**Dante Alighieri**

**De Monarchia (On World Government)**

(1) For all men whom the Higher Nature has endowed with a love of truth, this above all seems to be a matter of concern, that just as they have been enriched by the efforts of their forebears, so they too may work for future generations, in order that posterity may be enriched by their efforts.

(2) For the man who is steeped in the teachings which form our common heritage, yet has no interest in contributing something to the community, is failing in his duty: let him be in no doubt of that; for he is not "a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in due season", but rather a destructive whirlpool which forever swallows things down and never gives back what it has swallowed.

(3) Thinking often about these things, lest some day I be accused of burying my talent, I wish not just to put forth buds but to bear fruit for the benefit of all, and to reveal truths that have not been attempted by others.

(4) For what fruit would a man bear who proved once again a theorem of Euclid's? or who sought to show once again the nature of happiness, which has already been shown by Aristotle? or who took up the defence of old age which has already been defended by Cicero? None at all; indeed the tiresome pointlessness of the exercise would arouse distaste.

(5) Now since among other truths which are hidden and useful, a knowledge of temporal monarchy is both extremely useful and most inaccessible, and since no one has attempted to elucidate it (on account of its not leading directly to material gain), I propose to draw it forth from where it lies hidden, so that my wakeful nights may be of benefit to the world, and so that I may be the first to win for my own glory the honour of so great a prize.(6) It is indeed an arduous task, and one beyond my strength, that I embark on, trusting not so much in my own powers as in the light of that Giver who "giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not".MONARCHIA (I, ii, 1-8)

(1) Firstly therefore we must see what is meant by "temporal monarchy", in broad terms and as it is generally understood.(2) Temporal monarchy, then, which men call "empire", is a single sovereign authority set over all others in time, that is to say over all authorities which operate in those things and over those things which are measured by time.(3) Now there are three main points of inquiry which have given rise to perplexity on this subject: first, is it is necessary to the well-being of the world? second, did the Roman people take on the office of the monarch by right? and third, does the monarch's authority derive directly from God or from someone else (his minister or vicar)?(4) Now since every truth which is not itself a first principle must be demonstrated with reference to the truth of some first principle, it is necessary in any inquiry to know the first principle to which we refer back in the course of strict deductive argument in order to ascertain the truth of all the propositions which are advanced later. And since this present treatise is a kind of inquiry, we must at the outset investigate the principle whose truth provides a firm foundation for later propositions.(5) For it must be noted that there are certain things (such as mathematics, the sciences and divinity) which are outside human control, and about which we can only theorise, but which we cannot affect by our actions; and then there are certain things which are within our control, where we can not only theorise but also act, and in these action is not for the sake of theory, but theorising is for the sake of taking action, since in these the objective is to take action.(6) Now since our present subject is political, indeed is the source and starting-point of just forms of government, and everything in the political sphere comes under human control, it is clear that the present subject is not directed primarily towards theoretical understanding but towards action.(7) Again, since in actions it is the final objective which sets in motion and causes everything - for that is what first moves a person who acts - it follows that the whole basis of the means for attaining an end is derived from the end itself. For there will be one way of cutting wood to build a house, and another to build a ship.(8) Therefore whatever constitutes the purpose of the whole of human society (if there is such a purpose) will be here the first principle, in terms of which all subsequent propositions to be proved will be demonstrated with sufficient rigour; for it would be foolish to suppose that there is one purpose for this society and another for that, and not a common purpose for all of them.*MONARCHIA (*I, iii, 1-10)

(1) We must therefore now see what is the purpose of human society as a whole; when we have seen this, more than half our work will be done, as Aristotle says in the Ethics.(2) And to throw light on the matter we are inquiring into, it should be borne in mind that, just as there is a particular purpose for which nature produces the thumb, and a different one for which she produces the whole hand, and again a purpose different from both of these for which she produces the arm, and a purpose different from all of these for which she produces the whole person; in the same way there is one purpose for which the individual person is designed, another for the household, another for the small community, yet another for the city, and another for the kingdom; and finally the best purpose of all is the one for which God Everlasting with his art, which is nature, brings into being the whole of mankind. And it is this purpose we are seeking here as the guiding principle in our inquiry.(3) Consequently the first point to bear in mind is that God and nature do nothing in vain; on the contrary whatever they bring into being is designed for a purpose. For in the intention of its creator qua creator the essential nature of any created being is not an ultimate end in itself; the end is rather the activity which is proper to that nature; and so it is that the activity does not exist for the sake of the essential nature, but the essential nature for the sake of that activity.(4) There is therefore some activity specific to humanity as a whole, for which the whole human race in all its vast number of individual human beings is designed; and no single person, or household, or small community, or city, or individual kingdom can fully achieve it. Now what this activity is will become clear when once we clarify what is the highest potentiality of the whole of mankind.(5) I say therefore that no faculty shared by many different species is the highest potentiality of any one of them; because, since it is precisely that highest potentiality which is the defining characteristic of the species, it would follow that one and the same essential nature was specific to several species; and this is impossible.(6) So the highest faculty in a human being is not simply to exist, because the elements too share in the simple fact of existence; nor is it to exist in compound form, for that is found in minerals; nor is it to exist as a living thing, for plants too share in that; nor is it to exist as a creature with sense perception, for that is also shared by the lower animals; but it is to exist as a creature who apprehends by means of the potential intellect: this mode of existence belongs to no creature (whether higher or lower) other than human beings.(7) For while there are indeed other beings who like us are endowed with intellect, nonetheless their intellect is not "potential" in the way that man's is, since such beings exist only as intelligences and nothing else, and their very being is simply the act of understanding that their own nature exists; and they are engaged in this ceaselessly, otherwise they would not be eternal. It is thus clear that the highest potentiality of mankind is his intellectual potentiality or faculty.(8) And since that potentiality cannot be fully actualised all at once in any one individual or in any one of the particular social groupings enumerated above, there must needs be a vast number of individual people in the human race, through whom the whole of this potentiality can be actualised; just as there must be a great variety of things which can be generated so that the whole potentiality of prime matter can continuously be actualised; otherwise one would be postulating a potentiality existing separately from actualisation, which is impossible.(9) And Averroes is in agreement with this opinion in his commentary on the De anima. Now the intellectual potentiality of which I am speaking is not only concerned with universal ideas or classes, but also (by extension as it were) with particulars; and so it is often said that the theoretical intellect by extension becomes practical, its goal then being doing and making.(10) I am referring to actions, which are regulated by political judgment, and to products, which are shaped by practical skill; all of these are subordinate to thinking as the best activity for which the Primal Goodness brought mankind into existence. This sheds light on that statement in the Politics that "men of vigorous intellect naturally rule over others".MONARCHIA (I, iv, 1-6)

(1) Now it has been sufficiently explained that the activity proper to mankind considered as a whole is constantly to actualise the full intellectual potential of humanity, primarily through thought and secondarily through action (as a function and extension of thought).(2) And since what holds true for the part is true for the whole, and an individual human being "grows perfect in judgment and wisdom when he sits at rest", it is apparent that mankind most freely and readily attends to this activity - an activity which is almost divine, as we read in the psalm: "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels" - in the calm or tranquillity of peace. Hence it is clear that universal peace is the best of those things which are ordained for our human happiness.(3) That is why the message which rang out from on high to the shepherds was not wealth, nor pleasures, nor honours, not long life, nor health, nor strength, nor beauty, but peace; for the heavenly host said: "Glory to God on high, and on earth peace to men of good will".(4) And that is why the Saviour of men used the greeting "Peace be with you", for it was fitting that the supreme Saviour should utter the supreme salutation; and his disciples and Paul chose to preserve this custom in their own greetings, as everybody can verify.(5) From the arguments developed so far, it is clear what is the better, indeed the best, way of enabling mankind to engage in the activity proper to humanity; and consequently we see the most direct means of achieving the goal to which all our human actions are directed as to their final end. That means is universal peace, which is to be taken as the first principle for the arguments which follow.(6) As we said, it was necessary to have such a principle to serve as an agreed point of reference to which anything which had to be proved might be referred back, as to a self-evident truth.MONARCHIA (I, v, 1-10)

(1) Returning then to the point made at the beginning, there are three main points of inquiry concerning temporal monarchy (or empire as it is more commonly called) which have given rise to and continue to give rise to perplexity; and as we have already said, it is our intention to investigate these questions in the order in which we set them out and taking the principle we have just established as our starting-point.

(2) So the first question is this: is temporal monarchy necessary for the well-being of the world? That it is necessary can be shown with powerful and persuasive arguments, and neither reason nor authority provides any strong counter-argument. The first of these arguments may be taken from the authority of Aristotle in his Politics.

(3) Now this revered authority states in that work that when a number of things are ordered to a single end, one of them must guide or direct, and the others be guided or directed; and it is not only the authors illustrious name which requires us to believe this, but inductive reasoning as well.

(4) For if we consider a single person, we shall see that what happens in the individual is this: while all the faculties are directed towards happiness, it is the intellectual faculty which guides and directs all the others; otherwise happiness is unattainable.

(5) If we consider a household, whose purpose is to prepare its members to live the good life, there must be one person who guides and directs, who is called the "pater familias" or his representative, in line with Aristotle's observation that "Every household is governed by the eldest"; and his role, as Homer says, is to guide everyone and impose rules on the others. Hence the proverbial curse: "May you have an equal in your house".

(6) If we consider a small community, whose purpose is neighbourly support in relation both to people and to goods, there must be one person who guides the others, either appointed by someone from outside or emerging as leader from among their number with the agreement of the others; otherwise not only will they fail to achieve that neighbourly collaboration, but sometimes, if a number of people contest the leadership, the whole community is destroyed.

(7) If we consider a city, whose purpose is to be self-sufficient in living the good life, there must be one ruling body, and this is so not only in just government, but in perverted forms of government as well; if this should not be the case, not only is the purpose of social life thwarted, but the city itself ceases to be what it was.

(8) Lastly, if we consider an individual kingdom - and the purpose of a kingdom is the same as that of a city, but with greater confidence that peace can be maintained - there must be one king who rules and governs; otherwise not only do those who live in the kingdom not achieve that purpose, but the kingdom itself falls to ruin, in accordance with those words of the infallible Truth: "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be laid waste".

(9) If this holds true in these cases and in individuals who are ordered to one particular goal, then the proposition advanced above is true; now it is agreed that the whole of mankind is ordered to one goal, as has already been demonstrated: there must therefore be one person who directs and rules mankind, and he is properly called "Monarch" or "Emperor".

(10) And thus it is apparent that the well-being of the world requires that there be a monarchy or empire.

MONARCHIA (I, vii, 1-3)

(1) Amplius, humana universitas est quoddam totum ad quasdam partes, et est quedam pars ad quoddam totum. Est enim quoddam totum ad regna particularia et ad gentes, ut superiora ostendunt; et est quedam pars ad totum universum. Et hoc est de se manifestum.

(1) Furthermore, the human race constitutes a whole in relation to its constituent parts, and is itself a part in relation to a whole. It is a whole in relation to individual kingdoms and peoples, as has been shown above; and it is a part in relation to the whole universe. So much is self-evident.

(2) Sicut ergo inferiora humane universitatis bene respondent ad ipsam, sic ipsa 'bene' dicitur respondere ad suum totum; partes enim bene respondent ad ipsam per unum principium tantum, ut ex superioribus collegi potest de facili: ergo et ipsa ad ipsum universum sive ad eius principem, qui Deus est et Monarcha, simpliciter bene respondet per unum principium tantum, scilicet unicum principem.

(2) And just as the lesser parts which make up the human race are well adapted to it, so it too can be described as being well adapted to its whole; for its parts are well adapted to it in relation to a single principle, as can easily be deduced from what was said earlier: and so absolutely speaking it too is well adapted to the universe (or to its ruler, who is God and Monarch) in relation to a single principle, i.e. one ruler.

(3) Ex quo sequitur Monarchiam necessarium mundo ut bene sit.

(3) And thus it follows that monarchy is necessary to the well-being of the world.MONARCHIA (I, viii, 1-5)

(1) And every thing is in a good (indeed, ideal) state which is in harmony with the intention of the first mover, who is God; and this is self-evident, except to those who deny that divine goodness attains the summit of perfection.

(2) It is God's intention that every created thing should show forth His likeness in so far as its own nature can receive it. For this reason it is said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"; for although "in our image" cannot be said of things lower than man, "after our likeness" can be said of anything, since the whole universe is simply an imprint of divine goodness. So mankind is in a good (indeed, ideal) state when, to the extent that its nature allows, it resembles God.

(3) But mankind most closely resembles God when it is most a unity, since the true measure of unity is in him alone; and for this reason it is written: "Hear, o Israel, the Lord thy God is one".

(4) But mankind is most a unity when it is drawn together to form a single entity, and this can only come about when it is ruled as one whole by one ruler, as is self-evident.

(5) Therefore mankind is most like God when it is ruled by one ruler, and consequently is most in harmony with God's intention; and this is what it means to be in a good (indeed, ideal) state, as we established at the beginning of this chapter.

MONARCHIA (I, ix, 1-3)

(1) Again, every son is in a good (indeed, ideal) state when he follows in the footsteps of a perfect father, insofar as his own nature allows. Mankind is the son of heaven, which is quite perfect in all its workings; for man and the sun generate man, as we read in the second book of the Physics. Therefore mankind is in its ideal state when it follows the footsteps of heaven, insofar as its nature allows.

(2) And since the whole sphere of heaven is guided by a single movement (i.e. that of the Primum Mobile), and by a single source of motion (who is God), in all its own parts, movements and causes of movement, as human understanding perceives quite clearly through philosophical reasoning, then if our argument is sound, mankind is in its ideal state when it is guided by a single ruler (as by a single source of motion) and in accordance with a single law (as by a single movement) in its own causes of movement and in its own movements.

(3) Hence it is clear that monarchy (or that undivided rule which is called "empire") is necessary to the well-being of the world. Boethius expressed this view when he sighed: "O happy race of men, if only the love by which the heavens are ruled might rule your minds".

MONARCHIA (I, x, 1-6)

(1) Now wherever there can be conflict there must be judgment to resolve it, otherwise there would be an imperfection without its proper corrective; and this is impossible, since God and nature never fail in their provision of what is necessary.

(2) There is always the possibility of conflict between two rulers where one is not subject to the other's control; such conflict may come about either through their own fault or the fault of their subjects (the point is self-evident); therefore there must be judgment between them.

(3) And since neither can judge the other (since neither is under the other's control, and an equal has no power over an equal) there must be a third party of wider jurisdiction who rules over both of them by right.

(4) And this person will either be the monarch or not. If he is, then our point is proved; if he is not, he in his turn will have an equal who is outside the sphere of his jurisdiction, and then it will once again be necessary to have recourse to a third party.

(5) And so either this procedure will continue ad infinitum, which is not possible, or else we must come to a first and supreme judge, whose judgment resolves all disputes either directly or indirectly; and this man will be the monarch or emperor. Thus monarchy is necessary to the world.

(6) And Aristotle saw the force of this argument when he said: "Things do not wish to be badly ordered; a plurality of reigns is bad; therefore let there be one ruler".MONARCHIA (I, xi, 1-20)

(1) Furthermore, the world is ordered in the best possible way when justice is at its strongest in it. Thus Virgil, wishing to praise the age which seemed to be emerging in his day, sang in his Eclogues: "Now the Virgin returns, the reign of Saturn returns". For "the virgin" was their name for justice, whom they also called "Astrea"; the "reign of Saturn" was their name for the best of times, which they also called "golden".

(2) Justice is at its strongest only under a monarch; therefore for the best ordering of the world there must be a monarchy or empire.

(3) To clarify the minor premiss, it must be understood that justice, considered in itself and in its own nature, is a kind of rectitude or rule which spurns deviation from the straight path to either side; and thus it does not admit of a more and a less - just like whiteness considered in the abstract.

(4) There are forms of this kind, in fact, which are to be found in composites, but which in themselves consist of a simple and unchangeable essence, as the Master of the Six Principles rightly says. Such qualities are present to a greater or lesser degree depending on the subjects in which they are given concrete form, according as these subjects contain more or less of their opposites.

(5) Therefore justice is at its strongest where there is least of what is opposed to justice both in the disposition and in the actions of an agent; and then truly it can be said of her, as Aristotle says, "neither Hesperus nor Lucifer is so wondrous". For she is then like Phoebe gazing across the heavens at her brother from the rosy flush of the clear morning sky, from a point on the horizon diametrically opposite.

(6) As far as disposition is concerned, justice is sometimes impeded in the will; for where the will is not entirely free of all greed, even if justice is present, nonetheless it is not entirely present in the splendour of its purity; for the subject has something, however slight, which is in some way resistant to it; and this is why those who try to stir up a judge's emotions are rightly rebuffed.

(7) As far as actions are concerned, justice is sometimes impeded with regard to power; for since justice is a virtue that operates in relation to other people, if someone does not have the power to give to each person what is his, how will he act in accordance with justice? From this it is clear that the more powerful a just man is, the more effectively will justice be brought about by his actions.

(8) Building on this exposition we can argue as follows: justice is at its strongest in the world when it resides in a subject who has in the highest degree possible the will and the power to act; only the monarch is such a subject; therefore justice is at its strongest in the world when it is located in the monarch alone.

(9) This prosyllogism is of the second figure with intrinsic negation, and it takes this form: all B is A; only C is A; therefore only C is B. That is: all B is A; nothing except C is A; therefore nothing except C is B.

(10) And the first proposition is established by the preceding exposition; the second is shown as follows, firstly in relation to volition, and then in relation to power.

(11) To clarify the first of these it must be noted that the thing most contrary to justice is greed, as Aristotle states in the fifth book of the Ethics. When greed is entirely eliminated, nothing remains which is opposed to justice; hence Aristotle's opinion that those things which can be resolved by law should in no way be left to the judge's discretion. And it is fear of greed which makes this necessary, for greed easily leads men's minds astray. But where there is nothing which can be coveted, it is impossible for greed to exist, for emotions cannot exist where their objects have been destroyed.

(12) But there is nothing the monarch could covet, for his jurisdiction is bounded only by the ocean; whereas this is not the case with other rulers, whose sovereignty extends only as far as the neighbouring kingdom, as is the case, for instance, with the kings of Castille and of Aragon. From this it follows that of all men the monarch can be the purest embodiment of justice.

(13) Moreover, just as greed, however slight, dulls the habit of justice in some way, so charity or rightly ordered love makes it sharper and brighter. So the man in whom rightly ordered love can be strongest is the one in whom justice can have its principal abode; the monarch is such a man; therefore justice is or can be at its strongest when he exists.

(14) That rightly ordered love does what has been stated can be deduced from this: greed, scorning the intrinsic nature of man, seeks other things; whereas love, scorning all other things, seeks God and man, and hence the true good of man. Since among the other goods available to man living in peace is supremely important (as we saw earlier), and justice principally and most effectively brings this about, love most of all will strengthen justice, and the stronger love is the more it will do so.

(15) And that the monarch more than all other men should feel rightly ordered love can be shown as follows: the closer any loved object is to the lover the more it is loved; but men are closer to the monarch than to other princes; therefore they are more loved by him, or ought to be. The first premiss is clear if we take into consideration the nature of agents and patients; the second becomes clear if we bear in mind this fact, that men are close to other rulers only as parts, but they are close to the monarch as a totality.

(16) Again, they are close to other rulers by virtue of the monarch, and not vice versa; and thus concern for all men's welfare is primarily and directly the monarch's concern; other rulers share in it through the monarch, since their concern derives from that higher concern of his.

(17) Besides, the more universal a cause is, the more truly it is a cause, because the lower is not a cause except by virtue of the higher, as is clear from the De causis; and the more truly a cause is a cause, the more it loves its own effect, since this love follows from the cause as such.

(18) Therefore, since the monarch is the most universal cause among mortals that men should live the good life (for other rulers are a cause only by virtue of him, as we have seen), it follows that the good of mankind is dear to him above all else.

(19) Who doubts that the monarch is most strongly disposed to the working of justice, except those who do not understand the meaning of the word, since, if he is monarch, he cannot have enemies?

(20) The minor premiss of the main syllogism has been sufficiently proved and the conclusion is certain, namely that the best ordering of the world requires the existence of a monarchy.

MONARCHIA (I, xii, 1-13)

(1) Now the human race is in its ideal state when it is completely free. This will be clear if we clarify the principle of freedom.

(2) Therefore it must be borne in mind that the first principle of our freedom is free will, which many people talk about but few understand. For they go so far as to say that free will is free judgment in matters of volition. And what they say is true, but they are very far from understanding what the words mean, just like our logicians who daily enunciate certain propositions by way of example in their discussions on logic, such as "a triangle has three angles equal to two right angles".

(3) And therefore I say that judgment is the link between perception and appetition: for first a thing is perceived, then it is judged to be good or evil, and finally the person who judges pursues it or shuns it.

(4) Now if judgment controls desire completely and is in no way pre-empted by it, it is free; but if judgment is in any way at all pre-empted and thus controlled by desire, it cannot be free, because it does not act under its own power, but is dragged along in the power of something else.

(5) And that is why the lower animals cannot have free will, because their judgments are always pre-empted by desire. And from this it is also clear that non-material beings, whose wills are unchangeable, as well as human souls who leave this world of ours in a state of grace, do not lose free will on account of the fact that their wills are unchangeable; in fact they retain it in its most perfect and true form.

(6) When this has been grasped, it can also be seen that this freedom (or this principle of all our freedom) is the greatest gift given by God to human nature - as I have already said in the Paradiso of the Comedy - since by virtue of it we become happy here as men, by virtue of it we become happy elsewhere as gods.

(7) If this is the case, who will not agree that the human race is at its best when it is able to make fullest use of this principle?

(8) But living under a monarch it is supremely free. Thus it must be borne in mind that a thing is free which exists "for its own sake and not for the sake of something else", as Aristotle states in the Metaphysics. For a thing which exists for the sake of something else is necessarily conditioned by that other for whose sake it exists, as a route is necessarily conditioned by its terminus.

(9) Mankind exists for its own sake and not for the sake of something else only when it is under the rule of a monarch, for only then are perverted forms of government (i.e. democracies, oligarchies and tyrannies), which force mankind into slavery, set right - as is clear to anyone who examines them all; and only then do kings, aristocrats (known as the great and the good), and those zealous for the freedom of the people govern justly; for since the monarch loves men most, as we have already noted, he wants all men to become good; and this cannot happen under perverted forms of government.

(10) Hence Aristotle in the Politics says that in bad government the good man is a bad citizen, whereas in good government the good man and the good citizen are one and the same thing. And these just forms of government aim at freedom, i.e. that men should exist for their own sake.

(11) For citizens do not exist for the sake of consuls, nor the people for the sake of the king, but on the contrary consuls exist for the sake of the citizens and the king for the people; for just as a political community is not formed for the sake of the laws, but the laws are framed for the benefit of the political community, in the same way those whose lives are governed by the law are not there for the sake of the legislator, but rather he is there for their sake, as Aristotle says in those writings he left to us on this subject.

(12) Thus it is apparent that, although a consul or a king are masters over others with respect to means, with respect to ends they are the servants of others; and this is especially true of the monarch, who is to be considered without doubt the servant of all men. Thus it is already clear that the very same goal which requires the formulation of laws requires also that there be a monarch.

(13) Therefore mankind living under a monarch is in its ideal state; from this it follows that monarchy is necessary for the well-being of the world.

MONARCHIA (I, xiii, 1-8)

(1) Besides, the person who is himself capable of being best disposed to rule is capable of disposing others best, for in every action the primary aim of the agent, whether it act because its nature compels it to or as a matter of free choice, is to reproduce its own likeness.

(2) Hence every agent, precisely as agent, takes pleasure in its own action; for since everything which exists desires its own being, and in acting the agent's being is in some sense enhanced, of necessity pleasure ensues, since pleasure is always connected to something which is desired.

(3) Therefore nothing acts unless it has the qualities which are to be communicated to the thing acted upon; hence Aristotle in the Metaphysics says: "The movement from potentiality to actuality comes about by means of something which is already actual"; any attempt to do otherwise would be a vain attempt.

(4) And thus we can refute the error of those who, expressing worthy sentiments and doing wrong, nonetheless believe they can influence the lives and behaviour of others, not realising that Jacob's hands carried more weight than his words, even though his hands deceived and his words revealed the truth. Hence Aristotle in the Ethics says: "In matters where passions and actions are involved, words carry less conviction than actions".

(5) Hence a voice from heaven asked the sinner David: "Why do you tell of my righteousness?", as if to say: "You speak in vain, since your words are belied by what you are". From which it can be deduced that a person who wishes to dispose others for the best must himself be disposed for the best.

(6) But only the monarch can be best disposed for ruling. This can be explained as follows: any thing is the more easily and perfectly disposed to acquire a particular disposition and to act in accordance with it, the less there is in it which is opposed to that disposition; thus those who have never studied philosophy acquire the habit of philosophical truth more easily and perfectly than those who have studied for a long time and become familiar with false notions. So that Galen rightly comments that such people take twice as long to acquire knowledge.

(7) Therefore since the monarch can have no occasion for greed (or in any event of all men the very least occasion), as we saw earlier, (and this is not the case with other rulers), and since it is greed alone which perverts judgment and obstructs justice, it follows that he alone, or he more than anyone else, can be well disposed to rule, since of all men he can have judgment and justice in the highest degree. These are the two chief qualities needed by the legislator and the executor of the law, as that holy king bore witness when he asked God for those things needed by the king and the king's son: "God", he said, "give your judgment to the king and your justice to the king's son".

(8) What was affirmed in the minor premiss is therefore quite correct, i.e. that the monarch alone is the person who can be best disposed to rule: therefore the monarch alone can best dispose other people. It follows from this that monarchy is necessary to the well-being of the world.

MONARCHIA (I, xiv, 1-11)

(1) And what can be brought about by a single agent is better done by a single agent than by more than one. This can be explained as follows: let there be one agent (A) by which something can be brought about, and let there be several agents (A and B) by which it can equally be brought about; now if that same thing which can be brought about by means of A and B can be brought about by A alone, then B is introduced unnecessarily, because nothing is achieved by the introduction of B, since that same thing was already achieved by means of A alone.

(2) And since the introduction of any such means is unnecessary and pointless, and everything which is pointless is displeasing to God and to nature, and everything which is displeasing to God and to nature is evil (as is self-evident), it follows that not only is it better that something should be brought about by a single agent, where that is possible, rather than by several, but that being brought about by a single agent is good, by more than one is in absolute terms bad.

(3) Moreover, a thing is said to be better the closer it is to the best; and the goal itself is the measure of what is best; but to be brought about by a single agent is closer to the goal; therefore it is better. And that it is closer can be shown as follows: let the goal be C; let the achieving of that goal by a single agent be A, and by several agents be A and B; it is clear that to go from A through B to C is a longer route than to go from A directly to C.

(4) But mankind can be ruled by one supreme ruler, who is the monarch. On this point it must of course be noted that when we say "mankind can be ruled by one supreme ruler", this is not to be taken to mean that trivial decisions in every locality can be made directly by him - even though it can happen that local laws are sometimes defective and there may be a need for guidance in implementing them, as is clear from what Aristotle says in the fifth book of the Ethics when he commends the principle of equity.

(5) For nations, kingdoms and cities have characteristics of their own, which need to be governed by different laws; for law is a rule which governs life.

(6) Thus the Scythians, who live beyond the seventh zone and are exposed to nights and days of very unequal length, and who endure an almost unbearable intensity of cold, need to have one set of laws, while the Garamantes require different laws, since they live in the equatorial zone and always have days and nights of equal length, and because of the excessive heat of the air cannot bear to cover themselves with clothes.

(7) It is rather to be understood in this sense, that mankind is to be ruled by him in those matters which are common to all men and of relevance to all, and is to be guided towards peace by a common law. This rule or law should be received from him by individual rulers, just as the practical intellect, in order to proceed to action, receives the major premiss from the theoretical intellect, and then derives the minor premiss appropriate to its own particular case, and then proceeds to the action in question.

(8) And it is not only possible for one person to do this, but necessary for this to come from one person, to avoid any confusion about universal principles.

(9) Moses himself writes in the Law that he did just this when, having chosen certain leaders from the tribes of the sons of Israel, he left less important judgments to them, retaining for himself alone the more important ones which concerned all of them; these judgments of more general relevance were then applied by the leaders to their tribes, according to what was appropriate for each particular tribe.

(10) Therefore it is better for mankind to be ruled by one person than by several, and thus by a monarch who is the only ruler; and if this is better, then it is more acceptable to God, since God always wills what is better. And since when there are only two things being compared, the better is the best, it follows that when the choice is between "one" and "more than one", not only is the first of these more acceptable to God, but it is entirely acceptable.

(11) It follows from this that mankind is in its ideal state when it is ruled by one person; and thus monarchy is necessary to the well-being of the world.

MONARCHIA (I, xv, 1-10)

(1) Again, I say that being, unity and goodness are related in a sequence, according to the fifth sense of the term "priority". Being naturally comes before unity, and unity before goodness: perfect being is perfect unity, and perfect unity is perfect goodness; and the further removed something is from perfect being, the further it is from being one and consequently from being good.

(2) Therefore in every species of thing the best is that which is perfectly one, as Aristotle says in the Metaphysics. This is how it comes about that unity seems to be the root of what it is to be good, and plurality the root of what it is to be evil; that is why Pythagoras in his correlations placed unity on the side of goodness and plurality on the side of evil, as is clear in the first book of the Metaphysics.

(3) Hence it can be seen that to sin is nothing other than to spurn unity and move towards plurality; the Psalmist saw this when he said: "From the fruit of the corn, the wine and the oil they have been multiplied".

(4) It is clear then that everything which is good is good for this reason: that it constitutes a unity. And since concord, in itself, is a good, it is clear that it consists in some unity as in its root.

(5) What this root is will appear if we consider the nature or meaning of concord, for concord is a uniform movement of several wills; from this definition it is clear that unity of wills, which is what is signified by "uniform movement", is the root of concord or indeed is concord itself.

(6) For just as we would describe a number of clods of earth as being "in concord" because of their all falling towards the centre of the world, and a number of flames as in concord because of their all rising towards its circumference, if they did this of their own free will; in the same way we describe a number of people as being in concord when they move all together and of their own free will towards one thing which is in their wills formally, just as there is one quality (heaviness) formally in the clods of earth, and another (lightness) in the flames.

(7) For the capacity to will is a potentiality, and its form is the image of good which is perceived; and this form, just like other forms, is one in itself and becomes multiple according to the multiplicity of the material which receives it - just like soul, number and other forms which are found in composites.

(8) Having made these preliminary points in order to clarify the proposition to be advanced for our purposes, we may reason as follows: all concord depends on the unity which is in wills; mankind in its ideal state represents a kind of concord; for just as one man in his ideal state spiritually and physically is a kind of concord (and the same holds true of a household, a city, and a kingdom), so is the whole of mankind; thus the whole of mankind in its ideal state depends on the unity which is in men's wills.

(9) But this cannot be unless there is one will which controls and directs all the others towards one goal, since the wills of mortals require guidance on account of the seductive pleasures of youth, as Aristotle teaches at the end of the Ethics. Nor can such a single will exist, unless there is one ruler who rules over everybody, whose will can control and guide all the other wills.

(10) Now if all the above conclusions are true - as they are - for mankind to be in its ideal state there must be a monarch in the world, and consequently the well-being of the world requires a monarchy.

MONARCHIA (I, xvi, 1-5)

(1) All the arguments advanced so far are confirmed by a remarkable historical fact: namely the state of humanity which the Son of God either awaited, or himself chose to bring about, when he was on the point of becoming man for the salvation of mankind. For if we review the ages and the dispositions of men from the fall of our first parents (which was the turning-point at which we went astray), we shall not find that there ever was peace throughout the world except under the immortal Augustus, when a perfect monarchy existed.

(2) That mankind was then happy in the calm of universal peace is attested by all historians and by famous poets; even the chronicler of Christ's gentleness deigned to bear witness to it; and finally Paul called that most happy state "the fullness of time". Truly that time was "full", as were all temporal things, for no ministry to our happiness lacked its minister.

(3) What the state of the world has been since that seamless garment was first rent by the talon of cupidity we can read about - would that we might not witness it.

(4) O human race, how many storms and misfortunes and shipwrecks must toss you about while, transformed into a many-headed beast, you strive after conflicting things.

(5) You are sick in your intellects, both of them, and in your affections; you do not nurture your higher intellect with inviolable principles, nor your lower intellect with the lessons of experience, nor your affections with the sweetness of divine counsel, when it is breathed into you by the trumpet of the holy spirit: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity".

MONARCHIA (II, i, 1-8)

(1) "Why have the nations raged, and the peoples meditated vain things? The kings of the earth have arisen, and the princes have gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ. Let us burst their chains and cast their yoke from us".

(2) When confronted with an unfamiliar phenomenon whose cause we do not comprehend we usually feel amazement; and equally, when we do understand the cause, we look down almost mockingly on those who continue to be amazed. For my own part, I used once to be amazed that the Roman people had set themselves as rulers over the whole world without encountering any resistance, for I looked at the matter only in a superficial way and I thought that they had attained their supremacy not by right but only by force of arms.

(3) But when I penetrated with my mind''s eye to the heart of the matter and understood through unmistakable signs that this was the work of divine providence, my amazement faded and a kind of scornful derision took its place, on seeing how the nations raged against the supremacy of the Roman people, on seeing the peoples meditate vain things, as I myself once did; and I grieved too that kings and princes should be united only in this one thing: in opposing their Lord and his Anointed, the Roman prince.

(4) For this reason I can cry out in defence of that glorious people and of Caesar - mockingly, yet not without some feeling of grief - along with him who cried out for the prince of Heaven: "Why did the nations rage, and the peoples meditate vain things? The kings of the earth have arisen, and the princes have gathered together, against their Lord and against his Christ".

(5) But since natural love does not allow scorn to last long, preferring (like the summer sun which as it rises disperses the morning clouds and shines forth radiantly) to cast scorn aside and to pour forth the light of correction, I too then, in order to break the chains of ignorance of kings and princes such as these, and to show that the human race is free of their yoke, shall take heart along with the most holy prophet, by making my own the words of his which follow: "Let us burst their chains, and cast their yoke from us".

(6) These two things will be sufficiently accomplished when I have brought to completion the second part of my present project and shown the truth of the question we are now considering. For showing that the Roman empire is founded on right will not only disperse the fog of ignorance from the eyes of kings and princes who usurp control of public affairs for themselves, falsely believing the Roman people to have done the same thing, but it will make all men understand that they are free of the yoke of usurpers of this kind.

(7) The truth of the matter can be revealed not only by the light of human reason but also by the radiance of divine authority; when these two are in agreement, heaven and earth must of necessity both give their assent.

(8) Relying therefore on the faith of which I spoke earlier and trusting in the testimony of reason and authority, I proceed to resolve the second question.**MONARCHIA (III, i, 1-5)**

(1) "He shut the lions' mouths, and they did not harm me, for in his sight righteousness was found in me." At the beginning of this work it was proposed to inquire into three questions, within the limits allowed by the subject-matter; the first two of them have been dealt with sufficiently, I believe, in the previous books.

(2) Now it remains to deal with the third, the truth of which cannot be brought to light without putting certain people to shame, and will therefore perhaps be a cause of some resentment against me.

(3) But since truth from its unchangeable throne implores us, and Solomon too, entering the forest of Proverbs, teaches us by his own example to meditate on truth and loathe wickedness; and since our authority on morals, Aristotle, urges us to destroy what touches us closely for the sake of maintaining truth; then having taken heart from the words of Daniel cited above, in which divine power is said to be a shield of the defenders of truth, and putting on "the breast-plate of faith" as Paul exhorts us, afire with that burning coal which one of the seraphim took from the heavenly altar to touch Isaiah's lips, I shall enter the present arena, and, by his arm who freed us from the power of darkness with his blood, before the eyes of the world I shall cast out the wicked and the lying from the ring.

(4) What should I fear, when the Spirit who is coeternal with the Father and the Son says through the mouth of David: "the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance and shall not be afraid of ill report"?

(5) The present question, therefore, which we are now to investigate, concerns the "two great lights", that is the Roman Pope and the Roman Prince; and the point at issue is whether the authority of the Roman monarch, who is monarch of the world by right, as was proved in the second book, derives directly from God or else from some vicar or minister of God, by which I mean Peter's successor, who assuredly holds the keys to the kingdom of heaven.