreyned to certeyne bitydyng. ¶ For by grace of possessioun. so þat þou mowe þe better vnderstonde þis þat folweþ. ¶ I pose (impossibile) þat þer ne be no prescience. þan axe I quod she in as moche as appertenþ to þat. sholde þan þinges þat comen of frewille ben constreined to bytiden by necessite. *Boicius.* nay quod I. þan azeinward quod she. I suppose þat þere be prescience. but þat ne putteþ no necessite to þinges. þan trowe I þat þilk self fredom of wille shal dwellen al hool *and* absolut *and* vnbounen. but þou wolt sein þat al be it so þat prescience nis nat cause of þe necessite of bitidyng to þinges to comen. ¶ Al gates zitte it is a signe þat þe þinges ben to bytiden by necessite. by þis manere þan al þou3 þe prescience ne hadde neuer yben. zit algate or at þe lest[e] wey. it is certeyne þing þat þe endys *and* þe bitydynges of þinges to comen sholde ben necessarie. ¶ For euery sygne sheweþ *and* signifieþ oonly what þe þing is ¶ but it ne makþ nat þe þing þat it signifieþ. ¶ For whiche it byhoueþ firste to shewen þat no þing ne bitidþ [þat it ne bytydith] by necessite. so þat it may apere þat þe prescience is signe of þis necessite ¶ or ellys yif þere nere no necessite. certys þilke prescience ne myzt[e] nat ben signe of þinge þat nis nat. ¶ But certys it is nowe certeyne þat þe preue of þis sustenþ by stedfast resoun ne shal nat ben ladd ne proued by signes ne by argumentys ytaken fro wiþ oute. but by causes couenable *and* necessarie. ¶ But þou mayst sein how may it be þat þe þinges ne bitiden nat

4683 *whiche*—which
4685 *better*—betere
4688 *moche*—mochel
4689 *frewille*—free wyl
4691 *þat ne*—þat is ne
4692 *þat*—MS. þan
þilk self—þilke selue

4693 *wille*—wil
4699 *lest[e]*—leeste
4700 *sholde*—sholden
4703 *whiche*—which
firste—fyrst
4704 [þat — bytydith] —
from C.

4707 *myzt[e]*—myhte
þinge—þing
4708 *nowe*—now
4709 *sustenþ*—ysustenyd
stedfast—stydefast
ladd—MS. ladde, C. lad

pat ben ypurueyed to comen. but certys ryzt as we trowen pat þo þinges whiche pat þe purueaunce woot by-forn to comen. ne ben nat to bitiden. but [pat] ne sholde we nat demen. but raþer al þouȝ [pat] þei schal bitiden. ȝit ne haue þei no necessite of hire kynde to bitiden. and þis maist þou lyztly aperceyuen by þis pat I shal seyn. but we seen many þinges whan þei ben don by-forn oure eyen ryzt as men seen þe karter worken in þe tournynge and in attempryng or in adressyng of hys kartes or chariottes. ¶ and by þis manere as who seiþ mayst þou vnderstonde of alle manere oþir werkemen. ¶ Is þere þanne any necessite as who seiþ in oure lokynge [pat] constreineþ or compelliþ any of þilke þinges to ben don so. b. nay *quod* I ¶ For in ydel and in veyne were alle þe effect of crafte yif pat alle þinges weren moeued by constreynynge. pat is to seyn by constreynynge of oure eyen or of oure syzt. P. þise þingus þan *quod* she pat whan men don hem ne han non necessite pat men don hem. eke þo same þinges first or þei be don. þei ben to comen wiþ out necessite. for whi þer ben somme þinges to bytide of whiche þe endys and þe bitidynges of hem ben absolut *and quit of alle necessite. for certys I ne trowe nat pat any man woldeseyn þis. pat þo þinges pat men don now pat þei ne weren to bitiden. first or þei were ydon ¶ and þilk same þinges al þouȝ pat men hadden ywyst hem by-forn. ȝitte þei han fre bitidynges. for ryzt as science of þinges present ne bryngeþ in no necessite to þinges [pat men doon // Ryht so the prescience of thinges to comen ne bryngeth in no necessite to thinges] to bytiden but þou mayst seyn pat of þilke same it is ydouted. as wheþer pat of þilke þinges pat ne han non endes and

We see many things when they are done before our eyes; such as a charioteer driving his chariot, and other things of like nature.

Now, is there any necessity which compels these things to be done? B. No. For if all things were moved by compulsion—the efforts of art would be vain and fruitless.

P. The things, then, which are done are under no necessity that they should be done; then first before they were done, they were under no necessity of coming to pass; wherefore some things happen, the event of which is unconstrained by necessity.

These things therefore, although fore-known, have free events: for as the knowledge

4731 of present things imposes no necessity upon things which are now done, so

[* fol. 37.] neither does the foreknowledge of futurities necessitate the things which are to come. But you may doubt whether there can be any certain prescience of things, of which the event is not necessitated: for here there seems to be an evident contradiction. If things are fore-known, you may contend they must necessarily happen; and if their event is not necessary,

4714 *whiche*—which

4715 [pat]—from C.

sholde—sholden4716 *demen*—MS. denyen

[pat]—from C.

4717 *necessite*—MS. necessari-4721 *hys*—hise

4725 [pat]—from C.

4727 *veyne*—veyn*alle*—al*crafte*—craft4729 *þise*—MS. þise þise, C.4732 *wiþ out*—with-owte4733 *bytide*—bytyden4733 *whiche*—which4737 *were*—weeren [I-doon*ydon* — MS. ydone, C.*þilk*—þilke4741-2 [pat — *thinges*] —

from C.

4744 *endes*—issues

they cannot be foreseen, because true knowledge can comprehend nothing but what is absolutely certain. And if things uncertain in their events are foreseen as certain, this knowledge is nothing more than a false opinion. For it is very remote from true knowledge to judge of things otherwise than they really are. The cause of this error is that men imagine that their knowledge is wholly derived from the nature of the things known, whereas it is quite the reverse. Things are not known from their inherent properties, but by the faculties of the observer.

4761

The roundness of a body affects the sight in one way, and the touch in another. The eye, from afar, darts its rays upon the object, and by beholding it comprehends its form. But the object is not distinguished by the touch unless the hand comes in contact with it and feels it all round. Man himself is surveyed in divers ways—by the senses, by the imagination, by reason, and by the Intelligence (of the Deity). The senses take note of his material figure—the imagination considers the form alone, exclusive of the matter.

4746 *seme*—semyn
discorde—discorden

4749 *pat*—yif
4753-5 [*and*—*self*]*—*from C.

4757 *hap*—MS. *habe*
4760 *alle*—al

bytidynges necessaryes yif þer-of may ben any pre-science ¶ For certys þei seme to discorde. for þou wenest þat yif þat þinges ben yseyn byforn þat necessite folweþ hem. and yif (*et putas*) necessite faileþ hem þei ne myzten nat ben wist byforn. and þat no þinge ne may ben comprehendid by science but certeyne. and yif þo þinges þat ne han no certeyne bytidynges ben ypurueied as certeyn. it sholde ben dirkenesse of oppinioun nat soþefastnesse of science [*and þou weenyst þat it be diuerse fro the hoolnesse of science / þat any man sholde deme a thing to ben oother weys thanne it is it self*]. and þe cause of þis errour is. þat of alle þe þinges þat euery wyzt hap yknowe. þei wenen þat þo þinges ben y-knowe al onoly by þe strengþe and by þe nature of þe þinges þat ben ywyst or yknowe. and it is al þe contrarie. for alle þat euere is yknowe. it is raper comprehendid and yknowen nat after his strengþe and hys nature. but after þe faculte þat is to seyn þe power and [the] nature of hem þat knowen. and for þat þis shal mowe shewen by a short ensample þe same roundenes of a body .O. oþer weyes þe syzt of þe eye knoweþ it. and oþer weyes þe touching. þe lokinge by castyng of his bemes waiteþ and seeþ fro afer alle þe body to-gider wiþ oute mouyng of it self. but þe touchinge cliuiþ and conioigneþ to þe rounde body (*orbi*) and moueþ abouten þe environyng. and comprehendþ by parties þe roundnesse. ¶ and þe man hym self oþer weies wyt byholdþ hym. and oþerweyes ymaginacioun and oþer weyes resoun. and oþer weyes intelligence. ¶ For þe wit comprehendþ fro wiþ outen furþe þe figure of þe body of þe man. þat is establised in þe matere subiect. But þe ymaginacioun [comprehendith only the figure with owte the matere /

4763 *mowe*—mowen
4764 *roundenes* — Rownd-
nesse
4765 *syzt*—silte
4767 *alle*—al
4769 *abouten*—abowte
4770 *roundnesse* — Rownd-

nesse
4774 *fro wiþ outen furþe*—
with owte forth
4770-7 [*comprehendith* —
ymaginacioun]*—*from C.

Resoun surmounteth ymaginacioun] and comprehendē by an vniuersel lokinge þe *commune* spece (*speciem*) þat is in þe singular peces. ¶ But þe eye of intelligence is heyzer for it *sourmountēþ* þe enviroynge of þe vniuersite and lookeþ ouer þat by pure subtilite of þouzt. þilk same symple forme of man þat is perdurably in þe deuyne þouzt. in whiche þis auzt[e] gretely to ben considered þat þe heyest strengþe to comprehendē þinges embraceþ and conteyneþ þe lower[e] strengþe [but the lower strengthe ne arysith nat in no manere to heyere strengthe]. for wit ne may no þinge comprehendē oute of matere. ne þe ymaginacioun ne lokeþ nat þe vniuerseles speces. ne resoun ne takeþ nat þe symple forme. so as intelligence takeþ it. but þe intelligence þat lokeþ al abouen whan it haþ comprehendid þe forme it knoweþ and demeþ alle þe þinges þat ben vndir þat forme. but she knoweþ hem vndir þilke manere in þe whiche it comprehendid þilke same symple forme þat ne may neuer be knowen to non of þat oþer. þat is to seyn to non of þo þre forseide strengþes of þe soule. for it knoweþ þe vniuersite of resoun and þe figure of þe ymaginacioun. and þe sensible material conseed. and þou wenest þat it be diuerse fro þe hoolnesse of science. þat any man sholde deme a þing to ben oþerweyes þan it is it self and þe cause of þis errour etc'. *vt supra*. by wit. ne it ne vseþ nat nor of resoun ne of ymaginacioun ne of wit wiþ oute forþe but it byholdeþ alle þinges so as I shal seye. by a strok of þouzt formely wiþ oute discours or collacioun ¶ Certys resoun whan it lokeþ any þing vniuersel it ne vseþ nat of ymaginacioun nor of wit and algates 3it [it] comprehendid þe þinges ymaginable and sensible. for resoun is she þat *diffinisseþ þe vniuersel

Reason transcends the Imaginations, and examining existences in general discovers the particular species, but the eye of Intelligence soars still higher; for, going beyond the bounds of what is general, it surveys the *simple forms* themselves, by its own pure and subtle thought: in which this is chiefly to be considered, that the higher power of perception embraces the lower; but the inferior cannot attain to the energy of the superior: for the senses cannot go beyond the perception of matter; the imagination cannot comprehend existences in general, nor can the reason conceive the simple form. But the Intelligence looking down (as from 4794

above) and having conceived the form, discerns all things that are below it, and comprehends what does not fall within the reach of the other faculties of the mind. Without the aid of those faculties Intelligence comprehends things *formally* (i. e. by beholding their simple forms) by one effort of mind. Reason, without the aid of Imagination and Sense, in considering things in general, comprehends all imaginable and sensible things. For instance, reason defines her general conceptions thus:—

[* fol. 37 b.]

4777 *comprehendēþ* — MS. comprehendynge
4778 *an*—omitted
4780 *heyzer*—heyere
4783 *whiche*—which
auzt[e]—owhte
4784 *heyest*—heyiste

4785 *lower[e]*—lowers
4785-7 [*but* — *strengthe*]—
from C.
4787 *wit*—withe
oute—owt
4791 *haþ*—MS. haþe
4793 *whiche*—which

4795-6 *non*—none
4796 *strengþes*—thinges
4798-801 *and þou*—*vt supra*—omitted
4805 *collacioun*—MS. callacioun, C. collacioun
4806 *wit*—withe

Man is a rational two-footed animal, which, though it be a general idea, yet every one knows that man thus defined is perceived both by the imagination and the senses, notwithstanding that in this instance reason does not make use of imagination or the senses, but of her own rational conception. The imagination also, although it derives its power of seeing and forming figures from the senses, yet in the absence and without the use of the senses it considers and comprehends all sensible things by its own imaginative power. Do not you see that

4824

men attain to the knowledge of things more by their own faculties, than by the inherent property of things?

[The 4th Metur.] Nor is it unreasonable that it should be so—for since every judgment is the act of the person judging; every one must needs do his own work by the help of his own faculties, and not by the aid of foreign power. Fallacious and obscure was the lore of the Stoics, who taught that images of things obvious to the senses were imprinted on the mind by external objects, and that the soul is at first like a mirror or a clean parchment, free from figures and letters.

of hir conseite ryzt þus. ¶ Man is a resonable t[w]o-footid beest. and how so þat þis knowynge [is] vniuersel. 3it nys þer no wyzt þat ne woot wel. þat a man is [a thing] ymaginable *and* sensible ¶ and þis same considereþ wel resoun. but þat nis nat by ymaginacioun. nor by witte. but it lokip it by [a] resonable concepcioun. ¶ Also ymaginacioun al be it so. þat it takeþ of wit þe bygynyngus to seen *and* to formen þe figures. algates al þou3 þat wit ne ware not present. 3it it envirounip *and* comprehendip alle þinges sensible. nat by resoun sensible of demynge. but by resoun ymaginatif. ¶ sest þou nat þan þat alle þe þinges in knowynge vsen more of hir faculte or of hir power. þan þei don of [the] faculte or of power of þinges þat ben yknowen. ne þat nis no wronge. for so as euery iugement is þe dede or þe doynge of hym þat demep. It byhouep þat euery wyzt performe þe werke *and* hys entencioun nat of forein power: but of hys propre power.

QUONDAM PORTICUS ATTULIT.

þE porche þat is to sein a gate of þe toune of athenis þer as philosophres hadde hir congregacioun to dispoiten. *and* þilke porche brouzt[e] somtyme olde men ful derke in hire sentences. þat is to sein philosophers þat hyztenstoiciens. þat wenden þat ymages [*and*] sensibilites þat is to sein sensible ymaginaciouns. or ellys ymaginacioun of sensible þinges weren inprentid in to soules fro bodies wiþ oute forþe. ¶ As who seiþ þat þilke stoiciens wenden þat þe soule hadde ben naked of it self. as a mirour or a clene parchemyn. so þat alle fygures mosten [fyrst] comen fro þinges fro wiþ oute in to soules. *and* ben inprentid in to soules. *Textus.* Ryzt as we ben wont some tyme by a swift poyntel to ficchen *lettres* emprentid in þe smopenesse or in þe plainesse of

4810 [is]—from C.

4813 *witte*—wit4821 *don*—MS. done, C. doon

[the]—from C.

4822 *yknowen*—Iknowe4822 *no wronge*—nat wrong4824 *werke*—werk4825 *forein*—foreyno4827 *hadde*—hadden*dispoiten*—desputen4828 *brouzt[e]*—browlto4830 [*and*]—from C.4837 *inprentid*—aprentyd4838 *some tyme*—soutytyme*swift*—swyfte

þe table of wex. or in parchemyn þat ne haþ no figure
[ne] note in it. *Glosa.* But now arguiþ boece azeins þat
oppinioun and seiþ þus. but yif þe þriuyng soule no
vnplitiþ no þing. þat is to sein ne doþ no þing by hys
propre moeuynge. but suffriþ and lieþ subgit to þe
figures and to þe notes of bodyes wiþ oute forþe. and
zeldeþ ymages ydel and veyne in þe manere of a
mirour. whennes þriueþ þan or whennes comeþ þan
þilke knowyng in oure soule. þat discerniþ and by-
holdeþ alle þinges. and whennes is þilke strengþe þat
byholdeþ þe syngulere þinges. or whennes is þe strengþe
þat dyuydeþ þinges yknowe. and þilke strengþe þat
gadereþ to-gidre þe þinges deuided. and þe strengþe þat
cheseþ hys entrechaunged wey. for som tyme it heueþ
vp þe heued. þat is to sein þat it heueþ vp þe enten-
cioun to ryzt heye þinges. and som tyme it discendiþ in
to ryzt lowe þinges. and whan it retourniþ in to hym
self. it repreuiþ and destroieþ þe false þinges by þe
trewe þinges. ¶ Certys þis strengþe is cause more
efficient and mochel more myzty to seen and to knowe
þinges. þan þilke cause þat suffriþ and resceyueþ þe
notes and þe figures inpressed in manere of matere al-
gates þe passioun þat is to seyn þe suffraunce or þe wit
in þe quik[e] body goþ byforne excitynge and moeu-
yng þe strengþes of þe þouzte. ryzt so as whan þat
clerenesse smyteþ þe eyen and moeuiþ hem to seen. or
ryzt so as voys or sounne hurtliþ to þe eres and com-
moeuiþ hem to herkne. þan is þe strengþe of þe þouzt
ymoeuid and excitid and clepeþ furþe þe semblable
moeuynge þe spesces þat it halt wiþ inne it self. and
addiþ þo spesces to þe notes and to þe þinges wiþ out
forþe. and medeleþ þe ymages of þinges wiþ out forþe
to þe forme[s] yhid wiþ inne hym self.

But if the mind is passive in receiving the impressions of outward objects, whence proceeds the knowledge by which the mind comprehends all things?

4845

Whence its force to conceive individual existences, to separate those things when known, to unite divided things, and to choose and change its path, soaring to the highest and descending to the lowest things—and returning to itself, to confute false things by the true?

4854

This cause is more efficacious and powerful to see and to know things, than that cause which receives the characters impressed like servile matter.

4860

Yet the sense in the living body excites and moves the mental powers; as when the light striking the eyes causes them to see, or as the voice rushing into the ear excites hearing.

4866

Then is the force of thought excited; it calls forth the images within itself, and adds to them the outward forms, blending external images with the counterparts concealed within.

4872

4840 *hab*—MS. *haþe*
4843 *vnplitiþ*—*vnpleyteth*
doþ—MS. *doþe*
4845 *þe*—*tho*
4863 *quik[e]*—*qwyke*

4863 *goþ*—MS. *goþe*
4864 *þouzte*—*thoght*
4865 *clerenesse*—*cleer nesse*
4866 *sounne*—*sounn*
4868 *furþe*—*forth*

4870 *out*—*owte*
4871 *out forþe*—*owte forth*
4872 *forme[s]*—*formes*
yhid—*I-üdde*

QUOD SI IN CORPORIBUS SENCIENDIS.

[* fol. 88.]

*QUESTIO.

[The 5th prose.]

Although there are in objects certain qualities which strike externally upon the senses, and put their instruments in motion; although the passive impression upon the body precedes the action of the mind, and although the former rouses the latter to action, yet if in the perception of bodily things, the soul is not by the impression of external things made to know these things, but by its own power judgeth of these bodily impres-

4885

sions, how much more shall those pure spiritual beings (as God or angels) discern things by an act of their understanding alone, without the aid of impressions from external objects? For this reason, then, there are several sorts of knowing distributed among various beings. For sense (or sensation) destitute of all other knowledge is allotted to those creatures that have no motion, as shell-fish. But imagination is given to such brutes capable of motion, and having in some degree the power of desiring or refusing. Reason, however, is the attribute of man alone, as Intelligence is that of God.

4902

But what [yif] þat in bodies to ben feelid þat is to sein in þe takynge of knoweleching of bodyly þinges. and al be it so þat þe qualites of bodies þat ben obiect fro wiþ oute forþe moeuen *and* entalenten þe instrumentes of þe wittes. and al be it so þat þe passioun of þe body þat is to seyn þe witte [or the] suffraunce [goth to-forne the strengthe of the workynge corage / the which passioun or suffraunce] clepiþ furþe þe dede of þe þouzt in hym self. *and* moeueþ *and* exiteþ in þis mene while þe formes þat resten wiþ in forþe. and yif þat in sensible bodies as I haue seid oure corage nis nat ytauzt or enprentid by passioun to knowe þise þinges. but demip *and* knoweþ of hys owen strengþe þe passioun or suffraunce subiect to þe body. Moche more þan þoo þinges þat ben absolut *and* quit fram alle talentz or affeccions of bodies. as god or hys aungels ne folwen nat in discernynge þinges obiect fro wiþ oute forþe. but þei accomplissen *and* speden þe dede of hir þouzt by þis resoun. ¶ þan þere comen many manere knowynges to dyuerse *and* differyng substaunces. for þe wit of þe body þe whiche witte is naked *and* despoyled of alle oþer knowynges. pilke witte comeþ to bestes þat ne mowen nat moeuen hem self here ne þere. as oystres *and* muscles *and* oþer swiche shelle fysshe of þe see. þat cliuen *and* ben norissed to roches. but þe ymaginacioun comeþ to remuable bestes þat semen to han talent to fleen or to desiren any þinge. but resoun is al only to þe lynage of mankynde ryzt as intelligence is oonly þe deuyne nature. of whiche it folweþ þat pilke knowyng is more worþe þan [th]is[e] oþer. syn it knoweþ by hys

4973 [yif]—from C.
4378 [or the]—from C.
suffraunce — MS. suffi-
saunce, C. suffraunce
4979-80 [goth—suffraunce]
—from C.

4883 *seid*—MS. seide, C. seyð
4887 *quit*—quite
4888 *hys*—hise
4889 *discernynge* — MS. dis-
cryyng, C. discernynge
from—fro

4893-94 *witte*—wit
4895 *mowen*—mowe
here ne þere—her *and* ther
4901 *whiche*—which
4902 [th]is[e] oþer — thise
oother

propre nature nat only hys subiect. as who seip it ne knoweþ nat al oonly þat apperteiniþ proprely to hys knowynge. but it knoweþ þe subgitz of alle oþer knowynges. but how shal it þan be yif þat wit *and* ymaginacioun stryuen azeins resonyng *and* sein þat of pilke vniuersel þinges. þat resoun weneþ to seen þat it nis ryzt nauzt. for wit *and* ymaginacioun seyn þat þat. þat is sensible or ymaginable it ne may nat ben vniuersel. þan is eiper þe iugement of resoun [soth]. ne þat þer nis no þinge sensible. or ellys for þat resoun woot wel þat many þinges ben subiect to wit *and* to ymaginacioun. þan is þe consepcioun of resoun veyn *and* fals whiche þat lookeþ *and* comprehendip. þat þat is sensible *and* synguler as uniuerselle. and zif þat resoun wolde answeren azein to þise two þat is to sein to wit *and* to ymaginacioun. *and* sein þat soþely she hir self. þat is to seyn þat resoun lokeþ *and* comprehendip by resoun of vniuersalite. boþe þat þat is sensible *and* þat þat is ymaginable. *and* þat pilke two þat is to seyn wit *and* ymaginacioun ne mowen nat strecchen ne enhaunsen hem self to knowynge of vniuersalite for þat þe knowyng of hem ne may exceden nor sourmounten þe bodyly figure[s] ¶ Certys of þe knowyng of þinges men auzten raþer zeue credence to þe more stedfast *and* to þe more perfit iugement. In þis manere stryuyng þan we þat han strengþe of resonyng *and* of ymaginacyng *and* of wit. þat is to seyn by resoun *and* by ymaginacioun *and* by wit. [*and*] we sholde raþer preise þe cause of resoun. as who seip þan þe cause of wit or ymaginacioun. semblable þinge is it þat þe resoun of mankynde ne weneþ nat þat þe deuyne intelligence byholdeþ or knoweþ þinges to comen. but ryzt as þe resoun of mankynde knoweþ hem. for þou arguist *and* seist þus. þat

Hence His (i. e. God's) knowledge exceeds all other, comprehending both what belongs to His own nature, and what is comprehended by all inferior creatures. But how shall it be then, if sense and imagination oppose reason, affirming that the general idea of things, which reason thinks it so perfectly sees, is nothing? For what falls under the cognisance of the senses and imagination cannot be general. But if reason should answer to this—that in her idea of what is general she comprehends whatever is sensible and imaginable; but as to the senses and imagination, they cannot attain to the knowledge of what is general, since their know-
4921

ledge is confined to material figures; and therefore in all real knowledge of things we must give the greatest credit to that faculty which has a more steadfast and perfect judgment of things. In a controversy of this kind ought not we, who possess faculties of reason, &c., to side with reason and espouse her cause? The case is entirely similar when human reason thinks the Divine Intelligence cannot behold future events in any other way than she herself is capable of perceiving them. For thus you argue:—

4907 *azeins*—ayein
4908 *vniuersel*—vniuersels
4911 [*soth*]—from C.
4914 *fals whiche*—false which

4917 *wit*—witte
4918 *soþely*—soothly
4923 *knowynge*—knowy
4926 *zeue*—yeuen

4926 *stedfast*—stidefast
4930 [*and*]—from C.
4931 *or*—*and* of

What things are not necessitated cannot be fore-known; therefore there is no prescience of these things, for, if there were, everything would be fixed by an absolute necessity. If it were possible to enjoy the intelligence of the Deity, we should then deem it right that

4944 sense and imagination should yield to reason, and also judge it proper that human reason should submit to the Divine Intelligence. Let us, therefore, strive to elevate ourselves to the height of the supreme intelligence—there shall reason see what she cannot discover in herself; and that is in what manner the prescience of God sees and defines all things; although they have no certain event; and she will see that this is no mere conjecture, but rather simple, supreme, and unlimited knowledge.

[The 5th Metur.] Various are the shapes of created beings. Some creep along the ground and trace the dust in furrows as they go; others with nimble wings float through the air; some with their feet impress the ground, or tread lightly o'er the meads, or seek the shady grove.

yif it ne seme nat to men þat somme þinges han certeyne *and* necessarie bytydynges. þei ne mowen nat ben wist byforn certeynely to bytiden. þan nis [ther] no prescience of þilke þinges. *and* yif we trowen þat prescience ben in þise þinges. þan is þer no þinge þat it ne bitidiþ by necessite. but certys yif we myzten han þe iugement of þe deuyne þouzt as we *ben parsoners of resoun. ryzt so as we han demed. it byhoueþ þat ymaginacioun *and* wit ben byneþe resoun. ryzt so wolde we demen þat it were ryztful þing þat mans resoun auzt[e] to summitten it self *and* to ben byneþe þe deuyne þouzt. for whiche þat yif we mowen. as who seiþ. þat yif þat we mowen I conseil[e] þat we enhance vs in to þe heyzt of þilke souereyne intelligence. for þere shal resoun wel seen þat þat it ne may nat by-holden in it self. *and* certys þat is þis in what manere þe prescience of god seeþ alle þinges *certeins and* difinissed al þouzt þei ne han no certein issues or by-tydynges. ne þis is non oppinioun but it is raþer þe simpliceite of þe souereyn science þat nis nat enclosed nor yshet wiþinne no boundes.

QUAM UARIIS FIGURIS.

þE bestes passen by þe erþes by ful dyuerse figures for somme of hem han hir bodies straucht *and* crepen in þe dust *and* drawen after hem a traies or a forge contynued. þat is to sein as addres or snakes. *and* oþer bestes by [the] wandryng lyztnesse of hir wenges beten þe wyndes *and* ouer-swymmen þe spaces of þe longe eyer by moist flee[y]nge. *and* oþer bestes gladen hem to diggen her traas or her stappes in þe erþe wiþ hir goynge or wiþ her feet. or to gone eyþe[r] 4965 by þe grene feldes or [elles] to walken vnder þe wodes.

4938 [ther]—from C.
4939 trowen—trowe
4942 parsoners—parsoneres
4945 mans—mannes
4946 auzt[e]—owte
4947 whiche—which
4948 þat yif—yif þat

4949 heyzt—heihte
þere—ther
4952 þouzt—MS. þouzt
4955 no—none
4957 somme—som
4959 forge contynued —
forw Ikonutynned

4959 addres—nadriss
4960 [the]—from C.
4963 hem—hem self
stappes—steppis
4964 or to gone—*and* to gon
eyþe[r]—eyther
4965 [elles]—from C.

and al be it so þat þou seest þat þei alle discorden by dyurse formes. algate hire [faces] enclini[n]g heueþ hire dulle wittes. Onlyche þe lynage of man heueþ heyest hys heyze heued and stondeþ lyzt wiþ hys vpryzt body and byholdeþ þe erþe vndir hym. [and] but-3if þou erþely man wexest yuel oute of þi witte. þis figure amonesteþ þe þat axest þe heuene wiþ þi ryzt[e] visage. and hast areised þi forhede to beren vp on heye þi corage so þat þi þouzt ne be nat yheuied ne put lowe vndir foot. sen þat þi body is so heye areised.

4975

Though we see an endless variety of forms, yet all are prone; to the earth they bend their looks, increasing the heaviness of their dull sense. Man alone doth raise aloft his noble head; light and erect he spurns the earth. Thou art admonished by this figure then, unless by sense deceived, that whilst taught by thy lofty mien to look above, thou shouldst elevate thy mind lest it sink below its proper level.

[The 6th prose and the laste.]

Since everything which is known is not, as I have shown, perceived by its own inherent properties, but by the faculties of those comprehending them, let us now examine the disposition of the Divine nature. All rational creatures agree in affirming that God is eternal. And eternity is a full, total, and perfect possession of a life which shall never end. This will appear more clearly from a comparison with temporal things. Temporal existence proceeds from the past to the present, and thence to the future. And there is nothing under the law of time, which can at once comprehend the whole space of its existence. Having lost *yesterday* it does not as yet enjoy *to-morrow*; and as for *to-day* it consists only in the present transitory moment.

PROSA VLTIMA.

QUONIAM IGITUR UTI PAULO ANTE.

þ Er-fore þan as I haue shewed a litel her byforne þat al þinge þat is ywist nis nat knowen by hys nature propre. but by þe nature of hem þat comprehend it. ¶ Lat vs loke now in as moche as it is leueful to vs. as who seiþ lat vs loken now as we mowen whiche þat þe estat is of þe deuyne substaunce so þat we mowen [ek] knowen what his science is. þe comune iugement of alle creatures resonables þan is þis þat god is eterne. lat vs considere þan what is eternite. For certys þat shal shewen vs to-gidre þe deuyne nature and þe deuyne science ¶ Eternite þan is *perfit possessioun* and al togidre of lijf interminable and þat sheweþ more clerely by þe comparisoun or collacioun of temporel þinges. for al þing þat lyueþ in tyme it is present and procediþ fro preterit3 in to futures. þat is to sein. fro tyme passed in to tyme comynge. ne þer nis no þing establissed in tyme þat may enbracen to-gidre al þe space of hys lijf. for certys 3it ne haþ it nat taken þe tyme of þe morwe. and it haþ lost þat of 3ister-day. and certys in þe lijf

4967 [faces]—from C.
algate—algates
enclini[n]g—enclynyd
4968 Onlyche—Oonly
heyest—heyste
4970 erþe—erthes
4971 oute—owt
witte—wit

4972 ryzt[e]—ryhte
hast—MS. hape, C. hast
4973 forhede—foreheuyd
on heye—a heygh
4974 foot sen—foote syn
4977 al þinge — alle thinges
4979 moche—mochel
4980 loken—loke

4980 whiche—which
4981 [ek]—from C.
4987 clerely—cleerly
4989 al—alle
4993-4 haþ—MS. haþe
4993 þe (2)—to
4994 þat—the tyme

Whatever, therefore, is subjected to a temporal condition, as Aristotle thought of the world, may be without beginning and without end; and although its duration may extend

[* fol. 39.] to an infinity of time, yet it cannot rightly be called eternal: for it doth not comprehend at once the whole extent of its infinite duration, having no knowledge of things future which are not yet arrived. For what is eternal must be always present to itself and master of itself, and have always with it the infinite succession of time. Therefore some philosophers, who had heard that

5011

Plato believed that this world had neither beginning nor end, falsely concluded, that the created universe was coeternal with its Creator. But it is one thing to be conducted through a life of infinite duration, which was Plato's opinion of the world, and another thing to comprehend at once the whole extent of this duration as present which, it is manifest, can only belong to the Divine mind. Nor ought it to seem to us that God is prior to and more ancient than his creatures by the space of

of þis day 3e ne lyuen no more but ryzt as in þis moeu-
able *and* transitorie moment. þan þilke þinge þat suffriþ
temporel condicioun. a[l]þoughe þat [it] bygan neuer
to be. ne þoughe it neuere cese forto be. as aristotle
demde of þe worlde. and al þou3 þat þe lif of it be
strecchid wiþ infinite of tyme. 3it al*gates nis it no
swiche þing þat men myzten trowen by ryzt þat it is
eterne. for al þou3 þat it comprehende *and* embrace þe
space of life infinite. 3it algates ne [em]braceþ it nat þe
space of þe lif alto-gidre. for it ne haþ nat þe futures
þat ne ben nat 3it. ne it ne haþ no lenger þe preteritz
þat ben ydon or ypassed. but þilke þing þan þat haþ
and comprehendij to-gidre alle þe plente of þe lif in-
terminable. to whom þere ne failiþ nat of þe future.
and to whom þer nis nat of þe preterit escapid nor
ypassed. þilk[e] same is ywitnessed or yproued by ryzt
to ben eterne. and it byhoueþ by necessite þat þilke
þinge be alwey present to hym self *and* compotent. as
who seiþ alwey present to hym self *and* so myzty þat al
by ryzt at hys plesaunce. *and* þat he haue al present
þe infinit of þe moeuable tyme. wherfore som men
trowen wrongefully þat whan þei heren þat it semid[e]
to plato þat þis worlde ne had[de] neuer bygynnyge
of tyme. ne þat it neuere shal haue faylynge. þei wenen
in þis manere þat þis worlde ben maked coeterne wiþ
his makere. as who seiþ. þei wenen þat þis worlde *and*
god ben maked to-gidre eterne. and it is a wrongful
wenyng. for oþer þing is it to ben yladd by lif in-
terminable as plato graunted[e] to þe worlde. *and* oþer
þing is it to embracen to-gidre alle þe presence to þe lif
interminable. þe whiche þing it is clere *and* manifest

4997 a[l]þoughe—al-thogh
[it]—from C.

4999 worlde—world

5001 swiche—swych

5002 eterne— from C., MS.

eternite

5003 life—lyf

5004-5-6 haþ—MS. haþe

5006 ydon—MS. ydone, C. I.

doon

5007 alle—al

5008-9 nat—nawht

5010 þilk[e]—þilke

or—*and*

5014 by—be

5016 semid[e]—semede

5017 worlde—world

had[de]—hadde

5018 haue—han

5019-20 worlde—world

5022 yladd—MS. yladde, C.

I-lad

5023 worlde—world

5024 embracen—enbrace

alle—al

presence to—present of

5025 clere—cleer

þat it is *propre* to þe deuine þouzt. ne it ne sholde nat
semen to vs þat god is elder þan þinges þat ben ymaked
by quantite of tyme. but raþer by þe *proprete* of hys
symple nature. for þis ilke infinit[e] moeuynge of temporel
þinges folwiþ þis presentarie estat of þe lijf *inmoeue-*
able. *and* so as it ne may nat contrefeten it ne feynen
it ne ben euene lyke to it. for þe *inmoeueablete.* þat is
to seyn þat is in þe eternite of god. ¶ it faileþ *and*
falleþ in to moeuynge fro þe simplicite of [the] pre-
sence of god. *and* disencresisþ to þe infinite quantite of
future *and* of preterit. *and* so as it ne may nat han to-
gidre al þe plente of þe lif. algates 3itte for as moche as
it ne cesiþ neuere forto ben in som manere it semeþ
somde[1] to vs þat it folwiþ *and* resembliþ þilke þing
þat it ne may nat attayne to. ne fulfille. *and* byndeþ it
self to som manere presence of þis litel *and* swifte
moment. þe whiche presence of þis lytele *and* swifte
moment. for þat it bereþ a manere ymage or lykenesse
of þe ay dwellynge presence of god. it graunteþ to
swiche manere þinges as it bitidiþ to þat it semeþ hem
þat þise þinges han ben *and* ben *and* for [þat] þe pre-
sence of swiche litel moment ne may nat dwelle þer-for-
[it] rauyssid[e] *and* took þe infinit[e] wey of tyme. þat
is to seyn by successioun. *and* by þis manere it is ydon.
for þat it sholde continue þe lif in goynge of þe whiche
lif it ne myzt[e] nat embrace þe plente in dwellynge.
and for þi yif we willen putte worþi name[s] to þinges
and folwen plato. lat vs seyn þan sobely þat god is
eterne. *and* þat þe worlde is perpetuel. þan syn þat
euery iugement knoweþ *and* comprehendisþ by hys owen
nature þinges þat ben subiect vnto hym. þere is sobely
al-wey to god an eterne *and* presentarie estat. *and* þe

time, but rather by the simple and undivided properties of his nature. The infinite progression of temporal things imitates the ever-present condition of an immovable life: and since it cannot copy nor equal it from an immovable and simply present state, it passes into motion and into an infinite measure of past and future time. But since it cannot possess at once the whole extent of its duration, yet, as it never ceases wholly to be, it faintly emulates that whose perfection it can neither attain nor express, by attaching itself to

5041 the present fleeting inoment, which, because it resembles the durable present time, imparts to those things that partake of it an appearance of existence. But as it cannot stop or abide it pursues its course through infinite time, and by gliding along it continues its duration, the plenitude of which it could not comprehend, by abiding in a permanent state. If we would follow Plato in giving things their right names, let us say that God is eternal and the world perpetual. His knowledge, surpassing the progression of time, is ever present, containing the infinite space

5032 *lyke*—lyk
5034 [*the*]—from C.
5039 *somde*[1]—somdel
5040 *fulfille*—fullfyllen
5041 *litel*—fr. m. C., MS. lykly
5042 *whiche*—which
lytele—from C., MS. lykly

5046 *ben* (1)—yben
[*þat*]—from C.
5047 *swiche*—swych
5048 [*it*]—from C.
5051 *myzt*[e]—myhte
5052 *willen putte*—wollen
putten

5052 *name*[s]—names
5053 *sobely*—sothly
5054 *worlde*—world
5055 *owen*—owne
5056 *sobely*—sothly
5057 *al-wey*—al-weys

of past and future times, and embraces in his clear insight all things, as if they were now transacting. Prescience is, then, a foreknowledge, not of what is to come, but of the present and *never-failing now* (in which God [* fol. 39 b.] sees all things as if immovably present). Therefore *foreknowledge* is not so applicable a term as *providence*—for God looks down upon all things from the summit of the universe. Do you think that God imposes a necessity on things by beholding them? It is not so in human affairs. Do your view

5073

of an action lay any necessity upon it? *B. No. P.* By parity of reason it is clear that whilst you see only some things in a limited instant, God sees all things in his ever-present time. His Divine prescience therefore does not change the nature of things—but only beholds those things as present to him which shall in time be produced. Nor does he judge confusedly of them, but knows at one view what will necessarily and what will not necessarily happen.

The eye of God, seeing all things, doth not alter the properties of things, for everything is present to him, though its temporal event is future.

science of hym þat ouer-passeþ alle temporel moe[ue]-ment dwelliþ in þe symplicite of hys presence *and* embraceþ *and* considereþ alle þe infinit spaces of tymes preteritȝ *and* futures *and* lokeþ in þis symple knowynge alle þinges of preterit ryzt as þei weren ydoon presently ryzt now ¶ yif þou wolt þan þenke *and* avisen þe prescience by whiche it knoweþ al[le] þinges *þou ne shalt nat demen it as prescience of þinges to comen. but þou shalt demen [it] more ryztfully þat it is science of presence or of instaunce þat neuer ne fayleþ. for whiche it nis nat ycleped *providence* but it sholde raþer be cleped *purueaunce* þat is establissed ful fer fro ryzt lowe þinges. *and* byholdeþ from a-fer alle þinges ryzt as it were fro þe heye heyzte of þinges. whi axest þou þan or why disputest þou þan þat þilke þinges ben don by necessite whiche þat ben yseyen *and* yknownen by þe deuyne syzt. syn þat for soþe men ne maken nat þilke þinges necessarie. whiche þat þe[i] seen be ydoon in hire syzt. for addiþ þi byholdynge any necessite to þilke þinges þat þou byholdest present. ¶ Nay quod I. *p.* Certys þan yif men myzte maken any digne comparisoun or collacioun of þe presence diuine. *and* of þe presence of mankynde. ryzt so as 3e seen somme þinges in þis temporel presente. ryzt so seeþ god alle þinges by hys eterne present. ¶ wherfore þis dyuyne prescience ne chaungeþ nat þe nature ne þe proprete of þinges but byholdeþ swyche þinges present to hym ward. as þei shollen bytiden to 3ow ward in tyme to come. ne it ne confoundeþ nat þe Iugementȝ of þinges but by of syzt of hys þouzt he knoweþ þe þinges to comen as wel necessarie as nat necessarie. ryzt so as whan 3e seen to-gidre a man walke on þe erþe *and* þe sonne arysen in [the] heuene. al be it so þat 3e seen *and* byholden þat

5058 *alle*—al
moeuement—moeuement
5063 *þenke*—thinken
avisen—auiyse
5064 *whiche*—which
al[le]—alle

5066 *shalt*—shal
[*it*]—from C.
5068 *whiche*—which
5074-76 *syzt*—syhte
5075 *whiche*—which
þe[i]—they

5085 *come*—comyu
5086 *of syzt*—O syhte
5087 *he knoweþ*—MS. repeats
5090 [*the*]—from C.

oon *and* þat oþer to-gidre. 3it naþeles 3e demen *and* discernen þat þat oon is uoluntarie *and* þat oþer is necessarie. ¶ Ryzt so þan [the] deuyne lokinge byholdyng alle þinges vnder hym ne troubleþ nat þe qualite of þinges þat ben certeynely present to hym ward. but as to þe condicioun of tyme for soþe þei ben future. for whiche it folwiþ þat þis nis non oppinioun. but raper a stedfast knowyng ystrenged by soþenes. þat whan þat god knoweþ any þinge to be he ne vnwoot nat þat þilke þinge wanteþ necessite to be. þis is to seyn þat whan þat god knoweþ any þinge to bitide. he woot wel þat it ne haþ no necessite to bitide. *and* yif þou seist here þat þilke þinge þat god seeþ to bytide it ne may nat vnbytide. as who seiþ it mot bitide. ¶ *and* þilke þinge þat þat ne may nat vnbytide it mot bitide by necessite. *and* þat þou streine me to þis name of necessite. certys I wol wel confessen *and* byknowe a þinge of ful sadde trouþe. but vnneþ shal þere any wyzt [mowe] seen it or comen þer-to. but yif þat he be byholder of þe deuyne þouzte. ¶ for I wol answere þe þus. þat þilke þinge þat is future whan it is referred to þe deuyne knowyng þan is it necessarie. but certys whan it is vnderstonden in hys owen kynde men sen it [is] vtterly fre *and* absolut from alle necessite. for certys þer ben two maneres of necessites. þat oon necessite is symple as þus. þat it byhoueþ by necessite þat alle men be mortal or dedely. an oþer necessite is condicionel as þus. yif þou wost þat a man walkiþ. it byhoueþ by necessite þat he walke. þilke þinge þan þat any wyzt haþ yknowe to be. it ne may ben non oþer weyes þan he knoweþ it to be. ¶ but þis condicioun ne draweþ nat wiþ hir þilke necessite symple. For certys þis necessite condicionel.

When God knows that anything is to be, he knows at the same time that it is not under the necessity of being—but this is not conjecture, but certain knowledge founded upon truth. If you insist that *what God foresees shall and must happen; and that which cannot do otherwise than happen, must needs happen,* and so bind me to admit a necessity, I must confess that things are under such a restraint; but it is a truth that we scarce can comprehend, unless we be acquainted with the Divine counsels. For I will answer you thus. That the 5105

thing which is to happen in relation to the Divine knowledge is necessary; but, considered in its own nature, seems free and absolute. There are two kinds of necessity—one simple; as men must necessarily die—the other is conditional, as if you know a man walks he must necessarily walk—for that which is known cannot be otherwise than what it is apprehended to be. But this condition does not infer the absolute necessity, for the nature of the thing itself does not here constitute the necessity, but the necessity arises from the conjunction of the condition. No necessity compels a man to walk who does so

5092 *discerne*—discernen
5093 [*the*]—from C.
5097 *whiche*—which
5098 *stedfast*—stidefast
soþenes—soþtnesse
5102 *haþ*—MS. haþe
5104 *bitide*—bide

5108 *sadde*—sad
vneþ—vnnethe
[*mowe*]—from C.
5109 *comen*—come
5110 *þouzte*—thoght
answerc—answern
5113 *sen*—MS. sene, C. sei

5113 [*is*]—from C.
5117 *dedely*—dedly
5119 *haþ*—MS. haþe
5121 *condicioun*—from C.,
MS. *necessite*

willingly, but it must be necessary that he walk when he does step forward. So everything that is present to the eye of Providence must assuredly be, although there is

[* fol. 40.] nothing in its own nature to constitute that necessity. Since God beholds all future events proceeding from free-will as actually present—these events in relation to Divine sight are necessary—yet in relation to themselves they are absolutely free. All things which God foresees shall surely come to pass; but some of these things proceed from free-will, which although they hap-

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pen, yet do not thereby change their nature, as before they happened they had it in their power not to happen. But it is a thing of no moment then, whether things are necessary in their own nature or not, since by the condition of the Divine knowledge they fell out as if they were necessitated.

P. The difference is explained in the instances lately given you, of the man walking, &c. The event of the former was necessary before it befell, whereas that of the latter was altogether free. B. Then I did not go from the

þe propre nature of it ne make þit nauzt. but þe adieccioun of þe condicioun makip it. for no necessite ne constreynep a man to [gon / þat] goop by his propre wille. al be it so þat whan he goop þat it is necessarie þat he goop. ¶ Ryzt on þis same manere þan. yif þat þe purueaunce of god seep any þing present. þan mot pilke *þinge be by necessite. al þou3 þat it ne haue no necessite of hys owen nature. but certys þe futures þat bytyden by freedom of arbitre god seep hem alle to-gidre present3. þise þinges þan [yif] þei ben referred to þe deuyne syzt. þan ben þei makend necessarie to þe condicioun of þe deuyne knowynge. but certys yif pilke þinges ben considred by hem self þei ben absolut of necessite. and ne forleten nat ne cesen nat of þe liberte of hire owen nature. þan certys wiþ outen doute alle þe þingus shollen be doon whiche þat god woot by-forþ þat þei ben to comen. but somme of hem comen and bitiden of [free] arbitre or of fre wille. þat al be it so þat þei by-tiden. 3it algates ne lese þei nat hire propre nature ne beynge. by þe whiche first or þat þei were doon þei hadden power nat to han bitidd. Boece. what is þis to seyn þan quod I. þat þinges ne ben nat necessarie by hire propre nature. so as þei comen in alle maneres in þe lykenesse of necessite by þe condicioun of þe deuyne science. Philosophie. þis is þe difference quod she. þat þo þinges þat I purposed[e] þe a litel here byforþ. þat is to seyn þe sonne arysynge and þe man walkynge þat þerwhiles þat pilke þinges ben ydon. þei ne myzten nat ben vndon. naþeles þat oon of hem or it was ydon it byhoued[e] by necessite þat it was ydon. but nat þat oper. ryzt so it is here þat þe þinges þat god haþ present.

5123 nauzt—nat
5125 [gon þat]—from C.
wille—wil
5128 mot—MS. mote, C. mot
5131 present₃—present
5132 [yif]—from C.
syzt—syhte
5137 wiþ outen—with-owte
5138 whiche—which

5139 somme—som
5140 [free]—from C.
5141 ne (2)—C. in
5142 whiche—which
were doon—weeryn Idoon
5143 bitidd—MS. bitidde, C.
bityd
5148 purposed[e] — pur
posede

5150 ydon—MS. ydone, C.
I-doon
myzten—myhte
5151 vndon—MS. vndone, C.
vndoon
5151-2 ydon—MS. ydone, C.
I-doon
5152 byhoued[e]—houyd
5153 haþ—MS. haþe

wiþ outen doute þei shulle ben. but somme of hem descendip of þe nature of þinges as þe sonne arysynge. *and* somme descendip of þe power of þe doers as þe man walkynge. ¶ þan seide I. no wronge þat yif þat þise þinges ben referred to þe deuyne knowynge þan ben þei necessarie. *and* yif þei ben considered by hem selfe þan ben þei absolut from þe bonde of necessite. ryzt so [as] alle þinges þat appiereþ or sheweþ to þe wittes yif þou referre it to resoun it is vniuersel. *and* yif þou referre it or look[e] it to it self. þan is it synguler. but now yif þou seist þus þat yif it be in my power to change my purpose. þan shal I voide þe purueaunce of god. whan þat perauenture I shal han chaunged þo þinges þat he knoweþ byform. þan shal I answeere þe þus ¶ Certys þou maist wel chaungen þi purpos but for as mochel as þe present soþenesse of þe deuyne purueaunce byholdeþ þat þou maist chaungen þi purpose. *and* wheþir þou wolt change it or no. *and* whider-ward þat þou tourne it. þou maist nat eschewen þe deuyne prescience ryzt as þou ne maist nat fleen þe syzt of þe present eye. al þou; þat þou tourne þi self by þi fre wille in to dyuerse accioun. ¶ But þou maist seyn azeyne how shal it þan be. shal nat þe dyuyne science ben chaunged by my disposicioun whan þat I wol o þing now *and* now an oþer. *and* þilke prescience ne semeþ it nat to enterchaunge stoundes of knowynges. as who seiþ. ne shal it nat seme to vs þat þe deuyne prescience enterchaungeþ hys dyuers stoundes of knowynge. so þat it knowe somme tyme o þing *and* somme tyme þe contrarie. ¶ No for soþe. [quod I] for þe deuyne syzt renneþ to-forne *and* seeþ alle futures *and* clepeþ hem azein

truth when I said that some things referred to the Divine knowledge are necessary, while considered in themselves they are not under the bond of necessity. In the same way everything that is an object of sense is *general* when considered in relation to reason—but particular when considered by itself. But you may say—If I am able to change my purpose I can deceive providence by changing that which she hath foreseen I would do.

P. You may perhaps alter your purpose—but as providence takes note of your
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intentions, you cannot deceive her; for you cannot escape the divine prescience though you have the power, through a free-will, to vary and diversify your actions. But you may say—Shall the divine knowledge be changed according to the mutability of my disposition, and the apprehensions of the Deity fluctuated with my changing purposes? No, indeed! The view of the Deity fore-runs every future event, and brings it back into the presence of his own knowledge, which does not vary, as you imagine, to conform to your caprices, but remaining fixed, at once

5154 *wiþ outen*—with-owte
shulle—shollen
5156 *doers*—doeres
5157 *wronge*—wrong
5159 *selfe*—self
5160 *from*—fro
bonde—bond
[as]—from C.

5163 *look[e]*—loke
5166 *þo*—the
5169 *soþenesse*—soþnesse
5170 *chaungen*—chaunge
5173 *syzt*—syhte
5175 *wille*—wyl
5177 *wol*—wole
5179 *enterchaunge*—MS. en-

terchaungyng, C. entre-
chaunge
5181 *hys*—hise
5182 *somme* (1)—sum
somme (2)—som
5183 *syzt*—syhte
5184 *to-forne*—to-forn

foresees and comprehends all your changes. This faculty of comprehending and seeing all things as present, God does not receive from the issue of futurities, but from the simplicity of his own nature. Here, then, is an answer to your former objection—that it is folly to think that our future actions and events are the causes of the prescience of God. For the Divine mind, em-

[* fol. 41 b.]

bracing and comprehending all things by a present knowledge, plans and directs all things and is not dependent upon futurity. Since no necessity is imposed

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upon things by the Divine prescience, there remains to men an inviolable freedom of will. And those laws are just which assign rewards and punishments to men possessing free-will. Moreover, God, who sits on high, foreknows all things, and the eternal presence of his knowledge concurs with the future quality of our actions, dispensing rewards to good and punishments to evil men.

Nor are our hopes and prayers reposed in, and addressed to God in vain, which when they are sincere cannot be inefficacious nor unsuccessful. Resist and turn from vice—honour and

and retourniþ hem to þe presence of hys propre knowynge. ne he ne entrechaungeþ nat [so] as þou wenest þe stoundes of forknowyng [as] now þis now þat. but he ay dwellynge comiþ byforn and enbraceþ at o strook alle þi mutaciouns. and þis presence to comprehendend and to sen alle þinges. god ne haþ nat taken it of þe bitydyng of þinges forto come. but of hys propre symplidite. ¶ and her by is assoiled þilke þing þat þou putttest a litel her byforne. þat is to seyne þat it is vnworþi þinge to seyn þat oure futures zeuen cause of þe science of god ¶ For certys *þis strengþe of þe deuyne science whiche þat enbraceþ alle þinge by his presentarie knowynge establissey manere to alle þingus and it ne awiþ nat to lattere þinges. and syn þat þise þinges ben þus. ¶ þat is to seyn syn þat necessite nis nat in þinges by þe deuyne prescience. þan is þer fredom of arbitre. þat dwelleþ hool and vnwemmed to mortal men. ne þe lawes ne purpose nat wikkedly meedes and peynès to þe willynges of men þat ben vnbounde and quit of alle necessite. ¶ And god byholder and forwiter of alle þinges dwelliþ aboue and þe present eternite of hys syzt renneþ alwey wiþ þe dyuerse qualite of oure dedes dispensyng and ordeynyng medes to good[e] men. and tourmentz to wicked men. ¶ ne in ydel ne in veyn ne ben þer nat put in god hope and prayeres. þat ne mowen nat ben vnspedful ne wiþ oute effect whan þei ben ryztful ¶ wiþstond þan and eschewe þou vices. worshippe and loue þou vertus. arise þi corage to ryztful hoopes. zelde þou humble preiers an heyze. grete necessite of prowess and vertue is encharged and comaunded to 3ow yif 3e nil nat dissimulen. ¶ Syn þat 3e worchen and doon. þat is to seyn 3oure dedes and 3oure workes

5186 [so]—from C.
5187 [as]—from C.
5188 comiþ—comth
5190 haþ—MS. habe
5193 seyne—seyn
5196 whiche—which
5198 awiþ—oweth

5199 þat is to — pre-
science—omitted
5203 vnbounde—vnbownden
quit—quite
5206 syzt—sihte
5207 good[e]—goode
5211 wiþstond — MS. wiþ-

stonde, C. withstond
5213 an heyze—a heygh
yrets—Gret
5215 worchen—workyn
5216 and (2)—or

by-fore þe eyen of þe Iuge þat seeþ *and* demeþ alle
þinges. [To whom be goye *and* worshiþe bi Infynyt
tymes / AMEN.]

love virtue, exalt
your mind to God
(the truest hope),
offer up your
prayers with
humility. If you
are sincere you

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will feel that you are under an obligation to lead a good and virtuous life, inasmuch as all your actions and works are done in the presence of an all-discerning Judge.

EXPLICIT LIBER QUINTUS. ET VLTIMUS.

5217 *by-fore*—by-for5218 [*To whom—Amen*]—
from C.; MS. reads *et*
cetera after 'þinges.' C.ends with the following
rubric:
Explicit expliceat ludere
scriptor eatFinito libro sit laus *et*
gloria *Christo*
Corpore scribentis sit
gratia cunctipotentis

APPENDIX.

[*Camb. Univ. MS. Ii. 3. 21, fol. 52 b.*]

Chawcer vp-on this fyfte metur of the second book . 50

- A Blyful lyf a paysyble *and* a swete
 Ledden the poeples in the former age
 They helde hem paied of the fructes þat þey ete
 Whiche þat the feldes yaue hem by vsage 4
 They ne weere nat forpampred *with* owtrage
 Onknowyn was þ^e quyerne *and* ek the melle
 They eten mast hawes *and* swych pownage
 And dronken water of the colde welle 8
- ¶ Yit nas the grownd nat wownded *with* þ^e plowh
 But corn vp-sprong vnsowe of mannes hond
 þe which they gnodded *and* eete nat half .I.-nowh
 No man yit knewe the forwes of his lond 12
 No man the fyr owt of the flynt yit fonde
 Vn-koruen and vn-grobbed lay the vyne
 No man yit in the mortar spices grond
 To clarre ne to sawse of galentyne 16
- ¶ No Madyr welde or wod no litestere
 Ne knewh / the fles was of is former hewe
 No flessch ne wyste offence of egge or spere
 No coyn ne knewh man which is fals or trewe 20
 No ship yit karf the wawes grene *and* blewe
 No Marchaunt yit ne fette owt-landiss^h ware
 No batails trompes for the werres folk ne knewe
 Ne towres heye *and* walles rownde or square 24

¶ What sholde it han avayled to werreye
 Ther lay no *profyt* ther was no *rychesse*
 But corsed was the tyme .I. dar' wel seye
 þat men fyrst dede hir swety bysynesse 28
 To grobbe vp metal lurkyng in dirkenesse
And in þe Ryuerys fyrst gemmys sowhte
 Allas than sprong' vp al the cursydnesse
 Of coueytse þat fyrst ovr sorwe browhte 32

[fol. 58.]

¶ Thyse tyrauntz put hem gladly nat in pres
 No places wyldnesse ne no bussches for to wynne
 Ther pouerte is as seith diogenes
 Ther as vitayle ek is so skars *and* thinne 36
 þat nat but mast or apples is ther Inne
 But þer as bagges ben *and* fat vitaile
 Ther wol they gon *and* spare for no synne
 With al hir ost the Cyte forto a-sayle 40

¶ Yit was no paleis chaumbres ne non halles
 In kaues *and* wodes softe *and* swete
 Sleptin this blyssed folk' *with-owte* walles
 On gras or leues in *parfyt* Ioye reste *and* quiete 44
 No down of fetheres ne no bleched shete
 Was kyd to hem but in surte they slepte
 Hir hertes weere al on *with-owte* galles
 Euerych of hem his feith to oother kepte 48

¶ Vnforged was the hawberke *and* the plate
 þe lambyssh poeple voyded of alle vyse
 Hadden no fantasies to debate
 But eche of hem wolde oother wel cheryce 52
 No pride non enuye non Auaryce
 No lord no taylage by no tyranye
 Vmblesse *and* pes good feith the emperice
 56

39, 40 MS. transposes the lines

44 On—MS. Or

56 A line omitted, but no gap left for one.

¶ Yit was nat Iuppiter the lykerous
 þat fyrst was fadyr of delicacie
 Come in this world ne nembroth desyrous
 To regne had nat maad his towres hye 60
 Allas allas now may [men] wepe And crye
 For in owre dayes nis but couetyse
 Dowblenesse *and* tresoun *and* enuye
 Poyson *and* manslawhtre *and* mordre in sondry wyse

CAUSER / BALADES DE VILAGE SANZ PEINTURE

¶ This wrecched worlde-is *transmutacioun*
 As wele / or wo / now poeere *and* now honou
 With-owten ordyr or wis descresyoun
 Gouerned is by fortunes errour 4
 But natheles the lakke of hyr fauowr'
 Ne may nat don me syngen thowh I. deye
 Iay tout *perdu* moun temps *et* moun labour [fol. 53 b.]
 For fynaly fortune .I. the deffye 8

¶ Yit is me left the lyht of my resoun
 To knowen frend fro foo in thi merowr'
 So mochel hath yit thy whirlynge vp *and* down
 I-tawht me for to knowe in an howr 12
 But trewely no fors of thi reddowr'
 To hym þat ouer hym self hath the maystrye
 My suffysaunce shal be my socour'
 For fynaly fortune I. thee deffye 16

¶ O socrates þou stidfast chaumpanyoun
 She neuer myht[e] be thi tormentowr
 Thow neuer dreddest hyr oppressyoun
 Ne in hyr chere fownde thow no sauour' 20
 Thow knewe wel the deseyte of hyr colour'
 And þat hir' most[e] worshiþe is to lye
 I knew hir ek a fals dissimulour'
 For fynaly fortune .I. the deffye 24

LE RESPOUNCE DE FORTUNE A PLEINTIF.

¶ No man ys wrechchyd but hym self yt wene
And he þat hath hym self hat suffisaunce
 Whi seysthow thanne y am [to] the so kene
 þat hast thy self owt of my gouernaunce 28
 Sey thus graunt *mercy* of thyn haboundaunce
 That thou hast lent or this why wolt þou stryue
 What woost thou yit how y the wol auaunce
And ek thou hast thy beste frende a-lyue 32

¶ I haue the tawht deuisoun by-twene
 Frend of effect *and* frende of cowntenaunce
 The nedeth nat the galle of no hyene
 þat cureth eyen derkyd for penaunce 36
 Now se[st] thou cleer þat weere in ignoraunce
 Yit halt thin ancre *and* yit thou mayst aryue
 Ther bownte berth the keye of my substaunce
And ek þou hast thy beste frende alyue 40

¶ How manye haue .I. refused to sustigne
 Syn .I. the fostred haue in thy plesaunce
 Wolthow thanne make a statute on þy quyene
 þat .I. shal ben ay at thy ordynaunce 44
 Thow born art in my regne of varyaunce
 Abowte the wheel *with* oother most thou dryue
 My loore is bet than wikke is thi greuaunce
And ek þou hast thy beste frende a-lyue 48

LE RESPOUNCE DU PLEINTIF COUNTRÉ FORTUNE.

¶ Thy loore y dempne / it is aduersyte [fol. 54.]
 My frend maysthow nat reuen blynde goddessse
 þat .I. thy frendes knowe .I. thanke to the
 Tak hem agayn / lat hem go lye on presse 52
 The negardye in kepynge hyr rychesse
 Prenostik is thou wolt hir' towr' asayle

37 se[st]—partly erased and *ist* written on it in a later hand.
 41 *igne* of *sustigne* is in a later hand.

Wikke appetyt comth ay before sykenesse
 In general this rewle may nat fayle 56

LE RESPOUNJE DE FORTUNE COUNTRÉ LE PLEINTIF

¶ Thow pynchest at my mutabylyte
 For .I. the lente a drope of my rychesse
 And now me lykyth to *with*-drawe me
 Whi sholdysthow my realte apresse 60
 The see may ebbe *and* flowen moore or lesse
 The welkne hath myht to shyne reyne or hayle,
 Ryht so mot .I. kythen my brutelnesse
 In general this rewle may nat fayle 64

LE PLEINTIF

¶ Lo excussyoun of the maieste
 þat al purueyeth of his ryhtwysnesse
 That same thinge fortune clepyn ye
 Ye blynde beestys ful of lewednesse 68
 The heuene hath *proprete* of sykyrnesse
 This world hath euer resteles trauayle
 Thy laste day is ende of myn inter[e]sse
 In general this rewele may nat fayle 72

LENUOY DE FORTUNE

¶ Prynscs .I. prey yow of yowre gentilleses
 Lat nat this man on me thus crye *and* pleyne
 And .I. shal quyte yow yowre bysynesse
 At my requeste as thre of yow or tweyne 76
 þat but yow lest releue hym of hys peyne
 Preyeth hys best frend of his noblesse
 That to som betere estat he may attayne

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 Fycche, fix, 108/3073. *See*
Ficchen.
 Fyn, end, 69/1892
 Gabbe, 'gabbe I?' am I deceived?
49/1308
 Galentyne, a dish in ancient
cookery made of sopped bread and
spices (*Hulliwel*), 180/16
 Galles, galls, 181/47
 Gapen, to desire, be greedy for,
15/324, 36/910
 Gapinge, desire, 36/910
 Gastnesse, terror, fear, 75/2079
 Geaunt, giant, 104/2966
 Gentilesse, nobility, 78/2154
 Geometrien, geometrician, 91/
2552
 Gerdoned, rewarded, 120/3410
 Gerdoun, reward, 13/265
 Gerner, garner, 15/305
 Gesse, Gessen, to deem, suppose,
estimate, 17/378, 19/416, 65/1782
 Gessinge, opinion, 21/475
 Gest, guest, 38/979
 Gideresse, a female guide, 108/
3084
 Gise, guise, mode, 71/1943
 Giser, gizzard, 107/3054
 Glotonus, greedy, 26/620
 Gnodded, pounded, 180/11
 Gobet, a bit (of gold), 51/1349
 Godhed, divinity, 122/3492
 Goost, spirit, ghost, 40/1036
 Governaille, government (*guber-*
naculum), 27/651

- Governauce, control, 32/813
 Goye, joy, 179/5218
 Graype, to devise, prepare, 19/438
 Grobbe up, to grub up, 181/29
 Grond, did grind, 180/15
 Gynne, snare, trap, 82/2256
 Gynner, beginner, 150/4330
 Gyse, guise, mode, 134/3860

 Habitacle, habitation, 57/1525
 Habunde, to abound, 41/1073
 Halden, to hold, 41/1053
 Hale, to draw, drag, 61/1665
 Halt, holds, 56/1504
 Hardnesse, hardship, 132/3783
 Hardyly, boldly, 34/857
 Hastise, to hasten, 131/3746
 Haunten, to frequent, 10/168; to
 practise, exercise, 52/1389
 Heeres, hairs, 4/12
 Heet, heat, 28/699
 Hef, raised, heaved, 5/41
 Hele, health, 93/2623
 Henten, to seize, 15/326
 Hepen, to heap up, increase, 153/
 4418
 Herburghden, harboured, lodged,
 53/1409
 Herie, to praise, 109/3112
 Hert, hart, 106/3027
 Herted, hearted, 55/1466
 Heve, to raise, heave, 171/4968
 Heved, head, 4/13
 Hevenelyche, heavenly, 8/105
 Hevie, to make heavy, 171/4967
 Hey, high, 22/523
 Heyere, higher, 143/4117
 Heyze, high, 171/4969
 Hielde, pour, 35/899
 Hizte, to adorn, 8/116

 Hoke, hook, 16/347
 Holily, wholly, entirely, 90/2503
 Homelyche, homely, 105/3001
 Hond, hand, 20/449
 Honter, a hunter, 12/228
 Hool, whole, 46/1191
 Hoolnesse, wholeness, 164/4754
 Hoope, to hope, 17/384
 Hore, hoary, 4/13
 Humblesse, humility, 80/2213
 Hungry tyme, time of famine, 15/
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 Hurlten, to rush against, to
 oppose, 30/748, 167/4866
 Hyene, hyæna, 185/35
 Hyzt, is called, 9/154, 25/619
 Hyzten, are called, 77/2126

 Ibouzt, bought, 157/4540
 Ibowed, bent, turned, 137/3949
 Icharged, loaded, 71/1962
 Igete, gotten, 36/908
 Ilorn, lost, 62/1677
 Imperial, august (*imperiosus*), 7/
 91
 Implie, to fold, enclose, 152/4379
 Infortune, misfortune, 79/2197
 Inmoeveable, immovable, 173/
 5030
 Inmoeveableté, immobility, 173/
 5032
 Inorschid, nourished, nurtured, 8
 /128
 I-nowh, enough, 180/11
 Inperfit, imperfect, 83/2291
 Inplitable (*inexplicabilis*), 15/315
 Inprente, to imprint, 166/4832
 Impressed, impressed, 167/4861
 Inrest, innermost, 136/3913
 Instaunce (*instantia*), presence,
 174/5067

- Inutil, into, 110/3139
 Inwiþ, within, 32/801
 Issest, issuest, 105/2983
 Iwist, known, 156/4513
- Jangland, chattering, 68/1867
 Jape-worthi, ridiculous, 157/4540
 Jolyté, pleasure, 79/2189
 Jowes, jaws, 15/323
 Joygnen, to join, 54/1455
 Joynture, juncture, joining, 46/1207
 Juge, a judge, 19/431; to judge, 53/1427
 Jugement, judgment, 114/3253
- Karf (*pret.* of Kerven), cut, 50/1337
 Kembd, KEMBED, combed, 23/537
 Kerve, to cut, 64/1740
 Kevere, cover, obscure, 34/861
 Keye, helm (*clavus*), 103/2926
 Knowelechinge, knowledge, 168/4874
 Knyzt, soldier, 111/3142
 Konnyng, knowledge, 16/351
 Korue (*p.p.*), cut, rent, 6/58
 Kuytten, to cut, 147/4246
 Kyd, known, 181/46
 Kyndeliche, Kyndely, naturally, 101/2850, 114/3228
 Kythen, to make known, show, 184/63
- Lache, slow, lazy, 122/3471
 Lad (*p.p.*), led, 35/879
 Laddre, ladder, 6/55
 Lambyssh, lamb-like, 181/50
 Languisse, to languish, 30/734, 130/3740
 Lappe, flap, 9/146
- Largesse, liberality, 45/1183
 Lasse, less, 22/508
 Leche, Leecher, physician, 13/250, 114/3254, 139/3990
 Leef, dear, 37/941
 Leesen, Leese, to lose, 22/509, 43/1133
 Lene, to give, 139/3993
 Lenger, longer, 52/1370
 Lesynge, loss, 141/4066
 Lesynge, leasing, lie, 156/4525
 Leten, to leave, 10/176; to esteem, 61/1666
 Leve, permission, leave, 128/3658
 Leveful, allowable, lawful, 10/176
 Ligge, to lie, 60/1632, 147/4251
 Liifly, lively, lifelike, 5/33
 Likerous, lecherous, 72/1989
 Litargie, lethargy, 9/140
 Litestere, a dyer, 180/17
 Lokyng, sight, 10/167
 Loos, praise
 Loop, loath, 40/1036
 Lorel, a wretch, 21/495
 Lorn, lost, 34/859
 Lous, loose, free, 136/3926
 Lykyng, pleasure, 31/771
 Lymes, limbs, 71/1946
 Lynage, lineage, 41/1070
 Lythnesse, lightness, 98/2761
 Lyzte goodes, temporal goods, 4/21
 Lyztly, easily, 12/220
 Lyztne, to enlighten, 128/3655
 Lyztnesse, light, brightness, 8/106
- Maat, weary, dejected, 40/1037
 Magistrat, magistracy, 72/1985
 Maistresse, mistress, 10/169

- Malice, *nefas*, wickedness, 20/466
 Malyfice, *maleficium*, 20/468
 Manace, menace, 12/232
 Manassye, to menace, 118/3365
 Manassyng, threatening, 44/1158
 Mareis, Mareys, marsh, 56/1513, 97/2735
 Margarits, pearls, 94/2650
 Marye, pith, marrow, 97/2744
 Maugré, in spite of, 70/1928
 Mede, meed, reward, 91/2555
 Medle, to mix, *Medelyng*, mixing, mixture, 20/449, 122/3482, 126/3594
 Meenelyche, moderate, 28/706
 Meistresse, mistress, 17/363
 Melle, mill, 180/6
 Mene, the mean or middle path, 146/4228
 Meremaydenes, mermaids, 7/83
 Merken, to mark, 16/346
 Mervaille, Merveile, marvel, 18/403, 132/3787
 Merveilen, to marvel, 46/1205
 Mervelyng, wondering, 10/161
 Mest, most, 42/1081
 Mesuren, to measure, 65/1782
 Meyné, servants, domestics, 47/1243
 Mirie, pleasant, sweet, 4/16
 Mirinesse, pleasure, 66/1793
 Misericorde, mercy, pity, 107/3057
 Mistourne, to misturn, mislead, 69/1894
 Mochel, great, 62/1674, 109/3110
 Moeveable, mobile, fickle, 133/3817
 Moeven, to move, 8/112, 150/4329
 Moewyng, moving, motion, 130/3742
 Mokere, to hoard up, 45/1182
 Mokere, miser, 45/1182. A mistake for *mokerere*.
 Molesté, trouble, grief, 85/2346
 Monstre, prodigy, 18/403
 More, greater, 129/3697
 Morwe, morning, 22/513
 Mosten (*pl.*), must, 166/4836
 Mot, must, 40/1038
 Mowen, be able, 25/608
 Mowyng, ability, power, 124/3548
 Myche, much, 21/475
 Mychel, much, 46/1215
 Myntyng, purposing, endeavouring, 7/101
 Myrie, pleasant, 45/1165
 Myrily, pleasantly, 59/1582
 Myrpes, pleasures, 132/3782
 Mys, badly, wrongly, 131/3772
 Mysese, grievance, trouble, 15/299
 Mysknowyng, ignorant, 61/1659
 Mysweys, wrong paths, 149/4309
 Naie, to refuse, 4/19
 Naked, to make naked, 148/4288
 Nameles, unrenowned, 131/3762
 Namelyche, Namly, especially, 124/3550
 Nare, were not, 10/176
 Nart, art not, 23/556
 Narwe, narrow, 57/1520
 Nas, was not, 180/9
 Napeles, nevertheless, 6/57
 Nat, not, 23/556
 Necesseden, necessitated, 87/2419
 Nedely, of necessity, 84/2334
 Negardye, (*sb.*) misers, 183/53
 Nere, were not, 26/646

- Neþemaste, lowest, nethermost, 6/56
 Neþereste, lowest, 6/50
 Newe, to renew, 137/3938
 Newliche, recently, 122/3489
 Nice, foolish, 148/4287
 Nil, will not, 107/3055
 Nillynge, being unwilling, 97/2718
 Nilt, wilt not, 112/3193
 Nis, is not, 12/218
 Niste, knew not, 102/2882
 Noblesse, nobleness, 37/947
 Nobley, nobility, nobleness, 37/945
 Nolden, would not, 52/1369
 Norice, nurse, 10/167
 Norisse, to nourish, 79/2174
 Norry, nursling, pupil, 10/173
 Norssinge, nourishment, support, 47/1231; nutriment, 37/932
 Not, know not (*1st pers.*), 27/649
 Notful, useful, 7/85
 Nounpower, impotence, 75/2074
 Nouþir, neither, 160/4644
 Noyse, to make a noise (about a thing), to brag, 79/2171
 Nurry (*see* Norry), 86/2386
 Nys, is not, 45/1175

 O, one, 24/564
 Obeisaunt, obedient, 13/266, 32/814
 Object, presented, 168/4889
 Occupyte, to seize, 146/4227
 Offence, hurt, damage, 180/19
 Offensioun, offence, 20/473
 Olifuntz, elephants, 80/2223
 Onknowyn, unknown, 180/6
 Onlyche, only, 171/4968

 Onone, Onoon, at once, anon, 23/553, 74/2027
 Ony, any, 21/488
 Ooned, united, 135/3879
 Oor, oar, 50/1338
 Oosteresse, hostess, 122/3495
 Or, ere, before, 9/143
 Ordeinly, orderly, 140/4044
 Ordenour, ordainer, 109/3110
 Ordeyne, orderly, 109/3109
 Ordinat, ordered, settled, 12/229
 Ordinee, orderly, 102/2902
 Ordure, filth, 29/716
 Ostelmentz, furniture, goods, 48/1266
 Oþerweyes, otherwise (*aliter*), 164/4772
 Outrage, excess, 50/1326
 Outerest, extremest, remotest, 55/1469, 89/2476
 Outerly, utterly, 108/3081
 Outraien, do harm (?), 78/2162
 Over-comere, conqueror, 8/109
 Overmaste, highest, uppermost, 6/57
 Overmyche, overmuch, very much, 79/2191
 Overoolde, very old, 11/209
 Overþrowen, prostrate, 21/497
 Overþrowyng, forward, headstrong, 7/99, 141/4058
 Overtymelyche, untimely, 4/13
 Owh, an exclamation (*papæ*), 112/3166
 Owtrage, excess, 180/5

 Paied, satisfied, 58/1549
 Paleis, pale, 24/574
 Palude, marsh, 148/4262
 Paraventure, peradventure, 18/402
 Parchemyn, parchment, 166/4835

- Parsoners, sharers, partakers, 170/4942
- Partles, without a share, 120/3409
- Pas, paces, 19/442
- Paysyble, peaceable, peaceful, 180/1
- Peisible, quiet, placid, 23/550, 88/2450
- Percen, to pierce, 81/2236
- Perdurable, lasting, perpetual, 5/44, 21/503
- Perdurableté, immortality, 58/1557
- Perfitlyche, *Perfitly*, perfectly, 87/2426, 133/3833
- Perfourny, to afford, furnish, 67/1823
- Perisse, to perish, 96/2712
- Perturbacioun, perturbation, 7/98
- Perverte, to destroy, 11/201
- Peyne, punishment, 121/3439
- Piment, a kind of drink, 50/1329
- Plenté, fulness, 173/5037
- Plentevous, affluent, 67/1824
- Plentivous, yielding abundantly, fertile, 64/1739
- Plentivously, abundantly, 25/592
- Plete, argue, plead, 33/833
- Pletyngus, pleadings, debates (at law), 70/1933
- Pleyne, to complain, 31/777
- Pleynelyche, plainly, 28/681
- Pleynt, complaint, 110/3122
- Plonge, Ploungen, to plunge, 7/89, 65/1784
- Ploungy, wet, rainy (*imbrifer*), 64/1745
- Polute, polluted, 20/450
- Pose, to put a case, cf. put a *poser*, 162/4686
- Pouste, power, 131/3766
- Pownage, pasturage, 180/7
- Poyntel, style, 166/4838
- Preiere, prayer, 107/3044
- Preisen, to estimate, judge, 7/379
- Preisynge, praising, 77/2131
- Preke, to prick, 85/2346
- Prenostik, prognostic, 183/54
- Presentarie, present, 178/5196
- Preterit, preterite, past, 171/4990
- Pretorie, the imperial body-guard, 15/317
- Prevé, secret, 121/3464
- Preven, to prove, 90/2503
- Prie, to pray, 25/600
- Pris, value; 'worpi of *pris*,' precious, 24/583
- Proche, to approach, 145/4182
- Proeve, to approve, 154/4456
- Punisse, to punish, 22/531
- Puplisse, to publish, spread, propagate, 58/1549, 98/2753
- Purper, purple, 25/617
- Purpose, to propose, 176/5148
- Purveaunce, providence, 134/3863
- Purveiable, provident, foreseeing, 68/1854
- Purveie, to ordain, order, 21/478
- Purvyance, providence, 99/2795
- Quereles, complaints, 70/1932
- Quik, living, 134/3839
- Quyene, queen, 183/43
- Quyerne, a mill, 180/6
- Rafte, bereft, 147/4259
- Raper, earlier, former, 30/735
- Raviner, a plunderer, 12/228
- Ravische, to snatch, 11/190
- Ravyne, plunder, rapine, 15/302, 36/909

- Ravynour, plunderer, 121/3460
 Ravysse, to carry off, 131/3774
 Real, royal, 19/420
 Recche, to care, reck, 33/827, 38
 987
 Recompensacioun, recompense,
 130/3724
 Recorde, to recount, recall, 92/
 2580, 101/2871
 Reddowr, severity, rigour, 182/13
 Redenese, redness, flushing, 7/88
 Redoutable, venerable, 131/3763
 Redoute, to fear, 10/178, 57/1535
 Redy = rody, red, ruddy, 39/995
 Refet, refreshed, 143/4116
 Reft (away), carried off, 22/521
 Refut, refuge, 94/2644
 Regne, kingdom, 67/1843
 Regnen, to reign, rule, 29/726
 Remewe, to remove, 19/441
 Remorde, to vex, trouble, 140/
 4030
 Remuable, able to remove from
 one place to another, 168/4898
 Remuen, to remove, 52/1394
 Renomed, renowned, 41/1070,
 78/2143
 Renovele, to renew, 98/2752
 Replenissee, to replenish, 20/469
 Repreve, to reprove, 167/4857
 Repugnien, to be repugnant to,
 154/4440
 Requerable, desirable, 52/1377
 Requere, to require, 99/2790
 Rescove, to recover, 133/3809
 Rescove, to rescue, 35/881
 Resolve, to loosen, melt, 133/3814
 Resoune, to resound, 107/3036
 Rethoryen, rhetorical, 30/759
 Rewlyche, pitiable, sorrowful,
 35/878
- Risorse = recourse (*recursus*),
 course, 8/108
 Rody, ruddy, 143/4122
 Roos, roes, 82/2258
 Rosene, roseat, 8/117
 Route, company, 47/1243
 Royle, to run, roll, 29/717
 Rynnyng, running, 50/1335
 Ryztwisnesse, righteousness,
 equity, 16/331
- Sachel, satchel, sack, 12/223
 Sad, stable, 41/1064
 Saddenese, stability, 110/3123
 Sarpuler, a sack made of coarse
 cloth (*Sarcinula*), 12/223
 Sauuacioun, safety, salvation,
 97/2723
 Sau3, Say, saw, 8/106, 9/137
 Saye, sawest, 37/958
 Schad, shed, 4/13
 Schrew, a wicked person, a
 wretch, 12/217
 Schrewed, wicked, 18/398
 Schrewednesse, wickedness, 18/
 401, 117/3324
 Schronk, shrunk, 5/38
 Schulden (*pl.*), should, 9/132
 Schullen (*pl.*), shall, 25/605
 Scom, foam, froth, 148/4281
 Scripture, writing, 17/382
 Sege, seat, 13/258
 Seien (*pl.*), saw, 51/1344
 Seien (*p.p.*), seen, 6/54
 Selde, seldom, 133/3818
 Seler, cellar, 35/890
 Selily, happily, blissfully, 42/1076
 Selve, very, 5/42
 Semblable, like, 48/1279
 Semblaunce, likeness, 142/4106
 Semblaunt, appearance, counten-
 ance, 5/31

- Senglely, singly, 85/2369
 Sensibilites, sensations, 166/4830
 Servage, servitude, 153/4411
 Sewe, to follow, 88/2441
 Seye, sawest, 37/955
 Seyntuaries, sanctuaries, 16/343
 Shad, divided, spread, 136/3922
 Sholdres, shoulders, 148/4281
 Sich, such, 6/67
 Sikerly, certainly, 94/2635
 Singler, individual, single, 57/
 1529
 Singlerly, singly, 135/3890
 Sittyng, fitting, becoming, 10/176
 Skilynge, reason, 137/3931
 Slaken, to slake (hunger), 50/
 1326
 Slede, sledge, 110/3131
 Sleen, Slen, to slay, 53/1409,
 55/1460
 Slou3, slew, 55/1461
 Smaragde, emerald, 94/2650
 Smerte, to smart, pain, 39/1011
 Smot, smote, 147/4254
 Smoþe, smooth, 8/112
 Sodeyn, sudden, 10/161
 Somedel, somewhat, 25/606
 Somer, summer, 22/517
 Songen (*p.p.*), sung, 108/3078
 Soory, sorry, grievous, 38/978
 Soþe, true, 17/377, 118/3352
 Soþefastly, truly, 89/2481
 Soþely, truly, 169/4918
 Soþenesse, truth, 26/641
 Sothfast, true, 61/1652
 Soun, sound, 68/1852
 Soune, to sound, 37/929
 Sounyng, sounding, roaring, 8/
 111
 Sovereyn, supreme, 90/2508
 Sovereynely, supremely, 91/2545
 Sourmounte, to surpass, 80/2223
 Spece, species, 165/4789
 Speculacioun, looking, contem-
 plation, 153/4408
 Spedeful, Spedful, efficacious,
 conducive, 125/3570, 161/4671
 Speden, to make clear, explain,
 161/4667
 Spere, sphere, 8/108
 Sperkele, spark, 104/2971
 Sprad, spread (*p.p.*), 9/156
 Stableté, stability, 137/3950
 Stablise, to establish, 134/3860
 Stably, firmly, 135/3890
 Stappe, step, 170/4963
 Staunche, to satisfy, 71/1948,
 1961
 Stere, to move (*agitare*), 106/
 3015
 Sterre, star, 36/903
 Sterry, starry, 36/904
 Sterten, to start, 104/2971
 Stidefastnesse, stability, strength,
 97/2748
 Stidfast, steadfast, 182/17
 Stien, to ascend, 88/2444
 Stiere, *steer*, rudder (*gubernacu-
 lum*), 103/2926
 Stiern, stern, 60/1628
 Stoon, stone, 45/1165
 Stormyng, making stormy, 29/
 712
 Stont, stands, 9/154
 Stoundes, times, 178/5187
 Strau3t, stretched, extended, 170/
 4957
 Strengere, stronger, 12/221
 Strenkeþ, strength, 12/240
 Streyhte, stretched, 63/1702
 Streyne, to restrain, 150/4325

- Strond, strand, 51/1339
 Strook, stroke, 153/4433
 Strumpet, 6/66
 Styte, to ascend, 143/4117
 Stynte, to stop, 37/929
 Styntyng, stopping, ceasing, 61/1638
 Suasioun, persuasion (*suadela*), 30/759
 Subgit, subject, 48/1273
 Submytte, to compel, force (*summitto*), 19/434
 Sudeyn, sudden, 30/752
 Suffisaunce, sufficiency, 70/1922
 Suffisaunt, sufficient, 70/1924
 Suffisauntly, sufficiently, 133/3833
 Summitte, Summytte, to submit, 49/1288, 136/3924
 Superfice, surface, 81/2238
 Supplien, to supplicate, 80/2210
 Surté, security, 181/46
 Sustigne, to sustain, 183/41
 Sweighe, whirl, circular motion (*turbo*), 22/504
 Swerd, sword, 19/438
 Swety, sweaty, 181/28
 Sweyes, whirlings, 32/816
 Swich, such, 20/446
 Swolve, to swallow, 98/2777
 Syker, secure, safe, 12/224, 16/333
 Sykernes, security, safety, 9/132
 Symplesse, simplicity, 136/3914
 Syn, since, 31/789
 Sypen, since, 32/802
 Talent, affection, desire, will, 6/71, 168/4887
 Taylage, tollage, 181/524
 þar, need, 38/987
 þerwhiles, whilst, 176/5150
 þilke, the same, that, 99/2814
 þo, þoo (*pl.*), the, 11/200, 168/4886
 þondre, thunder, 45/1166
 þoru3, through, 11/202
 þreschefolde, threshold, 7/89
 þrest, thirst, 36/914, 71/1945
 þreste, þresten, thrust, 47/1237, 148/4283
 Throf, throve, flourished, 74/2050
 þrust, thirst, 107/3053
 Til, to, 69/1891
 Tilier, a tiller, 151/4352
 To-breke, break in pieces, 88/2447
 Todrowen (*pl.*), drew asunder, 11/193
 Toforne, before, 177/5184
 Togidres, together, 53/1421
 To hepe, together, 140/4029
 Tokene, to token, 26/624
 Tollen, to draw, 56/1496
 Torenten (*pl.*), rent asunder, 11/194
 To-teren, tear in pieces, 68/1865
 Traas, Trais, trace, track, 170/4958, 4963
 Transporten, throw on (*trans-ferre*), 19/419
 Travaille, labour, toil, 10/174
 Travayle, to toil, labour, 64/1754
 Travayle, labour, 148/4286
 Tregedie, tragedy, 77/2126
 Tregedien, tragedian, 77/2125
 Trenden, to roll, turn, 100/2835
 Troublable, troublesome, 118/3369
 Trouble, turbid, stormy, 29/711
 Troubly, troubled, cloudy (*nubilus*), 133/3819
 Trowen, to trow, believe, 20/468, 152/4399

- Twitre, to twitter, 68/1875
 Twynkel, to wink, 38/971
 Tylienge, tilling, 151/4347
 Tyren, to tear, 107/3055

 Umblesse, humility, 181/55
 Unagreable, unpleasant, disagreeable, 4/25
 Unassaep, untried, 42/1082
 Unbitide, not to happen, 161/4678
 Unbowed, unbent, 148/4284
 Uncovenable, unmeet, importunate (*importunus*), 141/4058
 Undefouled, undefiled, 40/1023
 Undepartable, inseparable, 120/3422
 Underput, put under, subject, 28/696
 Understonde, to understand, 30/733, 43/1120
 Undigne, unworthy, 54/1444
 Undirnep, underneath, 75/2074
 Undiscomfited, not discomfited (*invictus*), 12/232
 Undoutous, indubitable, 149/4315
 Uneschewably, unavoidable, 157/4531
 Ungentil, ignoble, 41/1070
 Ungrobbed, ungrubbed, 180/14
 Unhonestee, disreputableness, 24/587
 Unhoped, unexpected, 139/4006
 Université, whole, 165/4797
 Unjoynen, Unjoynen, to separate, 151/4373
 Unknowyng, ignorant, 139/3997
 Unknytten, to unloose (*dissolvere*), 154/4459
 Unkonnyng, Unkunnyng, unknowing, ignorant, 7/76, 11/202
 Unkorven, uncut, 180/14
 Unkouþ, unknown, foreign, 34/870
 Unlace, to disentangle, 105/2982
 Unleveful, illicit, unlawful, 154/4456
 Unmeke, fierce, cruel, 148/4267
 Unmoeveable, immovable, 136/3901
 Unmoeveableté, immobility, 136/3921
 Unmyzty, weak, impotent, 13/241
 Unnep, scarcely, 27/652
 Unparygal, unequal, 63/1708
 Unpitouse, cruel, 4/24
 Unpleyten, to explain, 61/1647
 Unplite, explain, unfold, 167/4843
 Unpunished, unpunished, 21/498
 Unpurveyed, unforeseen, 30/743
 Unraced, unbroken, whole, 110/3115
 Unryztyful, unjust, 10/185
 Unryztyfully, unrightfully, unjustly, 23/533
 Unscience, unreal knowledge, no knowledge, 156/4515
 Unsely, wretched, 39/1013
 Unselynesse, wretchedness, 124/3544
 Unskilfully, unwisely, improperly, 18/407
 Unsolempne, not famous, not celebrated, 11/210
 Unsowe, unsown, 180/10
 Unspedful, unsuccessful, 178/5210
 Unstauncheable, unlimited, infinite, 58/1573
 Unstaunched, uncurbed, unrestrained, 54/1439
 Unsuffrable, intolerable, 79/2179
 Unusage, unfrequency, 57/1528

- Untretable, inexorable, implacable, 61/1641
 Unwar, unexpected, 35/886
 Unwarly, unaware, unexpectedly, 4/10
 Unwemmed, inviolate, 40/1023, 178/5201
 Unwened, unexpected, 139/4006
 Unwoot, knows not, 175/5099
 Unworshipful, dishonoured, 75/2054
 Uphepyng, heaping up, 37/951
 Upsodoun, upside down, 48/1274, 156/4501
 Upsprong, upsprung, 180/10
 Used, accustomed, wonted, 22/512
 Uterreste, extremest, outermost, 7/95

 Vanisse, to vanish, 74/2027
 Variaunt, varying, 22/518
 Vengerisse, a she-avenger, 107/3048
 Verray, Verrey, true, 19/429
 Vilfully (Wilsfully), wilfully, 116/3295
 Voide, having an empty purse (*vacuus*), 50/1316
 Voyded (of), emptied of, free from, 181/50

 Wakyng, watchful, 148/4263
 Walwe, to toss, 51/1361
 Walwyng, tossing, 29/712
 Wan, did win, 147/4240
 War, be aware, take care, 145/4200
 Warne, to refuse, deny, 37/950
 Wawe, a wave, 8/115
 Wayk, weak, 28/706
 Weep (*pret.*), wept, 35/883
 Welde, wild, 180/17. It may mean *boiled*, since another copy reads *wellyd*.
 Weleful, Welful, prosperous, joyful, 4/15
 Welefulnessse, Welfulnesse, prosperity, felicity, 11/188, 21/478
 Welken, to wither, fade, 146/4224
 Welkne, welkin, 184/62
 Welle, well, source, 157/4548
 Wende, weened, thought, 53/1397
 Wenge, wing, 170/4961
 Wenyng, opinion, 172/5022
 Wepen (*p.p.*), wept, 25/596
 Wepli, tearful, 5/29
 Werdes, fates, destinies, 4/10
 Werreye, to make war, 181/25
 Weten, to know, 156/4519
 Wax, wax, 167/4840
 Weyve, to waive, forsake, 29/722
 Wham, whom, 89/2482
 Whelwe, to toss, roll, 39/1001
 Whiderward, whither, 177/5171
 Whist, hushed, 51/1341
 Wierdes, fates, destinies, 12/231
 Wikke, wicked, bad, 64/1743
 Willyng, desire, 178/5203
 Wilne, to desire, 17/367
 Wilnyng, desire, 98/2781
 Wirche, to work, 12/235
 Wirchyng, working, operation, 95/2677
 Wist, known, 170/4937
 Witen, to know, learn, 88/2458, 132/3776, 160/4624
 Wipdraw, withdrew, 64/1751
 Wiphalden, to withhold, 142/4105
 Wipoute forþe, outwardly, 165/4803
 Wipseid, denied, 90/2501

- Wipstant, withstand, 29/715
 Wipstonde (*p.p.*), withstood, 14/
 290
 Witnesfully, attestedly, publicly,
 131/3765
 Witynge, knowledge, 156/4526
 Wod, woad, 180/17
 Wod, Wode, mad, raging, 12/225
 Wode, wood, 39/995
 Wodenesse, rage, madness, 45/
 1169, 107/3052
 Wolen (*pl.*), will, 94/2645
 Woltow, wilt thou, 97/2741
 Wone, to dwell, 60/1627
 Woode, Wode, furious, mad, 25/
 600
 Woode, to rage, 123/3515
 Woodnesse, rage, madness, 107/
 3052
 Woot, knows, 43/1128
 Woep, to weep, 36/905
 Worchen, to work, 178/5215
 Wost, knowest, 19/423
 Woxe, to increase, wax, grow,
 25/608
 Woxen (*p.p.*), grown, 25/607
 Wrekere, avenger, 128/3665
 Wrekying, vengeance, 147/4238
 Wropely, grieved, sad, 7/87
 Wrypen, twist, turn, wrest, 154/
 4452
 Wymple, to cover with a veil or
 wimple, 31/774
 Wyt, sense, 164/4771
 Wyzt, wight, person, 19/425

 Yave (*pl.*), gave, 180/4
 Yben, been, 162/4698
 Ybeyen, to obey, 105/2998
 Ycauzt, caught, captured, 118/
 3371
 Ycleped, called, 150/4346

 Ydel, 'in ydel,' in vain, 5/43
 Ydred, feared, 33/825
 Yfelawshipped, associated, united,
 53/1421
 Yficched, fixed, 136/3910
 Yfinissed, finished, 125/3558
 Yflit, flitted, removed, 8/108
 Ygeten, gotten, 65/1776
 Yhardid, hardened, 133/3814
 Yheued, made heavy, 171/4974
 Ylad, led, 37/956, 172/5022
 Ylete, permitted, 130/3730
 Ylett, hindered, 161/4674
 Ylorn, lost, 147/4250
 Ymaginable, possessing imagina-
 tion, 166/4812
 Ymaked, made, 87/2426
 Ymedeled, mixed, 140/4029
 Ynou3, enough, 71/1947
 Yplitid, pleated, folded, 9/147
 YPORVEYD, YPURVEID, foreseen,
 155/4467, 4468
 Ysen, seen, 72/1982
 Yshad, shed, scattered, 68/1874
 Yshet, shut, 170/4955
 Ysmyte, smitten, 80/2202
 Yspedd, made clear, determined,
 161/4657; despatched, 149/4295
 Yspendyd, examined (*expediero*),
 161/4668
 Ysprad, spread, 78/2140
 Yspranid, sprinkled, mixed, 42/
 1102. *Read* yspraind.
 Ystrengēped, strengthened, 175/
 5098
 Ypewed, behaved, 139/4008
 Yprongen, pressed, squeezed, 57/
 1521
 Ytravailed, laboured, 155/4469
 Ytretid, handled, performed, 131/
 3765

- Yvel, evil, 105/2976
 Ywened, believed, 145/4178
 Ywist, known, 155/4475
 Ywoven, woven, 6/51
 Ywyst, known, 164/4759
 Y3even, given, 141/4069

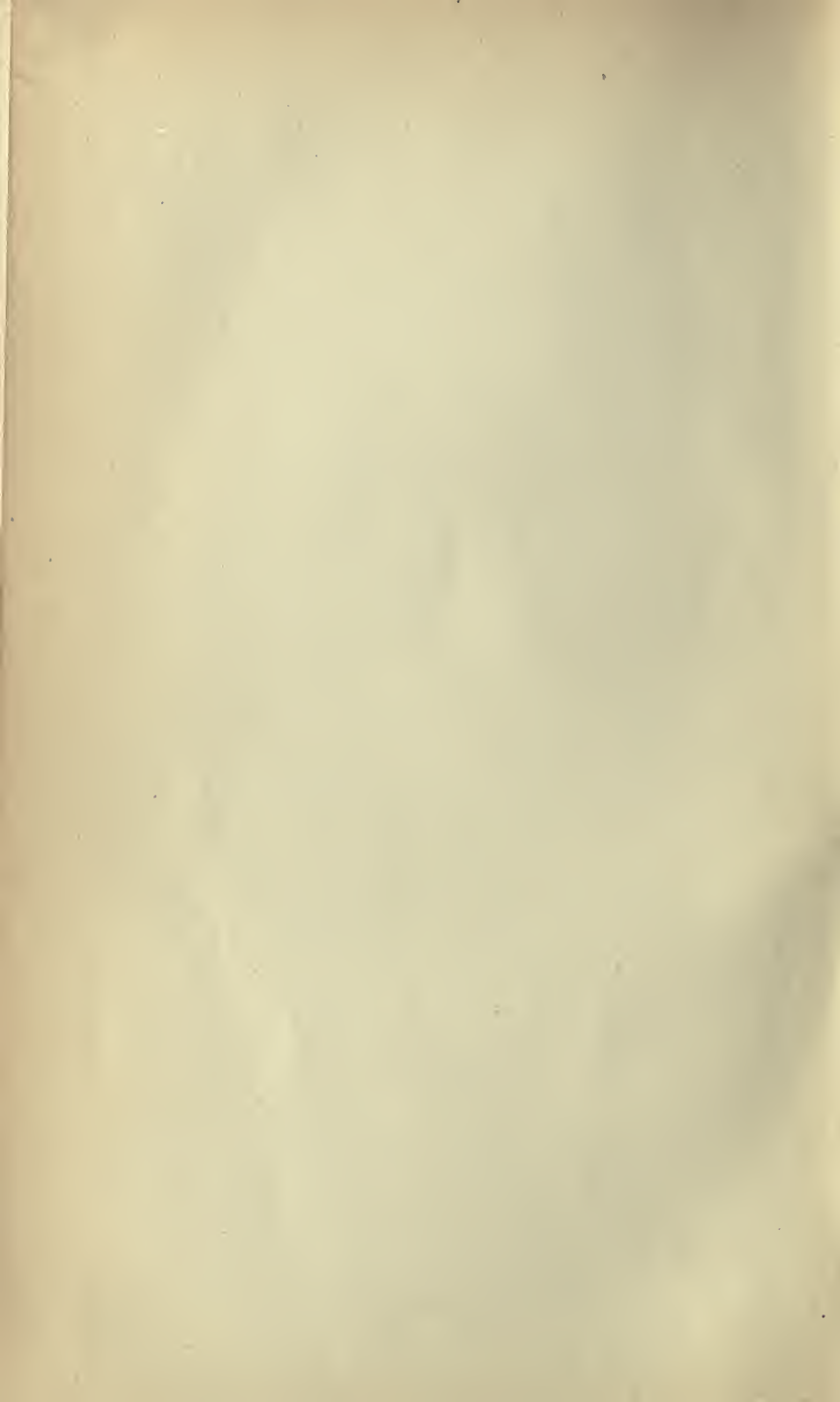
 3af, gave, 8/130
 3eelde, 3elde, seldom, 39/1002,
 52/1372
 3eld, yielded, 147/4253

 3elden, to yield, 149/4303
 3eve, to give, 149/4291
 3evyng, giving, 45/1188
 3if, if, 9/131
 3is, yes, 103/2919
 3isterday, yesterday, 171/4994
 3itte, yet, 156/4508
 3ok, 3okke, yoke, 32/802, 60/1620
 3olde (*p.p.*), yielded, 25/599
 3onge, young, 35/889
 3oupe, youth, 10/168

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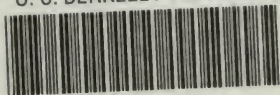
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