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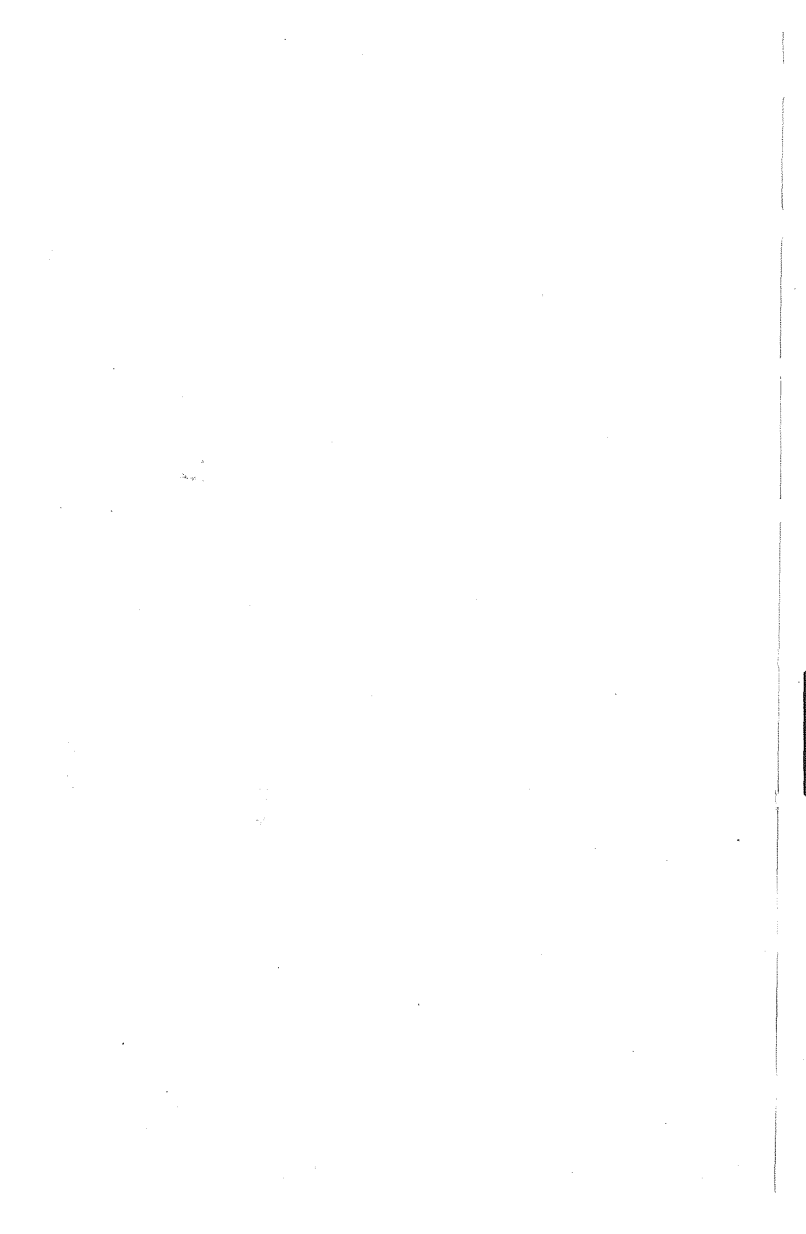
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BOETHIUS

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BOETHIUS

THE THEOLOGICAL TRACTATES

TRANSLATION BY

H. F. STEWART, E. K. RAND,
AND S. J. TESTER

THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY

TRANSLATION BY

J. TESTER



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INTRODUCTION

IN this re-issue in 1973 of Boethius' *Theological Tractates* and *Consolation of Philosophy* the Loeb Classical Library has taken advantage of much revision and re-translation by S. J. Tester, of the Department of Classics, University of Bristol. The original rendering of the *Tractates* for the Library by Dr. H. F. Stewart and Professor E. K. Rand, besides inaccuracies, contained omissions, obscurities, paraphrases, and some needless archaisms ; and the translation of the *Consolatio* by "I. T." (1609), despite its virtues and the revision by Dr. Stewart, was too far removed from the purposes of the Loeb series, and has been relinquished. In this reprint therefore much of the translation of the *Tractates* and the whole of the translation of the *Consolatio*, with the notes also, are the work of Tester, whose aim was, in addition to correction, to produce throughout the volume a homogeneous rendering, reasonably literal, which would make philosophical sense. The following note on the text, written by Rand in 1918, still applies : " The text of the *Opuscula Sacra* is based on my own collations of all the important manuscripts of these works. In preparing the text of the *Consolatio* I have used the apparatus in Peiper's edition (Teubner, 1871), since his reports, as I know in the case of the

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Tegernseensis, are generally accurate and complete ; I have depended also on my own collations or excerpts from various of the important manuscripts, nearly all of which I have at least examined, and I have also followed, not always but usually, the opinions of Engelbrecht in his admirable article, *Die Consolatio Philosophiae des Boethius* in the *Sitzungsberichte* of the Vienna Academy, CXLIV, (1902), 1-60. The present text, then, has been constructed from only part of the material with which an editor should reckon, though the reader may at least assume that every reading in the text has, unless otherwise stated, the authority of some manuscript of the ninth or tenth century ; in certain orthographical details, evidence from the text of the *Opuscula Sacra* has been used without special mention of this fact."

Of the specially renowned *Consolatio* there appeared in the Middle Ages (during which it was among the most popular of philosophical manuals) many translations including King Alfred's into Anglo-Saxon late in the ninth century, Chaucer's into English before 1382, and various renderings into French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Greek, before the end of the fifteenth century ; commentaries such as that of Asser (Alfred's instructor) and Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln ; and imitations. Later came the "Englishings" of Queen Elizabeth I. Modern editions and translations are numerous. Until the present century the best editions were those of T. Obbarius (Jena, 1843) containing the *Consolatio* only but including much information about Boethius himself, the manuscripts, and earlier editions ; and of R. Peiper (Leipzig, 1871) containing the *Consolatio* and the *Tractates*. Stewart and Rand's translation of
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the *Tractates* for the Loeb Series in 1918, in which they derived much help from the medieval commentary by John the Scot and the one by Gilbert de la Porrée, was the first English rendering. Since then, some important work has appeared of which note especially the following : editions of the *Consolatio* by A. Fortescue and G. D. Smith, London, 1925 ; G. Weinberger in *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* LXVII, Vienna, 1934 ; L. Bieler in *Corpus Christianorum*, Ser. Lat., xciv, Turnhout, 1957 ; E. Rapisarda (with translation), Catania, 1961 ; and the 2nd edition, with translation, of the *Tractates* by the same author, *Opuscoli teologici*, Catania, 1960 ; also F. Klingner, de Boethii consolatione Philosophiae, in *Philol. Untersuch.* XXVII, Berlin, 1921 ; M. Schanz, in *Geschichte d. Röm. Literatur*, Teil IV, *Boethius*, Berlin, 1921 ; H. R. Patch, *The tradition of Boethius*, Oxford, 1935 (with a good bibliography) ; and P. Courcelle's *La Consolation de Philosophie dans la tradition littéraire ; antécédents et postérité de Boèce*, Paris, 1967, with bibliography on pp. 383-402.

We reprint here the Life of Boethius by Stewart and Rand from our original issue.

E. H. W.

LIFE OF BOETHIUS

ANICIUS MANLIUS SEVERINUS BOETHIUS, of the famous Praenestine family of the Anicii, was born about 480 A.D. in Rome. His father was an ex-consul; he himself was consul under Theodoric the Ostrogoth in 510, and his two sons, children of a great granddaughter^a of the renowned Q. Aurelius Symmachus, were joint consuls in 522. His public career was splendid and honourable, as befitted a man of his race, attainments, and character. But he fell under the displeasure of Theodoric, and was charged with conspiring to deliver Rome from his rule, and with corresponding treasonably to this end with Justin, Emperor of the East. He was thrown into prison at Pavia, where he wrote the *Consolation of Philosophy*, and he was brutally put to death in 524. His brief and busy life was marked by great literary achievement. His learning was vast, his industry untiring, his object unattainable—nothing less than the transmission to his countrymen of all the works of Plato and Aristotle, and the reconciliation of their apparently divergent views. To form the idea was a silent judgement on the learning of his day; to realize it was more than one man could accomplish; but Boethius accomplished much. He translated the *Εἰσαγωγή* of Porphyry, and the whole of Aristotle's *Organon*. He wrote a double commentary on the *Εἰσ-*

^a Rusticana, daughter of Q. Aurelius Memmius Symmachus. Boethius's sons were Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius, and Q. Aurelius Memmius Symmachus.

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αγωγή, and commentaries on the *Categories* and the *De Interpretatione* of Aristotle, and on the *Topica* of Cicero. He also composed original treatises on the categorical and hypothetical syllogism, on Division and on Topical Differences. He adapted the arithmetic of Nicomachus, and his textbook on music, founded on various Greek authorities, was in use at Oxford and Cambridge until modern times. His five theological *Tractates* are here, together with the *Consolation of Philosophy*, to speak for themselves.

Boethius was the last of the Roman philosophers, and the first of the scholastic theologians. The present volume serves to prove the truth of both these assertions.

The *Consolation of Philosophy* is indeed, as Gibbon called it, "a golden volume, not unworthy of the leisure of Plato or of Tully." To belittle its originality and sincerity, as is sometimes done, with a view to saving the Christianity of the writer, is to misunderstand his mind and his method. The *Consolatio* is not, as has been maintained, a mere patchwork of translations from Aristotle and the Neoplatonists. Rather it is the supreme essay of one who throughout his life had found his highest solace in the dry light of reason. His chief source of refreshment, in the dungeon to which his beloved library had not accompanied him, was a memory well stocked with the poetry and thought of former days. The development of the argument is anything but Neoplatonic; it is all his own.

And if the *Consolation of Philosophy* admits Boethius to the company of Cicero or even of Plato, the theological *Tractates* mark him as the forerunner of St. Thomas. It was the habit of a former generation

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to regard Boethius as an eclectic, the transmitter of a distorted Aristotelianism, a pagan, or at best a luke-warm Christian, who at the end cast off the faith which he had worn in times of peace, and wrapped himself in the philosophic cloak which properly belonged to him. The authenticity of the *Tractates* was freely denied. We know better now. The discovery by Alfred Holder, and the illuminating discussion by Hermann Usener,^a of a fragment of Cassiodorus are sufficient confirmation of the manuscript tradition, apart from the work of scholars who have sought to justify that tradition from internal evidence. In that fragment Cassiodorus definitely ascribes to his friend Boethius "a book on the Trinity, some dogmatic chapters, and a book against Nestorius."^b Boethius was without doubt a Christian, a Doctor and perhaps a martyr. Nor is it necessary to think that, when in prison, he put away his faith. If it is asked why the *Consolation of Philosophy* contains no conscious or direct reference to the doctrines which are traced in the *Tractates* with so sure a hand, and is, at most, not out of harmony with Christianity, the answer is simple. In the *Consolation* he is writing philosophy; in the *Tractates* he is writing theology. He observes what Pascal calls the orders of things. Philosophy belongs to one order, theology to another. They have different objects. The object of philosophy is to understand and explain the nature of the world around us; the object of theology is to understand

^a *Anecdota Holderi*, Leipzig, 1877.

^b *Scriptit librum de sancta trinitate et capita quaedam dogmatica et librum contra Nestorium*. On the question of the genuineness of Tr. iv *De fide catholica* see note p. 52.

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and explain doctrines delivered by divine revelation. The scholastics recognized the distinction,^a and the corresponding difference in the function of Faith and Reason. Their final aim was to co-ordinate the two, but this was not possible before the thirteenth century. Meanwhile Boethius helps to prepare the way. In the *Consolation* he gives Reason her range, and suffers her, unaided, to vindicate the ways of Providence. In the *Tractates* Reason is called in to give to the claims of Faith the support which it does not really lack.^b Reason, however, has still a right to be heard. The distinction between *fides* and *ratio* is proclaimed in the first two *Tractates*. In the second especially it is drawn with a clearness worthy of St. Thomas himself; and there is, of course, the implication that the higher authority resides with *fides*. But the treatment is philosophical and extremely bold. Boethius comes back to the question of the substantiality of the divine Persons which he has discussed in Tr. I. from a fresh point of view. Once more he decides that the Persons are predicated relatively; even Trinity, he concludes, is not predicated substantially of deity. Does this square with catholic doctrine? It is possible to hear a note of challenge in his words to John the Deacon, *fidem si poterit rationemque coniunge*. Philosophy states the problem in unequivocal terms. Theology is required to say whether they commend themselves.

One object of the scholastics, anterior to the final co-ordination of the two sciences, was to harmonize and codify all the answers to all the questions

^a Cp. H. de Wulf, *Histoire de la philosophie médiévale* (Louvain and Paris, 1915), p. 332.

^b See below, *De Trin. vi ad fin.*, p. 31.

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that philosophy raises. The ambition of Boethius was not so soaring, but it was sufficiently bold. He set out, first to translate, and then to reconcile, Plato and Aristotle ; to go behind all the other systems, even the latest and the most in vogue, back to the two great masters, and to show that they have the truth, and are in substantial accord. So St. Thomas himself, if he cannot reconcile the teaching of Plato and Aristotle, at least desires to correct the one by the other, to discover what truth is common to both, and to show its correspondence with Christian doctrine. It is reasonable to conjecture that Boethius, if he had lived, might have attempted something of the kind. Were he alive to-day, he might feel more in tune with the best of the pagans than with most contemporary philosophic thought.

In yet one more respect Boethius belongs to the company of the schoolmen. He not only put into circulation many precious philosophical notions, served as channel through which various works of Aristotle passed into the schools, and handed down to them a definite Aristotelian method for approaching the problem of faith ; he also supplied material for that classification of the various sciences which is an essential accompaniment of every philosophical movement, and of which the Middle Ages felt the value. The uniform distribution into natural sciences, mathematics and theology which he recommends may be traced in the work of various teachers up to the thirteenth century, when it is finally accepted and defended by St. Thomas in his commentary on the *De Trinitate*.

H. F. S.

E. K. R. 1918

BOETHIUS
THE THEOLOGICAL TRACTATES
AND
THE CONSOLATION
OF PHILOSOPHY

ANICII MANLII SEVERINI BOETHII

V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. PATRICII

INCIPIT LIBER QUOMODO

TRINITAS UNUS DEUS
AC NON TRES DII

AD Q. AURELIUM MEMMIUM SYMMACHUM

V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. ATQUE PATRICIUM SOCERUM

Investigatam diutissime quaestionem, quantum
nostrae mentis igniculum lux divina dignata est,
formatam rationibus litterisque mandatam offerendam
vobis communicandamque curavi tam vestri cupidus
5 iudicii quam nostri studiosus inventi. Qua in re quid
mihi sit animi quotiens stilo cogitata commendo, tum
ex ipsa materiae difficultate tum ex eo quod raris id
est vobis tantum conloquor, intelligi potest. Neque
enim famae iactatione et inanibus vulgi clamoribus
10 excitamur ; sed si quis est fructus exterior, hic non

THE TRINITY IS ONE GOD NOT THREE GODS

A TREATISE BY
ANICIUS MANLIUS SEVERINUS
BOETHIUS

MOST HONOURABLE, OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF
EX-CONSULS, PATRICIAN

TO HIS FATHER-IN-LAW, QUINTUS AURELIUS
MEMMIUS SYMMACHUS

MOST HONOURABLE, OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF
EX-CONSULS, PATRICIAN

I HAVE very long pondered this question, so far as the divine light has deemed it fitting for the spark of my intelligence to do so. Now, having set it forth in logical order and cast it into literary form, I have caused it to be presented and communicated to you, being as much desirous of your judgement as zealous for my own discovery. You can readily understand what I feel in this matter whenever I try to write down what I think both from the actual difficulty of the topic and from the fact that I discuss it only with the few—I may say with no one but yourself. It is indeed no vain striving after fame or empty popular applause that prompts me ; but if there be any exter-

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potest aliam nisi materiae similem sperare sententiam. Quocumque igitur a vobis deieci oculos, partim ignava segnities partim callidus livor occurrit, ut contumeliam videatur divinis tractatibus inrogare qui talibus
15 hominum monstris non agnoscenda haec potius quam proculcanda proiecerit. Idcirco stilum brevitae contraho et ex intimis sumpta philosophiae disciplinis novorum verborum significationibus velo, ut haec mihi tantum vobisque, si quando ad ea convertitis
20 oculos, conloquantur; ceteros vero ita submovimus, ut qui capere intellectu nequiverint ad ea etiam legenda videantur indigni. Sane¹ tantum a nobis quaeri oportet quantum humanae rationis intuitus ad divinitatis valet celsa conscendere. Nam ceteris quoque
25 artibus idem quasi quidam finis est constitutus, quousque potest via rationis accedere. Neque enim medicina aegris semper affert salutem; sed nulla erit culpa medentis, si nihil eorum quae fieri oportebat omiserit. Idemque in ceteris. At quantum haec difficilior
30 quaestio est, tam facilius esse debet ad veniam. Vobis tamen etiam illud inspiciendum est, an ex beati Augustini scriptis semina rationum aliquos in nos venientia fructus extulerint. Ac de proposita quaestione hinc sumamus initium.

I

Christianae religionis reverentiam plures usurpant, sed ea fides pollet maxime ac solitarie quae cum propter universalium praecepta regularum, quibus

¹ sed ne the best MSS.

^a Cf. the discussion of human *ratio* and divine *intelligentia* in *Cons.* v, pr. 4 and 5.

^b e.g. Aug. *De Trin.*

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nal reward, we may not look for more warmth in the verdict than the subject itself arouses. So, apart from yourself, wherever I turn my eyes, they fall on either the apathy of the dullard or the jealousy of the shrewd, and a man who should cast his thoughts before such unnatural creatures of men, I will not say to consider but rather to trample under foot, would seem to bring discredit on the study of divinity. So I purposely use brevity and wrap up the ideas I draw from the deep questionings of philosophy in new and unaccustomed words such as speak only to you and to myself, that is, if you ever look at them. The rest of the world I simply disregard since those who cannot understand seem unworthy even to read them. We should of course press our inquiry only so far as the insight of man's reason is allowed to climb the height of heavenly knowledge.^a For in other arts the same point is set as a sort of limit, as far as which the way of reason can reach. Medicine, for instance, does not always bring health to the sick, though the doctor will not be to blame if he has left nothing undone which should have been done. So with the other arts. In the present case the very difficulty of the quest claims a lenient judgement. You must however examine whether the seeds of argument sown in my mind by St. Augustine's writings^b have borne fruit. And now let us make a beginning on the question proposed.

I

There are many who claim as theirs the dignity of the Christian religion ; but that form of faith is most valid and only valid which, both on account of the universal character of the rules and doctrines

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- eiusdem religionis intellegatur auctoritas, tum pro-
5 terea, quod eius cultus per omnes paene mundi ter-
minos emanavit, catholica vel universalis vocatur.
Cuius haec de trinitatis unitate sententia est: "Pater,"
inquiunt, "deus filius deus spiritus sanctus deus."
Igitur pater filius spiritus sanctus unus non tres dii.
10 Cuius coniunctionis ratio est indifferentia. Eos enim
differentia comitatur qui vel augment vel minuunt, ut
Arriani qui gradibus meritorum trinitatem variantes
distrahunt atque in pluralitatem diducunt. Principium
enim pluralitatis alteritas est; praeter alteritatem
15 enim nec pluralitas quid sit intellegi potest. Trium
namque rerum vel quotlibet tum genere tum specie
tum numero diversitas constat; quotiens enim idem
dicitur, totiens diversum etiam praedicatur. Idem
vero dicitur tribus modis: aut genere ut idem homo
20 quod equus, quia his idem genus ut animal; vel
specie ut idem Cato quod Cicero, quia eadem species
ut homo; vel numero ut Tullius et Cicero, quia unus
est numero. Quare diversum etiam vel genere vel
specie vel numero dicitur. Sed numero differentiam
25 accidentium varietas facit. Nam tres homines neque
genere neque specie sed suis accidentibus distant;
nam vel si animo cuncta ab his accidentia separemus,
tamen locus cunctis diversus est quem unum fingere
nullo modo possumus; duo enim corpora unum locum

^a From the Athanasian Creed.

^b The terms *differentia*, *numerus*, *species*, are used expertly, as would be expected of the author of the *In Isag. Porph. Commenta*. See S. Brandt's edition of that work (in the *Vienna Corpus*, 1906), s.v. *differentia*, etc.

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through which the authority of that same religion is perceived, and because its form of worship has spread throughout almost all the world, is called catholic or universal. The belief of this faith concerning the Unity of the Trinity is as follows: "the Father" they say "is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God."^a Therefore Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God, not three Gods. The cause of this union is absence of difference^b: difference cannot be avoided by those who add to or take from the Unity, as for instance the Arians, who, by graduating the Trinity according to merit, break it up and convert it to Plurality. For the principle of plurality is otherness; for apart from otherness plurality is unintelligible. In fact, the diversity of three or more things lies in genus or species or number; for as often as "same" is said, so often is "diverse" also predicated. Now sameness is predicated in three ways. By genus; *e.g.* a man is the same as a horse, because they have the same genus, animal. By species; *e.g.* Cato is the same as Cicero, because they have the same species, man. By number; *e.g.* Tully and Cicero, because he is one in number. Similarly diversity is expressed by genus, species, and number. Now numerical difference is caused by variety of accidents; for three men differ neither by genus nor species but by their accidents, for even if we mentally remove from them all other accidents,^c still the places for each are diverse, which we cannot by any means make into one place, since two bodies will not occupy one place, and place

^c This method of mental abstraction is employed more elaborately in *Tr.* iii (*vide infra*, p. 44) and in *Cons.* v, pr. 4, where the notion of divine foreknowledge is abstracted in imagination.

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30 non obtinebunt, qui est accidens. Atque ideo sunt numero plures, quoniam accidentibus plures fiunt.

II

Age igitur ingrediamur et unumquodque ut intellegi atque capi potest dispiciamus ; nam, sicut optime dictum videtur, eruditi est hominis unumquodque ut ipsum est ita de eo fidem capere temptare.

5 Nam cum tres sint speculativae partes, *naturalis*, in motu inabstracta ἀννπεξαίπετος (considerat enim corporum formas cum materia, quae a corporibus actu separari non possunt, quae corpora in motu sunt ut cum terra deorsum ignis sursum fertur,
10 habetque motum forma materiae coniuncta), *mathematica*, sine motu inabstracta (haec enim formas corporum speculatur sine materia ac per hoc sine motu, quae formae cum in materia sint, ab his separari non possunt), *theologica*, sine motu abstracta
15 atque separabilis (nam dei substantia et materia et motu caret), in naturalibus igitur rationabiliter, in mathematicis disciplinaliter, in divinis intellectualiter versari oportebit neque diduci ad imaginationes, sed potius ipsam inspicere formam quae vere forma
20 neque imago est et quae esse ipsum est et ex qua

^a By Cicero (*Tusc.* v. 7. 19).

^b Cf. the similar division of philosophy in *Isag. Porph.* ed. Brandt, pp. 7 ff.

^c *Sc.* though they may be separated in thought.

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is an accident. Wherefore it is because men are made plural by their accidents that they are plural in number.

II

Come, then, let us begin and consider each several point, as far as it can be grasped and understood ; for as has been wisely said,^a in my opinion, it is a scholar's duty to try to formulate his belief about each thing according as it actually is.

Speculative Science may be divided into three kinds^b : Physics, Mathematics, and Theology. Physics deals with motion and is not abstract or separable (*i.e.* ἀνυπεξάίρετος); for it is concerned with the forms of bodies together with their constituent matter, which forms cannot be separated in reality from their bodies.^c These bodies are in motion, the earth, for instance, tending downwards, and fire tending upwards, and the form which is joined with the matter takes on its motion. Mathematics does not deal with motion and is not abstract, for it investigates forms of bodies apart from matter, and therefore apart from motion, which forms, however, being connected with matter cannot be really separated from bodies. Theology does not deal with motion and is abstract and separable, for the Divine Substance is without either matter or motion.

In Physics, then, we shall be bound to use scientific, in Mathematics, systematical, in Theology, intellectual concepts ; and in Theology we should not be diverted to play with imaginations, but rather apprehend that form which is pure form and no image, which is very being and the source of being. For all

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esse est. Omne namque esse ex forma est. Statua enim non secundum aes quod est materia, sed secundum formam qua in eo insignita est effigies animalis dicitur, ipsumque aes non secundum terram
25 quod est eius materia, sed dicitur secundum aeris figuram. Terra quoque ipsa non secundum ἄποιον ὕλην dicitur, sed secundum siccitatem gravitatemque quae sunt formae. Nihil igitur secundum materiam esse dicitur sed secundum propriam formam. Sed divina
30 substantia sine materia forma est atque ideo unum et est id quod est. Reliqua enim non sunt id quod sunt. Unum quodque enim habet esse suum ex his ex quibus est, id est ex partibus suis, et est hoc atque hoc, id est partes suae coniunctae, sed non hoc vel hoc singulari-
35 ter, ut cum homo terrenus constet ex anima corporeque, corpus et anima est, non vel corpus vel anima in partem ; igitur non est id quod est. Quod vero non est ex hoc atque hoc, sed tantum est hoc, illud vere est id quod est ; et est pulcherrimum fortissimumque
40 quia nullo nititur. Quocirca hoc vere unum in quo nullus numerus, nullum in eo aliud praeterquam id quod est. Neque enim subiectum fieri potest ; forma enim est, formae vero subiectae esse non possunt. Nam quod ceterae formae subiectae accidentibus

^a Ἄποιος ὕλη = τὸ ἄμορφον, τὸ ἀειδές of Aristotle. Cf. οὔτε γὰρ ὕλη τὸ εἶδος (ἢ μὲν ἄποιος, τὸ δὲ ποιότης τις) οὔτε ἐξ ὕλης (Alexander Aphrod. *De Anima*, 17. 17) ; εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, ἄποιος δὲ ἢ ὕλη, ἄποιον ἂν εἴη σῶμα (id. *De anima libri mantissa*, 124. 7).

^b This is Realism. Cf. "Sed si rerum veritatem atque

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being is dependent on form. For a statue is not called a likeness of a living thing on account of the bronze which is its matter, but on account of the form whereby that likeness is impressed upon it : and the bronze itself is not called bronze because of the earth which is its matter, but because of the form of bronze. Likewise earth itself is not called earth by reason of unqualified matter,^a but by reason of dryness and weight, which are forms. So nothing is said to be because of its matter, but because of its distinctive form. But the Divine Substance is form without matter, and is therefore one, and is its own essence. But other things are not their own essences, for each thing has its being from the things of which it is composed, that is, from its parts. It is This *and* That, *i.e.* it is its parts in conjunction ; it is not This *or* That taken apart. Earthly man, for instance, since he consists of soul and body, is body *and* soul, not body *or* soul, separately ; therefore he is not his own essence. That on the other hand which does not consist of This and That, but is only This, is really its own essence, and is altogether beautiful and stable because it does not depend upon anything. Wherefore that is truly one in which is no number, in which nothing is present except its own essence. Nor can it become the substrate of anything, for it is form, and forms cannot be substrates.^b For if humanity, like

integritatem perpendas, non est dubium quin vere sint. Nam cum res omnes quae vere sunt sine his quinque (*i.e.* genus species differentia propria accidentia) esse non possint, has ipsas quinque res vere intellectas esse non dubites, " *Isag. in Porph. ed. pr. i* (Migne, *P.L.* lxiv, col. 19, Brandt, pp. 26 ff.). The passages show that Boethius is definitely committed to the Realistic position, although in his *Comment. in Porphyr. a se translatum* he holds the scales

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- 45 sunt ut humanitas, non ita accidentia suscipit eo quod ipsa est, sed eo quod materia ei subiecta est ; dum enim materia subiecta humanitati suscipit quodlibet accidens, ipsa hoc suscipere videtur humanitas. Forma vero quae est sine materia non poterit esse subiectum
- 50 nec vero inesse materiae, neque enim esset forma sed imago. Ex his enim formis quae praeter materiam sunt, istae formae venerunt quae sunt in materia et corpus efficiunt. Nam ceteras quae in corporibus sunt abutimur formas vocantes, dum imagines sint.
- 55 Adsimulantur enim formis his quae non sunt in materia constitutae. Nulla igitur in eo diversitas, nulla ex diversitate pluralitas, nulla ex accidentibus multitudo atque idcirco nec numerus.

III

- Deus vero a deo nullo differt, ne vel accidentibus vel substantialibus differentiis in subiecto positis dissent. Ubi vero nulla est differentia, nulla est omnino pluralitas, quare nec numerus ; igitur unitas tantum.
- 5 Nam quod tertio repetitur deus, cum pater ac filius et spiritus sanctus nuncupatur, tres unitates non faciunt pluralitatem numeri in eo quod ipsae sunt, si advertamus ad res numerabiles ac non ad ipsum numerum. Illic enim unitatum repetitio numerum
- 10 facit. In eo autem numero qui in rebus numerabilibus constat, repetitio unitatum atque pluralitas minime facit numerabilium rerum numerosam diversitatem.

between Plato and Aristotle, " quorum diiudicare sententias aptum esse non duxi " (cp. Hauréau, *Hist. de la philosophie scolastique*, i. 120). As a fact in the *Comment. in Porph.* he merely postpones the question, which in the *De Trin.* he settles.

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other forms, is a substrate for accidents, it does not receive accidents through the fact that it exists, but through the fact that matter is subjected to it. For when the matter which is subject to humanity receives any accident, humanity itself seems to receive it. But form which is without matter will not be able to be a substrate, nor indeed to be in matter, else it would not be form but an image. For from these forms which are outside matter have come those forms which are in matter and produce a body. We misname the entities that reside in bodies when we call them forms, since they are mere images ; for they only resemble those forms which are not incorporate in matter. In God, then, is no difference, no plurality arising out of difference, no multiplicity arising out of accidents, and accordingly no number either.

III

Now God differs from God in no respect, for there cannot be divine essences distinguished either by accidents or by substantial differences belonging to a substrate. But where there is no difference, there is no sort of plurality and accordingly no number ; here, therefore, is unity alone. For whereas we say God thrice when we name the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, these three unities do not produce a plurality of number in their own essences, if we think of numerable things and not of number itself. For in that case the repetition of ones does make a number ; but in that number which consists in numerable things, the repetition of ones and their plurality do not by any means produce numerical difference in the objects counted. For there are two

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Numerus enim duplex est, unus quidem quo numeramus, alter vero qui in rebus numerabilibus constat.

- 15 Etenim unum res est; unitas, quo unum dicimus. Duo rursus in rebus sunt ut homines vel lapides; dualitas nihil, sed tantum dualitas qua duo homines vel duo lapides fiunt. Et in ceteris eodem modo. Ergo in numero quo numeramus repetitio unitatum
- 20 facit pluralitatem; in rerum vero numero non facit pluralitatem unitatum repetitio, vel si de eodem dicam "gladius unus mucro unus ensis unus." Potest enim unus tot vocabulis gladius agnosci; haec enim unitatum iteratio potius est non nume-
- 25 ratio, velut si ita dicamus "ensis mucro gladius," repetitio quaedam est eiusdem non numeratio diversorum, velut si dicam "sol sol sol," non tres soles effecerim, sed de uno totiens praedicaverim.

- Non igitur si de patre ac filio et spiritu sancto
- 30 tertio praedicatur deus, idcirco trina praedicatio numerum facit. Hoc enim illis ut dictum est imminet qui inter eos distantiam faciunt meritorum. Catholicis vero nihil in differentia constituentibus ipsamque formam ut est esse ponentibus neque aliud
- 35 esse quam est ipsum quod est opinantibus recte repetitio de eodem quam enumeratio diversi videtur esse cum dicitur "deus pater deus filius deus spiritus sanctus atque haec trinitas unus deus," velut "ensis atque mucro unus gladius," velut "sol sol sol
- 40 unus sol."

^a The same words are used to illustrate the same matter in the *Comment. in Arist. περὶ ἐμπνεύσεως*, 2nd ed. (Meiser), 56. 12.

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kinds of number : one with which we count and the other which consists in numerable things. For indeed, " one " is a thing ; " unity " is that by which we call a thing one. Again " two " belongs to the class of things, as men or stones ; but not so duality ; duality is merely that whereby two men or two stones are denoted ; and similarly for the rest. Therefore in the case of that number by which we number, the repetition of ones makes plurality ; but in the number consisting in things the repetition of ones does not make plurality, as, for example, if I say of one and the same thing, " one sword, one brand, one blade."^a For one sword can be recognized in so many words ; for this is rather the iteration of ones, not their numeration, just as if we were to say " sword, brand, blade," this is a sort of repetition of the same thing not a numeration of different things, just as if I were to say " sun sun sun " I should not have produced three suns, but I should have spoken that many times of one thing.

So then if God be predicated thrice, of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the threefold predication does not result in plural number. The risk of that, as has been said, attends only on those who distinguish them according to merit. But Catholic Christians, allowing no difference of merit in God, and positing that form to be as it really is, nor thinking his essence to be other than it is, rightly regard the statement " the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, and this Trinity is one God," not as an enumeration of different things but as a reiteration of one and the same thing, like the statement, " blade and brand are one sword " or " sun, sun, and sun are one sun."

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Sed hoc interim ad eam dictum sit significationem demonstrationemque qua ostenditur non omnem unitatum repetitionem numerum pluralitatemque perficere. Non vero ita dicitur "pater ac filius et spiritus
45 sanctus" quasi multivocum quiddam; nam mucro et ensis et ipse est et idem, pater vero ac filius et spiritus sanctus idem eundem est, non vero ipse. In qua re paulisper considerandum est. Requirentibus enim: "Ipse est pater qui filius?" "Minime," inquit.
50 Rursus: "Idem alter qui alter?" Negatur. Non est igitur inter eos in re omni indifferentia; quare subintrat numerus quem ex subiectorum diversitate confici superius explanatum est. De qua re breviter considerabimus, si prius illud, quem ad modum de
55 deo unum quodque praedicatur, praemiserimus.

IV

Decem omnino praedicamenta traduntur quae de rebus omnibus universaliter praedicantur, id est substantia, qualitas, quantitas, ad aliquid, ubi, quando, habere, situm esse, facere, pati. Haec igitur talia
5 sunt qualia subiecta permiserint; nam pars eorum in reliquarum rerum praedicatione substantia est, pars in accidentium numero est. At haec cum quis in divinam verterit praedicationem, cuncta mutantur quae praedicari possunt. Ad aliquid vero omnino
10 non potest praedicari, nam substantia in illo non est vere substantia sed ultra substantiam; item qualitas et cetera quae venire queunt. Quorum ut amplior fiat intellectus exempla subdenda sunt.

Nam cum dicimus "deus," substantiam quidem

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Let this be enough for the present to establish my meaning and to show that not every repetition of units produces number and plurality. Still in saying "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," we are not using synonymous terms. For "brand and blade" are the same and identical, but "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," though the same, are not identical. This point deserves a moment's consideration. For to those who ask, "Is the Father the same as the Son?" Catholics answer "Not at all." Again: "Is the one the same as the other?" The answer is no. There is not, therefore, complete indifference between them; and so number does come in—number which we explained was the result of diversity of substrates. We will briefly debate this point when we have done examining how particular predicates can be applied to God.

IV

There are in all ten categories which can be universally predicated of all things, namely, Substance, Quality, Quantity, Relation, Place, Time, Condition, Situation, Activity, Passivity. Now these are such as their subjects allow; for some of them denote real substantive attributes of other things, others belong to the class of accidental attributes. But when anyone turns these to predication of God, all the things that can be predicated are changed. Relation, for instance, cannot be predicated at all of God; for substance in Him is not really substantial but super-substantial. So with quality and the other possible attributes, of which we must add examples for the sake of better understanding.

For when we say God, we seem indeed to denote a

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15 significare videmur, sed eam quae sit ultra substantiam ; cum vero " iustus," qualitatem quidem sed non accidentem, sed eam quae sit substantia sed ultra substantiam. Neque enim aliud est quod est, aliud est quod iustus est, sed idem est esse deo quod
20 iusto. Item cum dicitur " magnus vel maximus," quantitatem quidem significare videmur, sed eam quae sit ipsa substantia, talis qualem esse diximus ultra substantiam ; idem est enim esse deo quod magno. De forma enim eius superius monstratum
25 est quoniam is sit forma et unum vere nec ulla pluralitas. Sed haec praedicamenta talia sunt, ut in quo sint ipsum esse faciant quod dicitur, divise quidem in ceteris, in deo vero coniuncte atque copulate hoc modo : nam cum dicimus " substantia " (ut homo vel
30 deus), ita dicitur quasi illud de quo praedicatur ipsum sit substantia, ut substantia homo vel deus. Sed distat, quoniam homo non integre ipsum homo est ac per hoc nec substantia ; quod enim est, aliis debet quae non sunt homo. Deus vero hoc ipsum deus est ;
35 nihil enim aliud est nisi quod est, ac per hoc ipsum deus est. Rursus " iustus," quod est qualitas, ita dicitur quasi ipse hoc sit de quo praedicatur, id est si dicamus " homo iustus vel deus iustus," ipsum hominem vel deum iustos esse proponimus ; sed
40 differt, quod homo alter alter iustus, deus vero idem ipsum est quod est iustum. " Magnus " etiam homo

^a Gilbert de la Porrée in his commentary on the *De Trin.* makes Boethius's meaning clear. " Quod igitur in illo substantiam nominamus, non est subiectionis ratione quod dicitur, sed ultra omnem quae accidentibus est subiecta substantiam est essentia, absque omnibus quae possunt accidere solitaria omnino " (Migne, *P.L.* lxiv. 1283). Cf. *Aug. De Trin.* vii. 10.

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substance ; but it is such as is supersubstantial. When we say of him, " He is just," we do indeed mention a quality, but not an accidental quality—rather such as is substantial and, in fact, supersubstantial.^a For God is not one thing because he is, and another thing because he is just ; with him to be just and to be God are one and the same. So when we say, " He is great or the greatest," we seem indeed to predicate quantity, but it is such as to be the same as this substance which we have declared to be supersubstantial ; for with him to be great and to be God are all one. Again, concerning his form, we have already shown that he is form, and truly one without any plurality. Now the categories we have mentioned are such that they give to the thing to which they are applied the character which they express, in a divided manner in other things, but in God in a conjoined and united manner, in the following way. When we name a substance, as man or God, it is named as though that of which the predication is made were itself substance, as if man or God were substance. But there is a difference : since man is not simply and entirely man, and therefore is not substance after all. For what he is he owes to other things which are not man. But God is simply and entirely God, for he is nothing else than what he is, and therefore is simply God. Again just, which is a quality, is said as though it were that of which it is predicated ; that is, if we were to say " a just man or just God," we are asserting that man or God is just. But there is a difference, for man is one thing, and a just man another. But God himself is identical with the just. So a man or God is said to be great, and it would appear that man himself is great

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vel deus dicitur atque ita quasi ipse sit homo magnus
vel deus magnus ; sed homo tantum magnus, deus
vero ipsum magnus existit. Reliqua vero neque de
45 deo neque de ceteris praedicantur. Nam ubi vel de
homine vel de deo praedicari potest, de homine ut
in foro, de deo ut ubique, sed ita ut non quasi ipsa
sit res id quod praedicatur de qua dicitur. Non
enim ita homo dicitur esse in foro quem ad modum
50 esse albus vel longus nec quasi circumfusus et deter-
minatus proprietate aliqua qua designari secundum
se possit, sed tantum quo sit illud aliis informatum
rebus per hanc praedicationem ostenditur.

De deo vero non ita, nam quod ubique est ita dici
55 videtur non quod in omni sit loco (omnino enim in
loco esse non potest) sed quod omnis ei locus adsit
ad eum capiendum, cum ipse non suscipiatur in loco ;
atque ideo nusquam in loco esse dicitur, quoniam
ubique est sed non in loco. “ Quando ” vero eodem
60 praedicatur modo, ut de homine heri venit, de
deo semper est. Hic quoque non quasi esse aliquid
dicitur illud ipsum de quo hesternus dicitur adventus,
sed quid ei secundum tempus accesserit praedicatur.
Quod vero de deo dicitur “ semper est,” unum
65 quidem significat, quasi omni praeterito fuerit, omni
quoquo modo sit praesenti est, omni futuro erit.
Quod de caelo et de ceteris immortalibus corporibus
secundum philosophos dici potest, at de deo non ita.
Semper enim est, quoniam “ semper ” praesentis est
70 in eo temporis tantumque inter nostrarum rerum

^a *i.e.* according to their substance.

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or that God is great. But man is merely great ; God himself *is* essentially great.

The remaining categories are not predicated of God nor yet of other things.^a For place can be predicated of man or of God—of man as “ in the market-place ” ; of God as “ everywhere ”—but in neither case is the predicate identical with that of which it is predicated. For “ in the market-place ” is not said of a man in the same way as “ white ” or “ tall ” nor so to speak, is he encompassed and determined by some property which enables him to be described in terms of his substance ; this predicate of place simply declares how far his substance is given a particular setting amid other things.

It is otherwise, of course, with God. “ He is everywhere ” seems to mean not that he is in every place, for he cannot be in any place at all—but that every place is present to him for him to occupy, although he himself is not received by any place, and therefore he is said to be nowhere in place, since he is everywhere but not in any place. Now time is predicated in the same way, as, of a man, “ He came yesterday,” of God, “ He ever is.” Here again it is not as if “ he of whom yesterday’s coming is predicated ” is said actually to be something, but what is added to him in terms of time is predicated. But what is said of God, “ ever is,” signifies only one thing, that he was, as it were, in all the past, is in all the present—however that term be used—and will be in all the future. According to the philosophers this may be said of the heavens and of other immortal bodies, but of God it is said in a different way. He is ever, because “ ever ” is with him a term of present time, and there is this great difference

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praesens, quod est nunc, interest ac divinarum, quod nostrum "nunc" quasi currens tempus facit et sempiternitatem, divinum vero "nunc" permanens neque movens sese atque consistens aeternitatem facit; cui
75 nomini si adicias "semper," facies eius quod est nunc iugem indefessumque ac per hoc perpetuum cursum quod est sempiternitas.

Rursus habere vel facere eodem modo; dicimus enim "vestitus currit" de homine, de deo "cuncta
80 possidens regit." Rursus de eo nihil quod est esse de utrisque dictum est, sed haec omnis praedicatio exterioribus datur omniaque haec quodam modo referuntur ad aliud. Cuius praedicationis differentiam sic facilius internoscimus: qui homo est vel
85 deus refertur ad substantiam qua est aliquid, id est homo vel deus; qui iustus est refertur ad qualitatem qua scilicet est aliquid, id est iustus, qui magnus ad quantitatem qua est aliquid, id est magnus. Nam in ceteris praedicationibus nihil tale est. Qui enim
90 dicit esse aliquem in foro vel ubique, refert quidem ad praedicamentum quod est ubi, sed non quo aliquid est velut iustitia iustus. Item cum dico "currit" vel "regit" vel "nunc est" vel "semper est," refertur quidem vel ad facere vel ad tempus—si tamen
95 interim divinum illud semper tempus dici potest—sed non quo aliquo aliquid est velut magnitudine

^a The doctrine is Augustine's, cf. *De Civ. Dei*, xi. 6, xii. 16; but Boethius's use of *sempiternitas*, like his word-building, seems to be peculiar to himself. Claudianus Mamertus, speaking of applying the categories to God, uses *sempiternitas* as Boethius uses *aeternitas*. Cf. *De Statu Animae*, i. 19. Apuleius seems to use both terms interchangeably, e.g. *Asclep.* 29-31. On Boethius's distinction between time and eternity see *Cons.* v, pr. 6, and Rand, *Der*

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between the present of our affairs, which is now, and the divine present: our "now" connotes changing time and sempiternity; but God's "now," abiding, unmoved, and immovable, connotes eternity. If you add *semper* to *eternity*, you will get the flowing, incessant and thereby perpetual course of our present time, that is to say, sempiternity.^a

It is just the same with the categories of condition and activity. For example, we say of a man, "He runs, clothed," of God, "He rules, possessing all things." Here again nothing substantial is asserted of either subject; in fact all this kind of predication arises from what lies outside substance, and all of these predicates refer, so to speak, to something other than substance. And we easily distinguish the difference of this sort of predication in this way: the terms "man" and "God" refer to the substance in virtue of which the subject is—man or God. The term "just" refers to the quality in virtue of which the subject is something, viz. just; the term "great" to the quantity in virtue of which he is something, viz. great. Now in other kinds of predication there is nothing like this. For he who says that someone is in the market or everywhere, is surely referring to the category of place, but not to anything by reason of which he is something, as he is just in virtue of justice. So when I say, "he runs, he rules, he is now, he is ever," reference is surely made to activity or time—if indeed God's "ever" can be described as time—but not to anything in virtue of which he is something, as he is great in virtue of greatness.

dem B. zugeschr. Trakt. de fide, pp. 425 ff., and Brandt in *Theol. Litzg.*, 1902, p. 147.

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magnum. Nam situm passionemque requiri in deo non oportet, neque enim sunt.

Iamne patet quae sit differentia praedicationum ?
100 Quod aliae quidem quasi rem monstrant aliae vero quasi circumstantias rei; quodque illa quae ita praedicantur, ut esse aliquid rem ostendant, illa vero ut non esse, sed potius extrinsecus aliquid quodam modo affigant. Illa igitur, quae aliquid esse designant,
105 secundum rem praedicationes vocentur. Quae cum de rebus subiectis dicuntur, vocantur accidentia secundum rem ; cum vero de deo qui subiectus non est, secundum substantiam rei praedicatio nuncupatur.

V

Age nunc de relativis speculemur pro quibus omne quod dictum est sumpsimus ad disputationem ; maxime enim haec non videntur secundum se facere praedicationem quae perspicue ex alieno adventu
5 constare perspiciuntur. Age enim, quoniam dominus ac servus relativa sunt, videamus utrumne ita sit ut secundum se sit praedicatio an minime. Atqui si auferas servum, abstuleris et dominum ; at non etiam si auferas albedinem, abstuleris quoque album, sed
10 interest, quod albedo accidit albo, qua sublata perit nimirum album. At in domino, si servum auferas,

^a *Dominus* and *servus* are similarly used as illustration, *In Cat.* (Migne, *P.L.* lxiv. 217).

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Finally, we must not look for the categories of situation and passivity in God, for they simply are not to be found in him.

Have I now made clear the difference between the kinds of predication? Because one set points, as it were, to the thing, the other set to the circumstances of the thing; and because those things which are predicated in the first way point to a thing as being something, but the others do not point to it as being something, but rather in some way attach something external to it. Those which describe a thing as being something may be called objective predications; when they are said of things as subjects they are called objective accidents. But when they are said of God, who is not a subject at all, it is called predication according to the substance.

V

Let us now consider relationships to which all the foregoing remarks have been preliminary; for these especially, which are clearly seen to exist because of something else coming in, do not seem to produce predication by themselves. For instance, since master and slave^a are relative terms, let us see whether either of them is such that it is a predication by itself or not. But if you suppressed the term slave, you would simultaneously suppress the term master. On the other hand, though you suppressed the term whiteness, you would not suppress some white thing, though the fact is important that whiteness belongs as an accident to a white thing, and when it is removed, obviously the white thing ceases to be a white thing. But in the case of master, if you sup-

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perit vocabulum quo dominus vocabatur ; sed non
accidit servus domino ut albedo albo, sed potestas
quaedam qua servus coercetur. Quae quoniam sublato
15 deperit servo, constat non eam per se domino accidere
sed per servorum quodam modo extrinsecus accessum.

Non igitur dici potest praedicationem relativam
quidquam rei de qua dicitur secundum se vel addere
vel minuere vel mutare. Quae tota non in eo quod
20 est esse consistit, sed in eo quod est in comparatione
aliquo modo se habere, nec semper ad aliud sed
aliquotiens ad idem. Age enim stet quisquam. Ei
igitur si accedam dexter, erit ille sinister ad me
comparatus, non quod ille ipse sinister sit, sed quod
25 ego dexter accesserim. Rursus ego sinister accedo,
item ille fit dexter, non quod ita sit per se dexter
velut albus ac longus, sed quod me accedente fit
dexter atque id quod est a me et ex me est, minime
vero ex sese.

30 Quare quae secundum rei alicuius in eo quod ipsa
est proprietatem non faciunt praedicationem, nihil
alternare vel mutare queunt nullamque omnino
variare essentiam. Quocirca si pater ac filius ad
aliquid dicuntur nihilque aliud ut dictum est diffe-
35 runt nisi sola relatione, relatio vero non praedicatur
ad id de quo praedicatur quasi ipsa sit et secundum
rem de qua dicitur, non faciet alteritatem rerum de
qua dicitur, sed, si dici potest, quo quidem modo id
quod vix intelligi potuit interpretatum est, persona-

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press the term slave, the term by which he was called master disappears. But slave is not an accidental quality of master, as whiteness is of a white thing ; that accidental quality is a certain power by which the slave is coerced. Now since that power goes when the slave is removed, it is plain that it does not belong as an accident to the master by itself, but because of the accession of slaves, which is as it were external.

It cannot therefore be affirmed that predication of relationship by itself adds or takes away or changes anything in the thing of which it is said. It wholly consists not in that which is simply being, but in that which is being in some way in comparison, not always with another thing but sometimes with itself. For suppose a man standing. If I go up to him on the right and stand beside him, he will be left, in comparison with me, not because he is left in himself, but because I have come up to him on the right. Again, if I come up to him on the left, he becomes right, not because he is right in himself, as he may be white or tall, but because he becomes right in virtue of my approach, and what he is depends entirely on me, and not in the least on himself.

Accordingly those things which do not produce predication according to the essential property of a thing cannot alter, change, or disturb any essence in any way. Wherefore if father and son are predicates of relation, and, as we have said, have no other difference but that of relation, but relation is not predicated with reference to that of which it is predicated as if it were the thing itself and objectively predicated of it, it will not imply an otherness of the things of which it is said, but, in a phrase which aims at interpreting what we could hardly understand, an

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40 rum. Omnino enim magna regulae est veritas in
rebus incorporalibus distantias effici differentiis non
locis. Neque accessisse dici potest aliquid deo, ut
pater fieret; non enim coepit esse umquam pater
eo quod substantialis quidem ei est productio filii,
45 relativa vero praedicatio patris. Ac si meminimus
omnium in prioribus de deo sententiarum, ita cogi-
temus processisse quidem ex deo patre filium deum
et ex utrisque spiritum sanctum; hos, quoniam in-
corporales sint, minime locis distare. Quoniam vero
50 pater deus et filius deus et spiritus sanctus deus, deus
vero nullas habet differentias quibus differat ab deo,
a nullo eorum differt. Differentiae vero ubi absunt,
abest pluralitas; ubi abest pluralitas, adest unitas.
Nihil autem aliud gigni potuit ex deo nisi deus; et
55 in rebus numerabilibus repetitio unitatum non facit
modis omnibus pluralitatem. Trium igitur idonee
constituta est unitas.

VI

Sed quoniam nulla relatio ad se ipsum referri
potest, idcirco quod ea secundum se ipsum est prae-
dicatio quae relatione caret, facta quidem est trinita-
tis numerositas in eo quod est praedicatio relationis,
5 servata vero unitas in eo quod est indifferentia vel
substantiae vel operationis vel omnino eius quae se-
cundum se dicitur praedicationis. Ita igitur sub-
stantia continet unitatem, relatio multiplicat trini-
28

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otherness of persons. For there is indeed great truth in the rule that distinctions in incorporeal things are established by differences and not by spatial separation. It cannot be said that any accident was added to God, that he might become the Father; for he never began to be Father, since the begetting of the Son belongs to his very substance; however, the predication of father, as such, is relative. And if we bear in mind all the propositions made concerning God in the previous discussion, let us consider that God the Son proceeded from God the Father, and the Holy Ghost from both, and that they cannot possibly be spatially different, since they are incorporeal. But since the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, but God has no differences distinguishing him from God, he differs from none of the others. But where there are no differences there is no plurality; where there is no plurality there is unity. Again, nothing but God could be begotten of God, and lastly, in concrete enumerations the repetition of units does not in any way produce plurality. Thus the Unity of the Three is suitably established.

VI

But since no relation can be related to itself, inasmuch as one which makes a predicate by itself is a predication which lacks relation, the manifoldness of the Trinity is produced in the fact that it is predication of a relation, and the unity is preserved through the fact that there is no difference of substance, or operation, or generally of that kind of predication which is made on its own. So then, the substance preserves the unity, the relation makes

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tatem ; atque ideo sola singillatim proferuntur atque
10 separatim quae relationis sunt. Nam idem pater qui
filius non est nec idem uterque qui spiritus sanctus.
Idem tamen deus est pater et filius et spiritus sanctus,
idem iustus idem bonus idem magnus idem omnia
quae secundum se poterunt praedicari. Sane scien-
15 dum est non semper talem esse relativam praedi-
cationem, ut semper ad differens praedicetur, ut est
servus ad dominum ; differunt enim. Nam omne
aequale aequali aequale est et simile simili simile
est et idem ei quod est idem idem est ; et similis
20 est ratio in trinitate patris ad filium et utriusque
ad spiritum sanctum ut eius quod est idem ad id
quod est idem. Quod si id in cunctis aliis rebus
non potest inveniri, facit hoc cognata caducis rebus
alteritas. Nos vero nulla imaginatione diduci sed
25 simplici intellectu erigi et ut quidque intellegi potest
ita aggredi etiam intellectu oportet.

Sed de proposita quaestione satis dictum est.
Nunc vestri normam iudicii exspectat subtilitas quae-
stionis ; quae utrum recte decursa sit an minime,
30 vestrae statuet pronuntiationis auctoritas. Quod si
sententiae fidei fundamentis sponte firmissimae opitu-
lante gratia divina idonea argumentorum adiumenta
praestitimus, illuc perfecti operis laetitia remeabit
unde venit effectus. Quod si ultra se humanitas
35 nequivit ascendere, quantum inbecillitas subtrahit
vota supplebunt.

^a Cf. *Cons.* v, pr. 4 and 5, especially in pr. 5 the passage
“ quare in illius summae intelligentiae acumen si possumus
erigamur ” (page 418).

DE TRINITATE

up the Trinity. Hence only terms belonging to relation may be applied singly and separately. For the Father is not the same as the Son, nor is either of them the same as the Holy Spirit. Yet Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the same God, the same in justice, in goodness, in greatness, and in everything that can be predicated by itself. One must not forget that relative predication is not always such that it is always predicated with reference to something different, as slave is with reference to master ; for they are different. For equals are equal, likes are like, identicals are identical, each with other ; and the relation in the Trinity of Father to Son, and of both to Holy Spirit is like a relation of identicals. But if a relation of this kind cannot be found in all other things, this is because of the otherness natural to all perishable, transitory objects. But we ought not to be led astray by any imagination, but raised up by pure understanding and, so far as anything can be understood, thus far also we should approach it with our understanding.^a

But enough has now been said of the question which was proposed. The subtle reasoning of the argument awaits the standard of your judgement ; the authority of your verdict will decide whether it has been run through on a straight course or not. If, the grace of God helping me, I have furnished some fitting support in argument to an article which stands quite firmly by itself on the foundation of Faith, the joy felt for the finished work will flow back to the source whence its effecting came. But if human nature has failed to reach beyond its limits, whatever my weakness takes away, my prayers will make up.

ANICII MANLII SEVERINI BOETHII

V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. PATRICII

AD IOHANNEM DIACONUM

UTRUM PATER ET FILIUS ET SPIRITUS SANCTUS DE DIVINITATE SUBSTAN- TIALITER PRAEDICENTUR

Quaero an pater et filius ac spiritus sanctus de divinitate substantialiter praedicentur an alio quolibet modo ; viamque indaginis hinc arbitror esse sumendam, unde rerum omnium manifestum constat exordium, id est ab ipsis catholicae fidei fundamentis. Si 5 igitur interrogem, an qui dicitur pater substantia sit, respondetur esse substantia. Quod si quaeram, an filius substantia sit, idem dicitur. Spiritum quoque sanctum substantiam esse nemo dubitaverit. Sed cum 10 rursus colligo patrem filium spiritum sanctum, non plures sed una occurrit esse substantia. Una igitur substantia trium nec separari ullo modo aut disiungi potest nec velut partibus in unum coniuncta est, sed est una simpliciter. Quaecumque igitur de divina 15 substantia praedicantur, ea tribus oportet esse communia ; idque signi erit quae sint quae de divinitatis

ANICIUS MANLIUS SEVERINUS
BOETHIUS

MOST HONOURABLE, OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF
EX-CONSULS, PATRICIAN

TO JOHN THE DEACON

WHETHER FATHER, SON, AND HOLY
SPIRIT ARE SUBSTANTIALLY PRE-
DICATED OF THE DIVINITY

I ASK whether Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are predicated of the divinity substantially or in any other way. And I think that the method of our inquiry must be borrowed from what is admittedly the surest source of all truth, namely, the fundamental doctrines of the catholic faith. If, then, I ask whether he who is called the Father is a substance, the answer is that he is a substance. And if I ask whether the Son is a substance, the reply is the same. So, too, no one would doubt that the Holy Spirit is also a substance. But when, on the other hand, I take together Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the result is not several substances but one substance. The one substance of the Three, then, cannot be separated in any way or divided, nor is it combined into one as if from parts: it is simply one. Everything, therefore, that is predicated of the divine substance must be common to the Three, and this will be a sign of what sort of thing

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substantia praedicentur, quod quaecumque hoc modo dicuntur, de singulis in unum collectis tribus singulariter praedicabuntur. Hoc modo si dicimus :
20 " Pater deus est, filius deus est, spiritus sanctus deus est," pater filius ac spiritus sanctus unus deus. Si igitur eorum una deitas una substantia est, licet dei nomen de divinitate substantialiter praedicari.

Ita pater veritas est, filius veritas est, spiritus
25 sanctus veritas est ; pater filius et spiritus sanctus non tres veritates sed una veritas est. Si igitur una in his substantia una est veritas, necesse est veritatem substantialiter praedicari. De bonitate de incommutabilitate de iustitia de omnipotentia ac de ceteris
30 omnibus quae tam de singulis quam de omnibus singulariter praedicamus manifestum est substantialiter dici. Unde apparet ea quae cum in singulis separatim dici convenit nec tamen in omnibus dici queunt, non substantialiter praedicari sed alio modo ;
35 qui vero iste sit, posterius quaeram. Nam qui pater est, hoc vocabulum non transmittit ad filium neque ad spiritum sanctum. Quo fit ut non sit substantiale nomen hoc inditum ; nam si substantiale esset, ut deus ut veritas ut iustitia ut ipsa quoque substantia,
40 de ceteris diceretur.

Item filius solus hoc recipit nomen neque cum aliis iungit sicut in deo, sicut in veritate, sicut in ceteris quae superius dixi. Spiritus quoque non est idem qui pater ac filius. Ex his igitur intellegimus
45 patrem ac filium ac spiritum sanctum non de ipsa divinitate substantialiter dici sed alio quodam modo ;

^a *i.e. personaliter* (Ioh. Scottus *ad loc.*).

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is predicated of the substance of the divinity, that all those things which are said of it in this way will also be predicated severally of each of the Three combined into one. For instance if we say "the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God," then Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God. If then their one godhead is one substance, the name of God may with right be predicated substantially of the divinity.

Similarly the Father is truth, the Son is truth, and the Holy Spirit is truth ; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three truths, but one truth. If, then, the one substance in them is one truth, truth must of necessity be predicated substantially. So goodness, immutability, justice, omnipotence and all the other things which we predicate of the Persons singly and collectively are plainly said of them substantially. Hence it appears that what may be predicated of each single one but cannot be said of all is not predicated substantially, but in some other way ; in what way I shall enquire presently. For he who is Father does not transmit this name to the Son nor to the Holy Spirit. Hence it follows that this name is not attached to him as something substantial ; for if it were substantial, as God, truth, justice, or substance itself, it would be affirmed of the other Persons.

Similarly the Son alone receives this name ; nor does he associate it with the other Persons, as in the case of the titles God, truth, and the other predicates which I have already mentioned. The Spirit too is not the same as the Father and the Son. From these things, then, we understand that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not predicated of the divinity in a substantial manner, but in some other way.^a For if

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si enim substantialiter praedicaretur, et de singulis
et de omnibus singulariter diceretur. Haec vero ad
aliquid dici manifestum est ; nam et pater alicuius
50 pater est et filius alicuius filius est, spiritus alicuius
spiritus. Quo fit, ut ne trinitas quidem substantia-
liter de deo praedicetur ; non enim pater trinitas
(qui enim pater est, filius ac spiritus sanctus non
est) nec trinitas filius nec trinitas spiritus sanctus
55 secundum eundem modum, sed trinitas quidem in
personarum pluralitate consistit, unitas vero in
substantiae simplicitate.

Quod si personae divisae sunt, substantia vero
indivisa sit, necesse est quod vocabulum ex personis
60 originem capit id ad substantiam non pertinere ; at
trinitatem personarum diversitas fecit, trinitas igitur
non pertinet ad substantiam. Quo fit ut neque
pater neque filius neque spiritus sanctus neque trinitas
de deo substantialiter praedicetur, sed ut dictum est
65 ad aliquid. Deus vero veritas iustitia bonitas omni-
potentia substantia immutabilitas virtus sapientia et
quicquid huiusmodi excogitari potest substantialiter
de divinitate dicuntur. Haec si se recte et ex fide
70 diversus es, diligentius intuere quae dicta sunt et
fidem si poterit rationemque coniunge.

^a *i.e. sed personaliter* (Ioh. Scottus *ad loc.*).

^b *Vide supra*, Introduction, p. xiv.

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each term were predicated substantially it would be affirmed of the three Persons both separately and collectively. It is evident that these terms are relative, for the Father is some one's Father, the Son is some one's Son, the Spirit is some one's Spirit. Hence not even Trinity is predicated substantially^a of God ; for the Father is not Trinity—since he who is Father is not Son and Holy Spirit—nor yet, by parity of reasoning, is the Son Trinity nor the Holy Spirit Trinity, but the Trinity consists in plurality of Persons, the unity in simplicity of substance.

Now if the Persons are separate, while the substance is undivided, it must needs be that that term which is derived from Persons does not belong to Substance. But the diversity of Persons makes the Trinity, wherefore Trinity does not belong to substance. Hence neither Father, nor Son, nor Holy Spirit, nor Trinity is predicated substantially of God, but only relatively, as we have said. But God, truth, justice, goodness, omnipotence, substance, immutability, virtue, wisdom and all other conceivable predicates of the kind are said of the divinity substantially.

If these things are right and in accordance with the Faith, I pray you confirm me ; or if you are in any point of another opinion, examine carefully what has been said, and if possible, reconcile faith and reason.^b

ITEM EIUDEM

AD EUNDEM

QUOMODO SUBSTANTIAE IN EO QUOD
SINT BONAE SINT CUM NON SINT
SUBSTANTIALIA BONA

Postulas, ut ex Hebdomadibus nostris eius quaestio-
nis obscuritatem quae continet modum quo sub-
stantiae in eo quod sint bonae sint, cum non sint
substantialia bona, digeram et paulo evidentius mon-
5 stem ; idque eo dicis esse faciendum, quod non sit
omnibus notum iter huiusmodi scriptionum. Tuus
vero testis ipse sum quam haec vivaciter fueris ante
complexus. Hebdomadas vero ego mihi ipse commen-
tor potiusque ad memoriam meam speculata conservo
10 quam cuiquam participo quorum lascivia ac petulantia
nihil a ioco risuque patitur esse seiunctum.¹ Prohinc
tu ne sis obscuritatibus brevitatis adversus, quae cum
sint arcani fida custodia tum id habent commodi, quod
cum his solis qui digni sunt conloquuntur. Ut igitur

¹ seiunct. *Rand* ; coniunct. *the best mss.* ; disiunct. *vulg.*,
Vallinus.

^a "Groups of Seven." Similarly Porphyry divided the
works of Plotinus into six *Enneades* or groups of nine.

FROM THE SAME
TO THE SAME

HOW SUBSTANCES ARE GOOD IN VIRTUE OF THEIR EXISTENCE WITHOUT BEING SUBSTANTIAL GOODS

You ask me to state and explain somewhat more clearly that obscure question in my *Hebdomads*^a concerning the manner in which substances are good in virtue of existence without being substantial goods.^b You urge that this demonstration is necessary because the method of this kind of treatise is not clear to all. I can bear witness with what eagerness you have already attacked the subject. But I think over my *Hebdomads* with myself, and I keep my speculations in my own memory rather than share them with any of those pert and frivolous persons who will not tolerate an argument unless it is made amusing. Wherefore do not you take objection to obscurities consequent on brevity, which are the sure treasure-house of secret doctrine and have the advantage that they speak only with those who are worthy. I have

^b Cf. discussion on the nature of good in *Cons.* iii, m. 10 and pr. 11 (*infra*, pp. 284 ff.).

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15 in mathematica fieri solet ceterisque etiam disciplinis,
praeposui terminos regulasque quibus cuncta quae
sequuntur efficiam.

I. Communis animi conceptio est enuntiatio quam
quisque probat auditam. Harum duplex modus est.
20 Nam una ita communis est, ut omnium sit hominum,
veluti si hanc proponas: "Si duobus aequalibus
aequalia auferas, quae relinquuntur aequalia esse,"
nullus id intellegens neget. Alia vero est doctorum
tantum, quae tamen ex talibus communibus animi
25 conceptionibus venit, ut est: "Quae incorporalia
sunt, in loco non esse," et cetera; quae non vulgus
sed docti comprobant.

II. Diversum est esse et id quod est; ipsum enim
esse nondum est, at vero quod est accepta essendi
30 forma est atque consistit.

III. Quod est participare aliquo potest, sed ipsum
esse nullo modo aliquo participat. Fit enim partici-
patio cum aliquid iam est; est autem aliquid, cum
esse susceperit.

35 IV. Id quod est habere aliquid praeterquam quod
ipsum est potest; ipsum vero esse nihil aliud praeter
se habet admixtum.

V. Diversum est tantum esse aliquid et esse
aliquid in eo quod est; illic enim accidens hic
40 substantia significatur.

^a On this mathematical method of exposition cf. *Cons.*
iii, pr. 10 (*infra*, p. 281).

^b *Esse* = Aristotle's τὸ εἶναι; *id quod est* = τὸ τί.

^c *Consistere* = ὑποστέλλειν.

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therefore followed the example of the mathematical ^a and cognate sciences and laid down bounds and rules according to which I shall develop all that follows.

I. A common conception of the mind is a statement which anyone accepts as soon as he hears it. Of these there are two kinds. For one is common in that all men possess it ; as, for instance, if you say, " If you take equals from two equals, the remainders are equal." Nobody who grasps that would deny it. But the other kind is intelligible only to the learned, though it is derived from the same class of common conceptions ; as " Things which are incorporeal are not in space," and the like ; these conceptions are approved as obvious to the learned but not to the common herd.

II. Being and the thing that is ^b are different. For simple being awaits manifestation, but the thing that is is and exists as soon as it has received the form which gives it being. ^c

III. What is, can participate in something, but simple being does not participate in any way in anything. For participation is effected when something already is ; but something is, when it has acquired being.

IV. That which is can possess something besides what it is itself. But simple being has no admixture of aught besides itself.

V. Merely to be something and to be something in virtue of existence are different ; the former signifies an accident, the latter a substance.

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VI. Omne quod est¹ participat eo quod est esse ut sit ; alio vero participat ut aliquid sit. Ac per hoc id quod est participat eo quod est esse ut sit ; est vero ut participet alio quolibet.

45 VII. Omne simplex esse suum et id quod est unum habet.

VIII. Omni composito aliud est esse, aliud ipsum est.

IX. Omnis diversitas discors, similitudo vero
50 appetenda est ; et quod appetit aliud, tale ipsum esse naturaliter ostenditur quale est illud hoc ipsum quod appetit.

Sufficiunt igitur quae praemisimus ; a prudente vero rationis interprete suis unumquodque aptabitur
55 argumentis.

Quaestio vero huiusmodi est. Ea quae sunt bona sunt ; tenet enim communis sententia doctorum omne quod est ad bonum tendere, omne autem tendit ad simile. Quae igitur ad bonum tendunt
60 bona ipsa sunt. Sed quemadmodum bona sint, inquirendum est, utrumne participatione an substantia ? Si participatione, per se ipsa nullo modo bona sunt ; nam quod participatione album est, per se in eo quod ipsum est album non est. Et de ceteris qualitatibus
65 eodem modo. Si igitur participatione sunt bona, ipsa per se nullo modo bona sunt : non igitur ad bonum tendunt. Sed concessum est. Non igitur participatione sunt bona sed substantia. Quorum vero substantia bona est, id quod sunt bona sunt ;

¹ est omitted by the best MSS.

^a Id quod est esse = τὸ εἶναι.

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VI. Everything that is participates in absolute being ^a in order to exist; but it participates in something else in order to be something. Hence that which is participates in absolute being in order to exist, but it exists in order to participate in something else.

VII. Every simple thing possesses as a unity its existence and its particular being.

VIII. In every composite thing existence is one thing, its particular being is another.

IX. All diversity repels, likeness must be attracted. That which seeks something else is demonstrably of the same nature as that which it seeks.

These preliminaries are enough then for our purpose. The intelligent interpreter of the discussion will supply the arguments appropriate to each point.

Now the problem is this. Things which are, are good. For the common opinion of the learned holds that everything that is tends to good and everything tends to its like. Therefore things which tend to good are themselves good. We must, however, inquire how they are good—by participation or by substance. If by participation, they are in no wise good in themselves; for a thing which is white by participation is not white in itself by virtue of its own being. So with all other qualities. If then they are good by participation, they are in no way good in themselves; therefore they do not tend to good. But we have agreed that they do. Therefore they are good not by participation but by substance. But of those things whose substance is good the particular

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70 id quod sunt autem habent ex eo quod est esse.
Esse igitur ipsorum bonum est ; omnium igitur rerum
ipsum esse bonum est. Sed si esse bonum est, ea
quae sunt in eo quod sunt bona sunt idemque illis
est esse quod boni esse ; substantialia igitur bona
75 sunt, quoniam non participant bonitatem. Quod si
ipsum esse in eis bonum est, non est dubium quin
substantialia cum sint bona, primo sint bono similia
ac per hoc ipsum bonum erunt ; nihil enim illi
praeter se ipsum simile est. Ex quo fit ut omnia
80 quae sunt deus sint, quod dictu nefas est. Non
sunt igitur substantialia bona ac per hoc non in his
est esse bonum ; non sunt igitur in eo quod sunt
bona. Sed nec participant bonitatem ; nullo enim
modo ad bonum tenderent. Nullo modo igitur sunt
85 bona.

Huic quaestioni talis poterit adhiberi solutio.
Multa sunt quae cum separari actu non possunt,
animo tamen et cogitatione separantur ; ut cum
triangulum vel cetera a subiecta materia nullus actu
90 separat, mente tamen segregans ipsum triangulum
proprietaemque eius praeter materiam speculatur.
Amoveamus igitur primi boni praesentiam paulisper
ex animo, quod esse quidem constat idque ex omnium
doctorum indoctorumque sententia barbararumque
95 gentium religionibus cognosci potest. Hoc igitur
paulisper amoto ponamus omnia esse quae sunt bona
atque ea consideremus quemadmodum bona esse
possent, si a primo bono minime defluxissent. Hinc

^a Cf. the similar *reductio ad absurdum* in Tr. 5 (*infra*, p. 100).

^b *Vide supra*, p. 7, n. c.

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being is good. But they owe their particular being to absolute being. Their existence therefore is good ; therefore mere existence of all things is good. But if their existence is good, things which exist are good in virtue of their existence, and their existence is the same as the existence of the good. Therefore they are substantial goods, since they do not participate in goodness. But if the particular being in them is good, there is no doubt but that since they are substantial goods, they are like the first good, and thereby they will be that good itself ; for nothing is like it save itself. Hence all things that are, are God—an impious assertion. Wherefore they are not substantial goods, and so there is not in them good existence ; therefore they are not good in virtue of their existence. But neither do they participate in goodness ; for they would in no wise tend to good. Therefore they are in no wise good.^a

This problem will admit of the following solution.^b There are many things which are separated by a mental process, though they cannot be separated in fact. No one, for instance, actually separates a triangle or other mathematical figure from the underlying matter ; but separating it mentally one considers the triangle itself and its properties apart from matter. Let us therefore remove from the mind for a moment the presence of the first good, which it is certainly agreed exists, as can be known from the opinion of all men, learned and unlearned, and from the religious beliefs of savage races. This having been thus for a moment removed, let us postulate that all things that are good exist, and let us consider how they could possibly be good if they did not derive from the first good. This leads me to perceive

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intueor aliud in eis esse quod bona sunt, aliud quod
100 sunt. Ponatur enim una eademque substantia bona
esse alba, gravis, rotunda. Tunc aliud esset ipsa illa
substantia, aliud eius rotunditas, aliud color, aliud
bonitas ; nam si haec singula idem essent quod ipsa
substantia, idem esset gravitas quod color, <color>¹
105 quod bonum et bonum quod gravitas—quod fieri
natura non sinit. Aliud igitur tunc in eis esset esse,
aliud aliquid esse, ac tunc bona quidem essent, esse
tamen ipsum minime haberent bonum. Igitur si ullo
modo essent, non a bono ac bona essent ac non idem
110 essent quod bona, sed eis aliud esset esse aliud bonis
esse. Quod si nihil omnino aliud essent nisi bona
neque gravia neque colorata neque spatii dimensione
distenta nec ulla in eis qualitas esset, nisi tantum
bona essent, tunc non res sed rerum viderentur esse
115 principium nec potius viderentur, sed videretur ;
unum enim solumque est huiusmodi, quod tantum
bonum aliudque nihil sit. Quae quoniam non sunt
simplicia, nec esse omnino poterant, nisi ea id quod
solum bonum est esse voluisset. Idcirco quoniam
120 esse eorum a boni voluntate defluxit, bona esse
dicuntur. Primum enim bonum, quoniam est, in eo
quod est bonum est ; secundum vero bonum, quoniam
ex eo fluxit cuius ipsum esse bonum est, ipsum quo-
que bonum est. Sed ipsum esse omnium rerum ex eo
125 fluxit quod est primum bonum et quod bonum tale est

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that their goodness and their existence are two different things. For let us suppose that one and the same good substance is white, heavy and round. Then its particular substance, its roundness, colour and goodness would all be different things. For if each of these qualities were the same as its particular substance, weight would be the same thing as colour, colour as goodness, and goodness as weight—which is contrary to nature. Then in that case existence in them would be one thing, their particular being another, and then they would be good, but they would not have their particular being good. Therefore if they existed in any way, they would not be from the good and so good, and they would not be the same because good, but for them existence would be one thing, being good another. But if they were nothing else at all except good, and were neither heavy nor coloured nor extended in a spatial dimension, and there were in them no quality save only that they were good, then they (or rather it) would seem to be not things but the principle of things ; for there is one thing alone of this kind, that is only good and nothing else. But since they are not simple, they could not even exist at all unless that which is the one sole good had willed them to exist. They are called good simply because their existence has derived from the will of the good. For the first good, since it exists, is good in virtue of its existence ; but the secondary good, since it has derived from that whose existence is itself good, is itself also good. But the particular being of all things has derived from that which is the first good and which is such a

¹ <color> *supplied by Tester.*

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ut recte dicatur in eo quod est esse bonum. Ipsum igitur eorum esse bonum est ; tunc enim in eo.

Qua in re soluta quaestio est. Idcirco enim licet in eo quod sint bona sint, non sunt tamen similia
130 primo bono, quoniam non quoquo modo sint res ipsum esse earum bonum est, sed quoniam non potest esse ipsum esse rerum, nisi a primo esse deflexerit, id est bono ; idcirco ipsum esse bonum est nec est simile ei a quo est. Illud enim quoquo modo
135 sit bonum est in eo quod est ; non enim aliud est praeterquam bonum. Hoc autem nisi ab illo esset, bonum fortasse esse posset, sed bonum in eo quod est esse non posset. Tunc enim participaret forsitan bono ; ipsum vero esse quod non haberent a bono,
140 bonum habere non possent. Igitur sublato ab his bono primo mente et cogitatione, ista licet essent bona, tamen in eo quod essent bona esse non possent, et quoniam actu non potuere existere, nisi illud ea quod vere bonum est produxisset, idcirco et esse
145 eorum bonum est et non est simile substantiali bono id quod ab eo fluxit ; et nisi ab eo fluxissent, licet essent bona, tamen in eo quod sunt bona esse non possent, quoniam et praeter bonum et non ex bono essent, cum illud ipsum bonum primum [est]¹ et ipsum
150 esse sit et ipsum bonum et ipsum esse bonum. At non etiam alba in eo quod sunt alba esse oportebit ea quae alba sunt, quoniam ex voluntate dei fluxerunt

¹ [est] *deleted by Tester.*

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good that it is rightly said to be good in virtue of its existence. Therefore their particular being is good ; for then it is in the first good.

Thereby the problem is solved. For though they are good in virtue of their existence, they are not therefore like the first good, since their particular being is not good under all circumstances, but because the particular being of things cannot exist unless it has derived from the first being, that is, the good ; therefore their particular being is good, but it is not like that from which it derives. For that is good in any conditions in virtue of its existence ; for it is nothing else than good. But if the former were not derived from that good, it could perhaps be good, but it could not be good in virtue of its existence. For in that case it might perhaps participate in the good ; but their particular being, which such things would not have from the good, they could not have as good. Therefore, the first good being removed from these things by a mental process, these things, though they might be good, yet could not be good in virtue of their existence, and since they could not actually have existed unless that which is truly good had produced them, therefore their existence is good and yet that which has derived from the substantial good is not like its source ; and unless they had derived from it, though they were good yet they could not be good in virtue of their existence, since they would be both apart from the good and not derived from it, while that very first good is existence itself and good itself and good existence itself. But will not those things which are white also have to be white in virtue of their being white, since they have derived from the will of God that they should be

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ut essent alba? Minime. Aliud est enim esse, aliud
albis esse ; hoc ideo, quoniam qui ea ut essent effecit
155 bonus quidem est, minime vero albus. Voluntatem
igitur boni comitatum est ut essent bona in eo quod
sunt ; voluntatem vero non albi non est comitata
talis eius quod est proprietas ut esset album in eo
quod est ; neque enim ex albi voluntate defluerunt.
160 Itaque quia voluit esse ea alba qui erat non albus,
sunt alba tantum ; quia vero voluit ea esse bona qui
erat bonus, sunt bona in eo quod sunt. Secundum
hanc igitur rationem cuncta oportet esse iusta,
quoniam ipse iustus est qui ea esse voluit ? Ne hoc
165 quidem. Nam bonum esse essentiam, iustum vero
esse actum respicit. Idem autem est in eo esse
quod agere ; idem igitur bonum esse quod iustum.
Nobis vero non est idem esse quod agere ; non enim
simplices sumus. Non est igitur nobis idem bonis
170 esse quod iustis, sed idem nobis est esse omnibus in
eo quod sumus. Bona igitur omnia sunt, non etiam
iusta. Amplius bonum quidem generale est, iustum
vero speciale nec species descendit in omnia. Idcirco
alia quidem iusta alia aliud omnia bona.

QUOMODO SUBSTANTIAE

white? By no means. For existence is one thing, their being white is another; and that because he who produced them so that they existed is indeed good, but certainly not white. It is therefore in accordance with the will of the good that they should be good in virtue of their existence; but that which is a property of a thing like whiteness is not in accordance with the will of him who is not white, that it should be white in virtue of its existence; for such things have not derived from the will of one who is white. And so they are white simply because one who was not white willed them to be white; but because he willed them to be good who was good, they are good in virtue of their existence. Ought, then, according to this reasoning, all things to be just, since he himself is just who willed them to exist? That is not so either. For being good refers to essence, being just, to action. But in him being and acting are the same; and therefore being good is the same as being just. But for us being is not the same as acting; for we are not simple. Therefore being good is not the same for us as being just, but being is the same for all of us in virtue of our existence. Therefore all things are good, but not also just. Moreover, good is a genus, but just is a species, and this species does not apply to all. Therefore some things are just, others are something else, but all things are good.

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Christianam fidem novi ac veteris testamenti pandit auctoritas ; et quamvis nomen ipsum Christi vetus intra semet continuerit instrumentum eumque semper signaverit affuturum quem credimus per partum virginis iam venisse, tamen in orbem terrarum ab ipsius nostri salvatoris mirabili manasse probatur adventu.

Haec autem religio nostra, quae vocatur christiana atque catholica, his fundamentis principaliter nititur asserens : ex aeterno, id est ante mundi constitutionem, ante omne videlicet quod temporis potest retinere vocabulum, divinam patris et filii ac spiritus sancti exstitisse substantiam, ita ut deum dicat patrem, deum filium, deum spiritum sanctum, nec tamen tres deos sed unum : patrem itaque habere filium ex sua substantia genitum et sibi nota ratione coaeternum, quem filium eatenus confitetur, ut non sit idem qui pater est : neque patrem aliquando fuisse filium, ne rursus in infinitum humanus animus divinam progeniem cogitaret, neque filium in eadem

^a The conclusions adverse to the genuineness of this tractate, reached in the dissertation *Der dem Boethius zugeschriebene Traktat de Fide Catholica* (*Jahrbücher für kl. Phil.* xxvi (1901), Supplementband) by one of the editors, now seem to both unsound. This fourth tractate, though lacking, in the best mss., either an ascription to Boethius or a title, is firmly imbedded in two distinct recensions of Boethius's theological works. There is no reason to disturb it. Indeed

ON THE CATHOLIC FAITH^a

THE Christian Faith is proclaimed by the authority of the New Testament and of the Old ; but although the Old scripture^b contains within its pages the name of Christ and constantly gives token that he will come who we believe has already come by his birth of the Virgin, yet the diffusion of that faith throughout the world dates from the actual miraculous coming of our Saviour.

Now this our religion which is called Christian and Catholic is supported chiefly on these foundations which it asserts : From eternity, that is, before the establishment of the world, before all, that is, that can be given the name of time, there has existed the divine substance of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in such wise that our religion calls the Father God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God, and yet not three Gods but one. Thus the Father has the Son, begotten of his substance and coeternal with himself after a manner that he alone knows. Him we confess to be Son in the sense that he is not the same as the Father. Nor has the Father ever been Son, so the human mind must not imagine a divine lineage the *capita dogmatica* mentioned by Cassiodorus can hardly refer to any of the tractates except the fourth.

^b For *instrumentum*=Holy Scripture *cf.* Tertull. *Apol.* 18, 19, *Adv. Hermog.* 19, etc. ; for *instrumentum*=any historical writing *cf.* Tert. *De Spect.* 5.

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natura qua patri coaeternus est aliquando fieri patrem, ne rursus in infinitum divina progenies tenderetur: sanctum vero spiritum neque patrem esse neque filium atque ideo in illa natura nec
25 genitum nec generantem sed a patre quoque procedentem vel filio; qui sit tamen processione istius modus ita non possumus evidenter dicere, quemadmodum generationem filii ex paterna substantia non potest humanus animus aestimare. Haec autem ut
30 credantur vetus ac nova informat instructio. De qua velut arce religionis nostrae multi diversa et humaniter atque ut ita dicam carnaliter sentientes adversa locuti sunt, ut Arrius qui licet deum dicat filium, minorem tamen patre multipliciter et extra
35 patris substantiam confitetur. Sabelliani quoque non tres existentes personas sed unam ausi sunt affirmare, eundem dicentes patrem esse qui filius est eundemque filium qui pater est atque spiritum sanctum eundem esse qui pater et filius est; ac per
40 hoc unam dicunt esse personam sub vocabulorum diversitate signatam.

Manichaei quoque qui duo principia sibi coaeterna et adversa profitentur, unigenitum dei esse non credunt. Indignum enim iudicant, si deus habere
45 filium vidéatur, nihil aliud cogitantes nisi carnaliter, ut quia haec generatio duorum corporum commixtione procedit, illic quoque indignum esse intellectum huiusmodi applicare; quae res eos nec vetus facit

^a Boethius is no heretic. By the sixth century *vel* had often no separative force. Cp. "Noe cum sua vel trium natorum coniugibus," Greg. Tur. *H.F.* i. 20. Other examples in Bonnet, *La Latinité de Grég. de Tours*, p. 313, and in Brandt's edition of the *Isag.* Index, s.v. *vel*.

^b *Vide Cons.* i, pr. 3 (*infra*, p. 142), and cf. Dante, *De Mon.* iii. 16. 117.

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stretching back into infinity ; nor does the Son, being of the same nature in virtue of which he is coeternal with the Father, ever become Father, so that the divine lineage might not stretch again into infinity. But the Holy Spirit is neither Father nor Son, and therefore, albeit of the same nature, neither begotten, nor begetting, but proceeding as well from the Father as the Son.^a Yet what the manner of that procession is we are not able to state clearly just as the human mind is unable to understand the generation of the Son from the substance of the Father. But these articles are laid down for our belief by the teaching of the Old and New Testaments. Concerning which citadel,^b as it were, of our religion many men have spoken in a hostile way, having different opinions based on human and, so to speak, carnal feelings. Arius, for instance, who, while calling the Son God, declares him to be in various ways inferior to the Father and of another substance. The Sabellians also have dared to affirm that there are not three separate Persons but only one, saying that the Father is the same as the Son and the Son the same as the Father and the Holy Spirit the same as the Father and the Son ; and so they declare that there is but one Person signified under the diversity of names.

The Manichaeans, too, who profess two coeternal and contrary principles, do not believe in the only-begotten Son of God. For they consider it unworthy of God that he should be thought to have a Son, their thinking being only on a carnal level, as that since human generation arises from the mingling of two bodies, in the case of God also it is unworthy to apply a notion of this sort ; whereas their view finds

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- recipere testamentum neque in integro novum.
- 50 Nam sicut illud omnino error eorum non recipit ita ex virgine generationem filii non vult admittere, ne humano corpore polluta videatur dei fuisse natura. Sed de his hactenus ; suo enim loco ponentur sicut ordo necessarius postularit.
- 55 Ergo divina ex aeterno natura et in aeternum sine aliqua mutabilitate perdurans sibi tantum conscia voluntate sponte mundum voluit fabricare eumque cum omnino non esset fecit ut esset, nec ex sua substantia protulit, ne divinus natura crederetur,
- 60 neque aliunde molitus est, ne iam exstitisse aliquid quod eius voluntatem existentia propriae naturae iuvaret atque esset quod neque ab ipso factum esset et tamen esset ; sed verbo produxit caelos, terram creavit, ita ut caelesti habitatione dignas caelo
- 65 naturas efficeret ac terrae terrena componeret. De caelestibus autem naturis, quae universaliter vocatur angelica, quamvis illic distinctis ordinibus pulchra sint omnia, pars tamen quaedam plus appetens quam ei natura atque ipsius auctor naturae tribuerat de
- 70 caelesti sede proiecta est ; et quoniam angelorum numerum, id est supernae illius civitatis cuius cives angeli sunt, imminutum noluit conditor permanere, formavit ex terra hominem atque spiritu vitae animavit, ratione composuit, arbitrii libertate decoravit

^a *In integro* = *prorsus* ; cf. Brandt, *op. cit.* Index, s.v. *integer*.

^b The doctrine is orthodox, but note that Boethius does not say *ex nihilo creavit*.

^c *Vide infra*, *Cons.* iv, pr. 6, p. 360 l. 54.

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no authority in the Old Testament and absolutely ^a none in the New. Yea, their error which altogether refuses this notion will also not admit the generation of the Son from a virgin, lest the nature of God seem to have been polluted by the human body. But enough of this for the present ; the points will be presented in the proper place as the proper arrangement demands.

The divine nature then, abiding from eternity and unto eternity without any change, by the exercise of a will known only to himself, determined of himself to fashion the world, and brought it into being when it was absolutely naught, nor did he produce it from his own substance, lest it should be thought divine by nature, nor did he set about it after any model, lest it should be thought that anything had already come into being which might help his will by the existence of an independent nature, and that there existed something that had not been made by him and yet existed ; but by his word he brought forth the heavens, and created the earth ^b that so he might make natures worthy of a heavenly place for the heavens, and also fit earthly things to earth. But although in heaven all things are beautiful and arranged in due order, yet one part of the heavenly creation which is universally termed angelic, ^c seeking more than their nature and the author of that nature had granted them, was cast forth from its heavenly seat ; and because the Creator did not wish the number of the angels, that is of that heavenly city whose citizens the angels are, to remain diminished, he formed man out of the earth and breathed into him the breath of life ; he endowed him with reason, he adorned him with freedom of choice and estab-

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75 eumque praefixa lege paradisi deliciis constituit, ut,
si sine peccato manere vellet, tam ipsum quam eius
progeniem angelicis coetibus sociaret, ut quia superior
natura per superbiae malum ima petierat, inferior
substantia per humilitatis bonum ad superna con-
80 scenderet. Sed ille auctor invidiae non ferens
hominem illuc ascendere ubi ipse non meruit per-
manere, temptatione adhibita fecit etiam ipsum
eiusque comparem, quam de eius latere generandi
causa formator produxerat, inoboedientiae suppliciiis
85 subiacere, ei quoque divinitatem affuturam pro-
mittens, quam sibi dum arroganter usurpat elisus
est. Haec autem revelante deo Moysi famulo suo
comperta sunt, cui etiam humani generis conditionem
atque originem voluit innotescere, sicut ab eo libri
90 prolati testantur. Omnis enim divina auctoritas his
modis constare videtur, ut aut historialis modus sit,
qui nihil aliud nisi res gestas enuntiet, aut allegoricus,
ut non illic possit historiae ordo consistere, aut certe
ex utrisque compositus, ut et secundum historiam et
95 secundum allegoriam manere videatur. Haec autem
pie intelligentibus et veraci corde tenentibus satis
abundeque relucet. Sed ad ordinem redeamus.

Primus itaque homo ante peccatum cum sua con-
iuge incola paradisi fuit. At ubi aurem praebuit
100 suasori et conditoris praeceptum neglexit attendere,
exul effectus, terram iussus excolere atque a paradisi
sinu seclusus in ignotis partibus sui generis posteri-
tatem transposuit atque poenam quam ipse primus
homo praevaricationis reus exceperat generando
105 transmisit in posteros. Hinc factum est ut et cor-

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lished him in the joys of Paradise, establishing the law beforehand that if he would remain without sin he would add him and his offspring to the angelic hosts ; so that as the higher nature had fallen low through the evil of pride, the lower substance might ascend on high through the good of humility. But the father of envy, loath that man should climb to the place where *he himself did not deserve to remain*, put temptation before him and his consort, whom the Creator had brought forth out of his side for the continuance of the race, and laid them open to punishment for disobedience, promising man also the gift of Godhead, the arrogant attempt to seize which had caused his expulsion. All this was revealed by God to his servant Moses, whom he vouchsafed to teach the creation and origin of mankind, as the books written by him declare. For the divine authority seems always to be conveyed in these ways—the historical, which simply announces facts ; the allegorical, which is such that historical order cannot be preserved in it ; or else the two combined, such that it seems to be established both according to history and according to allegory. All this is abundantly clear to pious hearers and steadfast believers.

But let us return to the order of our discourse ; the first man, before sin came, dwelt with his consort in Paradise. But when he gave ear to the persuader and failed to keep the commandment of his Creator, he was banished, bidden to till the ground, and being shut out from the shelter of Paradise he carried abroad in unknown regions the children of his race ; in begetting whom he transmitted to those that came after, the punishment which he, the first man, had incurred by being guilty of his transgression. Hence

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porum atque animarum corruptio et mortis proveniret interitus primusque mortem in Abel filio suo meruit experiri, ut quanta esset poena quam ipse exceperit probaret in subole. Quod si ipse primus moreretur, 110 nesciret quodam modo ac, si dici fas est, nec sentiret poenam suam, sed ideo expertus in altero est, ut quid sibi iure deberetur contemptor agnosceret et dum poenam mortis sustinet, ipsa expectatione fortius torqueretur. Hoc autem praevaricationis 115 malum, quod in posteros naturaliter primus homo transfuderat, quidam Pelagius non admittens proprii nominis haeresim dedicavit, quam catholica fides a consortio sui mox reppulisse probatur. Ab ipso itaque primo homine procedens humanum genus ac 120 multiplici numerositate succrescens erupit in lites, commovit bella, occupavit terrenam miseriam quia¹ felicitatem paradisi in primo patre perdiderat. Nec tamen ex his defuerunt quos sibi conditor gratiae sequestraret eiusque placitis inservirent; quos licet 125 meritum naturae damnaret, futuri tamen sacramenti et longe postmodum proferendi faciendo participes perditam voluit reparare naturam. Impletus est ergo mundus humano genere atque ingressus est homo vias suas qui malitia propriae contumaciae 130 despexerat conditorem. Hinc volens deus per iustum potius hominem reparare genus humanum quam manere protervum, poenalem multitudinem effusa diluvii inundatione excepto Noe iusto homine

¹ qui *or* quod *MSS.*

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it came to pass that corruption both of their bodies and souls ensued, and the destruction which is death ; and he was the first to deserve to experience death in his own son Abel, in order that he might learn through his child the greatness of the punishment that he himself was to receive. For if he had died first he would in some sense not have known, and if one may so say not have felt, his punishment ; but he tasted it in another in order that he might perceive the due reward of his contempt, and doomed to death himself, might be the more powerfully tormented by the apprehension of it. But this evil of transgression which the first man had by natural propagation transmitted to posterity, was denied by one Pelagius who so set up the heresy which goes by his name and which the Catholic faith, as is known, at once banished from its bosom. So the human race that sprang from the first man and mightily increased and multiplied, broke into strife, stirred up wars, and became the heir of earthly misery, because it had lost the blessedness of Paradise in its first parent. Yet among them there were not lacking those whom the Author of Grace set apart for himself and who were obedient to his precepts ; and though the fault of their nature condemned them, yet God by making them partakers in the mystery to come, long afterwards to be revealed, vouchsafed to restore their fallen nature. So the world was filled by the human race and man who in the wickedness of his own arrogant disobedience had despised his Creator began to walk in his own ways. Hence God willing rather to restore mankind through one just man than that it should remain contumacious, suffered all the guilty multitude to perish by the wide waters of a flood, save only Noah, the just man, with his children

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cum suis liberis atque his quae secum in arcam intro-
 135 duxerat interire permisit. Cur autem per arcae
 lignum voluerit iustos eripere, notum est divinarum
 scripturarum mentibus eruditis. Et quasi prima
 quaedam mundi aetas diluvio ultore transacta est.

Reparatur itaque humanum genus atque propriae
 140 naturae vitium, quod praevaricationis primus auctor
 infuderat, amplecti non destitit. Crevitque con-
 tumacia quam dudum diluvii unda puniverat et qui
 numerosam annorum seriem permissus fuerat vivere,
 in brevitate annorum humana aetas addicta est.

145 Maluitque deus non iam diluvio punire genus
 humanum, sed eodem permanente eligere viros per
 quorum seriem aliqua generatio commearret, ex qua
 nobis filium proprium vestitum humano corpore
 mundi in fine concederet. Quorum primus est

150 Abraham, qui cum esset aetate confectus eiusque
 uxor decrepita, in senectute sua repromissionis
 largitione habere filium meruerunt. Hic vocatus
 est Isaac atque ipse genuit Iacob. Idem quoque
 duodecim patriarchas non reputante deo in eorum

155 numero quos more suo natura produxerat. Hic ergo
 Iacob cum filiis ac domo sua transigendi causa
 Aegyptum voluit habitare atque illic per annorum
 seriem multitudo concrescens coeperunt suspitioni
 esse¹ Aegyptiacis imperiis eosque Pharaeo magna

160 ponderum mole premi decreverat et gravibus oneri-
 bus affligebat. Tandem deus Aegyptii regis domina-
 tionem despiciens diviso mari rubro, quod numquam

¹ suspiciones or suspicione or suspicio or subici *the better MSS.*

^a e.g. Ishmael also *κατὰ σάρκα γεγέννηται*, Gal. iv. 23.

^b Cf. "populus dei mirabiliter crescens... quia... erant
 suspecta... laboribus premebatur," Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, xviii. 7.
 For other coincidences see Rand, *op. cit.* pp. 423 ff.

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and all that he had brought with him into the ark. The reason why he wished to save the just by the wood of the ark is known to all minds learned in the Holy Scriptures. Thus what we may call the first age of the world was ended by the avenging flood.

Thus the human race is restored, and yet it does not cease to embrace the vice of its own nature with which the first author of transgression had infected it. And the arrogance increased which had once been punished by the waters of the flood, and man who had been suffered to live for a long series of years was reduced to the brief span of ordinary human life. Yet would not God again punish mankind by a flood, but rather, letting it continue, he chose from it men of whose line a generation should arise out of which he might in the last age of the world grant us his own Son, clothed in a human body. Of these men Abraham is the first, and although he was stricken in years and his wife very old, they had in their old age the reward of a son in fulfilment of a promise. This son was named Isaac and he begat Jacob, who in his turn begat the Twelve Patriarchs, God not reckoning in their number those whom nature in its ordinary course produced.^a This Jacob, then, together with his sons and his household determined to dwell in Egypt for the purpose of trafficking ; and the multitude of them increasing there in the course of many years began to be a cause of suspicion to the Egyptian rulers, and Pharaoh ordered them to be oppressed by exceeding heavy tasks ^b and afflicted them with grievous burdens. At length God, minded to set at naught the tyranny of the king of Egypt, divided the Red Sea—a marvel such as nature had never known before—and led across his host under

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antea natura ulla cognoverat, suum transduxit exercitum auctore Moyses et Aaron. Postea igitur pro
165 eorum egressione altis Aegyptus plagis vastata est, cum nollet dimittere populum. Transmisso itaque ut dictum est mari rubro venit per deserta eremi ad montem qui vocatur Sinai, ibique universorum conditor deus volens sacramenti futuri gratia populos
170 erudire per Moysen data lege constituit, quemadmodum et sacrificiorum ritus et populorum mores instruerentur. Et cum multis annis multas quoque gentes per viam debellassent, venerunt tandem ad fluvium qui vocatur Iordanis duce iam Iesu Nave
175 filio atque ad eorum transitum quemadmodum aquae maris rubri ita quoque Iordanis fluenta siccata sunt; perventumque est ad eam civitatem quae nunc Hierosolyma vocatur. Atque dum ibi dei populus moraretur, post iudices et prophetas reges instituti
180 leguntur, quorum post Saulem primatum David de tribu Iuda legitur adeptus fuisse. Descendit itaque ab eo per singulas successiones regium stemma perductumque est usque ad Herodis tempora, qui primus ex gentilibus memoratis populis legitur
185 imperasse. Sub quo exstitit beata virgo Maria quae de Davidica stirpe provenerat, quae humani generis genuit conditorem. Hoc autem ideo quia multis infectus criminibus mundus iacebat in morte, electa est una gens in qua dei mandata clarescerent, ibique
190 missi prophetae sunt et alii sancti viri per quorum admonitionem ipse certe populus a tumore pervicaciae revocaretur. Illi vero eosdem occidentes in suae nequitiae perversitate manere voluerunt.

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the authority of Moses and Aaron. Thereafter to achieve their departure Egypt was laid waste with sore plagues, because they would not let the people go. So, after crossing the Red Sea, as I have told, they came through the desert of the wilderness to the mount which is called Sinai, where God the Creator of all, wishing to prepare the nations for the sake of the mystery to come, laid down by a law given through Moses how both the rites of sacrifices and the national customs should be ordered. And after fighting down many tribes in many years amidst their journeyings they came at last to the river called Jordan, with Joshua the son of Nun now as their captain, and, for their crossing, the streams of Jordan were dried up as the waters of the Red Sea had been ; so they finished their course to that city which is now called Jerusalem. And while the people of God abode there we read that there were set up first judges and prophets and then kings, of whom we read that after Saul the first king, David of the tribe of Judah ascended the throne. So from him the royal race descended from father to son and lasted till the days of Herod who, we read, was the first taken out of the peoples called Gentile to bear sway. In whose days rose up the blessed Virgin Mary, sprung from the stock of David, she who bore the Maker of the human race. But it was just because the world lay in death, stained with its many sins, that one race was chosen in which the commands of God might shine clear ; to it prophets and other holy men were sent, to the end that by their warnings that people at least might be called back from their swollen obstinacy. But they slew these holy men and chose rather to abide in the perversity of their own wickedness.

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Atque iam in ultimis temporibus non prophetas
195 neque alios sibi placitos sed ipsum unigenitum suum
deus per virginem nasci constituit, ut humana salus
quae per primi hominis inoboedientiam deperierat
per hominem deum rursus repararetur et quia
exstiterat mulier quae causam mortis prima viro
200 suaserat, esset haec secunda mulier quae vitae
causam humanis visceribus apportaret. Nec vile
videatur quod dei filius ex virgine natus est, quoniam
praeter naturae modum conceptus et editus est.
Virgo itaque de spiritu sancto incarnatum dei filium
205 concepit, virgo peperit, post eius editionem virgo
permansit; atque hominis factus est idemque dei
filius, ita ut in eo et divinae naturae radiaret splendor
et humanae fragilitatis appareret assumptio. Sed
huic tam sanae atque veracissimae fidei exstiterant
210 multi qui diversa garrissent et praeter alios Nestorius
et Eutyches repertoires haereseos exstiterunt, quorum
unus hominem solum, alter deum solum putavit
asserere nec humanum corpus quod Christus induerat
de humanae substantiae participatione venisse. Sed
215 haec hactenus.

Crevit itaque secundum carnem Christus, baptizatus
est, ut qui baptizandi formam erat ceteris tributurus,
ipse primus quod docebat exciperet. Post baptismum
vero elegit duodecim discipulos, quorum unus traditor
220 eius fuit. Et quia sanam doctrinam Iudaeorum
populus non ferebat, eum inlata manu crucis sup-
66

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And now at the last days of time, in place of prophets and other men well-pleasing to him, God decreed that his only-begotten Son himself should be born of a virgin that so the salvation of mankind which had been lost through the disobedience of the first man might be restored again by the God-man, and that inasmuch as it was a woman who had first persuaded a man to that which brought death there should be this second woman who should carry in a human womb him who brings life. Nor let it be deemed a thing unworthy that the Son of God was born of a virgin, for it was out of the course of nature that he was conceived and brought to birth. Virgin then she conceived, by the Holy Spirit, the incarnate Son of God, virgin she bore him, virgin she continued after his birth ; and he became the Son of Man and likewise the Son of God that in him the glory of the divine nature might shine forth and at the same time his assumption of human weakness be made clear. Yet against this article of faith so wholesome and altogether true there rose up many who babbled other doctrine, and especially Nestorius and Eutyches, inventors of heresy, arose, of whom the one thought fit to say that he was man alone, the other that he was God alone and that the human body which Christ put on had not come by participation in human substance. But enough on this point.

So Christ grew after the flesh, and was baptized in order that he who was to give the form of baptism to others should first himself receive what he taught. But after his baptism he chose twelve disciples, one of whom was his betrayer. And because the people of the Jews would not bear sound doctrine they laid hands upon him and destroyed him with the torment

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plicio peremerunt. Occiditur ergo Christus, iacet
tribus diebus ac noctibus in sepulcro, resurgit a
mortuis, sicut ante constitutionem mundi ipse cum
225 patre decreverat, ascendit in caelos ubi, in eo quod
dei filius est, numquam defuisse cognoscitur, ut
assumptum hominem, quem diabolus non permiserat
ad superna conscendere, secum dei filius caelesti
habitationi sustolleret. Dat ergo formam discipulis
230 suis baptizandi, docendi salutaria, efficientiam quoque
miraculorum atque in universum mundum ad vitam
praecipit introire, ut praedicatio salutaris non iam in
una tantum gente sed orbi terrarum praedicaretur.
Et quoniam humanum genus naturae merito, quam
235 ex primo praevaricatore contraxerat, aeternae poenae
iaculis fuerat vulneratum nec salutis suae erat
idoneum, quod eam in parente perdiderat, medici-
nalia quaedam tribuit sacramenta, ut agnosceret
aliud sibi deberi per naturae meritum, aliud per
240 gratiae donum, ut natura nihil aliud nisi poenae
submitteret, gratia vero, quae nullis meritis attributa
est, quia nec gratia diceretur si meritis tribueretur,
totum quod est salutis afferret.

Diffunditur ergo per mundum caelestis illa
245 doctrina, adunantur populi, instituuntur ecclesiae,
fit unum corpus quod mundi latitudinem occuparet,
cuius caput Christus ascendit in caelos, ut necessario
caput suum membra sequerentur. Haec itaque
doctrina et praesentem vitam bonis informat operibus

DE FIDE CATHOLICA

of the cross. Christ, then, is slain ; he lies three days and three nights in the tomb ; he rises again from the dead as he had predetermined with his Father before the foundation of the world ; he ascends into heaven whence we know that he was never absent, because he is Son of God, in order that as Son of God he might raise together with him to the heavenly habitation man whose flesh he had assumed, whom the devil had hindered from ascending to the places on high. Therefore he bestowed on his disciples the form of baptizing, and of teaching saving truth, and the power to work miracles, and bade them go throughout the whole world to give it life, in order that the message of salvation might be preached no longer in one nation only but to the whole world. And because the human race was wounded by the darts of eternal punishment by the fault of the nature which it had inherited from the first transgressor and was not fitted for its salvation because it had lost it in its first parent, he instituted certain health-giving sacraments that mankind might recognize that one thing was due to it through the fault of nature, but another thing through the gift of grace, nature simply subjecting to punishment, but grace, which is not won by any merits, since it would not be called grace if it were due to merits, conferring all that belongs to salvation.

Therefore is that heavenly instruction spread throughout the world, the peoples are knit together, churches are founded, and, filling the broad earth, one body formed, whose head, even Christ, ascended into heaven in order that the members might of necessity follow their head. Thus this teaching both instructs this present life in good works, and pro-

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250 et post consummationem saeculi resurrectura corpora
nostra praeter corruptionem ad regna caelestia
pollicetur, ita ut qui hic bene ipso donante vixerit,
esset in illa resurrectione beatissimus, qui vero male,
miser post munus resurrectionis adesset. Et hoc est
255 principale religionis nostrae, ut credat non solum
animas non perire, sed ipsa quoque corpora, quae
mortis adventus resolverat, in statum pristinum
futura de beatitudine reparari. Haec ergo ecclesia
catholica per orbem diffusa tribus modis probatur
260 exsistere : quidquid in ea tenetur, aut auctoritas est
scripturarum aut traditio universalis aut certe pro-
pria et particularis instructio. Sed auctoritate tota
constringitur, universali traditione maiorum nihilo-
minus tota, privatis vero constitutionibus et propriis
265 informationibus unaquaeque vel pro locorum varietate
vel prout cuique bene visum est subsistit et regitur.
Sola ergo nunc est fidelium expectatio qua credimus
affuturum finem mundi, omnia corruptibilia trans-
itura, resurrecturos homines ad examen futuri iudicii,
270 recepturos pro meritis singulos et in perpetuum atque
in aeternum debitis finibus permansuros ; solumque
esse praemium beatitudinis contemplationem condi-
toris—tanta dumtaxat, quanta a creatura ad crea-
torem fieri potest,—ut ex eis reparato angelico
numero superna illa civitas impleatur, ubi rex est
275 virginis filius eritque gaudium sempiternum, delec-
tatio, cibus, opus, laus perpetua creatoris.

DE FIDE CATHOLICA

mises that after the end of the world our bodies shall rise incorruptible to the kingdom of heaven, to the end that he who has lived well on earth by God's gift should be altogether blessed in that resurrection, but he who has lived amiss should, with the gift of resurrection, enter upon misery. And this is a firm principle of our religion, to believe not only that men's souls do not perish, but that their very bodies, which the coming of death had destroyed, are restored to their first state through the blessedness that is to be. This Catholic church, then, spread throughout the world, is known to exist by three marks : whatever is believed in it has the authority of the Scriptures, or of universal tradition, or at least of its own and proper teaching. And the whole church is bound by that authority, as is the whole church no less by the universal tradition of the Fathers, while each separate church exists and is governed by its private constitution and its proper rites according to difference of locality and the approval of each. There is therefore now but one expectation of the faithful by which we believe that the end of the world will come, that all corruptible things shall pass away, that men shall rise for the test of the judgement to come, that each shall receive reward according to his deserts and abide in the lot assigned to him perpetually and eternally ; and that the sole reward of blessedness is the contemplation of the Creator, so far, that is, as the creature may look on the Creator, to the end that the number of the angels may be restored from these and that heavenly city filled where the Virgin's Son is King and where will be everlasting joy, delight, food, labour, and unending praise of the Creator.

ANICII MANLII SEVERINI BOETHII

V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. PATRICII

INCIPIT LIBER

CONTRA EUTYCHEN ET
NESTORIUM

DOMINO SANCTO AC VENERABILI PATRI IOHANNI
DIACONO BOETHIUS FILIUS

Anxie te quidem diuque sustinui, ut de ea quae
in conventu mota est quaestione loqueremur. Sed
quoniam et tu quominus venires occupatione dis-
tractus es et ego in crastinum constitutis negotiis
5 implicabor, mando litteris quae coram loquenda
servaveram. Meministi enim, cum in concilio
legeretur epistola, recitatum Eutychianos ex duabus
naturis Christum consistere confiteri, in duabus
negare: catholicos vero utrique dicto fidem prae-
10 bere, nam et ex duabus eum naturis consistere
et in duabus apud verae fidei sectatores aequaliter
credi. Cuius dicti novitate percussus harum coniunc-

^a Evidently the letter addressed to Pope Symmachus by the Oriental bishops (*vide* Mansi, *Concil.* viii. 221 ff.), in which they inquire concerning the safe middle way between the heresies of Eutyches and Nestorius. The date of the

A TREATISE AGAINST EUTYCHES AND NESTORIUS

BY

ANICIUS MANLIUS SEVERINUS
BOETHIUS

MOST HONOURABLE, OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF
EX-CONSULS, PATRICIAN

TO HIS SAINTLY MASTER AND REVEREND FATHER
JOHN THE DEACON HIS SON BOETHIUS

I HAVE been long and anxiously waiting for you that we might discuss the problem which was raised at the meeting. But since *your* duties have prevented your coming and *I* shall be for some time involved in my business engagements, I am setting down in writing what I had been keeping to say by word of mouth.

Now you remember how, when the letter ^a was read in the assembly, it was read out that the Eutychians confess that Christ is formed from two natures but does not consist of them, but that Catholics give credence to both propositions, for among followers of the true Faith he is equally believed to be of two natures and in two natures. Struck

bishops' letter, and consequently, in all probability, of Boethius's tractate was 512.

BOETHIUS

tionum quae ex duabus naturis vel in duabus consisterent differentias inquirebam, multum scilicet referre
15 ratus nec inerti negligentia praetereundum, quod episcopus scriptor epistolae tamquam valde necessarium praeterire nolisset. Hic omnes apertam esse differentiam nec quicquam in eo esse caliginis inconditum confusumque strepere nec ullus in tanto
20 tumultu qui leviter attingeret quaestionem, nedum qui expediret inventus est.

Adsederam ego ab eo quem maxime intueri cupiebam longius atque adeo, si situm sedentium recorderis, aversus pluribusque oppositis, ne si aegerrime quidem
25 cuperem, vultum nutumque eius aspicere poteram ex quo mihi aliqua eius darentur signa iudicii. Atqui ego quidem nihil ceteris amplius afferebam, immo vero aliquid etiam minus. Nam de re proposita aequè nihil ceteris sentiebam ; minus vero quam ceteri ipse
30 afferebam, falsae scilicet scientiae praesumptionem. Tuli aegerrime, fateor, compressusque indoctorum grege conticui metuens ne iure viderer insanus, si sanus inter furiosos haberi contenderem. Meditabar igitur dehinc omnes animo quaestiones nec deglutiebam
35 quod acceperam, sed frequentis consilii iteratione ruminabam. Tandem igitur patuere pulsanti animo fores et veritas inventa quaerenti omnes nebulas Eutychiani reclusit erroris. Unde mihi maxime subiit admirari, quaenam haec indoctorum hominum

^a Obviously his father-in-law Symmachus. *Vide* p. 76, *eius cuius soleo iudicio*, etc.

^b *Cf. Hor. Serm.* i. 3. 82 ; ii. 3. 40.

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by the novelty of this assertion I began to inquire into the differences between unions formed from two natures and unions which consist in two natures, for the point which the bishop who wrote the letter refused to pass over because of its gravity, seemed to me of importance and not one to be idly and carelessly slurred over. On that occasion all loudly protested that the difference was evident, that there was in this matter no obscurity, confusion or perplexity, and in the general storm and tumult there was found no one who really touched the edge of the problem, much less anyone who solved it.

I was sitting a long way from the man whom I especially wished to watch,^a and if you recall the arrangement of the seats, I was turned away from him, with so many between us, that however much I desired it I could not see his face and expression and glean therefrom any sign of his opinion. Personally, indeed, I had nothing more to contribute than the rest, in fact rather somewhat less. For, about the question at issue my feelings in no way coincided with the others'; but my own contribution was less than theirs in that it did not imply a false assumption of knowledge. I was, I admit, much put out, and being overwhelmed by the mob of ignorant speakers, I held my peace, fearing lest I should be rightly set down as insane if I held out for being sane among those madmen.^b So I continued to ponder all the questions in my mind, not swallowing what I had heard, but rather *chewing the cud of constant meditation*. At last the door opened to my mind's knocking, and the truth which I found in my inquiry disclosed all the fogs of the Eutychnian error. And with this discovery a great wonder came upon me at the vast temerity of

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40 esset audacia qui inscientiae vitium praesumptionis
atque inpudentiae nube conentur obducere, cum non
modo saepe id quod proponatur ignorent, verum in
huiusmodi contentionibus ne id quidem quod ipsi
loquantur intellegant, quasi non deterior fiat in-
45 scientiae causa, dum tegitur.

Sed ab illis ad te transeo, cui hoc quantumcumque
est examinandum prius perpendendumque transmitto.
Quod si recte se habere pronuntiaveris, peto ut mei
nominis hoc quoque inseras chartis; sin vero vel
50 minuendum aliquid vel addendum vel aliqua muta-
tione variandum est, id quoque postulo remitti, meis
exemplaribus ita ut a te revertitur transcribendum.
Quae ubi ad calcem ducta constiterint, tum demum
eius cuius soleo iudicio censenda transmittam. Sed
55 quoniam semel res a conlocutione transfertur ad stilum,
prius extremi sibi que contrarii Nestorii atque Eutyichis
summoveantur errores; post vero adiuvante deo,
Christianae medietatem fidei temperabo. Quoniam
vero in tota quaestione contrariarum sibimet *αἰπέσσω*
60 de personis dubitatur atque naturis, haec primitus
definienda sunt et propriis differentiis segreganda.

I

Natura igitur aut de solis corporibus dici potest
aut de solis substantiis, id est corporeis atque incor-
poreis, aut de omnibus rebus quae quocumque modo
esse dicuntur. Cum igitur tribus modis natura dici

^a Cf. *infra*, de *Cons.* i, pr. 4 (p. 144): *oportet vulnus de-
tegas.*

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unlearned men who seek with a cloud of impudent presumption to cover up the vice of ignorance, for not only do they often fail to grasp the point at issue, but in debates of this kind they do not even understand their own statements, as if the cause of ignorance is not made worse when it is covered up.^a

I turn from them to you, and to you I submit this little essay for your first consideration and judgement. If you pronounce it to be sound I beg you to place it among the other writings of mine ; but if there is anything to be struck out or added or changed in any way, I would ask you to let me have your suggestions, in order that I may enter them in my copies just as they come back from you. When this revision has been duly accomplished, then I will send the work on to be judged by the man to whom I always submit everything.^b But since the pen is now to take the place of the living voice, let there first be cleared away the extreme and self-contradictory errors of Nestorius and Eutyches ; after that, by God's help, I will set out in order the middle way of the Christian Faith. But since in this whole question of self-contradictory heresies the matter of debate is persons and natures, these terms must first be defined and distinguished by their proper differences.

I

Nature, then, may be predicated either of bodies alone or of substances alone, that is, of corporeals and incorporeals, or of all things which are said to exist in any way at all. Since, then, nature can be predicated in three ways, it must obviously be defined in

^b *Vide supra*, p. 75, and *De Trin.* p. 3.

BOETHIUS

5 possit, tribus modis sine dubio definienda est. Nam si de omnibus rebus naturam dici placet, talis definitio dabitur quae res omnes quae sunt possit includere. Erit ergo huiusmodi: "natura est earum rerum quae, cum sint, quoquo modo intellectu capi pos-

10 sunt." In hac igitur definitione et accidentia et substantiae definiuntur; haec enim omnia intellectu capi possunt. Additum vero est "quoquo modo," quoniam deus et materia integro perfectoque intellectu intelligi non possunt, sed aliquo tamen

15 modo ceterarum rerum privatione capiuntur. Idcirco vero adiunximus "quae cum sint," quoniam etiam ipsum nihil significat aliquid sed non naturam. Neque enim quod sit aliquid sed potius non esse significat; omnis vero natura est. Et si de omnibus

20 quidem rebus naturam dici placet, haec sit naturae definitio quam superius proposuimus. Sin vero de solis substantiis natura dicitur, quoniam substantiae omnes aut corporeae sunt aut incorporeae, dabimus, definitionem naturae substantias significanti huius-

25 modi: "natura est vel quod facere vel quod pati possit." "Pati" quidem ac "facere," ut omnia corporea atque corporeorum anima; haec enim in corpore et a corpore et facit et patitur. "Facere" vero tantum ut deus ceteraque divina. Habes igitur

30 definitionem eius quoque significationis naturae quae tantum substantiis applicatur. Qua in re substantiae quoque est reddita definitio. Nam si nomen naturae substantiam monstrat, cum naturam descripsimus

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three ways. For if you choose to predicate nature of all things, a definition will be given of such a kind as to be able to include all things that are. It will accordingly be something of this kind: "Nature belongs to those things which, since they exist, can in some way be apprehended by the intellect." This definition, then, includes the definition of both accidents and substances, for they all can be apprehended by the intellect. But I add "in some way" because God and matter cannot be apprehended by the intellect, be it never so whole and perfect, but still they are apprehended in some way through the removal of other things. The reason we add the words, "since they exist," is that even the word "nothing" itself signifies something, though not nature. For it signifies, indeed, not that something is, but rather non-existence; but every nature exists. And if we choose to predicate nature of all things, the definition will be as we have given it above.

But if nature is predicated of substances alone, we shall, since all substances are either corporeal or incorporeal, give to nature signifying substances a definition of the following kind: "Nature is either that which can act or that which can be acted upon." On the one hand, be acted upon and act, as all corporeals and the soul of corporeals; for the soul acts and is acted upon in the body and by means of the body. On the other hand, only act, as God and other divine substances.

Here, then, you have the definition of that signification of nature which is only applied to substances. This definition comprises also the definition of substance. For if the word nature indicates substance, when we have described nature we have also given a

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substantiae quoque est assignata descriptio. Quod si
35 naturae nomen relictis incorporeis substantiis ad corporales usque contrahitur, ut corporeae tantum substantiae naturam habere videantur, sicut Aristoteles ceterique et eiusmodi et multimodae philosophiae sectatores putant, definiemus eam, ut hi etiam qui
40 naturam non nisi in corporibus esse posuerunt. Est autem eius definitio hoc modo : “ natura est motus principium per se non per accidens.” Quod “ motus principium ” dixi hoc est, quoniam corpus omne habet proprium motum, ut ignis sursum, terra deorsum.
45 Item quod “ per se principium motus ” naturam esse proposui et non “ per accidens,” tale est, quoniam lectum quoque ligneum deorsum ferri necesse est, sed non deorsum per accidens fertur. Idcirco enim quia lignum est, quod est terra, pondere et gravitate
50 deducitur. Non enim quia lectus est, deorsum cadit, sed quia terra est, id est quia terrae contigit, ut lectus esset ; unde fit ut lignum naturaliter esse dicamus, lectum vero artificialiter. Est etiam alia significatio naturae per quam dicimus diversam esse
55 naturam auri atque argenti in hoc proprietatem rerum monstrare cupientes, quae significatio naturae definietur hoc modo : “ natura est unam quamque rem informans specifica differentia.” Cum igitur tot modis vel dicatur vel definiatur natura, tam catholici
60 quam Nestorius secundum ultimam definitionem duas in Christo naturas esse constituent ; neque enim easdem in deum atque hominem differentias convenire.

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description of substance. But if we neglect incorporeal substances and confine the name nature to corporeal substances so that they alone appear to possess the nature of substance—which is the view of Aristotle and the adherents both of his and various other schools—we shall define nature as those do who have posited nature as not existing except in bodies. Now, its definition is as follows: “Nature is the principle of movement, *per se* and not accidental.” I said “principle of movement” because every body has its proper movement, as fire upwards, earth downwards. Again, that I propose that nature is “the principle of movement *per se* and not accidental” is so expressed because a wooden bed is necessarily borne downward and is not carried downward by accident. For it is drawn downward by weight and heaviness because it is of wood, *i.e.* an earthly material. For it falls downwards not because it is a bed, but because it is earth, that is, because it has happened of earth that it should be a bed; hence we call it wood in virtue of its nature, but bed in virtue of the art that shaped it.

Nature has, further, another signification according to which we speak of the different nature of gold and silver, wishing thereby to indicate the special property of things; this signification of nature will be defined as follows: “Nature is the specific difference that gives form to anything.” Thus, although nature is predicated or defined in so many ways, both Catholics and Nestorius hold that there are in Christ two natures according to our last definition, but the same differences cannot apply to God and man.

BOETHIUS

II

Sed de persona maxime dubitari potest, quaenam ei definitio possit aptari. Si enim omnis habet natura personam, indissolubilis nodus est, quaenam inter naturam personamque possit esse discretio; aut si
5 non aequatur persona naturae, sed infra terminum spatiumque naturae persona subsistit, difficile dictu est ad quas usque naturas persona perveniat, id est quas naturas conveniat habere personam, quas a personae vocabulo segregari. Nam illud quidem
10 manifestum est personae subiectam esse naturam nec praeter naturam personam posse praedicari. Vestiganda sunt igitur haec inquirentibus hoc modo.

Quoniam praeter naturam non potest esse persona quoniamque naturae aliae sunt substantiae, aliae
15 accidentes et videmus personam in accidentibus non posse constitui (quis enim dicat ullam albedinis vel nigredinis vel magnitudinis esse personam?), relinquitur ergo ut personam in substantiis dici conveniat. Sed substantiarum aliae sunt corporeae, aliae incorporeae.
20 Corporearum vero aliae sunt viventes, aliae minime; viventium aliae sunt sensibiles, aliae minime; sensibilibus aliae rationales, aliae irrationales. Item incorporearum aliae sunt rationales, aliae minime, ut pecudum vitae; rationalium vero alia est inmutabilis
25 atque impassibilis per naturam ut deus, alia per creationem mutabilis atque passibilis, nisi impassibilis gratia substantiae ad impassibilitatis firmitudinem permutetur ut angelorum atque animae. Ex quibus

^a For a similar example of the method of *divisio cf.* Cic. *De Off.* ii. 3. 11. Cf. also *Isag. Porph. edit. prima*, i. 10 (ed. Brandt, p. 29).

CONTRA EUTYCHEN

II

But the proper definition of person is a matter of very great perplexity. For if every nature has person, the difference between nature and person is a hard knot to unravel; or if person is not taken as the equivalent of nature but is a term of less scope and range, it is difficult to say to what natures it may be extended, that is, to what natures the term person may be applied and what natures are dissociate from it. For one thing is clear, namely that nature is a substrate of person, and that person cannot be predicated apart from nature.

We must, therefore, conduct our inquiry into these points as follows.

Since person cannot exist apart from nature and since natures are either substances or accidents and we see that person cannot consist in accidents (for who can say there is any person of whiteness or blackness or size?), it therefore remains that person is properly predicated of substances. But of substances, some are corporeal and others incorporeal. And of corporeals, some are living and others not; of living substances, some are sensitive and others not; of sensitive substances, some are rational and others irrational.^a Similarly of incorporeal substances, some are rational, others not (for instance the animating spirits of beasts); but of rational substances one is immutable and impassible by nature, as God, another which in virtue of its creation is mutable and passible unless by the grace of the impassible substance it be transformed to the unshaken impassibility which belongs to angels and to the soul.

BOETHIUS

omnibus neque in non viventibus corporibus personam
30 posse dici manifestum est (nullus enim lapidis ullam
dicit esse personam), neque rursus eorum viventium
quae sensu carent (neque enim ulla persona est
arboris), nec vero eius quae intellectu ac ratione
35 deseritur (nulla est enim persona equi vel bovis
ceterorumque animalium quae muta ac sine ratione
vitam solis sensibus degunt), at hominis dicimus esse
personam, dicimus dei, dicimus angeli. Rursus sub-
stantiarum aliae sunt universales, aliae particulares.
Universales sunt quae de singulis praedicantur ut
40 homo, animal, lapis, lignum ceteraque huiusmodi
quae vel genera vel species sunt; nam et homo de
singulis hominibus et animal de singulis animalibus
lapisque ac lignum de singulis lapidibus ac lignis
dicuntur. Particularia vero sunt quae de aliis minime
45 praedicantur ut Cicero, Plato, lapis hic unde haec
Achillis statua facta est, lignum hoc unde haec mensa
composita est. Sed in his omnibus nusquam in
universalibus persona dici potest, sed in singularibus
tantum atque in individuis; animalis enim vel gene-
50 ralis hominis nulla persona est, sed vel Ciceronis
vel Platonis vel singulorum individuorum personae
singulae nuncupantur.

III

Quocirca si persona in solis substantiis est atque
in his rationabilibus substantiaque omnis natura est
nec in universalibus sed in individuis constat,
reperta personae est definitio: "naturae rationabilis
5 individua substantia." Sed nos hac definitione
eam quam Graeci *ὑπόστασις* dicunt terminavimus.

^a Boethius's definition of *persona* was adopted by St.

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Now from all this it is clear that person cannot be predicated of bodies which have no life (for no one ever says that a stone has a person), nor yet of living things which lack sense (for neither is there any person of a tree), nor finally of that which is bereft of mind and reason (for there is no person of a horse or ox or any other of the animals which dumb and without reason live a life of sense alone), but we say there is a person of a man, of God, of an angel. Again, some substances are universal, others are particular. Universals are those which are predicated of individuals, as man, animal, stone, plank and other things of this kind which are either genera or species ; for man is predicated of individual men just as animal is of individual animals, and stone and plank of individual stones and planks. But particulars are those which are never predicated of other things, as Cicero, Plato, this stone from which this statue of Achilles was hewn, this plank out of which this table was made. But in all these things person cannot anywhere be predicated of universals, but only of particulars and individuals ; for there is no person of man as animal or a genus ; only of Cicero, Plato, or other single individuals are single persons named.

III

Wherefore if person belongs to substances alone, and these rational, and if every substance is a nature, and exists not in universals but in individuals, we have found the definition of person : " The individual substance of a rational nature." ^a Now by this definition we Latins have described what the Greeks call Thomas (*S. Th.* I^a II^{ae} 29. 1), and was regarded as classical by the Schoolmen.

BOETHIUS

Nomen enim personae videtur aliunde traductum, ex his scilicet personis quae in comoediis tragoediisque eos quorum interest homines repraesentabant. Per-
10 sona vero dicta est a personando, circumflexa paenultima. Quod si acuatur antepaenultima, apertissime a sono dicta videbitur; idcirco autem a sono, quia concavitate ipsa maior necesse est volvatur sonus. Graeci quoque has personas *πρόσωπα* vocant ab eo
15 quod ponantur in facie atque ante oculos obtegant vultum: *παρὰ τοῦ πρὸς τοὺς ὤπας τίθεσθαι*. Sed quoniam personis inductis histriones individuos homines quorum intererat in tragoedia vel in comoedia ut dictum est repraesentabant, id est Hecubam vel
20 Medeam vel Simonem vel Chremetem, idcirco ceteros quoque homines, quorum certa pro sui forma esset agnitio, et Latini personam et Graeci *πρόσωπα* nuncupaverunt. Longe vero illi signatius naturae rationabilis individuum subsistentiam *ὑπόστασις* nomine vocaverunt, nos vero per inopiam significantium
25 vocum translaticiam retinimus nuncupationem, eam quam illi *ὑπόστασις* dicunt personam vocantes; sed peritior Graecia sermonum *ὑπόστασις* vocat individuum subsistentiam. Atque, uti Graeca utar oratione in
30 rebus quae a Graecis agitata Latina interpretatione translata sunt: *αἱ οὐσίαι ἐν μὲν τοῖς καθόλου εἶναι δύνανται· ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀτόμοις καὶ κατὰ μέρος μόνοις ὑφίστανται*, id est: essentiae in universalibus quidem esse possunt, in solis vero individuis et particularibus
35 substant. Intellectus enim universalium rerum ex

^a Implying a short penultimate.

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ὑπόστασις. For the word "person" seems to be borrowed from a different source, namely from the masks (*personae*) which in comedies and tragedies used to represent the people concerned. Now *persona* with a circumflex on the penultimate is derived from *personare*. But if the accent is put on the antepenultimate^a the word will clearly be seen to come from *sonus* "sound," and it is from *sonus* for this reason, that the sound that is produced is necessarily greater from the very hollowness of the mask. The Greeks, too, call these masks πρόσωπα from the fact that they are placed over the face and conceal the countenance in front of the eyes: παρά τοῦ πρὸς τοὺς ὄπας τίθεσθαι (from being put up against the face). But since, as we have said, it was by the masks they put on that actors represented the individual people concerned in a tragedy or comedy—Hecuba or Medea or Simo or Chremes,— so also of all other men who could be clearly recognized by their appearance the Latins used the name *persona*, the Greeks πρόσωπα. But the Greeks far more clearly called the individual subsistence of a rational nature by the name ὑπόστασις, while we through want of appropriate words have kept the name handed down to us, calling that *persona* which they call ὑπόστασις; but Greece with its richer vocabulary gives the name ὑπόστασις to the individual subsistence. And, if I may use Greek in dealing with matters which were dealt with by Greeks before they came to be interpreted in Latin: αἱ οὐσίαι ἐν μὲν τοῖς καθόλου εἶναι δύνανται ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀτόμοις καὶ κατὰ μέρος μόνοις ὑφίστανται, that is: essences can indeed exist in universals, but they subsist in individuals and particulars alone. For the understanding of universals is

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particularibus sumptus est. Quocirca cum ipsae subsistentiae in universalibus quidem sint, in particularibus vero capiant substantiam, iure subsistentias particulariter substantes *ὑποστάσεις* appellaverunt. Neque
 40 enim pensius subtiliusque intuenti idem videbitur esse subsistentia quod substantia.

Nam quod Graeci *οὐσίωσιν* vel *οὐσιῶσθαι* dicunt, id nos subsistentiam vel subsistere appellamus; quod vero illi *ὑπόστασιν* vel *ὑφίστασθαι*, id nos substantiam
 45 vel substare interpretamur. Subsistit enim quod ipsum accidentibus, ut possit esse, non indiget. Substat autem id quod aliis accidentibus subiectum quoddam, ut esse, valeant, subministrat; sub illis enim stat, dum subiectum est accidentibus. Itaque genera vel species
 50 subsistunt tantum; neque enim accidentia generibus speciebusve contingunt. Individua vero non modo subsistunt verum etiam substant, nam neque ipsa indigent accidentibus ut sint; informata enim sunt iam propriis et specificis differentiis et accidentibus
 55 ut esse possint ministrant, dum sunt scilicet subiecta. Quocirca *εἶναι* atque *οὐσιῶσθαι* esse atque subsistere, *ὑφίστασθαι* vero substare intellegitur. Neque enim verborum inops Graecia est, ut Marcus Tullius alludit, sed essentiam, subsistentiam, substantiam, personam
 60 totidem nominibus reddit, essentiam quidem *οὐσίαν*, subsistentiam vero *οὐσίωσιν*, substantiam *ὑπόστασιν*, personam *πρόσωπον* appellans. Ideo autem *ὑποστάσεις* Graeci individuas substantias vocaverunt, quoniam ceteris subsunt et quibusdam quasi accidentibus sub-
 65 positae subiectaeque sunt; atque idcirco nos quoque eas substantias nuncupamus quasi subpositas, quas illi¹

¹ quas illi *Vallinus*: quasi *or* quas *the better MSS.*

^a *Tusc.* ii. 15. 35.

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taken from particulars. Wherefore since subsistences themselves are present in universals but acquire substance in particulars they rightly gave the name *ὑπόστασις* to subsistences which acquired substance through the medium of particulars. For to no one looking at it with any care or penetration will subsistence and substance appear identical.

For our equivalents of the Greek terms *οὐσίωσις* *οὐσιῶσθαι* are respectively *subsistentia* and *susistere*, while their *ὑπόστασις* *ὑφίστασθαι* are represented by our *substantia* and *substare*. For a thing has subsistence when it does not require accidents in order to be, but that thing has substance which supplies to other things, accidents to wit, a substrate enabling them to be; for it "stands under" (*sub-stat*) those things while it is "put under" (*sub-iectum*) the accidents. Thus genera and species have only subsistence, for accidents do not attach to genera and species. But individuals have not only subsistence but also substance, for neither do they depend on accidents for their being; for they are already provided with their proper and specific differences and they enable accidents to be by being, that is, their subjects. Wherefore *esse* and *susistere* represent *εἶναι* and *οὐσιῶσθαι*, while *substare* represents *ὑφίστασθαι*. For Greece, as Marcus Tullius ^a playfully says, is not short of words, but provides as many equivalents for *essentia*, *subsistentia*, *substantia* and *persona*—*οὐσία* for *essentia*, *οὐσίωσις* for *subsistentia*, *ὑπόστασις* for *substantia*, *πρόσωπον* for *persona*. But the Greeks called individual substances *ὑποστάσεις* because they underlie the rest and are put under and subject to certain things such as accidents; and therefore we also call them substances as being

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ὑποστάσεις, cumque etiam *πρόσωπα* nuncupent easdem substantias, possumus nos quoque nuncupare personas. Idem est igitur *οὐσίαν* esse quod essentiam, idem
 70 *οὐσίωσιν* quod subsistentiam, idem *ὑπόστασιν* quod substantiam, idem *πρόσωπον* quod personam. Quare autem de inrationabilibus animalibus Graecus *ὑπόστασιν* non dicat, sicut nos de eisdem nomen substantiae praedicamus, haec ratio est, quoniam nomen
 75 hoc melioribus applicatum est, ut aliqua id quod est excellentius, tametsi non descriptione naturae secundum id quod *ὑφίστασθαι* atque substare est, at certe *ὑποστάσεως* vel substantiae vocabulis discerneretur.

Est igitur et hominis quidem essentia, id est *οὐσία*,
 80 et subsistentia, id est *οὐσίωσις*, et *ὑπόστασις*, id est substantia, et *πρόσωπον*, id est persona; *οὐσία* quidem atque essentia quoniam est, *οὐσίωσις* vero atque subsistentia quoniam in nullo subiecto est, *ὑπόστασις* vero atque substantia, quoniam subest
 85 ceteris quae subsistentiae non sunt, id est *οὐσιώσεως*; est *πρόσωπον* atque persona, quoniam est rationabile individuum. Deus quoque et *οὐσία* est et essentia, est enim et maxime ipse est a quo omnium esse proficiscitur. Est *οὐσίωσις*, id est subsistentia (subsistit
 90 enim nullo indigens); et *ὑφίστασθαι*: substat enim. Unde etiam dicimus unam esse *οὐσίαν* vel *οὐσίωσιν*, id est essentiam vel subsistentiam deitatis, sed tres *ὑποστάσεις*, id est tres substantias. Et quidem secundum hunc modum dixere unam trinitatis essentiam,
 95 tres substantias tresque personas. Nisi enim tres in deo substantias ecclesiasticus loquendi usus excluderet, videretur idcirco de deo dici substantia, non
 90

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“ put under ”—*ὑποστάσεις*, and since they also term the same substances *πρόσωπα*, we too can call them persons. So *οὐσία* is identical with essence, *οὐσίωσις* with subsistence, *ὑπόστασις* with substance, *πρόσωπον* with person. But the reason why the Greek does not use *ὑπόστασις* of irrational animals while we predicate the term substance of them is this : this term has been applied to things of higher value, in order that in some way what is more excellent might be distinguished, if not by a description of nature answering to the literal meaning of *ὑφίστασθαι* = *substare*, at any rate by the words *ὑπόστασις* and *substantia*.

To begin with, then, man has essence, *i.e.* *οὐσία*, subsistence, *i.e.* *οὐσίωσις*, *ὑπόστασις*, *i.e.* substance, and *πρόσωπον*, *i.e.* person : *οὐσία* or *essentia* because he exists, *οὐσίωσις* or subsistence because he is not in any subject, *ὑπόστασις* or substance because he is subject to the other things which are not subsistences or *οὐσιώσεις*, while he is *πρόσωπον* or person because he is a rational individual. Next, God is *οὐσία* or essence, for he is and is especially that from which proceeds the being of all things. He is *οὐσίωσις*, *i.e.* subsistence, for he subsists in absolute independence ; and *ὑφίστασθαι*, for he is substance. Whence we go on to say that there is one *οὐσία* or *οὐσίωσις*, *i.e.* one essence or subsistence of the Godhead, but three *ὑποστάσεις*, that is three substances. And indeed, following this use, men have spoken of One essence of the Trinity, three substances and three persons. For did not the language of the Church forbid us to say that there are three substances in God,^a substance might seem for this reason to be predicated of God,

^a For a similar submission of his own opinion to the usage of the Church *cf.* the end of *Tr.* i and of *Tr.* ii.

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quod ipse ceteris rebus quasi subiectum supponeretur,
sed quod idem omnibus uti praeeset ita etiam quasi
100 principium subesset rebus, dum eis omnibus *οὐσιῶσθαι*
vel subsistere subministrat.

IV

Sed haec omnia idcirco sint dicta, ut differentiam
naturae atque personae id est *οὐσίας* atque *ὑποστάσεως*
monstrarem. Quo vero nomine unumquodque
oporteat appellari, ecclesiasticae sit locutionis arbi-
5 trium. Hoc interim constet quod inter naturam
personamque differre praediximus, quoniam natura
est cuiuslibet substantiae specificata proprietates,
persona vero rationabilis naturae individua sub-
stantia. Hanc in Christo Nestorius duplicem esse
10 constituit eo scilicet traductus errore, quod putaverit
in omnibus naturis dici posse personam. Hoc enim
praesumpto, quoniam in Christo duplicem naturam
esse censebat, duplicem quoque personam esse con-
fessus est. Qua in re eum falsum esse cum definitio
15 superius dicta convincat, tum haec argumentatio
evidenter eius declarabit errorem. Si enim non est
Christi una persona duasque naturas esse manifestum
est, hominis scilicet atque dei (nec tam erit insipiens
quisquam, utqui utramque earum a ratione seiungat),
20 sequitur ut duae videantur esse personae; est enim
persona ut dictum est naturae rationabilis individua
substantia.

Quae est igitur facta hominis deique coniunctio?
Num ita quasi cum duo corpora sibimet apponuntur,
25 ut tantum locis iuncta sint et nihil in alterum ex

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not because he is set under other things like a substrate, but because, just as he is before all things, so he is as it were the principle beneath all things, supplying them all with *οὐσιῶσθαι* or subsistence.

IV

You must consider that all I have said so far has been for the purpose of marking the difference between nature and person, that is, *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*. The exact name by which each should be called must be left to the decision of ecclesiastical usage. For the time being let that distinction between nature and person hold which I have affirmed, viz. that nature is the specific property of any substance, and person the individual substance of a rational nature. Nestorius affirmed that in Christ person was twofold, being led astray by thinking that person can be predicated of every nature. For on this assumption, understanding that there was in Christ a twofold nature, he declared that there was likewise a twofold person. And although the definition which we have already given is enough to prove Nestorius wrong in this, his error shall be clearly declared by the following argument. If the person of Christ is not single, and if it is clear that there are in him two natures, to wit, of man and of God (and no one will be so foolish as to fail to include either in the definition), it follows that there must apparently be two persons; for person, as has been said, is the individual substance of a rational nature.

What kind of union, then, between God and man has been effected? Is it as when two bodies are laid the one against the other, so that they are only joined

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alterius qualitate perveniat? Quem coniunctionis Graeci modum *κατὰ παράθεσιν* vocant. Sed si ita humanitas divinitati coniuncta est, nihil horum ex utrisque confectum est ac per hoc nihil est Christus.

30 Nomen quippe ipsum unum quiddam significat singularitate vocabuli. At si duabus personis manentibus ea coniunctio qualem superius diximus facta est naturarum, unum ex duobus effici nihil potuit; omnino enim ex duabus personis nihil umquam fieri

35 potest. Nihil igitur unum secundum Nestorium Christus est ac per hoc omnino nihil. Quod enim non est unum, nec esse omnino potest; esse enim atque unum convertitur et quodcumque unum est est. Etiam ea quae ex pluribus coniunguntur

40 ut acervus, chorus, unum tamen sunt. Sed esse Christum manifeste ac veraciter confitemur; unum igitur esse dicimus Christum. Quod si ita est, unam quoque Christi sine dubitatione personam esse necesse est. Nam si duae personae essent, unus

45 esse non posset; duos vero esse dicere Christos nihil est aliud nisi praecipitatae mentis insania. Cur enim omnino duos audeat Christos vocare, unum hominem alium deum? Vel cur eum qui deus est Christum vocat, si eum quoque qui homo est Christum est

50 appellaturus, cum nihil simile, nihil habeant ex copulatione coniunctum? Cur simili nomine diversissimis abutatur naturis, cum, si Christum definire cogitur, utrisque ut ipse dicit Christis non possit unam definitionis adhibere substantiam? Si enim

55 dei atque hominis diversa substantia est unumque in utrisque Christi nomen nec diversarum coniunctio

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locally, and nothing of the quality of the one reaches the other—the kind of union which the Greeks term *κατὰ παράθεσιν* “by juxtaposition”? But if humanity has been united to divinity in this way no one thing has been formed out of the two, and hence Christ is nothing. The very name of Christ, indeed, denotes by its singular number a unity. But if the two persons continued and such a union of natures as we have above described took place, no unity could have been formed from the two things, for nothing can ever possibly be formed out of two persons. Therefore Christ is, according to Nestorius, in no respect one, and therefore he is absolutely nothing. For what is not one cannot exist at all either; because being and unity are convertible terms, and whatever is one is. Even things which are made up of many items, such as a heap or chorus, are nevertheless one. Now we openly and truly confess that Christ is; therefore we say that Christ is one. And if this is so, then without doubt the person of Christ must be one also. For if there were two persons he could not be one; but to say that there are two Christs is nothing else than the madness of a distraught mind. For why should he ever dare to name two Christs, one man, the other God? Or why does he call him Christ who is God, if he is also going to call him Christ who is man, when the two have no common factor, no coherence from being joined? Why should he wrongly use the same name for two utterly different natures, when, if he is compelled to define Christ, he cannot, as he himself admits, apply the one substance of his definition to both Christs? For if the substance of God is different from that of man, and the one name of Christ applies to both, and the combination

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substantiarum unam creditur fecisse personam, aequi-
 vocum nomen est Christi et nulla potest definitione
 concludi. Quibus autem umquam scripturis nomen
 60 Christi geminatur? Quid vero novi per adventum
 salvatoris effectum est? Nam catholicis et fidei
 veritas et raritas miraculi constat. Quam enim
 magnum est quamque novum, quam quod semel
 nec ullo alio saeculo possit evenire, ut eius qui solus
 65 est deus natura cum humana quae ab eo erat diver-
 sissima conveniret atque ita ex distantibus naturis
 una fieret copulatione persona! Secundum Nestorii
 vero sententiam quid contingit novi? "Servant,"
 inquit, "proprias humanitas divinitasque personas."
 70 Quando enim non fuit divinitatis propria humanita-
 tisque persona? Quando vero non erit? Vel quid
 amplius in Iesu generatione contingit quam in cuius-
 libet alterius, si discretis utrisque personis discretæ
 etiam fuere naturæ? Ita enim personis manentibus
 75 illic nulla naturarum potuit esse coniunctio, ut in
 quolibet homine, cuius cum propria persona subsistat,
 nulla est ei excellentissimæ substantiæ coniuncta
 divinitas. Sed fortasse Iesum, id est personam
 hominis, idcirco Christum vocet, quoniam per eam
 80 mira quaedam sit operata divinitas. Esto. Deum
 vero ipsum Christi appellatione cur vocet? Cur vero
 non elementa quoque ipsa simili audeat appellare
 vocabulo per quæ deus mira quaedam cotidianis
 motibus operatur? An quia irrationabiles sub-
 85 stantiae non possunt habere personam qua¹ Christi
 vocabulum excipere possint?² Nonne in sanctis

¹ quæ *MSS.*

² possit *Vallinus.*

^a Cf. the discussion of *aequivoca* = *ὁμώνυμος* in *Isag. Porph.*
Vide Brandt's Index.

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of different substances is not believed to have formed one person, the name of Christ is equivocal ^a and cannot be comprised in any definition. But in what Scriptures is the name of Christ ever made double? Or what new thing has been wrought by the coming of the Saviour? For the truth of the faith and the unwontedness of the miracle alike remain, for Catholics, unshaken. For how great and unprecedented a thing it is—unique and incapable of repetition in any other age—that the nature of him who is God alone should come together with human nature which was entirely different from God and thus form from different natures by conjunction a single person! But according to the opinion of Nestorius, what happens that is new? “Humanity and divinity,” quoth he, “keep their proper persons.” Well, when had not divinity and humanity each its proper person? And when will this not be so? Or wherein is the birth of Jesus more significant than that of any other child, if, the two persons remaining distinct, the natures also were distinct? For while the persons remained so there could be no union of natures in Christ, as in the case of any man at all, so long as his proper person subsists, there is no conjunction of divinity with his substance, however excellent it be. But perhaps he would call Jesus, *i.e.* the human person, Christ, because through that person divinity wrought certain wonders. Agreed. But why should he call God himself by the name of Christ? Why should he not make bold to call the very elements by that name, through which in their daily movements God works certain wonders? Is it because irrational substances cannot possess a person enabling them to receive the name of Christ? Is not the action of

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hominibus ac pietate conspicuis apertus divinitatis
actus agnoscitur? Nihil enim intererit, cur non
sanctos quoque viros eadem appellatione dignetur,
90 si in adsumptione humanitatis non est una ex
coniunctione persona. Sed dicat forsitan, " Illos quoque
Christos vocari fateor, sed ad imaginem veri Christi."
Quod si nulla ex homine atque deo una persona
coniuncta est, omnes ita veros Christos arbitrabimur
95 ut hunc qui ex virgine genitus creditur. Nulla
quippe in hoc adunata persona est ex dei atque
hominis copulatione sicut nec in eis, qui dei spiritu
de venturo Christo praedicebant, propter quod etiam
ipsi quoque appellati sunt Christi. Iam vero sequitur,
100 ut personis manentibus nullo modo a divinitate
humanitas credatur adsumpta. Omnino enim dis-
iuncta sunt quae aequae personis naturisque separan-
tur, prorsus inquam disiuncta sunt nec magis inter
se homines bovesque disiuncti quam divinitas in
105 Christo humanitasque discreta est, si mansere per-
sonae. Homines quippe ac boves una animalis com-
munitate iunguntur; est enim illis secundum genus
communis substantia eademque in universalitatis
collectione natura. Deo vero atque homini quid
110 non erit diversa ratione disiunctum, si sub diversitate
naturae personarum quoque credatur mansisse dis-
cretio? Non est igitur salvatum genus humanum,
nulla in nos salus Christi generatione processit, tot
prophetarum scripturae populum inlusere credentem,
115 omnis veteris testamenti spernatur auctoritas per
quam salus mundo Christi generatione promittitur.

^a Universalitas = τὸ καθόλου.

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divinity seen plainly in men of holy life and notable piety? For there will be no reason for him not to call holy men also by that same name, if in the assumption of humanity there is not one person out of the conjunction. But perhaps he will say, "I allow that such men are called Christs, but it is because they are in the image of the true Christ." But if no one person has been formed of the union of God and man, we shall consider all of them just as true Christs as him who, we believe, was born of a virgin. For no person has been made one by the joining of God and man either in him or in them who by the Spirit of God foretold the Christ to come, for which cause they too were called Christs. So now it follows that so long as the persons remain, we cannot in any wise believe that humanity has been assumed by divinity. For things which differ alike in persons and natures are altogether separate; they are, I say, utterly separate, and men and oxen are not more separate than are divinity and humanity apart in Christ, if the persons have remained. Men indeed and oxen are joined in the single common category, animal, for according to their genus they have a common substance and the same nature in the collection which forms the universal.^a But God and man will be at all points fundamentally different if we are to believe that distinction of persons continued under difference of nature. Then the human race has not been saved, Christ's begetting has brought us no salvation, the writings of so many prophets have but beguiled the people that believed in them, contempt is poured upon the authority of the whole Old Testament which promised to the world salvation by the birth of Christ. It is plain that salvation has not

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Non autem provenisse manifestum est, si eadem in
persona est quae in natura diversitas. Eundem
quippe salvum fecit quem creditur adsumpsisse ;
120 nulla vero intellegi adsumptio potest, si manet aequae
naturae personaeque discretio. Igitur qui adsumi
manente persona non potuit, iure non videbitur per
Christi generationem potuisse salvari. Non est
igitur per generationem Christi hominum salvata
125 natura—quod credi nefas est.

Sed quamquam permulta sint quae hunc sensum
inpugnare valeant atque perfringere, de argumen-
torum copia tamen haec interim libasse sufficiat.

V

Transeundum quippe est ad Eutychem qui cum
a veterum orbitis esset evagatus, in contrarium
cucurrit errorem asserens tantum abesse, ut in
Christo gemina persona credatur, ut ne naturam
5 quidem in eo duplicem oporteat confiteri ; ita quippe
esse adsumptum hominem, ut ea sit adunatio facta
cum deo, ut natura humana non manserit. Huius
error ex eodem quo Nestorii fonte prolabitur. Nam
sicut Nestorius arbitratur non posse esse naturam
10 duplicem quin persona fieret duplex, atque ideo,
cum in Christo naturam duplicem confiteretur,
duplicem credit esse personam, ita quoque Eutyches
non putavit naturam duplicem esse sine duplicatione
personae et cum non confiteretur duplicem esse per-

^a For a similar *reductio ad absurdum* ending in *quod nefas est* see *Tr. iii (supra, p. 44)*. *Generatio* is properly begetting by a male.

^b The ecclesiastical *via media*, with the relegation of opposing theories to the extremes, which meet in a common

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been brought us, if there is the same difference in person that there is in nature. No doubt he saved that humanity which we believe he assumed; but no assumption can be conceived, if the distinction abides alike of nature and of person. Hence man who could not be assumed as long as the person continued, will rightly appear incapable of salvation by Christ's begetting. Wherefore man's nature has not been saved by Christ's begetting—an impious conclusion.^a

But although there are many arguments strong enough to assail and demolish the Nestorian view, let us for the moment be content with this small selection from the store available.

V

I must now pass to Eutyches who, wandering from the path of primitive doctrine, has rushed into the opposite error ^b and asserts that so far from our having to believe in a twofold person in Christ, we must not even confess a double nature; man, he maintains, was so assumed that such a union was made with God that the human nature did not remain. His error springs from the same source as that of Nestorius. For just as Nestorius thinks there could not be a double nature unless the person were doubled, and therefore, confessing the double nature in Christ, has perforce believed the person to be double, so also Eutyches deemed that the nature was not double without the doubling of the person, and since he did not confess a double person, he fount of falsity, owes something to Aristotle and to our author. *Vide infra*, p. 120.

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15 sonam, arbitratus est consequens, ut una videretur
esse natura. Itaque Nestorius recte tenens duplicem
in Christo esse naturam sacrilege confitetur duas
esse personas ; Eutyches vero recte credens unam
esse personam impie credit unam quoque esse
20 naturam. Qui convictus evidentia rerum, quando-
quidem manifestum est aliam naturam esse hominis
aliam dei, ait duas se confiteri in Christo naturas
ante adunationem, unam vero post adunationem.
Quae sententia non aperte quod vult eloquitur. Ut
25 tamen eius dementiam perscrutemur, adunatio haec
aut tempore generationis facta est aut tempore
resurrectionis. Sed si tempore generationis facta
est, videtur putare et ante generationem fuisse
humanam carnem non a Maria sumptam sed aliquo
30 modo alio praeparatam, Mariam vero virginem
appositam ex qua caro nasceretur quae ab ea sumpta
non esset, illam vero carnem quae antea fuerit esse
et divisam atque a divinitatis substantia separatam ;
cum ex virgine natus est, adunatum esse deo, ut una
35 videretur facta esse natura. Vel si haec eius
sententia non est, illa esse poterit dicentis duas ante
adunationem, unam post adunationem, si adunatio
generatione perfecta est, ut corpus quidem a Maria
sumpserit, sed, antequam sumeret, diversam deitatis
40 humanitatisque fuisse naturam ; sumptam vero unam
factam atque in divinitatis cessione substantiam.
Quod si hanc adunationem non putat generatione
sed resurrectione factam, rursus id duobus fieri arbi-
trabitur modis ; aut enim genito Christo et non
45 adsumente de Maria corpus aut adsumente ab eadem

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thought it followed that the nature should be regarded as single. Thus Nestorius, rightly holding nature to be double in Christ, sacrilegiously professes the persons to be two ; whereas Eutyches, rightly believing the person to be single, impiously believes that the nature also is single. And being confuted by the plain evidence of facts, since it is clear that the nature of man is one thing, that of God another, he declares his belief to be : two natures in Christ before the union and only one after the union. Now this statement does not express clearly what he means. However, let us scrutinize his folly. It is plain that this union took place either at the moment of begetting or that of resurrection. But if it happened at the moment of begetting, Eutyches seems to think that even before that He was human flesh, not taken from Mary but prepared in some other way, while the Virgin Mary was brought in to give birth to flesh that had not been taken from her ; that this flesh, which already existed, was apart and separate from the substance of divinity, but that when he was born of the Virgin he was united to God, so that it seemed that one nature was made. Or if that is not his opinion, it could be this, if he says that there were two natures before the union and one after, supposing the union to be effected by begetting so that the body indeed he took from Mary but before he took it the natures of Godhead and humanity were different : but the nature assumed became one with that of Godhead into the substance of which it passed. But if he thinks that this union was effected not by begetting but resurrection, again he will believe this to happen in two ways ; either Christ was born but did *not* assume a body from Mary

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carnem, usque dum resurgeret quidem, duas fuisse naturas, post resurrectionem unam factam. De quibus illud disiunctum nascitur, quod interrogabimus hoc modo: natus ex Maria Christus aut
50 ab ea carnem humanam traxit aut minime. Si non confitetur ex ea traxisse, dicat quo homine indutus advenerit, utrumne eo qui deciderat praevaricatione peccati an alio? Si eo de cuius semine ductus est homo, quem vestita divinitas est? Nam si ex
55 semine Abrahae atque David et postremo Mariae non fuit caro illa qua natus est, ostendat ex cuius hominis sit carne derivatus, quoniam post primum hominem caro omnis humana ex humana carne deducitur. Sed si quem dixerit hominem a quo
60 generatio sumpta sit salvatoris praeter Mariam virginem, et ipse errore confundetur et adscribere mendacii notam summae divinitati inlusus ipse videbitur, quando quod Abrahae atque David promittitur in sanctis divinationibus, ut ex eorum semine toti
65 mundo salus oriaur, aliis distribuit, cum praesertim, si humana caro sumpta est, non ab alio sumi potuerit nisi unde etiam procreabatur. Si igitur a Maria non est sumptum corpus humanum sed a quolibet alio, per Mariam tamen est procreatum quod fuerat prae-
70 varicatione corruptum, superius dicto repellitur argumento. Quod si non eo homine Christus indutus est qui pro peccati poena sustinuerat mortem, illud eveniet ex nullius hominis semine talem potuisse nasci qui fuerit sine originalis poena peccati. Ex

^a The use of this kind of argument by Boethius allays any suspicion as to the genuineness of *Tr.* iv which might be caused by the use of allegorical interpretation therein. Note also that in the *Consolatio* the framework is allegory, which is also freely applied in the details.

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or he *did* assume flesh from her, and there were, until indeed he rose, two natures which became one after the Resurrection. From these alternatives a disjunction arises which we will examine as follows : Christ who was born of Mary either did or did not take human flesh from her. If Eutyches does not admit that he took it from her, then let him say dressed in what manhood he came—that which had fallen through the transgression of sin or another ? If it was the manhood of that man from whose seed all men descend, what manhood did divinity invest ? For if that flesh in which he was born came not of the seed of Abraham and of David and finally of Mary, let Eutyches show from what man's flesh he descended, since, after the first man, all human flesh is derived from human flesh. But if he shall name any human besides Mary the Virgin from whom the Saviour's begetting came, he will both be himself confounded by error, and, himself a dupe, will seem to stamp with falsehood the very Godhead for thus transferring to others the promise of the sacred oracles made to Abraham and David ^a that of their seed salvation should arise for all the world, especially since if human flesh was taken it could not be taken from any other but him of whom it was begotten. If, therefore, his human body was not taken from Mary but from any other, yet that was engendered through Mary which had been corrupted by transgression, Eutyches is confuted by the argument already stated. But if Christ did not put on that manhood which had endured death in punishment for sin, it will result that of no man's seed could ever one have been born who should be without punishment for original sin. Therefore flesh like this

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75 nullo igitur talis sumpta est caro ; unde fit ut noviter
videatur esse formata. Sed haec aut ita hominum
visa est oculis, ut humanum putaretur corpus quod
revera non esset humanum, quippe quod nulli
originali subiaceret poenae, aut nova quaedam vera
80 nec poenae peccati subiacens originalis ad tempus
hominis natura formata est? Si verum hominis
corpus non fuit, aperte arguitur mentita divinitas,
quae ostenderet hominibus corpus, quod cum verum
non esset, tum fallerentur ii¹ qui verum esse arbitra-
85 rentur. At si nova veraque non ex homine sumpta
caro formata est, quo tanta tragoedia generationis?
Ubi ambitus passionis? Ego quippe ne in homine
quidem non stulte fieri puto quod inutiliter factum
est. Ad quam vero utilitatem facta probabitur tanta
90 humilitas divinitatis, si homo qui periit generatione
ac passione Christi salvatus non est, quoniam negatur
adsumptus? Rursus igitur sicut ab eodem Nestorii
fonte Eutyichis error principium sumpsit, ita ad
eundem finem relabitur, ut secundum Eutychen
95 quoque non sit salvatum genus humanum, quoniam
non is qui aeger esset et salvatione curaue egeret,
adsumptus est. Traxisse autem hanc sententiam
videtur, si tamen huius erroris fuit ut crederet non
fuisse corpus Christi vere ex homine sed extra atque
100 adeo in caelo formatum, quoniam cum eo in caelum
creditur ascendisse. Quod exemplum continet tale :
“ non ascendit in caelum, nisi qui de caelo descendit.”

¹ hii or hi MSS.

^a Another *reductio ad absurdum* or *ad impietatem*, cf. *supra*, p. 100, note a.

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was taken from no man; whence it would appear to have been new-formed. But did this flesh then either so appear to human eyes that the body was deemed human which was not really human, because it was not subject to any primal penalty, or was some new true nature of man formed for the time, not subject to the penalty for original sin? If it was not a truly human body, the Godhead is plainly convicted of falsehood for displaying to men a body which since it was not real thus deceived those who thought it real. But if flesh had been formed new and real and not taken from man, to what purpose was the tremendous drama of the begetting? Where the scene of his Passion? I cannot but consider foolish even a human action that is useless. And to what useful end shall we say this great humiliation of Divinity was wrought if ruined man has not been saved by the begetting and Passion of Christ—for they denied that he was taken into Godhead? Once more then, just as the error of Eutyches took its rise from the same source as that of Nestorius, so it sinks into the same end inasmuch as according to Eutyches also the human race has not been saved,^a since man who was sick and needed health and salvation was not taken into Godhead. Yet this is the conclusion he seems to have drawn, if he erred so deeply as to believe that Christ's body was not formed really from man but from a source outside him and indeed in heaven, since it is believed to have ascended into heaven with him. Which is the meaning of the text: "none hath ascended into heaven save him who came down from heaven."

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VI

Sed satis de ea parte dictum videtur, si corpus quod
Christus excepit ex Maria non credatur adsumptum.
Si vero adsumptum est ex Maria neque permansit per-
fecta humana divinaque natura, id tribus effici potuit
5 modis : aut enim divinitas in humanitatem translata
est aut humanitas in divinitatem aut utraeque in se
ita temperatae sunt atque commixtae, ut neutra sub-
stantia propriam formam teneret. Sed si divinitas
in humanitatem translata est, factum est, quod credi
10 nefas est, ut humanitate inmutabili substantia per-
manente divinitas verteretur et quod passibile atque
mutabile naturaliter existeret, id inmutabile per-
maneret, quod vero inmutabile atque impassibile
naturaliter creditur, id in rem mutabilem verteretur.
15 Hoc igitur fieri nulla ratione contingit. Sed humana
forsitan natura in deitatem videatur esse conversa.
Hoc vero qui fieri potest, si divinitas in generatione
Christi et humanum animam suscepit et corpus ? Non
enim omnis res in rem omnem verti ac transmutari
20 potest. Nam cum substantiarum aliae sint corporeae,
aliae incorporeae, neque corporea in incorpoream
neque incorporea in eam quae corpus est mutari
potest, nec vero incorporea in se invicem formas
propriam mutant ; sola enim mutari transformarique
25 in se possunt quae habent unius materiae commune
subiectum, nec haec omnia, sed ea quae in se et facere
et pati possunt. Id vero probatur hoc modo : neque
108

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VI

I think enough has been said on that aspect of the case, that is if it were not believed that the body which Christ received was taken from Mary. But if it was taken from Mary and the human and divine natures did not continue, each in its perfection, this could have happened in three ways. Either divinity was translated into humanity, or humanity into divinity, or both were so modified and mingled that neither substance kept its proper form. But if divinity was translated into humanity, that has happened which piety forbids us to believe, viz. while the humanity continued in unchangeable substance divinity was changed, and that which was by nature passible and mutable remained immutable, while that which we believe to be by nature immutable and impassible was changed into a mutable thing. But it accords with no reasoning that this should happen. But perchance the human nature may seem to have been changed into Godhead. Yet how can this be if divinity in Christ's begetting received both human soul and body? Things cannot be promiscuously changed and interchanged. For since some substances are corporeal and others incorporeal, neither can a corporeal substance be changed into an incorporeal, nor can an incorporeal be changed into that substance which is body, nor yet incorporeals interchange their proper forms; for only those things can be interchanged and transformed which possess the common substrate of the same matter, nor can all of these so behave, but only those which can act upon and be acted on by each other. Now this is proved as follows: bronze cannot be converted into

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enim potest aes in lapidem permutari nec vero idem
aes in herbam nec quodlibet aliud corpus in quodlibet
30 aliud transfigurari potest, nisi et eadem sit materia
rerum in se transeuntium et a se et facere et pati
possint, ut, cum vinum atque aqua miscentur, utraque
sunt talia quae actum sibi passionemque communicent.
Potest enim aquae qualitas a vini qualitate aliquid
35 pati ; potest item vini ab aquae qualitate aliquid pati.
Atque idcirco si multum quidem fuerit aquae, vini vero
paululum, non dicuntur inmixta, sed alterum alterius
qualitate corrumpitur. Si quis enim vinum fundat
in mare, non mixtum est mari vinum sed in mare
40 corruptum, idcirco quoniam qualitas aquae multi-
tudine sui corporis nihil passa est a qualitate vini,
sed potius in se ipsam vini qualitatem propria multi-
tudine commutavit. Si vero sint mediocres sibi
aequales vel paulo inaequales naturae quae a se
45 facere et pati possunt, illae miscentur et mediocribus
inter se qualitibus temperantur. Atque haec qui-
dem in corporibus neque his omnibus, sed tantum
quae a se, ut dictum est, et facere et pati possunt
communi atque eadem materia subiecta. Omne enim
50 corpus quod in generatione et corruptione subsistit
communem videtur habere materiam, sed non omne
ab omni vel in omni vel facere aliquid vel pati potest.
Corpora vero in incorporea nulla ratione poterunt
permutari, quoniam nulla communi materia subiecta
55 participant quae susceptis qualitibus in alterutram
110

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stone nor indeed can the same bronze be changed into grass, and generally no body can be transformed into any other body unless the things which pass into each other have a common matter and can act upon and be acted on by each other, as when wine and water are mingled both are of such a nature as to allow reciprocal action and influence. For the quality of water can be influenced in some degree by that of wine, similarly the quality of wine can be influenced by that of water. And therefore if there be a great deal of water but very little wine, they are not said to be mingled, but the one is brought to nothing by the quality of the other. For if anyone pours wine into the sea the wine is not mingled with the sea but is brought to nothing in the sea, simply because the quality of the water owing to its bulk has been in no way effected by the quality of the wine, but rather by its own bulk has changed the quality of the wine into water. But if the natures which are capable of reciprocal action and influence are in moderate proportion and equal or only slightly unequal, they are really mingled and form a mixture with the qualities which are in moderate relation to each other. This indeed takes place in bodies but not in all bodies, but only in those, as has been said, which are capable of reciprocal action and influence, having the same common material substrate. For every body which subsists in conditions of birth and decay seems to possess a common matter, but every body is not capable of reciprocal action and influence on and by every other. But bodies will not be able in any way to be changed into incorporeals because they do not share in any common material substrate which might be changed into this or that thing by taking on its

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permutetur. Omnis enim natura incorporeae substantiae nullo materiae nititur fundamento ; nullum vero corpus est cui non sit materia subiecta. Quod cum ita sit cumque ne ea quidem quae communem
60 materiam naturaliter habent in se transeant, nisi illis adsit potestas in se et a se faciendi ac patiendi, multo magis in se non permutabuntur quibus non modo communis materia non est, sed cum alia res materiae fundamento nititur ut corpus, alia omnino materiae
65 subiecto non egeat ut incorporeum.

Non igitur fieri potest, ut corpus in incorporalem speciem permutetur, nec vero fieri potest, ut incorporalia in sese commixtione aliqua permutentur. Quorum enim communis nulla materia est, nec in
70 se verti ac permutari queunt. Nulla autem est incorporalibus materia rebus ; non poterunt igitur in se invicem permutari. Sed anima et deus incorporeae substantiae recte creduntur ; non est igitur humana anima in divinitatem a qua adsumpta est permutata.
75 Quod si neque corpus neque anima in divinitatem potuit verti, nullo modo fieri potuit, ut humanitas converteretur in deum. Multo minus vero credi potest, ut utraque in sese confunderentur, quoniam neque incorporalitas transire ad corpus potest neque
80 rursus e converso corpus ad incorporalitem, quando quidem nulla his materia subiecta communis est quae alterutris substantiarum qualitatibus permutetur.

At hi ita aiunt ex duabus quidem naturis Christum consistere, in duabus vero minime, hoc scilicet in-

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qualities. For the nature of no incorporeal substance rests upon a material basis ; but there is no body that has not matter as a substrate. Since this is so, and since not even those things which naturally have a common matter pass over into each other, unless they have the power of acting on each other and being acted upon by each other, far more will those things not suffer interchange which not only have no common matter but are different in substance, since one of them, being body, rests on a basis of matter, while the other, being incorporeal, cannot possibly stand in need of a material substrate.

It is therefore impossible for a body to be changed into an incorporeal species, nor is it ever possible for incorporeals to be changed into each other by some process of mingling. For things which have no common matter cannot be changed and converted one into another. But incorporeal things have no matter ; they will never, therefore, be able to be changed about among themselves. But the soul and God are rightly believed to be incorporeal substances ; therefore the human soul has not been changed into the divinity by which it was assumed. But if neither body nor soul could be turned into divinity, it could not possibly happen that humanity should be transformed into God. But it is much less credible that the two should be confounded together since neither can incorporeality pass over to body, nor again, contrariwise, can body pass over into incorporeality, when these have no common material substrate to be converted by the qualities of one or other of the two substances.

But the Eutychemians say that Christ consists indeed of two natures, but not in two natures, meaning, no

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- 85 tendentes, quoniam quod ex duabus consistit ita
unum fieri potest, ut illa ex quibus dicitur constare
non maneant; veluti cum mel aquae confunditur
neutrum manet, sed alterum alterius copulatione cor-
ruptum quiddam tertium fecit, ita illud quidem quod
90 ex melle atque aqua tertium fit constare ex utrisque
dicitur, in utrisque vero negatur. Non enim poterit
in utrisque constare, quando utrorumque natura non
permanet. Ex utrisque enim constare potest, licet
ea ex quibus coniungitur alterutra qualitate corrupta
95 sint; in utrisque vero huiusmodi constare non poterit,
quoniam ea quae in se transfusa sunt non manent
ac non sunt utraque in quibus constare videatur,
cum ex utrisque constet in se invicem qualitatum
mutatione transfusis.
- 100 Catholici vero utrumque rationabiliter confitentur,
nam et ex utrisque naturis Christum et in utrisque
consistere. Sed id qua ratione dicatur, paulo posterius
explicabo. Nunc illud est manifestum convictam
esse Eutyichis sententiam eo nomine, quod cum tribus
105 modis fieri possit, ut ex duabus naturis una subsistat,
ut aut divinitas in humanitatem translata sit aut
humanitas in divinitatem aut utraque permixta sint,
nullum horum modum fieri potuisse superius dicta
argumentatione declaratur.

VII

Restat ut, quemadmodum catholica fides dicat, et

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doubt, thereby, that a thing which consists of two natures can become one in such a way that the elements of which it is said to be made up disappear; just as, for example, when honey is mixed with water neither remains, but each being brought to nothing by conjunction with the other produces a certain third thing, so that third thing which is produced by the combination of honey and water is said to consist of both, but not in both. For it will not be able to consist in both so long as the nature of both does not continue. For it can consist of both even though each element of which it is compounded has been brought to nothing by the quality of the other; but it will not be able to consist in both natures of this kind since the elements which have been transmuted into each other do not continue, and both the elements in which it seems to consist cease to be, since it consists of two things translated into each other by change of qualities.

But Catholics in accordance with reason confess both, for they say that Christ consists both of and in two natures. How this can be affirmed I will explain a little later. One thing is now clear; the opinion of Eutyches has been confuted on the ground that, although there are three ways by which of two natures one may subsist, viz. either divinity has been translated into humanity or humanity into divinity or both have been mixed together, the foregoing train of reasoning shows that no one of these ways could have been effected.

VII

It remains for us to show how in accordance with

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in utrisque naturis Christum et ex utrisque consistere doceamus.

Ex utrisque naturis aliquid consistere duo significat : unum quidem, cum ita dicimus aliquid ex duabus naturis iungi sicut ex melle atque aqua, id autem est ut ex quolibet modo confusis, vel si una vertatur in alteram vel si utraeque in se invicem misceantur, nullo modo tamen utraeque permaneant ;
10 secundum hunc modum Eutyches ait ex utrisque naturis Christum consistere.

Alter vero modus est ex utrisque consistendi quod ita ex duabus iunctum est, ut illa tamen ex quibus iunctum esse dicitur maneant nec in alterutra
15 vertantur, ut cum dicimus coronam ex auro gemmisque compositam. Hic neque aurum in gemmas translatum est neque in aurum gemma conversa, sed utraque permanent nec formam propriam derelinquunt. Talia ergo ex aliquibus constantia et in his constare dicimus
20 ex quibus consistere praedicantur. Tunc enim possumus dicere coronam gemmis auroque consistere ; sunt enim gemmae atque aurum in quibus corona consistat. Nam in priore modo non est mel atque aqua in quibus illud quod ex utrisque iungitur constat.
25 Cum igitur utrasque manere naturas in Christo fides catholica confiteatur perfectasque easdem persistere nec alteram in alteram transmutari, iure dicit et in utrisque naturis Christum et ex utrisque consistere : in utrisque quidem, quia manent utraeque, ex utrisque
30 vero, quia utrarumque adunatione manentium una persona fit Christi. Non autem secundum eam
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the affirmation of Catholic belief Christ consists at once in and of both natures.

The statement that a thing consists of two natures bears two meanings ; one, when we say that anything is a union of two natures, as *e.g.* honey and water, where the union is such that in the combination, however the elements be confounded, whether by one nature changing into the other, or by both mingling with each other, the two entirely disappear. This is the way in which according to Eutyches Christ consists of two natures.

The other way in which a thing can consist of two natures is when it is so combined of two that the elements of which it is said to be combined continue without changing into each other, as when we say that a crown is composed of gold and gems. Here neither is the gold converted into gems nor is the gem turned into gold, but both continue without surrendering their proper form.

Things then like this, composed of various elements, we say consist also in the elements of which they are said to consist. For in this case we can say that a crown consists of gems and gold, for gems and gold are that in which the crown consists. For in the former mode of composition honey and water is not that in which the resulting union of both consists.

Since then the Catholic Faith confesses that both natures continue in Christ and that they both remain perfect, neither being transformed into the other, it says with right that Christ consists both in and of the two natures ; *in* the two because both continue, *of* the two because the one person of Christ is formed by the union of the two continuing natures.

But the Catholic Faith does not hold the union

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significationem ex utrisque naturis Christum iunctum esse fides catholica tenet, secundum quam Eutyches pronuntiat. Nam ille talem significationem coniunctionis ex utraque natura sumit, ut non confiteatur in utrisque consistere, neque enim utrasque manere; catholicus vero eam significationem ex utrisque consistendi sumit quae illi sit proxima eamque conservet quae in utrisque consistere confitetur.

40 Aequivocum igitur est " ex utrisque consistere " ac potius amphibolum et gemina significatione diversa designans: una quidem significatione non manere substantias ex quibus illud quod copulatum est dicatur esse coniunctum, alio modo significans ita ex utrisque
45 coniunctum, ut utraque permaneant.

Hoc igitur expedito aequivocationis atque ambiguitatis nodo nihil est ultra quod possit opponi, quin id sit quod firma veraque fides catholica continet; eundem Christum hominem esse perfectum, eundem deum
50 eundemque qui homo sit perfectus atque deus unum esse deum ac dei filium, nec quaternitatem trinitati adstrui, dum homo additur supra perfectum deum, sed unam eandemque personam numerum trinitatis explere, ut cum humanitas passa sit, deus tamen
55 passus esse dicatur, non quo ipsa deitas humanitas facta sit, sed quod a deitate fuerit adsumpta. Item qui homo est, dei filius appellatur non substantia divinitatis sed humanitatis, quae tamen divinitati naturali unitate coniuncta est. Et cum haec ita
60 intelligentia discernantur permisceanturque, tamen unus idemque et homo sit perfectus et deus: deus

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of Christ out of two natures according to that meaning which Eutyches puts upon it. For the meaning of the conjunction out of two natures which he adopts forbids him to confess that it consists in the two or that the two continue; but the Catholic adopts such a meaning of its consisting of two as comes near to that of Eutyches, yet keeps the meaning which confesses that it consists in two.

“To consist of two natures” is therefore an equivocal or rather an ambiguous term of double meaning denoting different things; according to one meaning the substances out of which the union is said to have been composed do not continue, according to another the union effected of the two is such that both natures continue.

When once this knot of equivocity and ambiguity has been untied, nothing further can be advanced to shake the true and solid content of the Catholic Faith, which is that the same Christ is perfect man, the same is God, and the same who is perfect man and God is one as God and Son of God; that, however, quaternity is not added to the Trinity by the addition of man to perfect God, but that one and the same person completes the number of the Trinity, so that, although it was the humanity which suffered, yet God may be said to have suffered, not because manhood became Godhead itself but because it was assumed by Godhead. Further, he who is man is called Son of God not in virtue of divine but of human substance, which latter none the less was conjoined to divinity in a unity of natures. And although these things are distinguished and mixed together by the understanding, yet one and the same is perfect man and God: God because he was

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quidem, quod ipse sit ex patris substantia genitus, homo vero, quod ex Maria sit virgine procreatus. Itemque qui homo, deus eo quod a deo fuerit adsumptus, et qui deus, homo, quoniam vestitus homine
65 sit. Cumque in eadem persona aliud sit divinitas quae suscepit, aliud quam suscepit humanitas, idem tamen deus atque homo est. Nam si hominem intellegas, idem homo est atque deus, quoniam homo
70 ex natura, deus adsumptione. Si vero deum intellegas, idem deus est atque homo, quoniam natura deus est, homo adsumptione. Fitque in eo gemina natura geminaque substantia, quoniam homo-deus unaque
75 est haec inter duas haereses via sicut virtutes quoque medium tenent. Omnis enim virtus in medio rerum decore locata consistit. Siquid enim vel ultra vel infra quam oportuerit fiat, a virtute disceditur. Medietatem igitur virtus tenet.

80 Quocirca, si quattuor haec neque ultra neque infra esse possunt ut in Christo aut duae naturae sint duaeque personae ut Nestorius ait, aut una persona unaque natura ut Eutyches ait, aut duae naturae sed una persona ut catholica fides credit, aut una natura
85 duaeque personae,¹ cumque duas quidem naturas duasque personas in ea quae contra Nestorium dicta est responsione convicerimus (unam vero personam unamque naturam esse non posse Eutyche proponente monstravimus neque tamen tam amens quisquam huc
90 usque exstitit, ut unam in eo naturam crederet sed geminas esse personas), restat ut ea sit vera quam fide catholica pronuntiat geminam substantiam sed unam

¹ quod nullus haereticus adhuc attigit *added by some MSS.*

^a *Vide supra*, p. 100, note b.

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begotten of the substance of the Father, but man because he was engendered of the Virgin Mary. And further he who is man is God in that man was assumed by God, and he who is God is man in that God was clothed with man. And although in the same person the divinity which took manhood is different from the humanity which it took, yet the same is God and man. For if you think of him as man, the same is man and God, being man by nature, God by assumption. But if you think of him as God, the same is God and man, being God by nature, man by assumption. And in him nature becomes double and substance double because he is God-man, and one person since the same is man and God. This is the middle way between two heresies, just as virtues also hold a middle place.^a For every virtue has a place of honour midway between extremes. If anything happens, then, to a higher or lower degree than it should, it parts company with virtue. And so virtue holds a middle place.

Wherefore if these are the only four possibilities, no more and no less, viz. that in Christ are either two natures and two persons as Nestorius says, or one person and one nature as Eutyches says, or two natures but one person as the Catholic Faith believes, or one nature and two persons, and inasmuch as we have refuted the doctrine of two natures and two persons in our argument against Nestorius and incidentally have shown that the one person and one nature suggested by Eutyches is impossible, nor indeed has there ever been anyone so mad as to believe that there was in him one nature but two persons; it remains that that must be true which the Catholic Faith affirms, viz. that the substance is

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esse personam. Quia vero paulo ante diximus
Eutychem confiteri duas quidem in Christo ante
95 adunationem naturas, unam vero post adunationem,
cumque hunc errorem duplicem interpretaremur celare
sententiam, ut haec adunatio aut generatione fieret,
cum ex Maria corpus hominis minime sumeretur aut
ad sumptum¹ quidem ex Maria per resurrectionem
100 fieret adunatio, de utrisque quidem partibus idonee
ut arbitror disputatum est. Nunc quaerendum est
quomodo fieri potuerit ut duae naturae in unam
substantiam miscerentur.

VIII

Verumtamen est etiam nunc et alia quaestio quae
ab his inferri potest qui corpus humanum ex Maria
sumptum esse non credunt, sed alias fuisse seque-
stratum praeparatumque quod in adunatione ex
5 Mariae utero gigni ac proferri videretur. Aiunt
enim : si ex homine sumptum est corpus, homo vero
omnis ex prima praevaricatione non solum peccato
et morte tenebatur, verum etiam affectibus pecca-
torum erat implicitus, eaque illi fuit poena peccati,
10 ut, cum morte teneretur obstrictus, tamen esset reus
etiam voluntate peccandi, cur in Christo neque
peccatum fuit neque voluntas ulla peccandi? Et
omnino habet animadvertendam dubitationem talis
quaestio. Si enim ex carne humana Christi corpus
15 adsumptum est, dubitari potest, quaenam caro haec
quae adsumpta sit esse videatur. Eum quippe

¹ sumptum *mss.* : adsumptum *printer's error* : ad sumptum
Stewart or Rand.

CONTRA EUTYCHEN

double, but the person one. But as I have just now remarked that Eutyches confesses two natures in Christ before the union, but only one after the union, and since I explained that this error concealed two opinions, that the union was brought about either by begetting though the human body was certainly not taken from Mary ; or, that the union was effected with what was taken indeed from Mary by means of the Resurrection, I have, it seems to me, argued the twofold aspect of the case as completely as it deserves. What we have now to inquire is how it could come to pass that two natures were combined into one substance.

VIII

Nevertheless there remains yet another question which can be advanced by those who do not believe that the human body was taken from Mary, but that the body was at some other time set apart and prepared, which in the moment of union appeared to be begotten and brought forth from Mary's womb. For they say : if the body was taken from man, while every man was, from the time of the first transgression, not only bound by sin and death but also involved in sinful desires, and if his punishment for sin was that, although he was held bound by death, yet at the same time he should be guilty because of the will to sin, why was there in Christ neither sin nor any will to sin ? And certainly such a question is attended by a difficulty which deserves attention. For if the body of Christ was assumed from human flesh, it is open to doubt of what kind we must consider that flesh to be which was assumed.

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salvavit quem etiam adsumpsit; sin vero talem hominem adsumpsit qualis Adam fuit ante peccatum, integram quidem videtur humanam adsumpsisse naturam, sed tamen quae medicina penitus non egebat. Quomodo autem fieri potest, ut talem adsumpserit hominem qualis Adam fuit, cum in Adam potuerit esse peccandi voluntas atque affectio, unde factum est ut etiam praetergressis divinis praeceptis inobedientiae delictis teneretur adstrictus? In Christo vero ne voluntas quidem ulla creditur fuisse peccandi, cum praesertim si tale corpus hominis adsumpsit quale Adae ante peccatum fuit, non debuerit esse mortalis, quoniam Adam, si non peccasset, mortem nulla ratione sensisset. Cum igitur Christus non peccaverit, quaerendum est cur senserit mortem, si Adae corpus ante quam peccaret adsumpsit. Quod si talem statum suscepit hominis qualis Adae post peccatum fuit, videtur etiam Christo non defuisse necessitas, ut et delictis subiceretur et passionibus confunderetur obductisque iudicii regulis bonum a malo non sincera integritate discerneret, quoniam has omnes poenas Adam delicti praevaricatione suscepit.

40 Contra quos respondendum est tres intellegi hominum posse status: unum quidem Adae ante delictum in quo, tametsi ab eo mors aberat nec adhuc ullo se delicto polluerat, poterat tamen in eo voluntas esse peccandi: alter in quo mutari potuisset, 45 si firmiter in dei praeceptis manere voluisset, tunc enim id addendum foret ut non modo non peccaret aut peccare vellet sed ne posset quidem aut peccare aut velle delinquere. Tertius status est post delictum

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In truth, the manhood which he assumed he likewise saved ; but if he assumed such manhood as Adam had before sin, he appears to have assumed a human nature complete indeed, but one which was in no need of healing. But how can it be that he assumed such manhood as Adam had when there could be in Adam both the will and the desire to sin, whence it came to pass that even after the divine commands had been broken, he was still held captive to sins of disobedience ? But we believe that in Christ there was never even any will to sin, though especially if he assumed such a human body as Adam had before his sin, he ought not to have been mortal, since Adam, had he not sinned, would in no wise have experienced death. Since, then, Christ never sinned, it must be asked why he suffered death if he assumed the body of Adam before he sinned. But if he took on such condition of man as was Adam's after sin, it seems that even on Christ lay the necessity of being both subject to sin and perplexed by passions, and, since the canons of judgement were obscured, of distinguishing good from evil without perfect soundness, since Adam by his sinful transgression incurred all these penalties.

Against whom we must reply that there are three conditions of men to envisage : one, that of Adam before his sin, in which, though death was not with him and he had not yet defiled himself with any sin yet there could be within him the will to sin ; the second, that in which he could have suffered change had he chosen to abide steadfastly in the commands of God, for then it might have been further granted him not only not to sin or wish to sin, but to be incapable of sinning or of wanting to transgress. The

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in quo mors illum necessario subsecuta est et peccatum
50 ipsum voluntasque peccati. Quorum summitatum
atque contrariorum haec loca sunt : is status qui
praemium esset, si in praeceptis dei Adam manere
voluisset et is qui poenae fuit, quoniam manere
noluit ; in illo enim nec mors esset nec peccatum
65 nec voluntas ulla peccati, in hoc vero et mors et
peccatum et delinquendi omnis affectio omniaque in
perniciem prona nec quicquam in se opis habentia,
ut post lapsum posset adsurgere. Ille vero medius
status in quo praesentia quidem mortis vel peccati
60 aberat, potestas vero utriusque constabat, inter
utrumque statum est conlocatus. Ex his igitur
tribus statibus Christus corporeae naturae singulas
quodam modo indidit causas ; nam quod mortale
corpus adsumpsit ut mortem a genere humano
65 fugaret, in eo statu ponendum est quod post Adae
praevaricationem poenaliter inflictum est. Quod
vero non fuit in eo voluntas ulla peccati, ex eo
sumptum est statu qui esse potuisset, nisi voluntatem
insidiantis fraudibus applicasset. Restat igitur tertius
70 status id est medius, ille scilicet qui eo tempore fuit,
cum nec mors aderat et adesse poterat delinquendi
voluntas. In hoc igitur Adam talis fuit ut mandu-
caret ac biberet, ut accepta digereret, ut laberetur
in somnum et alia quae ei non defuerunt humana
75 quidem sed concessa et quae nullam poenam mortis
inferrent.

Quae omnia habuisse Christum dubium non est ;

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third condition is that after sin, in which man needs must be pursued by death and sin and the sinful will. Now the points of extreme divergence between these conditions are the following : that condition which would have been a reward if Adam had chosen to abide in God's laws ; and that which was his punishment because he would not abide in them ; for in the former there would have been no death nor sin nor any will to sin, in the latter there was death and sin and every desire to transgress, and a general tendency to ruin and a condition helpless to render possible a rise after the Fall. But that middle condition from which actual death or sin was absent, but the power for both remained, is situate between the other two.

Each one, then, of these three conditions somehow supplied to Christ a cause for his corporeal nature ; thus his assumption of a mortal body in order to drive death far from the human race belongs properly to that condition which was laid on man by way of punishment after Adam's transgression, whereas the fact that there was in Christ no will to sin is borrowed from that condition which might have been if Adam had not surrendered his will to the frauds of the tempter. There remains, then, the third or middle condition, to wit, that which existed at that time when death had not come and while the will to sin could yet be present. In this condition, therefore, Adam was such that he ate and drank, digested the food he took, fell asleep, and performed all the other functions which always belonged to him as man, though they were allowed and brought with them no penalty of death.

There is no doubt that Christ was in all points

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nam et manducavit et bibit et humani corporis officio
functus est. Neque enim tanta indigentia in Adam
80 fuisse credenda est ut nisi manducasset vivere
non potuisset, sed, si ex omni quidem ligno escam
sumeret, semper vivere potuisset hisque non mori ;
idcirco paradisi fructibus indigentiam explebat.
Quam indigentiam fuisse in Christo nullus ignorat,
85 sed potestate non necessitate ; et ipsa indigentia ante
resurrectionem in eo fuit, post resurrectionem vero
talis exstitit ut ita illud corpus inmutaretur humanum,
sicut Adae praeter praevaricationis vinculum mutari
potuisset. Quodque nos ipse dominus Iesus Christus
90 votis docuit optare, ut fiat voluntas eius sicut in caelo
et in terra et ut adveniat eius regnum et nos liberet
a malo. Haec enim omnia illa beatissima humani
generis fideliter credentium inmutatio deprecatur.

Haec sunt quae ad te de fidei meae credulitate
95 scripsi. Qua in re si quid perperam dictum est, non
ita sum amator mei, ut ea quae semel effuderim
meliori sententiae anteferre contendam. Si enim
nihil est ex nobis boni, nihil est quod in nostris
sententiis amare debeamus. Quod si ex illo cuncta
100 sunt bona qui solus est bonus, illud potius bonum
esse credendum est quod illa incommutabilis bonitas
atque omnium bonorum causa perscribit.

^a Adam did not need to eat in order to live, but if he had not eaten he would have suffered hunger, etc.

CONTRA EUTYCHEN

thus conditioned ; for he ate and drank and discharged the function of the human body. For we must not think that there was such great need in Adam that unless he had eaten he could not have lived, but, if he had taken food from *every* tree, he would have been able to live for ever and by their fruits not die ; and so by the fruits of Paradise he satisfied a need.^a And all know that in Christ the same need dwelt, but lying in his own power and not laid upon him. And this need was in him before the Resurrection, but after the Resurrection he was such that his human body was changed as Adam's could have been changed but for the bond of his transgression. Which, moreover, our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us to desire in our prayers, asking that his will be done as in heaven so on earth, and that his Kingdom come, and that he may deliver us from evil. For that most blessed change of those of mankind who faithfully believe wards off all these things.

So much have I written to you concerning the acceptability of my belief. In which matter if I have said aught amiss, I am not so well pleased with myself as to try to press what I have once blurted out in the face of wiser judgement. For if nothing good comes from us there is nothing we should fancy in our opinions. But if all things are good that come from him who alone is good, that rather must be thought good which that unchangeable good and cause of all things indites.

ANICII MANLII SEVERINI BOETHII

V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. EX MAG. OFF. PATRICII

PHILOSOPHIAE CONSOLA-
TIONIS

LIBER I

I

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi,
Flebilis heu maestos cogor inire modos.
Ecce mihi lacerae dictant scribenda camenae
Et veris elegi fletibus ora rigant.
5 Has saltem nullus potuit pervincere terror,
Ne nostrum comites prosequerentur iter.
Gloria felicitis olim viridisque iuventae
Solantur maesti nunc mea fata senis.
Venit enim properata malis inopina senectus
10 Et dolor aetatem iussit inesse suam.
Intempestivi funduntur vertice cani
Et tremit effeto corpore laxa cutis.
Mors hominum felix quae se nec dulcibus annis
Inserit et maestis saepe vocata venit.
15 Eheu quam surda miseros avertitur aure
Et flentes oculos claudere saeva negat.

BOETHIUS
THE CONSOLATION OF
PHILOSOPHY

BOOK I

I

Verses I made once glowing with content ;
Tearful, alas, sad songs must I begin.
See how the Muses grieftorn bid me write,
And with unfeigned tears these elegies drench my face.
But them at least my fear that friends might tread
my path

Companions still

Could not keep silent : they were once
My green youth's glory ; now in my sad old age
They comfort me.

For age has come unlooked for, hastened by ills,
And anguish sternly adds its years to mine ;
My head is white before its time, my skin hangs loose
About my tremulous frame : I am worn out.

Death, if he come

Not in the years of sweetness

But often called to those who want to end their
misery

Is welcome. My cries he does not hear ;
Cruel he will not close my weeping eyes.

BOETHIUS

Dum levibus male fida bonis fortuna faveret,
Paene caput tristis merserat hora meum.
Nunc quia fallacem mutavit nubila vultum,
20 Protrahit ingratas impia vita moras.
Quid me felicem totiens iactastis amici ?
Qui cecidit, stabili non erat ille gradu.

I

Haec dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem queri-
moniamque lacrimabilem stili officio signarem, ad-
stitisse mihi supra verticem visa est mulier reve-
rendi admodum vultus, oculis ardentibus et ultra
5 communem hominum valentiam perspicacibus colore
vividio atque inexhausti vigoris, quamvis ita aevi
plena foret ut nullo modo nostrae crederetur aetatis,
statura discretionis ambiguae. Nam nunc quidem
ad communem sese hominum mensuram cohibebat,
10 nunc vero pulsare caelum summi verticis cacumine
videbatur; quae cum altius caput extulisset, ipsum
etiam caelum penetrabat respicientiumque hominum
frustrabatur intuitum. Vestes erant tenuissimis filis
subtili artificio, indissolubili materia perfectae quas,
15 uti post eadem prodente cognovi, suis manibus ipsa
texuerat. Quarum speciem, veluti fumosas imagines
solet, caligo quaedam neglectae vetustatis obduxerat.
Harum in extrema margine ·Π· Graecum, in supremo
vero ·Θ·, legebatur intextum. Atque inter utrasque
20 litteras in scalarum modum gradus quidam insigniti
videbantur quibus ab inferiore ad superius elementum

^a For the twofold division of Philosophy, into Practical and Theoretical.

CONSOLATION I

While fortune favoured me—
How wrong to count on swiftly-fading joys—
Such an hour of bitterness might have bowed my
head.

Now that her clouded, cheating face is changed
My cursed life drags on its long, unwanted days.
Ah why, my friends,
Why did you boast so often of my happiness ?
How faltering even then the step
Of one now fallen.

I

While I was thinking these thoughts to myself in silence, and set my pen to record this tearful complaint, there seemed to stand above my head a woman. Her look filled me with awe ; her burning eyes penetrated more deeply than those of ordinary men ; her complexion was fresh with an ever-lively bloom, yet she seemed so ancient that none would think her of our time. It was difficult to say how tall she might be, for at one time she seemed to confine herself to the ordinary measure of man, and at another the crown of her head touched the heavens ; and when she lifted her head higher yet, she penetrated the heavens themselves, and was lost to the sight of men. Her dress was made of very fine, imperishable thread, of delicate workmanship : she herself wove it, as I learned later, for she told me. Its form was shrouded by a kind of darkness of forgotten years, like a smoke-blackened family statue in the atrium. On its lower border was woven the Greek letter Π (P), and on the upper, Θ (Th),^a and between the two letters steps were marked like a ladder, by which one might climb from the lower

BOETHIUS

esset ascensus. Eandem tamen vestem violentorum
quorundam sciderant manus et particulas quas
quisque potuit abstulerant. Et dextera quidem eius
25 libellos, sceptrum vero sinistra gestabat.

Quae ubi poeticas Musas vidit nostro adsistentes
toro fletibusque meis verba dictantes, commota
paulisper ac torvis inflammata luminibus: "Quis,"
inquit, "has scenicas meretriculas ad hunc aegrum
30 permisit accedere quae dolores eius non modo nullis
remediis foverent, verum dulcibus insuper alerent
venenis? Hae sunt enim quae infructuosis affectuum
spinis uberem fructibus rationis segetem necant homi-
numque mentes assuefaciunt morbo, non liberant.
35 At si quem profanum, uti vulgo solitum vobis, blan-
ditiae vestrae detraherent, minus moleste ferendum
putarem; nihil quippe in eo nostrae operae laederen-
tur. Hunc vero Eleaticis atque Academicis studiis
innutritum? Sed abite potius Sirenes usque in
40 exitium dulces meisque eum Musis curandum sanan-
dumque relinquite."

His ille chorus increpitus deiecit humi maestior
vultum confessusque rubore verecundiam limen tristis
excessit. At ego cuius acies lacrimis mersa caligaret
45 nec dinoscere possem, quaenam haec esset mulier
tam imperiosae auctoritatis, obstipui visuque in terram
defixo quidnam deinceps esset actura, exspectare
tacitus coepi. Tum illa propius accedens in extrema

^a The Eleatics and the Academics were two ancient schools of philosophy. That of Elea was founded by Xenophanes in the mid-sixth century B.C.; its best known representatives are the great monist Parmenides and Zeno, the author of the

CONSOLATION I

letter to the higher. But violent hands had ripped this dress and torn away what bits they could. In her right hand she carried a book, and in her left, a sceptre.

Now when she saw the Muses of poetry standing by my bed, helping me to find words for my grief, she was disturbed for a moment, and then cried out with fiercely blazing eyes: "Who let these theatrical tarts in with this sick man? Not only have they no cures for his pain, but with their sweet poison they make it worse. These are they who choke the rich harvest of the fruits of reason with the barren thorns of passion. They accustom a man's mind to his ills, not rid him of them. If your enticements were distracting merely an unlettered man, as they usually do, I should not take it so seriously—after all, it would do no harm to us in our task—but to distract this man, reared on a diet of Eleatic and Academic thought! ^a Get out, you Sirens, beguiling men straight to their destruction! Leave him to *my* Muses to care for and restore to health." Thus upbraided, that company of the Muses dejectedly hung their heads, confessing *their shame by their blushes*, and dimly left my room. I myself, since my sight was so dimmed with tears that I could not clearly see who this woman was of such commanding authority, was struck dumb, my eyes cast down; and I went on waiting in silence to see what she would do next. Then she came closer and sat on the end of

famous paradoxes concerned with motion. The Academics were the later (3rd and 2nd centuries B.C.) successors of Plato in the Academy in Athens; theirs was a sceptical philosophy, in some respects not unlike contemporary analytical thought.

BOETHIUS

lectuli mei parte consedit meumque intuens vultum
50 luctu gravem atque in humum maerore deiectum
his versibus de nostrae mentis perturbatione con-
questa est.

II

Heu quam praecipiti mersa profundo
Mens hebet et propria luce relicta
Tendit in externas ire tenebras,
Terrenis quotiens flatibus aucta
5 Crescit in immensum noxia cura.
Hic quondam caelo liber aperto
Suetus in aetherios ire meatus
Cernebat rosei lumina solis,
Visebat gelidae sidera lunae
10 Et quaecumque vagos stella recursus
Exercet varios flexa per orbis,
Comprensam numeris victor habebat.
Quin etiam causas unde sonora
Flamina sollicitent aequora ponti,
15 Quis volvat stabilem spiritus orbem
Vel cur hesperias sidus in undas
Casurum rutilo surgat ab ortu,
Quid veris placidas temperet horas,
Ut terram roseis floribus ornet,
20 Quis dedit ut pleno fertilis anno
Autumnus gravidis influat uvis
Rimari solitus atque latentis
Naturae varias reddere causas,

^a *Numeris* here refers to mathematical astronomy: from Plato's pupil Eudoxus onwards, Greek astronomers were concerned to make mathematical "models" (in the modern philosophical sense) of the movements of the sun, moon and

CONSOLATION I

my bed, and seeing my face worn with weeping and cast down with sorrow, she bewailed my mind's confusion bitterly in these verses :

II

Ah ! How steep the seas that drown him !
His mind, all dulled, its own light fled,
Moves into outer dark, while noxious care
Swollen by earthbound winds
Grows beyond measure.

This man

Used once to wander free under open skies
The paths of the heavens ; used to gaze
On rosy sunlight, and on the constellations
Of the cold new moon,
And on each star that on its wandering ways
Turns through its changing circles—all such things
He mastered and bound by number and law.^a
Causes, moreover, he sought and knew :
Why the winds howl and stir up the waves of the sea,
What breath turns the fixed stars' sphere,
Why the sun rises in the red east
And sinks beneath the Western waves,
What warms the spring's calm hours
So that the earth is lovely with flowers of roses,
And who makes fruitful autumn heavy, as the year
fills,
With the full grapes. He sought and told
All Nature's secret causes.

planets—the " wandering stars "— which would enable their positions and motions to be accurately computed. Boethius studied astronomy, and wrote a Latin textbook of the subject, based on Ptolemy, which has not survived.

BOETHIUS

25 Nunc iacet effeto lumine mentis
Et pressus gravibus colla catenis
Declivemque gerens pondere vultum
Cogitur, heu, stolidam cernere terram.

II

Sed medicinae," inquit, "tempus est quam que-
relae." Tum vero totis in me intenta luminibus :
"Tunc ille es," ait, "qui nostro quondam lacte
nutritus nostris educatus alimentis in virilis animi
5 robur evaseras? Atqui talia contuleramus arma
quae nisi prior abiecisses, invicta te firmitate tue-
rentur. Agnoscisne me? Quid taces? Pudore an
stupore siluisti? Mallem pudore, sed te, ut video,
stupor oppressit." Cumque me non modo tacitum
10 sed elinguem prorsus mutumque vidisset, admovit
pectori meo leniter manum et: "Nihil," inquit,
"pericli est; lethargum patitur communem inlu-
sarum mentium morbum. Sui paulisper oblitus est;
recordabitur facile, si quidem nos ante cognoverit.
15 Quod ut possit, paulisper lumina eius mortalium
rerum nube caligantia tergamus." Haec dixit ocu-
losque meos fletibus undantes contracta in rugam
veste siccavit.

III

Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebrae
Luminibusque prior rediit vigor,

CONSOLATION I

But now he lies
His mind's light languishing,
Bowed with these heavy chains about his neck,
His eyes cast down beneath the weight of care,
Seeing nothing
But the dull, solid earth.

II

“ But,” she said, “ now is the time for cure rather than complaint.” Then, gazing keenly and directly on me, she said : “ Are you the same man who was once nourished with my milk, once fed on my diet, till you reached your full manhood ? And did I not furnish you with such weapons as would now keep you steadfast and safe if you had not thrown them away ? Do you recognize me ? Why do you say nothing ? Were you silent because you were ashamed or stupefied ? I should like to think that you were ashamed, but I can see that you are quite stupefied.” Seeing that I was not merely silent, but altogether speechless and dumb, she gently laid her hand on my breast and said : “ He is in no real danger, but suffers only from lethargy, a sickness common to deluded minds. He has for a little forgotten his real self. He will soon recover—he did, after all, know me before—and to make this possible for him, let me for a little clear his eyes of the mist of mortal affairs that clouds them.” And so saying she gathered her dress into a fold and dried my eyes, flowing as they were with tears.

III

Then was the night dispersed, and darkness left me ;
My eyes grew strong again.

BOETHIUS

Ut, cum praecipiti glomerantur sidera Coro
Nimbosisque polus stetit imbris,
5 Sol latet ac nondum caelo venientibus astris,
Desuper in terram nox funditur ;
Hanc si Threicio Boreas emissus ab antro
Verberet et clausam reseret diem,
Emicat ac subito vibratus lumine Phoebus
10 Mirantes oculos radiis ferit.

III

Haud aliter tristitiae nebulis dissolutis hausi
caelum et ad cognoscendam medicantis faciem
mentem recepi. Itaque ubi in eam deduxi oculos
intuitumque defixi, respicio nutricem meam cuius
5 ab adulescentia laribus obversatus fueram Philo-
sophiam. "Et quid," inquam, "tu in has exilii
nostri solitudines o omnium magistra virtutum supero
cardine delapsa venisti? An ut tu quoque mecum
rea falsis criminationibus agiteris?
10 "An," inquit illa, "te alumne desererem nec
sarcinam quam mei nominis invidia sustulisti, com-
municato tecum labore partirer? Atqui Philosophiae
fas non erat incommittatum relinquere iter innocentis;
meam scilicet criminationem vererer et quasi novum
15 aliquid acciderit, perhorrescerem? Nunc enim
primum censes apud improbos mores lacessitam peri-
culis esse sapientiam? Nonne apud veteres quoque
ante nostri Platonis aetatem magnum saepe certamen
cum stultitiae temeritate certavimus eodemque

^a The cave of Aeolus, the lord of the winds; "Thracian" is a poetic adjective for "northern" (as seen from Greece).

CONSOLATION I

Just as when north-west winds pile up the weather
And rain-clouds fill the sky and the sun is hidden,
And before the stars come out
Night comes flooding down upon the world ;
And then the north wind from the Thracian cavern ^a
Sweeps away night and lets the daylight out
So that the sparkling sunlight
Suddenly flashes on our wondering eyes.

III

Just so the clouds of misery were dispelled, and I drank in the clear light, recovering enough to recognize my healer's face. So, when I looked on her clearly and steadily, I saw the nurse who brought me up, whose house I had from my youth frequented, the lady Philosophy. And I said : " Why have you come, Queen of all the virtues, why have you come down from your high seat in heaven to these wastes where I am banished ? So that you too stand in the dock with me, falsely accused ? " " Should I desert you, my pupil ? " she replied ; " Should I not share your labour and help to bear your burden, which you bear because my name is hated ? It could not be right that Philosophy should leave an innocent man companionless on the road. Surely I should then be afraid that I should be charged myself ; I should shudder with horror at such an unheard-of thing ! Do you think that this is the first time that Wisdom has been attacked and endangered by a wicked society ? Did I not often of old also, before my Plato's time, have to battle in mighty struggle with arrogant stupidity ? And in his day, was I not beside

BOETHIUS

- 20 superstite praeceptor eius Socrates iniustae victoriam
mortis me adstante promeruit? Cuius hereditatem
cum deinceps Epicureum vulgus ac Stoicum ceterique
pro sua quisque parte raptum ire molirentur meque
reclamantem renitentemque velut in partem praedae
25 traherent, vestem quam meis texueram manibus,
disciderunt abreptisque ab ea panniculis totam me
sibi cessisse credentes abiere. In quibus quoniam
quaedam nostri habitus vestigia videbantur, meos
esse familiares imprudentia rata nonnullus eorum
30 profanae multitudinis errore pervertit.
- Quod si nec Anaxagorae fugam nec Socratis vene-
num nec Zenonis tormenta quoniam sunt peregrina
novisti, at Canios, at Senecas, at Soranos quorum nec
pervetusta nec incelebris memoria est, scire potuisti.
- 35 Quos nihil aliud in cladem detraxit nisi quod nostris
moribus instituti studiis improborum dissimillimi
videbantur. Itaque nihil est quod admirere, si in
hoc vitae salo circumflantibus agitemur procellis,
quibus hoc maxime propositum est pessimis displicere.
- 40 Quorum quidem tametsi est numerosus exercitus,
spernendus tamen est, quoniam nullo duce regitur,
sed errore tantum temere ac passim lymphante
raptatur. Qui si quando contra nos aciem struens
valentior incubuerit, nostra quidem dux copias suas in
45 arcem contrahit, illi vero circa diripiendas inutiles
sarcinulas occupantur. At nos desuper inridemus

^a Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, the Pre-Socratic philosopher, fled from Athens for fear of persecution in 450 B.C.; Zeno of Elea is said to have died helping to rid his native city of a tyrant in the second half of the fifth century B.C.; Socrates was condemned to death in Athens in 399 B.C.; Canius, or better, Canus, Seneca and Soranus are quoted as types of the

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CONSOLATION I

his teacher Socrates when he won the prize of a martyr's death? And after him the crowd of Epicureans and Stoics and the rest strove as far as they could to seize his legacy, carrying me off protesting and struggling, as if I were part of the booty, tearing my dress, which I wove with my own hands, and then went off with their torn-off shreds, thinking they possessed all of me. And because they seemed to be wearing certain bits of my dress, some were ignorantly accepted as my servants, and were abused by the delusions of the uneducated mob. But even if you knew nothing of Anaxagoras' flight from Athens, or Socrates' draught of hemlock, or Zeno's sufferings, all these being foreign events, surely you could have thought of Canius and Seneca and Soranus^a whose stories are neither ancient nor obscure? The only cause of their deaths was that they were brought up in my ways, so that their behaviour and pursuits were seen to be utterly different from those of wicked men. So it is no wonder if we are buffeted by storms blustering round us on the sea of this life, since we are especially bound to anger the wicked. Though their forces are large, yet we should hold them in contempt, for they are leaderless and are simply carried hither and thither at random in their crazed ignorance. If ever they range against us and press about us too strongly, Wisdom our captain withdraws her forces into her citadel, while our enemies busy themselves ransacking useless baggage. But we are safe from all their mad tumult and from our heights we can laugh at

"Stoic opposition" to the emperors: Canus died under Caligula in about A.D. 40, Seneca and Soranus under Nero in 65 and 66.

BOETHIUS

vilissima rerum quaeque rapientes securi totius furiosi
tumultus eoque vallo muniti quo grassanti stultitiae
adspirare fas non sit.

IV

Quisquis composito serenus aevo
Fatum sub pedibus egit¹ superbum
Fortunamque tuens utramque rectus
Invictum potuit tenere vultum,
5 Non illum rabies minaeque ponti
Versum funditus exagitantis aestum
Nec ruptis quotiens vagus caminis
Torquet fumificos Vesaevus ignes
Aut celsas soliti ferire turres
10 Ardentis via fulminis movebit.
Quid tantum miseri saevos tyrannos
Mirantur sine viribus furentes ?
Nec speres aliquid nec extimescas,
Exarmaveris impotentis iram.
15 At quisquis trepidus pavet vel optat,
Quod non sit stabilis suiue iuris,
Abiecit clipeum locoque motus
Nectit qua valeat trahi catenam.

IV

Sentisne," inquit, "haec atque animo inlabuntur
tuo, an ὄνος λύρας ? Quid fles, quid lacrimis manas ?

Ἐξαύδα, μὴ κεῦθε νόω.

5 Si operam medicantis expectas, oportet vulnus de-
tegas."

¹ *Perhaps* iecit ; cf. *Virg. Georg. ii. 491 sq.*

^a *Iliad, i. 363.*

CONSOLATION I

them as they carry off all those worthless things ;
we are protected by such a wall as may not be scaled
by raging stupidity.

IV

He who has ground proud fate beneath his heel
Calm in his own well-ordered life
And has looked in the face good and ill fortune
Still able to keep erect his unconquered head,
He shall not be troubled by the rage or threats of the
sea

Driving the turning tide up from the deep,
Nor by Vesuvius
However often it break from its deep forges
Flinging its smoking fires abroad,
Nor by the blazing thunderbolt
That strikes down lofty towers.
Why are wretched men so stupefied
By cruel tyrants raging with no real power ?
Leave hope and fear aside
And anger is impotent, weaponless ;
But he who trembles with fear or desire,
Fickle at heart, nor master of himself,
Has thrown away his shield, and left his post,
And links the chain by which he can be led.

IV

“ Now,” she said, “ have you understood what I
have been saying ? Has it penetrated your stricken
mind ? Or are you like an ass hearing the sound of
a lyre ? Why do you go on weeping, dissolving in
tears ? As Homer says, ‘ Speak out, don’t hide it in
your heart.’^a If you are looking for a healer’s cure,

BOETHIUS

Tum ego collecto in vires animo: "Anne adhuc eget admonitione nec per se satis eminent fortunae in nos saevientis asperitas? Nihilne te
10 ipsa loci facies movet? Haecine est bibliotheca, quam certissimam tibi sedem nostris in laribus ipsa delegeras? In qua mecum saepe residens de humanarum divinarumque rerum scientia disserebas? Talis habitus talisque vultus erat, cum tecum naturae
15 secreta rimarer, cum mihi siderum vias radio describeres, cum mores nostros totiusque vitae rationem ad caelestis ordinis exempla formares? Haecine praemia referimus tibi obsequentes? Atqui tu hanc sententiam Platonis ore sanxisti: beatas fore res
20 publicas, si eas vel studiosi sapientiae regerent vel earum rectores studere sapientiae contigisset. Tu eiusdem viri ore hanc sapientibus capessendae rei publicae necessariam causam esse monuisti, ne improbis flagitiosisque civibus urbium relicta gubernacula pestem bonis ac perniciem ferrent.
25

Hanc igitur auctoritatem secutus quod a te inter secreta otia didiceram transferre in actum publicae administrationis optavi. Tu mihi et qui te sapientium mentibus inseruit deus conscii nullum me ad magistratum nisi commune bonorum omnium studium
30 detulisse. Inde cum improbis graves inexorabilesque discordiae et quod conscientiae libertas habet, pro tuendo iure spreta potentiorum semper offensio.

^a *Republic*, 473 D.

CONSOLATION I

you must lay bare the wound." So I gathered my strength of mind and said : " Do you really still need to ask ? Is my harsh treatment at fortune's hands not obvious enough ? Are you not affected by the very appearance of this room ? Do you not recognize the library, which you once chose for yourself as a secure dwelling-place in my house—the very room in which you used often to sit with me discoursing on the knowledge of all things human and divine ? Was this how I looked, was this my expression, when I used to seek out with you the secrets of Nature ? When with your rod you drew for me the paths of the stars ? When you shaped my character and the whole manner of my life according to celestial models ? Are these our rewards for obedient service to you ? It was you who established through the words of Plato the principle that those states would be happy where philosophers were kings or their governors were philosophers.^a You, through that same Plato, told us that this was why philosophers must involve themselves in political affairs, lest the rule of nations be left to the base and wicked, bringing ruin and destruction on the good. It was in accordance with that teaching that I chose to apply in the practice of public administration what I learned from you in the seclusion of my private leisure. You, and God, who has set you in the minds of philosophers, know me well, and that I undertook office with no other motives than the common purposes of all good men. That is why there arose serious and irreconcilable disagreements with wicked men, and, as a consequence of keeping my conscience free, I have always maintained what is right and lawful in spite of the fact that I offended those more powerful than myself.

BOETHIUS

Quotiens ego Conigastum in inbecilli cuiusque
35 fortunas impetum facientem obuius excepi, quotiens
Trigguillam regiae praepositum domus ab incepta,
perpetrata iam prorsus iniuria deiecti, quotiens
miseros quos infinitis calumniis impunita barbarorum
semper avaritia vexabat, obiecta periculis auctoritate
40 protexi ! Numquam me ab iure ad iniuriam quisquam
detraxit. Provincialium fortunas tum privatis rapinis
tum publicis vectigalibus pessumdari non aliter
quam qui patiebantur indolui.

Cum acerbae famis tempore gravis atque inexplica-
45 bilis indicta coemptio proffigatura inopia Campaniam
provinciam videretur, certamen adversum praefectum
praetorii communis commodi ratione suscepti, rege
cognoscente contendendi et ne coemptio exigeretur,
evici. Paulinum consularem virum cuius opes Pala-
50 tinae canes iam spe atque ambitione devorassent, ab
ipsis hiantium faucibus traxi. Ne Albinum consularem
virum praeiudicatae accusationis poena corripere,
odiis me Cypriani delatoris opposui. Satisne in me
magnas videor exacerbasse discordias ? Sed esse apud
55 ceteros tutior debui qui mihi amore iustitiae nihil

^a Nothing more is known of Trigguilla or of Conigastus, who was the addressee of a letter from Cassiodorus, Boethius's successor as Master of the Offices to Theodoric, the Ostrogothic king of Italy, 493-526 (*Var.* viii. 28).

^b *Coemptio* was a means by which supplies for troops, over and above those provided for out of normal taxation, might be obtained by compulsory purchase ; under later emperors it was strictly limited by law except in the province of Thrace, where taxation yielded insufficient revenue. It was clearly open to abuse in the hands of unscrupulous administrators,

CONSOLATION I

How often did I stand in the way of Conigastus when he was trying to rob some weaker man of his wealth! How often did I frustrate Triggulla, the Provost of the Royal Household, in committing some injustice—or even when he had actually committed it!^a How often did I protect poor wretches harassed with countless malicious charges by the constant and unchecked avarice of barbarians, though the exercise of my authority involved me in great dangers. No-one has ever turned me aside from the right, to commit injustice. That the fortunes of provincial families were ruined both by robbery by individuals and by taxation by the state grieved me no less than it did those who suffered so. When in a time of grievous famine it seemed there was to be by order a terrible and quite indefensible compulsory purchase of supplies which would have reduced the province of Campania to destitution, I took up the fight with the Praetorian Prefect for the sake of the common good, I fought against the enforcement of the purchase before the king, and I won.^b The wealth of Paulinus, a man of consular rank, which had already in their ambitious hope been all but devoured by those dogs of the court, I snatched even from their gaping jaws. To prevent Albinus, another man of consular rank, being punished for a crime of which he was found guilty before being tried, I made an enemy of his accuser Cyprian. Ought I not to have been satisfied with the amount of strong feeling I stirred up against myself? But surely I ought to have been that much the more safe with the others, since in my regard for justice I kept no favours and the object here was to buy food cheaply and sell it back at an inflated price.

BOETHIUS

- apud aulicos quo magis essem tutior reservavi. Quibus autem deferentibus perculsi sumus ? Quorum Basilius olim regio ministerio depulsus in delationem nostri nominis alieni aeris necessitate compulsus est.
- 60 Opilionem vero atque Gaudentium cum ob innumeras multiplicesque fraudes ire in exilium regia censura decrevisset cumque illi parere nolentes sacrarum sese aedium defensione tuerentur compertumque id regi foret, edixit : uti ni intra praescriptum diem Ravenna
- 65 urbe decederent, notas insigniti frontibus pellerentur. Quid huic severitati posse astrui videtur ? Atqui in eo die deferentibus eisdem nominis nostri delatio suscepta est. Quid igitur ? Nostraene artes ita meruerunt ? An illos accusatores iustos fecit praemissa
- 70 damnatio ? Itane nihil fortunam puduit si minus accusatae innocentiae, at accusantium vilitatis ?¹ At cuius criminis arguimur summam quaeris ? Senatum dicimur salvum esse voluisse. Modum desideras ? Delatorem ne documenta deferret quibus senatum
- 75 maiestatis reum faceret impedisse criminamur. Quid igitur o magistra censes ? Infitiabimur crimen, ne tibi pudor simus ? At volui nec umquam velle desistam. Fatebimur ? Sed impediendi delatoris opera cessavit. An optasse illius ordinis salutem
- 80 nefas vocabo ? Ille quidem suis de me decretis, uti hoc nefas esset, effecerat. Sed sibi semper mentiens imprudentia rerum merita non potest inmutare nec

¹ vilitatis *Glareanus* ; vilitas *MSS.*

^a He was no doubt offered a remission of his debts as a bribe.

CONSOLATION I

among the courtiers to ensure my own safety. Who are the accusers, then, by whom I have been brought down? One of them, Basil, once in the king's service but dismissed, was forced to denounce me because of his burden of debts.^a Two others were Opilio and Gaudentius: on account of their many different frauds they were condemned to exile by the king's judgement, but they refused to obey and took sanctuary in a temple. When the king learned of this he ordered that unless they left Ravenna by a certain date they should be branded on the forehead and driven out. Could they possibly have been more severely treated? And yet on that very date the accusation against me was lodged, with their names on it! I ask you! Was that the reward my exercise of office had earned? Did their previous conviction make them just accusers? Was fortune not the least bit ashamed, if not that innocence was thus accused, at least that the accusers were so base?

Do you want to know what, in a word, was the charge against me? That I wanted to preserve the Senate. And how did I do that? I am charged with preventing those accusers from bringing forward proofs whereby the Senate might have been convicted of treason. What then do you think, Lady? Shall I deny the charge, so as not to cause you to be ashamed of me? But I did want the Senate to be preserved, nor shall I ever cease to want it so. Shall I then confess to the charge? But the chance of hindering their accuser has now passed. Shall I call it wrong to have wanted the preservation of the Senatorial order? That order had itself made it wrong, by its decrees against me. But self-deceiving ignorance cannot change the true worth of anything,

BOETHIUS

mihi Socratico decreto fas esse arbitror vel occuluisse
veritatem vel concessisse mendacium. Verum id
85 quoquo modo sit, tuo sapientiumque iudicio aesti-
mandum relinquo. Cuius rei seriem atque veritatem,
ne latere posteros queat, stilo etiam memoriaeque
mandavi.

Nam de compositis falso litteris quibus libertatem
90 arguor sperasse Romanam quid attinet dicere?
Quarum fraus aperta patuisset, si nobis ipsorum con-
fessione delatorum, quod in omnibus negotiis maximas
vires habet, uti licuisset. Nam quae sperari reliqua
libertas potest? Atque utinam posset ulla! Re-
95 spondissem Canii verbo, qui cum a Gaio Caesare
Germanici filio conscius contra se factae coniurationis
fuisse diceretur: 'Si ego,' inquit, 'scissem, tu ne-
scissem.' Qua in re non ita sensus nostros maeror
hebetavit ut impios scelerata contra virtutem querar
100 molitos, sed quae speraverint effecisse vehementer
admiror. Nam deteriora velle nostri fuerit fortasse
defectus, posse contra innocentiam, quae sceleratus
quisque conceperit inspectante deo, monstri simile
est. Unde haud iniuria tuorum quidam familiarium
105 quaesivit: 'Si quidem deus,' inquit, 'est, unde
mala? Bona vero unde, si non est?' Sed fas fuerit

^a Cf. Plato, *Republic*, 485 and *Theaetetus*, 151 D.

^b The authorship of this dilemma is unknown. Editors have generally referred to Epicurus fr. 374, *ex* Lactantius,

CONSOLATION I

nor do I think it would have been right for me, following Socrates' counsel,^a to conceal the truth or admit to falsehood. But what the truth of the matter is, I leave to your judgement and to that of philosophers ; though so that the true details of this affair cannot lie concealed from later generations, I have written it down to be remembered. For what is the point of talking about those forgeries in which I am accused of having striven for Roman liberty ? Their falsity would have been evident for all to see, had I been allowed to use the confessions of my accusers themselves, for this always has most influence in all such matters as these. What freedom can now be hoped for ? Would there were any ! Then I should have replied with the words of Canius : when he was said by Caligula to have been aware of a conspiracy against his person, he replied : ' Had I known of it, you would not.' In this affair, grief has not so far blunted my sense that I complain that wicked men have tried to do evil to virtue, but rather I am amazed that they have succeeded in their hopes. For although it is perhaps a normal human failing to have evil desires, it is surely a monstrous thing in the sight of God that whatever an evil man conceives can actually be done to the innocent. So it was not without reason that one of your disciples asked : ' If there is a God, whence comes evil ? But whence good, if there is not ? ' ^b It would be natural that

De ira dei, 13, 21 ; but that is a different problem (either God can prevent evil, and will not, or will, but cannot), and this one is surely not Epicurean. Its origins can be found in Plato (*cf. Republic*, 379, and *Schol. in Remp.* 379a : τύπος θεολογικός ὅτι πάντων ἀγαθῶν ὁ θεὸς αἴτιος, τῶν κακῶν δ' οὐδενός). It is probably from some Neo-platonist commentator, possibly Ammonius.

BOETHIUS

- nefarios homines qui bonorum omnium totiusque senatus sanguinem petunt, nos etiam quos propugnare bonis senatuique viderant, perditum ire voluisse.
- 110 Sed num idem de patribus quoque merebamur? Meministi, ut opinor, quoniam me dicturum quid facturumve praesens semper ipsa dirigebas, meministi inquam, Veronae cum rex avidus exitii communis maiestatis crimen in Albinum delatae ad cunctum
- 115 senatus ordinem transferre moliretur, universi innocentiam senatus quanta mei periculi securitate defenderim. Scis me haec et vera proferre et in nulla umquam mei laude iactasse. Minuit enim quodam modo se probantis conscientiae secretum, quotiens
- 120 ostentando quid factum recipit famae pretium. Sed innocentiam nostram quis exceperit eventus vides; pro verae virtutis praemiis falsi sceleris poenas subimus. Et cuius umquam facinoris manifesta confessio ita iudices habuit in severitate concordem ut
- 125 non aliquos vel ipse ingenii error humani vel fortunae condicio cunctis mortalibus incerta submitteret? Si inflammare sacras aedes voluisse, si sacerdotes impio iugulare gladio, si bonis omnibus necem struxisse diceremur, praesentem tamen sententia, confessum
- 130 tamen convictumve punisset. Nunc quingentis fere passuum milibus procul muti atque indefensi ob studium propensius in senatum morti proscriptionique damnamur. O meritos de simili crimine neminem posse convinci!

^a Theodoric the Ostrogoth; see p. 148.

CONSOLATION I

wicked men who wanted the blood of all good men and of the whole Senate should want to destroy me also, whom they saw fighting for good men and the Senate. But surely I deserved differently from the Senators themselves? You remember, I expect, since you yourself were with me directing all my words and actions, how when the king^a at Verona tried to shift on to the whole Senatorial order the charge of treason laid against Albinus, since he was eager to do away with them all, I defended the innocence of the whole Senate with complete disregard for my own peril. You know that I mention this simply as the truth, not because I ever wished to sing my own praises; for the secret, mental satisfaction of self approval is in some way lessened if a man by revealing the deed reaps the reward of its being talked about by others. But you see what the result of my innocence has been: instead of being rewarded for the good I did, I am punished for the evil I did not do. Was there ever any crime the clear admission of which made the judges so unanimously severe that none was moved to moderation either by the fallibility of man's mind or by that uncertainty of fortune common to all mortals? If I were accused of trying to burn down a temple or of sacrilegiously murdering priests, or of contriving the deaths of all good men, I should be punished, and rightly—but only having been present and tried, and either having confessed or been found guilty. But now I am condemned to death, my goods confiscate, for too zealously supporting the Senate, although I am nearly five hundred miles away and unable to speak in my own defence. Ah me! Surely I deserved that no one could possibly be convicted on a charge like this!

BOETHIUS

135 Cuius dignitatem reatus ipsi etiam qui detulere
 viderunt, quam uti alicuius sceleris admixtione
 fuscarent, ob ambitum dignitatis sacrilegio me con-
 scientiam polluisse mentiti sunt. Atqui et tu insita
 nobis omnem rerum mortalium cupidinem de nostri
 140 animi sede pellebas et sub tuis oculis sacrilegio locum
 esse fas non erat. Instillabas enim auribus cogita-
 tionibusque cotidie meis Pythagoricum illud *ἐπου*
θεῶν.¹ Nec conveniebat vilissimorum me spirituum
 praesidia captare quem tu in hanc excellentiam com-
 145 ponebas ut consimilem deo faceres. Praeterea
 penetral innocens domus, honestissimorum coetus
 amicorum, socer etiam sanctus et aequae ac tu ipsa²
 reverendus ab omni nos huius criminis suspitione de-
 fendunt. Sed, o nefas, illi vero de te tanti criminis
 150 fidem capiunt atque hoc ipso videbimur affines fuisse
 maleficio, quod tuis inbuti disciplinis, tuis instituti
 moribus sumus. Ita non est satis nihil mihi tuam
 profuisse reverentiam, nisi ultro tu mea potius offen-
 sione lacereris. At vero hic etiam nostris malis
 155 cumulus accedit, quod existimatio plurimorum non
 rerum merita sed fortunae spectat eventum eaque
 tantum iudicat esse provisam quae felicitas com-
 mendaverit. Quo fit ut existimatio bona prima
 omnium deserat infelices. Qui nunc populi rumores,
 160 quam dissonae multiplicesque sententiae, piget
 reminisci. Hoc tantum dixerim ultimam esse ad-
 versae fortunae sarcinam, quod dum miseris aliquod

¹ *θεῶν MSS.*

² *ipsa Sitzmannus : ipso MSS.*

^a Not strictly a Pythagorean saying, but one of the "ancient precepts" (*vetera praecepta*) of the Greeks, like "Know thyself," taken in by many philosophical schools; cf. Cicero, *De finibus*, iii. 73.

CONSOLATION I

Those who laid the charge know well its true worth. In order to smirch it with the stain of some foul deed, they lyingly alleged that I sullied my conscience in committing sacrilege in canvassing for high office. But you, Lady, dwelling in me, drove from my soul's depths all desire for mortal things, and to have made any room for sacrilege under your very eyes would have been wicked indeed, for daily you instilled into my ears and my mind the Pythagorean saying, 'Follow God' ^b Now would it have been fitting for me to grasp for the support of baser spirits, since you were preparing me for such excellence, that you might make me like to God. Besides, the fact that my house hides no guilty secrets deep within, my friendship with good men, and the uprightness of my father-in-law—for he is as much to be revered as you yourself—all these protect me against any suspicion of this crime. But *they* are so wickedly impious that it is actually from you that they derive their proof of this great charge: I shall appear to have been a close party to such a misdeed precisely because I am steeped in your learning and trained in your ways. So it is not enough that reverence for you shall have done me no good: you too must be abused because I have offended. And now, to add to all my troubles, I know that common opinion looks not at the true deserts of any case but regards only the outcome of fortune, and judges only such things well foreseen as success commends. The result is that their good reputation is the first thing the unfortunate lose. I hate to think what tales are going round among the people, how many different opinions, about my case. This only I would say, that the final burden imposed by adverse fortune is that while any poor wretch is

BOETHIUS

crimen affingitur, quae perferunt meruisse creduntur.
Et ego quidem bonis omnibus pulsus, dignitatibus
165 exutus, existimatione foedatus ob beneficium suppli-
cium tuli.

Videre autem videor nefarias sceleratorum officinas
gaudio laetitiaque fluitantes, perditissimum quemque
novis delationum fraudibus imminentem, iacere bonos
170 nostri discriminis terrore prostratos, flagitiosum quem-
que ad audendum quidem facinus impunitate, ad
efficiendum vero praemiis incitari, insontes autem
non modo securitate, verum ipsa etiam defensione
privatos. Itaque libet exclamare :

V

O stelliferi cōnditor orbis
Qui perpetuo nixus solio
Rapido caelum turbine versas
Legemque pati sidera cogis,
5 Ut nunc pleno lucida cornu
Totis fratris obvia flammis
Condat stellas luna minores,
Nunc obscuro pallida cornu
Phoebo propior lumina perdat,
10 Et qui primae tempore noctis
Agit argentes Hesperos ortus,
Solitas iterum mutet habenas
Phoebi pallens Lucifer ortu.
Tu frondifluae frigore brumae
15 Stringis lucem breviora mora :
Tu, cum fervida venerit aestas,
Agiles nocti dividis horas.
Tua vis varium temperat annum
Ut quas Boreae spiritus aufert

CONSOLATION I

charged with some crime, he is thought to deserve all that he suffers. So I now, deprived of all my goods, stripped of my honours, and the object of evil gossip, am punished for my good service. And I seem to see the wicked in their factories of crime wallowing in their evil delight, all the corrupt now plotting new false accusations, while good men cower in fear, terrified by what has happened to me. The base and wicked are encouraged to greater boldness by their impunity, to greater crimes by their rewards; and the innocent are deprived not only of safety but even of the chance to defend themselves. So I am moved to exclaim :

V

O Maker of the circle of the stars,
Seated on your eternal throne,
Spinner of the whirling heavens,
Binding the constellations by your law—
As at one time the shining moon with crescent full,
Reflecting all the sun her brother's fire.
Hides all the lesser stars,
And at another closer to Phoebus pales
And loses all her light, her crescent dark ;
Or when, at fall of night,
Venus, as evening star, arises cold,
And then, as morning star, paling at sunrise,
Changes again her long-accustomed role ;—
You with the winter's cold when leaves pour down
Draw in the short day's light ;
You when the summer comes aflame
Hasten the passing of the night's swift hours.
The changing year is ordered by your power,
So that the leaves the north wind strips away

BOETHIUS

- 20 Revehat mites Zephyrus frondes
 Quaeque Arcturus semina vidit
 Sirius altas urat segetes.
 Nihil antiqua lege solutum
 Linqvit propriae stationis opus.
- 25 Omnia certo fine gubernans
 Hominum solos respuis actus
 Merito rector cohibere modo.
 Nam cur tantas lubrica versat
 Fortuna vices? Premit insontes
- 30 Debita sceleri noxia poena,
 At perversi resident celso
 Mores solio sanctaque calcant
 Iniusta vice colla nocentes.
 Latet obscuris condita virtus
- 35 Clara tenebris iustusque tulit
 Crimen iniqui.
 Nil periuria, nil nocet ipsis
 Fraus mendaci compta colore.
 Sed cum libuit viribus uti,
- 40 Quos innumeri metuunt populi
 Summos gaudent subdere reges.
 O iam miseras respice terras
 Quisquis rerum foedera nectis.
 Operis tanti pars non vilis
- 45 Homines quatimur fortunae salo.
 Rapidos rector comprime fluctus
 Et quo caelum regis immensum
 Firma stabiles foedere terras.”

V

Haec ubi continuato dolore delatravi, illa vultu placido nihilque meis questibus mota: “Cum te,”

CONSOLATION I

The west wind brings again in gentleness,
And what Arcturus saw as sleeping seed
As tall crops under Sirius burn dry.
Nothing escapes your ancient ordering
Or fails its proper office to fulfil.
With a sure purpose ruling and guiding all,
Man's acts alone
You will not, though you rightly could, constrain.
Why else does slippery fortune change so much ?
The innocent endure the pains
That are the proper penalties of crime,
And evil ways sit in the thrones of kings,
And wicked men in unjust recompense
Trample beneath their heels the necks of the good.
Virtue's clear brightness lies obscured
In darkness hidden, and the just man bears
The unjust's calumnies.
Their perjuries hurt them not, nor their deceit,
Decked in false colours ;
And when they please to use their power,
Then they delight to overcome great kings
Whom countless peoples fear.
Look on this wretched earth,
Whoever you are who bind the world with law !
Of that great work far from the meanest part
We men are buffeted by fortune's seas.
Ruler, restrain their rushing waves and make the earth
Steady with that stability of law
By which you rule the vastness of the heavens.

V

When I had done thus baying my unabated grief,
she said, with a calm expression, unaffected by my

BOETHIUS

inquit, "maestum lacrimantemque vidissem, ilico miserum exulemque cognovi. Sed quam id longin-
5 quum esset exilium, nisi tua prodidisset oratio, nesciebam. Sed tu quam procul a patria non quidem pulsus es sed aberrasti; ac si te pulsum existimari mavis, te potius ipse pepulisti. Nam id quidem de te numquam cuiquam fas fuisset. Si enim cuius
10 oriundus sis patriae reminiscare, non uti Atheniensium quondam multitudinis imperio regitur, sed

εἰς κοίρανος ἔστω, εἰς βασιλεύς

qui frequentia civium non depulsione laetetur; cuius
agi frenis atque obtemperare iustitiae summa libertas
15 est. An ignoras illam tuae civitatis antiquissimam legem, qua sanctum est ei ius exulare non esse quisquis in ea sedem fundare maluerit? Nam qui vallo eius ac munimine continetur, nullus metus est ne exul esse mereatur. At quisquis eam inhabitare velle
20 desierit, pariter desinit etiam mereri. Itaque non tam me loci huius quam tua facies movet nec bibliothecae potius comptos ebore ac vitro parietes quam tuae mentis sedem requiro, in qua non libros sed id quod libris pretium facit, librorum quondam meorum
25 sententias, collocavi. Et tu quidem de tuis in commune bonum meritis vera quidem, sed pro multitudine gestorum tibi pauca dixisti. De obiectorum tibi vel honestate vel falsitate cunctis nota memorasti. De sceleribus fraudibusque delatorum recte tu quidem
30 strictim attingendum putasti, quod ea melius uberius-

^a Homer, *Iliad*, ii. 204-205. *εἰς κοίρανος ἔστω*, | *εἰς βασιλεύς*.

CONSOLATION I

complaining : “ When I saw you weeping in your grief I knew at once that you were wretchedly banished ; but how remote was that banishment I should not have known if your speech had not told me. But how far from your homeland have you strayed ! Strayed, not been driven, I say ; or if you prefer to be thought of as driven, then how far have you driven yourself ! For in your case it could never have rightly been possible for anyone else to do this. You must remember what your native country is : not one like that of the old Athenians, governed by the rule of the many, but “ there is one ruler, one king,”^a who delights in associating with his subjects, not in driving them out ; to be guided by his hand and obey his justice is true freedom. Surely you know the ancient and fundamental law of your city, by which it is ordained that it is not right to exile one who has chosen to dwell there ? No one who is settled within her walls and fortifications need ever fear the punishment of banishment : but whoever ceases to desire to live there has thereby ceased to deserve to do so. So I am moved more by the sight of you than of this place. I seek not so much a library with its walls ornamented with ivory and glass, as the storeroom of your mind, in which I have laid up not books, but what makes them of any value, the opinions set down in my books in times past. Now what *you* have said about your services to the common good is true, though you have mentioned but few of the great number of things you have done. The state of honesty, or rather the well-known dishonesty of the accusations against you, you have spoken of. You were of course right to think that you only needed to touch briefly on your accusers’ crimes and deceits,

BOETHIUS

que recognoscentis omnia vulgi ore celebrentur.
Increpuisti etiam vehementer iniusti factum senatus.
De nostra etiam criminatione doluisti, laesae quoque
opinionis damna fleuisti. Postremus adversum fortu-
35 nam dolor incanduit conquestusque non aequa meritis
praemia pensari, in extremo Musae saevientis, uti
quae caelum terras quoque pax regeret, vota posuisti.
Sed quoniam plurimus tibi affectuum tumultus in-
cubuit diversumque te dolor, ira, maeror distrahunt,
40 uti nunc mentis es, nondum te validiora remedia con-
tingunt. Itaque lenioribus paulisper utemur, ut
quae in tumorem perturbationibus influentibus in-
duruerunt, ad acrioris vim medicaminis recipiendum
tactu blandiore mollescant.

VI

Cum Phoebi radiis grave
Cancris sidus inaestuat,
Tum qui larga negantibus
Sulcis semina credidit,
5 Elusus Cereris fide
Quernas pergat ad arbores.
Numquam purpureum nemus
Lecturus violas petas
Cum saevis aquilonibus
10 Stridens campus inhorruit,
Nec quaeras avida manu
Vernos stringere palmites,
Uvis si libeat frui ;

CONSOLATION I

since they are all common topics of gossip among ordinary people who recall them better and in fuller detail. You have been more forceful in complaining of the unjust actions of the Senate. And you have bewailed the fact that I too am included under the charge, you have wept for the harm done to my reputation. In the end your grief flared against your ill fortune, and complaining that your rewards were not equal to your deserts you prayed at the end of your outpourings in verse that that peace which governs heaven might also govern earth. But since you are buffeted by a tumult of different emotions, and grief and anger and sorrow pull you in different directions, for that is the state you are in, you are not yet ready for strong medicines, so we shall for a little use milder ones, so that by our gentler touch what has swollen hard under the influence of all these passions and worries may soften and become fit to be treated with a sharper, stronger physic.

VI

When heavy Cancer burns
Under the rays of the sun,
He who then sows his seed
In unreceiving furrows
Must, cheated of grain, go look
For acorns under oak trees.
Never would you seek in reddening woods
To gather violets,
When grasses shake their rustling spears
Under the fierce north winds.
Nor if you want full grapes would you greedily seek
To prune the vine in spring :

BOETHIUS

15 Autumno potius sua
 Bacchus munera contulit.
 Signat tempora propriis
 Aptans officiis deus
 Nec quas ipse coercuit
 Misceri patitur vices.
20 Sic quod praecipiti via
 Certum deserit ordinem
 Laetos non habet exitus.

VI

Primum igitur paterisne me pauculis rogationibus statum tuae mentis attingere atque temptare, ut qui modus sit tuae curationis intellegam? "Tu vero arbitrato," inquam, "tuo quae voles ut responsum rogato." Tum illa: "Huncine," inquit, "mundum temerariis agi fortuitisque casibus putas, an ullum credis ei regimen inesse rationis?" "Atqui," inquam, "nullo existimaverim modo ut fortuita temeritate tam certa moveantur, verum operi suo
10 conditorem praesidere deum scio nec umquam fuerit dies qui me ab hac sententiae veritate depellat."

"Ita est," inquit. "Nam id etiam paulo ante cecidisti, hominesque tantum divinae exsortes curae esse deplorasti. Nam de ceteris quin ratione regerentur,
15 nihil movebare. Papae autem! Vehementer admiror cur in tam salubri sententia locatus aegrotas. Verum altius perscrutemur; nescio quid abesse coniecto.

Sed dic mihi, quoniam <a> deo mundum regi non

CONSOLATION I

Bacchus confers his gifts
In autumn rather.
God marks out the seasons
Each for its proper duty ;
Nor does he suffer the order he has fixed
To be disturbed.

So, whatever deserts that order
Rushing headlong
Comes to no happy ending.

VI

“ Now first of all, will you let me ask a few simple questions, to probe and test the state of your mind, so as to learn what kind of cure is best for your condition ? ” “ Ask what you will, as you think right,” I replied, “ and I will answer.” “ Do you think, then,” she said, “ that this world is run by random and chance events, or do you believe that it is rationally directed ? ” “ Well, I could never imagine,” I replied, “ that anything so regular was moved at random or by chance ; I know that God the creator watches over and directs his work, nor could there ever be such a time as would deprive me of the certainty of that truth.” “ Good,” she said. “ That is just what you spoke of a little time ago in your verse, when you complained that man alone fell outside the sphere of God’s watchful care, for you were sure enough that all the rest was governed by reason. But I am really astonished that you should sicken, holding as you do such a healthy opinion ! But, let us look into this more deeply ; something is missing, I think. Now tell me, since you are not in any doubt that the world is guided by God, do you

BOETHIUS

ambigis, quibus etiam gubernaculis regatur advertis ?

20 " Vix," inquam, " rogationis tuae sententiam nosco, nedum ad inquisita respondere queam." " Num me," inquit, " fefellit abesse aliquid, per quod, velut hiantae valli robore, in animum tuum perturbationum morbus inreperit ? Sed dic mihi, meministine, quis

25 sit rerum finis, quoque totius naturae tendat intentio ? "

" Audieram," inquam, " sed memoriam maeror hebetavit." " Atqui scis unde cuncta processerint ? "

" Novi," inquam, deumque esse respondi. " Et qui fieri potest, ut principio cognito quis sit rerum finis
30 ignores ? Verum hi perturbationum mores, ea valentia est, ut movere quidem loco hominem possint, convellere autem sibique totum extirpare non possint.

Sed hoc quoque respondeas velim, hominemne te esse meministi ? " " Quidni," inquam, " meminerim ? "

35 " Quid igitur homo sit, poterisne proferre ? " " Hocine interrogas an esse me sciam rationale animal atque mortale ? Scio et id me esse confiteor." Et illa : " Nihilne aliud te esse novisti ? " " Nihil."

" Iam scio," inquit, " morbi tui aliam vel maximam
40 causam ; quid ipse sis, nosse desisti. Quare plenissime vel aegritudinis tuae rationem vel aditum reconciliandae sospitatis inveni. Nam quoniam tui oblivione confunderis, et exsulem te et exspoliatum propriis bonis esse doluisti. Quoniam vero quis sit rerum finis

CONSOLATION I

perceive what kind of governance it is guided by ? ”
“ I can scarcely understand your meaning,” I said,
“ much less answer the question.” “ I was not mis-
taken, was I, when I said that something was missing,
leaving as it were a crack in a strong wall, through
which the sickness of your troubles stole into your
mind ? But tell me, do you remember what is the
end of all things, towards what purpose does the
whole universe aim and move ? ”

“ I heard it once,” I said, “ but pain and grief have
weakened my memory.”

“ But at least you know where all things have
come from ? ”

“ Yes ; ” and I said they came from God.

“ Then since you know their origin, how can you
not know their end ? The nature and strength of
these troubles is such that they can dislodge a man,
but they cannot tear him out and completely uproot
him. Now I should like you to answer this : you
are aware that you are a man ? ”

“ How could I not be ? ”

“ Then can you say, what is a man ? ”

“ Are you asking me if I know that I am a mortal,
rational animal ? I do know that, and admit to being
such.”

“ And you do not know that you are anything
more ? ”

“ I am nothing more.”

“ Now I know,” she said, “ that other, more serious
cause of your sickness : you have forgotten what you
are. So I really understand why you are ill and how
to cure you. For because you are wandering, forget-
ful of your real self, you grieve that you are an exile
and stripped of your goods ; since indeed you do not

BOETHIUS

45 ignoras, nequam homines atque nefarios potentes
felicisque arbitraris. Quoniam vero quibus gubernaculis
mundus regatur oblitus es, has fortunarum vices
aestimassine rectore fluitare—magnae non ad morbum
modo verum ad interitum quoque causae. Sed sospi-
50 tatis auctori grates, quod te nondum totum natura
destituit. Habemus maximum tuae fomitem salutis
veram de mundi gubernatione sententiam, quod eam
non casuum temeritati sed divinae rationi subditam
credis. Nihil igitur pertimescas; iam tibi ex hac
55 minima scintillula vitalis calor inluxerit. Sed quoniam
firmioribus remediis nondum tempus est et eam men-
tium constat esse naturam, ut quotiens abiecerint
veras falsis opinionibus induantur ex quibus orta per-
turbationum caligo verum illum confundit intuitum,
60 hanc paulisper lenibus mediocribusque fomentis at-
tenuare temptabo, ut dimotis fallacium affectionum
tenebris splendorem verae lucis possis agnoscere.

VII

Nubibus atris
Condita nullum
Fundere possunt
Sidera lumen.
5 Si mare volvens
Turbidus Auster
Misceat aestum,
Vitrea dudum
Parque serenis
10 Unda diebus
Mox resoluta
Sordida caeno
Visibus obstat.

CONSOLATION I

know the goal and end of all things, you think that evil and wicked men are fortunate and powerful ; since indeed you have forgotten what sort of governance the world is guided by, you think these fluctuations of fortune uncontrolled. All these are quite enough to cause not merely sickness but even death. But I think the author of all health that you have not yet wholly lost your true nature. The best kindler of your health we have is your true opinion of the governance of the world, that you believe it to be subject not to the randomness of chance events but to divine reason ; do not be afraid, then, for presently out of this tiny spark your vital warmth will glow again. But it is not yet time for strong medicines. Men's minds are obviously such that when they lose true opinions they have to take up false ones, and then a fog arises from these false ideas, which obscures that true vision. So I shall try for a while with gentle and moderate applications to lessen that fog, so that when the darkness of those deceptive ideas is removed, you may be able to recognize the glory of the light of truth.

VII

Stars in the dark clouds hid
Can give no light.
When the south wind's storm
Stirs up the rolling breakers of the sea,
The wave once glass-clear, calm
As settled days,
Now muddied with the stirred-up bottom
sand
Obscures our sight.

BOETHIUS

15 Quique vagatur
 Montibus altis
 Defluus amnis,
 Saepe resistit
 Rupe soluti
 Obice saxi.
20 Tu quoque si vis
 Lumine claro
 Cernere verum,
 Tramite recto
 Carpere callem,
25 Gaudia pelle,
 Pelle timorem
 Spemque fugato
 Nec dolor adsit.
 Nubila mens est
30 Vinctaque frenis,
 Haec ubi regnant.”

CONSOLATION I

A river wandering down the hills
Can be dammed and stopped by fallen rock
From the high crags.
You too, if you want
Clearly to see the truth
And to walk the right road straight,
Cast out joy,
Cast out fear,
Rid yourself of hope and grief.
The mind is clouded, checked,
Where these hold sway.

ANICII MANLII SEVERINI BOETHII

V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. PATRICII

PHILOSOPHIAE CONSOLA-
TIONIS

LIBER PRIMUS EXPLICIT

INCIPIT LIBER II

I

Post haec paulisper obticuit atque ubi attentionem
meam modesta taciturnitate collegit, sic exorsa est :
“ Si penitus aegritudinis tuae causas habitumque
cognovi, fortunae prioris affectu desiderioque tabescis.
5 Ea tantum animi tui sicuti tu tibi fingis mutata per-
vertit. Intellego multiformes illius prodigii fucos et
eo usque cum his quos eludere nititur blandissimam
familiaritatem, dum intolerabili dolore confundat quos
insperata reliquerit. Cuius si naturam mores ac
10 meritum reminiscare, nec habuisse te in ea pulchrum
aliquid nec amisisse cognosces, sed ut arbitror haud
multum tibi haec in memoriam revocare laboraverim.
Solebas enim praesentem quoque blandientemque
virilibus incessere verbis eamque de nostro adyto
15 prolatis insectabare sententiis. Verum omnis subita

BOETHIUS
THE CONSOLATION OF
PHILOSOPHY
BOOK II

I

THEN she was silent for a little, and having gained my attention by her quiet modesty, she began thus :
“ If I have properly understood the causes and the nature of your sickness, you are faint with desire and longing for your previous good fortune. It is simply the change in your fortune, you imagine, which has so much cast down your spirit. I know the many kinds of tricks of that monster, fortune, and especially her charming and friendly manner with those she is trying to cheat, when she crushes with unbearable grief those whom she leaves when they least expect it. If you will just recall what she is and how she behaves, and her true worth, you will recognize that you never had anything worth having at her hands nor have you lost anything. I do not think I should have to work very hard to make you remember this. After all, when she was with you, smiling on you, you used to attack her with firm language and chase her with arguments produced from our very sanctuary. But

BOETHIUS

mutatio rerum non sine quodam quasi fluctu contingit
animorum ; sic factum est ut tu quoque paulisper
a tua tranquillitate descisceres. Sed tempus est
haurire te aliquid ac degustare molle atque iucundum
20 quod ad interiora transmissum validioribus haustibus
viam fecerit. Adsit igitur Rhetoricae suadela dulce-
dinis quae tum tantum recto calle procedit, cum
nostra instituta non deserit cumque hac Musica laris
nostri vernacula nunc leviores nunc graviores modos
25 succinat.

Quid est igitur o homo quod te in maestitiam
luctumque deiecit ? Novum, credo, aliquid inusita-
tumque vidisti. Tu fortunam putas erga te esse
mutatam ; erras. Hi semper eius mores sunt ista
30 natura. Servavit circa te propriam potius in ipsa
sui mutabilitate constantiam. Talis erat cum
blandiebatur, cum tibi falsae inlecebris felicitatis
alluderet. Deprehendisti caeci numinis ambiguos
vultus. Quae sese adhuc velat aliis, tota tibi prorsus
35 innotuit. Si probas, utere moribus ; ne queraris. Si
perfidiam perhorrescis, sperne atque abice pernicio-
samente. Nam quae nunc tibi est tanti causa
maeroris, haec eadem tranquillitatis esse debuisset.
Reliquit enim te quam non relicturam nemo umquam
40 poterit esse securus. An vero tu pretiosam aestimas
abituram felicitatem ? Et cara tibi est fortuna
praesens nec manendi fida et cum discesserit adlatura
maerorem ? Quod si nec ex arbitrio retineri potest
176

CONSOLATION II

such a sudden and complete change in a man's affairs does not happen without some sort of disturbance of the mind, and so even you have fallen for a little while from your proper serenity. But now it is time for you to take some gentle and pleasant physic, which taken and absorbed will prepare you to take stronger medicines. So let us use the sweet persuasiveness of rhetoric, which can only be kept on the right path if it does not swerve from our precepts, and if it harmonizes, now in a lighter, now in a graver mood, with the music native to our halls.

What then is it, man, that has cast you down so that you weep and wail so much? You have had an unusual shock, I think. You imagine that fortune's attitude to you has changed; you are wrong. Such was always her way, such is her nature. Instead, all she has done in your case is remain constant to her own inconstancy; she was just the same when she was smiling, when she deluded you with the allurements of her false happiness. You have merely discovered the changing face of that blind power: she who still conceals herself from others has completely revealed herself to you. If you like her, follow her ways without complaint. If you abhor her treachery, spurn and reject her, that sports so to a man's destruction. She, you think, is the cause of your great sorrow. Yet that same fortune should have set your heart at rest. For she has left you; and no-one will ever be able to feel sure that she is not going to leave him. Or do you think that happiness precious, which you are bound to lose? Is fortune so dear to you, while she is with you, although she cannot be trusted to stay with you, and will bring you sorrow when she leaves you? But if she cannot be held fast by your

BOETHIUS

et calamitosos fugiens facit, quid est aliud fugax
45 quam futurae quoddam calamitatis indicium? Neque
enim quod ante oculos situm est, suffecerit intueri;
rerum exitus prudentia metitur eademque in alterutro
mutabilitas nec formidandas fortunae minas nec
exoptandas facit esse blanditias. Postremo aequo
50 animo tolere oportet quidquid intra fortunae aream
geritur, cum semel iugo eius colla submiseris. Quod
si manendi abeundique scribere legem velis ei quam
tu tibi dominam sponte legisti, nonne iniurius fueris
et impatientia sortem exacerbes quam permutare non
55 possis? Si ventis vela committeres, non quo voluntas
peteret sed quo flatus impellerent, promoveres; si
arvis semina crederes, feraces inter se annos ste-
rilesque pensares. Fortunae te regendum dedisti;
dominae moribus oportet obtemperes. Tu vero
60 volventis rotae impetum retinere conaris? At,
omnium mortalium stolidissime, si manere incipit,
fors esse desistit.

I

Haec cum superba verterit vices dextra
Et aestuantis more fertur Euripi,
Dudum tremendos saeva proterit reges
Humilemque victi sublevat fallax vultum
5 Non illa miseros audit aut curat fletus

^a *Euripus*: the narrow strait which separates Euboea from Boeotia, or any strait in which the tidal currents flow strongly and variably.

CONSOLATION II

willing it, and makes those she flees from miserable, what is this fleeting goddess but a sure sign of misery to come? It is never enough for a man to contemplate what is before his eyes : prudence must measure up how things will work out in future, and the very changeableness and ambiguity of the future render impotent the threats of fortune to inspire fear and her flattery to awaken desire for it. Lastly, once you have submitted your neck to her yoke, you must calmly bear whatever happens to you on fortune's own ground. And if you wanted to lay down rules for her whom you have freely chosen as your mistress, how long to stay and when to go, would you not be wrong and would you not make your own lot, which you could not change, much worse because of your impatience? If you spread your sails for the wind, you must go where the wind takes you, not where you wish to go; when you cast your seed on the ground, you must weigh the barren years against the good. You have given yourself over to fortune's rule : you must accommodate yourself to your mistress's ways. Will you really try to stop the whirl of her turning wheel? Why, you are the biggest fool alive—if it once stop, it ceases to be the wheel of fortune.

I

So with imperious hand she turns the wheel of change
This way and that like the ebb and flow of the tide,^a
And pitiless tramples down those once dread kings,
Raising the lowly face of the conquered—
Only to mock him in his turn ;
Careless she neither hears nor heeds the cries
Of miserable men : she laughs

BOETHIUS

Ultroque gemitus dura quos fecit ridet.
Sic illa ludit, sic suas probat vires
Magnumque suis demonstrat¹ ostentum, si quis
Visatur una stratus ac felix hora.

II

Vellem autem pauca tecum fortunae ipsius verbis
agitare. Tu igitur an ius postulet, animadvertete.
' Quid tu homo ream me cotidianis agis querelis?
Quam tibi fecimus iniuriam? Quae tua tibi detraxi-
5 mus bona? Quovis iudice de opum dignitatumque
mecum possessione contende. Et si cuiusquam
mortalium proprium quid horum esse monstraveris,
ego iam tua fuisse quae repetis, sponte concedam.

Cum te matris utero natura produxit, nudum rebus
10 omnibus inopemque suscepi, meis opibus fovi et
quod te nunc impatientem nostri facit, favore prona
indulgentius educavi, omnium quae mei iuris sunt
affluentia et splendore circumdedi. Nunc mihi
retrahere manum libet. Habes gratiam velut usus
15 alienis, non habes ius querelae tamquam prorsus tua
perdideris. Quid igitur ingemiscis? Nulla tibi a
nobis est allata violentia. Opes honores ceteraque
talium mei sunt iuris. Dominam famulae cognoscunt;
mecum veniunt, me abeunte discedunt. Audacter
20 adfirmem, si tua forent quae amissa conquereris nullo

¹ monstrat *MSS.*

CONSOLATION II

At the groans that she herself has mercilessly caused.
So she sports, so she proves her power,
Showing a mighty marvel to her subjects, when
The self-same hour
Sees a man first successful, then cast down.

II

But I should like to deal with you for a moment in fortune's own words ; and do you think whether she is not right. " Why, man, do you daily complain against me," she says, " what hurt have I done you ? What goods of yours have I taken from you ? Contest with me the possession of wealth and office before any judge, and if you can show that any such thing is the property of any mortal, I shall immediately and perfectly readily grant that those things you want back were indeed yours. When nature brought you out of your mother's womb, I accepted you, naked and poor in all respects ; I supported you, and, ready to be kind to you, even pampered you with my wealth, and over-indulgently spoiled you—which is precisely why you are now so angry with me. I surrounded you with every kind of affluence and splendour within my power. Now I am pleased to draw back my hand. You should thank me, as having enjoyed the use of what was not yours, not complain as if you had lost something of your own. Now why lament ? I have done no violence to you. Wealth and honours and other such are under my control, they are my handmaids ; knowing their mistress, they come, and they go, with me. I may say quite firmly that if those things the loss of which you complain of were really yours, you would never have lost

BOETHIUS

modo perdidisses. An ego sola meum ius exercere prohibebor? Licet caelo proferre lucidos dies eosdemque tenebrosis noctibus condere. Licet anno terrae vultum nunc floribus frugibusque redimire, nunc
 25 nimbis frigoribusque confundere. Ius est mari nunc strato aequore blandiri, nunc procellis ac fluctibus inhorrescere. Nos ad constantiam nostris moribus alienam inexpleta hominum cupiditas alligabit? Haec nostra vis est, hunc continuum ludum ludimus; rotam
 30 volubili orbe versamus, infima summis summa infimis mutare gaudemus. Ascende si placet, sed ea lege ne utique¹ cum ludicri mei ratio poscet, descendere iniuriam putes. An tu mores ignorabas meos? Nesciebas Croesum regem Lydorum Cyro paulo ante
 35 formidabilem mox deinde miserandum rogi flammis traditum misso caelitus imbres defensum? Num te praeterit Paulum Persi regis a se capti calamitatibus pias inpendisse lacrimas? Quid tragoediarum clamor aliud deflet nisi indiscreto ictu fortunam felicia regna
 40 vertentem? Nonne adulescentulus *δοιοῦς πίθους τὸν μὲν ἕνα κακῶν τὸν δ' ἕτερον εἰάων* in Iovis limine iacere didicisti? Quid si uberius de bonorum parte sumpsisti? Quid si a te non tota discessi? Quid si haec ipsa mei mutabilitas iusta tibi causa est sperandi
 45 meliora? Tamen ne animo contabescas et intra commune omnibus regnum locatus proprio vivere iure desideres.

¹ utique *Klussmann*; uti *MSS.*

^a Cf. Bacchylides iii. 23-62; Herodotus i. 86-87.

^b Cf. Livy xlv. 7; but the story is probably from Pacuvius's *fabula praetexta* (Roman play) *Paulus*, based on the victory of L. Aemilius Paulus over the king of Macedon, Perseus, in 168 B.C.

^c Homer, *Iliad*, xxiv. 527.

CONSOLATION II

them. Or will I alone be not allowed to exercise my rights? The sky may bring forth clear days, and then hide them in the darkness of night; the year may weave a crown of flowers and fruits for the face of the earth, and then confuse and obscure her features with rain and frost; the sea has a right to smile with a smooth stillness, and then shudder and rise with storms and great waves. But I, shall I be bound by the insatiable desire of men to a constancy quite foreign to my nature? For this is my nature, this is my continual game: turning my wheel swiftly I delight to bring low what is on high, to raise high what is down. Go up, if you will, but on this condition, that you do not really think it a wrong to have to go down again whenever the course of my sport demands. You were hardly unaware in my ways! Did you not know the story of Croesus, the king of the Lydians; how he, not long before such a terror to Cyrus, was soon wretchedly given over to be burnt, but saved by a shower from heaven? ^a Have you forgotten how Aemilius Paulus, good man that he was, shed tears over the fate of King Perses, whom he had captured? ^b What else is the cry of tragedy but a lament that happy states are overthrown by the indiscriminate blows of fortune? Did you not learn as a youth that on Jupiter's threshold there stand "two jars, the evils in one, the blessings in the other"? ^c Suppose you have had more than your share of the goods; suppose I have not altogether deserted you; and suppose that this very changeableness of mine is a fair cause for you to hope for better things to come: still you must neither pine away, nor, set as you are in a kingdom which embraces all men, desire to live under a law peculiar to yourself.

BOETHIUS

II

- Si quantas rapidis flatibus incitus
Pontus versat harenas
Aut quot stelliferis edita noctibus
Caelo sidera fulgent
5 Tantas fundat opes nec retrahat manum
Pleno copia cornu,
Humanum miseris haud ideo genus
Cesset flere querellas.
Quamvis vota libens excipiat deus
10 Multi prodigus auri
Et claris avidos ornet honoribus,
Nil iam parta videntur,
Sed quaesita vorans saeva rapacitas
Alios¹ pandit hiatus.
15 Quae iam praecipitem frena cupidinem
Certo fine retentent,
Largis cum potius muneribus fluens
Sitis ardescit habendi?
Numquam dives agit qui trepidus gemens
20 Sese credit egentem.'

III

His igitur si pro se tecum fortuna loqueretur, quid profecto contra hisceres non haberes, aut si quid est quo querelam tuam iure tuearis, proferas oportet. Dabimus dicendi locum." Tum ego: "Speciosa
5 quidem ista sunt," inquam, "oblitaque Rhetoricae ac Musicae melle dulcedinis; tum tantum, cum audiuntur, oblectant. Sed miseris malorum altior sensus est. Itaque cum haec auribus insonare desierint,

¹ *altos vulg. ; alios the best MSS.*

CONSOLATION II

II

Should Plenty pour from cornucopia full
As much in riches as the sand
Stirred up by wind-whipped seas, or as the countless
stars
That shine in a clear night sky,
And never stay her hand,
Still would mankind not cease
Complaining of their wretchedness.
Even were God with much gold prodigal,
Answering men's prayers,
And heaped bright honours on those wanting them,
Their gains would seem to them
Nothing : ever their cruel gain-devouring greed
Opens new maws. What curbs
Could check within firm bounds this headlong lust,
When even in those whose wealth is overflowing
The thirst for gain still burns ?
He is never rich
Who trembles and sighs, thinking himself in need."

III

Now if fortune spoke to you in this way in her own defence, you would not know what to reply, would you ? If indeed you do have anything to say that would justify your complaints, you must utter it—you shall have your chance to speak now."

"Such arguments," I said, "have a specious sweetness, honeyed as they are with rhetoric and music. While a man listens to them, they please him, wretched though he is, but his sense of his wrongs lies deeper, so that once they cease to sound in his

BOETHIUS

insitus animum maeror praegravat." Et illa : " Ita
10 est," inquit. " Haec enim nondum morbi tui remedia
sed adhuc contumacis adversum curationem doloris
fomenta quaedam sunt. Nam quae in profundum
sese penetrent, cum tempestivum fuerit admovebo.
Verumtamen ne te existimari miserum velis, an
15 numerum modumque tuae felicitatis oblitus es ?

Taceo quod desolatum parente summorum te
virorum cura suscepit delectusque in affinitatem prin-
cipum civitatis, quod pretiosissimum propinquitatis
genus est, prius carus quam proximus esse coepisti.
20 Quis non te felicissimum cum tanto splendore soce-
rorum, cum coniugis pudore, cum masculae quoque
prolis opportunitate praedicavit ? Praetereo, libet
enim praeterire communia, sumptas in adolescentia
negatas senibus dignitates ; ad singularem felicitatis
25 tuae cumulum venire delectat. Si quis rerum mortal-
ium fructus ullum beatitudinis pondus habet, poteritne
illius memoria lucis quantalibet ingruentium malorum
mole deleri, cum duos pariter consules liberos tuos
domo provehi sub frequentia patrum, sub plebis
30 alacritate vidisti, cum eisdem in curia curules in-
sidentibus tu regiae laudis orator ingenii gloriam
facundiaeque meruisti, cum in circo duorum medius
consulum circumfusae multitudinis expectationem
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CONSOLATION II

ears he is oppressed again by the grief deep in his heart."

"That is so," she replied; "for they are not yet intended to be a cure for your ills, but just a sort of poultice for your hurt, which stubbornly resists curing. I shall apply more deeply penetrating remedies when the right time comes. Yet there is no reason why you should want to be pitied. Have you forgotten the number and the extent of your blessings? I shall not mention the fact that when you lost your own father you were cared for by men of the highest rank, and being chosen to become kin to the first men in the state, which is the most valuable kind of kinship, you became dear to them even before you were actually related by marriage. Who did not call you most happy, in having married into such a splendidly famous family, with such a chaste wife, and with the blessing of sons to follow you? I pass over also—for it is better to pass over what is common knowledge—the honours granted you in your youth, though denied to older men. I want to come to the very summit of your success, which was specially yours. If genuine happiness ever comes from the affairs of mortals, could the weight of any crowding ills, however great, obliterate the memory of that glory you experienced when you saw your two sons borne from your house together as consuls, in the crowd of Senators and the throng of the rejoicing populace; when you delivered the panegyric in praise of the king with them sitting in the curule chairs in the Senate House, and well deserved the praise you received for your splendid oratory; when between the two of them as consuls in the assembly you satisfied, with the largesse proper to a triumphal occasion, the

BOETHIUS

triumphali largitione satiasti? Dedisti ut opinor
35 verba fortunae, dum te illa demulcet, dum te ut
delicias suas fovet. Munus quod nulli umquam
privato commodaverat abstulisti. Visne igitur cum
fortuna calculum ponere? Nunc te primum liventi
oculo praestrinxit. Si numerum modumque laetorum
40 tristiumve consideres, adhuc te felicem negare non
possis. Quod si idcirco te fortunatum esse non
aestimas, quoniam quae tunc laeta videbantur abie-
runt, non est quod te miserum putes, quoniam quae
nunc creduntur maesta praetereunt. An tu in hanc
45 vitae scaenam nunc primum subitus hospesque ve-
nisti? Ullamne humanis rebus inesse constantiam
reris, cum ipsum saepe hominem velox hora dissolvat?
Nam etsi rara est fortuitis manendi fides, ultimus
tamen vitae dies mors quaedam fortunae est etiam
50 manentis. Quid igitur referre putas, tunc illam
moriendo deseras an te illa fugiendo?

III

Cum polo Phoebus roseis quadrigis
 Lucem spargere coeperit,
Pallet albentes hebetata vultus
 Flammis stella prementibus.
5 Cum nemus flatu zephyri tepentis
 Vernis inrubit rosis,
Spiret insanum nebulosus auster :
 Iam spinis abeat decus.

CONSOLATION II

hopes and expectations of the mob crowding round you? I suppose you made fine phrases for fortune then, when she caressed and cuddled you as her darling! You received such a gift as she had never before bestowed on a private citizen. Do you want to reckon up your account with her? Now is the first time she has glanced grudgingly on you. If you weighed up the number and the kinds of joyful and sad things that have happened to you, you could not deny that up to now you have been fortunate. And if you now think yourself unfortunate, because the things that then seemed joyful to you are passed away, that is really no reason why you should think yourself wretched, for those things that you now think so miserable also pass away. Do you now enter on the stage of this life for the first time, a newcomer and a stranger? Do you think there is some constancy in human affairs, when man himself is so swiftly removed from the scene by flying time? Even if a man can, very rarely, rely on the gifts of fortune remaining with him, yet the last day of his life is a death also for what fortune does remain. Do you think it matters, then, whether you leave fortune behind by dying, or she leaves you?

III

When Phoebus from his roseate car
Begins to spread his light across the sky,
His overwhelming fires
Dim the white faces of the paling stars.
Warmed by the west wind's gentle breath
The groves blush pink with roses in the spring;
Let but the stormy south wind madly blow
And the thorns are stripped of their loveliness.

BOETHIUS

- 10 Saepe tranquillo radiat sereno
Immotis mare fluctibus,
Saepe ferventes aquilo procellas
Verso concitat aequore.
Rara si constat sua forma mundo,
Si tantas variat vices,
15 Crede fortunis hominum caducis,
Bonis crede fugacibus.
Constat aeterna positumque lege est
Ut constet genitum nihil."

IV

- Tum ego: "Vera," inquam, "commemoras, o virtutum omnium nutrix, nec infigiari possum prosperitatis meae velocissimum cursum. Sed hoc est quod recolentem vehementius coquit. Nam in
5 omni adversitate fortunae infelicissimum est genus infortunii fuisse felicem." "Sed quod tu," inquit, "falsae opinionis supplicium luas, id rebus iure imputare non possis. Nam si te hoc inane nomen fortuitae felicitatis movet, quam pluribus maximisque
10 abundes mecum reputes licet. Igitur si quod in omni fortunae tuae censu pretiosissimum possidebas, id tibi divinitus inlaesum adhuc inviolatumque servatur, poterisne meliora quaeque retinens de infortunio iure causari?
- 15 Atqui viget incolumis illud pretiosissimum generis humani decus Symmachus socer et quod vitae pretio non segniter emeris, vir totus ex sapientia virtutibusque factus suarum securus tuis ingemiscit iniuriis. Vivit uxor ingenio modesta, pudicitia pudore praecellens
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CONSOLATION II

Sometimes the sea gleams calm, serene,
Unruffled ;
Sometimes the north wind whips up raging storms
And overturns the sea.
Earth's beauty seldom stays, but ever changes.
Go on, then : trust in the passing fortunes,
The fleeting pleasures of men !
It is decreed by firm, eternal law
Nothing that comes to be can firm remain."

IV

" Lady," I answered, " you who nurture all the virtues, what you say is true ; nor can I deny that I did enjoy, however briefly, great prosperity. But it is just that which most torments me, for in all the adversities of fortune, the most unhappy kind of misfortune is to have known happiness."

" But you cannot rightly blame anything else for the fact that you are punished for your own wrong ideas. For if you really take this empty notion of fortuitous happiness seriously, you should consider with me how much great good is still yours. So if by God's will that one of your possessions which in the whole reckoning of your fortune was most precious is still preserved unharmed and inviolate, can you, keeping all that is best, rightly talk of your misfortune ? First, your father-in-law, Symmachus, that most precious ornament of mankind, lives safely, and being a man wholly formed in wisdom and virtue (a state you would not be slow to purchase even at the cost of your life) and therefore without concern for his own troubles, he laments over yours. Then again, your wife lives, a good woman excelling in modesty

BOETHIUS

- 20 et, ut omnes eius dotes breviter includam, patri similis. Vivit inquam tibi que tantum vitae huius exosa spiritum servat quoque uno felicitatem minui tuam vel ipsa concesserim, tui desiderio lacrimis ac dolore tabescit.
- 25 Quid dicam liberos consulares quorum iam, ut in id aetatis pueris, vel paterni vel aviti specimen elucet ingenii? Cum igitur praecipua sit mortalibus vitae cura retinendae, o te si tua bona cognoscas felicem, cui suppetunt etiam nunc quae vita nemo dubitat
- 30 esse cariora! Quare sicca iam lacrimas. Nondum est ad unum omnes exosa fortuna nec tibi nimium valida tempestas incubuit, quando tenaces haerent ancorae quae nec praesentis solamen nec futuri spem temporis abesse patiantur."
- 35 "Et haereant," inquam, "precor; illis namque manentibus, utcumque se res habeant, enatabimus. Sed quantum ornamentis nostris decesserit, vides." Et illa: "Promovimus," inquit, "aliquantum, si te nondum totius tuae sortis piget. Sed delicias tuas
- 40 ferre non possum qui abesse aliquid tuae beatitudini tam luctuosus atque anxius conqueraris. Quis est enim tam compositae felicitatis ut non aliqua ex parte cum status sui qualitate rixetur? Anxia enim res est humanorum condicio bonorum et quae vel
- 45 numquam tota proveniat vel numquam perpetua subsistat. Huic census exuberat, sed est pudori degener sanguis; hunc nobilitas notum facit, sed angustia rei familiaris inclusus esse mallet ignotus.

CONSOLATION II

and propriety and—to sum up all her gifts in one phrase—a woman like her father ; she lives, I say, and goes on living though she detests this life, only for you—and I must admit that in this alone is your happiness lessened, that she is wasting away in tears in her grievous longing for you. Need I speak of your sons, both consuls, who already show, for children of their age, a likeness to their father's or grandfather's nature ? Now although it is men's special concern to preserve their own lives, are you not happy, if you recognize your blessings, you who still possess those things which no one doubts are dearer than life ? So now dry your tears. Fortune does not yet hate every single one of your family, nor has too violent a storm overwhelmed you, when those anchors still hold firm which ensure that neither present consolation nor future hope shall be wanting.”

“ I pray they may continue to hold firm,” said I. “ For so long as they are there, I shall not drown, whatever happens. But you can see how many of my former distinctions have disappeared.”

“ Come, we have taken a small step forward,” she said, “ if you are no longer grieved by the whole of your present state. But I cannot tolerate your luxuriating in your grief to such an extent, peevishly complaining that something is lacking in your happiness. For who is so completely happy that he does not find something to quarrel with in his own condition ? For the condition of human good fortune is never free from worry ; a man never wholly possesses it, nor does it last for ever. One man has a good deal of property, but is ashamed of his low birth ; another is known for his high birth, but prefers to remain ignored, shut in by his personal poverty. Another

BOETHIUS

Ille utroque circumfluus vitam caelibem deflet ; ille
50 nuptiis felix orbus liberis alieno censum nutrit heredi.
Alius prole laetatus filii filiaeve delictis maestus
inlacrimat. Idcirco nemo facile cum fortunae suae
condicione concordat ; inest enim singulis quod
inexpertus ignoret, expertus exhorreat. Adde quod
55 felicissimi cuiusque delicatissimus sensus est et nisi ad
nutum cuncta suppetant, omnis adversitatis insolens
minimis quibusque prosternitur ; adeo perexigua sunt
quae fortunatissimis beatitudinis summam detrahunt.
Quam multos esse coniectas qui sese caelo proximos
60 arbitrentur, si de fortunae tuae reliquiis pars eis
minima contingat ? Hic ipse locus quem tu exilium
vocas, incolentibus patria est ; adeo nihil est miserum
nisi cum putes contraque beata sors omnis est aequa-
nimitate tolerantis. Quis est ille tam felix qui cum
65 dederit impatientiae manus, statum suum mutare non
optet ? Quam multis amaritudinibus humanae felici-
tatis dulcedo respersa est ! Quae si etiam fruenti
iucunda esse videatur, tamen quo minus cum velit
abeat retineri non possit. Liquet igitur quam sit mor-
70 talium rerum misera beatitudo quae nec apud aequa-
nimos perpetua perdurat nec anxios tota delectat.

Quid igitur o mortales extra petitis intra vos po-
sitam felicitatem ? Error vos inscitiaeque confundit.
Ostendam breviter tibi summae cardinem felicitatis.

CONSOLATION II

is rich in both birth and property, but bewails his single state, while another is happily married but being childless preserves and increases his wealth for someone else's children to inherit ; and he who is blessed with children sadly weeps for his son's or daughter's faults. So, scarcely a man is easily happy with the state of his own fortunes ; in every case there are aspects unknown to those not experiencing them but dreadful to those who are. Consider also that he who is most happy is also the most delicately sensitive, so that unless everything is exactly as he wants it to be, he is so unused to any adversity that he is put out by even the least upset. Even the very tiniest thing can topple the most fortunate from the summit of their happiness. Think how many there are who would think themselves close to paradise if they possessed even the least part of what remains of your fortunes ! This place itself, which you call a place of exile, is home to those who live here. So nothing is miserable unless you think so, and on the other hand a man who bears all with contentment, finds every state a happy one. Who is so happy that once he gives in to discontent he would not choose to change his condition ? How many bitter troubles spoil with their spattering the sweetness of a man's happiness ! A happiness which even if it seem pleasant to a man when he enjoys it, yet cannot be prevented from passing when it will. So it is very clear how wretched is the happiness of mortal affairs, since it neither endures for the contented nor altogether satisfies the uneasy.

Why then do you mortals look outside for happiness when it is really to be found within yourselves ? Error and ignorance confuse you. Let me briefly show you

BOETHIUS

75 Estne aliquid tibi te ipso pretiosius? Nihil inquires.
Igitur si tui compos fueris, possidebis quod nec tu
amittere umquam velis nec fortuna possit auferre.
Atque ut agnoscas in his fortuitis rebus beatitudinem
constare non posse, sic collige. Si beatitudo est sum-
80 mum naturae bonum ratione degentis nec est summum
bonum quod eripi ullo modo potest, quoniam prae-
cellit id quod nequeat auferri, manifestum est quoniam¹
ad beatitudinem percipiendam fortunae instabilitas
adspirare non possit. Ad haec quem caduca ista
85 felicitas vehit vel scit eam vel nescit esse mutabilem.
Si nescit, quatenus beata sors esse potest ignorantiae
caecitate? Si scit, metuat necesse est, ne amittat
quod amitti posse non dubitat; quare continuus
timor non sinit esse felicem. An vel si amiserit,
90 neglegendum putat? Sic quoque perexile bonum
est quod aequo animo feratur amissum. Et quoniam
tu idem es cui persuasum atque insitum permultis
demonstrationibus scio mentes hominum nullo modo
esse mortales cumque clarum sit fortuitam felicitatem
95 corporis morte finiri, dubitari nequit, si haec afferre
beatitudinem potest, quin omne mortalium genus in
miseriam mortis fine labatur. Quod si multos scimus
beatitudinis fructum non morte solum verum etiam
doloribus suppliciisque quaesisse, quoniam modo prae-
100 sens facere beatos potest quae miseros transacta non
efficit?

¹ quin MSS.

CONSOLATION II

on what the greatest happiness really turns. Is anything more precious to you than yourself? Nothing, you will agree. If therefore you are in possession of yourself, you will possess that which you will never wish to lose, and which fortune cannot take away from you. Now to see that happiness cannot consist in the fortuitous things of this mortal life, look at it in this way. If happiness is the highest good of a rational nature, and that cannot be the highest good which can in any way be taken away—because clearly that which cannot be taken away is higher—then surely the instability of fortune cannot aspire to the attainment of happiness. Again, he who is borne up on this fallible happiness must either know or not know that it is changeable. If he does not know, can his state truly be a happy one in such blind ignorance? If he does know, he must fear that he may lose that which he knows can be lost, and his continual fear will prevent him being happy. Or does he think that when he does lose it, it does not matter? Then it must be an insignificant little good the loss of which he can bear so calmly! Now since you are still the same man who was deeply convinced by many proofs, as I know, that the minds of men are by no means mortal, and since it is obvious that the fortuitous happiness of the body is ended by death, you cannot now doubt that if such bodily pleasure can bring happiness, yet every kind of mortal thing falls into misery in the end, at death. But if we know that many have sought the enjoyment of happiness not simply through death but even through pain and suffering, how can this present life make them happy, when its being past does not make them miserable?

BOETHIUS

IV

Quisquis volet perennem
Cautus ponere sedem
Stabilisque nec sonori
Sterni flatibus Euri
5 Et fluctibus minantem
Curat spernere pontum,
Montis cacumen alti,
Bibulas vitet harenas.
Illud protervus Auster
10 Totis viribus urget,
Hae pendulum solutae
Pondus ferre recusant.
Fugiens periculosam
Sortem sedis amoenae
15 Humili domum memento
Certus figere saxo.
Quamvis tonet ruinis
Miscens aequora ventus,
Tu conditus quieti
20 Felix robore valli
Duces serenus aevum
Ridens aetheris iras.

V

Sed quoniam rationum iam in te mearum fomenta
descendunt, paulo validioribus utendum puto. Age
enim si iam caduca et momentaria fortunae dona non
essent, quid in eis est quod aut vestrum umquam
5 fieri queat aut non perspectum consideratumque
vilescat? Divitiaene vel vestrae¹ vel sui natura pre-

¹ vestrae P, T¹, V¹ (prob.): vestri V²; vestra the other
MSS.

CONSOLATION II

IV

The prudent man
Intending to build a house to last
Stable, not to be tumbled down
By the south-east wind with its noisy blast,
Nor crumbled by the sea
With its threatening waves,
Will avoid the mountain top
And the thirsty desert sand ;
The one is buffeted
By all the force of the violent south wind ;
The other shifts
And will not bear the heavy-hanging weight.
Run from the risks of a beautiful place
That might be dangerous.
Be careful, certain : build your house
On a low, rock base.
Then though the wind thunder and make
A ruinous turmoil of the troubled sea,
You, safe settled and content
Within your own strong walls,
Will quietly live your life
Smiling at all the anger of the skies.

V

But since you are now well warmed by the poultices of my arguments, I think it is now time to use rather stronger medicines. Come now, suppose that the gifts of fortune were not transient and purely temporary, is there any among them which could ever become truly yours or which on proper examination is not seen to be worthless ? Are riches either really

BOETHIUS

tiosae sunt? Quid earum potius, aurumne an vis
congesta pecuniae? Atqui haec effundendo magis
quam coacervando melius nitent, si quidem avaritia
10 semper odiosos, claros largitas facit. Quod si manere
apud quemque non potest quod transfertur in alterum,
tunc est pretiosa pecunia cum translata in alios
largiendi usu desinit possideri. At eadem si apud
unum quanta est ubique gentium congeratur, ceteros
15 sui inopes fecerit. Et vox quidem tota pariter
multorum replet auditum; vestrae vero divitiae nisi
comminutae in plures transire non possunt. Quod
cum factum est, pauperes necesse est faciant quos
relinquunt. O igitur angustas inopesque divitias
20 quas nec habere totas pluribus licet et ad quemlibet
sine ceterorum paupertate non veniunt! An gem-
marum fulgor oculos trahit? Sed si quid est in
hoc splendore praecipui, gemmarum est lux illa non
hominum, quas quidem mirari homines vehementer
25 admiror. Quid est enim carens animae motu atque
compage quod animatae rationabilique naturae pul-
chrum esse iure videatur? Quae tametsi conditoris
opera suique distinctione postremae aliquid pulchri-
tudinis trahunt, infra vestram tamen excellentiam
30 conlocatae admirationem vestram nullo modo mere-
bantur. An vos agrorum pulchritudo delectat?
Quidni? Est enim pulcherrimi operis pulchra portio.
Sic quondam sereni maris facie gaudemus; sic caelum

CONSOLATION II

yours or precious by their own nature ? If so, what part of them especially, the gold, or the piles of money ? But riches are more splendid in the spending than in the getting, since avarice makes men hated, but liberality makes them famous. Yet if that cannot remain with a man which passes to another, then money is precious just when it passes over to others, and in being liberally given ceases to be possessed. If all the money there is in the world were heaped together in one man's possession, it would make all the rest of men live in lack of it. The voice wholly fills the ears of many hearers simultaneously, but your riches cannot pass to many unless they are split into small parts first. When that is done, those who part with money must necessarily become poorer. Well then, O riches, how poor and mean you are ! You can neither be wholly possessed by many nor come to any man without impoverishing others !

Are your eyes attracted by glittering jewels ? But even if their sparkling is in any way wonderful, the light is the gems', not men's, and I am amazed that men admire them so. What is there, lacking the structure and movement of the living spirit, which a living, rational being could rightly think beautiful ? Although through the work of the Creator and because of their own peculiarities they have something of the lower kind of beauty, yet they are so far beneath your excellence as a man that they did not by any means deserve your admiration.

Does the beauty of the countryside delight you ? As why should it not ? It is a beautiful part of the whole creation, which is beautiful. So we sometimes take pleasure in the calm aspect of the sea, and so

BOETHIUS

sidera lunam solemque miramur. Num te horum
35 aliquid attingit? Num audes alicuius talium splendore gloriari? An vernis floribus ipse distingueris aut tua in aestivos fructus intumescit ubertas? Quid inanibus gaudiis raperis? Quid externa bona pro tuis amplexaris? Numquam tua faciet esse fortuna quae
40 a te natura rerum fecit aliena. Terrarum quidem fructus animantium procul dubio debentur alimentis. Sed si, quod naturae satis est, replere indigentiam velis, nihil est quod fortunae affluentiam petas. Paucis enim minimisque natura contenta est, cuius
45 satietatem si superfluis urgere velis, aut iniucundum quod infuderis fiet aut noxium. Iam vero pulchrum variis fulgere vestibis putas, quarum si grata intuitu species est, aut materiae naturam aut ingenium mirabor artificis. An vero te longus ordo famulorum
50 facit esse felicem? Qui si vitiosi moribus sint, perniciosa domus sarcina et ipsi domino vehementer inimica; sin vero probi, quonam modo in tuis opibus aliena probitas numerabitur? Ex quibus omnibus nihil horum quae tu in tuis computas bonis tuum esse
55 bonum liquido monstratur. Quibus si nihil inest appetendae pulchritudinis, quid est quod vel amissis doleas vel laeteris retentis? Quod si natura pulchra sunt, quid id tua refert? Nam haec per se a tuis quoque opibus sequestrata placuissent. Neque enim
60 idcirco sunt pretiosa quod in tuas venere divitias,

CONSOLATION II

also we admire the sky with its stars and the moon and the sun. Does any of these things belong to you? Dare you boast of the splendour of any of them? Are *you adorned with flowers in spring*? Is it *your* plenteousness which grows big with summer fruits? Why are you captivated by empty pleasures, why embrace external goods as though they were your own? Fortune will never make yours what nature has made otherwise. The fruits of the earth are surely intended for the sustenance of living things. But if you want to satisfy your needs, which is enough for nature, there is no need to ask fortune for abundance. For nature is content with few things and small: if you want to overlay that satisfaction with superfluity, then what you add will be either unpleasant or positively harmful.

Perhaps now you think it fine to be admired in a variety of clothes? If their appearance is pleasing to the eye, I admire either the material itself or the skill of the tailor. But perhaps a great household of servants makes you happy? If they are wicked in their ways, they are a ruinous burden on the house and highly dangerous to the master himself; but if they are honest, how can the honesty of others be counted among your own possessions? So it is clearly shown by all this that, of what you count among your goods, none is a good of yours. And if they have no beauty in them which you should seek, why should you grieve when they are lost or rejoice when you hold on to them? If they are beautiful by their own nature, what has that to do with you? For they would have pleased of themselves quite separated from your possessions. It is not that they are precious because they form part of your riches, but

BOETHIUS

- sed quoniam pretiosa videbantur, tuis ea divitiis adnumerare maluisti. Quid autem tanto fortunae strepitu desideratis? Fugare credo indigentiam copia quaeritis. Atqui hoc vobis in contrarium cedit.
- 65 Pluribus quippe adminiculis opus est ad tuendam pretiosae suppellectilis varietatem, verumque illud est permultis eos indigere qui permulta possideant contraque minimum qui abundantiam suam naturae necessitate non ambitus superfluitate metiantur.
- 70 Itane autem nullum est proprium vobis atque insitum bonum ut in externis ac sepositis rebus bona vestra quaeratis? Sic rerum versa condicio est ut divinum merito rationis animal non aliter sibi splendere nisi inanimatae suppellectilis possessione
- 75 videatur? Et alia quidem suis contenta sunt; vos autem deo mente consimiles ab rebus infimis excellentis naturae ornamenta captatis nec intellegitis quantum conditori vestro faciatis iniuriam. Ille genus humanum terrenis omnibus praestare voluit; vos
- 80 dignitatem vestram infra infima quaeque detruditis. Nam si omne cuiusque bonum eo cuius est constat esse pretiosius, cum vilissima rerum vestra bona esse iudicatis, eisdem vosmet ipsos vestra existimatione submittitis, quod quidem haud immerito cadit.
- 85 Humanae quippe naturae ista condicio est ut tum tantum ceteris rebus cum se cognoscit excellat, eadem tamen infra bestias redigatur, si se nosse desierit. Nam ceteris animantibus sese ignorare naturae est; hominibus vitio venit. Quam vero
- 90 late patet vester hic error qui ornari posse aliquid ornamentis existimatis alienis? At id fieri nequit.

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you preferred to count them among your riches because you thought them precious.

But what do you so noisily demand of fortune ? You want, I think, to banish need with plenty. But yet you achieve exactly the opposite. For you need a good many aids to help you guard your many kinds of precious furniture ! And it is true that they need very many things who have very great possessions, while they need least who measure their sufficiency by the requirements of nature, not by the excesses of ambitious vanity. Have you no personal good of your own within yourself, that you seek your goods in other things, externally ? Is the state of nature so upside-down that man, a living and rational—and therefore godlike—animal, can only appear splendid to himself by the possession of lifeless stuff ? Other things are content with what is their own ; but you men, like God in your minds, seek to bedeck your nature, excellent that it is, with lower things, and do not see how greatly you injure your maker. *He* wanted man to be above all earthly things ; *you men* reduce your worth to less than that of the lowest. For if it is agreed that the good of anything is of higher worth than that whose good it is, then when you judge the lowest things to be your goods, you put yourselves in your own estimation lower than them—and entirely deservedly ! For the nature of man is such that he is better than other things only when he knows himself, and yet if he ceases to know himself he is made lower than the brutes. For it is natural for other animals not to have this self-knowledge ; in man it is a fault. How far from your true state have you wandered when you think you can be at all improved by the addition of the beauties of other things ! That

BOETHIUS

Nam si quid ex appositis luceat, ipsa quidem quae
sunt apposita laudantur ; illud vero his tectum atque
velatum in sua nihilo minus foeditate perdurat. Ego
95 vero nego ullum esse bonum quod noceat habenti.
Num id mentior ? ' Minime,' inquis. Atqui divitiae
possidentibus persaepe nocuerunt, cum pessimus
quisque eoque alieni magis avidus quidquid usquam
auri gemmarumque est se solum qui habeat dignissi-
100 mum putat. Tu igitur qui nunc contum gladiumque
sollicitus pertimescis, si vitae huius callem vacuus
viator intrasses, coram latrone cantares. O praeclara
opum mortalium beatitudo quam cum adeptus fueris
securus esse desistis !

V

Felix nimium prior aetas
Contenta fidelibus arvis
Nec inertī perdita luxu,
Facili quae sera solebat
5 Ieiunia solvere glande.
Non Bacchica munera norant
Liquido confundere melle
Nec lucida vellera Serum
Tyrio miscere veneno.
10 Somnos dabat herba salubres,
Potum quoque lubricus amnis,
Umbras altissima pinus.
Nondum maris alta secabat
Nec mercibus undique lectis

^a Cf. Juvenal, *Sat.* x. 20-22. After the Civil War that ended in Augustus' principate, the roads of Italy were beset by highwaymen and brigands, and the Roman traveller, who
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cannot be ; if something seem fine because of its wrappings, it is the wrappings that are praised, while what is covered and hidden by them persists no less foul and ugly underneath. Now I maintain that nothing is good which harms its possessor. Am I wrong ? Of course not, you answer. Yet riches have often harmed their possessors, since every man of base character, and therefore the more greedy for others' goods, thinks himself the only one really worthy to possess all the gold and jewels there are. So you who now anxiously fear to be attacked and murdered, had you entered on this life's road an empty-handed traveller, would laugh at robbers.^a O marvellous blessedness of mortal riches ! When you have gained that, you have lost your safety.

V

How happy was that earlier age
When men content depended on the trusty land,
And not yet sunk in idle luxury
Sated their hunger only at their need
With acorns gathered with ease.
They had not learned to mix
Wine with clear honey ;
Nor to dye shining silken stuffs
With Tyrian purple.
The greensward gave them healthy sleep,
The gliding river water for their thirst,
And the tall pine a shadow from the sun.
Not yet did they cut deep waters with their ships,
Nor seeking trade abroad

carried his plate with him, went in fear of the pikes and swords of robbers (*contum gladiumque*).

BOETHIUS

15 Nova litora viderat hospes.
Tunc classica saeva tacebant,
Odiis neque fusus acerbis
Cruor horrida tinxerat arva.
20 Quid enim furor hosticus ulla
Vellet prior arma movere,
Cum vulnera saeva viderent
Nec praemia sanguinis ulla ?
Utinam modo nostra redirent
25 In mores tempora priscos !
Sed saevior ignibus Aetnae
Fervens amor ardet habendi.
Heu primus quis fuit ille
Auri qui pondera tecti
30 Gemmasque latere volentes
Pretiosa pericula fodit ?

VI

Quid autem de dignitatibus potentiaque disseram
quae vos verae dignitatis ac potestatis inscii caelo
exaequatis ? Quae si in improbissimum quemque
ceciderunt, quae flammis Aetnae eructantibus, quod
5 diluvium tantas strages dederint ? Certe, uti memi-
nisse te arbitror, consulare imperium, quod libertatis
principium fuerat, ob superbiam consulum vestri
veteres abolere cupiverunt, qui ob eandem superbiam
prius regium de civitate nomen abstulerant. At si
10 quando, quod perrarum est, probis deferantur, quid

^a The dual consulships traditionally date from the expulsion of the kings in about 509 B.C. ; the power of the aristocratic consuls was gradually limited during the " Struggle between the Orders," which lasted some 150 years, beginning with the institution of the tribunate in 495, when the plebeians elected two officers of their own, the tribunes.

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Stand strangers on an unknown shore.
There was no sound of savage bugle-calls,
Nor had men's blood been shed in bitter hate
Staining the scrubby fields.
For why should any man in furious enmity
Want to strike first
When he could see what cruel wounds would come
With no reward for blood ?
Would that our present times
Would now return to those good ancient ways !
But fiercer now than Etna's fires
Burns the hot lust for gain.
Ah who was he
Who first dug out those perilous precious things—
Nuggets of gold, which had lain concealed,
And gems, far better hid ?

VI

But what shall I say of your worthy offices and power, which you praise to high heaven, being ignorant of true worth and real power ? When such things have fallen into the hands of the worst of men, what Etnas with belching flames or what floods have caused greater destruction ? Certainly your old Romans once, as you remember, I expect, wanted to abolish the power of the consuls, which had earlier been the beginning of Roman liberty, because of the arrogance of the consuls—those same Romans who because of the same arrogance had formerly removed the power and the name of kings from the state.^a And whenever such offices and powers have—very rarely !—been given to good men, surely the only acceptable goodness seen in those powers and offices has been

BOETHIUS

in eis aliud quam probitas utentium placet? Ita fit
ut non virtutibus ex dignitate sed ex virtute digni-
tatis honor accedat. Quae vero est ista vestra
expetibilis ac praeclara potentia? Nonne, o terrena
15 animalia, consideratis quibus qui praesidere videamini?
Nunc si inter mures videres unum aliquem
ius sibi ac potestatem prae ceteris vindicantem,
quanto movereris cachinno! Quid vero, si corpus
spectes, inbecillius homine reperire queas quos
20 saepe muscularum quoque vel morsus vel in secreta
quaeque reptantium necat introitus? Quo vero
quisquam ius aliquod in quempiam nisi in solum
corpus et quod infra corpus est, fortunam loquor,
possit exserere? Num quidquam libero imperabis
25 animo? Num mentem firma sibi ratione cohaerentem
de statu propriae quietis amovebis? Cum liberum
quendam virum supplicii se tyrannus adacturum
putaret, ut adversum se factae coniurationis conscios
proderet, linguam ille momordit atque abscidit et in
30 os tyranni saevientis abiecit; ita cruciatus, quos
putabat tyrannus materiam crudelitatis, vir sapiens
fecit esse virtutis. Quid autem est quod in alium
facere quisquam¹ possit, quod sustinere ab alio ipse
non possit? Busiridem accipimus necare hospites so-
35 litum ab Hercule hospite fuisse mactatum. Regulus
plures Poenorum bello captos in vincla coniecerat, sed
mox ipse victorum catenis manus praebuit. Ullamne

¹ quisque *the best MSS.*

^a The free man was the Democritean philosopher Anaxarchus, the tyrant Nicocreon; Anaxarchus became for the Romans the typical instance of indifference to pain, *cf.*

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that of the men possessing them ? So it comes about not that virtues are honoured because of office, but office because of the virtue of the holders.

Now what is this famous power of yours, so much sought after ? Will you not consider, earthbound animals that you are, whom you think you command, and in what manner ? If you saw one mouse among many claiming to have rightful power over the rest, how you would laugh ! Now if you look at the body only, what can you find weaker than man, whom a little fly often kills with its bite or by crawling into some innermost part ? How could anyone exert any power over anyone else except over his body, or over what is inferior to his body, that is, his fortune ? Can you ever command a free mind in anything ? Can you ever disturb the natural calm of a mind made whole and one by firm reason ? When a tyrant thought he was going to drive a free man by torture to betray those conspiring against him, the man bit off his own tongue and spat it in the face of that raging tyrant.^a So the very torture which the tyrant thought was the instrument of his cruelty the philosopher made the instrument of virtue. What is there that anyone can do to a man which he might not have done to himself by another ? We read that Busiris used to murder his guests, and that he himself was killed by his guest Hercules.^b Regulus had chained in prison many Carthaginians taken in war, but then he himself found his hands bound by the chains of his captors.^c Do you think that that man has any real

Cicero, *Tusc.* ii. 52 ; *De Nat. Deor.* iii. 82. The story is told by Valerius Maximus III. iii. 4, and Diogenes Laertius ix. 59.

^b Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 31. 2.

^c Cf. Cic. *De Off.* iii. 99, and esp. Aul. Gell. vii (vi). 4.

BOETHIUS

igitur eius hominis potentiam putas, qui quod ipse in alio potest, ne id in se alter valeat efficere non possit ?

40 Ad haec si ipsis dignitatibus ac potestatibus inesset aliquid naturalis ac proprii boni, numquam pessimis provenirent. Neque enim sibi solent adversa sociari ; natura respuit ut contraria quaeque iungantur. Ita cum pessimos plerumque dignitatibus fungi dubium

45 non sit, illud etiam liquet natura sui bona non esse quae se pessimis haerere patiantur. Quod quidem de cunctis fortunae muneribus dignius existimari potest, quae ad improbissimum quemque uberiora perveniunt. De quibus illud etiam considerandum puto,

50 quod nemo dubitat esse fortem, cui fortitudinem inesse conspexerit, et cuicumque velocitas adest manifestum est esse velocem. Sic musica quidem musicos, medicina medicos, rhetorice rhetores facit. Agit enim cuiusque rei natura quod proprium est nec

55 contrariarum rerum miscetur effectibus et ultro quae sunt aversa depellit. Atqui nec opes inexpletam restringere avaritiam queunt nec potestas sui competentem fecerit quem vitiosae libidines insolubilibus adstrictum retinent catenis, et collata improbis

60 dignitas non modo non efficit dignos, sed prodit potius et ostentat indignos. Cur ita provenit ? Gaudetis enim res sese aliter habentes falsis compellere nominibus quae facile ipsarum rerum redarguuntur effectum ; itaque nec illae divitiae nec illa

65 potentia nec haec dignitas iure appellari potest. Postremo idem de tota concludere fortuna licet in qua nihil expetendum, nihil nativae bonitatis inesse

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power who cannot prevent another from doing to him what he himself can do to others ?

Consider also that if those offices and powers had in them any natural and proper good they would never be possessed by evil men ; for it is not usual for opposites to be associated—nature rejects the conjunction of contraries. Therefore since there is no doubt that offices are often filled by evil men, this also is clear, that they are not good in their nature, since they allow themselves to be joined with evil in this way. The same may be very rightly held true of all the gifts of fortune which evil men all enjoy so abundantly. Now we can also look at it in this way. No one hesitates to call that man brave in whom he sees bravery present, and clearly he is swift who possesses swiftness ; so too art makes a man an artist, medicine makes him a medical man, and rhetoric makes him an orator. The nature of each produces what is proper to it, and is not mixed with contrary effects, but naturally rejects what is opposed to it. Yet riches cannot get rid of avarice, for it is insatiable, nor can power give a man self-control if he is too firmly in the grip of sinful lusts ; and a high office given to dishonest men not only does not make them worthy of it, but rather betrays and publishes their unworthiness. Why is this so ? Because you delight to give to things which are really otherwise names they should not bear and which are easily shown to be false by the effects of the things themselves, so that this cannot rightly be called wealth, nor that really power, nor the other truly an honour. Lastly, we may draw the same conclusion in the matter of a man's fortune as a whole, in which there is obviously nothing really worth the seeking, no

BOETHIUS

manifestum est, quae nec se bonis semper adiungit
et bonos quibus fuerit adiuncta non efficit.

VI

Novimus quantas dederit ruinas
Urbe flammata patribusque caesis
Fratre qui quondam ferus interempto
Matris effuso maduit cruore
5 Corpus et visu gelidum pererrans
Ora non tinxit lacrimis, sed esse
Censor extincti potuit decoris.
Hic tamen sceptro populos regebat
Quos videt condens radios sub undas
10 Phoebus extremo veniens ab ortu,
Quos premunt septem gelidi triones,
Quos Notus sicco violentus aestu
Torret ardentem recoquens harenas.
Celsa num tandem valuit potestas
15 Vertere pravi rabiem Neronis ?
Heu gravem sortem, quotiens iniquus
Additur saevo gladius veneno !”

VII

Tum ego : “ Scis,” inquam, “ ipsa minimum nobis
ambitionem mortalium rerum fuisse dominatam. Sed
materiam gerendis rebus optavimus quo ne virtus

^a Nero (A.D. 54-68) poisoned Britannicus, the son of his step-father and predecessor as emperor, Claudius, when his ambitious and scheming mother Agrippina, Claudius's widow, seemed to be supporting Britannicus against him ; Agrippina protected his wife Octavia, but under the influence

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natural goodness, since it is not always conjoined with good men, nor does it make good those to whom it is joined.

VI

We know what great destruction that man caused
The city blazing, Senators killed,
His brother murdered, and his savage hand
Wet with the blood that from his mother flowed—
He could gaze on her cold corpse
And not shed tears
But coolly criticize her beauty dead.^a
And yet beneath his sceptre's sway he held
Peoples the sun sees as he sinks in western waves
After his rising in the farthest east,
Those beneath the cold stare of the Bear
And those burnt by the harsh south wind
That bakes the hot dry sands.
Could not such power
Turn this perverted madness? Alas, how many times
Both knife and poison served the dreadful state of
Nero!"

VII

She finished, and I replied: "You know yourself that ambition for mortal things governed me very little; but I wanted the chance to take an active part

of his mistress Poppaea he first murdered Agrippina (Tacitus in *Annals*, xiv. 9, says that "some say, and others deny, that Nero looked at his lifeless mother and praised the beauty of her body") and then Octavia, making Poppaea empress. He was responsible also for the deaths of his counsellor Burrus, his old tutor and adviser Seneca, the poet Lucan, and many other nobles, as well as many Christians after the great fire in Rome in 64, before his own suicide in 68.

BOETHIUS

tacita consenesceret." Et illa : " Atqui hoc unum
5 est quod praestantes quidem natura mentes sed
nondum ad extremam manum virtutum perfectione
perductas allicere possit, gloriae scilicet cupido et
optimorum in rem publicam fama meritorum ; quae
quam sit exilis et totius vacua ponderis, sic considera.
10 Omnem terrae ambitum, sicuti astrologicis demon-
strationibus accepisti, ad caeli spatium puncti constat
obtinere rationem, id est ut, si ad caelestis globi
magnitudinem conferatur, nihil spatii prorsus habere
iudicetur. Huius igitur tam exiguae in mundo
15 regionis quarta fere portio est, sicut Ptolomaeo pro-
bante didicisti, quae nobis cognitis animantibus in-
colatur. Huic quartae, si quantum maria paludesque
premunt quantumque siti vasta regio distenditur
cogitatione subtraxeris, vix angustissima inhabitandi
20 hominibus area relinquetur. In hoc igitur minimo
puncti quodam puncto circumsaepi atque conclusi de
pervulganda fama, de proferendo nomine cogitatis ?
Aut quid habeat amplum magnificentumque gloria tam
angustis exiguisque limitibus artata ? Adde quod
25 hoc ipsum brevis habitaculi saeptum plures incolunt
nationes lingua, moribus, totius vitae ratione distantes,
ad quas tum difficultate itinerum tum loquendi diver-
sitate tum commercii insolentia non modo fama
hominum singulorum sed ne urbium quidem pervenire

^a Cf. Macrobi. *Somn.* ii. 5-9, esp. 9, where Macrobius says : " And the reason he so carefully stresses the smallness of the earth is so that a brave man may reckon little of the desire for fame, which cannot be great in so small a context."

^b Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus, astronomer and geographer, who worked in Alexandria in the first half of the second century A.D.) summed up Greek astronomical knowledge in his day in a work known as the *Almagest*, from one

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in affairs of state, so that what powers for good I possess might not wither with age unused."

"Yet that is the only thing that could attract minds which are naturally outstanding, but not yet brought to the perfecting of their virtues to their finished condition: namely the desire for glory and the reputation of having deserved well of the state. How unsubstantial that glory is, how totally without weight, you may learn in this way. You have learned from astronomical proofs ^a that the whole circle of our earth is but a point in comparison with the extent of the whole heavens; that is, if it is compared in size with the celestial sphere, it is judged to have no size at all. Of this very tiny part of the universe only a quarter, as you know from Ptolemy's ^b proofs, is inhabited by living things known to us. If in your imagination you subtract from that quarter all that is covered by seas and marshes and all the regions which extend in dried-up deserts, only a very narrow portion indeed is left for habitation by men. Now is it in this tightly-enclosed and tiny point, itself but part of a point, that you think of spreading your reputation, of glorifying your name? What grandeur or magnificence can glory have, contracted within such small and narrow limits? Consider also that in this little habitable enclosure there live many nations, different in language and customs and in their whole ways of life; because of the difficulties of travel, and differences of language, and the rarity of trading contacts, the fame not merely of individual men but

of its late Greek titles, ἡ μεγίστη (σύνταξις) with the article ἡ translated into Arabic. The smallness of the part of our earth known to be inhabited was illustrated by Ptolemy in his γεωγραφικὴ σύνταξις. Cf. also pp. 136-137, note.

BOETHIUS

30 queat. Aetate denique Marci Tullii, sicut ipse quodam loco significat, nondum Caucasum montem Romanae rei publicae fama transcenderat, et erat tunc adulta Parthis etiam ceterisque id locorum gentibus formidolosa. Videsne igitur quam sit angusta, quam
35 compressa gloria quam dilatare ac propagare laboratis? An ubi Romani nominis transire fama nequit, Romani hominis gloria progredietur? Quid quod diversarum gentium mores inter se atque instituta discordant, ut quod apud alios laude apud alios supplicio dignum
40 iudicetur. Quod fit ut si quem famae praedicatio delectat, huic in plurimos populos nomen proferre nullo modo conducat. Erit igitur pervagata inter suos gloria quisque contentus et intra unius gentis terminos praeclara illa famae immortalitas coarta-
45 bitur.

Sed quam multos clarissimos suis temporibus viros scriptorum inops delevit oblivio! Quamquam quid ipsa scripta proficiant, quae cum suis auctoribus premit longior atque obscura vetustas? Vos vero
50 immortalitatem vobis propagare videmini, cum futuri famam temporis cogitatis. Quod si aeternitatis infinita spatia pertractes, quid habes quod de nominis tui diuturnitate laeteris? Unius etenim mora momenti, si decem milibus conferatur annis, quoniam
55 utrumque spatium definitum est, minimam, licet, habet tamen aliquam portionem. At hic ipse numerus annorum eiusque quamlibet multiplex ad interminabilem diuturnitatem ne comparari quidem potest. Etenim finitis ad se invicem fuerit quaedam,

^a Cic. *Rep.* vi. 22; but Boethius is quoting from Macrobius's *Commentary on Cicero's Republic*, ii. 10.

CONSOLATION II

even of cities cannot reach them all. Lastly, in Cicero's time, as he himself says somewhere,^a the fame of the Roman state had not yet gone beyond the Caucasus, though Rome was then in her prime and feared by Parthians and other peoples in that region. Do you then see how narrow, how contracted is that glory which you labour to increase and spread abroad? Or shall the glory of one Roman go where the fame of Rome herself cannot? Besides, the customs and conventions of different peoples vary so much that what is praised in one may be judged deserving of punishment in another. This is why even if a man is delighted to have his fame publicly proclaimed, it is by no means to his advantage to have his name spread abroad among many nations. Each man must therefore be content to have his glory well-known among his own people, and the glorious immortality of his fame must be restricted within the bounds of one nation.

But how many men famous in their own time are now completely forgotten, for want of written record? Though what is the value of such records themselves when they and their writers are lost in the obscurity of long ages? Yet *you* suppose that you provide for your own immortality when you are concerned for your future fame. But if you really consider the infinite space of eternity, have you any reason to rejoice in the long life of your own name? For, one moment compared with ten thousand years, since each is a determinate length of time, is a certain proportion, even if a very small fraction; but even that length of years, or any multiple of it, cannot be compared at all with the infinite length of time. For there can be a comparison between finite things, but

BOETHIUS

60 infiniti vero atque finiti nulla umquam poterit esse collatio. Ita fit ut quamlibet prolixi temporis fama, si cum inexhausta aeternitate cogitetur, non parva sed plane nulla esse videatur. Vos autem nisi ad populares auras inanesque rumores recte facere
65 nescitis et relicta conscientiae virtutisque praestantia de alienis praemia sermunculis postulatis. Accipe in huiusmodi arrogantiae levitate quam festive aliquis inluserit. Nam cum quidam adortus esset hominem contumeliis, qui non ad verae virtutis usum sed ad
70 superbam gloriam falsum sibi philosophi nomen induerat, adiecissetque iam se sciturum, an ille philosophus esset, si quidem illatas iniurias leniter patienterque tolerasset, ille patientiam paulisper adsumpsit acceptaque contumelia velut insultans: 'Iam tan-
75 dem,' inquit, 'intellegis me esse philosophum?' Tum ille nimium mordaciter: 'Intellexeram,' inquit, 'si tacuisses.' Quid autem est quod ad praecipuos viros, de his enim sermo est, qui virtute gloriam petunt, quid, inquam, est quod ad hos de fama post
80 resolutum morte suprema corpus attineat? Nam si, quod nostrae rationes credi vetant, toti moriuntur homines, nulla est omnino gloria, cum is cuius ea esse dicitur non exstet omnino. Sin vero bene sibi mens conscia terreno carcere resoluta caelum libera
85 petit, nonne omne terrenum negotium spernat quae se caelo fruens terrenis gaudet exemptam?

^a That silence when necessary was a mark of the philosopher seems to have been a commonplace of antiquity

CONSOLATION II

there can never be any proportion between the finite and the infinite. That is why however long a time fame last, if it is thought of in the context of boundless eternity, it is clearly seen to be, not small, but nothing at all. Yet *you* do not know how to act rightly unless you are favoured by the changing winds of popularity and empty rumour, and ignoring the excellence of the knowledge of your own virtue, you ask for the rewards of the common chatter of other men. Hear now how one man joked about the triviality of this kind of arrogance. He had insultingly attacked a man who had falsely assumed the title of philosopher, not for the practice of true virtue but simply from vanity, to increase his own glory ; and he added that he would know he was really a philosopher if he bore all the injuries heaped upon him calmly and patiently. The other adopted a patient manner for a time and bore the insults, and then said tauntingly : “ Now do you recognize that I am a philosopher ? ” To which the first very cuttingly replied : “ I should have, had you kept silent.”^a But what has fame to offer men of the best sort—for these are the ones we are talking about, whose means to glory has been their virtue—what indeed, I ask, after death has finally destroyed the body ? If men wholly perish (which our arguments in fact forbid us to believe), glory is really nothing at all, since he to whom it is said to belong will no longer exist. If however a mind fully aware of its own nature, loosed from its earthly prison, is free to seek its heavenly home, will it not despise all earthly affairs, and in the joy of heaven rejoice to be freed from earthly things ? (and *cf.* Proverbs 11. 12), but the origin of this story is unknown.

BOETHIUS

VII

Quicumque solam mente praecipiti petit
Summumque credit gloriam,
Late patentes aetheris cernat plagas
Artumque terrarum situm.
5 Brevem replere non valentis ambitum
Pudebit aucti nominis.
Quid o superbi colla mortali iugo
Frustra levare gestiunt ?
Licet remotos fama per populos means
10 Diffusa linguas explicet
Et magna titulis fulgeat claris domus,
Mors spernit altam gloriam,
Involvit humile pariter et celsum caput
Aequatque summis infima.
15 Ubi nunc fidelis ossa Fabricii manent,
Quid Brutus aut rigidus Cato ?
Signat superstes fama tenuis pauculis
Inane nomen litteris.
Sed quod decora novimus vocabula,
20 Num scire consumptos datur ?
Iacetis ergo prorsus ignorabiles
Nec fama notos efficit.
Quod si putatis longius vitam trahi
Mortalis aura nominis,
25 Cum sera vobis rapiet hoc etiam dies,
Iam vos secunda mors manet.

VIII

Sed ne me inexorabile contra fortunam gerere
bellum putes, est aliquando cum de hominibus illa,

CONSOLATION II

VII

The man who rushes after glory
And nothing else, thinking it highest of all,
Let him compare the vastness of the heavens
With the narrowness of earth :
He'll blush for his proud name that cannot satisfy
Even his brief ambition.
Why do men in their pride—and yet in vain !—
Long to shake from their necks the yoke
Of their mortality ?
Though fame may spread abroad
Loosing the tongues of many different peoples,
And though a great house blaze with many a famous
title,
Death despises the heights of glory,
Enfolds alike the humble and the proud,
Making the lowest equal to the highest.
Where now are the bones of good Fabricius ?
What is Brutus now, or stern old Cato ?
What little fame is left them—just their names
In a few old stories !
And if we read and learn their glorious names
Do we then know the dead ?
And so you too will all be quite forgotten,
Nor can fame make you known by any man.
And if you think you may live longer yet
At least as a name alive on the lips of men,
When your last day takes even *this* from you,
There's still to come
That second death.

VIII

But in case you think I am inexorably hostile to
fortune, know that there is a time when she deserves

BOETHIUS

fallax illa nihil, bene mereatur, tum scilicet cum se aperit, cum frontem detegit moresque profitetur.

5 Nondum forte quid loquar intellegis. Mirum est quod dicere gestio, eoque sententiam verbis explicare vix queo. Etenim plus hominibus reor adversam quam prosperam prodesse fortunam. Illa enim semper specie felicitatis cum videtur blanda,

10 mentitur; haec semper vera est, cum se instabilem mutatione demonstrat. Illa fallit, haec instruit, illa mendacium specie bonorum mentes fruendum ligat, haec cognitione fragilis felicitatis absolvit. Itaque illam videas ventosam, fluentem suique semper

15 ignaram, hanc sobriam succinctamque et ipsius adversitatis exercitatione prudentem. Postremo felix a vero bono devios blanditiis trahit, adversa plerumque ad vera bona reduces unco retrahit. An hoc inter minima aestimandum putas quod amicorum

20 tibi fidelium mentes haec aspera, haec horribilis fortuna detexit, haec tibi certos sodalium vultus ambiguosque secrevit, discedens suos abstulit, tuos reliquit? Quanti hoc integer, ut videbaris tibi fortunatus, emisses! Nunc et amissas opes querere;

25 quod pretiosissimum divitiarum genus est amicos invenisti.

CONSOLATION II

well of men, not deceiving them at all : when she shows herself clearly, uncovering her face and declaring her ways. Perhaps you do not yet understand what I am saying. What I want to tell you is something wonderful, which makes it very difficult for me to put it into words. For I think that ill fortune is better for men than good. Fortune always cheats when she seems to smile, with the appearance of happiness, but is always truthful when she shows herself to be inconstant by changing. The first kind of fortune deceives, the second instructs ; the one binds the minds of those who enjoy goods that cheatingly only seem to be good, the other frees them with the knowledge of the fragility of mortal happiness. So you can see that the one is inconstant, always running hither and thither, uncertain of herself ; and the other is steady, well prepared and—with the practice of adversity itself—wise. Lastly fortune when apparently happy leads men astray by her blandishments, wandering from the true good ; when she is adverse, she commonly draws them back, as it were with a hook, towards it. Surely you do not think it wholly unimportant that this rough and unpleasant fortune has discovered those friends who are truly loyal to you, and has divided the honest from the dishonest among your companions, by taking her own kind with her when she left you, leaving your sort with you ? How dearly would you have bought such knowledge in your unaffected and—as you thought—fortunate state ! As it is, you are even complaining of your lost wealth : but you have found the most precious of all kinds of riches—true friends.

BOETHIUS

VIII

Quod mundus stabili fide
Concordes variat vices,
Quod pugnancia semina
Foedus perpetuum tenent,
5 Quod Phoebus roseum diem
Curru provehit aureo,
Ut quas duxerit Hesperos
Phoebe noctibus imperet,
Ut fluctus avidum mare
10 Certo fine coerceat,
Ne terris liceat vagis
Latos tendere terminos,
Hanc rerum seriem ligat
Terras ac pelagus regens
15 Et caelo imperitans amor.
Hic si frena remiserit,
Quidquid nunc amat invicem
Bellum continuo geret
Et quam nunc socia fide
20 Pulchris motibus incitant,
Certent solvere machinam.
Hic sancto populos quoque
Iunctos foedere continet,
Hic et coniugii sacrum
25 Castis nectit amoribus,
Hic fidis etiam sua
Dictat iura sodalibus.
O felix hominum genus,
Si vestros animos amor
30 Quo caelum regitur regat."

CONSOLATION II

VIII

In regular harmony
The world moves through its changes ;
Seeds in competition with each other
Are held in balance by eternal law ;
Phoebus brings rosy dawns
In his golden chariot
That his sister Phoebe may rule the nights
That Hesperus brings ;
The waves of the greedy sea
Are kept within fixed bounds,
Nor may the land move out
And extend its limits.
What binds all things to order,
Governing earth and sea and sky,
Is love.
If love's rein slackened
All things now held by mutual love
At once would fall to warring with each other
Striving to wreck that engine of the world
Which now they drive . . .
In mutual trust with motion beautiful.
And love joins peoples too
By a sacred bond,
And ties the knot of holy matrimony
That binds chaste lovers,
Joins too with its law
All faithful comrades.
O happy race of men,
If the love that rules the stars
May also rule your hearts ! ”

ANICII MANLII SEVERINI BOETHII

V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. PATRICII

PHILOSOPHIAE CONSOLA-
TIONIS

LIBER SECUNDUS EXPLICIT

INCIPIT LIBER III

I

Iam tantum illa finiverat, cum me audiendi avidum stupentemque arrectis adhuc auribus carminis mulcedo defixerat. Itaque paulo post : " O," inquam, " summum lassorum solamen animorum quam tu me
5 vel sententiarum pondere vel canendi etiam iucunditate refovisti ! Adeo ut iam me post haec inparem fortunae ictibus esse non arbitrer. Itaque remedia quae paulo acriora esse dicebas, non modo non perhorresco, sed audiendi avidus vehementer efflagito."
10 Tum illa : " Sensi," inquit, " cum verba nostra tacitus attentusque rapiebas, eumque tuae mentis habitum vel exspectavi vel, quod est verius, ipsa perfeci. Talia sunt quippe quae restant, ut degustata quidem mordeant, interius autem recepta dulcescant.
15 Sed quod tu te audiendi cupidum dicis, quanto ardore flagrares, si quonam te ducere aggrediamur

BOETHIUS
THE CONSOLATION OF
PHILOSOPHY

BOOK III

I

SHE had just finished singing, while the sweetness of her song held me with still attentive ears, struck silent, and eager to listen further. So after a little while I said : " O best of comforters of weary spirits, how well you have revived me with the weight of your arguments and also with the delights of your songs ! So well that now I no longer think myself unequal to the blows of fortune. So now I am not only not terrified of those remedies you described as somewhat more bitter, but I do most strongly urge you to administer them, since I am eager to listen further."

" I felt it was so," she said in reply, " when you were so absorbed, silent and attentive, by what I was saying, and I expected—or, more truly, I brought about—your present state of mind. Those remedies that are left now are like those that sting on the tongue, but sweeten once taken within. But you say you are desirous to hear more : with what desire you would burn if you knew where I am going to lead you ! "

BOETHIUS

agnosceres!" "Quonam?" inquam. "Ad veram,"
inquit, "felicitatem, quam tuus quoque somniat
animus, sed occupato ad imagines visu ipsam illam
20 non potest intueri." Tum ego: "Fac obsecro et
quae illa vera sit, sine cunctatione demonstra."
"Faciám," inquit illa, "tui causa libenter. Sed quae
tibi causa notior est, eam prius designare verbis
atque informare conabor ut ea perspecta cum in
25 contrariam partem flexeris oculos, verae beatitudinis
speciem possis agnoscere.

I

Qui serere ingenium volet agrum,
Liberat arva prius fructibus,
Falce rubos filicemque resecat,
Ut nova fruge gravis Ceres eat.
5 Dulcior est apium mage labor,
Si malus ora prius sapor edat.
Gratius astra nitent ubi Notus
Desinit imbriferos dare sonos.
Lucifer ut tenebras pepulerit
10 Pulchra dies roseos agit equos.
Tu quoque falsa tuens bona prius
Incipe colla iugo retrahere.
Vera dehinc animum subierint."

II

Tum defixo paululum visu et velut in augustam
suae mentis sedem recepta sic coepit: "Omnis

CONSOLATION III

“Where ?” I asked.

“To that true happiness,” said she, “which your spirit, too, dreams of, but cannot see as it really is because your sight is too occupied with images.”

Then I said : “Tell me, show me without delay, I beg you, what that true happiness is.”

“I shall willingly,” she answered, “for your sake. But first I shall try to describe in words and delineate a subject better known to you, so that, when you have seen that clearly, you may, since you will then have turned your eyes on its opposite, recognize the appearance of true blessedness.”

I

Whoever wants to sow a virgin field,
First clears the ground of scrub,
And with his sickle cuts down fern and bramble,
That Ceres may come, heavy with new grain.
Bees' honey is sweeter far
If first a bitter flavour bites the mouth.
The stars shine brighter
When the south wind has ceased its noisy rain.
When the morning star has driven away the dark,
Fair the day drives its rosy steeds.
So must you too, who now have eyes
Only for false goods, first begin
To draw your neck from the yoke,
That then the true may slip into your mind.

II

Then for a little her look was cast down and, as if
withdrawn into the depths of her noble mind, she

BOETHIUS

mortalium cura quam multiplicium studiorum labor exercet, diverso quidem calle procedit, sed ad unum
5 tamen beatitudinis finem nititur pervenire. Id autem est bonum quo quis adepto nihil ulterius desiderare queat. Quod quidem est omnium summum bonorum cunctaque intra se bona continens, cui si quid aforet summum esse non posset, quoniam relinqueretur
10 extrinsecus quod posset optari. Liquet igitur esse beatitudinem statum bonorum omnium congregatione perfectum. Hunc, uti diximus, diverso tramite mortales omnes conantur adipisci. Est enim mentibus hominum veri boni naturaliter inserta cupiditas,
15 sed ad falsa devius error abducit. Quorum quidem alii summum bonum esse nihilo indigere credentes ut divitiis affluent elaborant; alii vero bonum quod sit dignissimum veneratione iudicantes adeptis honoribus reverendi civibus suis esse nituntur. Sunt
20 qui summum bonum in summa potentia esse constituent; hi vel regnare ipsi volunt vel regnantibus adhaerere conantur. At quibus optimum quiddam claritas videtur, hi vel belli vel pacis artibus gloriosum nomen propagare festinant. Plurimi vero boni fructum gaudio laetitiaque metiuntur; hi felicissimum
25 putant voluptate diffuere. Sunt etiam qui horum fines causasque alterutro permutent, ut qui divitias ob potentiam voluptatesque desiderant vel qui potentiam seu pecuniae causa seu proferendi nominis
30 appetunt. In his igitur ceterisque talibus humanorum

CONSOLATION III

began : " The whole concern of men, which the effort of a multitude of pursuits keeps busy, moves by different roads, yet strives to arrive at one and the same end, that of happiness. Now that is the good which, once a man attains it, leaves no room for further desires. And it is the highest of all goods, containing in itself all that is good, for if there were anything lacking to it, it could not be the highest good, since there would remain something outside it which could be desired. So it is clear that happiness is that state which is perfect since all goods are gathered together in it. This it is, as I have said, that all men strive to obtain by various paths ; for the desire for the true good is naturally inborn in the minds of men, but they are led astray after false goods. Now some men believe that the highest good is to want nothing, so that they labour to abound in riches ; but others hold whatever is most worthy of honour to be the good, and strive to be honoured and respected by their fellow citizens for the distinctions they receive. There are some who think that the highest good lies in the greatest power ; these either wish themselves to rule, or try to attach themselves to those who rule. But those who think fame is something very good hasten to spread their names abroad, made glorious through some skill in war or peace. More, however, measure their enjoyment of the good in terms of joy and gladness, and think it most happy to abandon themselves to pleasure. And there are those too who interchange and intermingle these various aims and motives, such as those who desire riches for the sake of power or pleasure, or those who seek power for the sake of wealth or to advance their own fame. So, to these and to all

BOETHIUS

actuum votorumque versatur intentio, veluti nobilitas favorque popularis quae videntur quandam claritudinem comparare, uxor ac liberi quae iucunditatis gratia petuntur ; amicorum vero quod sanctissimum quidem
35 genus est, non in fortuna sed in virtute numeratur, reliquum vero vel potentiae causa vel delectationis assumitur. Iam vero corporis bona promptum est ut ad superiora referantur. Robur enim magnitudoque videtur praestare valentiam, pulchritudo atque
40 velocitas celebritatem, salubritas voluptatem ; quibus omnibus solam beatitudinem desiderari liquet. Nam quod quisque prae ceteris petit, id summum esse iudicat bonum. Sed summum bonum beatitudinem esse definivimus ; quare beatum esse iudicat statum
45 quem prae ceteris quisque desiderat.

Habes igitur ante oculos propositam fere formam felicitatis humanae—opes, honores, potentiam, gloriam, voluptates. Quae quidem sola considerans Epicurus consequenter sibi summum bonum voluptatem esse constituit, quod cetera omnia iucunditatem
50 animo videantur afferre. Sed ad hominum studia revertor, quorum animus etsi caligante memoria tamen bonum suum repetit, sed velut ebrius domum quo tramite revertatur ignorat. Num enim videntur
55 errare hi qui nihilo indigere nituntur ? Atqui non est aliud quod aequè perficere beatitudinem possit

^a The founder of the Epicurean school of philosophers ; born about 342 B.C. in Attica and brought up in Samos, he adopted the physics of Democritus with its atomic theory to make a mechanistic universe that would free men from fear of the gods and life after death and enable them to live a life of pleasure, which for him meant freedom from fear and worry.

^b The ideas of seeking the good again (*repetit*) and of the memory of it being clouded both refer to the Platonic notion

CONSOLATION III

other such things are the aims and purposes of men's acts and prayers related : so noble rank and the support of the populace are sought after because they appear to acquire some sort of renown, or a wife and children are sought after for the pleasure they give ; but the most sacred kind of good is that of friendship, a good reckoned not a matter of fortune but of virtue, while any other kind is chosen for the sake of power or delight. Now all the goods connected with the body can easily be related to the things mentioned above : physical strength and size seem to provide influence ; beauty and swiftness, fame ; and health, pleasure. In all of these things it is obviously happiness alone that is desired ; for whatever a man seeks above all else, that he reckons the highest good. But we have defined the highest good as happiness ; wherefore each man judges that state to be happy which he desires above all others.

So now you have as it were set before your eyes the delineaments of human happiness : wealth, honour, power, glory, pleasure. Epicurus ^a looked only at these things, and consequently decided that for him the highest good was pleasure, since all the others seemed to bring delight to the mind. But I turn back to the endeavours of men : for man's mind, though the memory of it is clouded, yet does seek again its proper good, ^b but like a drunken man cannot find by what path it may return home. For are they really wrong, who strive to lack nothing ? But surely there is nothing else so conducive to perfect

that the soul is of one kind with Ideas, the perfect Forms, including the Form of the Good, and is born with a knowledge of them, but forgets them on being imprisoned, as it were, in the body.

BOETHIUS

quam copiosus bonorum omnium status nec alieni
egens sed sibi ipse sufficiens. Num vero labuntur hi
qui quod sit optimum, id etiam reverentiae cultu
60 dignissimum putent? Minime. Neque enim vile
quiddam contemnendumque est quod adipisci omnium
fere mortalium laborat intentio. An in bonis non est
numeranda potentia? Quid igitur? Num imbecillum
ac sine viribus aestimandum est, quod omnibus rebus
65 constat esse praestantius? An claritudo nihili
pendenda est? Sed sequestrari nequit quin omne
quod excellentissimum sit id etiam videatur esse
clarissimum. Nam non esse anxiam tristemque
beatitudinem nec doloribus molestiisque subiectam
70 quid attinet dicere, quando in minimis quoque rebus
id appetitur quod habere fruique delectet? Atqui
haec sunt quae adipisci homines volunt eaque de
causa divitias, dignitates, regna, gloriam voluptatesque
desiderant quod per haec sibi sufficientiam, reveren-
75 tiam, potentiam, celebritatem, laetitiam credunt esse
venturam. Bonum est igitur quod tam diversis
studiis homines petunt; in quo quanta sit naturae
vis facile monstratur, cum licet variae dissidentesque
sententiae tamen in diligendo boni fine consentiunt.

II

Quantas rerum flectat habenas
Natura potens, quibus immensum
Legibus orbem provida servet.
Stringatque ligans inresoluto
5 Singula nexu, placet arguto
Fidibus lentis promere cantu.

CONSOLATION III

happiness as a condition possessing plenty of all goods, needing no other's help, but being self-sufficient. Are they indeed mistaken, who think that whatever is best is also most worthy of reverence and respect? Of course not: for that cannot be base and contemptible which the efforts and labour of almost all men strive to obtain. Is power not to be accounted a good? Why, surely we are not to think that to be feeble and lacking in vigour which it is agreed is more excellent than all else? Is fame to be rated as nothing? Yet it cannot be set aside that all that is most excellent also seems to be most famous. Is there any point in saying that happiness is not worried or depressed, not subject to pain or vexation? Since even in the least things men seek that which they delight to have and to enjoy. These surely are the things men want to gain, and for that reason they desire riches, high office, the rule of men, glory and pleasure, because they believe that through them they will achieve sufficiency, respect, power, celebrity and joy. The good is therefore that which men pursue in so many different endeavours; and we can easily see how great is nature's power in this, since although opinions vary and differ so much, yet they agree in loving the same end, the good.

II

I have decided now
In clear song, with my pliant strings, to show
What great control Nature in her power
Wields over all things, with what laws
She in her foresight keeps the vast universe
Tied fast, each single thing, in indissoluble bonds.

BOETHIUS

Quamvis Poeni pulchra leones
 Vincula gestent manibusque datas
 Captent escas metuantque trucem
 10 Soliti verbera ferre magistrum,
 Si cruor horrida tinxerit ora,
 Resides olim redeunt animi
 Fremituque gravi meminere sui ;
 Laxant nodis colla solutis
 15 Primusque lacer dente cruento
 Domitor rabidas imbuit iras.
 Quae canit altis garrula ramis
 Ales caveae clauditur antro ;
 Huic licet inlita pocula melle
 20 Largasque dapes dulci studio
 Ludens hominum cura ministret,
 Si tamen arto saliens texto
 Nemorum gratas viderit umbras,
 Sparsas pedibus proterit escas,
 25 Silvas tantum maesta requirit,
 Silvas dulci voce susurrat.
 Validis quondam viribus acta
 Pronum flectit virga cacumen ;
 Hanc si curvans dextra remisit,
 30 Recto spectat vertice caelum.
 Cadit Hesperias Phoebus in undas,
 Sed secreto tramite rursus
 Currum solitos vertit ad ortus.
 Repetunt proprios quaeque recursus
 35 Redituque suo singula gaudent
 Nec manet ulli traditus ordo
 Nisi quod fini iunxerit ortum
 Stablemque sui fecerit orbem.

CONSOLATION III

Though lions from Carthage wear fine-fashioned
chains
And eat out of a man's hand,
And fear—being used to beatings—their harsh master,
If blood once touch their bristling jaws
Their long inactive spirits straight revive,
With rumbling growls they are themselves again,
Shake their necks free from broken knots,
And the first to slake their rage, torn by their blood-
stained teeth,
Is their trainer.
The tree-top loving, chirruping bird
Is shut in a coop like a cavern.
Men treat her as a toy and care for her
With kindness putting in honeyed drink
And food in plenty :
Yet if she sees, hopping in her narrow cage,
The beloved shade of trees,
She scatters her food beneath her feet
And all she wants is her woods,
Sings sadly, softly, sweetly of her woods.
Bend now, with all your strength,
A sapling's top to the ground :
But if the right hand bowing it let go
Its top again points straight up to the sky.
Phoebus sinks under western waves
But by a secret path again
He turns his car
To his accustomed rising.
Each thing seeks its own way back
And coming back is glad ;
None is consigned to any ordered course
Save that which links the end to the beginning
And makes its cycle firm.

BOETHIUS

III

Vos quoque, o terrena animalia, tenui licet imagine vestrum tamen principium somniatis verumque illum beatitudinis finem licet minime perspicaci qualicumque tamen cogitatione prospicitis eoque vos et
5 ad verum bonum naturalis ducit intentio et ab eodem multiplex error abducit. Considera namque an per ea quibus se homines adepturos beatitudinem putant ad destinatum finem valeant pervenire. Si enim vel pecuniae vel honores ceteraque tale quid afferunt
10 cui nihil bonorum abesse videatur, nos quoque fateamur fieri aliquos horum adeptione felices. Quod si neque id valent efficere quod promittunt bonisque pluribus carent, nonne liquido falsa in eis beatitudinis species deprehenditur? Primum igitur
15 te ipsum qui paulo ante divitiis affluebas, interrogo: inter illas abundantissimas opes numquamne animum tuum concepta ex qualibet iniuria confudit anxietas?" "Atqui," inquam, "libero me fuisse animo quin aliquid semper angerer reminisci non queo." "Nonne
20 quia vel aberat quod abesse non velles vel aderat quod adesse noluisse?" "Ita est," inquam. "Illius igitur praesentiam huius absentiam desiderabas?" "Confiteor," inquam. "Eget vero," inquit, "eo quod quisque desiderat?" "Eget," inquam. "Qui
240

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III

And you also, earthly creatures that you are, have some image, though hazy, in your dreams of your beginning; you see, though with a far from clear imagination yet with some idea, that true end of your happiness. Your natural inclinations draw you towards that end, to the true good, though mistaken notions of many kinds lead you away from it. For consider, can men come to the end they set themselves through those things by which they think they will obtain happiness? For if money or honours or the rest do produce any such thing, from which no good seems to be lacking, even we should admit that some men are made happy by getting them. But if they cannot perform what they promise, but lack many goods, is not the appearance of happiness that they produce clearly false? First then, I ask you yourself, you who were not so long ago very wealthy, were you never, among all your vast riches, troubled in mind by some anxiety, arising from some wrong or other?"

"I certainly cannot remember," I answered, "that my mind was so free that it was not always in some way tormented."

"Was it not either because something was missing that you wanted, or because something you did not want was present?"

"Yes," I said.

"So you desired the presence of the one, and the absence of the other?"

"That is so," I said.

"Now any man must lack that thing which he desires?"

"Yes, he must," said I.

BOETHIUS

25 vero eget aliquo, non est usquequaque sibi ipse
sufficiens ? ” “ Minime,” inquam. “ Tu itaque hanc
insufficientiam plenus,” inquit, “ opibus sustinebas ? ”
“ Quidni ? ” inquam. “ Opes igitur nihilo indigentem
sufficientemque sibi facere nequeunt et hoc erat quod
30 promittere videbantur. Atqui hoc quoque maxime
considerandum puto quod nihil habeat suapte natura
pecunia ut his a quibus possidetur invitis nequeat
auferri.” “ Fateor,” inquam. “ Quidni fateare, cum
eam cotidie valentior aliquis eripiat invito ? Unde
35 enim forenses querimoniae nisi quod vel vi vel fraude
nolentibus pecuniae repetuntur ereptae ? ” “ Ita
est,” inquam. “ Egebit igitur,” inquit, “ extrinsecus
petito praesidio quo suam pecuniam quisque tueatur ? ”
“ Quis id,” inquam, “ neget ? ” “ Atqui non egeret
40 eo, nisi possideret pecuniam quam posset amittere ? ”
“ Dubitari,” inquam, “ nequit.” “ In contrarium
igitur relapsa res est ; nam quae sufficientes sibi fa-
cere putabantur opes, alieno potius praesidio faci-
unt indigentes. Quis autem modus est quo pellatur
45 divitiis indigentia ? Num enim divites esurire ne-
queunt ? Num sitire non possunt ? Num frigus hi-
bernum pecuniosorum membra non sentiunt ? Sed
adest, inquires, opulentis quo famem satient, quo
sitim frigusque depellant. Sed hoc modo consolari

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“ But whoever lacks anything, is not completely self-sufficient ? ”

“ No, he is certainly not,” I said.

“ So, did *you*, loaded with wealth as you were,” she said, “ feel this insufficiency ? ”

“ Why not ? ” I asked.

“ Then wealth cannot make a man self-sufficient, lacking nothing, though this was what it seemed to promise. And I think that this also is specially worth considering, that there is nothing in the nature of money which prevents its being taken away from those who possess it, against their will.”

“ I grant that,” I said.

“ Why shouldn't you grant it, since every day someone who is stronger takes it from another against his will ? What else causes all the lawsuits, if not that someone is trying to get back money that has been taken against their will by force or by fraud ? ”

“ That is so,” said I.

“ So,” said she, “ a man will need some help sought from outside himself by which to keep his money safe ? ”

“ Who would deny it ? ” I asked.

“ But he would not need it, did he not possess money, which he could lose.”

“ There is no doubt of that,” said I.

“ So the very opposite is true to what was expected. Wealth, which was thought to make a man self-sufficient, actually makes him need another's help. And by what means does wealth get rid of need ? Can rich men not get hungry, can they not be thirsty, do the bodies of the moneyed men not feel the winter's cold ? But, you will argue, the wealthy have the means to satisfy their hunger, and to be rid of thirst

BOETHIUS

50 quidem divitiis indigentia potest, auferri penitus non potest. Nam si haec hians semper atque aliquid poscens opibus expletur, maneat necesse est quae possit expleri. Taceo quod naturae minimum, quod avaritiae nihil satis est. Quare si opes nec sub-
55 movere possunt indigentiam et ipsae suam faciunt, quid est quod eas sufficientiam praestare credatis ?

III

Quamvis fluente dives auri gurgite
Non expleturas cogat avarus opes
Oneretque bacis colla rubri litoris
Ruraque centeno scindat opima bove,
5 Nec cura mordax deseret superstitem,
Defunctumque leves non comitantur opes.

IV

Sed dignitates honorabilem reverendumque cui provenerint reddunt. Num vis ea est magistratibus ut utentium mentibus virtutes inserant vitia depellant ? Atqui non fugare sed illustrare potius
5 nequitiam solent ; quo fit ut indignemur eas saepe nequissimis hominibus contigisse, unde Catullus licet in curuli Nonium sedentem strumam tamen appellat. Videsne quantum malis dedecus adiciant dignitates ? Atqui minus eorum patebit indignitas, si nullis
10 honoribus inclarescant. Tu quoque num tandem tot

^a A *struma* is a "scrofulous tumour" (in *Cat.* lii. 2 it is a proper name, as also in Pliny, *N.H.* xxxvii. 81) : the curule chairs (*sellae curules*) in the Senate House were the official seats of consuls and other magistrates.

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or cold. But in that way need can be made easier to bear by riches, it cannot be removed altogether. For if need, always gasping for and demanding something, is satisfied by riches, there must remain a need still which could be satisfied. I pass over the fact that nature is satisfied with very little, while nothing satisfies avarice. So if riches not only cannot remove need, but even produce a need of their own, why should you believe that they can provide sufficiency ?

III

Let the rich man in his avarice pile up his wealth
(Which is never enough !) with flowing streams of
gold ;

Let him load his neck with Red Sea pearls ;
And plough his fat fields with hundreds of oxen !
Gnawing care will never leave him while he lives,
Nor does his insubstantial wealth go with him dead.

IV

But high offices bring to him who acquires them honour and respect. Yet is there really this power in offices, that they instil virtues into the minds of those who fill them, and drive away vices ? Surely they do not usually drive off wickedness but rather make it notorious ? That is why we are indignant that they are often bestowed on wicked men : so that Catullus called Nonius a ' growth ' although he was sitting in a curule chair.^a Do you see how much dishonour high offices bring on bad men ? Their baseness would surely be less obvious if they were not well known for any honours. And could you

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periculis adduci potuisti ut cum Decorato gerere magistratum putares, cum in eo mentem nequissimi scurrae delatorisque respiceres? Non enim possumus ob honores reverentia dignos iudicare quos ipsis honoribus iudicamus indignos. At si quem sapientia praeditum videres, num posses eum vel reverentia vel ea qua est praeditus sapientia non dignum putare? Minime. Inest enim dignitas propria virtuti, quam protinus in eos quibus fuerit adiuncta transfundit. Quod quia populares facere nequeunt honores, liquet eos propriam dignitatis pulchritudinem non habere.

In quo illud est animadvertendum magis. Nam si eo abiectior est quo magis a pluribus quisque contemnitur, cum reverendos facere nequeat quos pluribus ostentat, despectiores potius improbos dignitas facit. Verum non impune; reddunt namque improbi parem dignitatibus vicem quas sua contagione commaculant. Atque ut agnoscas veram illam reverentiam per has umbratiles dignitates non posse contingere, si qua multiplici consulatu functus in barbaras nationes forte devenerit, venerandumne barbaris honor faciet? Atqui si hoc naturale munus dignitatibus foret, ab officio suo quoquo gentium nullo modo cessarent, sicut ignis ubique terrarum numquam tamen calere desistit, sed quoniam id eis non propria vis sed hominum fallax adnectit opinio, vanescunt

^a Decoratus was a magistrate, possibly quaestor, about A.D. 508 (cf. Cassiodorus, *Variae*, v. 3 and 4).

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yourself ever have been induced by any number of dangers to think of taking office with Decoratus, since you perceived that he had the disposition of a wicked clown and informer? ^a For we cannot judge those worthy of respect because of their offices whom we judge unworthy of the offices themselves. But if you saw someone endowed with wisdom, could you think him unworthy of respect or of that wisdom with which he is endowed? Of course not. So there is some worth proper to virtue which is immediately transferred to those to whom virtue is joined. Now since honours acclaimed by the mob cannot do this, it is clear that they do not possess the beauty proper to real worth. And in this matter you should further consider this: if a man is the more abject the more he is despised by the more people, high office, since it cannot make dishonest men worthy of respect, for it exposes them to the gaze of more people, makes them rather the more despised. But the offices themselves do not escape without harm, for those dishonest men do an equally bad turn to them by defiling them with their own infection.

Now that you may recognize that that true respect cannot be derived from these shadowy dignities, suppose a man who has been consul many times should happen to visit some barbarian nations outside the Roman world, will his high rank make him respected by the barbarians? If such dignities did possess this ability naturally, they would not lose their power among any peoples at all, just as fire never ceases to be hot anywhere in the world. But since it is not a power proper to them, but only attributed to them by the delusory opinion of men, they at once became empty as soon as they come among

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ilico, cum ad eos venerint qui dignitates eas esse non aestimant.

Sed hoc apud exteras nationes. Inter eos vero
40 apud quos ortae sunt, num perpetuo perdurant?
Atqui praetura magna olim potestas nunc inane
nomen et senatorii census gravis sarcina; si quis
populi quondam curasset annonam, magnus habe-
batur, nunc ea praefectura quid abiectius? Ut
45 enim paulo ante diximus, quod nihil habet proprii
decoris, opinione utentium nunc splendorem accipit
nunc amittit. Si igitur reverendos facere nequeunt
dignitates, si ultro improborum contagione sordescunt,
si mutatione temporum splendere desinunt, si gentium
50 aestimatione vilescunt, quid est quod in se expetendae
pulchritudinis habeant, nedum aliis praestent?

IV

Quamvis se Tyrio superbus ostro
Comeret et niveis lapillis,
Invisus tamen omnibus vigebat
Luxuriae Nero saevientis.
5 Sed quondam dabat improbus verendis
Patribus indecores curules.
Quis illos igitur putet beatos
Quos miseri tribuunt honores?

V

An vero regna regumque familiaritas efficere
potentem valet? Quidni, quando eorum felicitas

^a There is possibly a reference here to Pompey the Great; cf. Cassiod. *Variae*, vi. 18 (*Formula Praefectus Annonae*; Migne, *P.L.* lxxix. 699).

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peoples who do not count them dignities at all. But this is of course so among foreigners. Yet do they last constant among those who created these high offices? The praetorship was once an office of great power, now it is an empty name and a heavy burden on the resources of the Senatorial order. Once, when a man had charge of the public corn-dole, he was held to be great; now, is there anything lower than that prefectship? ^a For as I said just now, that which has no glory of its own nature, is in the estimation of those using it at one time splendid, at another, not. If, then, high offices cannot make a man worthy of respect; if, what is more, they are readily sullied by being infected by dishonest men occupying them; if they cease to be splendid as times change, and are cheapened in the judgement of different peoples, what beauty can they have in themselves which we should seek after or which, still less, they can confer on others?

IV

Though in his pride he decked himself
In Tyrian purple and in snowy pearls,
Nero for all his pomp was hated by all
For his self-indulgent cruelty.
Shamelessly once he gave the reverend Senators
Unworthy consuls to elect:
Who could then think such honours blessed
Granted by such miserable men?

V

But surely kingdoms and association with kings
can make a man truly powerful? Why not, when

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perpetuo perdurat? Atqui plena est exemplorum
vetustas, plena etiam praesens aetas, qui reges
5 felicitatem calamitate mutaverint. O praeclara
potentia quae ne ad conservationem quidem sui satis
efficax invenitur! Quod si haec regnorum potestas
beatitudinis auctor est, nonne si qua parte defuerit,
felicitatem minuat, miseriam inportet? Sed quamvis
10 late humana tendantur imperia, plures necesse est
gentes relinqui quibus regum quisque non imperet.
Qua vero parte beatos faciens desinit potestas, hac
inpotentia subintrat quae miseros facit; hoc igitur
modo maiorem regibus inesse necesse est miseriae
15 portionem. Expertus sortis suae periculorum
tyrannus regni metus pendentis supra verticem gladii
terrore simulavit. Quae est igitur haec potestas
quae sollicitudinum morsus expellere, quae formi-
dinum aculeos vitare nequit? Atqui vellent ipsi
20 vixisse securi, sed nequeunt; dehinc de potestate
gloriantur. An tu potentem censes quem videas
velle quod non possit efficere? Potentem censes
qui satellite latus ambit, qui quos terret ipse plus
metuit, qui ut potens esse videatur, in servientium
25 manu situm est? Nam quid ego de regum familiari-
bus disseram, cum regna ipsa tantae inbecillitatis
plena demonstram? Quos quidem regia potestas
saepe incolumis saepe autem lapsa prosternit. Nero
Senecam familiarem praeceptoremque suum ad
30 eligendae mortis coegit arbitrium. Papinianum diu
inter aulicos potentem militum gladiis Antoninus

^a Dionysius I of Syracuse (430-367 B.C.); the story is told in Cic. *Tusc.* V. xxi. 61-62.

^b Tac. *Ann.* xiv. 53-54; and cf. Book II, pp. 214-215; the date was A.D. 65.

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their happiness lasts for ever ? Yet ancient times are full—and the present times are full, too—of examples of kings whose happiness changed to misfortune. O a fine power indeed, that is discovered to be insufficient even for its own preservation ! If this power over kingdoms does produce happiness, would it not lessen that happiness and introduce misery if it were lacking in any respect ? But however widely any human empires may extend, there must always be many nations left which any particular king does not rule. Now wherever the power that makes kings happy ends, there their lack of power creeps in and makes them miserable ; in this way, then, kings must have a larger share of misery than happiness. Knowing by experience the dangers of his own position, one tyrant ^a likened his fears as king to the terror of the sword hanging over Damocles' head. What is this power, then, that cannot get rid of gnawing care or prevent the pricks of fear ? Surely kings would like to have lived out their lives without care, yet they cannot : and then they boast of their power ! If you see a man who wants to do what he cannot, do you think him powerful ? Do you think him powerful who goes everywhere with a bodyguard at his side ? Or him who himself is more afraid of others than they of him ? Or him whose show of power depends on a crowd of courtiers ? Well, need I say anything about the companions of kings, when I have shown that kingship itself is full of such weakness ? For courtiers are cast down often both when kingly power is secure and when it is overthrown. Nero forced Seneca, his old companion and teacher, to choose the manner of his own death ^b ; Papinian had long been powerful at court, but Antoninus threw him to his soldier's

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obiecit. Atqui uterque potentiae suae renuntiare
vulnerunt, quorum Seneca opes etiam suas tradere
Neroni seque in otium conferre conatus est; sed
35 dum ruituros moles ipsa trahit, neuter quod voluit
effecit. Quae est igitur ista potentia quam perti-
mescunt habentes, quam ne cum habere velis tutus
sis et cum deponere cupias vitare non possis? An
praesidio sunt amici quos non virtus sed fortuna
40 conciliat? Sed quem felicitas amicum fecit, infor-
tunium faciet inimicum. Quae vero pestis efficacior
ad nocendum quam familiaris inimicus?

V

Qui se volet esse potentem
Animos domet ille feroces
Nec victa libidine colla
Foedis submittat habenis.
5 Etenim licet Indica longe
Tellus tua iura tremescat
Et serviat ultima Thyle,
Tamen atras pellere curas
Miserasque fugare querelas
10 Non posse potentia non est.

VI

Gloria vero quam fallax saepe, quam turpis est!

^a Papinian, the greatest perhaps of the Roman jurists, and praetorian prefect under Severus (emperor from 192 to 211) was killed by Severus's son M. Antoninus Caracalla in about 212 (cf. Spartianus, *Caracalla*, 8: *a militibus non solum permittente verum etiam suadente Antonino occisum*).

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swords.^a Yet both wanted to renounce their power ; Seneca even tried to hand his wealth over to Nero and to retire. But while they stood on the brink and their very greatness drew them down, neither achieved what he wished. What is this power, then, which those who have it greatly fear ? While you want to possess it, you are not safe, and when you want to put it aside, you cannot get rid of it. Are we really helped by friends who are drawn to us not by our virtue but by our fortune ? But a man made a friend by good fortune, misfortune will make an enemy. And what plague is more able to hurt a man than an enemy who was once a familiar friend ?

V

The man who wants to be powerful
Must tame his high spirits,
Must not submit his neck, conquered by lust,
To its stinking halter ;
For indeed though far-off Indian soil
Tremble under your sway,
And furthest Thule ^b serve you,
Yet not to be able to dispel black care
Or put complaining misery to flight
This is no power at all.

VI

And glory—how deceptive that often is, how base !
That is why the tragic poet ^c was not wrong when

^b *ultima Thule* : cf. Virg. *Georg.* i. 30 ; a land or island of dubious identity (Iceland ? Norway ?) in the far north of Europe.

^c Eur. *Andr.* 319 f.

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Unde non iniuria tragicus exclamat :

᾿Ω δόξα δόξα μυρίοισι δὴ βροτῶν
οὐδὲν γεγῶσι βίοτον ὄγκωσας μέγαν.

- 5 Plures enim magnum saepe nomen falsis vulgi
opinionibus abstulerunt ; quo quid turpius excogitari
potest ? Nam qui falso praedicantur, suis ipsi
necesse est laudibus erubescant. Quae si etiam
meritis conquisita sit, quid tamen sapientis adiecerit
10 conscientiae qui bonum suum non populari rumore,
sed conscientiae veritate metitur ? Quod si hoc
ipsum propagasse nomen pulchrum videtur, con-
sequens est ut foedum non extendisse iudicetur.
Sed cum, uti paulo ante disserui, plures gentes esse
15 necesse sit ad quas unius fama hominis nequeat
pervenire, fit ut quem tu aestimas esse gloriosum,
proxima¹ parte terrarum videatur inglorius. Inter
haec vero popularem gratiam ne commemoratione
quidem dignam puto, quae nec iudicio provenit nec
20 umquam firma perdurat. Iam vero quam sit inane
quam futile nobilitatis nomen, quis non videat ?
Quae si ad claritudinem refertur, aliena est. Videtur
namque esse nobilitas quaedam de meritis veniens
laus parentum. Quod si claritudinem praedicatio
25 facit, illi sint clari necesse est qui praedicantur.
Quare splendidum te, si tuam non habes, aliena
claritudo non efficit. Quod si quid est in nobilitate
bonum, id esse arbitror solum, ut inposita nobilibus
necessitudo videatur ne a maiorum virtute degeneret.

¹ var. lect. pro maxima.

^a Reading *proxima* with Weinberger and Bieler; *pro maxima* would presumably mean "in the greater part of the earth," but I prefer *proxima* if only on the *difficilior lectio* principle.

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he exclaimed :

O glory, glory, myriads of mortals,
Born nothings, thou hast blown their lives up big.

For too many men have often acquired a great reputation because of the mistaken notions of the mob—and what can be imagined baser than that? For those who are much talked about, but mistakenly, must surely blush to hear their own praises. Even if such praises are won by deserts, what will they have added to the self-knowledge of a wise man who measures his own good not by gossip of the populace but by the truth of that self-knowledge? But if to have had even one's reputation spread abroad seems fair, then it follows that for it not to have been so widely spread must be adjudged foul. But since, as I showed just now, there must be many nations which the reputation of one man cannot reach, it happens that the man you think glorious may seem inglorious in the very next-door region of the earth.^a But here I may say that I do not think popular favour even worth mentioning; it neither proceeds from judgement nor ever firmly endures. But now who does not see how empty and vain a thing is a reputation for nobility? If it is related to fame, it belongs to another: for nobility seems to be a kind of praise deriving from the deserts of one's parents. Now if being talked about produces fame, then those must be famous who are talked about; wherefore the fame of others, if you have none of your own, does not make you renowned. But if there is anything good in nobility, I think it is this only, that there seems to be an obligation imposed on the noble not to let it degenerate from the virtue of their ancestors.

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VI

Omne hominum genus in terris simili surgit ab ortu.
Unus enim rerum pater est, unus cuncta ministrat.
Ille dedit Phoebos radios dedit et cornua lunae,
Ille homines etiam terris dedit ut sidera caelo,
5 Hic clausit membris animos celsa sede petitos.
Mortales igitur cunctos edit nobile germen.
Quid genus et proavos strepitis? Si primordia vestra
Auctoremque deum spectes, nullus degener exstat,
Ni vitiis peiora fovens proprium deserat ortum.

VII

Quid autem de corporis voluptatibus loquar
quarum appetentia quidem plena est anxietatis,
satietas vero poenitentiae? Quantos illae morbos,
quam intolerabiles dolores quasi quendam fruc-
5 tum nequitiae fruendum solent referre corporibus!
Quarum motus quid habeat iucunditatis, ignoro.
Tristes vero esse voluptatum exitus, quisquis remi-
nisci libidinum suarum volet, intellet. Quae si
beatos explicare possunt, nihil causae est quin
10 pecudes quoque beatæ esse dicantur quarum omnis
ad explendam corporalem lacunam festinat intentio.
Honestissima quidem coniugis foret liberorumque
iucunditas, sed nimis e natura dictum est nescio
quem filios invenisse tortores¹; quorum quam sit

¹ *var. lect. tortorem.*

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VI

All human kind on earth arises from the same origin ;
There is one Father of all things, one who looks after
all.

He gave the sun his rays, the moon her horns,
He peopled too the earth with men as the sky with
constellations ;

He locked into limbs spirits brought down from their
high abode.

So did a noble seed produce all mortals.

Why shout about your lineage or your forbears ? If
you consider

Your beginnings and God your Author, no man is now
degenerate

Save who embracing baser things in vice forsakes his
proper origin.

VII

What shall I say about the pleasures of the body,
the longing for which is full of anxiety, the satisfac-
tion of which full of regret ? What dreadful diseases,
what unbearable pains they generally cause in the
bodies of those enjoying them, as a kind of fruit of
their wickedness ! What pleasure there is in stirring
them up, I do not know ; but that these pleasures
have a bitter end, anyone will understand who is
willing to recall his own lusts. If bodily pleasures
can make men happy, there is no reason why beasts
should not be called happy too, since their whole
effort is directed to fulfilling their bodies' missing
needs. The pleasure derived from wife and children
should surely be wholly good, but it was too well said,
too truly to nature, that someone invented children

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15 mordax quaecumque condicio, neque alias expertum
te neque nunc anxium necesse est admonere. In
quo Euripidis mei sententiam probo, qui carentem
liberis infortunio dixit esse felicem.

VII

Habet hoc voluptas omnis,
Stimulis agit fruentes
Apiumque par volantum
Ubi grata mella fudit,
5 Fugit et nimis tenaci
Ferit icta corda morsu.

VIII

Nihil igitur dubium est quin hae ad beatitudinem
viae devia quaedam sint nec perducere quemquam
eo valeant ad quod se perducturas esse promittunt.
Quantis vero implicitae malis sint, brevissime mon-
5 strabo. Quid enim? Pecuniamne congregare cona-
beris? Sed eripies habenti. Dignitatibus fulgere
velis? Danti supplicabis et qui praeire ceteros
honore cupis, poscendi humilitate vilesces. Poten-
tiamne desideras? Subiectorum insidiis obnoxius
10 periculis subiacebis. Gloriam petas? Sed per aspera
quaeque distractus securus esse desistis. Voluptariam
vitam degas? Sed quis non spernat atque abiciat

^a Reading *tortores*. If *tortorem* (which has better mss. authority) is retained, the translation should be: "that some tormentor invented children."

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to be tormentors.^a There is no need to warn you—having experienced it before and even now being anxious—how, whatever their condition is, it gnaws at you with worry. In this matter I agree with the opinion of my Euripides, who said that one who lacks children is happy in his misfortune.^b

VII

Such is every pleasure
Goading those enjoying it,
And like swarming bees
That have poured out their pleasing honey,
It flees, and strikes our hearts
With a too lasting sting.

VIII

There is therefore no doubt but that these ways to happiness are a kind of *by-paths* and cannot bring anyone to that place to which they promise to lead him. Now I shall very briefly show with what great evils they are bound up. What then, will you try to amass money? But you will have to take it from him who has it. Would you like to be illustrious for your honours? You will have to beg them humbly of their giver, and you who long to surpass others in honour will become cheap through the baseness of your begging. Do you desire power? You will lie exposed to dangers, prey to your subjects' treachery. Do you seek glory? But pulled about through every kind of difficulty you cease to be safe. Would you lead a life of pleasure? But who would not despise

^b Eur. *Andr.* 420 : δυστυχῶν εὐδαιμονεῖ.

BOETHIUS

vilissimae fragilissimaeque rei corporis servum? Iam
vero qui bona prae se corporis ferunt, quam exigua,
15 quam fragili possessione nituntur! Num enim
elephantos mole, tauros robore superare poteritis,
num tigres velocitate praeibitis? Respicite caeli
spatium firmitudinem celeritatem et aliquando
desinite vilia mirari. Quod quidem caelum non his
20 potius est quam sua qua regitur ratione mirandum.
Formae vero nitor ut rapidus est, ut velox et
vernalium florum mutabilitate fugacior! Quod si, ut
Aristoteles ait, Lynceis oculis homines uterentur,
ut eorum visus obstantia penetraret, nonne intro-
25 spectis visceribus illud Alcibiadis superficie pul-
cherrimum corpus turpissimum videretur? Igitur
te pulchrum videri non tua natura sed oculorum
spectantium reddit infirmitas. Sed aestimate quam
vultis nimio corporis bona, dum sciatis hoc quod-
30 cumque miramini triduanæ febris igniculo posse
dissolvi! Ex quibus omnibus illud redigere in
summam licet, quod haec quæ nec præstare quæ
pollicentur bona possunt nec omnium bonorum
congregatione perfecta sunt, ea nec ad beatitudinem
35 quasi quidem calles ferunt nec beatos ipsa perficiunt.

VIII

Eheu quæ miseros tramite devios

Abducit ignorantia!

Non aurum in viridi quaeritis arbore

Nec vite gemmas carpitis,

^a Arist. fr. 59; and cf. *An. Post.* 1397 b 18. The sharp sight of the Argonaut Lynceus became proverbial.

CONSOLATION III

and reject the service of so very base and frail a thing as the body? Now indeed those indeed who boast of the good qualities of their bodies—how mean and how frail the possession on which they rely! Could you exceed elephants in size, or bulls in strength, could you outstrip tigers in speed? Look on the space and steadfastness and speed of the heavens and cease hereafter to wonder at base things; though the heavens are rather to be wondered at not for these things but for the order by which they are governed. But how brief is the brightness of beauty, how swiftly passing, more quickly fleeting than the changing loveliness of spring flowers. And if, as Aristotle says,^a men enjoyed the use of Lynceus' eyes so that their sight penetrated obstacles, would not the superficially very beautiful body of Alcibiades seem most vile when his inwards could be seen? So it is not your nature that makes you appear fair, but the weakness of the eyes of those who look at you. But you may over-estimate the body's good qualities as much as you like, provided you realize that what you admire can be destroyed by the burning of a three-days fever. Out of all which we may gather this in sum, that these things which can neither provide those goods they promise nor are perfect by amassing all goods, neither lead to happiness like so many roads, nor themselves make men happy.

VIII

Alas, what ignorance
Leads wretched men astray on a devious path!
You seek not gold on a green tree,
Nor gather gems from the vine;

BOETHIUS

- 5 Non altis laqueos montibus abditis
 Ut pisce ditetis dapes
 Nec vobis capreas si libeat sequi,
 Tyrrhena captatis vada.
 Ipsos quin etiam fluctibus abditos
10 Norunt recessus aequoris,
 Quae gemmis niveis unda feracior
 Vel quae rubentis purpurae
 Nec non quae tenero pisce vel asperis
 Praestent echinis litora.
15 Sed quonam lateat quod cupiunt bonum,
 Nescire caeci sustinent,
 Et quod stelliferum trans abiit polum,
 Tellure demersi petunt.
 Quid dignum stolidis mentibus inprecer ?
20 Opes honores ambiant ;
 Et cum falsa gravi mole paraverint,
 Tum vera cognoscant bona.

IX

Hactenus mendacis formam felicitatis ostendisse suffecerit, quam si perspicaciter intueris, ordo est deinceps quae sit vera monstrare." "Atqui video," inquam, "nec opibus sufficientiam nec regnis potentiam nec reverentiam dignitatibus nec celebritatem gloria nec laetitiam voluptatibus posse contingere." "An etiam causas, cur id ita sit,prehendisti?" "Tenui quidem veluti rimula mihi videor intueri, sed ex te apertius cognoscere malim."

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You do not spread your hidden nets on mountains high
To enrich your feast with fish,
Nor if it please you hunt roe-deer
Do you search Tyrrhenian seas.
Rather indeed men know the deep retreats
Hidden by the waves of the sea,
What waters more abound in snowy pearls,
Which in red murices,
As too which shores provide the tender fish
Or the prickly sea-urchin.
But where the good that they desire may hide,
They blindly ignorant remain,
And that which passes far beyond the starry pole
Sunk in the earth they seek.
What curse can I invoke on such stupid minds ?
Let them strive for wealth and honours, and then
When they have gained false goods with labour great,
Let them recognize true goods.

IX

Now let what I have so far shown you of the shape of false happiness suffice : if you look at that properly and thoroughly, the right order now is to show you what true happiness is."

" Indeed I see," I said, " that sufficiency cannot be obtained through wealth, nor power through kingship, nor respect through office, nor fame through glory, nor joy through pleasures."

" And have you also grasped the reasons why this is so ? "

" I think I glimpse them as it were through a narrow crack, but I should prefer to learn of them more plainly from you."

BOETHIUS

10 “ Atqui promptissima ratio est. Quod enim simplex
est indivisumque natura, id error humanus separat
et a vero atque perfecto ad falsum imperfectumque
traducit. An tu arbitraris quod nihilo indigeat
egere potentia ? ” “ Minime,” inquam. “ Recte tu
15 quidem. Nam si quid est quod in ulla re inbecillioris
valentiae sit, in hac praesidio necesse est egeat
alieno.” “ Ita est,” inquam. “ Igitur sufficientiae
potentiaeque una est eademque natura.” “ Sic
videtur.” “ Quod vero huiusmodi sit, spernendumne
20 esse censes an contra rerum omnium veneratione
dignissimum ? ” “ At hoc,” inquam, “ ne dubitari
quidem potest.” “ Addamus igitur sufficientiae
potentiaeque reverentiam, ut haec tria unum esse
iudicemus.” “ Addamus, si quidem vera volumus
25 confiteri.”

“ Quid vero,” inquit, “ obscurumne hoc atque
ignobile censes esse an omni celebritate clarissimum ?
Considera vero, ne quod nihilo indigere, quod potentis-
simum, quod honore dignissimum esse concessum est,
30 egere claritudine quam sibi praestare non possit atque
ob id aliqua ex parte videatur abiectius.” “ Non
possum,” inquam, “ quin hoc uti est ita etiam cele-
berrimum esse confitear.” “ Consequens igitur est ut
claritudinem superioribus tribus nihil differre fatea-
35 mur.” “ Consequitur,” inquam. “ Quod igitur nullius

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“ The explanation is indeed very ready to hand, for that which is simple and undivided by nature, human error divides and perverts from the true and perfect to the false and imperfect. Do you think that that which needs nothing is in want of power ? ”

“ Certainly not,” I said.

“ You are quite right,” she said, “ for if there is something the power of which is in any respect too weak, there must be in that respect a need for others’ help.”

“ That is so,” I said.

“ Therefore the nature of sufficiency and that of power are one and the same.”

“ So it seems.”

“ Now do you think that what is of this kind is to be despised or, on the contrary, to be of all things the most worthy of respect ? ”

“ The latter,” I said ; “ it cannot even be doubted.”

“ So let us add respect to sufficiency and power, so that we judge these three to be one.”

“ Let us so add it, since we wish indeed to acknowledge the truth.”

“ Well then,” she said, “ do you think it is obscure and undistinguished, or is it most famous, with all renown ? Now consider whether that which it is granted lacks nothing, which is most powerful and most worthy of honour, is in want of fame, and cannot provide it for itself, and for that reason seems in some respect to be lower.”

“ I cannot but acknowledge,” I said, “ that being what it is, it is also most renowned.”

“ Consequently, then, let us admit that fame differs not at all from the previous three.”

“ It follows,” I said.

BOETHIUS

egeat alieni, quod suis cuncta viribus possit, quod sit clarum atque reverendum, nonne hoc etiam constat esse laetissimum ? ” “ Sed unde huic, ” inquam, “ tali maeror ullus obrepit ne cogitare quidem possum ; quare
40 plenum esse laetitiae, si quidem superiora manebunt, necesse est confiteri. ” “ Atqui illud quoque per eadem necessarium est sufficientiae, potentiae, claritudinis, reverentiae, iucunditatis nomina quidem esse diversa, nullo modo vero discrepare substantiam. ”
45 “ Necesse est, ” inquam. “ Hoc igitur quod est unum simplexque natura, pravitas humana dispertit et dum rei quae partibus caret partem conatur adipisci, nec portionem quae nulla est nec ipsam quam minime affectat assequitur. ” “ Quonam, ” inquam, “ modo ? ”
50 “ Qui divitias, ” inquit, “ petit penuriae fugam, de potentia nihil laborat, vilis obscurusque esse mavult, multas etiam sibi naturales quoque subtrahit voluptates, ne pecuniam quam paravit amittat. Sed hoc modo ne sufficientia quidem contingit ei quem
55 valentia deserit, quem molestia pungit, quem vilitas abicit, quem recondit obscuritas. Qui vero solum posse desiderat, profligat opes, despicit voluptates honoremque potentia carentem gloriam quoque nihili pendit. Sed hunc quoque quam multa deficient
60 vides. Fit enim ut aliquando necessariis egeat, ut anxietatibus mordeatur cumque haec depellere
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CONSOLATION III

“ Now that which needs no-one else, which can do all things by its own power, which is famous and worthy of respect—should we not agree that it is also most joyful ? ”

“ I cannot even conceive,” I said, “ whence any sadness might steal upon it, such as it is ; wherefore it must be acknowledged to be full of joy, if indeed what has been said before shall remain true.”

“ And this too is necessary according to those same arguments, that the *names* of sufficiency, power, fame, respect and pleasure are different, but their *substance* differs in no respect.”

“ That is necessary,” I said.

“ Now this, which is one and simple in its nature, man’s perversity splits up, and while he tries to obtain a part of it, though in fact it has no parts, he gains neither a portion of it, for there are no portions, nor the thing itself, which he is not in the least trying to get.”

“ How is that ? ” I asked.

“ He who in flight from want seeks riches,” she answered, “ takes no pains over power, prefers to be base and obscure, and also deprives himself of many pleasures, even natural ones, in case he lose the money he has acquired. But in this way he does not even achieve sufficiency, since he is deserted by power, afflicted by trouble, made abject by baseness and hidden in obscurity. Now he who only desires power, squanders his wealth, despises pleasures, and all honour without power, as well as glory, he counts as worthless. But you see how many things are wanting to him too : for it happens that sometimes he lacks necessities, so that he is gnawed by worries, and since he cannot get rid of these worries, he loses

BOETHIUS

nequeat, etiam id quod maxime petebat potens esse desistat. Similiter ratiocinari de honoribus, gloria, voluptatibus licet. Nam cum unumquodque horum
65 idem quod cetera sit, quisquis horum aliquid sine ceteris petit, ne illud quidem quod desiderat apprehendit." "Quid igitur," inquam, "si qui cuncta simul cupiat adipisci, summam quidem ille beatitudinis velit?" "Sed num in his eam reperiet, quae demon-
70 stravimus id quod pollicentur non posse conferre?" "Minime," inquam. "In his igitur quae singula quaedam expetendorum praestare creduntur, beatitudo nullo modo vestiganda est." "Fateor," inquam, "et hoc nihil dici verius potest." "Habet
75 igitur," inquit, "et formam falsae felicitatis et causas. Deflecte nunc in adversum mentis intuitum; ibi enim veram quam promisimus statim videbis." "Atqui haec," inquam, "vel caeco perspicua est eamque tu paulo ante monstrasti, dum falsae causas
80 aperire conaris. Nam nisi fallor ea vera est et perfecta felicitas quae sufficientem, potentem, reverendum, celebrem laetumque perficiat. Atque ut me interius animadvertisse cognoscas, quae unum horum, quoniam idem cuncta sunt, veraciter praestare potest
85 hanc esse plenam beatitudinem sine ambiguitate cognosco." "O te alumne hac opinione felicem, si quidem hoc," inquit, "adieceris." "Quidnam?" inquam. "Essene aliquid in his mortalibus caducisque
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even that which he most sought after, being powerful. We may produce similar arguments about honours, glory and pleasures ; for since each one of these is essentially the same thing as the rest, whoever seeks one of them apart from the others does not even grasp that one he desires."

" Well then," I said, " suppose a man desire to obtain them all together ; he would indeed be desiring the sum of happiness." " But surely he will not find it in those things we have shown cannot bestow what they promise ? "

" No indeed," I said.

" Therefore happiness is by no means to be sought in these things, which are believed to provide each desirable thing separately ? "

" I admit it," I said, " and nothing could be truer."

" You know, then," she said, " both the form of false happiness, and its causes. Now turn your mind's gaze in the opposite direction ; for there you will at once see true happiness, as I promised."

" It is indeed clear," I said, " even to a blind man, and you have shown it to me just now, while you were seeking to display the causes of false happiness. For unless I am wrong, that is true and perfect happiness which makes a man sufficient, powerful, respected, famous and joyful. And so that you may know that I have inwardly understood this, that which can truly provide one of these—since all are really the same—that I recognize unequivocally as full happiness."

" O my pupil," she said, " I should call you happy in this opinion, if you but added this."

" What, please ? " I asked.

" Do you think that there is any among these

BOETHIUS

- rebus putas quod huiusmodi statum possit afferre ? ”
- 90 “ Minime,” inquam, “ puto idque a te, nihil ut amplius desideretur, ostensum est.” “ Haec igitur vel imagines veri boni vel imperfecta quaedam bona dare mortalibus videntur, verum autem atque perfectum bonum conferre non possunt.” “ Assentior,” in-
- 95 quam. “ Quoniam igitur agnovisti quae vera illa sit, quae autem beatitudinem mentiantur, nunc superest ut unde veram hanc petere possis agnoscas.” “ Id quidem,” inquam, “ iam dudum vehementer exspecto.” “ Sed cum, ut in Timaeo¹ Platoni,” inquit, “ nostro
- 100 placet, in minimis quoque rebus divinum praesidium debeat implorari, quid nunc faciendum censes, ut illius summi boni sedem reperire mereamur ? ” “ Invocandum,” inquam, “ rerum omnium patrem, quo praetermisso nullum rite fundatur exordium.”
- 105 “ Recte,” inquit, ac simul ita modulata est.

IX

“ O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas
Terrarum caelique sator qui tempus ab aevo
Ire iubes stabilisque manens das cuncta moveri,
Quem non externae pepulerunt fingere causae

¹ uti Timaeo the best mss.

^a Tim. 27 c.

^b This poem is largely derived from Plato's *Timaeus* 27 c—42 d, with much use of the Neo-platonist commentary of Proclus (ed. Ernest Diehl, Teubner (3 vols.), 1903–1906). It has been described by Courcelle as “ substantiel et concis, obscur et presque intraduisable ”, and its difficulty, because of the compression of so much thought in so few lines, has called forth commentaries throughout medieval and modern times. For a full account of sources and commentary see F. Klingner, *De Boethii Consolatione*, in *Philologische Unter-*
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mortal and impermanent things which could produce a condition of this kind ? ”

“ I most certainly think not,” I replied, “ and that has been so demonstrated by you that no further argument is desired.”

“ These things, therefore, seem to give mortals images of the true good, or certain imperfect goods, but they cannot confer the true and perfect good.”

“ I agree,” I said.

“ Then since you have recognized what is the true happiness, and what things counterfeit it, it now remains for you to recognize whence you can seek this true happiness.”

“ That indeed,” I said, is what I have long been eagerly hoping for.”

“ But since,” said she, “ as is my Plato’s opinion in the *Timaeus*,^a we ought to implore God’s help in even the least of matters, what do you think we should do now, that we may be worthy to discover the abode of that highest good ? ”

“ We must call upon the Father of all things,” I said, “ for if this is omitted no beginning can be rightly and properly based.”

“ You are right,” she said, and at once began singing in this way :

IX ^b

“ O you who in perpetual order govern the universe,
Creator of heaven and earth, who bid time ever move,
And resting still, grant motion to all else ;
Whom no external causes drove to make

suchungen, xxvii (Berlin, 1921), pp. 38-67 and P. Courcelle, *La Consolation de Philosophie dans la tradition littéraire* (Paris, 1967), pp. 161 ff.

BOETHIUS

- 5 *Materiae fluitantis opus, verum insita summi
 Forma boni livore carens, tu cuncta superno
 Ducis ab exemplo, pulchrum pulcherrimus ipse
 Mundum mente gerens similique in imagine formans
 Perfectasque iubens perfectum absolvere partes.*
- 10 *Tu numeris elementa ligas ut frigora flammis
 Arida convenient liquidis, ne purior ignis
 Evolet aut mersas deducant pondera terras.
 Tu triplicis mediam naturae cuncta moventem
 Conectens animam per consona membra resolvis.*
- 15 *Quae cum secta duos motum glomeravit in orbes,
 In semet reditura meat mentemque profundam
 Circuit et simili convertit imagine caelum.
 Tu causis animas paribus vitasque minores
 Provehis et levibus sublimes curribus aptans*
- 20 *In caelum terramque seris quas lege benigna
 Ad te conversas reduci facis igne reverti.*
-

^a Matter, all sensible things, is flowing, ever coming to be, changing and passing away; the only reason for God's creation is the outpouring of good, since the Form of the Good is in him, a Good lacking all grudging spirit (the "envy of the gods," *φθόνος θεῶν*, their grudging nature, was a commonplace among the Greeks). God creates on the pattern of the eternal Forms, which for the Neo-platonists and their Christian followers were in the mind of God.

^b Soul's nature is threefold: God took the eternal Same, and the changing Other, and forced the two into union to produce their harmony, Being; and then of these three fashioned Soul. All movement is caused by Soul, the only self-mover, or by its parts, which are harmonious since they too are formed of the same three elements, Same, Other and Being.

^c The two circles into which the divided Soul is bent are the celestial equator and the ecliptic; the Mind is the

CONSOLATION III

Your work of flowing matter,^a but the form
Within yourself of the highest good, ungrudging ;
from a heavenly pattern

You draw out all things, and being yourself most fair,
A fair world in your mind you bear, and forming it
In the same likeness, bid it being perfect to complete
itself

In perfect parts. *You* bind its elements with law, so
that the cold

Come together with flames, the dry with liquids, lest
the fire too pure

Fly off, or lest its weight pull down the overwhelmed
earth.

You, binding soul together in its threefold nature's
midst,^b

Soul that moves all things, then divide it into har-
monious parts ;

Soul thus divided has its motion gathered
Into two circles,^c moves to return into itself, and the
Mind deep within

Encircles, and makes the heaven turn, in likeness to
itself.

You then bring forth, with the same bases, lesser
living souls,^d

And giving them light chariots fitting their heavenly
nature,

Broadcast them in the heavens and on earth, and by
your bounteous law

Make them, turned towards you, with returning fire
come back.

moving soul in the outermost, invisible heaven, which turns
the visible heaven in its perfect motion.

^a The lesser souls are the souls of men, each assigned to a
star as its chariot, and each returning when purified after a
good life in the body to the heavens (see *Tim.* 41 D—42 D).

BOETHIUS

Da pater augustam menti conscendere sedem,
Da fontem lustrare boni, da luce reperta
In te conspicuos animi defigere visus.

- 25 Dissice terrenae nebulas et pondera molis
Atque tuo splendore mica ! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis, te cernere finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus idem.

X

Quoniam igitur quae sit imperfecti, quae etiam
perfecti boni forma vidisti, nunc demonstrandum
reor quonam haec felicitatis perfectio constituta sit.
In quo illud primum arbitror inquirendum, an aliquod
5 huiusmodi bonum quale paulo ante definisti in rerum
natura possit exsistere, ne nos praeter rei subiectae
veritatem cassa cogitationis imago decipiat. Sed
quin exsistat sitque hoc veluti quidam omnium
fons bonorum negari nequit. Omne enim quod
10 imperfectum esse dicitur, id inminutione perfecti
imperfectum esse perhibetur. Quo fit, ut si in
quolibet genere imperfectum quid esse videatur, in
eo perfectum quoque aliquid esse necesse sit.
Etenim perfectione sublata, unde illud quod imper-
15 fectum perhibetur exstiterit ne fingi quidem potest.
Neque enim ab deminutis inconsummatisque natura
rerum coepit exordium, sed ab integris absolutisque
procedens in haec extrema atque effeta dilabitur.
Quod si, uti paulo ante monstravimus, est quaedam
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Grant, Father, to my mind to rise to your majestic
seat,
Grant me to wander by the source of good, grant
light to see,
To fix the clear sight of my mind on you.
Disperse the clouding heaviness of this earthly mass
And flash forth in your brightness. For, to the
blessed, *you*
Are clear serenity, and quiet rest : to see *you* is their
goal,
And you, alone and same,
Are their beginning, driver, leader, pathway, end.

X

“ Now since you have seen what is the form both of the imperfect and of perfect good, I think we must now show where this perfection of happiness is set. And in this I think we first have to inquire whether any good of this kind, as you have just defined it, can exist in the world, lest we are deceived by an empty imagining going beyond the truth of the reality before us. But that there exists this thing, as it were a kind of fount of all goods, cannot be denied. For everything which is called imperfect is held to be imperfect because of some diminution of what is perfect. Hence it happens that if in any class something seems to be imperfect, there must also be something perfect of that class ; for if we take away perfection altogether, it cannot even be imagined how that which is held to be imperfect can exist. For the universe did not take its origin from diminished and unfinished beginnings, but proceeding from beginnings whole and completely finished it lapses into this latest, exhausted state. But if, as we have just

BOETHIUS

20 boni fragilis imperfecta felicitas, esse aliquam solidam
perfectamque non potest dubitari." " Firmissime,"
inquam, " verissimeque conclusum est." " Quo vero,"
inquit, " habitet, ita considera. Deum rerum omnium
principem bonum esse communis humanorum con-
25 ceptio probat animorum. Nam cum nihil deo melius
excogitari queat, id quo melius nihil est bonum esse
quis dubitet? Ita vero bonum esse deum ratio
demonstrat, ut perfectum quoque in eo bonum
esse convincat. Nam ni tale sit, rerum omnium
30 princeps esse non poterit. Erit enim eo praestanti-
us aliquid perfectum possidens bonum, quod hoc
prius atque antiquius esse videatur; omnia namque
perfecta minus integris priora esse claruerunt. Quare
ne in infinitum ratio prodeat, confitendum est sum-
35 mum deum summi perfectique boni esse plenissi-
mum. Sed perfectum bonum veram esse beatitudinem
constituimus; veram igitur beatitudinem in summo
deo sitam esse necesse est." " Accipio," inquam,
" nec est quod contradici ullo modo queat." " Sed
40 quaeso," inquit, " te vide quam id sancte atque
inviolabiliter probes quod boni summi summum deum
diximus esse plenissimum." " Quonam," inquam,
" modo?" " Ne hunc rerum omnium patrem illud
summum bonum quo plenus esse perhibetur vel
45 extrinsecus accepisse vel ita naturaliter habere prae-

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shown, there is a certain imperfect happiness in a good that perishes, it cannot be doubted that there is some enduring and perfect happiness."

"The conclusion is most firmly and truly drawn," I said.

"Now where that dwells," she said, "consider in this way. That God, the principle of all things, is good is proved by the common concept of all men's minds; for since nothing better than God can be conceived of, who can doubt that that, than which nothing is better, is good? But reason so much shows that God is good that it proves clearly that perfect good also is in him. For unless he were such, he could not be the principle of all things; for there would be something possessing perfect good more excellent than he, which in this would seem to be prior and more ancient. For it has become clear that all perfect things are prior to the less perfect. Therefore, so that our argument does not fall into an infinite regress, we must admit that the most high God is full of the most high and perfect good; but we have decided that the perfect good is true happiness; therefore true happiness must reside in the most high God."

"I accept that," I said, "nor can it in any way be contradicted."

"But now I ask you," said she, "see how solemnly and inviolably you approve what we said of the most high God being filled full of the highest good."

"How?" I asked.

"So that you may not suppose that he, the Father of all things, has received that highest good, of which it is agreed he is filled, from outside, or in such a way naturally possesses it, as if you might think that the

BOETHIUS

sumas, quasi habentis dei habitaeque beatitudinis
diversam cogites esse substantiam. Nam si extrin-
secus acceptum putes, praestantius id quod dederit
ab eo quod acceperit existimare possis. Sed hunc
50 esse rerum omnium praecellentissimum dignissime
confitemur. Quod si natura quidem inest, sed est
ratione diversum, cum de rerum principe loquamur
deo, fingat qui potest : quis haec diversa coniunxerit ?
Postremo quod a qualibet re diversum est, id non
55 est illud a quo intellegitur esse diversum. Quare
quod a summo bono diversum est sui natura, id
summum bonum non est—quod nefas est de eo
cogitare quo nihil constat esse praestantius. Omnino
enim nullius rei natura suo principio melior poterit
60 exsistere, quare quod omnium principium sit, id
etiam sui substantia summum esse bonum verissima
ratione concluderim.” “ Rectissime,” inquam. “ Sed
summum bonum beatitudinem esse concessum est.”
“ Ita est,” inquam. “ Igitur,” inquit, “ deum esse
65 ipsam beatitudinem necesse est confiteri.” “ Nec
propositis,” inquam, “ prioribus refragari queo et
illis hoc inlatum consequens esse perspicio.”

“ Respice,” inquit, “ an hinc quoque idem firmius
approbetur, quod duo summa bona quae a se diversa
70 sint esse non possunt. Etenim quae discrepant
bona, non esse alterum quod sit alterum liquet ;
quare neutrum poterit esse perfectum, cum alterutri

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substance of the happiness possessed is different from that of God the possessor. For if you thought it was received from outside, you could think that which gave it more excellent than that which received it : but we most rightly confess that he is the most excellent of all things. But if it is by nature that it is in him, but it is essentially different, then since we are speaking of God the Author of all things, let him imagine who can who it was joined these two different natures. Finally, that which is different from something is not that from which it is understood to be different ; therefore that which is different in its nature from the highest good is not itself the highest good, which it would be wicked to think of him than whom it is agreed there is nothing more excellent. For since there could exist no nature of anything at all better than its own principle, therefore I would conclude with the truest reasoning, that which is the principle of all things is also in its substance the highest good."

"Most rightly," I said.

"But we have granted that the highest good is happiness."

"That is so," I said.

"Therefore," she said, "it must be confessed that happiness is itself God."

"I both am unable to refute your previous propositions," I said, "and see that this inference follows from them."

"Consider," she said, "whether the same is not more firmly proved also from this, that two highest goods different from one another cannot exist. For it is clear that when two goods are different, the one is not the other ; and therefore neither could be

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alterum deest. Sed quod perfectum non sit, id
summum non esse manifestum est ; nullo modo igitur
75 quae summa sunt bona ea possunt esse diversa.
Atqui et beatitudinem et deum summum bonum esse
collegimus ; quare ipsam necesse est summam esse
beatitudinem quae sit summa divinitas." " Nihil,"
inquam, " nec reapse verius¹ nec ratiocinatione firmitus
80 nec deo dignius concludi potest." " Super haec,"
inquit, " igitur veluti geometrae solent demonstratis
propositis aliquid inferre quae porismata ipsi vocant,
ita ego quoque tibi veluti corollarium dabo. Nam
quoniam beatitudinis adeptione fiunt homines beati,
85 beatitudo vero est ipsa divinitas, divinitatis adeptione
beatos fieri manifestum est : sed uti iustitiae adeptione
iusti, sapientiae sapientes fiunt, ita divinitatem
adeptos deos fieri simili ratione necesse est. Omnis
igitur beatus deus, sed natura quidem unus ; parti-
90 cipatione vero nihil prohibet esse quam plurimos."
" Et pulchrum," inquam, " hoc atque pretiosum, sive
porisma sive corollarium vocari mavis." " Atqui hoc
quoque pulchrius nihil est, quod his annectendum
esse ratio persuadet." " Quid ? " inquam.

95 " Cum multa," inquit, " beatitudo continere videatur,
utrumne haec omnia unum veluti corpus beatitudinis
quadam partium varietate coniungant an sit

¹ reapse verius *Schepss* : re ab severius or re ipsa verius
the best MSS.

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perfect, since the one is lacking from the other ; but it is obvious that what is not perfect is not the highest ; and therefore in no way can those highest goods be different from one another. But we have concluded that both God and happiness are the highest good, so that that must be the highest happiness which is the highest divinity."

" No conclusion could be drawn," I said, " more genuinely true, more firmly based on argument, or more worthy of God."

" Now in addition to these things," she said, " just as geometers are used to draw from the theorems they have proved what they call *porismata* (corollaries), so I shall give you too a kind of corollary. For since men are made happy by the acquisition of happiness, but happiness is itself divinity, it is obvious that they are made happy by the acquisition of divinity. But as by the acquisition of justice they become just, or by the acquisition of wisdom, wise, so by the same argument they must, when they have acquired divinity, become gods. Therefore every happy man is a god, though by nature God is one only : but nothing prevents there being as many as you like by participation."

" That is both a beautiful and a precious thing," I said, " whether you prefer it to be called a *porisma* or a corollary."

" And yet there is nothing more beautiful than this, which reason persuades us should be added to what we have said."

" What ? " I asked.

" Since happiness," she said, " seems to include many things, do they all join, with a certain variability of parts, to make as it were one body of happiness

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eorum aliquid quod beatitudinis substantiam compleat, ad hoc vero cetera referantur ? ” “ Vellem,”
100 inquam, “ id ipsarum rerum commemoratione patefaceres.” “ Nonne,” inquit, “ beatitudinem bonum esse censemus ? ” “ Ac summum quidem,” inquam.
“ Addas,” inquit, “ hoc omnibus licet. Nam eadem sufficientia summa est, eadem summa potentia, reverentia quoque, claritas ac voluptas beatitudo esse
105 iudicatur. Quid igitur ? Haecine omnia—bonum sufficientia potentia ceteraque—veluti quaedam beatitudinis membra sunt an ad bonum veluti ad verticem cuncta referuntur ? ” “ Intellego,” inquam,
110 “ quid investigandum proponas, sed quid constituas audire desidero.” “ Cuius discretionem rei sic accipe. Si haec omnia beatitudinis membra forent, a se quoque invicem discreparent. Haec est enim partium natura ut unum corpus diversa component. Atqui
115 haec omnia idem esse monstrata sunt ; minime igitur membra sunt. Alioquin ex uno membro beatitudo videbitur esse coniuncta—quod fieri nequit.” “ Id quidem,” inquam, “ dubium non est, sed id quod restat exspecto.” “ Ad bonum vero cetera referri
120 palam est. Idcirco enim sufficientia petitur quoniam bonum esse iudicatur, idcirco potentia quoniam id quoque esse creditur bonum ; idem de reverentia, claritudine, iucunditate coniectare licet. Omnium igitur expetendorum summa atque causa bonum
125 est. Quod enim neque re neque similitudine ullum
282

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or is there some one of them which completely makes up the substance of happiness, and to which all the rest are related ? ”

“ I should like you to make this clear,” I said, “ by mentioning the things themselves.”

“ Now we think happiness is good, do we not ? ”

“ And indeed the highest good,” I agreed.

“ You may add that to each of them,” she said, “ for happiness is also judged to be the highest sufficiency, the highest power, and the highest respect, fame and pleasure. What, then ? Are all these—good, sufficiency, power and so on—as it were members of the body, happiness, or do they all stand in relation to the good as it were to their head ? ”

“ I understand what you are proposing for our investigation,” I said, “ but I long to hear what your conclusion is.”

“ Hear then how we distinguish in this matter. If all these things were parts of happiness, they would also differ from one another, for this is the nature of parts, that being different they make up one body ; yet all these things have been shown to be one and the same ; therefore they are not parts. Otherwise happiness will seem to be conjoined of one part, which cannot be done.”

“ Well that, certainly, is beyond doubt,” I said, “ but I am waiting for the rest.”

“ Clearly, then, the others are related to the good. This is why sufficiency is sought after, because it is adjudged to be good ; this is why power is sought after, because it too is thought to be good ; and the same may be inferred of respect, fame, and pleasure. The sum and cause of all things that are to be sought after is the good : for that which holds no good in

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in se retinet bonum, id expeti nullo modo potest.
Contraque etiam quae natura bona non sunt, tamen
si esse videantur, quasi vere bona sint appetuntur.
Quo fit uti summa, cardo atque causa expetendorum
130 omnium bonitas esse iure credatur. Cuius vero
causa quid expetitur, id maxime videtur optari,
veluti si salutis causa quispiam velit equitare, non
tamequitandi motum desiderat quam salutis effectum.
Cum igitur omnia boni gratia petantur, non illa
135 potius quam bonum ipsum desideratur ab omnibus.
Sed propter quod cetera optantur, beatitudinem esse
concessimus; quare sic quoque sola quaeritur bea-
tudo. Ex quo liquido apparet ipsius boni et beati-
tudinis unam atque eandem esse substantiam.”
140 “Nihil video cur dissentire quispiam possit.” “Sed
deum veramque beatitudinem unum atque idem esse
monstravimus.” “Ita,” inquam. “Securo igitur
concludere licet dei quoque in ipso bono nec usquam
alio sitam esse substantiam.

X

Huc omnes pariter venite capti
Quos fallax ligat improbis catenis
Terrenas habitans libido mentes,
Haec erit vobis requies laborum,
5 Hic portus placida manens quiete,

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itself either in reality or by some resemblance cannot by any means be sought after. And on the other hand, those things which are not good by nature, provided they seem so, are sought as though they were really good. That is why it is rightly held that the chief or cardinal cause of all things sought after is goodness. Now the cause for which a thing is sought is seen to be most greatly desired, as for example if a man wanted to ride for the sake of his health, he does not so much desire the motion of riding, but the effect, health. Therefore, since all things are sought after for the sake of good, they are not so much desired by all as the good itself. But we have granted that that for which the rest are desired is happiness ; so in the same way, only happiness is sought after. From this it clearly appears that the substance of goodness and of happiness is one and the same."

" I see no reason why anyone could disagree," I said.

" But we have shown that God and true happiness are one and the same."

" Yes," I said.

" We may therefore safely conclude that the substance of God too is established in goodness itself and nowhere else.

X

Come here together, all you prisoners, come,
You who are bound in shameful chains
By cheating lust that lives in your earthbound minds ;
Here will you find from all your labours rest,
Here is a haven of quiet abiding calm,

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Hoc patens unum miseris asyllum.
Non quidquid Tagus aureis harenis
Donat aut Hermus rutilante ripa
Aut Indus calido propinquus orbi
10 Candidis miscens virides lapillos,
Inlustrent aciem magisque caecos
In suas condunt animos tenebras.
Hoc quidquid placet excitatque mentes,
Infimis tellus aluit cavernis ;
15 Splendor quo regitur vigetque caelum,
Vitat obscuras animae ruinas.
Hanc quisquis poterit notare lucem,
Candidos Phoebi radios negabit."

XI

"Assentior," inquam, "cuncta enim firmissimis nexa
rationibus constant." Tum illa, "Quanti," inquit,
"aestimabis, si bonum ipsum quid sit agnoveris?"
"Infinito," inquam, "si quidem mihi pariter deum
5 quoque qui bonum est continget agnoscere." "Atqui
hoc verissima," inquit, "ratione patefaciam, maneant
modo quae paulo ante conclusa sunt." "Manebunt."
"Nonne," inquit, "monstravimus ea quae appetuntur
pluribus idcirco vera perfectaue bona non esse
10 quoniam a se invicem discreparent cumque alteri
abesset alterum, plenum absolutumque bonum afferre
non posse? Tum autem verum bonum fieri cum in
unam veluti formam atque efficientiam colliguntur,

^a The rivers Tagus (in Spain and Portugal) and Hermus (in
Aeolis in Asia Minor) were sources of alluvial gold.

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Here lies the only refuge for unfortunates.
Neither whatever Tagus yields with its golden sands,
Nor Hermus with its ruddy-glowing bank,^a
Nor Indus, next the torrid zone,
Mingling its emeralds and brilliant stones
Would clear men's sight ; but in their dark they all
Bury men's even blinder minds.
Whatever that is that stirs men's minds with pleasure
The earth has cherished in its deepest caves.
The brightness by which the lively heavens are ruled
Shuns the soul's ruin and obscurity ;
And any man who can observe this light
Will say the rays of Phoebus are not bright."

XI

" I agree," I said, " for all is bound together by most firm reasoning." Then she said : " How highly will you value it, if you come to know what the good itself is ? "

" Infinitely highly," I replied, " since together with that I shall also come to know God, who is the good."

" I shall indeed make that clear too," she said, " with most valid reasoning, provided those conclusions stand which have just now been reached."

" They shall stand," I said.

" Have we not shown," said she, " that those things which are sought by many are not true and perfect goods for this reason, because they are different from one another ; and since each one lacks the others, none can confer the full and absolute good ; but the true good is only produced when they are gathered as it were into one form which as efficient cause makes

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ut quae sufficientia est, eadem sit potentia, reverentia,
15 claritas atque iucunditas, nisi vero unum atque idem
omnia sint, nihil habere quo inter expetenda nume-
rentur ? ” “ Demonstratum,” inquam “ nec dubitari
ullo modo potest.” “ Quae igitur cum discrepant
minime bona sunt, cum vero unum esse coeperint,
20 bona fiunt ; nonne haec ut bona sint, unitatis fieri
adeptione contingit ? ” “ Ita,” inquam, “ videtur.”
“ Sed omne quod bonum est boni participatione
bonum esse concedis an minime ? ” “ Ita est.”
“ Oportet igitur idem esse unum atque bonum simili
25 ratione concedas ; eadem namque substantia est
eorum quorum naturaliter non est diversus effectus.”
“ Negare,” inquam, “ nequeo.” “ Nostine igitur,”
inquit, “ omne quod est tam diu manere atque sub-
sistere quam diu sit unum, sed interire atque dissolvi
30 pariter atque unum destiterit ? ” “ Quonam modo ? ”
“ Ut in animalibus,” inquit, “ cum in unum coeunt
ac permanent anima corpusque, id animal vocatur ;
cum vero haec unitas utriusque separatione dissol-
vitur, interire nec iam esse animal liquet. Ipsum
35 quoque corpus cum in una forma membrorum con-
iunctione permanet, humana visitur species ; at si
distributae segregataeque partes corporis distraxerint
unitatem, desinit esse quod fuerat. Eoque modo

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that which is sufficiency the same as power, respect, fame and pleasure ; but unless all are one and the same, they possess nothing to justify their inclusion among those things we should seek ? ”

“ That has been demonstrated,” I said, “ and it cannot by any means be doubted.”

“ Now those things which are not good, since they differ, but become good when they begin to be one, does it not happen that they become good by the acquisition of unity ? ”

“ So it appears,” I said.

“ But do you agree or not, that everything which is good is good by participation in the good ? ”

“ That is so.”

“ Then by the same argument you must agree that the one and the good are the same ; for those things have the same substance the effect of which, according to their nature, is not different.”

“ I cannot deny it,” I said.

“ Then you know,” she said, “ that everything that is, endures and subsists so long as it is one, and perishes and is destroyed as soon as it ceases to be one ? ”

“ How is that ? ”

“ For example, in living things,” she replied, “ while the body and soul come together and remain as one, the result is called a living thing ; but when this unity is dissolved by the separation of the two, clearly it perishes and is no longer a living thing. And the body itself, so long as by the conjunction of its members it remains in one form, is seen as a human shape ; but if the parts, being separated and scattered, tear apart the unity of the body, it ceases to be what it was. In the same way it will be obvious

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percurrenti cetera procul dubio patebit subsistere
40 unumquodque, dum unum est, cum vero unum esse
desinit, interire.” “ Consideranti,” inquam, “ mihi
plura minime aliud videtur.” “ Estne igitur,” inquit,
“ quod in quantum naturaliter agat relicta subsistendi
appetentia venire ad interitum corruptionemque
45 desideret ? ” “ Si animalia,” inquam, “ considerem
quae habent aliquam volendi nolendique naturam,
nihil invenio quod nullis extra cogentibus abiciant
manendi intentionem et ad interitum sponte festinent.
Omne namque animal tueri salutem laborat, mortem
50 vero perniciemque devitat. Sed quid de herbis
arboribusque, quid de inanimatis omnino consentiam
rebus prorsus dubito.”

“ Atqui non est quod de hoc quoque possis ambi-
gere, cum herbas atque arbores intuearis primum sibi
55 convenientibus innasci locis, ubi quantum earum
natura queat cito exarescere atque interire non
possint. Nam aliae quidem campis aliae montibus
oriuntur, alias ferunt paludes, aliae saxis haerent,
aliarum fecundae sunt steriles harenae, quas si in alia
60 quispiam loca transferre conetur, arescant. Sed dat
cuique natura quod convenit et ne, dum manere
possunt, intereant, elaborat. Quid quod omnes velut
in terras ore demerso trahunt alimenta radicibus ac
per medullas robur corticemque diffundunt ? Quid
65 quod mollissimum quidque, sicuti medulla est, in-
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beyond doubt to anyone surveying other examples that each thing subsists so long as it is one, but when it ceases to be one, it perishes."

"If I consider many more things," I said, "it seems not in the least different."

"Then is there anything," she asked, "that, so far as it acts naturally, abandons the appetite for subsistence and desires to come to its own corruption and destruction?"

"If I consider living things," I answered, "which have some natural ability to want or not to want a thing, I find nothing which with no forces working from outside is such as to cast aside the effort to remain alive, and hasten voluntarily to its own destruction. For every animal strives to guard its own safety and avoids death and destruction. But what I should think of plants and trees, or of things altogether without life, I am very much in doubt."

"But there is nothing that you could be in doubt about in their case either, since you perceive first that plants and trees grow in places suitable to them, where, so far as their nature permits, they are able to avoid withering swiftly and perishing. For some spring up in the fields, others on mountains; others marshes bring forth, and others cling to stones, while the barren sands are productive of others which would wither if one tried to transplant them into other places. But nature gives to each what is fitting for it, and labours to prevent their dying for as long as they can endure. Have you not noticed that they all, with, as it were, their mouths buried in the ground, draw nourishment through their roots and diffuse strength through their pith and bark? Have you not noticed that all that is softest, like the pith,

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teriore semper sede reconditur, extra vero quadam ligni firmitate, ultimus autem cortex adversum caeli intemperiem quasi mali patiens defensor opponitur? Iam vero quanta est naturae diligentia, ut cuncta
70 semine multiplicato propagentur! Quae omnia non modo ad tempus manendi verum generatim quoque quasi in perpetuum permanendi veluti quasdam machinas esse quis nesciat? Ea etiam quae inanimata esse creduntur nonne quod suum est quaeque
75 simili ratione desiderant? Cur enim flammas quidem sursum levitas vehit, terras vero deorsum pondus deprimit, nisi quod haec singulis loca motionesque conveniunt? Porro autem quod cuique consentaneum est, id unumquodque conservat, sicuti ea quae sunt
80 inimica corrumpunt. Iam vero quae dura sunt ut lapides, adhaerent tenacissime partibus suis et ne facile dissolvantur resistunt. Quae vero liquentia ut aer atque aqua, facile quidem dividendum cedunt, sed cito in ea rursus a quibus sunt abscisa relabuntur,
85 ignis vero omnem refugit sectionem. Neque nunc nos de voluntariis animae cognoscentis motibus, sed de naturali intentione tractamus, sicuti est quod acceptas escas sine cogitatione transigimus, quod in somno spiritum ducimus nescientes; nam ne in
90 animalibus quidem manendi amor ex animae voluntatibus, verum ex naturae principiis venit. Nam saepe mortem cogentibus causis quam natura reformidat voluntas amplectitur, contraque illud quo solo mortalium rerum durat diuturnitas gignendi
95 opus, quod natura semper appetit, interdum coercet

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is hidden always in an inside place, covered without by some woody hardness, and lastly the bark is set as a defence against the inclemency of the weather, as able to bear its ill-usage? Again, how great indeed is nature's care that all are propagated by the multiplication of seed! Who does not know that they are all as it were a kind of mechanism not only for enduring for a time, but also from one generation to another as if to last for ever? And do not all those things which are believed to be without life in a similar way desire each what is fitting for itself? For why else does their lightness bear flames upwards, or its weight press earth downwards, except because these directions and motions are fitting for each? And further, whatever is suited to any thing preserves that thing, whatever it is; just as those things injurious to it destroy it. Again, those things which are hard, like stones, cling most tenaciously to their parts and resist easy dissolution; but those things which are flowing, as air or water, yield easily it is true to forces dividing them, but the parts so divided swiftly flow together as one again; while fire shuns all division.

Nor are we now dealing with the voluntary motions of the intelligent soul, but with the exertion of nature, such as when we digest food we have taken in without any conscious thought, or when we draw breath in our sleep without knowing it. For not even in living things does the love of survival proceed from the acts of will of the soul, but from natural principles. For often for compelling reasons the will embraces death, which nature fears and avoids, and on the other hand, though nature always desires it, the will sometimes restrains that act of generation by which alone the

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voluntas. Adeo haec sui caritas non ex animali
motive sed ex naturali intentione procedit. Dedit
enim providentia creatis a se rebus hanc vel maximam
manendi causam ut quoad possunt naturaliter manere
100 desiderent ; quare nihil est quod ullo modo queas
dubitare cuncta quae sunt appetere naturaliter con-
stantiam permanendi, devitare perniciem."

"Confiteor," inquam, "nunc me indubitato cernere
quae dudum incerta videbantur." "Quod autem,"
105 inquit, "subsistere ac permanere petit, id unum esse
desiderat ; hoc enim sublato ne esse quidem cui-
quam permanebit." "Verum est," inquam. "Omnia
igitur," inquit, "unum desiderant." Consensi. "Sed
unum id ipsum monstravimus esse quod bonum."
110 "Ita quidem." "Cuncta igitur bonum petunt, quod
quidem ita describas licet : ipsum bonum esse quod
desideretur ab omnibus." "Nihil," inquam, "verius
excogitari potest. Nam vel ad nihil unum cuncta
referuntur et uno veluti vertice destituta sine rectore
115 fluitabunt, aut si quid est ad quod universa festinent,
id erit omnium summum bonorum." Et illa :
"Nimum," inquit, "o alumne laetor, ipsam enim
mediae veritatis notam mente fixisti. Sed in hoc
patuit tibi quod ignorare te paulo ante dicebas."
120 "Quid ?" inquam. "Quis esset," inquit, "rerum

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perpetuation of mortal things is assured. So this love of self proceeds not from a motion of the soul but from an exertion of nature ; for providence has given to her creatures this most important cause of enduring, that by their nature they desire to endure so far as they can. Therefore there is nothing that could in any way make you doubt that all things that are seek naturally the continuance of their own survival, and avoid destruction."

" I confess," I said, " that now I see without any doubt what previously seemed doubtful."

" Now that," said she, " which seeks to subsist and endure, desires to be one ; for if this unity is destroyed not even continued existence will be left to anything."

" That is true," I said.

" Therefore all things desire unity," she said. I agreed.

" But we have shown that unity is the very same as the good."

" That is so. "

" Therefore all things seek the good, which indeed you may describe in this way : the good is that which is desired by all things."

" Nothing truer can be conceived," I said ; " for either all things are unrelated to any one thing and, as it were left without one thing as head, flow about with no direction, or, if there is anything towards which all things swiftly move, that will be the highest good of all."

And she said : " I am so glad, dear pupil : you have fixed in your mind that mark which is at the very centre of truth. But now that has become clear to you which just now you said you did not know."

" What ? " I asked.

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omnium finis. Is est enim profecto, quod desideratur ab omnibus, quod quia bonum esse collegimus, oportet rerum omnium finem bonum esse fateamur.

XI

Quisquis profunda mente vestigat verum
Cupitque nullis ille deviis falli,
In se revolvat intimi lucem visus
Longosque in orbem cogat inflectens motus
5 Animumque doceat quidquid extra molitur
Suis retrusum possidere thesauris.
Dudum quod atra texit erroris nubes
Lucebit ipso perspicacius Phoebo.
Non omne namque mente depulit lumen
10 Obliviosam corpus invehens molem.
Haeret profecto semen introrsum veri
Quod excitatur ventilante doctrina.
Nam cur rogati sponte recta censetis,
Ni mersus alto viveret fomes corde ?
15 Quod si Platonis musa personat verum,
Quod quisque discit immemor recordatur."

XII

Tum ego : " Platoni," inquam, " vehementer assentior, nam me horum iam secundo commemoras, primum quod memoriam corporea contagione, dehinc

^a According to Plato's doctrine of "reminiscence" (*anamnesis*, for which see esp. *Meno*, 81-86 and *Phaedo*, 72-76) the soul, when it is imprisoned in the body at birth, forgets all it naturally knows of the eternal world of Ideas to which it

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“What was the end of all things,” she answered ;
“for surely that is the end, which is desired by all ;
and, since we have agreed that that is the good, we
must also admit the good is the end of all things.

XI

Whoever with deep thought seeks out the truth
And wants not to go wrong down devious ways,
Must on himself turn back the light of his inward
vision,

Bending and forcing his far-reaching movements
Into a circle, and must teach his mind,
Whatever she is striving for without,
Removed within her treasury to grasp ;
What the black cloud of error lately covered
Will shine then clearer than Phoebus himself.

For the body weighing upon the mind with bulky
oblivion

Has not removed all light :

Assuredly there sticks within some seed of truth
Which is stirred to life by learning's breeze.

For why, being asked a question, do you rightly judge
Out of yourself, unless the kindling lived
Deep down in your heart ? If Plato's muse rings true,
What each man learns, forgetful he recalls.”^a

XII

Then I said : “I strongly agree with Plato ; for
this is now the second time you have reminded me
of these things. The first time was after I lost them
from my memory because the body contaminated it,
belongs, and all learning of the truth in this life is a recalling
of that forgotten knowledge.

BOETHIUS

cum maeroris mole pressus amisi." Tum illa : " Si
5 priora," inquit, " concessa respicias, ne illud quidem
longius aberit quin recorderis quod te dudum nescire
confessus es." " Quid ? " inquam. " Quibus," ait
illa, " gubernaculis mundus regatur." " Memini,"
inquam, " me incitiam meam fuisse confesum, sed
10 quid afferas, licet iam prospiciam, planius tamen ex
te audire desidero." " Mundum," inquit, " hunc deo
regi paulo ante minime dubitandum putabas." " Ne
nunc quidem arbitror," inquam, " nec umquam dubi-
tandum putabo quibusque in hoc rationibus accedam
15 breviter exponam. Mundus hic ex tam diversis
contrariisque partibus in unam formam minime con-
venisset, nisi unus esset qui tam diversa coniungeret.
Coniuncta vero naturarum ipsa diversitas invicem
discors dissociaret atque divelleret, nisi unus esset
20 qui quod nexuit contineret. Non tam vero certus
naturae ordo procederet nec tam dispositos motus
locis, temporibus, efficientia, spatiis, qualitatibus
explicarent, nisi unus esset qui has mutationum
varietates manens ipse disponeret. Hoc quidquid
25 est quo condita manent atque agitantur, usitato
cunctis vocabulo deum nomino."

Tum illa : " Cum haec," inquit, " ita sentias,

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and the second when I was oppressed by the weight of grief."

"If you reflect on the things we have so far granted," she then said, "you will not be very far from remembering even that which lately you confessed to not knowing."

"What?" I asked.

"By what governance the universe is ruled," she replied.

"I remember," I said, "that I did confess my ignorance, but what you are now bringing to light, though I can already glimpse it far off, yet I long to hear more clearly from you."

"A little while ago," she said, "you thought it not to be doubted that this universe is ruled by God."

"Nor do I even now think," I said, "nor shall I ever think that to be doubted, and I shall briefly set out by what arguments I come to this position. This universe is of such different and contrary parts that it would never have come together in one form were there not one to join such diverse elements together. And this very conjoined diversity of natures discordant among themselves would split and fall apart if there were not one to hold together what he has connected. Nor indeed would so certain an order of nature go on, nor would things work out such well-ordered motions in place and time, in their effects, their spaces and their qualities, unless there were one who himself enduring disposed and ordered this variety of changes. And whatever this is by which created things continue in being and move, I call by the name used by all, God."

Then she said: "Since this is how you feel, I think

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parvam mihi restare operam puto ut felicitatis
compos patriam sospes revisas. Sed quae proposui-
30 mus intueamur. Nonne in beatitudine sufficientiam
numeravimus deumque beatitudinem ipsam esse con-
sensimus? "Ita quidem." "Et ad mundum igitur,"
inquit, "regendum nullis extrinsecus adminiculis in-
digebit; alioquin si quo egeat, plenam sufficientiam
35 non habebit." "Id," inquam, "ita est necessarium."
"Per se igitur solum cuncta disponit." "Negari,"
inquam, "nequit." "Atqui deus ipsum bonum esse
monstratus est." "Memini," inquam. "Per bonum
igitur cuncta disponit, si quidem per se regit omnia
40 quem bonum esse consensimus et hic est veluti
quidam clavus atque gubernaculum quo mundana
machina stabilis atque incorrupta servatur." "Vehe-
menter assentior," inquam, "et id te paulo ante
dicturam tenui licet suspicione prospexi." "Credo";
45 inquit, "iam enim ut arbitror vigilantius ad cernenda
vera oculos deducis. Sed quod dicam non minus
ad contuendum patet." "Quid?" inquam. "Cum
deus," inquit, "omnia bonitatis clavo gubernare iure
credatur eademque omnia sicuti docui ad bonum
50 naturali intentione festinent, num dubitari potest
quin voluntaria regantur seque ad disponentis nutum
300

CONSOLATION III

there is only a little more left for me to do for you to come back to your homeland safely, capable of grasping happiness. But let us look at what we have set out. Have we not included sufficiency under happiness, and granted that God is happiness itself?"

"Yes indeed."

"And therefore," she said, "he will need no outside assistance in ruling the universe; otherwise, if he need anything, he will not have full sufficiency."

"That is necessarily so," I said.

"Therefore he alone disposes all things, by himself?"

"It cannot," I said, "be denied."

"And God has been shown to be the good itself."

"So I recall," I said.

"So he disposes all things by the good, since he rules all things by himself, and we have agreed that he is the good; and this is as it were the tiller or helm by which the fabric of the universe is preserved stable and unharmed."

"I firmly agree," I said, "and I foresaw just now, although only with a vague suspicion, that that was what you would say."

"So I believe," she said, "for now, I think, you direct your gaze more watchfully to discern the truth; but what I shall now say lies no less obviously before your eyes."

"What is that?" I asked.

"Since God is rightly believed," she answered, "to govern all things with the helm of goodness, and all these same things, as I have taught you, hasten towards the good by their natural exertion, can it possibly be doubted that they are ruled voluntarily, and of their own accord give heed to the command

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veluti convenientia contemperataque rectori sponte convertant ? ” “ Ita,” inquam, “ necesse est ; nec beatum regimen esse videretur, si quidem detrec-
55 tantium iugum foret, non obtemperantium salus.”

“ Nihil est igitur quod naturam servans deo contrarie conetur.” “ Nihil,” inquam. “ Quod si conetur,” ait, “ num tandem proficiet quidquam adversus eum quem iure beatitudinis potentissimum esse con-
60 cessimus ? ” “ Prorsus,” inquam, “ nihil valeret.”

“ Non est igitur aliquid quod summo huic bono vel velit vel possit obsistere.” “ Non,” inquam, “ arbitror.” “ Est igitur summum,” inquit, “ bonum quod regit cuncta fortiter suaviterque disponit.”

65 Tum ego : “ Quam,” inquam, “ me non modo ea quae conclusa est summa rationum, verum multo magis haec ipsa quibus uteris verba delectant, ut tandem aliquando stultitiam magna lacerantem sui pudeat.”

“ Accepisti,” inquit, “ in fabulis lacescentes caelum
70 Gigantas ; sed illos quoque, uti condignum fuit, benigna fortitudo disposuit. Sed visne rationes ipsas invicem collidamus ? Forsitan ex huiusmodi conflictatione pulchra quaedam veritatis scintilla dissiliat.” “ Tuo,” inquam, “ arbitrato.” “ Deum,”
75 inquit, “ esse omnium potentem nemo dubitaverit.”

^a Cf. *Wisdom* 8. 1.

CONSOLATION III

of their disposer, being as it were constitutionally accordant to their ruler ? ”

“ It must be so,” I said ; “ nor would his rule seem happy, if indeed it were a yoke on the necks of those who would reject it, and not the preservation of willing subjects.”

“ There is therefore nothing,” she said, “ which while remaining true to its nature would try to go against God ? ”

“ Nothing,” I said.

“ But if anything were to try,” she said, “ will it accomplish anything against him, whom we have justly agreed to be most powerful in his blessedness ? ”

“ Surely it would not be able to achieve anything,” I said.

Therefore there is nothing, which either would or could resist this, the highest good ? ”

“ I think not,” I said.

“ It is therefore the highest good,” she said, “ which rules all things firmly, and sweetly disposes them.” ^a

“ How much,” I then said, “ does not only the conclusion, the sum of your arguments, delight me, but much more the very words you use, so that at long last the folly which tortured me so cruelly is ashamed.”

“ You have read in stories,” she said, “ of the giants challenging heaven ; but those too, as was wholly right, a kindly strength put in their proper place. But would you like us to clash together our arguments, for perhaps out of a conflict of this kind some fair spark of truth will fly out ? ”

“ As it pleases you,” I said.

“ No one would doubt,” she said, “ that God has power over all things.”

BOETHIUS

- “ Qui quidem,” inquam, “ mente consistat, nullus prorsus ambigat.” “ Qui vero est,” inquit, “ omnium potens, nihil est quod ille non possit.” “ Nihil,” inquam. “ Num igitur deus facere malum potest ? ”
- 80 “ Minime,” inquam. “ Malum igitur,” inquit, “ nihil est, cum id facere ille non possit, qui nihil non potest.” “ Ludisne,” inquam, “ me inextricabilem labyrinthum rationibus texens, quae nunc quidem qua egrediaris introeas, nunc vero quo introieris
- 85 egrediare, an mirabilem quendam divinae simplicitatis orbem complicas ? Etenim paulo ante beatitudine incipiens eam summum bonum esse dicebas quam in summo deo sitam loquebare. Ipsum quoque deum summum esse bonum plenamque beatitudinem
- 90 disserebas ; ex quo neminem beatum fore nisi qui pariter deus esset quasi munusculum dabas. Rursus ipsam boni formam dei ac beatitudinis loquebaris esse substantiam ipsumque unum id ipsum esse bonum docebas quod ab omni rerum natura peteretur.
- 95 Deum quoque bonitatis gubernaculis universitatem regere disputabas volentiaque cuncta parere nec ullam mali esse naturam. Atque haec nullis extrinsecus sumptis sed ex altero altero fidem trahente insitis domesticisque probationibus explicabas.”
- 100 Tum illa : “ Minime,” inquit, “ ludimus remque omnium maximam dei munere quem dudum depre-

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“ No one indeed,” I said, “ who is in his right mind could possibly doubt it.”

“ But there is nothing,” she said, “ which he cannot do, who has power over all.”

“ Nothing,” I said.

“ Now God cannot do evil, can he ? ” she asked.

“ Not in the least,” I said.

“ Evil, then,” she said, “ is nothing, since he cannot do it, and there is nothing he cannot do.”

“ Are you playing a game with me,” I said, “ weaving an inextricable labyrinth with your arguments, since at one time you go in where you are going to come out again, and at another come out where you went in ? Or are you folding together as it were a wonderful circle of the simplicity of God ? For a little while ago, beginning with happiness, you said it was the highest good, and you said it was set in the most high God ; and you argued that God himself was the highest good and complete happiness, from which you gave me as a sort of little present the conclusion that no one would be happy unless he was also a god. Again, you spoke of that same form of the good being the substance of God and of happiness, and you taught me that unity itself was the same thing as the good, which was sought after by the whole natural world. Then too, you argued that God ruled the whole with the helm of goodness, that all things willingly obeyed, and that evil had no real nature. And these things you set out with proofs not fetched in from outside, but belonging within and native to our sphere, each one drawing its validity from another.”

Then she said : “ We are not in the least playing a game, but we have examined the most important

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cabamur exegimus. Ea est enim divinae forma substantiae ut neque in externa dilabatur nec in se externum aliquid ipsa suscipiat, sed, sicut de ea
105 Parmenides ait :

Πάντοθεν εὐκύκλου σφαίρης ἐναλίγκιον ὄγκῳ,
rerum orbem mobilem rotat, dum se immobilem ipsa conservat. Quod si rationes quoque non extra petitas sed intra rei quam tractabamus ambitum
110 collocatas agitavimus, nihil est quod admirere, cum Platone sanciente didiceris cognatos de quibus loquuntur rebus oportere esse sermones.

XII

Felix qui potuit boni
Fontem visere lucidum,
Felix qui potuit gravis
Terrae solvere vincula.
5 Quondam funera coniugis
Vates Threicius gemens
Postquam flebilibus modis
Silvas currere mobiles,
Amnes stare coegerat,
10 Iunxitque intrepidum latus
Saevis cerva leonibus,
Nec visum timuit lepus,
Iam cantu placidum canem,
Cum flagrantior intima
15 Fervor pectoris ureret,
Nec qui cuncta subegerant
Mulcerent dominum modi,

^a Diels fr. 8. 43.

^b *Tim.* 29 B.

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of all matters, with the help of God, to whom we prayed at the beginning. For such is the form of the divine substance that it does not slip away into external things, nor does it receive anything external into itself, but as Parmenides says of it ^a :

Like the body of a sphere well-rounded on all sides,
it turns the moving circle of the universe while it keeps itself unmoved. But if we have dealt in arguments not sought outside but set within the area we were working in, there is no reason for you to wonder, since you have learned under Plato's authority that words should be akin to the things spoken about. ^b

XII

Happy was he who could look upon
The clear fount of the good ;
Happy who could loose the bonds
Of heavy earth.
Of old the Thracian poet mourned
His wife's sad death,
He who before had made the woods so nimbly run
And rivers stand
With his weeping measures,
And the hind's fearless flank
Lay beside savage lions,
Nor was the hare afraid to look upon
The hound, made peaceful by his song ;
When grief burned yet more fierce and hot
His inmost heart,
And measures that subdued all else
Soothed not their master,

BOETHIUS

Inmites superos querens
Infernas adiit domos.
20 Illic blanda sonantibus
Chordis carmina temperans
Quidquid praecipuis deae
Matris fontibus hauserat,
Quod luctus dabat impotens,
25 Quod luctum geminans amor,
Deflet Taenara commovens
Et dulci veniam prece
Umbrarum dominos rogat.
Stupet tergeminus novo
30 Captus carmine ianitor,
Quae sontes agitant metu
Ultrices scelorum deae
Iam maestae lacrimis madent.
Non Ixionium caput
35 Velox praecipitat rota
Et longa site perditus
Spernit flumina Tantalus.
Vultur dum satur est modis,
Non traxit Tityi iecur.
40 Tandem, 'Vincimur,' arbiter
Umbrarum miserans ait,
'Donamus comitem viro
Emptam carmine coniugem.
Sed lex dona coerceat,
45 Ne, dum Tartara liquerit,

^a Orpheus's mother was Calliopê, the chief of the Muses and goddess of poetry (especially epic).

^b Taenarus on Cape Matapan possessed a cavern which was one of the entrances to Hades.

^c Ixion was bound to a turning wheel for having attempted to ravish Juno; Tantalus was condemned, for betraying the

CONSOLATION III

Complaining of inexorable gods above
He approached the halls below.
There modulating gentle songs
On the sounding lyre
All that he drew from the foremost springs
Of his goddess mother,^a
All that his unquelled grief bestowed
And love, that doubles grief,
Make his laments ; he moves Taenarian hearts,^b
And with sweet prayer
Asks pardon of the lords of Hades' shades.
Taken by his strange song the doorkeeper
Three-headed Cerberus stands benumbed ;
Goddess-avengers of men's crimes who make
The guilty quake with fear
Now full of sadness melt in tears ;
Ixion's swift wheel^c
No longer spins his head,
And Tantalus tormented by long thirst
Scorns stooping to the water ;
The vulture, while he is filled with Orpheus' mea-
sures,
Stops tearing at Tityus' liver.
At last ' We are overborne ' in pity says
The ruler of the shades ;
' We grant the man his wife to go with him,
Bought by his song ;
Yet let our law restrict the gift,
That, while he Tartarus quits,

secrets of the gods, to stand up to his neck in water under a fruit tree, and water and fruit receded as he attempted to drink or eat ; Tityus lay stretched over a space of nine acres, as a punishment for his attempt on Leto's honour (the mother of Apollo), with a vulture tearing at his ever-replenished liver.

BOETHIUS

Fas sit lumina flectere.
Quis legem det amantibus ?
Maior lex amor est sibi.
Heu, noctis prope terminos
50 Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.
Vos hæc fabula respicit
Quicumque in superum diem
Mentem ducere quaeritis.
55 Nam qui Tartareum in specus
Victus lumina flexerit,
Quidquid præcipuum trahit
Perdit, dum videt inferos.”

CONSOLATION III

He shall not turn his gaze.'
Who can give lovers laws ?
Love is a greater law unto itself.
Woe ! By the very boundaries of Night
Orpheus his Eurydice
Saw, lost, and killed.
To you this tale refers,
Who seek to lead your mind
Into the upper day ;
For he who overcome should turn back his gaze
Towards the Tartarean cave,
Whatever excellence he takes with him
He loses when he looks on those below.

ANICII MANLII SEVERINI BOETHII

V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. PATRICII

PHILOSOPHIAE CONSOLA-
TIONIS

LIBER TERTIUS EXPLICIT

INCIPIT LIBER IV

I

Haec cum Philosophia dignitate vultus et oris
gravitate servata leniter suaviterque cecinisset, tum
ego nondum penitus insiti maeroris oblitus inten-
tionem dicere adhuc aliquid parantis abrui. Et :
5 "O," inquam, "veri praevia luminis quae usque
adhuc tua fudit oratio, cum sui speculatione divina
tuis rationibus invicta patuerunt, eaque mihi etsi
ob iniuriae dolorem nuper oblita non tamen antehac
prorsus ignorata dixisti. Sed ea ipsa est vel maxima
10 nostri causa maeroris, quod, cum rerum bonus rector
exsistat, vel esse omnino mala possint vel impunita
praetereant; quod solum quanta dignum sit ad-
miratione profecto consideras. At huic aliud maius
adiungitur. Nam imperante florenteque nequitia
15 virtus non solum praemiis caret, verum etiam

BOETHIUS
THE CONSOLATION OF
PHILOSOPHY

BOOK IV

I

WHEN Philosophy had finished softly and sweetly singing these verses, while preserving the dignity and gravity of her face and visage, then I, not yet having completely forgotten my inward grief, interrupted her as she was just preparing to say something more, and said : " Lady, you who lead the way to the true light, what your speech has so far poured into my mind has clearly been both divine, contemplated on its own, and invincible because of your arguments, and you have told me things which, although lately forgotten because of the pain of my injuries, I was not previously totally ignorant of. But this itself is the very greatest cause of my grief, that, although there does exist a good ruler of the universe, evil can exist at all and even pass unpunished ; and I beg you consider now how much wonder this fact alone properly causes. And to this is added another thing, of greater import : for when wickedness flourishes and is in control, virtue not only lacks rewards, but

BOETHIUS

sceleratorum pedibus subiecta calcatur et in locum facinorum supplicia luit. Quae fieri in regno scientis omnia, potentis omnia sed bona tantummodo volentis dei nemo satis potest nec admirari nec conqueri."

- 20 Tum illa : " Et esset," inquit, " infiniti stuporis omnibusque horribilius monstis, si, uti tu aestimas, in tanti velut patrisfamilias dispositissima domo vilia vasa colerentur, pretiosa sordescerent. Sed non ita est. Nam si ea quae paulo ante conclusa sunt incon-
- 25 vulsa servantur, ipso de cuius nunc regno loquimur auctore cognosces semper quidem potentes esse bonos, malos vero abiectos semper atque inbecillos nec sine poena umquam esse vitia nec sine praemio virtutes, bonis felicia, malis semper infortunata con-
- 30 tingere multaue id genus quae sopitis querelis firma te soliditate corroborent. Et quoniam verae formam beatitudinis me dudum monstrante vidisti, quo etiam sita sit agnovisti, decursis omnibus quae praemittere necessarium puto, viam tibi quae te domum revehat
- 35 ostendam. Pennas etiam tuae menti quibus se in altum tollere possit adfigam, ut perturbatione depulsa sospes in patriam meo ductu, mea semita, meis etiam vehiculis revertaris.

I

Sunt etenim pennae volucres mihi
Quae celsa conscendant poli.

CONSOLATION IV

is even thrown down and trodden under the feet of wicked men and pays the penalty in place of vice. That this should happen in the kingdom of God who knows all, and is all-powerful, but only wills the good, no man can sufficiently wonder at or complain of."

Then she replied : " It would indeed be a matter of boundless wonder more dreadful than any evil omens if, as you think, as it were in the most well arranged house of so great a master the worthless vessels were cherished while the precious ones were allowed to get filthy. But it is not so ; for if those conclusions we have just now reached are preserved and not overthrown, by the help of that same God of whose kingdom we are now speaking you will learn that the good are always powerful, while the bad are always abject and weak, nor are vices ever without punishment, nor virtues without reward ; that success attends the good and misfortune the wicked, and many things of this kind, which will settle your complaints and strengthen you firmly and solidly. And since I have just shown you and you have seen the form of true blessedness, and also recognized wherein it is placed, when we have run through all those things I think it necessary to set out first, I shall show you the way which will bring you back home. And I shall affix to your mind wings, whereby it may raise itself aloft, so that with all disturbance dispelled, you may return safely to your homeland, under my guidance, on my path, and in my carriage.

I

For I have wings swift flying
Which can ascend the heights of heaven ;

BOETHIUS

Quas sibi cum velox mens induit,
Terras perosa despicit,
5 Aeris immensi superat globum,
Nubesque postergum videt,
Quique agili motu calet aetheris,
Transcendit ignis verticem,
Donec in astriferas surgat domos
10 Phoeboque coniungat vias
Aut comitetur iter gelidi senis
Miles corusci sideris,
Vel quocumque micans nox pingitur,
Recurrat astri circum
15 Atque ubi iam exhausti fuerit satis,
Polum relinquat extimum
Dorsaque velocis premat aetheris
Compos verendi luminis.
Hic regum sceptrum dominus tenet
20 Orbisque habenas temperat
Et volucrem currum stabilis regit
Rerum coruscus arbiter.
Huc te si reducem referat via,
Quam nunc requiris immemor :
25 ' Haec,' dices, ' memini, patria est mihi,
Hinc ortus, hic sistam gradum.'
Quod si terrarum placeat tibi
Noctem relictam visere,
Quos miseri torvos populi timent
30 Cernes tyrannos exules."

CONSOLATION IV

When your quick mind has put them on,
It looks down on the hated earth,
Passes beyond the sphere of measureless air,
And looks back at the clouds
And climbs beyond the highest point of fire
That burns with the rapid motion of the upper air,^a
Until it rise to the houses of the stars
And join its path to Phoebus',
Or go along the road with the cold old god,
Squire to his shining star,
Or where the glittering night is painted forth
Turn with the circling stars ;
Then when it is satisfied with all so far achieved,
It leaves the furthest pole,
And stands on the outside of the swift upper air,
Mastering its awful light.
Here the lord of kings his sceptre holds,
Controls the reins of the world,
And guides its swift chariot, though himself unmoved,
The shining master of the universe.
If the road bring you back, returning to this place,
Which you now seek, forgetful,
" This," you will say, " I remember, is my native land,
Here I was born, here shall I halt my step."
But if you like to look upon
Earth's night that you have left,
Those tyrants wretched peoples fear as fierce
You will see as exiles.

^a The upper air, or ether, is the outermost sphere, that moves the rest, and beyond which is the empyrean, the abode of God. The " star-bearing houses " are the twelve mansions of the zodiac, the twelve sections of the ecliptic through which the sun moves in the year ; the " cold old god " is Saturn, the furthest out of the five visible planets (*cf.* Virgil, *Georg.* i. 336).

BOETHIUS

II

Tum ego : " Papae," inquam, " ut magna promittis !
Nec dubito quin possis efficere ; tu modo quem excita-
veris ne moreris." " Primum igitur," inquit, " bonis
semper adesse potentiam, malos cunctis viribus esse
5 desertos agnoscas licebit, quorum quidem alterum
demonstratur ex altero. Nam cum bonum malumque
contraria sint, si bonum potens esse constiterit, liquet
inbecillitas mali ; at si fragilitas clarescat mali, boni
firmitas nota est. Sed uti nostrae sententiae fides
10 abundantior sit, alterutro calle procedam nunc hinc
nunc inde proposita confirmans.

Duo sunt quibus omnis humanorum actuum constat
effectus, voluntas scilicet ac potestas, quorum si alter-
utrum desit, nihil est quod explicari queat. Deficiente
15 etenim voluntate ne aggreditur quidem quisque quod
non vult ; at si potestas absit, voluntas frustra sit.
Quo fit ut si quem videas adipisci velle quod minime
adipiscatur, huic obtinendi quod voluerit defuisse
valentiam dubitare non possis." " Perspicuum est,"
20 inquam, " nec ullo modo negari potest." " Quem
vero effecisse quod voluerit videas, num etiam potuisse
dubitabis ? " " Minime." " Quod vero quisque
potest, in eo validus, quod vero non potest, in hoc
imbecillis esse censendus est." " Fateor," inquam.

CONSOLATION IV

II

Then I exclaimed, "Wonderful! What great things you promise me! Nor do I doubt that you can do them, but do not hold me back, whom you have now so aroused."

"First then," she said, "that good men always possess power, and that the wicked are deprived of all their strength, you may learn, since indeed the one is proved from the other. For since good and evil are contraries, if it is established that good is powerful, the weakness of evil is clear; and if the frailty of evil is evident, the strength of good is known. But that the trustworthiness of our opinion may be the greater, I shall proceed by either path, confirming my propositions now from this side, now from that.

There are two things, by which the effect of all human actions is achieved, will and ability. If either of these be lacking, there is nothing which can be completed. For the will being lacking, no man can even begin anything, because he does not will it; but if the ability were to be wanting, the will would be frustrated. That is why, if you were to see any man wanting to obtain something which he was not in fact obtaining, you could not doubt that he lacked the ability to get what he wanted."

"That is obvious," I said, "nor can it by any means be denied."

"And the man you see has achieved what he desired, will you doubt that he was also able to do it?"

"Not in the least."

"And every man should be reckoned strong in that point in which he is able, and weak in that in which he is not able."

BOETHIUS

- 25 "Meministine igitur," inquit, "superioribus rationibus esse collectum intentionem omnem voluntatis humanae quae diversis studiis agitur ad beatitudinem festinare?" "Memini," inquam, "illud quoque esse demonstratum." "Num recordaris beatitudinem
- 30 ipsum esse bonum eoque modo, cum beatitudo petitur, ab omnibus desiderari bonum?" "Minime," inquam "recordor, quoniam id memoriae fixum teneo." "Omnes igitur homines boni pariter ac mali indiscreta intentione ad bonum pervenire nituntur?"
- 35 "Ita," inquam, "consequens est." "Sed certum est adeptione boni bonos fieri." "Certum." "Adipiscuntur igitur boni quod appetunt?" "Sic videtur." "Mali vero si adipiscerentur quod appetunt bonum, mali esse non possent." "Ita est." "Cum igitur
- 40 utrique bonum petant, sed hi quidem adipiscantur, illi vero minime, num dubium est bonos quidem potentes esse, qui vero mali sunt imbecillos?" "Quisquis," inquam, "dubitat, nec rerum naturam nec consequentiam potest considerare rationum."
- 45 "Rursus," inquit, "si duo sint quibus idem secundum naturam propositum sit eorumque unus naturali officio id ipsum agat atque perficiat, alter vero naturale
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“ That I admit,” I said.

“ Do you then remember,” she asked, “ that it was concluded from our previous arguments that the whole effort of man’s will, which is active in various pursuits, hastens towards happiness ? ”

“ I remember,” I said, “ that that also was proved.”

“ And do you not recall that happiness is the good itself, and that in that way, when happiness is sought, the good is desired by all men ? ”

“ I do not recall it at all,” I said, “ for I hold it fixed in my memory.”

“ All men, therefore, good and evil alike, strive with an effort not to be distinguished, to arrive at the good.”

“ So it follows,” I said.

“ But it is certain that men become good by obtaining the good.”

“ It is certain.”

“ The good, then, obtain what they seek ? ”

“ So it seems.”

“ And if evil men obtained what they seek, that is, the good, they could not be evil.”

“ That is so.”

“ Since then both seek the good, but the former obtain it and the latter do not, can there be any doubt that the good are powerful, and those who are evil, weak ? ”

“ Whoever doubts it,” I said, “ can be considering neither the nature of things nor what follows from the arguments.”

“ Again,” she said, “ suppose two men, to whom the same natural action is proposed, and one of them does that same action and completes it by exercising the proper natural function, but the other cannot

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illud officium minime administrare queat, alio vero modo quam naturae convenit non quidem impleat
50 propositum suum sed imitetur implentem, quemnam horum valentio-rem esse decernis ? ” “ Etsi coniecto, ” inquam, “ quid velis, planius tamen audire desidero. ” “ Ambulandi, ” inquit, “ motum secundum naturam esse hominibus num negabis ? ” “ Minime, ” inquam.
55 “ Eiusque rei pedum officium esse naturale num dubitas ? ” “ Ne hoc quidem, ” inquam. “ Si quis igitur pedibus incedere valens ambulet aliusque cui hoc naturale pedum desit officium, manibus nitens ambulare conetur, quis horum iure valentior existimari
60 potest ? ” “ Contexe, ” inquam, “ cetera ; nam quin naturalis officii potens eo qui idem nequeat valentior sit, nullus ambigat. ” “ Sed summum bonum, quod aequae malis bonisque propositum, boni quidem naturali officio virtutum petunt, mali vero variam
65 per cupiditatem, quod adipiscendi boni naturale officium non est, idem ipsum conantur adipisci. An tu aliter existimas ? ” “ Minime, ” inquam, “ nam etiam quod est consequens patet. Ex his enim quae concesserim, bonos quidem potentes, malos vero esse
70 necesse est imbecillos. ”

“ Recte, ” inquit, “ praecurris idque, uti medici sperare solent, indicium est erectae iam resisten-tisque naturae. Sed quoniam te ad intellegendum
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manage that natural function, but in a manner different from that according to nature does not perform what was proposed to him but imitates the one who does perform it—which of these two would you decide was the stronger ? ”

“ Though I guess what you would like me to say,” I said, “ yet I desire to hear it more plainly.”

“ You will not deny,” she said, “ that the action of walking is natural to men ? ”

“ Not in the least,” I replied.

“ Nor do you doubt, surely, that the performing of that action is the natural function of the feet ? ”

“ I don’t doubt that either,” I said.

“ Then if one man being able to move on his feet, walked, while another who lacked this natural function of the feet, tried to walk leaning on his hands, which of these can rightly be thought the stronger ? ”

“ Construct the rest of the argument,” I said, “ for no one would doubt that he who is able to use that natural function is stronger than the one who is unable to do the same thing.”

“ Now the highest good, which is proposed to good and evil men alike, the good seek by the natural function of their virtues, but the evil only try to obtain it through their fluctuating desire, which is not the natural function for obtaining the good ; or do you think otherwise ? ”

“ Not in the least,” I said, “ for what follows is also clear. For from these propositions, which I have granted, it follows necessarily that the good are powerful, but the evil weak.”

“ You run ahead rightly,” she said, “ and that is, as doctors usually hope, an indication of a nature now raised up and resistant. But since I see you very

BOETHIUS

promptissimum esse conspicio, crebras coacervabo
75 rationes. Vide enim quanta vitiosorum hominum
pateat infirmitas qui ne ad hoc quidem pervenire
queunt ad quod eos naturalis ducit ac paene com-
pellit intentio. Et quid si hoc tam magno ac paene
invicto praeceuntis naturae desererentur auxilio?
80 Considera vero quanta sceleratos homines habeat
impotentia. Neque enim levia aut ludicra praemia
petunt, quae consequi atque obtinere non possunt,
sed circa ipsam rerum summam verticemque deficiunt
nec in eo miseris contingit effectus quod solum
85 dies noctesque moliuntur; in qua re bonorum vires
eminent. Sicut enim eum qui pedibus incedens
ad eum locum usque pervenire potuisset, quo nihil
ulterius pervium iaceret incessui, ambulandi poten-
tissimum esse censes, ita eum qui expetendorum
90 finem quo nihil ultra est apprehendit, potentissimum
necesse est iudices. Ex quo fit quod huic obiacet,
ut idem scelesti, idem viribus omnibus videantur
esse deserti. Cur enim relicta virtute vitia sectantur?
Inscitiane bonorum? Sed quid enervatius ignorantiae
95 caecitate? An sectanda noverunt, sed transversos
eos libido praecipitat? Sic quoque intemperantia
fragiles qui obluctari vitio nequeunt. An scientes
volentesque bonum deserunt, ad vitia deflectunt?
Sed hoc modo non solum potentes esse sed omnino
100 esse desinunt. Nam qui communem omnium quae

^a Virgil, *Aeneid*, xii. 764 f.

CONSOLATION IV

ready to learn, I shall heap up many arguments together. For see how plainly great is the weakness of corrupt men, who cannot attain even to that towards which their natural inclination draws and almost compels them. And what would it be like if they were deprived of this great and almost invincible aid, of nature leading the way? And consider also how great is the impotence that grips wicked men. For those things they seek as rewards, which they cannot acquire and possess, are not trifles or playthings^a; they fail in what concerns the very sum and summit of things, nor do the wretches achieve the performance of that for which alone they spend days and nights striving; and it is in this matter that the strength of good men is outstandingly clear. For just as you would judge him most powerful in walking who, proceeding on foot, was able to reach a place so distant that no further passable place lay before his step, so you are bound to judge him most powerful who attains the end of all things desirable, beyond which is nothing. And hence we have also the opposite to this, that those same men who are wicked are those who appear destitute of all power. For why do they abandon virtue and pursue vices? Is it because they do not know what things are good—but what is more weakly than the blindness of ignorance? Or do they know what should be pursued, but does inordinate desire lead them headlong astray? Then this way too they are frail because of their lack of control, those who are unable to struggle against vice. Or do they forsake the good and turn aside to vice knowingly and willingly? But in this case they cease not merely to be powerful, but simply to be: for those who leave aside

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sunt finem relinquunt, pariter quoque esse desistunt. Quod quidem cuiquam mirum forte videatur, ut malos, qui plures hominum sunt, eosdem non esse dicamus ; sed ita sese res habet. Nam qui mali sunt eos malos
105 esse non abnuo ; sed eosdem esse pure atque simpliciter nego.

Nam uti cadaver hominem mortuum dixeris, simpliciter vero hominem appellare non possis, ita vitiosos malos quidem esse concesserim, sed esse
110 absolute nequeam confiteri. Est enim quod ordinem retinet servatque naturam ; quod vero ab hac deficit, esse etiam, quod in sua natura situm est, derelinquit. ‘ Sed possunt,’ inquires, ‘ mali.’ Ne ego quidem negaverim, sed haec eorum potentia non a viribus
115 sed ab imbecillitate descendit. Possunt enim mala quae minime valerent, si in bonorum efficientia manere potuissent. Quae possibilitas eos evidentius nihil posse demonstrat. Nam si, uti paulo ante collegimus, malum nihil est, cum mala tantummodo
120 possint, nihil posse improbos liquet.” “ Perspicuum est.” “ Atque ut intellegas quatenus sit huius potentiae vis, summo bono nihil potentius esse paulo ante definivimus.” “ Ita est,” inquam. “ Sed idem,” inquit, “ facere malum nequit.” “ Minime.” “ Est

CONSOLATION IV

the common end of all things that are, at the same time also leave off being.

And this indeed may seem strange to some, that we should say of evil men, who are the majority of mankind, that they do not exist ; but that is how things are. For of those who are evil I do not deny that they are evil ; but that they are, purely and simply, I do deny. For as you would say that a corpse was a dead man, but you could not call it simply a man, so I concede of the vicious that they are indeed evil, but I cannot admit that they are, absolutely. For that *is*, which keeps its order and preserves its nature ; and whatever falls from this, also abandons being, which is dependent on its nature. But evil men, you will say, are able to do things. Not even I would deny that, but this ability of theirs is derived not from their strength but from their weakness. For they can do evil things, which they would not be able to do, had they been able to persevere in the performance of good things. And that ability they do have shows more clearly that they can really do nothing ; for if, as we concluded just now, evil is nothing, since they can only do evil, it is obvious that the wicked can 'do nothing.'

"That is very clear."

"And that you may understand what the nature of this power of theirs is, remember we laid it down a little while ago that nothing was more powerful than the highest good."

"That is so," I said.

"But that, the highest good," she said, "cannot do evil."

"Not at all."

BOETHIUS

125 igitur," inquit, "aliquis qui omnia posse homines
putet?" "Nisi quis insaniat, nemo." "Atqui idem
possunt mala." "Utinam quidem," inquam, "non
possent." "Cum igitur bonorum tantummodo potens
possit omnia, non vero queant omnia potentes etiam
130 malorum, eosdem qui mala possunt minus posse mani-
festum est. Huc accedit quod omnem potentiam
inter expetenda numerandam omniaque expetenda
referri ad bonum velut ad quoddam naturae suae
cacumen ostendimus. Sed patrandi sceleris possi-
135 bilitas referri ad bonum non potest; expetenda
igitur non est. Atqui omnis potentia expetenda
est; liquet igitur malorum possibilitatem non esse
potentiam. Ex quibus omnibus bonorum quidem
potentia, malorum vero minime dubitabilis apparet
140 infirmitas veramque illam Platonis esse sententiam
liquet solos quod desiderant facere posse sapientes,
improbos vero exercere quidem quod libeat, quod
vero desiderant explere non posse. Faciunt enim
quaelibet, dum per ea quibus delectantur id bonum
145 quod desiderant se adepturos putant; sed minime
adipiscuntur, quoniam ad beatitudinem probra non
veniunt.

II

Quos vides sedere celsos solii culmine reges
Purpura claros nitente saeptos tristibus armis
Ore torvo comminantes rabie cordis anhelos,

^a Cf. *Gorgias*, 507 c; the whole of this chapter and the next are very similar to the *Gorgias*.

CONSOLATION IV

“ Now is there anyone,” she asked, “ who thinks that men can do all things ? ”

“ No one, unless he is mad.”

“ Yet men can do evil.”

“ Would indeed,” I exclaimed, “ that they could not ! ”

“ Since then he who can only do good things can do all things, and they cannot do all things who *can* do evil, it is plain that those same men, who can do evil, can do less. And what is more, we have shown that all power is to be counted among desirable things, and all desirable things are related to the good as to the very summit of their nature. But it is impossible for the ability to commit evil to be related to the good, and therefore it is not to be desired. Yet all power is to be desired ; clearly therefore the ability to do evil is not a power. From all of which the power of good men and the quite undoubted weakness of evil men is plain, and clearly the opinion of Plato is true that only wise men can do what they desire and that wicked men can perform what pleases them but not achieve what they desire.^a For they do anything you like thinking they will obtain through those things in which they take pleasure, that good which they desire ; but they do not obtain it, since shameful deeds are not conducive to happiness.

II

Those lofty kings you see seated high on thrones,
Bright in their glowing purple, hedged in with bristling
arms,
Threatening with visage stern, and gasping in the
frenzy of their hearts—

BOETHIUS

Detrahat si quis superbis vani tegmina cultus,
5 Iam videbit intus artas dominos ferre catenas.
Hinc enim libido versat avidis corda venenis,
Hinc flagellat ira mentem fluctus turbida tollens
Maeror aut captus fatigat aut spes lubrica torquet.
Ergo cum caput tot unum cernas ferre tyrannos,
10 Non facit quod optat ipse dominis pressus iniquis.

III

Videsne igitur quanto in caeno probra volvuntur,
qua probitas luce resplendeat? In quo perspicuum
est numquam bonis praemia numquam sua sceleribus
desse supplicia. Rerum etenim quae geruntur illud
5 propter quod unaquaeque res geritur, eiusdem rei
praemium esse non iniuria videri potest, uti currendi
in stadio propter quam curritur iacet praemium
corona. Sed beatitudinem esse idem ipsum bonum
propter quod omnia geruntur ostendimus. Est igitur
10 humanis actibus ipsum bonum veluti praemium
commune propositum. Atqui hoc a bonis non potest
separari neque enim bonus ultra iure vocabitur qui
careat bono; quare probos mores sua praemia non
relinquunt. Quantumlibet igitur saeviant mali,
15 sapienti tamen corona non decidet, non arescet.
Neque enim probis animis proprium decus aliena

CONSOLATION IV

If a man strip from those proud kings the cloak of
their empty splendour,
At once he will see these lords within bear close-
bound chains ;
For there, lust stirs their hearts with poisonous greed,
There anger whips the mind as a whirlwind whips up
waves,
And either close-confined sorrow plagues, or slippery
hope torments.
Therefore since as you see one head so many tyrants
bears,
He does not do what he himself would do, by these
harsh masters pressed.

III

Do you see, then, in what deep mire wickedness
wallows, with what brightness goodness shines ?
From which it is obvious that good deeds never lack
their rewards, nor wicked deeds their punishments.
For in all actions performed, that for which each
action is performed can rightly be seen as the reward
of that action, as for example, for running on the
racetrack, the crown, for which the race is run, is
clearly the reward. *But we have shown that happi-
ness is the good itself, that good for which all things
are done ; therefore the good itself is proposed as
the common reward for all human actions. But this
cannot be separated from good men—for he will no
longer rightly be called good who lacks goodness—
and therefore good behaviour is not left without its
rewards. However much, therefore, evil men may
rage, yet the wise man's laurels will not fall, nor
wither ; for neither does another's wickedness pluck*

BOETHIUS

decerpit improbitas. Quod si extrinsecus accepto
laetaretur, poterat hoc vel alius quispiam vel ipse
etiam qui contulisset auferre ; sed quoniam id sua
20 cuique probitas confert, tum suo praemio carebit,
cum probus esse desierit. Postremo cum omne
praemium idcirco appetatur quoniam bonum esse
creditur, quis boni compotem praemii iudicet ex-
pertem ? At cuius praemii ? Omnium pulcherrimi
25 maximique. Memento etenim corollarii illius quod
paulo ante praecipuum dedi ac sic collige : cum ipsum
bonum beatitudo sit, bonos omnes eo ipso quod boni
sint fieri beatos liquet. Sed qui beati sint deos esse
convenit. Est igitur praemium bonorum quod nullus
30 deterat dies, nullius minuat potestas, nullius fuscet
improbitas, deos fieri. Quae cum ita sint, de malorum
quoque inseparabili poena dubitare sapiens nequeat.
Nam cum bonum malumque item poenae atque prae-
mium adversa fronte dissideant, quae in boni praemio
35 videmus accedere eadem necesse est in mali poena
contraria parte respondeant. Sicut igitur probis
probitas ipsa fit praemium, ita improbis nequitia ipsa
supplicium est. Iam vero quisquis afficitur poena,
malo se affectum esse non dubitat. Si igitur sese
40 ipsi aestimare velint, possuntne sibi supplicii expertes
videri quos omnium malorum extrema nequitia non
affecit modo verum etiam vehementer infecit ? Vide
autem ex adversa parte bonorum, quae improbos

^a Book III, pr. 10, p. 280.

CONSOLATION IV

their proper glory from good spirits. But should a man rejoice in what he received from someone else, some other man or even he who gave it would be able to take it away. But since his goodness confers on each man his reward, he will only lack it when he has ceased to be good. Lastly, since every reward is sought after because it is believed to be good, who will judge one who possesses the good to be without his reward? But what reward? The greatest and fairest of all: for remember that corollary ^a which I gave you a little time ago as an excellent present, and conclude thus: since the good itself is happiness, it is clear that all good men are made happy for this reason, that they are good. But those who are happy, it is agreed, are gods; and therefore that is the reward of good men, which no time can lessen, no man's power diminish, no man's wickedness obscure, to become gods. These things being so for good men, no wise man can doubt either of the punishment inseparable from evil men; for since good and evil, and also punishment and reward, are directly opposite to one another, what we see added in the case of the good man's reward must necessarily be reflected in an opposite manner in the case of the evil man's punishment. As therefore goodness is itself the reward for good men, so for wicked men wickedness is itself the punishment. Now whoever is punished is in no doubt that he is afflicted with evil. If therefore they were willing to appraise their own state, could those men think themselves without punishment whom wickedness—the worst of all evils!—not only affects but even disastrously infects?

But see, by comparing it with its opposite in the case of the good, what punishment attends the

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poena comitetur. Omne namque quod sit unum
45 esse ipsumque unum bonum esse paulo ante didicisti,
cui consequens est ut omne quod sit id etiam bonum
esse videatur. Hoc igitur modo quidquid a bono
deficit esse desistit; quo fit ut mali desinant esse
quod fuerant, sed fuisse homines adhuc ipsa humani
50 corporis reliqua species ostentat. Quare versi in
malitiam humanam quoque amisere naturam. Sed
cum ultra homines quemque provehere sola probitas
possit, necesse est ut quos ab humana condicione
deiecit, infra hominis meritum detrudat improbitas.
55 Evenit igitur, ut quem transformatum vitiis videas
hominem aestimare non possis. Avaritia fervet
alienarum opum violentus ereptor? Lupi similem
dixeris. Ferox atque inquires linguam litigiis exercet?
Cani comparabis. Insidiator occultus subripuisse
60 fraudibus gaudet? Vulpeculis exaequetur. Irae in-
temperans fremit? Leonis animum gestare credatur.
Pavidus ac fugax non metuenda formidat? Cervis
similis habeatur. Segnis ac stupidus torpit? Asinum
vivit. Levis atque inconstans studia permutat?
65 Nihil avibus differt. Foedis inmundisque libidinibus
immergitur? Sordidae suis voluptate detinetur.
Ita fit ut qui probitate deserta homo esse desierit,
cum in divinam condicionem transire non possit,
vertatur in beluam.

CONSOLATION IV

wicked. For you learned a little time ago that everything that is, is one, and that oneness itself is good ; and from this it follows that everything, since it is, is seen also to be good. In this way, then, whatever falls from goodness, ceases to be ; wherefore evil men cease to be what they were—but that they were men till now their still surviving form of the human body shows—and therefore by turning to wickedness they have by the same act lost their human nature. But since only goodness can raise anyone above mankind, it follows necessarily that wickedness thrusts down beneath deserving the name of men those whom it has cast down from the human condition. So it follows that you cannot adjudge him a man whom you see transformed by vices. The violent plunderer of others' wealth burns with avarice : you would say he was like a wolf. The wild and restless man exercises his tongue in disputes : you will compare him to a dog. The secret trickster rejoices that he succeeds in his frauds : let him be on a level with the little foxes. He that cannot govern his anger roars : let him be thought to have the spirit of a lion. The timorous and fugitive is afraid of things not fearful : let him be reckoned like a deer. The stupid sluggard is numb : he lives an ass's life. The fickle and inconstant changes his pursuits : he is no different from the birds. A man is drowned in foul and unclean lusts : he is gripped by the pleasure of a filthy sow. So he who having left goodness aside has ceased to be a man, since he cannot pass over into the divine state, turns into a beast.

BOETHIUS

III

Vela Neritii ducis
Et vagas pelago rates
Eurus appulit insulae,
Pulchra qua residens dea
5 Solis edita semine
Miscet hospitibus novis
Tacta carmine pocula.
Quos ut in varios modos
Vertit herbipotens manus,
10 Hunc apri facies tegit,
Ille Marmaricus leo
Dente crescit et unguibus.
Hic lupis nuper additus,
Flere dum parat, ululat.
15 Ille tigris ut Indica
Tecta mitis obambulat.
Sed licet variis malis
Numen Arcadis alitis
Obsitum miserans ducem
20 Peste solverit hospitis,
Iam tamen mala remiges
Ore pocula traxerant,
Iam sues Cerealia
Glande pabula verterant
25 Et nihil manet integrum
Voce corpore perditis.
Sola mens stabilis super

^a Lit. "the Neritian leader"—Ovid's phrase (*Fasti*, iv. 69) for Ulysses; Neritos was a mountain in Ithaca, Ulysses's home.

^b Circê was the daughter of the Sun and Persê, the daughter of Oceanus.

CONSOLATION IV

III

The ship of Ulysses ^a
And his ocean-wandering fleet
The south-east wind drove to the isle
Where the fair goddess dwells
Sprung from the Sun's seed, ^b
Who mixes for each new guest
An enchanted cup.
Her herb-skilled hand
Thus changes them in various ways :
This one the shape of boar conceals,
That one a lion of Africa ^c
Grows fangs and claws ;
Another just becoming one with wolves,
While he essays to weep, but howls ;
Another like an Indian tiger
Prowls tame around the house.
But though the power of the Arcadian flyer ^d
Had pity on the captain
Beset by these different ills,
And freed him from the poison of his host,
Yet already his oarsmen's throats
Had drained the evil drinks,
Already as swine they had changed
Their bread for acorns,
And for them, lost,
Nothing, in voice or body, stays unchanged.
Alone the mind of each, surviving firm,

^c "Marmaric," of Marmarica, to the west of Egypt ; so generally, African, in late classical and early medieval poetry, in imitation of Lucan, iii. 293.

^d Mercury, who was born on Mt. Cyllenê in Arcadia ; cf. *Cyllenius ales*, Claudian xxxiii. 77.

BOETHIUS

Monstra quae patitur gemit.
O levem nimium manum
30 Nec potentia gramina,
Membra quae valeant licet,
Corda vertere non valent !
Intus est hominum vigor
Arce conditus abdita.
35 Haec venena potentius
Detrahunt hominem sibi
Dira quae penitus meant
Nec nocentia corpori
Mentis vulnere saeviunt."

IV

Tum ego : " Fateor," inquam, " nec iniuria dici
video vitiosos, tametsi humani corporis speciem
servent, in beluas tamen animorum qualitate mutari ;
sed quorum atrox scelerataque mens bonorum pernicie
5 saevit, id ipsum eis licere noluissem." " Nec licet,"
inquit, " uti convenienti monstrabitur loco. Sed
tamen si id ipsum quod eis licere creditur auferatur,
magna ex parte sceleratorum hominum poena
relevetur. Etenim quod incredibile cuiquam forte
10 videatur, infeliciores esse necesse est malos, cum
cupita perfecerint, quam si ea quae cupiunt implere
non possint. Nam si miserum est voluisse prava,
potuisse miserius est, sine quo voluntatis miserae
langueret effectus. Itaque cum sua singulis miseria
15 sit, triplici infortunio necesse est urgeantur quos

CONSOLATION IV

Bemoans the monster it endures.
O too feeble hand,
And powerless herbs !
Though they have power over the limbs of men
They cannot change their hearts.
Within is the strength of men,
Kept close in a hidden citadel.
Those poisons do more powerfully
Drag down man from himself—
Dire they are !—that deep within do move,
And leaving the body unharmed
Cruelly wound the mind.

IV

Then I said : “ I admit, and I see that it is not wrongly said that the wicked, although they preserve the form of a human body, yet in the quality of their minds they are changed into beasts ; but I should have wished that those whose savage and wicked mind rages for the destruction of the good had not had that within their power.”

“ It is not,” she said, “ as will be shown in its proper place ; and yet, if that very power which is believed to be theirs were taken away, in great measure the punishment of these wicked men would also be relieved. For indeed, as may perhaps seem unbelievable to some, the wicked must necessarily be more unhappy when they achieve what they desire than if they are unable to carry out their desires. For if it is wretched to have the will to do evil things, it is more wretched to have the ability to do them, without which the effecting of the will wretchedly fails. So since each of these has its own proper wretchedness, those must be oppressed with

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videas scelus velle, posse, perficere." "Accedo,"
inquam, "sed uti hoc infortunio cito careant patrandi
sceleris possibilitate deserti vehementer exopto."
"Carebunt," inquit, "ocius quam vel tu forsitan velis
20 vel illi sese aestiment esse carituros. Neque enim
est aliquid in tam brevibus vitae metis ita serum
quod exspectare longum immortalis praesertim animus
putet: quorum magna spes et excelsa facinorum
machina repentino atque insperato saepe fine de-
25 struitur, quod quidem illis miseriae modum statuit.

Nam si nequitia miseros facit, miserior sit necesse
est diuturnior nequam; quos infelicissimos esse
iudicarem, si non eorum malitiam saltem mors
extrema finiret. Etenim si de pravitatis infortunio
30 vera conclusimus, infinitam liquet esse miseriam quam
esse constat aeternam." Tum ego: "Mira quidem,"
inquam, "et concessu difficilis inlatio, sed his eam
quae prius concessa sunt nimium convenire cognosco."
"Recte," inquit, "aestimas. Sed qui conclusioni
35 accedere durum putat, aequum est vel falsum aliquid
praecessisse demonstret vel collocationem proposi-
tionum non esse efficacem necessariae conclusionis
ostendat; alioquin concessis praecedentibus nihil
prorsus est quod de inlatione causetur. Nam hoc
40 quoque quod dicam non minus mirum videatur, sed
ex his quae sumpta sunt aequae est necessarium."

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a threefold misfortune whom you see wanting to do evil, able to do evil, and actually doing evil."

"That I grant," I said, "but I very strongly wish they might swiftly lose that misfortune by being deprived of the ability to commit evil."

"They will lose it," she said, "more swiftly than you desire, perhaps, or than they think that they will. For there is nothing within the brief limits of this life so late that man's mind, considering especially that it is immortal, should think it long to wait for. Their great expectation and the heights of their evil machinations are suddenly destroyed and brought to an end, often unexpectedly; and that indeed sets a limit to their wretchedness. For if wickedness makes them wretched, your long-time miscreant is bound to be more wretched. And I should judge them the most unfortunate of men but that death at least, in the end, sets a term on their wickedness; for indeed if we have come to a true conclusion about the misfortune attendant upon evil-doing, clearly that wretchedness is infinite which it is agreed is eternal."

"A wonderful conclusion," I then said, "and one hard to concede: but I acknowledge that it accords very well with what was granted earlier."

"Your thoughts are right," she said, "but it is proper for one who thinks it hard to accede to a conclusion either to demonstrate that something false has been premised or to show that the conjunction of the premises does not give a necessary conclusion. Otherwise, if the premises are granted, there is absolutely no reason why he should dispute the conclusion. For this also, which I am going to tell you, may seem no less wonderful, but it follows equally necessarily from those things already taken as true."

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“ Quidnam ? ” inquam. “ Feliciores, ” inquit, “ esse improbos supplicia luentes quam si eos nulla iustitiae poena coerceat. Neque id nunc molior quod cuivis
45 veniat in mentem, corrigi ultione pravos mores et ad rectum supplicii terrore deduci, ceteris quoque exemplum esse culpanda fugiendi, sed alio quodam modo infeliciores esse improbos arbitror impunitos, tametsi nulla ratio correctionis, nullus respectus
50 habeatur exempli. ” “ Et quis erit, ” inquam, “ praeter hos alius modus ? ” Et illa : “ Bonos, ” inquit, “ esse felices, malos vero miseros nonne concessimus ? ” “ Ita est, ” inquam. “ Si igitur, ” inquit, “ miseriae cuiuspiam bonum aliquid addatur, nonne felicius est
55 eo cuius pura ac solitaria sine cuiusquam boni admixtione miseria est ? ” “ Sic, ” inquam, “ videtur. ” “ Quid si eidem misero qui cunctis careat bonis, praeter ea quibus miser est malum aliud fuerit adnexum, nonne multo infelicius eo censendus est
60 cuius infortunium boni participatione relevatur ? ” “ Quidni ? ” inquam. “ Sed puniri improbos iustum, impunitos vero elabi iniquum esse manifestum est. ” “ Quis id neget ? ” “ Sed ne illud quidem, ” ait, “ quisquam negabit bonum esse omne quod iustum
65 est contraque quod iniustum est malum. ” Liquere,

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“ What is that ? ” I asked.

“ That the wicked,” she answered, “ are happier being punished than if the penalty required by justice did not constrain them. And I am not now labouring a point that might occur to anyone’s mind, that wicked behaviour is corrected by retribution and brought back to the right way by fear of punishment, and that it is also an example to others that they should avoid anything blameworthy ; but that it is in another way, I think, that the wicked are more unhappy if unpunished, even if no account were to be taken of correction, no regard paid to example.”

“ And what will be that other way,” I asked, “ besides these ? ”

And she answered : “ Have we not granted that the good are happy, the wicked wretched ? ”

“ We have,” I said.

“ Now if,” she said, “ to the wretchedness of any man some good were added, is he not happier than the man whose wretchedness is uniquely pure with no admixture of good ? ”

“ So it seems,” I said.

“ Suppose to that same wretched man, who lacks every good, there should have been added another evil besides those because of which he is wretched, is he not to be considered far less happy than he whose misfortune is relieved by some share in the good ? ”

“ Surely,” I said.

“ But it is obviously just for the wicked to be punished, and unjust for them to escape unpunished.”

“ Who would deny it ? ”

“ But neither will anyone deny *this*,” she said, “ that everything that is just is good, and on the other hand whatever is unjust is evil.”

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- respondi.¹ " Habent igitur improbi, cum puniuntur quidem boni aliquid adnexum poenam ipsam scilicet quae ratione iustitiae bona est, idemque cum supplicio carent, inest eis aliquid ulterius mali ipsa impunitas
- 70 quam iniquitatis merito malum esse confessus es." " Negare non possum." " Multo igitur infeliciores improbi sunt iniusta impunitate donati quam iusta ultione puniti." Tum ego: " Ista quidem consequentia sunt eis quae paulo ante conclusa sunt.
- 75 Sed quaeso," inquam, " te, nullane animarum supplicia post defunctum morte corpus relinquis?" " Et magna quidem," inquit, " quorum alia poenali acerbitate, alia vero purgatoria clementia exerceri puto. Sed nunc de his disserere consilium non est.
- 80 Id vero hactenus egimus, ut quae indignissima tibi videbatur malorum potestas eam nullam esse cognosceres quosque impunitos querebare, videres numquam improbitatis suae carere suppliciis, licentiam quam cito finiri precabaris nec longam esse disceres
- 85 infelicioremque fore, si diuturnior, infelicissimam vero, si esset aeterna; post haec miseriores esse improbos iniusta impunitate dimissos quam iusta ultione punitos. Cui sententiae consequens est ut tum demum gravioribus suppliciis urgeantur, cum
- 90 impuniti esse creduntur."

¹ Sed puniri . . . respondi, *which MSS. have after ultioni puniti below, was transferred here by Langen.*

^a Or: "they have some further evil in them—their impunity, which you have admitted. . . ."

^b Nor, indeed, later; there is no need to see here a reference to Purgatory (in that sense the word is not found until six centuries later) but to the myths of Plato's dialogues, especially, as H. F. Stewart says (*Boethius: an Essay*, 1891, pp. 98 f.), to *Gorgias*, 525 B.

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I replied that that was clear.

“ The wicked, therefore, at the time when they are punished, have some good added to them, that is, the penalty itself, which by reason of its justice is good ; and in the same way, when they go without punishment, they have something further in them, the very impunity of their evil,^a which you have admitted is evil because of its injustice.”

“ I cannot deny it.”

“ Therefore the wicked granted unjust impunity are much less happy than those punished with just retribution.”

Then I said : “ These things do indeed follow from those which were just now concluded. But I now ask you, do you keep no punishments for souls after the end of the body in death ? ”

“ Great punishments, indeed,” she said ; “ some of them I think are executed with penal harshness, but others with a purifying clemency. But it is not my design to discuss these now. ^b”

But so far we have aimed to make you recognize that the power of the wicked, which appeared to you most intolerable, is really nothing, and to make you see that those who you complained were unpunished never lack the punishments due for their wickedness ; and to make you learn that the licence which you prayed might swiftly be ended is not long-lasting, but would be more unhappy if it lasted longer, and most unhappy if it were eternal ; and lastly, that the wicked are more wretched if they are allowed to escape in unjust impunity than if they are punished with just retribution. And it follows from this conclusion that they are oppressed by heavier punishments precisely when they are thought to be unpunished.”

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Tum ego : " Cum tuas," inquam, " rationes considero, nihil dici verius puto. At si ad hominum iudicia revertar, quis ille est cui haec non credenda modo sed saltem audienda videantur ? " " Ita est,"

95 inquit illa. " Nequeunt enim oculos tenebris assuetos ad lucem perspicuae veritatis attollere, similesque avibus sunt quarum intuitum nox inluminat dies caecat. Dum enim non rerum ordinem, sed suos intuentur affectus, vel licentiam vel impunitatem

100 scelerum putant esse felicem. Vide autem quid aeterna lex sanciat. Melioribus animum conformaveris, nihil opus est iudice praemium deferente ; tu te ipse excellentioribus addidisti. Studium ad peiora deflexeris, extra ne quaesieris ultorem. Tu te

105 ipse in deteriora trusisti, veluti si vicibus sordidam humum caelumque respicias, cunctis extra cessantibus ipsa cernendi ratione nunc caeno nunc sideribus interesse videaris. At vulgus ista non respicit. Quid igitur ? Hisne accedamus quos beluis similes

110 esse monstravimus ? Quid si quis amisso penitus visu ipsum etiam se habuisse oblivisceretur intuitum nihilque sibi ad humanam perfectionem deesse arbitraretur, num videntes eadem caeco¹ putaremus ? Nam ne illud quidem adquiescent quod aequae validis

115 rationum nititur firmamentis : infeliciores eos esse qui faciant quam qui patiantur iniuriam." " Vellem,"

¹ caeco *Weinberger, Bieler, following Bases* (AΘHNA IV, 1892, 341 ff.); *cf. Planudes τὰ τῶ τυφλῶ* : caecos *mss.* *King Alfred seems to have read caeco, Queen Elizabeth I caecos (and made little sense of it); Chaucer's text is doubtful.*

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Then I said : " When I consider your arguments, I think nothing is more truly stated, but if I were to turn again to the judgements of men, is there any one to whom they would not seem unworthy not merely of belief but even of a hearing ? "

" That is so," she said. " For they cannot raise eyes accustomed to darkness to the light of manifest truth, and they are like birds whose sight night enlightens but day makes blind. For while they have regard not to the order of the world but their own desires, they think the freedom to commit evil and go unpunished for the evil done is a happy thing.

But see what eternal law ordains. Suppose you have conformed your mind to better things : there is no need of a judge to confer rewards, you have yourself joined yourself to the more excellent things. Suppose you turn aside to worse things : look not without for one to punish you, you have yourself thrust yourself down among the baser things ; just as, if you were to look by turns now at the squalid ground, now at the sky, leaving aside all other outward signs, on the evidence of your sight itself you would seem now to be in the dirt, now among the stars. But the common herd does not look up at the stars : well then, shall we join them, who we have shown are like the beasts ? Suppose a man having completely lost his sight forgot even that he ever possessed sight at all, and thought he lacked nothing needed to make him perfectly a man, surely we who see would not have the same opinions as that blind man ? For not even this will they assent to, which rests on equally strong foundations, that those are more unhappy who commit injustice than those who suffer it."

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inquam, "has ipsas audire rationes." "Omnem,"
inquit, "improbum num supplicio dignum negas?"
"Minime." "Infelices vero esse qui sint improbi
120 multipliciter liquet." "Ita," inquam. "Qui igitur
supplicio digni sunt miseros esse non dubitas?"
"Convenit," inquam. "Si igitur cognitor," ait,
"resideres, cui supplicium inferendum putares, eine
qui fecisset an qui pertulisset iniuriam?" "Nec
125 ambigo," inquam, "quin perpesso satisfacerem dolore
facientis." "Miserior igitur tibi iniuriae inlator
quam acceptor esse videretur." "Consequitur,"
inquam. "Hinc igitur aliis de causis ea radice
nitentibus, quod turpitude suapte natura miseros
130 faciat, apparet inlatam cuilibet iniuriam non accipien-
tis sed inferentis esse miseriam." "Atqui nunc,"
ait, "contra faciunt oratores. Pro his enim qui
grave quid acerbumque perpessi sunt miserationem
iudicum excitare conantur, cum magis admittentibus
135 iustior miseratio debeatur; quos non ab iratis sed
a propitiis potius miserantibusque accusatoribus ad
iudicium veluti aegros ad medicum duci oportebat,

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“ Those are arguments,” I said, “ which I should like to hear.”

“ You do not deny,” she said, “ that every wicked man is worthy of punishment ? ”

“ Not at all.”

“ But it is in many ways obvious that those who are wicked are unhappy.”

“ Yes,” I said.

“ Therefore you do not doubt that those who are worthy of punishment are wretched ? ”

“ Agreed,” I said.

“ Now if you,” she said, “ were sitting as judge, which would you think should bear the punishment, the one who has committed the injustice or the one who suffered it ? ”

“ I am in no doubt,” I said, “ that I should give satisfaction to the sufferer by the pain of the perpetrator.”

“ So the committer of the injustice would seem to you more wretched than the receiver of it.”

“ That follows,” I said. “ And therefore for this and other causes resting on the same principle, that dishonesty makes men wretched by its very nature, it is clear that an injustice committed against any man means wretchedness not for the receiver but for the doer of the injustice.”

“ Yet now-a-days,” she said, “ orators take the opposite line. For they try to stir the judges to mercy for those who have suffered some severe and grievous injury, when the mercy is more justly owed rather to those perpetrating the injury, who ought, not by angry, but rather by kindly and merciful accusers to be brought to judgment like sick men to a doctor, that they might cut out their fault by being

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ut culpae morbos supplicio researent. Quo pacto
defensorum opera vel tota frigeret, vel si prodesse
140 hominibus mallet, in accusationis habitum verteretur.
Ipsi quoque improbi, si eis aliqua rimula virtutem
relictam fas esset aspicere vitiorumque sordes
poenarum cruciatibus se deposituros viderent, com-
pensatione adipiscendae probitatis nec hos cruciatus
145 esse ducerent defensorumque operam repudiarent ac
se totos accusatoribus iudicibusque permetterent.
Quo fit ut apud sapientes nullus prorsus odio locus
relinquatur. Nam bonos quis nisi stultissimus
oderit? Malos vero odisse ratione caret. Nam si,
150 uti corporum languor, ita vitiositas quidam est quasi
morbus animorum, cum aegros corpore minime dignos
odio sed potius miseratione iudicemus, multo magis
non insequendi sed miserandi sunt quorum mentes
omni languore atrocior urget improbitas.

IV

Quid tantos iuvat excitare motus
Et propria fatum sollicitare manu?
Si mortem petitis, propinquat ipsa
Sponte sua volucres nec remoratur equos.
5 Quos serpens leo tigris ursus aper
Dente petunt, idem se tamen ense petunt.
An distant quia dissidentque mores,
Iniustas acies et fera bella movent

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punished. In this way, the work of defence-counsel would either languish altogether or, if they preferred to do men good, their role would be changed to that of prosecutors. And the wicked themselves, if it were allowable to glimpse through some small chink the virtue they had abandoned, and see that they would lay aside, through the torments of their punishment, the filth of their vices, they would not think them torments, weighing against them the benefit of acquiring goodness, and they would reject the efforts of defence lawyers and give themselves wholly over to their prosecutors and judges. Wherefore in wise men there would be left no place at all for hatred : for who except an utter fool would hate good men ? Yet to hate the wicked lacks all reason. For if, just as faintness is a disease of the body, so is any vice a sort of disease of the mind, since we should think those sick in body not at all deserving of hatred, but rather of pity, much more are those to be pitied, not persecuted, whose minds are oppressed by what is crueller than any bodily weakness, wickedness."

IV

Why do you delight to stir up great commotion
And with your own hand to invite your fate ?
If you seek death, herself draws near
Of her own accord, and does not slow her flying steeds.
Those whom the serpent, lion, tiger, bear or boar
Hunt with their teeth, the same hunt one another
with their swords.
Is it because they differ and their customs disagree,
That they unjustly wage such cruel wars

BOETHIUS

Alternisque volunt perire telis ?

10 Non est iusta satis saevitiae ratio.

Vis aptam meritis vicem referre ?

Dilige iure bonos et miserescere malis."

V

Hic ego : " Video," inquam, " quae sit vel felicitas
vel miseria in ipsis proborum atque improborum
meritis constituta. Sed in hac ipsa fortuna populari
non nihil boni malive inesse perpendo. Neque enim
5 sapientum quisquam exul inops ignominiosusque esse
malit, potius quam pollens opibus, honore reverendus,
potentia validus, in sua permanens urbe florere. Sic
enim clarius testatiusque sapientiae tractatur offi-
cium, cum in contingentes populos regentium quo-
10 dam modo beatitudo transfunditur, cum praesertim
carcer, nex¹ ceteraque legalium tormenta poenarum
perniciosis potius civibus propter quos etiam constituta
sunt debeantur. Cur haec igitur versa vice mutantur
scelerumque supplicia bonos premant, praemia vir-
15 tutum mali rapiant, vehementer admiror, quaeque
tam iniustae confusionis ratio videatur ex te scire
desidero. Minus etenim mirarer, si misceri omnia
fortuitis casibus crederem. Nunc stuporem meum
deus rector exaggerat. Qui cum saepe bonis iucunda,
20 malis aspera contraque bonis dura tribuat, malis
optata concedat, nisi causa deprehenditur, quid est

¹ nex *Bieler* : lex *most MSS.* : *Weinberger omits.*

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And by each others' weapons are willing to die ?
Not right enough is cruelty's reasoning ;
Would you give fair return for men's deserts ?
Rightly then love the good, and pity the evil.

V

Then said I : " I see what happiness and what wretchedness is implicit in the deserts of honest and of dishonest men. Yet even in that popular idea of fortune itself I consider there is some good or ill : for none of those who are wise would prefer to be an exile, poor and disgraced, rather than to flourish staying in his own city, powerful because of his riches, respected for his honours, and strong in his power. For thus is the office of wisdom practised in a more notable and manifest way, when the happiness of the rulers is in some manner transferred to the peoples under them, especially when prison, death and the other torments of the punishments of the law are due rather to wicked citizens, for whom indeed they were established. Now why these things are changed about, *vice versa*, and the punishments due to the wicked oppress the good, while the wicked seize the rewards due to virtue, I earnestly wonder, and I long to learn from you what might appear to be the explanation of such iniquitous confusion. For I should indeed wonder less, if I believed that all were jumbled up by random chances. But as it is, my belief in God as governor increases my astonishment. Since he frequently grants delights to the good and unpleasant things to the wicked, and on the other hand frequently metes out harshness to the good and grants their desires to the wicked, unless the cause is discovered,

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quod a fortuitis casibus differre videatur ? ” “ Nec mirum,” inquit, “ si quid ordinis ignorata ratione temerarium confusumque credatur. Sed tu quamvis
25 causam tantae dispositionis ignores, tamen quoniam bonus mundum rector temperat, recte fieri cuncta ne dubites.

V

Si quis Arcturi sidera nescit
 Propinqua summo cardine labi,
Cur legat tardus plaustra Bootes
 Mergatque seras aequore flammās,
5 Cum nimis celeres explicet ortus,
 Legem stupebit aetheris alti.
Palleant plenae cornua lunae
 Infecta metis noctis opacae
Quaeque fulgenti texerat ore
10 Confusa Phoebe detegat astra,
Commovet gentes publicus error
 Lassantque crebris pulsibus aera.
Nemo miratur flamina Cori
 Litus frementi tundere fluctu
15 Nec nivis duram frigore molem
 Fervente Phoebi solvier aestu.
Hic enim causas cernere promptum est,
 Illic latentes pectora turbant.
Cuncta quae rara provehit aetas
20 Stupetque subitis mobile vulgus,

^a The reference is to an eclipse of the full moon, hidden in the cone of the earth's shadow (*cf.* Ptolemy vi. 5 and Macrobius, *In Somn. Scip.* i. 15. 10 ff.); at such times, the
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why should his governance seem to be any different from that of random chances ? ”

“ It is no wonder,” she said, “ if a thing be thought random and confused, when the true ground of its order is unknown. But you, although you do not know the cause of this great ordering, yet, since a good governor does regulate the universe, do not doubt that all things are rightly done.”

V

If a man know not how Arcturus' stars
Glide next the pole of heaven,
Or why Boötes follows slow the Wain,
And sinks his fires so late into the sea,
While he so quickly rises,
He will be astounded at high heaven's law.
Let the full moon's horns grow pale,
Darkened by thick night's cone,
And the stars she hid with her shining face
Let Phoebe, thus obscured, discover :
The common people's error troubles the nations
And the bronze is worn with constant striking.^a
No man wonders that the blowing of the north-west
wind

Beats on the shore with rumbling wave,
Nor that the snow's hard weight of cold
Is loosed by the glowing warmth of Phoebus.
For to see the causes here is easy,
While there they are hidden and disturb men's hearts ;
All things that time brings forth but rarely,
And unexpected things, astound the excitable mob.

Romans, fearing the omen, made great noise of gongs and trumpets (*cf.* Livy xxvi. 5. 9 and Tacitus, *Ann.* i. 28).

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Cedat inscitiae nubilus error,
Cessent profecto mira videri."

VI

"Ita est," inquam; "sed cum tui muneris sit latentium rerum causas evolvere velatasque caligine explicare rationes, quaeso uti quae hinc decernas, quoniam hoc me miraculum maxime perturbat, 5 edisseras." Tum illa paulisper arridens: "Ad rem me," inquit, "omnium quaesitu maximam vocas, cui vix exhausti quicquam satis sit. Talis namque materia est ut una dubitatione succisa innumerabiles aliae velut hydrae capita succrescant, nec ullus fuerit 10 modus, nisi quis eas vivacissimo mentis igne coerceat. In hac enim de providentiae simplicitate, de fati serie, de repentinis casibus, de cognitione ac praedestinatione divina, de arbitrii libertate quaeri solet, quae quanti oneris sint ipse perpendis. Sed quoniam 15 haec quoque te nosse quaedam medicinae tuae portio est, quamquam angusto limite temporis saepti tamen aliquid delibare¹ conabimur. Quod si te musici carminis oblectamenta delectant, hanc oportet paulisper differas voluptatem, dum nexas sibi ordine 20 contexo rationes." "Ut libet," inquam.

Tunc velut ab alio orsa principio ita disseruit: "Omnium generatio rerum cunctusque mutabilium naturarum progressus et quidquid aliquo movetur

¹ *deliberare mss.; delibare Pulman.*

^a The seven-headed water-serpent slain by Hercules; when one head was cut off, two grew in its place.

CONSOLATION IV

Let the clouded error of ignorance give place,
And straightway let them cease to seem astonishing.

VI

“That is so,” I said. “Yet since it is your office to unfurl the causes of hidden things and to unfold explanations veiled in mist, I beseech you to explain what conclusions you draw from this, for that wonder I mentioned disturbs me very greatly.”

Then she said, smiling a little, “You invite me to discuss a matter greatest of all in the seeking, and such that almost no discourse, however exhaustive, is sufficient for it. It is such a kind of matter that, when one doubt is cut away, innumerable others grow in its place, like the heads of the Hydra^a; nor would there be any limit to them, if one did not repress them with the most lively fire of one’s mind. For under this head enquiry is made concerning the singleness of providence, the course of fate, the suddenness of chance, the knowledge and predestination of God, and the freedom of the will—and you are well aware what weighty questions these are. But since that you should know these things too is some part of your medicine, although we are constrained within a narrowly limited time, we shall try to have some discussion of them. But if the delights of music and song please you, for a little while you must postpone that pleasure, while I weave arguments for you bound to each other in due order.”

“As it pleases you,” I said.

Then as if beginning from a new starting-point, she discoursed in this way: “The generation of all things, and the whole development of changeable natures,

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modo, causas, ordinem, formas ex divinae mentis
25 stabilitate sortitur. Haec in suae simplicitatis arce
composita multiplicem rebus¹ regendis modum sta-
tuit. Qui modus cum in ipsa divinae intellegentiae
puritate conspicitur, providentia nominatur; cum
vero ad ea quae movet atque disponit refertur, fatum
30 a veteribus appellatum est. Quae diversa esse facile
liquebit, si quis utriusque vim mente conspexerit.
Nam providentia est ipsa illa divina ratio in summo
omnium principe constituta quae cuncta disponit;
fatum vero inhaerens rebus mobilibus dispositio per
35 quam providentia suis quaeque nectit ordinibus.
Providentia namque cuncta pariter quamvis diversa
quamvis infinita complectitur; fatum vero singula
digerit in motum locis formis ac temporibus dis-
tributa, ut haec temporalis ordinis explicatio in
40 divinae mentis adunata prospectum providentia sit,
eadem vero adunatio digesta atque explicata tem-
poribus fatum vocetur. Quae licet diversa sint,
alterum tamen pendet ex altero. Ordo namque
fatalis ex providentiae simplicitate procedit. Sicut
45 enim artifex faciendae rei formam mente praecipiens
moveri operis effectum, et quod simpliciter prae-
sentarieque prospexerat, per temporales ordines
ducit, ita deus providentia quidem singulariter

¹ rebus *cod. Emmeramensis s. x/xi; the rest omit.*

^a *moveri* gives great trouble to translators of Latin philosophical and scientific works: it is both middle and passive, and can mean "to move" (intransitive: *the moon moves*) and "to be moved" (passive: *furniture is moved*); and it is used by Latin writers for the Greek *κινεῖσθαι*, which is used by Aristotle and others of all kinds of "motion" or change
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and whatever moves in any manner,^a are given their causes, order and forms from the stability of the divine mind. That mind, firmly placed in the citadel of its own simplicity of nature, established the manifold manner in which all things behave. And this manner, when it is contemplated in the utter purity of the divine intelligence, is called providence ; but when related to those things it moves and disposes, it was by the ancients called fate. And that these are different will easily be seen, if one mentally examine the nature of each : for providence is the divine reason itself, established in the highest ruler of all things, the reason which disposes all things that exist ; but fate is a disposition inherent in movable things, through which providence binds all things together, each in its own proper ordering. For providence embraces all things together, though they are different, though they are infinite ; but fate arranges as to their motion separate things, distributed in place, form and time ; so that this unfolding of temporal order being united in the foresight of the divine mind is providence, and the same unity when distributed and unfolded in time is called fate.

Now although these are different, yet the one depends on the other ; for the order of fate proceeds from the simplicity of providence. For in the same way as a craftsman first conceives in his mind the form of the thing he is to make and then puts the work into effect, and produces by stages in temporal order what he had previously envisaged in a simple and instantaneous manner, just so God by providence disposes what is to be done in a single and unchanging of state. “ Move ” in this version should be read with this in mind.

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stabiliterque facienda disponit, fato vero haec ipsa
50 quae disposuit multipliciter ac temporaliter adminis-
trat. Sive igitur famulantibus quibusdam provi-
dentiae divinis spiritibus fatum exercetur seu anima
seu tota inserviente natura seu caelestibus siderum
motibus seu angelica virtute seu daemonum varia
55 sollertia seu aliquibus horum seu omnibus fatalis
series textitur, illud certe manifestum est immobilem
simplicemque gerendarum formam rerum esse provi-
dentiam, fatum vero eorum quae divina simplicitas
gerenda disposuit mobilem nexum atque ordinem
60 temporalem. Quo fit ut omnia quae fato subsunt
providentiae quoque subiecta sint cui ipsum etiam
subiacet fatum, quaedam vero quae sub providentia
locata sunt fati seriem superent. Ea vero sunt
quae primae propinqua divinitati stabiliter fixa fatalis
65 ordinem mobilitatis excedunt. Nam ut orbium
circa eundem cardinem sese vertentium qui est
intimus ad simplicitatem medietatis accedit cetero-
rumque extra locatorum veluti cardo quidam circa
quem versentur existit, extimus vero maiore ambitu
70 rotatus quanto a puncti media individuitate discedit
tanto amplioribus spatiis explicatur, si quid vero illi
se medio conectat et societ, in simplicitatem cogitur
diffundique ac diffluere cessat, simili ratione quod
longius a prima mente discedit maioribus fati nexibus
75 implicatur ac tanto aliquid fato liberum est quanto
illum rerum cardinem vicinius petit. Quod si
supernae mentis haeserit firmitati, motu carens fati
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way, but by fate accomplishes those same things he has disposed in a manifold and temporal way. Now whether fate works by certain divine spirits acting as servants of providence, or whether the course of fate is woven by the service of the soul or of the whole of nature, or by the celestial motions of the stars, or by angelic power or demons' ingenuity, or by any or all of these, this surely is clear, that the unmoving and simple form of the way things are done is providence, and fate is the movable interlacing and temporal ordering of those things which the divine simplicity has disposed to be done.

So it is that all things that are under fate are also subject to providence, to which even fate itself is subordinate ; but that some things, which are placed under providence, are above the course of fate. These are the things which are immovably fixed close to the principal divinity and so are beyond the ordering of fate's moving nature. For just as, of a number of spheres turning about the same centre, the innermost one approaches the simplicity of middle-ness and is a sort of pivot for the rest, which are placed outside it, about which they turn ; but the outermost one, turning with a greater circumference, the further it is separated from the indivisibility of the central point, the wider the spaces it spreads over ; and if anything is joined or associated with that centre, it is gathered into its simplicity and ceases to spread and diffuse itself : in a similar manner, that which is furthest separated from the principal mind is entangled in the tighter meshes of fate, and a thing is the more free from fate the more closely it moves towards that centre of all things. And if it should cling fast to the firmness of the supernal mind, then

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quoque supergreditur necessitatem. Igitur uti est ad intellectum ratiocinatio, ad id quod est id quod
80 gignitur, ad aeternitatem tempus, ad punctum medium circulus, ita est fati series mobilis ad providentiae stabilem simplicitatem. Ea series caelum ac sidera movet, elementa in se invicem temperat et alterna commutatione transformat ; eadem nascentia
85 occidentiaque omnia per similes fetuum seminumque renovat progressus. Haec actus etiam fortunasque hominum indissolubili causarum conexione constringit, quae cum ab immobilis providentiae proficiscatur exordiis, ipsas quoque immutabiles esse necesse est.
90 Ita enim res optime reguntur, si manens in divina mente simplicitas indeclinabilem causarum ordinem promat. Hic vero ordo res mutabiles et alioquin temere fluituras propria incommutabilitate coerceat. Quo fit ut tametsi vobis hunc ordinem minime con-
95 siderare valentibus confusa omnia perturbataque videantur, nihilo minus tamen suus modus ad bonum dirigens cuncta disponat. Nihil est enim quod mali causa ne ab ipsis quidem improbis fiat ; quos, ut uberrime demonstratum est, bonum quaerentes pravus
100 error avertit, nedum ordo de summi boni cardine proficiscens a suo quoquam deflectat exordio.

Quae vero, inquires, potest ulla iniquior esse confusio, quam ut bonis tum adversa tum prospera, malis etiam tum optata tum odiosa contingant? Num
105 igitur ea mentis integritate homines degunt, ut quos

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being without motion it is also superior to the necessity of fate. Therefore as reasoning is to understanding, as that which becomes is to that which is, as time is to eternity, as the circle is to its centre, so is the moving course of fate to the unmoving simplicity of providence. That course moves the heaven and the stars, it mingles the elements with one another in proportion and transforms them by changing one with another ; it renews all things that are born and die through the growth of their young and their seedlings in their likeness ; and it also binds the acts and fortunes of men in an unbreakable chain of causes, which since they start from beginnings in immovable providence must also be themselves immutable. For things are governed in the best way if the simplicity which rests in the divine mind produces an inflexible order of causes, and this order constrains with its own immutability things which are mutable and would otherwise be in random flux.

So it is that although all things may seem confused and disordered to you, unable as you are to contemplate this order, nevertheless their own measure directing them towards the good disposes them all. For there is nothing which is done for the sake of evil, even by the wicked themselves ; they, as has been very fully demonstrated, are turned aside by perverse error as they seek the good, far from it being that order, proceeding from the centre of the highest good, which turns them aside in any direction from the beginning. But, you will say, what confusion could possibly be more unfair than that for the good, things turn out both ill and well, and to the bad also both desired and detestable things happen ? Do men, then, really live with such soundness of

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probos improbosve censuerunt eos quoque uti existimant esse necesse sit? Atqui in hoc hominum iudicia depugnant, et quos alii praemio alii supplicio dignos arbitrantur. Sed concedamus ut aliquis possit bonos
110 malosque discernere; num igitur poterit intueri illam intimam temperiem, velut in corporibus dici solet, animorum? Non enim dissimile est miraculum nescienti cur sanis corporibus his quidem dulcia illis vero amara convenient, cur aegri etiam quidam lenibus
115 quidam vero acribus adiuventur. At hoc medicus, qui sanitatis ipsius atque aegritudinis modum temperamentumque dinoscit, minime miratur. Quid vero aliud animorum salus videtur esse quam probitas? Quid aegritudo quam vitia? Quis autem alius
120 vel servator bonorum vel malorum depulsor quam rector ac medicator mentium deus? Qui cum ex alta providentiae specula respexit, quid unicuique conveniat agnoscit et quod convenire novit accommodat. Hic iam fit illud fatalis ordinis insigne miraculum,
125 cum ab sciente geritur quod stupeant ignorantes. Nam ut pauca quae ratio valet humana de divina profunditate perstringam, de hoc quem tu iustissimum et aequi servantissimum putas omnia scienti providentiae diversum videtur; et victricem quidem
130 causam dis, victam vero Catoni placuisse familiaris noster Lucanus admonuit. Hic igitur quidquid citra spem videas geri, rebus quidem rectus ordo est,

^a Lucan, *Pharsalia*, i. 128; *victrix causa deis placuit, sed victa Catoni*.

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understanding that those they have judged to be good or bad must necessarily also be as they think? Yet in this matter the judgements of men conflict, and there are those whom some judge worthy of reward, others deserving of punishment.

But let us concede that there is someone who can discern good men from evil. Will he really therefore be able to see that inward temper—as one says of the body—of men's minds? For the case is not unlike that which is a wonder to an ignorant man, why with some healthy bodies sweet things agree, with others bitter, or why, again, of the sick, some are helped by mild medicines, others by sharp ones. But this the doctor, who distinguishes the manner and temper of health itself and of sickness, does not wonder at. Now what else, think you, is the health of minds but goodness, what their sickness but vices, and who else is both the preserver of good things and the remover of evils besides the ruler and healer of minds, God? He, when he has looked out from the lofty watch-tower of his providence, sees what is fitting for each individual, and arranges what he knows is fitting. Here now happens that remarkable wonder of the ordering of fate, when by him who knows, such things are done as the ignorant are amazed at.

For to glance at a few examples, which human reason can grasp, of the depth of God, in the case of that man whom you think to be most just and the greatest preserver of justice, to providence that knows all, the opposite seems true. And our school-fellow Lucan suggests that the conqueror's cause pleased the gods, the conquered's, Cato.^a Therefore whatever you see happen here contrary to your

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opinionem vero tuam perversa confusio. Sed sit aliquis
 ita bene moratus ut de eo divinum iudicium pariter
 135 et humanum consentiat, sed est animi viribus in-
 firmus; cui si quid eveniat adversi, desinet colere
 forsitan innocentiam per quam non potuit retinere
 fortunam. Parcit itaque sapiens dispensatio ei quem
 deteriore facere possit adversitas, ne cui non con-
 140 venit, laborare patiatur. Est alius cunctis virtutibus
 absolutus sanctusque ac deo proximus; hunc con-
 tingi quibuslibet adversis nefas providentia iudicat
 adeo ut ne corporeis quidem morbis agitari sinat.
 Nam ut quidam me quoque excellentior:

145 Ἄνδρὸς δὴ ἱεροῦ δέμας αἰθέρες ὑποκόδομησαν.

Fit autem saepe, uti bonis summa rerum regenda
 deferatur, ut exuberans retundatur improbitas. Aliis
 mixta quaedam pro animorum qualitate distribuit;
 quosdam remordet ne longa felicitate luxurient, alios
 150 duris agitari¹ ut virtutes animi patientiae usu atque
 exercitatione confirmet. Alii plus aequo metuunt
 quod ferre possunt, alii plus aequo despiciunt quod
 ferre non possunt; hos in experimentum sui tristibus
 ducit. Nonnulli venerandum saeculi nomen gloriosae
 155 pretio mortis emerunt: quidam suppliciis inexpugna-
 biles exemplum ceteris praetulerunt invictam malis

¹ agitatur *Warmington*. *Perhaps* duris <sinit> agitari.

^a The Greek text is uncertain and otherwise unknown; an early variant produced "virtues" in place of *αἰθέρες* (so not only Chaucer and Elizabeth but even Notker in the ninth century). The plural *αἰθέρες* means it is very late, and not Parmenides, as Peiper suggested. It is probably from some late "Orphic" source, and undoubtedly culled by Boethius from a Neo-platonist commentary, possibly on Plato's *Epinomis*, 984 ε. "Orpheus" would surely be acceptable as "one more excellent even than" Philosophy.

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expectation, is indeed right order in fact, though in your opinion it is perverse confusion. Yet suppose there be someone so well constituted that about him the judgement of God and man agree together, yet he is weak in strength of mind ; if anything adverse happen to him he will perhaps cease to preserve his innocence, because he has not been able to keep his good fortune by its means. So a wise dispensation spares him whom adversity could make worse, lest it allow him to be afflicted for whom it is not fitting. There is another perfect in all virtues, a holy man and near to God ; that he should be affected by any adversity at all providence so far judges monstrous that it does not allow him to be troubled even by bodily illnesses. For as one more excellent even than myself said :

The body of a holy man the heavens did build.^a

But it often happens that the highest direction of affairs is given to good men, that luxuriating wickedness may be beaten back. To some providence metes out a fitting mixture of good and ill fortune according to the quality of their minds ; some it vexes, lest they run to excess with long prosperity ; others it allows to be troubled with hardships, that the virtues of their minds may be strengthened by the use and practice of patience. Some are over afraid of what they can bear, others are over contemptuous of what they can not—these it leads with harsh treatment to test themselves. Some have bought a name respected in this world at the price of a glorious death ; others by remaining unbeaten by their torments have shown the rest of men an example, that virtue is unconquered by evils. And

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esse virtutem. Quae quam recte atque disposite et ex eorum bono quibus accedere videntur fiant, nulla dubitatio est. Nam illud quoque, quod improbis
160 nunc tristia nunc optata proveniunt, ex eisdem ducitur causis ; ac de tristibus quidem nemo miratur, quod eos male meritos omnes existimant. Quorum quidem supplicia tum ceteros ab sceleribus deterrent, tum ipsos quibus invehuntur emendant ; laeta vero
165 magnum bonis argumentum loquuntur, quid de huiusmodi felicitate debeant iudicare quam famulari saepe improbis cernant. In qua re illud etiam dispensari credo, quod est forsitan alicuius tam praeceptum atque inportuna natura ut eum in scelera potius
170 exacerbare possit rei familiaris inopia ; huius morbo providentia collatae pecuniae remedio medetur. Hic foedatam probris conscientiam exspectans et se cum fortuna sua comparans, forsitan pertimescit ne cuius ei iucundus usus est, sit tristis amissio.
175 Mutabit igitur mores ac dum fortunam metuit amittere, nequitiam derelinquit. Alios in cladem meritam praecipitavit indigne acta felicitas ; quibusdam permissum puniendi ius, ut exercitii bonis et malis esset causa supplicii. Nam ut probis atque
180 improbis nullum foedus est, ita ipsi inter se improbi nequeunt convenire. Quidni, cum a semet ipsis discerpentibus conscientiam vitiis quisque dissentiat faciantque saepe, quae cum gesserint non fuisse
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there is no doubting how rightly and in what good order these things are done, and how much in accord with the good of those to whom they come. For this too, that the wicked are sometimes harshly treated and sometimes gain their desires, proceeds from the same causes. Their harsh treatment no-one wonders at, since all think they deserve ill—and their torments indeed both deter the rest from crime and correct those they fall upon—but their joyful fortune speaks a great argument for the good to hear, how they ought to judge this kind of prosperity, which they see often attendant upon the wicked. And in this matter I think it is also arranged, that there is some man whose nature is so headstrong and rude, that the want of property could very likely provoke him to crime ; and his sickness providence cures with this remedy, the provision of money. One man, regarding his own conscience soiled by his misdeeds, and comparing his own character with his fortune, is afraid perhaps lest it should be hard for him to lose that the enjoyment of which he finds pleasant ; therefore he will change his behaviour and, while he is afraid of losing his fortune, he leaves his wickedness. Others prosperity unworthily used has hurled to well-deserved disaster. To some the right to punish others is granted, that it may be the cause of the employment of the good and the chastisement of the bad. For just as there is no compact between honest and dishonest men, so too the dishonest cannot agree among themselves. How can they, when each differs even with himself, their vices tearing their consciences apart, and when they often do things which, once they have done them, they see ought not to have been done ?

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gerenda decernant? Ex quo saepe summa illa
185 providentia protulit insigne miraculum, ut malos
mali bonos facerent. Nam dum iniqua sibi a pessimis
quidam perpeti videntur, noxiorum odio flagrantes
ad virtutis frugem rediere, dum se eis dissimiles
student esse quos oderant. Sola est enim divina vis
190 cui mala quoque bona sint, cum eis competenter
utendo alicuius boni elicit effectum. Ordo enim
quidam cuncta complectitur, ut quod adsignata
ordinis ratione decesserit, hoc licet in alium, tamen
ordinem relabatur, ne quid in regno providentiae
195 liceat temeritati.

Ἀργαλέον δέ με ταῦτα θεὸν ὡς πάντ' ἀγορεύειν.

Neque enim fas est homini cunctas divinae operae
machinas vel ingenio comprehendere vel explicare
sermone. Hoc tantum perspexisse sufficiat, quod
200 naturarum omnium proditor deus idem ad bonum
dirigens cuncta disponat, dumque ea quae protulit in
sui similitudinem retinere festinat, malum omne de
reipublicae suae terminis per fatalis seriem necessi-
tatis eliminat. Quo fit ut quae in terris abundare
205 creduntur, si disponentem providentiam spectes,
nihil usquam mali esse perpendas. Sed video te
iam dudum et pondere quaestionis oneratum et
rationis prolixitate fatigatum aliquam carminis ex-
spectare dulcedinem. Accipe igitur haustum quo
210 refectus firmior in ulteriora contendas.

^a Homer, *Il.* xii. 176.

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And often that highest providence produces from all this a remarkable wonder, that evil men make evil men good. For some of them, while they think they are suffering injustices at the hands of men much worse than they, being inflamed with hatred of those injuring them, have come back to virtue's harvest, striving to be unlike those whom they hated. For only the divine nature is such that to it even evils are good, since by suitable use of them God draws out as a result some good. For a certain order embraces all things, so that that which has departed from the rule of this order appointed to it, although it slips into another condition yet that too is order, so that nothing in the realm of providence may be left to chance.

“ But it is grievous that *I should talk of all this as if I were a god.*”^a For it is not allowed to a man either to comprehend with his natural powers or to express in words all the devices of the work of God. Let it suffice to have perceived only this, that God the author of all natures himself directing them towards the good disposes all things, and while he is swift to retain those things he has made in his own likeness, he removes all evil from within the bounds of his commonwealth by the course of the necessity of fate. Thus it happens that if you were to have regard to providence's disposing, looking at those things which are thought so widespread on earth, you would judge that there was no evil anywhere in them. But I see that you are long since burdened with the weight of this enquiry and tired by the length of the argument, and are waiting for some sweetness in verse ; therefore take a draught, that you may be refreshed by it and go more firmly further on.

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VI

Si vis celsi iura tonantis
Pura sollers cernere mente,
Aspice summi culmina caeli.
Illic iusto foedere rerum
5 Veterem servant sidera pacem.
Non sol rutilo concitus igne
Gelidum Phoebes impedit axem
Nec quae summo vertice mundi
Flectit rapidos Ursa meatus,
10 Numquam occiduo lota profundo
Cetera cernens sidera mergi
Cupit oceano tingere flammās.
Semper vicibus temporis aequis
Vesper seras nuntiat umbras
15 Revehitque diem Lucifer alnum.
Sic aeternos reficit cursus
Alternus amor, sic astrigeris
Bellum discors exulat oris.
Haec concordia temperat aequis
20 Elementa modis, ut pugnancia
Vicibus cedant umida siccis
Iungantque fidem frigora flammis,
Pendulus ignis surgat in altum
Terraque graves pondere sidant.
25 Isdem causis vere tepenti
Spirat florifer annus odores,
Aestas Cererem fervida siccāt,
Remeat pomis gravis autumnus,
Hiemem defluus inrigat imber.
30 Haec temperies alit ac profert
Quidquid vitam spirat in orbe.

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VI

If you would see, with pure discerning mind,
The lofty Thunderer's laws,
Look up to the heights of the topmost heaven ;
There the stars keep their ancient peace
In the just compact of the universe.
The sun with his red fire roused does not detain
Phoebe's cold chariot,
Nor does the Bear, who turns his rapid course
About the highest pole of the universe,
Ever in western deeps submerged—
Although he sees the other stars sink down—
Desire to plunge his flames in Ocean's waves.
Always with fair exchange of time
Vesper announces late the shades of night
And Lucifer brings back the kindly day.
So mutual love renews eternal motions,
So from those star-strewn regions
Discordant war is banished.
Concord these elements regulates
In equal measures, that the warring wet
In turn yield place to dry,
And cold joins faith with flames.
The hanging fire rises on high
And heavy earth sinks down beneath its weight.
These are the causes why in the warmth of spring
The year in flower breathes out its lovely scents,
Hot summer dries the corn,
Autumn heavy with fruits returns,
And falling rain waters the winter earth.
This due proportion nourishes and brings forth
All things that breathe their life on earth,

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Eadem rapiens condit et aufert
Obitu mergens orta supremo.
Sedet interea conditor altus
35 Rerumque regens flectit habenas
Rex et dominus fons et origo
Lex et sapiens arbiter aequi
Et quae motu concitat ire,
Sistit retrahens ac vaga firmat.
40 Nam nisi rectos revocans itus
Flexos iterum cogat in orbem,
Quae nunc stabilis continet ordo
Dissaepta suo fonte fatiscant.
Hic est cunctis communis amor
45 Repetuntque boni fine teneri,
Quia non aliter durare queant,
Nisi converso rursus amore
Refluant causae quae dedit esse.

VII

Iamne igitur vides quid haec omnia quae diximus
consequatur? " Quidnam? " inquam. " Omnem,"
inquit, " bonam prorsus esse fortunam." " Et qui id,"
inquam, " fieri potest? " " Attende," inquit. " Cum
5 omnis fortuna vel iucunda vel aspera tum remunerandi
exercendive bonos tum puniendi corrigendive im-
probos causa deferatur, omnis bona quam vel iustam
constat esse vel utilem." " Nimis quidem," inquam,
" vera ratio etsi quam paulo ante docuisti providentiam

^a *i.e.* the planets; cf. Cic. *Rep.* i. 14. 22: *stellae quae errantes et quasi vagae nominantur.*

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And the same order seizing them, bears and hides
 them away,
Burying all that was born in its final end.
While the Creator sits on high,
And ruling the universe guides its reins,
Their king and lord, fount and beginning,
Their law, and judge in wisdom of their right,
And those he stirs to motion, drawing back
He halts and stays their wanderings ^a ;
For if he did not call them back to their right paths,
Forcing them run their circles once again,
All things now stable order holds so fast
Would tear apart, and from their origin in pieces fall.
This is the love common to all things,
And they seek to be bound by their end, the good,
Since in no other way could they endure,
If the causes that gave them being did not flow back
Under the power of returning love.

VII

“ And now do you see what follows from all these things we have been saying ? ”

“ What ? ” I asked.

“ That every kind of fortune,” she replied, “ is good.”

“ But how can that be ? ” I asked.

“ Attend to this,” she said, “ Since every kind of fortune, whether pleasing or hard, is granted for the purpose either of rewarding or exercising good men, or of punishing or correcting the bad, every kind is good, since it is agreed to be just or useful.”

“ Now that is indeed very true reasoning,” I said,
“ and if I considered providence, about which you

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10 fatumve considerem, firmis viribus nixa sententia.
Sed eam si placet inter eas quas inopinabiles paulo
ante posuisti numeremus." " Qui ? " inquit. " Quia
id hominum sermo communis usurpat et quidem
crebro quorundam malam esse fortunam." " Visne
15 igitur," inquit, " paulisper vulgi sermonibus accedamus,
ne nimium velut ab humanitatis usu recessisse videamur ? "
" Ut placet," inquam. " Nonne igitur bonum censes
esse quod prodest ? " " Ita est," inquam. " Quae
vero aut exercet aut corrigit,
20 prodest ? " " Fateor," inquam. " Bona igitur ? "
" Quidni ? " " Sed haec eorum est qui vel in virtute
positi contra aspera bellum gerunt, vel a vitiis
declinantes virtutis iter arripiunt." " Negare,"
inquam, " nequeo." " Quid vero iucunda, quae in
25 praemium tribuitur bonis, num vulgus malam esse
decernit ? " " Nequaquam ; verum uti est ita quoque
esse optimam censet." " Quid reliqua, quae cum sit
aspera, iusto supplicio malos coercet, num bonam
populus putat ? " " Immo omnium," inquam, " quae
30 excogitari possunt, iudicat esse miserrimam." " Vide

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taught me just now, or fate, I should see that it was an opinion strongly and firmly founded. But if you agree, let us count it among those things you just now posited as unthinkable."

"How so?" she asked.

"Because the common talk of men usually says, and indeed often, that some men have ill fortune."

"Then do you want us," she asked, "to have recourse for a while to terms like those of the common people, in case we seem to have withdrawn too far, as it were, from the practice of men?"

"As you think best," I said.

"Then do you not judge that which is profitable to be good?"

"That is so," I said.

"But that which either exercises or corrects is profitable?"

"I agree," I said.

"And therefore good?"

"How could it not be?"

"But this is the case with those who, either being established in virtue wage war against adversity, or turning aside from their vices take the path of virtue."

"I cannot deny it," I said.

"Now what about the pleasant fortune which is granted as a reward to the good: do the common people judge that to be bad?"

"By no means, but as indeed it is, so also they judge it to be, very good."

"What of the other, which although it is hard, constrains the wicked with just punishment; the people do not think that good, do they?"

"Indeed not," I said, "they judge it to be the most wretched of all conceivable things."

BOETHIUS

igitur ne opinionem populi sequentes quiddam valde
inopinabile confecerimus." "Quid?" inquam. "Ex
his enim," ait, "quae concessa sunt, evenit eorum
quidem qui vel sunt vel in possessione vel in pro-
35 vectu vel in adeptione virtutis, omnem quaecumque
sit bonam, in improbitate vero manentibus omnem
pessimam esse fortunam." "Hoc," inquam, "verum
est, tametsi nemo audeat confiteri." "Quare,"
inquit, "ita vir sapiens moleste ferre non debet,
40 quotiens in fortunae certamen adducitur, ut virum
fortem non decet indignari, quotiens increpuit
bellicus tumultus; utriusque enim, huic quidem gloriae
propagandae illi vero conformandae sapientiae, diffi-
cultas ipsa materia est. Ex quo etiam virtus vocatur
45 quod suis viribus nitens non superetur adversis.
Neque enim vos in propectu positi virtutis diffluere
deliciis et emarcescere voluptate venistis. Proelium
cum omni fortuna animis¹ acre conseritis, ne vos aut
tristis opprimat aut iucunda corrumpat. Firmis
50 medium viribus occupate! Quidquid aut infra sub-
sistit aut ultra progreditur, habet contemptum
felicitationis, non habet praemium laboris. In vestra
enim situm manu qualem vobis fortunam formare
malitis; omnis enim quae videtur aspera nisi aut
55 exercet aut corrigit punit.

¹ animis the better MSS.: var. reading nimis.

^a Boethius here derives *virtus* from *vires*; and *virtus* can also mean "strength" or "vigour"—cf. Cic. *de Or.* ii. 27. 120: *oratoris vis divina virtusque*. . . *Virtus* is properly derived, as Cicero elsewhere says (*Tusc.* ii. 18. 43), from *vir*, a man.

CONSOLATION IV

“ See then whether we have not reached a most surprising conclusion by following the opinion of common folk.”

“ What ? ” I asked.

“ Because from those things that have been granted,” she said, “ it has followed that the fortune of those who indeed are either in possession of virtue, or making progress in it, or attaining to it, whatever that fortune may be, is all good, but for those who persevere in wickedness every kind of fortune is very bad.”

“ That,” I said, “ is true, though no-one would dare to admit it.”

“ And therefore,” she said, “ a wise man ought not to take it ill, every time he is brought into conflict with fortune, just as it would not be fitting for a brave man to be vexed every time the sound of war crashed out. Since for each of these the difficulty is *itself the occasion, for the latter of increasing his glory, for the former of further fashioning his wisdom.* And this is indeed why virtue is so called, because relying on its own powers it is not overcome by adversity.^a For neither have you, who are set on the road to virtue, come here to wallow in luxury or swoon with pleasure. You are engaged in bitter *mental strife with every kind of fortune*, lest ill fortune oppress you or pleasant fortune corrupt. Hold to the mean with firm strength ; whatever either remains below the mean or passes beyond it has contempt for good fortune, but not the reward for labour. For it is placed in your own hands, what kind of fortune you prefer to shape for yourselves ; for all fortune that seems adverse, if it does not exercise or correct, punishes.

BOETHIUS

VII

Bella bis quinis operatus annis
 Ultor Atrides Phrygiae ruinis
 Fratris amissos thalamos piavit ;
 Ille dum Graiae dare vela classi
 5 Optat et ventos redimit cruore,
 Exiit patrem miserumque tristis
 Foederat¹ natae iugulum sacerdos.
 Flevit amissos Ithacus sodales
 Quos ferus vasto recubans in antro
 10 Mersit inmani Polyphemus alvo ;
 Sed tamen caeco furibundus ore
 Gaudium maestis lacrimis rependit.
 Herculem duri celebrant labores.
 Ille Centauros domuit superbos,
 15 Abstulit saevo spolium leoni
 Fixit et certis volucres sagittis,
 Poma cernenti rapuit draconi
 Aureo laevam gravior metallo,
 Cerberum traxit triplici catena.
 20 Victor immitem posuisse fertur
 Pabulum saevis dominum quadrigis.
 Hydra combusto periit veneno,
 Fronte turpatus Achelous amnis
 Ora demersit pudibunda ripis.
 25 Stravit Antaeum Libycis harenis,
 Cacus Evandri satiavit iras
 Quosque pressurus foret altus orbis
 Saetiger spumis umeros notavit.

¹ *foderat early versions, σφαγίασσε Planudes.*

^a Agamemnon, who waged the war against Troy, a Phrygian city, for ten years, to avenge the abduction of Helen, his brother Menelaus's wife, by Paris ; the Greek

CONSOLATION IV

VII

Having warred a decade
The vengeful son of Atreus ^a with Phrygia's fall
Avenged his brother's violated bed.
He when he wants the fleet of Greece to sail
And buys a wind with blood,
Puts off the father and sternly as a priest
Makes a pact of his daughter's throat—poor girl.
Odysseus of Ithaca wept for his comrades lost,
Whom savage Polyphemus, lying in his vast cave,
Engulfed in his monstrous belly ;
But when the Cyclops raged with his one eye blinded
Then were his bitter tears with joy requited.
Harsh labours make the fame of Hercules :
He tamed the arrogant Centaurs,
Stole the spoil from the savage lion,
Pierced the Stymphalian birds with arrows sure ;
He seized the fruits from the watching dragon,
His hand the heavier for the golden ball,
And with triple chain led Cerberus.
The tale is told how he beat and gave as fodder
That cruel master to his own savage steeds.
Its poison burnt, the Hydra died ;
The river Achelous, in shame for his hornless brow,
Disgraced, did bury in his banks his face.
Hercules stretched Antaeus' length on Libyan sands,
And Cacus dead sated Evander's wrath.
Those shoulders which the high sphere of heaven was
to press
The bristled boar did fleck with foam.

fleet was becalmed after sailing for Troy from Mycenae, at Aulis, and to get a wind Agamemnon had to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia.

BOETHIUS

30 Ultimus caelum¹ labor inreflexo
 Sustulit collo pretiumque rursus
 Ultimi caelum meruit laboris.
 Ite nunc fortes ubi celsa magni
 Ducit exempli via ! Cur inertes
35 Terga nudatis ? Superata tellus
 Sidera donat."

¹ caelo *the better MSS.*

CONSOLATION IV

As his last labour he with unbended neck
Bore up the heavens, and as his reward
For that last labour, heaven deserved.
Go then, you brave, where leads the lofty path
Of this great example. Why in indolence
Do you turn your backs in flight ? Earth overcome
Grants you the stars.

ANICII MANLII SEVERINI BOETHII
V.C. ET INL. EXCONS. ORD. EX MAG. OFF. PATRICII
PHILOSOPHIAE CONSOLA-
TIONIS

LIBER QUARTUS EXPLICIT

INCIPIIT LIBER V

I

Dixerat orationisque cursum ad alia quaedam tractanda atque expedienda vertebat. Tum ego : " Recta quidem," inquam, " exhortatio tuaque prorsus auctoritate dignissima, sed quod tu dudum de providentia
5 quaestionem pluribus aliis implicitam esse dixisti, re experior. Quaero enim an esse aliquid omnino et quidnam esse casum arbitrere." Tum illa : " Festino," inquit, " debitum promissionis absolvere viamque tibi qua patriam reveharis aperire. Haec autem etsi
10 perutilia cognitu tamen a propositi nostri tramite paulisper aversa sunt, verendumque est ne devius fatigatus ad emetiendum rectum iter sufficere non possis." " Ne id," inquam, " prorsus vereare. Nam quietus mihi loco fuerit ea quibus maxime delector

BOETHIUS
THE CONSOLATION OF
PHILOSOPHY
BOOK V

I

SHE finished speaking, and was going to turn the course of her speech to deal with and explain some other questions ; then I said : “ Your exhortation is right indeed and very worthy of your authority, but what you said just now about providence, that it was a question involving many others, I know from experience. For I want to know whether you think chance is anything at all, and if so, what ? ”

“ I am hastening,” she replied, “ to make good my promise and open the way to you by which you may be brought back to your homeland. But these things, though they are very useful to know, are yet a little aside from the path we have set ourselves, and it is to be feared you may not be able to last out to the end of the direct road if you are tired by going down by-paths.”

“ There is really no need,” I said, “ for you to be afraid of that. For I shall find it a resting-place, to

BOETHIUS

15 agnoscere, simul cum omne disputationis tuae latus
indubitata fide constiterit, nihil de sequentibus
ambigatur." Tum illa : " Morem," inquit, " geram
tibi," simulque sic orsa est : " Si quidem," inquit,
" aliquis eventum temerario motu nullaue causarum
20 conexione productum casum esse definiat, nihil
omnino casum esse confirmo et praeter subiectae rei
significationem inanem prorsus vocem esse decerno.
Quis enim coercente in ordinem cuncta deo locus
esse ullus temeritati reliquus potest ? Nam nihil ex
25 nihilo existere vera sententia est cui nemo umquam
veterum refragatus est, quamquam id illi non de
operante principio, sed de materiali subiecto hoc
omnium de natura rationum quasi quoddam iecerint
fundamentum. At si nullis ex causis aliquid oriatur,
30 id de nihilo ortum esse videbitur. Quod si hoc fieri
nequit, ne casum quidem huiusmodi esse possibile
est qualem paulo ante definivimus." " Quid igitur,"
inquam, " nihilne est quod vel casus vel fortuitum
iure appellari queat ? An est aliquid, tametsi vulgus
35 lateat, cui vocabula ista convenient ? " " Aristoteles
meus id," inquit, " in *Physicis* et brevi et veri
propinqua ratione definivit." " Quonam," inquam
" modo ? " " Quotiens," ait, " aliquid cuiuspiam rei
gratia geritur aliudque quibusdam de causis quam
40 quod intendebatur obtingit, casus vocatur, ut si quis
colendi agri causa fodiens humum defossi auri pondus

^a *Physics*, ii. 4-5.

CONSOLATION V

understand these things, which I most delight in. At the same time, since every side of your argument would be set up in undoubted credibility, nothing that follows from it would be doubted."

"I will grant your wish," she said then; and at once began thus: "If indeed someone were to define chance as an event produced by random motion and not by any chain of causes, then I assert that chance is nothing at all, and I judge that apart from signifying the subject-event it refers to, it is a sound entirely empty of meaning. For what place can be left for randomness where God constrains all things into his order? For that nothing comes from nothing is a true opinion, which none of the ancients ever contested, but they laid it as it were as a foundation of all arguments about nature, though they applied it not to the creative principle but to the material subject to it. But if something were to arise from no causes, that will seem to have arisen from nothing; and if this cannot be, then even chance cannot even possibly exist, of such a kind as we have just now defined."

"Why then," I said, "is there nothing which can rightly be called chance or fortuitousness? Or is there something, although it is hidden from common men, to which these names belong?"

"My Aristotle," she said, "defined it in his *Physics* ^a in an argument brief and close to the truth."

"How?" I asked.

"Whenever," she said, "something is done for the sake of some given end, and another thing occurs, for some reason or other, different from what was intended, it is called chance: as, for example, if a man digging in the ground in order to till his field were

BOETHIUS

inveniat. Hoc igitur fortuito quidem creditur acci-
disse, verum non de nihilo est ; nam proprias causas
habet quarum improvisus inopinatusque concursus
45 casum videtur operatus. Nam nisi cultor agri
humum foderet, nisi eo loci pecuniam suam de-
positor obruisset, aurum non esset inventum. Haec
sunt igitur fortuiti causa compendii, quod ex obviis
sibi et confluentibus causis, non ex gerentis inten-
50 tione provenit. Neque enim vel qui aurum obruit
vel qui agrum exercuit ut ea pecunia reperiretur
intendit ; sed uti dixi, quo ille obruit hunc fodisse
convenit atque concurrit. Licet igitur definire
casum esse inopinatum ex confluentibus causis in his
55 quae ob aliquid geruntur eventum ; concurrere vero
atque confluere causas facit ordo ille inevitabili
conexione procedens, qui de providentiae fonte
descendens cuncta suis locis temporibusque disponit.

I

Rupis Achaemeniae scopulis ubi versa sequentum
Pectoribus figit spicula pugna fugax,
Tigris et Euphrates uno se fonte resolvunt
Et mox abiunctis dissociantur aquis.

^a Achaemenes was the grandfather of Cyrus, king of Persia, and the adjective *Achaemenius* is used to mean simply "Persian," as by Horace and Ovid. As to the notion that the Tigris and Euphrates rise from the same source (false, as

CONSOLATION V

to find he had dug up a quantity of gold. Now this is indeed believed to have happened by chance, but it does not come from nothing ; for it has its proper causes, and their unforeseen and unexpected coming together appears to have produced a chance event. For if the man tilling his field were not digging the ground, and if the man who put it there had not hidden his money in that particular spot, the gold would not have been found. These are therefore the causes of that fortuitous profit, which is produced by causes meeting one another and coming together, not by the intention of the doer of the action. For neither he who hid the gold, nor he who worked the field, intended that money to be found, but as I said, where the one buried it the other happens and chances to have dug. We may therefore define chance as the unexpected event of concurring causes among things done for some purpose. Now causes are made to concur and flow together by that order which, proceeding with inevitable connexion, and coming down from its source in providence, disposes all things in their proper places and times."

I

Among the crags of the Achaemenian cliffs, where
turned in flight ^a

The fighting Parthian's arrows pierce his pursuers'
breast,

The Tigris and Euphrates rise from one spring,
Next they separate and their waters divide ;

Herodotus, Strabo and Pliny knew) *cf.* Isidore, *Etym.* XII.
xxi. 10 : *Sallustius autem, auctor certissimus, asserit Tigrim
et Euphraten uno fonte manare in Armenia.*

BOETHIUS

5 Si coeant cursumque iterum revocentur in unum,
Confluat alterni quod trahit unda vadi ;
Convenient puppes et vulsi flumine trunci
Mixtaque fortuitos implicet unda modos,
Quos tamen ipsa vagos terrae declivia casus
10 Gurgitis et lapsi defluus ordo regit.
Sic quae permissis fluitare videtur habenis
Fors patitur frenos ipsaque lege meat.”

II

“ Animadverto,” inquam, “ idque, uti tu dicis, ita esse consentio. Sed in hac haerentium sibi serie causarum estne ulla nostri arbitrii libertas an ipsos quoque humanorum motus animorum fatalis catena
5 constringit ? ” “ Est,” inquit, “ neque enim fuerit ulla rationalis natura quin eidem libertas adsit arbitrii. Nam quod ratione uti naturaliter potest id habet iudicium quo quidque discernat ; per se igitur fugienda optandave dinoscit. Quod vero quis
10 optandum esse iudicat petit ; refugit vero quod aestimat esse fugiendum. Quare quibus in ipsis inest ratio, inest etiam volendi nolendique libertas. Sed hanc non in omnibus aequam esse constituo. Nam supernis divinisque substantiis et perspicax
390

CONSOLATION V

If they should come together, into one course brought
back again,
If all that the water of each stream bears should flow
into one,
Their ships would meet, as will treetrunks torn up by
the river,
And their mingled waters in chance paths will twist
and turn.
Yet these chance wanderings the very slopes of the
land
And the downflowing nature of the slipping stream
control.
So too that chance which seems slack-reined to roam
Endures its own bridle, and itself moves by law.

II

“ I see that,” I said, “ and I agree it is as you say.
But in this close-linked series of causes, is there any
freedom of our will, or does this chain of fate also bind
even the motions of men’s minds ? ”

“ Freedom there is,” she said, “ for there could
not be any rational nature, did not that same nature
possess freedom of the will. For that which can by
its nature use reason, has the faculty of judgement,
by which it determines everything ; of itself, there-
fore, it distinguishes those things which are to be
avoided, and those things that are to be desired.
Now what a man judges is to be desired, that he seeks ;
but he runs away from what he thinks is to be
avoided. And therefore those who have in them-
selves reason have also in them freedom to will or not
to will, but this freedom is not, I am sure, equal in
all of them. For heavenly, divine substances possess

BOETHIUS

15 iudicium et incorrupta voluntas et efficax optatorum
praesto est potestas. Humanas vero animas liberiores
quidem esse necesse est cum se in mentis divinae
speculatione conservant, minus vero cum dilabuntur
ad corpora, minusque etiam, cum terrenis artibus
20 colligantur. Extrema vero est servitus, cum vitiis
deditae rationis propriae possessione ceciderunt.
Nam ubi oculos a summae luce veritatis ad inferiora
et tenebrosa deiecerint, mox inscitiae nube caligant,
perniciosis turbantur affectibus quibus accedendo
25 consentiendoque quam invexere sibi adiuvant servi-
tutem et sunt quodam modo propria libertate
captivae. Quae tamen ille ab aeterno cuncta pro-
spiciens providentiae cernit intuitus et suis quaeque
meritis praedestinata disponit.

II

*Πάντ' ἔφορᾶν καὶ πάντ' ἑπακούειν*¹
Puro clarum lumine Phoebum
Melliflui canit oris Homerus ;
Qui tamen intima viscera terrae
5 Non valet aut pelagi radiorum
Infirma perrumpere luce.
Haud sic magni conditor orbis ;
Huic ex alto cuncta tuenti
Nulla terrae mole resistunt,
10 Non nox atris nubibus obstat.
Quae sint, quae fuerint veniantque
Uno mentis cernit in ictu ;

¹ *The reconstruction of the verse and the right disposal of the words are due to Engelbrecht.*

^a *Il. iii. 277 et alibi.*

CONSOLATION V

penetrating judgement, an uncorrupted will, and the ability to achieve what they desire. But human souls must indeed be more free when they preserve themselves in the contemplation of the divine mind ; less free, however, when they slip down to the corporeal, and still less free when they are bound into earthly limbs. But their ultimate servitude is when, given over to vice, they have lapsed from the possession of the reason proper to them. For when from the light of the highest truth they have lowered their eyes to inferior, darkling things, at once they are befogged by the cloud of unknowing, they are disturbed by destructive affections, by giving in and by consenting to which they strengthen that servitude which they have brought upon themselves, and are in a way made captive by their freedom. Yet that regard of providence which looks forth on all things from eternity, sees this and disposes all that is predestined to each according to his deserts."

II

That Phoebus shining with pure light
" Sees all and all things hears, "
So Homer sings, he of the honeyed voice ^a ;
Yet even he, with the light of his rays, too weak,
Cannot burst through
To the inmost depths of earth or ocean.
Not thus the Maker of this great universe :
Him, viewing all things from his height,
No mass of earth obstructs,
No night with black clouds thwarts.
What is, what has been, and what is to come,
In one swift mental stab he sees ;

BOETHIUS

Quem, quia respicit omnia solus,
Verum possis dicere solem."

III

Tum ego: "En," inquam, "difficiliore rursus
ambiguitate confundor." "Quaenam," inquit, "ista
est? Iam enim quibus perturbare coniecto."
"Nimum," inquam, "adversari ac repugnare videtur
5 praenosceri universa deum et esse ullum libertatis
arbitrium. Nam si cuncta prospicit deus neque falli
ullo modo potest, evenire necesse est quod provi-
dentia futurum esse praeviderit. Quare si ab aeterno
non facta hominum modo sed etiam consilia volun-
10 tatesque praenoscit, nulla erit arbitrii libertas; neque
enim vel factum aliud ullum vel quaelibet existere
poterit voluntas nisi quam nescia falli providentia
divina praesenserit. Nam si aliorum quam provisae
sunt detorqueri valent, non iam erit futuri firma
15 praescientia, sed opinio potius incerta, quod de deo
credere nefas iudico. Neque enim illam probo
rationem qua se quidam credunt hunc quaestionis
nodum posse dissolvere. Aiunt enim non ideo quid
esse eventurum, quoniam id providentia futurum
20 esse prospexerit, sed e contrario potius, quoniam quid
futurum est, id divinam providentiam latere non
posse eoque modo necessarium hoc in contrariam
relabi partem, neque enim necesse esse contingere
quae providentur, sed necesse esse quae futura sunt
25 provideri—quasi vero quae cuius rei causa sit prae-

CONSOLATION V

Him, since he only all things sees,
The true sun could you call.

III

Then I said : " See, I am again confused, with a still more difficult doubt."

" What is that ? " she asked. " Tell me, for I already guess what troubles you."

" It seems," I said, " much too conflicting and contradictory that God foreknows all things *and* that there is any free will. For if God foresees all and cannot in any way be mistaken, then that must necessarily happen which in his providence he foresees will be. And therefore if he foreknows from all eternity not only the deeds of men but even their plans and desires, there will be no free will ; for it will be impossible for there to be any deed at all or any desire whatever except that which divine providence, which cannot be mistaken, perceives beforehand. For if they can be turned aside into a different way from that foreseen, then there will no longer be firm foreknowledge of the future, but rather uncertain opinion, which I judge impious to believe of God.

For neither do I agree with that argument according to which some believe that they can solve this knotty question. For they say that a thing is not going to happen because providence has foreseen that it will be, but rather to the contrary, that since something is going to be, it cannot be hidden from divine providence, and in this way the necessity slips over to the opposite side. For, they say, it is not necessary that those things happen which are foreseen, but it is necessary that those things that will happen are foreseen ; as if indeed our work were to

BOETHIUS

scientiane futurorum necessitatis an futurorum necessitas providentiae laboretur, ac non illud demonstrare nitamur, quoquo modo sese habeat ordo causarum, necessarium esse eventum praescitarum rerum, etiam
30 si praescientia futuris rebus eveniendi necessitatem non videatur inferre. Etenim si quispiam sedeat, opinionem quae eum sedere coniectat veram esse necesse est; atque e converso rursus, si de quopiam vera sit opinio quoniam sedet, eum sedere necesse
35 est. In utroque igitur necessitas inest, in hoc quidem sedendi, at vero in altero veritatis. Sed non idcirco quisque sedet quoniam vera est opinio, sed haec potius vera est quoniam quempiam sedere praecessit. Ita cum causa veritatis ex altera parte procedat,
40 inest tamen communis in utraque necessitas.

Similia de providentia futurisque rebus ratiocinari patet. Nam etiam si idcirco quoniam futura sunt, providentur, non vero ideo quoniam providentur eveniunt, nihilo minus tamen ab deo vel ventura provideri
45 vel provisa necesse est evenire,¹ quod ad perimendam arbitrii libertatem solum satis est. Iam vero quam praeposterum est ut aeternae praescientiae temporalium rerum eventus causa esse dicatur! Quid est autem aliud arbitrari ideo deum futura quoniam
50 sunt eventura providere, quam putare quae olim acciderunt causam summae illius esse providentiae? Ad haec sicuti cum quid esse scio, id ipsum esse necesse est, ita cum quid futurum novi, id ipsum

¹ evenire provisa *the better mss.*

^a The argument is that God *does* foresee all, and therefore . . .

CONSOLATION V

discover which is the cause of which, foreknowledge of future things' necessity, or future things' necessity of providence, and as if we were not striving to show this, that whatever the state of the ordering of causes, the outcome of things foreknown is necessary, even if that foreknowledge were not to seem to confer on future things the necessity of occurring.

For indeed, if anyone sit, then the opinion that thinks that he sits must be true ; and conversely also, if the opinion about any man be true, that he sits, then he must be sitting. There is thus a necessity in both cases : in the latter, he must be sitting, but in the former, the opinion must be true. But a man does not sit because the opinion about him is true, but rather that opinion is true because that someone is sitting happened first. So that although the cause of truth proceeds from the one part, yet there is in both a common necessity.

Obviously the same reasoning holds with regard to providence and future events : for even if the reason they are foreseen is that they *are* future events, yet they do not happen simply because they are foreseen ; and yet nevertheless things either must be foreseen by God because they are coming or happen because they are foreseen,^a and that alone is enough to destroy the freedom of the will. But now how upside-down it is that it should be said that the cause of eternal foreknowledge is the occurrence of temporal things ! But what else is it, to think that God foresees future things because they are going to happen, than to think that those things, once they have happened, are the cause of his highest providence ? Furthermore, just as when I know that something is, then that necessarily is so, so when I

BOETHIUS

futurum esse necesse est. Sic fit igitur ut eventus
55 praescitae rei nequeat evitari. Postremo si quid
aliquis aliorum atque sese res habet existimet, id
non modo scientia non est, sed est opinio fallax ab
scientiae veritate longe diversa. Quare si quid ita
futurum est ut eius certus ac necessarius non sit
60 eventus, id eventurum esse praesciri qui poterit?
Sicut enim scientia ipsa impermixta est falsitati, ita
id quod ab ea concipitur esse aliter atque concipitur
nequit. Ea namque causa est cur mendacio scientia
carcat, quod se ita rem quamque habere necesse est
65 uti eam sese habere scientia comprehendit. Quid
igitur? Quonam modo deus haec incerta futura
praenoscit? Nam si inevitabiliter eventura censet
quae etiam non evenire possibile est, fallitur; quod
non sentire modo nefas est, sed etiam voce proferre.
70 At si ita uti sunt, ita ea futura esse decernit, ut
aeque vel fieri ea vel non fieri posse cognoscat, quae
est haec praescientia quae nihil certum nihil stabile
comprehendit? Aut quid hoc refert vaticinio illo
ridiculo Tiresiae?

75 Quidquid dicam, aut erit aut non.

Quid etiam divina providentia humana opinione
praestiterit, si uti homines incerta iudicat quorum
est incertus eventus? Quod si apud illum rerum
omnium certissimum fontem nihil incerti esse potest,
80 certus eorum est eventus quae futura firmiter ille
praescierit. Quare nulla est humanis consiliis actioni-

^a Hor. *Sat.* ii. 5. 59; cf. Cic. *N.D.* i. 70.

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know something will be, then that necessarily will be so ; and so it happens that the occurrence of a thing foreknown cannot be avoided. Lastly, if a man think a thing to be otherwise than it is, that is not only not knowledge, but it is a mistaken opinion very different indeed from the truth of knowledge. And therefore if something is future in such a way that its occurrence is not certain or necessary, how will it be possible for it to be foreknown that it will occur ? For just as real knowledge is unmixed with falsity, so that which is grasped by knowledge cannot be otherwise than as it is grasped. For the real reason why knowledge lacks any falsehood is that every single thing must necessarily be just as knowledge comprehends it to be.

Well then, how does God foreknow that these uncertain things shall be ? For if he thinks those things will inevitably occur which it is yet possible may not occur, he is mistaken, which it is not only impious to think but still more impious to say aloud. But if he sees that those future things are just as indeed they are, so that he knows that they can equally either happen or not happen, what sort of foreknowledge is this, that grasps nothing certain, nothing stable ? Or how does it compare with that ridiculous prophecy of Tiresias?—" Whatever I say will either happen or not ? " ^a And in what will divine providence be better than the opinions of men, if it judges in the way men do those things to be uncertain the occurrence of which is uncertain ? But if in him, the most certain fount of all things, there can be nothing uncertain, then the occurrence is certain of those things which he firmly foreknows will be.

And therefore there is no freedom in human inten-

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busque libertas quas divina mens sine falsitatis errore
cuncta prospiciens ad unum alligat et constringit
eventum. Quo semel recepto quantus occasus
85 humanarum rerum consequatur liquet. Frustra enim
bonis malisque praemia poenaeve proponuntur quae
nullus meruit liber ac voluntarius motus animorum.
Idque omnium videbitur iniquissimum quod nunc
aequissimum iudicatur vel puniri improbos vel
90 remunerari probos quos ad alterutrum non propria
mittit voluntas, sed futuri cogit certa necessitas.
Nec vitia igitur nec virtutes quidquam fuerint, sed
omnium meritorum potius mixta atque indiscreta
confusio. Quoque nihil sceleratius excogitari potest,
95 cum ex providentia rerum omnis ordo ducatur nihil-
que consiliis liceat humanis, fit ut vitia quoque nostra
ad bonorum omnium referantur auctorem. Igitur
nec sperandi aliquid nec deprecandi ulla ratio est.
Quid enim vel speret quisque vel etiam deprecetur,
100 quando optanda omnia series indeflexa conectit?
Auferetur igitur unicum illud inter homines deumque
commercium sperandi scilicet ac deprecandi. Si
quidem iustae humilitatis pretio inaestimabilem
vicem divinae gratiae promeremur, qui solus modus
105 est quo cum deo colloqui homines posse videantur
illique inaccessae luci prius quoque quam impetrent
ipsa supplicandi ratione coniungi. Quae si recepta
futurorum necessitate nihil virium habere credantur,
quid erit quo summo illi rerum principi conecti atque

^a It is assumed that Boethius here uses *deprecari* in the usual sense of "to pray against," not simply "to pray" or "to pray for," and that by *optanda* he means things to be desired, whether positive or negative.

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tions or actions, which the divine mind, foreseeing all without mistaken error, binds and constrains to one actual occurrence. This once accepted, it is clear what a great collapse of human affairs follows ! For it is vain to propose for good and evil men rewards or punishments which no free and voluntary act of their minds has deserved. And that very thing will seem most unjust of all which now is judged most just, that either the wicked are punished or the good rewarded, since they have not been brought by their own wills but driven by the certain necessity of what shall be to one or other end. And therefore there would be no vices nor virtues, but rather a mixed-up and indistinguishable confusion of all deserts, and—than which nothing more wicked can be conceived !—since the whole ordering of things proceeds from providence and nothing is really possible to human intentions, it follows that even our vices are to be referred to the author of all things good. And therefore there is no sense in hoping for anything or in praying that anything may be averted ^a ; for what even should any man hope for or pray to be averted when an inflexible course links all that can be desired ?

And so that sole intercourse between men and God will be removed, that is, hope and prayer for aversion (if indeed at the price of a proper humility we deserve the inestimable return of God's grace), and that is the only way in which men seem able to converse with God and to be joined by the very manner of their supplication to that inaccessible light, even before they receive what they seek. Now if these things, once the necessity of what shall be is admitted, be thought to have no power, how should we be able to be joined and cleave to him, the highest principle of

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110 adhaerere possimus? Quare necesse erit humanum
genus, uti paulo ante cantabas, dissaeptum atque
disiunctum suo fonte fatiscere.

III

Quaenam discors foedera rerum
Causa resolvit? Quis tanta deus
Veris statuit bella duobus,
5 Ut quae carptim singula constant
Eadem nolint mixta iugari?
An nulla est discordia veris
Semperque sibi certa cohaerent,
Sed mens caecis obruta membris
Nequit oppressi luminis igne
10 Rerum tenues noscere nexus?
Sed cur tanto flagrat amore
Veri tectas reperire notas?
Scitne quod appetit anxia nosse?
Sed quis nota scire laborat?
15 At si nescit, quid caeca petit?
Quis enim quidquam nescius optet
Aut quis valeat nescita sequi?
Quove inveniatur, quisque¹ repertam
Queat ignarus noscere formam?
20 An cum mentem cerneret altam,
Pariter summam et singula norat?
Nunc membrorum condita nube
Non in totum est oblita sui
Summamque tenet singula perdens.
25 Igitur quisquis vera requirit,

¹ quisque *codex Bambergensis s. xi*: quis the better *mss.*

^a Book IV, m. VI. 43, pp. 374-375.

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all things ? So it will necessarily follow, as you sang a little while ago,^a that human kind would, torn apart and disjoined, in pieces fall from their origin.

III

What cause discordant breaks the world's compact ?
What god sets strife so great
Between two truths,
That those same things which stand, alone and
separate,
Together mixed, refuse to be so yoked ?
Or is there no such discord between truths,
And do they ever each to other firmly cleave,
But is it the mind, eclipsed by the body's unseeing
parts,
That cannot recognize, by its suppressed light's fire,
The world's fine fastenings ?
But why does it blaze with so great love
To find the hidden characters of truth ?
Does it know what it anxiously seeks to know ?
But who is there labours to know known things ?
Yet if it does not know, why then in blindness seek ?
For who would long for anything he knows not of,
Or who could follow after things unknown,
Or how discover them ? Who could in ignorance
recognize
The form of what he found ?
Or, when it perceived the highest mind,
Did it know at once the whole and the separate parts ?
Now, clouded and hidden by the body's parts,
It is not totally forgetful of itself,
And the whole it keeps, losing the separate parts.
Therefore whoever seeks the truth

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Neutro est habitu ; nam neque novit
Nec penitus tamen omnia nescit,
Sed quam retinens meminit summam
Consulit alte visa retractans,
30 Ut servatis queat oblitas
Addere partes.”

IV

Tum illa : “ Vetus,” inquit, “ haec est de providentia querela Marcoque Tullio, cum divinationem distribuit, vehementer agitata tibi que ipsi res diu prorsus multumque quaesita, sed haud quaquam ab
5 ullo vestrum haecenus satis diligenter ac firmiter expedita. Cuius caliginis causa est, quod humanae ratiocinationis motus ad divinae praescientiae simplicitatem non potest admoveri, quae si ullo modo cogitari queat, nihil prorsus relinquetur ambigui.
10 Quod ita demum patefacere atque expedire temptabo, si prius ea quibus moveris expendero. Quaero enim, cur illam solventium rationem minus efficacem putes, quae quia praescientiam non esse futuris rebus causam necessitatis existimat, nihil impediri praescientia arbitrii libertatem putat. Num enim tu
15 aliunde argumentum futurorum necessitatis trahis, nisi quod ea quae praesciuntur non evenire non possunt ? Si igitur praenotio nullam futuris rebus adicit necessitatem, quod tu etiam paulo ante fatebare, quid est quod voluntarii exitus rerum ad certum cogantur eventum ? Etenim positionis gratia, ut

^a *De Divin.* ii. 8 ff.

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Is of neither class : for he neither knows
Nor is altogether ignorant of all,
But the whole he keeps, remembers and reflects on,
All from that height perceived goes over once again,
That he might to those things he has preserved
Add the forgotten parts."

IV

Then she said : " That is the old complaint about providence, one powerfully dealt with by Cicero when he was classifying kinds of divination,^a and a matter for a very long time and deeply investigated by yourself ; but it has so far been by no means sufficiently carefully or steadfastly developed by any of you. The cause of this obscurity is that the movement of human reasoning cannot approach the simplicity of divine foreknowledge ; if that could by any means be conceived, no doubt whatever will remain. And I shall try to make clear and explain this only when I have first considered those things by which you are now troubled. For I ask, why do you think that explanation of those solving the problem less than effectual which, since it considers that foreknowledge is not the cause of any necessity for future events, thinks the freedom of the will not at all restricted by foreknowledge ? For you, surely, do not produce proof of the necessity of future things other than from the fact that those things that are foreknown cannot not happen ? Then if foreknowledge imposes no necessity on future things, which you did indeed admit a little while ago, what is the reason why the outcome of those things dependent on the will should be forced to end in a certain result ?

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quid consequatur advertas, statuamus nullam esse praescientiam. Num igitur quantum ad hoc attinet, quae ex arbitrio eveniunt ad necessitatem cogantur ? ”

25 “ Minime. ” “ Statuamus iterum esse, sed nihil rebus necessitatis iniungere ; manebit ut opinor eadem voluntatis integra atque absoluta libertas.

Sed praescientia, inquires, tametsi futuris eveniendi necessitas non est, signum tamen est necessario ea
30 esse ventura. Hoc igitur modo, etiam si praecognitio non fuisset, necessarios futurorum exitus esse constaret. Omne etenim signum tantum quid sit ostendit, non vero efficit quod designat. Quare demonstrandum prius est nihil non ex necessitate
35 contingere, ut praenotionem signum esse huius necessitatis appareat. Alioquin si haec nulla est, ne illa quidem eius rei signum poterit esse quae non est. Iam vero probationem firma ratione subnixam constat non ex signis neque petitis extrinsecus argumentis
40 sed ex convenientibus necessariisque causis esse ducendam. Sed qui fieri potest ut ea non proveniant quae futura esse providentur ? Quasi vero nos ea quae providentia futura esse praenoscit non esse eventura credamus ac non illud potius arbitremur,
45 licet eveniant, nihil tamen ut evenirent sui natura necessitatis habuisse ; quod hinc facile perpendas licebit. Plura etenim dum fiunt subiecta oculis

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Now for the sake of argument, that you may see what follows, let us suppose that there is no foreknowledge. In such a case, those things that depend upon the will would not be forced into any necessity, would they ? ”

“ Not at all.”

“ Again, let us suppose that there is foreknowledge, but that it enjoins no necessity on things ; there will remain, I think, that same freedom of the will, whole and absolute. But foreknowledge, you will say, although it does not constitute a necessity for future things, of their happening, yet it is a sign that they will necessarily come to be. In this way, then, even had there been no foreknowledge, it would be agreed that the outcome of future things is necessary ; for every sign only points to what is, but does not cause to be what it signifies. Wherefore it must first be demonstrated that nothing happens except of necessity, that foreknowledge may be seen to be the sign of that necessity ; otherwise, if there is no necessity, nor then will foreknowledge be able to be a sign for that which does not exist. But it is agreed that a proof supported by firm reasoning must be drawn not from signs nor from arguments fetched from outside the subject, but from relevant and necessary causes.

But how could it be that those things should not happen which are foreseen to be future ? Just as if we were to believe that those things which providence foreknows will happen were not going to happen, and did not rather think that although they do happen, yet *they have of their nature no necessity that they must happen*. Which you may easily gather from this : for many things, while they are happening, we

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intuemur, ut ea quae in quadrigis moderandis atque
flectendis facere spectantur aurigae, atque ad hunc
50 modum cetera. Num igitur quidquam illorum ita
fieri necessitas ulla compellit? ” “ Minime. Frustra
enim esset artis effectus, si omnia coacta moverentur.”
“ Quae igitur cum fiunt carent existendi necessitate,
eadem prius quam fiant sine necessitate futura sunt.
55 Quare sunt quaedam eventura quorum exitus ab
omni necessitate sit absolutus. Nam illud quidem
nullum arbitror esse dicturum, quod quae nunc fiunt,
prius quam fierent, eventura non fuerint. Haec
igitur etiam praecognita liberos habent eventus.
60 Nam sicut scientia praesentium rerum nihil his quae
fiunt, ita praescientia futurorum nihil his quae
ventura sunt necessitatis importat. Sed hoc, inquis,
ipsum dubitatur, an earum rerum quae necessarios
exitus non habent ulla possit esse praenotio. Dis-
65 sonare etenim videntur putasque si praevideantur
consequi necessitatem, si necessitas desit minime
praesciri nihilque scientia comprehendi posse nisi
certum; quod si quae incerti sunt exitus ea quasi
certa providentur, opinionis id esse caliginem non
70 scientiae veritatem. Aliter enim ac sese res habeat
arbitrari ab integritate scientiae credis esse diversum.
Cuius erroris causa est, quod omnia quae quisque

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look at set out before our eyes, as for example those things which charioteers are watched doing in guiding and turning their teams, and other things of a similar kind. Now surely no necessity compels any of these things to happen as it does ? ”

“ Not at all ; for the exercise of skill would be useless if all things moved under compulsion. ”

“ Therefore things which, while they are happening, lack any necessity of being so, these same things, before they happen, are future without any necessity. And therefore there are some things going to happen the occurrence of which is free from all necessity. For I do not think that any man would say this, that those things which are happening now were not “ going to happen ” before they happened ; therefore of these, even foreknown, the occurrence is free. For just as knowledge of present things introduces no necessity into those things which are happening, so the foreknowledge of future things introduces none into those things which are to come. But this, you say, is exactly what is in doubt, whether there can be any foreknowledge of those things which do not have necessary outcomes. For these two (foreknowledge and not-necessary outcomes) seem to be incompatible, and you think that if things are foreseen, necessity is a consequence, and if there is no necessity, they cannot be foreknown at all, and nothing can be grasped by knowledge except what is certain. But if those things which are of uncertain outcome are foreseen as if they were certain, that is really the obscurity of opinion, not the truth of knowledge ; for you believe thinking things to be other than as they are to be alien to the integrity of knowledge. The cause of this mistake is that each

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novit ex ipsorum tantum vi atque natura cognosci aestimat quae sciuntur ; quod totum contra est.

- 75 Omne enim quod cognoscitur non secundum sui vim sed secundum cognoscentium potius comprehenditur facultatem. Nam ut hoc brevi liqueat exemplo, eandem corporis rotunditatem aliter visus aliter tactus agnoscit. Ille eminus manens totum simul
80 iactis radiis intuetur ; hic vero cohaerens orbi atque coniunctus circa ipsum motus ambitum rotunditatem partibus comprehendit. Ipsum quoque hominem aliter sensus, aliter imaginatio, aliter ratio, aliter intellegentia contuetur. Sensus enim figuram in
85 subiecta materia constitutam, imaginatio vero solam sine materia iudicat figuram. Ratio vero hanc quoque transcendit speciemque ipsam quae singularibus inest universali consideratione perpendit. Intellegentiae vero celsior oculus existit ; supergressa
90 namque universitatis ambitum ipsam illam simplicem formam pura mentis acie contuetur.

- In quo illud maxime considerandum est : nam superior comprehendendi vis amplectitur inferiorem, inferior vero ad superiorem nullo modo consurgit.
95 Neque enim sensus aliquid extra materiam valet vel universales species imaginatio contuetur vel ratio capit simplicem formam, sed intellegentia quasi desuper spectans concepta forma quae subsunt etiam cuncta diiudicat, sed eo modo quo formam ipsam, quae nulli
100 alii nota esse poterat, comprehendit. Nam et rationis

^a This principle, which is stated again later, is virtually to be found—though not in this formulation—in the commentary of Ammonius on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* (*Comm. Arist. Graeca*, iv. 5. 12 ff., where Ammonius claims to be following Iamblichus) to which Boethius owes a good deal in this part of his work.

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thinks that all that he knows is known simply by the power and nature of those things that are known. Which is altogether otherwise : for everything which is known is grasped not according to its own power but rather according to the capability of those who know it.^a For—that this may become clear by a brief example—the same roundness of a body sight recognizes in one way and touch in another ; the former sense remaining at a distance looks at the whole at once by the light of its emitted rays, while the latter, being united and conjoined to the round body, going right round its circuit, grasps the roundness by parts.

Man himself also, sense, imagination, reason and intelligence look at in different ways. For sense examines the shape set in the underlying matter, imagination the shape alone without the matter ; while reason surpasses this too, and examines with a universal consideration the specific form itself, which is present in single individuals. But the eye of intelligence is set higher still ; for passing beyond the process of going round the one whole, it looks with the pure sight of the mind at the simple Form itself. And herein the greatest consideration is to be given to this : for the higher power of comprehension embraces the lower, while the lower in no way rises to the higher. For neither can sense attain to anything outside matter, nor does imagination look at universal specific forms, nor reason grasp the simple Form : but the intelligence, as it were looking down from above, by conceiving the Form distinguishes all the things subject to that Form, but only because of the way it comprehends the Form itself, which could not be known to anything else. For it knows

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universum et imaginationis figuram et materiale sensibile cognoscit nec ratione utens nec imaginatione nec sensibus, sed illo uno ictu mentis formaliter, ut ita dicam, cuncta prospiciens. Ratio quoque cum quid
105 universale respicit, nec imaginatione nec sensibus utens imaginabilia vel sensibilia comprehendit. Haec est enim quae conceptionis suae universale ita definivit: homo est animal bipes rationale. Quae cum universalis notio sit, tum imaginabilem sensi-
110 bilemque esse rem nullus ignorat, quod illa non imaginatione vel sensu sed in rationali conceptione considerat. Imaginatio quoque tametsi ex sensibus visendi formandique figuras sumpsit exordium, sensu tamen absente sensibilia quaeque conlustrat non
115 sensibili sed imaginaria ratione iudicandi. Videsne igitur ut in cognoscendo cuncta sua potius facultate quam eorum quae cognoscuntur utantur? Neque id iniuria; nam cum omne iudicium iudicantis actus existat, necesse est ut suam quisque operam non ex
120 aliena sed ex propria potestate perficiat.

IV

Quondam porticus attulit
Obscuros nimium senes
Qui sensus et imagines
E corporibus extimis
5 Credant mentibus imprimi,
Ut quondam celeri stilo
Mos est aequore paginae,
Quae nullas habeat notas,

^a The Porch refers to the *Stoa Poikilê*, or Painted Porch, in Athens, used as a lecture-hall by Zeno, the founder of the Stoic school of philosophers.

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the reason's universal, and the imagination's shape, and what is materially sensible, but without using reason, imagination or the senses, but by the one stroke of the mind, Formally, so to speak, looking forth on all these things together. Reason, too, when it regards some universal, without using imagination or the senses grasps the imaginable and sensible aspects. For reason it is which defines the universal it has conceived thus : man is a rational, bipedal animal. And although this is a universal idea, at the same time no-one is ignorant that it is an imaginable and sensible thing which the reason is considering, not by means of imagination or sense, but in its rational conceiving. Imagination also, although it has taken its beginning of seeing and forming shapes from the senses, yet with sense removed surveys all sensible things not by a sensible manner of examining them but by an imaginative one. Do you therefore see that in knowing, all these use their own capability rather than that of those things which are known ? Nor is this wrong : for since every judgement is the act of one judging, it must be that each performs his task not from some other's power but from his own.

IV

Sometimes the Porch ^a has brought into the world
Some very obscure old philosophers,
Such as think sensible images
From bodies outside themselves
Are impressed upon men's minds ;
As at times with swiftly-moving stylus
Men are used to print the blank space of a page
Which has no marks

BOETHIUS

Pressas figere litteras.
10 Sed mens si propriis vicens
Nihil motibus explicat,
Sed tantum patiens iacet
Notis subdita corporum
Cassasque in speculi vicem
15 Rerum reddit imagines,
Unde haec sic animis viget
Cernens omnia notio ?
Quae vis singula perspicit
Aut quae cognita dividit ?
20 Quae divisa recolligit
Alternumque legens iter
Nunc summis caput inserit,
Nunc decedit in infima,
Tum sese referens sibi
25 Veris falsa redarguit ?
Haec est efficiens magis
Longe causa potentior
Quam quae materiae modo
Impressas patitur notas.
30 Praecedit tamen excitans
Ac vires animi movens
Vivo in corpore passio.
Cum vel lux oculos ferit
Vel vox auribus instrepit,
35 Tum mentis vigor excitus
Quas intus species tenet
Ad motus similes vocans
Notis applicat exteris
Introrsumque reconditis
40 Formis miscet imagines.

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With impressed letters.
But if the mind, with the strength of its proper
 motions,
Nothing unfolds,
But merely passive lies
Subject to other bodies' marks,
And like a mirror but reflects
The empty images of things,
Whence then this all-discerning common concept's
 strength
In the minds of men ?
What power singulars perceives,
Or what power all things known divides ?
Things thus divided what collects again,
And taking either way in turn
Now lifts its head to highest things
And now to lowest things descends,
Then to itself returning
Falsehood refutes with truth ?
This is an efficient cause
More powerful by far
Than that which passively receives
Only the impressed marks on things material.
Yet there precedes,
To stir and move the powers of the mind,
Emotive movement in the living body,
As when light strikes the eyes,
Or a cry in the ears resounds.
Then the mind's wakened power,
Calling upon these forms it holds within
To similar motions,
Applies them to the marks received from without
And joins those images
To the forms hidden within.

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V

Quod si in corporibus sentiendis, quamvis afficiant instrumenta sensuum forinsecus obiectae qualitates animique agentis vigorem passio corporis antecedit quae in se actum mentis provocet excitetque interim
5 quiescentes intrinsecus formas, si in sentiendis, inquam, corporibus animus non passione insignitur, sed ex sua vi subiectam corpori iudicat passionem, quanto magis ea quae cunctis corporum affectionibus absoluta sunt, in discernendo non obiecta extrinsecus
10 sequuntur, sed actum suae mentis expediunt? Hac itaque ratione multiplices cognitiones diversis ac differentibus cessere substantiis. Sensus enim solus cunctis aliis cognitionibus destitutus immobilibus animantibus cessit quales sunt conchae maris quaeque
15 alia saxis haerentia nutriuntur, imaginatio vero mobilibus beluis quibus iam inesse fugiendi appetitive aliquis videtur affectus, ratio vero humani tantum generis est sicut intelligentia sola divini. Quo fit ut ea notitia ceteris praestet quae suapte
20 natura non modo proprium sed ceterarum quoque notitiarum subiecta cognoscit. Quid igitur, si ratiocinationi sensus imaginatioque refragentur, nihil esse illud universale dicentes quod sese intueri ratio putet? Quod enim sensibile vel imaginabile est, id
25 universum esse non posse; aut igitur rationis verum esse iudicium nec quidquam esse sensibile, aut

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V

Now if in perceiving corporeal things, although qualities presented from without affect the apparatus of the senses, and the emotive movement of the body precedes the activity of the active mind, a movement which calls forth upon itself the action of the mind and stirs up the forms previously lying at rest within ; if, I say, in perceiving corporeal things, the mind is not marked by that movement, but of its own power judges that movement, which is a quality of the body, then how much the more do those things which are quite separate from all bodily affections, in the act of judgement not follow things presented from without, but set in motion the action of the mind to which they belong ! And so on this principle many kinds of knowledge belong to different and diverse substances. For sense alone without any other kind of knowledge belongs to living things that do not move, such as are sea shells and such other things as feed clinging to rocks ; but imagination belongs to beasts that move, which seem already to have in them some disposition to flee or to seek out things. But reason belongs only to human kind, as intelligence only to the divine. So it is that that kind of knowledge is better than the rest which of its own nature knows not only its own object but the subjects of other kinds of knowledge also.

What, then, if sense and imagination gainsay reasoning, saying that that universal which reason thinks she perceives, is nothing at all ? For that which is the object of sense and imagination cannot, they say, be universal ; therefore either the judgement of reason is true, and there is nothing sensible,

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quoniam sibi notum sit plura sensibus et imaginationi esse subiecta, inanem conceptionem esse rationis quae quod sensibile sit ac singulare quasi quiddam universale consideret. Ad haec, si ratio contra respondeat se quidem et quod sensibile et quod imaginabile sit in universitatis ratione conspiceret, illa vero ad universitatis cognitionem adspirare non posse, quoniam eorum notio corporales figuras non possit excedere, de rerum vero cognitione firmiori potius perfectiorique iudicio esse credendum, in huiusmodi igitur lite nos quibus tam ratiocinandi quam imaginandi etiam sentiendique vis inest nonne rationis potius causam probaremus? Simile est quod humana ratio divinam intellegentiam futura, nisi ut ipsa cognoscit, non putat intueri. Nam ita disseris: Si qua certos ac necessarios habere non videantur eventus, ea certo eventura praesciri nequeunt. Harum igitur rerum nulla est praescientia, quam si etiam in his esse credamus, nihil erit quod non ex necessitate proveniat. Si igitur uti rationis participes sumus, ita divinae iudicium mentis habere possemus, sicut imaginationem sensumque rationi cedere oportere iudicavimus, sic divinae sese menti humanam submittere rationem iustissimum censeremus. Quare in illius summae intellegentiae cacumen, si possumus, erigamur; illic enim ratio videbit quod in se non potest intueri, id autem est, quonam modo etiam quae certos exitus non habent, certa tamen videat

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or, since they know that many things are objects of the senses and imagination, reason's concept is empty, since she thinks of that which is sensible and singular as if it were some kind of universal. Further, if reason rejoins to this that she does indeed see both the object of sense and the object of imagination under the aspect of their universality, but that they cannot aspire to the knowledge of universality since their knowledge cannot go beyond corporeal shapes, but we must give credence rather to the more firm and perfect judgement concerning the knowledge of things : in this sort of argument, then, should we not, we who have in us the power of reasoning as well as those of imagination and sense, should we not rather judge in favour of reason's case ? It is similar when human reason thinks that the divine intelligence does not see future things except in the same manner as she herself knows them. For this is how you argue : if any things seem not to have certain and necessary occurrences, those things cannot be certainly foreknown as going to occur. Therefore of these things there is no foreknowledge, and if we think there is foreknowledge in these matters, there will be nothing which does not happen from necessity. Now if just as we have a share in reason, so we could possess the judgement belonging to the divine mind, then just as we have judged that imagination and sense ought to give way to reason, so we should think it most just that human reason should submit to the divine mind. Wherefore let us be raised up, if we can, to the height of that highest intelligence ; for there reason will see that which she cannot look at in herself, and that is, in what way even those things which have no certain occurrence a certain and

BOETHIUS

55 ac definita praenotio neque id sit opinio sed summae
potius scientiae nullis terminis inclusa simplicitas.

V

Quam variis terras animalia permeant figuris !

Namque alia extento sunt corpore pulveremque
verrunt

Continuumque trahunt vi pectoris incitata sulcum,
Sunt quibus alarum levitas vaga verberetque ventos

5 Et liquido longi spatia aetheris enatet volatu,

Haec pressisse solo vestigia gressibusque gaudent

Vel virides campos transmittere vel subire silvas.

Quae variis videas licet omnia discrepare formis,

Prona tamen facies hebetes valet ingravare sensus.

10 Unica gens hominum celsum levat altius cacumen

Atque levis recto stat corpore despicitque terras.

Haec nisi terrenus male desipis, admonet figura,

Qui recto caelum vultu petis exserisque frontem,

In sublime feras animum quoque, ne gravata pessum

15 Inferior sidat mens corpore celsius levato.

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definite foreknowledge yet does see, neither is that opinion, but rather the simplicity, shut in by no bounds, of the highest knowledge.

V

In what diversity of shapes do living things traverse
the lands !
For some are long in body and sweep the dust
And draw a continuous furrow, moved by their belly's
power ;
There are those the lightness of whose wandering
wings beats on the winds
And floats in the spaces of the ether far with flight
so smooth ;
These others delight to press their footprints in the
ground, and with their steps
To cross green fields, or pass beneath the woods.
And all these, though you see they differ in their
various forms,
Yet their downturned faces make their senses heavy
grow and dull.
Only the race of men lift high their lofty heads
And lightly stand with upright bodies, looking down
so on the earth.
And (unless, being earthly, you are stupidly wrong)
this shape tells you,
You who with upright face do seek the sky, and
thrust your forehead out,
You should also bear your mind aloft, lest weighted
down
The mind sink lower than the body raised above.

BOETHIUS

VI

Quoniam igitur, uti paulo ante monstratum est, omne quod scitur non ex sua sed ex comprehendentium natura cognoscitur, intueamur nunc quantum fas est, quis sit divinae substantiae status, ut quaenam
5 etiam scientia eius sit, possimus agnoscere. Deum igitur aeternum esse cunctorum ratione degentium commune iudicium est. Quid sit igitur aeternitas consideremus; haec enim nobis naturam pariter divinam scientiamque patefacit. Aeternitas igitur
10 est interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio, quod ex collatione temporalium clarius liquet. Nam quidquid vivit in tempore id praesens a praeteritis in futura procedit nihilque est in tempore constitutum quod totum vitae suae spatium pariter
15 possit amplecti. Sed cratinum quidem nondum apprehendit, hesternum vero iam perdidit; in hodierna quoque vita non amplius vivitis quam in illo mobili transitorioque momento. Quod igitur temporis patitur condicionem, licet illud, sicuti de mundo censuit
20 Aristoteles, nec coeperit umquam esse nec desinat vitaeque eius cum temporis infinitate tendatur, nondum tamen tale est ut aeternum esse iure credatur. Non enim totum simul infinitae licet vitae spatium comprehendit atque complectitur, sed futura nondum,
25 transacta iam non habet. Quod igitur interminabilis vitae plenitudinem totam pariter comprehendit ac possidet, cui neque futuri quidquam absit nec praeteriti fluxerit, id aeternum esse iure perhibetur, idque

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VI

Since, then, as was shown a little while ago, everything which is known is known not according to its own nature but according to the nature of those comprehending it, let us now examine, so far as is allowable, what is the nature of the divine substance, so that we may be able to recognize what kind of knowledge his is. Now that God is eternal is the common judgement of all who live by reason. Therefore let us consider, what is eternity ; for this makes plain to us both the divine nature and the divine knowledge. Eternity, then, is the whole, simultaneous and perfect possession of boundless life, which becomes clearer by comparison with temporal things. For whatever lives in time proceeds in the present from the past into the future, and there is nothing established in time which can embrace the whole space of its life equally, but tomorrow surely it does not yet grasp, while yesterday it has already lost. And in this day to day life you live no more than in that moving and transitory moment. Therefore whatever endures the condition of time, although, as Aristotle thought concerning the world, it neither began ever to be nor ceases to be, and although its life is drawn out with the infinity of time, yet it is not yet such that it may rightly be believed to be eternal. For it does not simultaneously comprehend and embrace the whole space of its life, though it be infinite, but it possesses the future not yet, the past no longer. Whatever therefore comprehends and possesses at once the whole fullness of boundless life, and is such that neither is anything future lacking from it, nor has anything past flowed away, that is

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necesse est et sui compos praesens sibi semper ad-
30 sistere et infinitatem mobilis temporis habere prae-
sentem. Unde non recte quidam, qui cum audiunt
visum Platoni mundum hunc nec habuisse initium
temporis nec habiturum esse defectum, hoc modo
conditori conditum mundum fieri coaeternum putant.
35 Aliud est enim per interminabilem duci vitam, quod
mundo Plato tribuit, aliud interminabilis vitae totam
pariter complexum esse praesentiam, quod divinae
mentis proprium esse manifestum est. Neque deus
conditis rebus antiquior videri debet temporis quan-
40 titate sed simplicis potius proprietate naturae. Hunc
enim vitae immobilis praesentiarium statum infinitus
ille temporalium rerum motus imitatur cumque eum
effingere atque aequare non possit, ex immobilitate
deficit in motum, ex simplicitate praesentiae decrescit
45 in infinitam futuri ac praeteriti quantitatem; et
cum totam pariter vitae suae plenitudinem nequeat
possidere, hoc ipso quod aliquo modo numquam esse
desinit, illud quod implere atque exprimere non
potest, aliquatenus videtur aemulari alligans se ad
50 qualemcumque praesentiam huius exigui volucrisque
momenti, quae, quoniam manentis illius praesentiae
quandam gestat imaginem, quibuscumque contigerit
id praestat ut esse videantur. Quoniam vero manere
non potuit, infinitum temporis iter arripuit eoque
55 modo factum est ut continuaret eundo vitam cuius
plenitudinem complecti non valuit permanendo.
Itaque si digna rebus nomina velimus imponere,

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rightly held to be eternal, and that must necessarily both always be present to itself, possessing itself in the present, and hold as present the infinity of moving time.

And therefore those are not right who, when they hear that Plato thought this world neither had a beginning in time nor would have an end, think that in this way the created world is made co-eternal with the Creator. For it is one thing to be drawn out through a life without bounds, which is what Plato attributes to the world, but it is a different thing to have embraced at once the whole presence of boundless life, which it is clear is the property of the divine mind. Nor should God seem to be more ancient than created things by some amount of time, but rather by his own simplicity of nature. For this present nature of unmoving life that infinite movement of temporal things imitates, and since it cannot fully represent and equal it, it fails from immobility into motion, it shrinks from the simplicity of that present into the infinite quantity of the future and the past and, since it cannot possess at once the whole fullness of its life, in this very respect, that it in some way never ceases to be, it seems to emulate to some degree which it cannot fully express, by binding itself to the sort of present of this brief and fleeting moment, a present which since it wears a kind of likeness of that permanent present, grants to whatsoever things it touches that they should seem to be. But since it could not be permanent, it seized on the infinite journeying of time, and in that way became such that it should continue by going on a life the fullness of which it could not embrace by being permanent. And so if we should wish to give things

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Platonem sequentes deum quidem aeternum, mundum vero dicamus esse perpetuum. Quoniam igitur
60 omne iudicium secundum sui naturam quae sibi subiecta sunt comprehendit, est autem deo semper aeternus ac praesentarius status; scientia quoque eius omnem temporis supergressa motionem in suae manet simplicitate praesentiae infinitaque praeteriti
65 ac futuri spatia complectens omnia quasi iam gerantur in sua simplici cognitione considerat. Itaque si praescientiam¹ pensare velis qua cuncta dinoscit, non esse praescientiam quasi futuri sed scientiam numquam deficientis instantiae rectius aestimabis; unde non
70 praeventia sed providentia potius dicitur, quod porro ab rebus infimis constituta quasi ab excelso rerum cacumine cuncta prospiciat. Quid igitur postulas ut necessaria fiant quae divino lumine lustrentur, cum ne homines quidem necessaria faciant
75 esse quae videant? Num enim quae praesentia cernis, aliquam eis necessitatem tuus addit intuitus?"
"Minime." "Atqui si est divini humanique praesentis digna collatio, uti vos vestro hoc temporario praesenti quaedam videtis, ita ille omnia suo cernit
80 aeterno. Quare haec divina praenotio naturam rerum proprietatemque non mutat taliaque apud se praesentia spectat qualia in tempore olim futura provenient. Nec rerum iudicia confundit unoque suae mentis intuitu tam necessarie quam non necessarie

¹ praescientiam *V*² *Land*: praeventiam *V*¹: praesentiam *the other mss.*

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names befitting them, then following Plato we should say that God indeed is eternal, but that the world is perpetual.

Since then every judgement comprehends those things subject to it according to its own nature, and God has an always eternal and present nature, then his knowledge too, surpassing all movement of time, is permanent in the simplicity of his present, and embracing all the infinite spaces of the future and the past, considers them in his simple act of knowledge as though they were now going on. So if you should wish to consider his foreknowledge, by which he discerns all things, you will more rightly judge it to be not foreknowledge as it were of the future but knowledge of a never-passing instant. And therefore it is called not prevision (*praevidentia*) but providence (*providentia*), because set far from the lowest of things it looks forward on all things as though from the highest peak of the world. Why then do you require those things to be made necessary which are scanned by the light of God's sight, when not even men make necessary those things they see? After all, your looking at them does not confer any necessity on those things you presently see, does it?"

"Not at all."

"But if the comparison of the divine and the human present is a proper one, just as you see certain things in this your temporal present, so he perceives all things in his eternal one. And therefore this divine foreknowledge does not alter the proper nature of things, but sees them present to him just such as in time they will at some future point come to be. Nor does he confuse the ways things are to be judged, but with one glance of his mind distinguishes both

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85 ventura dinoscit ; sicuti vos cum pariter ambulare in
terra hominem et oriri in caelo solem videtis, quam-
quam simul utrumque conspectum tamen discernitis
et hoc voluntarium illud esse necessarium iudicatis,
ita igitur cuncta despiciens divinus intuitus quali-
90 tatem rerum minime perturbat apud se quidem prae-
sentium, ad condicionem vero temporis futurarum.
Quo fit ut hoc non sit opinio sed veritate potius nixa
cognitio, cum exstaturum quid esse cognoscit quod
idem existendi necessitate carere non nesciat. Hic
95 si dicas quod eventurum deus videt id non evenire
non posse, quod autem non potest non evenire id ex
necessitate contingere, meque ad hoc nomen neces-
situdinis adstringas, fatebor rem quidem solidissimae
veritatis sed cui vix aliquis nisi divini speculator
100 accesserit. Respondebo namque idem futurum, cum
ad divinam notionem refertur, necessarium, cum vero
in sua natura perpenditur, liberum prorsus atque
absolutum videri. Duae sunt etenim necessitates,
simplex una, veluti quod necesse est omnes homines
105 esse mortales, altera condicionis, ut si aliquem
ambulare scias, eum ambulare necesse est ; quod
enim quisque novit, id esse aliter ac notum est
nequit, sed haec condicio minime secum illam sim-
plicem trahit. Hanc enim necessitatem non propria
110 facit natura sed condicionis adiectio ; nulla enim
necessitas cogit incedere voluntate gradientem,

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those things necessarily coming to be and those not necessarily coming to be, just as you, when you see at one and the same time that a man is walking on the ground and that the sun is rising in the sky, although the two things are seen simultaneously, yet you distinguish them, and judge the first to be voluntary, the second necessary. So then the divine perception looking down on all things does not disturb at all the quality of things that are present indeed to him but future with reference to imposed conditions of time. So it is that it is not opinion but a knowledge grounded rather upon truth, when he knows that something is going to happen, something which he is also aware lacks all necessity of happening.

If at this point you were to say that what God sees is going to occur cannot not occur, and that what cannot not occur happens from necessity, and so bind me to this word "necessity," I will admit that this is a matter indeed of the firmest truth, but one which scarcely anyone except a theologian could tackle. For I shall say in answer that the same future event, when it is related to divine knowledge, is necessary, but when it is considered in its own nature it seems to be utterly and absolutely free. For there are really two necessities, the one simple, as that it is necessary that all men are mortal; the other conditional, as for example, if you know that someone is walking, it is necessary that he is walking. Whatever anyone knows cannot be otherwise than as it is known, but this conditional necessity by no means carries with it that other simple kind. For this sort of necessity is not caused by a thing's proper nature but by the addition of the condition; for no necessity forces him to go who walks of his own will, even

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quamvis eum tum cum graditur incedere necessarium sit. Eodem igitur modo, si quid providentia praesens videt, id esse necesse est, tametsi nullam naturae
115 habeat necessitatem. Atqui deus ea futura quae ex arbitrii libertate proveniunt praesentia contuetur. Haec igitur ad intuitum relata divinum necessaria fiunt per condicionem divinae notionis ; per se vero considerata ab absoluta naturae suae libertate non
120 desinunt. Fient igitur procul dubio cuncta quae futura deus esse praenoscit, sed eorum quaedam de libero proficiscuntur arbitrio ; quae quamvis eveniant, existendo tamen naturam propriam non amittunt, qua priusquam fierent non evenire potuissent.
125 Quid igitur refert non esse necessaria, cum propter divinae scientiae condicionem modis omnibus necessitatis instar eveniet ? Hoc scilicet quod ea quae paulo ante proposui, sol oriens et gradiens homo. Quae dum fiunt, non fieri non possunt ; eorum tamen
130 unum prius quoque quam fieret, necesse erat existere, alterum vero minime. Ita etiam quae praesentia deus habet, dubio procul existent, sed eorum hoc quidem de rerum necessitate descendit, illud vero de potestate facientium. Haud igitur iniuria diximus
135 haec si ad divinam notitiam referantur necessaria, si per se considerentur necessitatis esse nexibus absoluta ; sicuti omne quod sensibus patet, si ad rationem referas, universale est, si ad se ipsa respicias, singulare. ‘ Sed si in mea,’ inquires, ‘ potestate situm
430

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though it is necessary that he is going at the time when he is walking. Now in the same way, if providence sees anything as present, that must necessarily be, even if it possesses no necessity of its nature. But God beholds those future events which happen because of the freedom of the will, as present; they therefore, related to the divine perception, become necessary through the condition of the divine knowledge, but considered in themselves do not lose the absolute freedom of their nature. Therefore all those things which God foreknows will come to be, will without doubt come to be, but certain of them proceed from free will, and although they do come to be, yet in happening they do not lose their proper nature, according to which, before they happened, they might also not have happened. What then does it matter that they are not necessary, since on account of the condition of the divine knowledge it will turn out in all respects like necessity? Surely as much as those things I put before you a moment ago, the rising sun and the walking man: while these things are happening, they cannot not happen, but of the two one, even before it happened, was bound to happen, while the other was not. So also, those things God possesses as present, beyond doubt will happen, but of them the one kind is consequent upon the necessity of things, the other upon the power of those doing them. So therefore we were not wrong in saying that these, if related to the divine knowledge, are necessary, if considered in themselves, are free from the bonds of necessity, just as everything which lies open to the senses, if you relate it to the reason, is universal, if you look at it by itself, is singular.

But if, you will say, it lies in my power to change

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140 est mutare propositum, evacuabo providentiam, cum
quae illa praenoscit forte mutavero.' Respondebo :
propositum te quidem tuum posse deflectere, sed
quoniam et id te posse et an facias quove convertas
praesens providentiae veritas intuetur, divinam te
145 praescientiam non posse vitare, sicuti praesentis oculi
effugere non possis intuitum, quamvis te in varias
actiones libera voluntate converteris. Quid igitur
inquies ? Ex meane dispositione scientia divina muta-
bitur, ut cum ego nunc hoc nunc aliud velim, illa
150 quoque noscendi vices alternare videatur ? Minime.
Omne namque futurum divinus praecurrit intuitus
et ad praesentiam propriae cognitionis retorquet ac
revocat nec alternat, ut aestimas, nunc hoc nunc
illud praenoscendi vice, sed uno ictu mutationes tuas
155 manens praevenit atque complectitur. Quam com-
prehendendi omnia visendique praesentiam non ex
futararum proventu rerum, sed ex propria deus
simplicitate sortitus est. Ex quo illud quoque re-
solvitur quod paulo ante posuisti indignum esse, si
160 scientiae dei causam futura nostra praestare dicantur.
Haec enim scientiae vis praesentaria notione cuncta
complectens rebus modum omnibus ipsa constituit,
nihil vero posterioribus debet. Quae cum ita sint,
manet intemerata mortalibus arbitrii libertas nec
165 iniquae leges solutis omni necessitate voluntatibus
praemia poenasque proponunt. Manet etiam spec-
tator desuper cunctorum praescius deus visionisque
eius praesens semper aeternitas cum nostrorum actuum

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my intention, I shall make nonsense of providence, since what providence foreknows, I shall perhaps have changed. I shall reply that you can indeed alter your intention, but since the truth of providence sees in its present both that you can do so, and whether you will do so and in what direction you will change, you cannot avoid the divine prescience, just as you could not escape the sight of an eye that was present, even though of your own free will you changed to different courses of action. What then will you say? Will the divine knowledge be changed by my disposition, so that, since I want to do this at one time and that at another, it too alternates from this kind of knowledge to that? Not at all. For the divine perception runs ahead over every future event and turns it back and recalls it to the present of its own knowledge, and does not alternate, as you suggest, foreknowing now this, now that, but itself remaining still anticipates and embraces your changes at one stroke. And God possesses this present instant of comprehension and sight of all things not from the issuing of future events but from his own simplicity. In this way that too is resolved which you suggested a little while ago, that it is not right that our future actions should be said to provide the cause of the knowledge of God. For the nature of his knowledge as we have described it, embracing all things in a present act of knowing, establishes a measure for everything, but owes nothing to later events. These things being so, the freedom of the will remains to mortals, inviolate, nor are laws proposing rewards and punishments for wills free from all necessity unjust. There remains also as an observer from on high foreknowing all things, God, and the always present

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futura qualitate concurrat bonis praemia malis sup-
170 plicia dispensans. Nec frustra sunt in deo positae
spes precesque ; quae cum rectae sunt, inefficaces esse
non possunt. Aversamini igitur vitia, colite virtutes,
ad rectas spes animum sublevate, humiles preces in
excelsa porrigite. Magna vobis est, si dissimulare
175 non vultis, necessitas indicta probitatis, cum ante
oculos agitis iudicis cuncta cernentis.”

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eternity of his sight runs along with the future quality of our actions dispensing rewards for the good and punishments for the wicked. Nor vainly are our hopes placed in God, nor our prayers, which when they are right cannot be ineffectual. Turn away then from vices, cultivate virtues, lift up your mind to righteous hopes, offer up humble prayers to heaven. A great necessity is solemnly ordained for you if you do not want to deceive yourselves, to do good, when you act before the eyes of a judge who sees all things.

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