

THE DICTS AND SAYINGS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

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Published for TEAMS
(The Consortium for the Teaching of the Middle Ages)
in Association with the University of Rochester

by

MEDIEVAL INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS
Kalamazoo, Michigan
2006



INTRODUCTION

The tastes of modern readers have to some degree skewed our understanding of the literary likes and dislikes of people in the Middle Ages. This tendency is perhaps best exhibited by the genre of wisdom literature, a general designation for texts that claim to compile important information (proverbs, precepts, etc.) for the moral and practical edification of their audience. Many modern readers find this sort of material monotonous and pedantic, for it often entails long lists of adages and instructions presented in no apparent order, with little or no narrative context. While the twenty-first-century reader can relate to a variety of medieval genres — such as the romance, the sermon, the chronicle, and so forth — he or she is likely to be put off by the very nature of wisdom literature; repetitive and unsystematic, it is at odds with our modern penchant for logical organization, categorization, suspense, and patterned discovery.

In the Middle Ages, however, wisdom literature was highly esteemed, and not just by members of the Church, who saw the usefulness of this material for didactic purposes. The laity too was drawn to wisdom literature, as evinced by the prominent placement of these texts in medieval manuscripts; Cameron Louis, in an article entitled “Manuscript Contexts of Middle English Proverb Literature,” argues that wisdom literature, or “proverb literature” as he calls it, was

seen very much as part of the canon of respected mainstream literature which was read by aristocrats and wealthy members of the middle class. The proverbial material, even when it consists of very short texts, does not appear in these anthologies as random jottings or space fillers or pen-trials, but rather as texts that are as respectfully recorded as other genres of writings, like romances and religious narratives. (p. 223)

In fact, wisdom literature was popular enough to influence a host of later medieval works, including John Gower’s masterpiece, *Confessio Amantis*,¹ and Chaucer’s Tale of Melibee.² While the impact of the wisdom tradition was not limited to great poets and their audiences of the elite — oral folk culture abounded with mnemonic lists and proverbial anecdotes — the pri-

¹ Several early recension manuscripts of the *Confessio* include a marginal note between lines *34 and *35 on Gower’s method of compiling his text that includes *poetarum philosophorumque dictis*, or “sayings of poets and philosophers,” as one of his primary sources. Since no Middle English translation is known to exist this early, the reference must surely refer to the Latin predecessor of *Dicts and Sayings*, *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum*. See *Confessio Amantis*, ed. Peck, vol. 1, p. 287.

² For an excellent study of how the tradition of wisdom literature influenced Chaucer’s writing, see Whiting, *Chaucer’s Use of Proverbs*.

many consumers of this information were the middle class and aristocracy, and the texts clearly were written with these social classes in mind.

At the forefront of the medieval wisdom tradition was *The Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*, a long prose text that purports to be a compendium of lore collected from biblical, classical, and legendary philosophers and sages. *Dicts and Sayings* was a well-known work that traveled across many lands and was translated into many languages. It became popular in England in the fifteenth century, and cemented its place in English literary history on 18 November 1477, when William Caxton printed an edition of *Dicts and Sayings* that was perhaps the first book ever printed in England.³

Dicts and Sayings is characteristic of medieval wisdom literature in form and content. Like many such works that have any kind of narrative structure, *Dicts and Sayings* is presented as a series of truisms handed down from a wise speaker to a receptive audience.⁴ The text introduces its audience to a long series of eminent wise men, with each philosopher's words of wisdom being preceded by a biographical story that ranges from a few words to several manuscript pages. The prefatory biographical sketches tend to become more elaborate as the work progresses, and many of these narratives could easily stand alone as individual tales. These biographies are culled from well-known medieval traditions and legends about the sages, but the actual sayings of the philosophers are designated almost completely arbitrarily.⁵ Their words of advice make up a consistent brand of wisdom that today we would call "proverbial."

PROVERBS AND SENTENCES

Exactly what, however, is a proverb? Why do proverbs play so large a role in folk culture and its interface with literate culture? Archer Taylor, one of the twentieth century's leading parmeniologists (proverb scholars) opens his seminal study *The Proverb* with this dispiriting admission: "The definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking" (p. 3). Proverbs are indeed nebulous phrases that resist easy categorization, but it will be useful to put forth some working definitions. First and most obviously, the proverb is a brief, pithy statement of commonsense wisdom that remains more or less fixed in its wording over long periods of time. The proverb is also associated with popular speech rather than learned discourse. In *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings Mainly before 1500*, Bartlett Jere Whiting defines the proverb as "an expression which owes its birth to the people and testifies to its origin in form and phrase" (p. xiv). Therefore the proverb, at least initially, is *oral* and *popular* — although, needless to say, all the historical examples cited by Whiting were collected from textual sources.

Despite its roots among the common people, the proverb can be used as a means of social control. This occurs when a person invokes a proverb to convince someone else to

³ As Bühler notes, this presupposes that the controversial *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, dated 17 December 1468, is in fact a misprint, most likely for 1478 (*Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Bühler, p. ix).

⁴ There are many variations to this basic design, from the advice of a ruler to his subjects to the advice of parent to his or her child. This kind of arrangement is meant to underscore the speaker's superior intellectual (or moral) position, thereby enhancing the perceived veracity of the speaker's statements.

⁵ Louis, "Proverbs, Precepts, and Monitory Pieces," p. 2977.

accept his or her position. Since the speaker's words are meant to produce a specific effect in the listener, those words can be said to possess "illocutionary force," to use the terminology of the pioneering language philosopher J. L. Austin. Cameron Louis argues that the force of the proverb is linked to authority; that is, speaking a proverb is an act performed from a position of superior cultural wisdom, since the speaker is invoking a commonly accepted source of truth. When the proverb is seen as "common sense," it becomes simply a verbal reflex that discourages diverging opinions.⁶ Used in this way, the proverb can be "a linguistic device that attempts to marshal the norms and history of a society in order to enforce certain norms of behavior. As such, many embody conservative values and perspectives and encourage respect for authority."⁷

Louis makes an excellent case for the political function of the proverb, but he takes this argument too far by suggesting that the proverb is always, or almost always, an instrument of social control. What he sees as an authoritarian "verbal reflex" might well be turned around into a liberating "verbal stimulus" that incites people to think critically about the issue at hand. For instance, today the utterance of a proverb like "A woman's place is in the home" might well spark a spirited denunciation of the patriarchal values of earlier generations. The notion of the proverb as a verbal stimulus is perhaps even more appropriate for the Middle Ages, when people so often obtained information in an oral—and, significantly, *public*—context. One individual reciting a proverb for the purpose of 'proving' the rightness of his position might well have found himself under siege by those with far different opinions on the meaning of that particular verbal formula. What Louis does not adequately consider, then, is the *interface* between learned and popular culture, and the ensuing potential for multiple (and subversive) interpretations of proverbs by ordinary people.

In contrast to the proverb, Whiting argues, is the "sentence," which has its roots not in oral culture but in writing.⁸ Moreover, the wisdom of a sentence does not appear in the kind of concrete, unchanging verbal formula in which we find the proverb. Whiting describes a sentential statement as "a piece of wisdom which has not crystallized into specific current form and which anyone feels free to rephrase to suit himself."⁹ Thus if proverbs are fixed in form and popular in origin while sentences are fluid in form and learned in origin, medieval wisdom literature should be considered "sentential" rather than "proverbial." The "sentence" they offer is the direct, straightforward moral guidance we find in fiction such as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* or Gower's *Confessio*, but also in philosophical treatises such as Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*. In allegorical and exemplary traditions, distinctions are made between the notions of *sentence* (wisdom) and *solaas* (pleasure, entertainment), a convention so commonplace that even the bombastic innkeeper Harry Bailly may be mindful of it as he proposes a tale-telling contest for the pilgrims' journey to Canterbury. He decrees:

And which of yow that bereth hym best of all—
 That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
 Tales of best sentence and moost solaas —
 Shal have a soper at oure aller cost

⁶ Louis, "Proverbs and the Politics," p. 183.

⁷ Louis, "Proverbs and the Politics," p. 178.

⁸ Whiting, *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases*, p. xi.

⁹ Whiting, *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases*, p. xiv.

Heere in this place, sittyng by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury. (CT I[A]796–801)

For Harry, the ideal tale is one that blends *sentence* and *solaas*, imparting wisdom to the audience while entertaining them at the same time. Harry's own remarks throughout the *Tales*, while often sententious, are also laced with folksy proverbs, demonstrating another form of interface between learned and popular culture.

It is not difficult to discern the ultimate roots of sentential literature like *Dicts and Sayings*. The Church is the obvious source for much of the wisdom literature of the Middle Ages, for it had a vested interest in the propagation of moral precepts, specifically those that reinforced orthodox Christian ideology. Biblical passages provided clerical authors with their most prolific source of sentential wisdom; the Old Testament books of Ecclesiastes and Proverbs especially were mined for the aphorisms of wisdom they contain. Latin works from the first few centuries of the Common Era also provided material for sentential wisdom, and the most important of these was the *Disticha Catonis* (*The Distichs of Cato*), a third-century compilation of wise sayings attributed (spuriously, as is the custom for medieval wisdom literature) to the Roman moralist Cato the Censor. Despite its harsh, world-weary outlook, *The Distichs of Cato* was a very popular work throughout the Middle Ages, and was translated into a number of languages, including Old and Middle English.¹⁰ These later vernacular translations also Christianized the content to some degree, incorporating advice that applied to Christian virtues, such as patience.¹¹ The *Distichs* achieved its popularity chiefly as a result of its widespread use in the schools, where it served the dual function of providing a basic Latin text for translation and study as well as a manual of advice for the moral betterment of its readers. Even Chaucer's Miller is mindful of it as he scolds John the Carpenter in The Miller's Tale because "He knew nat Catoun, for his wit was rude, / That bad man sholde wedde his simylitude" (CT I[A]3227–28).

Such precepts and maxims provided medieval wisdom literature with its proverb-like quality. Indeed, it is easy to see why sentences are so often mistaken for proverbs, or at least referred to informally as proverbs. Many modern scholars of medieval wisdom literature, in fact, still refer to works like *Dicts and Sayings* and *The Distichs of Cato* as collections of proverbs. While writers in the Middle Ages apparently did not think much about these distinctions, differentiating between the two does not amount to splitting hairs: sentential adages and folk proverbs have different characteristics, and also serve different purposes.

The Catholic Church recognized that wisdom could disseminate orally by means of the proverb, but there was no way to control the content of that wisdom. Since the folk-based nature of the proverb could lead to the spread of heterodox beliefs, the Church needed to fix appropriate pieces of wisdom into a more permanent medium. "The goal, of course, was to combat the ambiguous, potentially subversive content of the folk proverb with dogma that was more certainly expressed and more serviceable to its interests."¹² The sentences we find

¹⁰ For uses of the *Distichs* in English, see Brunner. She notes, among other things, that the *Distichs* were a major source for the twelfth-century poem *The Proverbs of Alfred*; that Caxton published no fewer than four editions of the *Distichs* during his printing career; and that Benjamin Franklin produced a translation and printed edition, and used the *Distichs* as a source for *Poor Richard's Almanac*.

¹¹ Louis, "Proverbs, Precepts, and Monitory Pieces," p. 2973.

¹² Louis, "Concept," p. 179. Louis also notes, however, that while the Church may have appro-

collected in medieval wisdom literature, then, exist primarily as tools for instilling and reinforcing officially sanctioned beliefs in readers (or listeners, as these texts were likely read aloud, as well). Sentences exercise this social control in a number of ways. First, the sentence represents words of authority; just as the oral proverb *can* be used as a means of control, the sentence is likely to be *designed* for this function. The writer of a sentence puts himself or herself in a position of power over his or her audience, for the audience is expected to accept the validity of the claim or tenet contained in that sentence. To this end, sentential works often are given a basic narrative framework in which the narrator is a parent, a priest, a renowned wise man, or some other person of authority who is cast in a role superior to that of the reader. As was the case for the oral proverb, the wisdom put forth in sentential literature is concise and circumscribed, leaving little room for varying interpretations.

I do not mean to imply, however, that *all* churchmen were employing sentential wisdom for the purpose of social control. Consider scholasticism, the theological movement that sought to reconcile faith and reason. The heyday of scholasticism was the thirteenth century, when Franciscan and Dominican teachers at the University of Paris and other schools expounded upon the place of rational thought within orthodox Catholic belief. The greatest philosopher of this movement was St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–74), who drew heavily upon Aristotelian logic (Thomas can be said to have “Christianized” Aristotle) and argued that reason is separate from faith, but each fully complements the other. In the intellectual activity of the scholastics—especially in their “questions” that are answered by argument and evidence—we see a rising advocacy for empirical thinking, the very opposite of Louis’ conception of sentential wisdom as an authoritarian instrument of control. This move toward empiricism is reflected famously in the writings of Chaucer. His *Tale of Melibee* and *Parson’s Tale* are both deeply Christian works and replete with sentences, but they in no way attempt to limit interpretive possibilities; on the contrary, these works encourage readers or listeners to engage in the very empirical activity of self-analysis.

Just as in the case of proverbs, then, sentences can be employed for repression *or* liberation. Likewise, they too can function as a site of interface between learned and popular culture. One sentential work that illustrates this interface particularly well is the Middle English *Sidrak and Bokkus*, a “verse adaptation of an Old French prose book of knowledge, cast in question-and-answer form, enclosed within a framing adventure story.”¹³ Although the date and authorship of the original are unknown, *Sidrak* was widely popular from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries. The text consists primarily of a question-and-answer session between the powerful King Bokkus and the wise man Sidrak—identified with the biblical Shadrach, who refused to worship a golden idol erected by Nebuchadnezzar (see Daniel 3). Bokkus asks and Sidrak answers, and the topics range from theology to politics to science. *Sidrak and Bokkus* may be didactic and catechistic, and Bokkus never questions the wise man’s answers, but the point of the text is clearly to *entertain*. *Sidrak* appropriates a format common to learned sentential texts (a wise speaker handing down wisdom to a

priated the folk proverb in its development of sentential literature, it never truly succeeded in supplanting the proverb: “What we may see . . . is an attempt by the church to take possession of a powerful linguistic instrument in an attempt to maintain its control over the minds of the people. The fact that the folk proverb seems to have managed a continuous line of survival from the beginning of the Middle Ages to the present day suggests that the religious establishment failed quite miserably” (p. 183).

¹³ *Sidrak and Bokkus*, ed. Burton, p. xxi.

receptive learner) to provide a popular audience with entertaining factoids. The drive for social control that Louis sees in sentential wisdom is entirely absent in this work that editor T. L. Burton refers to aptly as “infotainment.”¹⁴

WISDOM LITERATURE IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

There is a long tradition of wisdom literature in medieval England, beginning with some of the earliest works in the English language. Wisdom literature was very popular in England before the Norman Conquest, as suggested by the sheer number of extant Old English works that fall into this diverse category. The mysterious *Rune Poem*, for instance, presents a catalogue of Christianized proverbial statements organized around the Anglo-Saxon runic characters. Most examples of wisdom literature in Old English, however, are contained in a single manuscript, the renowned Exeter Book (c. 975), a huge compendium of all kinds of Old English poetry, including works by the poet Cynewulf, heroic poems like *Deor* and *Widsith*, elegies such as *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, two large sets of riddles, and religious works like *Phoenix* and the two poems about St. Guthlac. The Exeter Book’s collection of wisdom literature includes the following: the *Maxims*, lists of pithy, gnomic statements about the nature of the world; *Gifts of Men*, a description of the various abilities and aptitudes that God has given to humans; *Fortunes of Men*, similar to *Gifts* in that it lists the talents people can have, but it also catalogues the many ways that people can die according to the fate that God has ordained; and *VainGlory*, in which the narrator contrasts the evils of pride and the virtues of humility.¹⁵ The kind of wisdom these works tend to impart, as Elaine Tuttle Hansen has argued, centers on the moral theme of the “distinction between the righteous and the wicked. Most sayings define the practical ways that wisdom is found and the rewards of righteousness achieved.”¹⁶

The Old English wisdom tradition was not limited to specifically sentential poems. Sentences crop up in a variety of other works, including some of the best-known Anglo-Saxon poems. In *The Battle of Maldon*, for instance, Paul Cavill notes that the use of maxims helps motivate the doomed East Anglian warriors and the poem’s audience alike.¹⁷ Sentential wisdom is also crucial to *Beowulf*, as Susan E. Deskins argues in *Beowulf and the Medieval Proverb Tradition*. Deskins examines the sentential sources and analogues of *Beowulf*, such as *The Distichs of Cato*, and demonstrates that the poem reflects an attitude toward this wisdom that “may be described in brief as a respect for and appreciation of the uses of traditional wisdom” (p. 140).

The popularity of wisdom literature continued throughout the Middle English period, as well. Many texts take the loose narrative framework of a parent speaking to his or her child; among the better known are *How the Wise Man Taught His Son* and *How the Good Wife Taught Her Daughter*, stanzaic rhyming poems that convey both moral and practical advice. Louis notes that these poems often overlap with medieval courtesy books, particularly concerning matters of practical information.¹⁸ Other texts, like *The Distichs of Cato* — several

¹⁴ *Sidrak and Bokkus*, ed. Burton, p. xxxviii.

¹⁵ A good introduction to the genre of Old English wisdom literature can be found in Shippey’s *Poems of Wisdom and Learning in Old English*, which also provides edited Old English texts and translations.

¹⁶ Hansen, *Solomon Complex*, p. 33.

¹⁷ Cavill, *Maxims in Old English Poetry*, p. 185.

¹⁸ Louis, “Authority,” p. 101.

distinct versions of which exist in Middle English — are attributed to a historical person but are almost never the work of that individual. Perhaps the most famous of these today is the twelfth-century *Proverbs of Alfred*, a catalog of advice and moral sayings attributed to King Alfred the Great (849–99), but based heavily on the *Distichs*. Another such text, widespread in its day, is the *ABC of Aristotle*, which organizes its moral advice around the letter of the alphabet with which each statement begins.

Similar to these works that speciously ascribe authorship to a historical figure are texts that claim to be compilations of the wisdom of several or many historical persons. *The Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*, the best-known work from this category, features a motley crew of biblical, mythological, classical, and medieval thinkers, each offering more or less the same brand of moral advice. As is the case for many works of sentential literature, the use of these august philosophers as narrators leads one “to suspect that intellectual or religious authority in general is being invoked to bolster the credibility of the sayings—historical accuracy seems not to have been a major concern.”¹⁹

THE DICTS AND SAYINGS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

For a text with virtually no regard for historical accuracy, *Dicts and Sayings* itself has a fascinating history, one that spans many lands, languages, and centuries. This text was born into a medieval Islamic world that was increasingly fascinated by the study of philosophy, especially the work of the ancient Greeks; the Arabic word *falsafa* (“philosophy”), in fact, is a simple transliteration of the Greek *philosophia*.²⁰ As Michael Marmura argues, “medieval Islamic philosophy, as we know it, was a direct result of the translations of Greek philosophy and science into Arabic. It is rooted in Greek philosophy.”²¹ Plato’s writings were known to Muslim thinkers only through Arabic translations of summaries and paraphrases (such as Galen’s *Synopsis of the Platonic Dialogues*), but Aristotle’s work, Marmura notes, was widely available.²² Aristotle was held in high esteem by Muslim philosophers, who dubbed him “the first teacher.” Greek-based *falsafa* and Islamic theology had a complex relationship, for, as Thérèse-Anne Druart explains, *falsafa* was considered foreign to this world “formed at its deepest levels, both politically and culturally, by the Qur’an and the law based on it.”²³

The relationship between faith and philosophy can best be illustrated by considering three of the most prominent philosophers of the medieval Islamic world. The first was al-Farabi (d. 950), of Baghdad and Aleppo, who reconciled Aristotle with Islam (his close association with Aristotelian teachings earned him the moniker “the second teacher”), but, as a rationalist, he believed that ultimately religion should be subordinate to philosophy. Avicenna (980–1037), or Ibn Sina in Arabic, was a Persian whose treatises entitled *Canon of Medicine* and *Book of Healing* helped him surpass Galen as the most famous and prominent physician of the Middle Ages. Avicenna was also a distinguished philosopher who was influ-

¹⁹ Louis, “Authority,” p. 115.

²⁰ For a discussion of the kinds of sources that would have been available to medieval Muslim writers on the subject of philosophy, see Alon, *Socrates in Mediaeval Arabic Literature*, pp. 12–22.

²¹ Marmura, “Medieval Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition,” p. 21.

²² Marmura, “Medieval Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition,” pp. 22–23.

²³ Druart, “Philosophy in Islam,” p. 100.

enced by al-Farabi, but, as Druart argues, he “Islamicized” his predecessor’s strict Aristotelianism.²⁴ A third distinguished Islamic thinker, though one whose life postdates the original composition of *Dicts and Sayings*, was the Spaniard Averroës (1126–98), or Ibn Rushd in Arabic. Like Avicenna, he was a physician as well as a philosopher. In his commentaries on Aristotle, he argued that the truth of reason (found in the tenets of the “first teacher”) and the truth of Islamic theology had no need for reconciliation because they were separate but equal truths that did not conflict with one another.

Dicts and Sayings first appeared in the midst of this burgeoning of interest in philosophy. It was composed in Arabic (entitled *Mokhtâr el-Hikam*) by Abu'l Wefa Mubeschschir ben Fatik, identified by contemporary sources as an Egyptian emir and prolific author who was born in Damascus in the eleventh century.²⁵ His sources for *Mokhtâr el-Hikam* are not known for certain, but “[s]ome of them are probably to be found in the large storehouse of Arabic translations made in the ninth century under the Khalif al-Ma'mon. This Khalif encouraged the work of a sort of college of translators at Baghdad.”²⁶ These texts may have included the “genuine” writings of philosophers like Aristotle and Pythagoras, and perhaps also *The Secret of Secrets*, which was, like *Dicts and Sayings*, an originally Arabic text.

Mokhtâr el-Hikam proved to be a very popular work. In the first half of the thirteenth century it was translated into Spanish and titled *Bocados de Oro*. Even a brief perusal of the Spanish version reveals the consistency of the content of this work over its long and circuitous history; for instance, the ordering of the philosophers in *Bocados de Oro* is nearly the same as what we find in the Middle English versions more than two hundred years later: Sed, Ermes, Catalquius, Tad, Omirus, Solon, Rracion [sic], Ypocras, Pitagoras, Diogenis, Socrates, Platon, Aristotiles, Alixandre, Tolomeo, Leogenin/Longinen, Enufio, Medragis, Sillus, Galieno, Proteus, Gregorio, Piramus, and finally the miscellaneous philosophers. There are only a few major differences, and these tend to appear in the shorter chapters toward the end of the work (most notably, Assaron is absent in many Spanish manuscripts and his material is added to the end of Tolomeo). *Bocados de Oro* remained in circulation for centuries, and later was published in a half-dozen early printed editions.²⁷ A Latin translation, called *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum*, appeared in the second half of the thirteenth century, and its popularity is attested by the many manuscripts that survive to this day. Bühler concurs with Ezio Franceschini and Remigio Sabbadini, scholars of the *Liber Philosophorum*, that the man who translated *Bocados de Oro* into Latin was most likely the Italian Giovanni da Procida, a doctor in the employ of Emperor Frederick II.²⁸ Giovanni’s translation was faithful to the Spanish, and preserved its organization with only minor changes. Here the philosophers are arranged as follows: Sedechias, Hermes, Tac, Machalquin, Homerus, Zalon, Rabion, Ypocras, Pitagoras, Diogenes, Socrates, Plato, Aristotiles, Alexander, Ptholomeus, Assaron, Loginon, Avesius, Macdargis, Thesilus, Gregorius, Galienus, and then the last philosophers. This ordering would be maintained in the subsequent French and English versions. A century after the Latin text appeared, Guillaume de Tignonville (d. 1414), the

²⁴ Druart, “Philosophy in Islam,” p. 97.

²⁵ Scrope, *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Schofield, pp. 24–25.

²⁶ Scrope, *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Schofield, p. 25.

²⁷ *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Bühler, p. x.

²⁸ *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Bühler, p. xi.

provost of Paris and a courtier to the king of France, translated the *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum* into French. His version was entitled *Dits Moraulx*. Guillaume's work was not, however, merely a rote translation of the Latin; he shortened his version considerably, but did not hesitate to insert material of his own creation to the text.²⁹ Over time, his *Dits Moraulx* achieved great renown throughout Western Europe.³⁰

The journey between *Mokhtâr el-Hikam* and *Dits Moraulx* was more about geography than content. The work's basic structure — the names of the philosophers, the order in which they appear, the approximate length of each section, and the general contents of each section — has remained conservative over time, and with each successive translation the text has managed to avoid large-scale interpolation. It has also resisted overt Christianization. Aside from some biblical allusions (see the Explanatory Notes to this edition), the influence of Christianity has been subtle, which seems appropriate for a text that began its life as more generically monotheistic than dogmatically Islamic. In brief, some maxims were added and others deleted, but the text that France exported was substantively the same as its original Arabic ancestor.

Guillaume's *Dits Moraulx* became extremely popular in England in the second half of the fifteenth century, when there was something of an explosion of interest in works of wisdom literature. Although George Ashby produced a metrical paraphrase of the Latin *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum*, all the other English translations were based on Guillaume's *Dits Moraulx*. Several independent translations were made between 1450 and 1500, and all of these would come to be known as *The Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*. They include Stephen Scrope's version from around 1450, William of Worcester's 1472 revision of Scrope, Earl Rivers' translation (the version used by Caxton for what may be the first book ever printed in England), and an anonymous translation from around 1450 (the version used for this edition).

Today the most famous of these English versions of the *Dicts and Sayings* is the translation made by Scrope, perhaps because of his family's prominence in late medieval England. Stephen Scrope's grandfather was part of the infamous Scrope-Grosvenor dispute (1385–90), the lengthy trial held to determine which family had the right to bear the coat of arms that both sides claimed. After countless depositions from gentlemen of at least the rank of squire (including Geoffrey Chaucer), the court found in favor of the Scropes. Their triumph was short-lived, however, for as strong supporters of King Richard II, the Scrope family suffered greatly when the king was deposed in 1399. Stephen Scrope, born around 1396, was a sickly, miserable man who spent most of his adult life seeking (unsuccessfully) to pry his inheritance from his avaricious stepfather, Sir John Fastolf — one of the inspirations for Shakespeare's Falstaff.

Scrope's translation of *Dicts and Sayings* is literal and unwieldy. As Schofield characterizes it, "[h]is phrasing is almost always an exact replica of the French, even to the point of making an awkward English construction."³¹ The revisions made by William of Worcester (Fastolf's secretary and steward) are mainly additions of new material and not corrections or emendations of Scrope's work. Earl Rivers' translation of *Dits Moraulx*, independent of the Scrope version, is much more readable, but remains a literal rendering of the French

²⁹ *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Böhler, p. xviii.

³⁰ Shillinglaw, Review of *Dicts and Sayings* (ed. Böhler), p. 185.

³¹ Scrope, *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Schofield, p. 30.

and seems to be incomplete, or greatly abbreviated.³² The anonymous translation, independent of Scrope and also of Rivers, is found in only one manuscript (best known as the Helmingham Hall Manuscript), but is by far the most accurate and the most idiomatic English translation of *Dits Moraulx*.³³ For these reasons I have chosen to use the Helmingham Hall version, and not Scrope or Rivers, as the basis for this edition of *The Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*.³⁴

No matter whose translation one reads, *Dicts and Sayings* is by no means a work of high art — though, to be fair, it was never intended as such. Instead it is a disorderly, repetitive, almost overwhelming heap of recorded wisdom. The wisdom it contains would not be considered “philosophy,” however, as the title might imply; as Arthur Shillinglaw aptly notes, “[i]t goes without saying that an English translation of a French translation of a Latin translation of a Spanish translation of an Arabic text compiled from prior sources is not to be regarded as a serious contribution to philosophy.”³⁵ The kind of wisdom that *Dicts and Sayings* imparts is practical advice for living well. While not overly insightful, the advice proffered by the incessant parade of philosophers is largely sensible and reasonable: “Patience, moderation in desire, honesty and fair dealing are the clues to happiness.”³⁶ These virtues are, of course, important Christian virtues, but *Dicts and Sayings* espouses little explicitly Christian ideology. References to Christ, Mary, and other Christian characters and themes are almost entirely absent, which should not be surprising given that the text was originally a product of the Muslim world. There are many references to God, but always in the context of God as the creator and ultimate arbiter of the universe — that is, God as “law” and “reason.”

At first glance, God’s presence seems to be one of the few consistent themes that runs throughout this disparate work. Indeed, Cameron Louis, while admitting that the work is composed in the spirit of its times, argues that “there is no overall organizing principle, nor is there any attempt to avoid repetition.”³⁷ I would disagree. There is an overall organizing principle in *Dicts and Sayings*, in that the text is organized around the idea of oppositional logic. Many of the sayings link two contrasting concepts in order to demonstrate a given precept in action: the wise man does X, but the fool does Y. This is perhaps the most common manifestation of the oppositional logic of the text, but there are many other analogous dichotomies, such as good/bad and friend/enemy. With these constructions as the controlling theme of the text, *Dicts and Sayings* follows many other sentential works in encouraging the kind of binary judgment that discourages free thinking and the questioning of authority.

Finally, how are we to classify *Dicts and Sayings*? It fits under the broad heading of wisdom literature in its subject matter and purpose (promoting the obedience to intellectual authority), but it is far longer and more encyclopedic than most texts of this sort, such as *How the Wise Man Taught His Son*. Likewise, with its many exemplary tales and biographical

³² Scrope, *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Schofield, p. 32.

³³ *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Bühler, p. xlvii.

³⁴ This manuscript is known by many names. I refer to it as the Helmingham Hall Manuscript, but it is also known informally as Lord Tollemache’s Manuscript, and as Pierpont Morgan Library Manuscript G.66 — the official designation of its current owner.

³⁵ Shillinglaw, Review of *Dicts and Sayings* (ed. Bühler), p. 186.

³⁶ Shillinglaw, Review of *Dicts and Sayings* (ed. Bühler), p. 187.

³⁷ Louis, “Proverbs, Precepts, and Monitory Pieces,” p. 2978.

sketches of the philosophers' lives, *Dicts and Sayings* offers a stronger narrative framework than such texts as *The Proverbs of Alfred*, which tend to be little more than lists of precepts cloaked in the thinnest veneer of a story. While it has more in common with a work like Gower's *Confessio Amantis* — both are immense compendia of wisdom, compiled from a variety of sources, that weave together brief maxims and longer tales — *Dicts and Sayings* is better grouped with a tradition of works that feature a chronological progression of historical and legendary figures; this tradition dates back at least to the moralizing anecdotes found in *Factorum ac Dictorum Memorabilium Libri IX* (*Nine Books of Memorable Deeds and Sayings*) of Valerius Maximus (c. 20 BC–c. AD 50), and to the third-century Greek writer Diogenes Laertius and his *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, which combines biographical material with long accounts of teachings attributed to each of the philosophers.

When *Dicts and Sayings* was translated into English by several independent writers in the mid-fifteenth century, it joined a parade of kindred texts that were circulating throughout late medieval England. All of these works in some way presented the collected insight (often spuriously attributed, of course) of the wise men of yore, and all tended to borrow material from one another. One early author who made an indelible impact upon this genre was the Dominican cleric Vincent of Beauvais (d. c. 1264), whose colossal mid-thirteenth-century trifecta — *Speculum Naturale*, *Speculum Historiale*, and *Speculum Doctrinale* — was ambitiously intended to be a collection of all mankind's knowledge. It is the *Speculum Historiale* that contains Vincent's lengthy account of the lives and sayings of wise men. As Gerrit Bunt notes, the *Historiale* provided the major source for an analogous section in Ranulf Higden's widely popular *Polychronicon*.³⁸ Higden (d. 1364), a Benedictine, wrote the *Polychronicon* (c. 1362) as a history of the world from creation until 1327. His text reached an even more extensive audience when it was translated from Latin into Middle English by John of Trevisa (c. 1340–1402) in 1387, and then again by an anonymous writer in the fifteenth century. Another work that was part of the "Vincent tradition," as Curt Bühler calls it, is *Liber de Vita et Moribus Philosophorum* (*The Book of the Lives and Deaths of the Philosophers*), by Walter Burley (1275–c. 1337), who was a disciple of the eminent scholastic philosopher Duns Scotus and tutor to Edward the Black Prince, son of King Edward III (years later, Burley's son Simon was the tutor of Richard II).³⁹ Bühler notes that Burley's *Liber* is drawn not just from classical sources like Diogenes Laertius "but is largely a re-working (with some additions) of Vincent's compilations" in *Speculum Historiale*.⁴⁰ Burley's *Liber* provided ample source material for late medieval Latin chronicle-writers' accounts of the ancient world, but as Bühler contends, "the influence of Burley's work and what I call the 'Vincent tradition' extended far beyond the chronicles."⁴¹ Writers of vernacular works also drew from this tradition; for instance, Bühler's research suggests that Thomas Hoccleve (c. 1367–c. 1426), remembered mainly as a pale imitator of Chaucer, used Burley as a minor source for his *Regiment of Princes* (1411), a "Mirror for Princes" addressed to the future Henry V.⁴²

³⁸ Bunt, *Alexander the Great*, p. 36.

³⁹ Burley, sometimes spelled "Burleigh," is also known by the Latin form of his name, Gualterus Burleaus.

⁴⁰ Bühler, "Greek Philosophers," p. 443.

⁴¹ Bühler, "Greek Philosophers," p. 448.

⁴² Bühler, "Greek Philosophers," p. 454.

Dicts and Sayings, however, never influenced literature in England to the extent that the Vincent tradition did. In fact, despite its being the first book ever printed in England, and despite its popularity in the fifteenth century, this text had almost no impact on later English writings.⁴³ I believe the chief reason is that — then as now — *Dicts and Sayings* is a very unwieldy text. It exists as a monument to wisdom and as a spur toward the obedience of intellectual authority, but the practical applications of the material contained in this work seem to have been beyond the concerns of its original author and the legions of later redactors.

NOTES ON THIS EDITION

The unique manuscript that contains the anonymous version of the *Dicts and Sayings* dates to the 1450s, and most likely is not in the hand of the translator himself.⁴⁴ Although this translation is superior to all the other English versions, the text of the Helmingham Hall manuscript is defective in its arrangement, perhaps the result of a copyist's carelessness or a misbound French original. Beginning with folio 58r, the latter sections of the work — the text, that is, not the actual folios — are badly disordered. I have followed Bühler in silently restoring the proper order. The folio numbers are identified in the margins, and the breaks are marked in the text with a vertical line. This should assist readers in cross-referencing with other editions of the text.

As for other editorial matters, I have adhered to the standard practices for the Middle English Texts Series. All *i/j* and *u/v* spellings are given in modern orthography, the thorns (þ) are transcribed as *th*, and the few occurrences of the yogh (ȝ) are transcribed in each case to the corresponding modern letter. Often the scribe uses *y* for initial *g*, and for these cases I have silently emended to *g*. Capitalization, word formation, and punctuation are all editorial. I have also added quotation marks because of the sheer amount of spoken dialogue in this work, but my attempts to sort out the speakers from the narrator proved to be more difficult than one might have expected, since the narrative framework of *Dicts and Sayings* is so loosely maintained that often it is not altogether certain when a speaking character stops and the narrator begins, or vice versa.

Finally, I should note that the manuscript contains a vast number of additional strokes that have not been reproduced here. The scribe regularly places a flourish over the ends of words, and it is not always clear whether these strokes are otiose or genuine abbreviations. When they occur over final consonants they may represent a final *e*, but, as Bühler points out, some words have a flourish *and* a final *e*.⁴⁵ Bühler, in producing a diplomatic edition, retains these flourishes, but I have not, nor have I expanded any of them into a final *e*. I also did not reproduce letter variants like the elongated *s* or the doubled *f* at the beginning of some words. I have, however, expanded obvious manuscript abbreviations, while treating all other strokes as otiose.

⁴³ For one example of how this text *did* influence English literature, see Bühler, "Survival from the Middle Ages." Bühler argues that the *Dicte [sic] and Sayings of the Philosophers*, the version translated by Anthony Woodville (Earl Rivers), was a major source for William Baldwin's *A Treatise on Morall Phylosophie*, a compendium of philosophical quotations that appeared in twenty-three editions between 1547 and 1651 (pp. 76–77).

⁴⁴ *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Bühler, p. xxxviii. See pp. xxviii–xxix for a complete physical description.

⁴⁵ *Dicts and Sayings*, ed. Bühler, p. lxii.



THE DICTS AND SAYINGS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

1. ZEDECHYE

fol. 1r | Zedechye was the first philisophre, which, by the will of God, lawe was first res-
ceived and wisdam undirstanden. And the seide Zedechie seith that every man that
is of good beleve shulde have in himself sixtene vertues. The first is to knowe God
and His aungellis. The secunde is to have discrecioun of good and evel — of the
5 good for to do it and of the evel for to leve it. The thridde is for to obeye to kinges
and princes that God hath sette on erthe for to governe and reule and have puiss-
saunce over the people. The fourth is for to honoure fader and moder. The fyveth
is to do every man good aftir his power. The sixte is for to geve almes to the poore
10 people. The seventh is to kepe and defende straungiers and pilgrymes. The eighth
is to abaundon himself entierly to the service of God. The ninth is for to eschewe
fornycacioun. The tenth is to have pacience. The eleventh is to be true. The twelfth
is to be just. The thriteneth is to be liberall. The fourteneth is to offre God His sac-
refices for the grete benefitis that he resceiveth of Him every daye. The fifteeneth
15 is to thanke God and put himself holly unto His keping for the divers fortunes that
contynuelly comen in this worlde. The sixteeneth is to be shamefast, peisable, and
wele attempred. And seithe that as it apperteyneth to the people to be subjecte and
obeissaunt to the kinges magesté, in lyke wyse it longeth to a kinge to undirstande
fol. 1v diligently the governaunce of his roialme and mor | thanne to his owen propre,
20 for in lyke wyse is the kinge with his peple as the soule is with the body. And seithe
that whanne a kinge enforcethe himself to assemble tresoure by extorcioun or
othirwise unduly, he shuld knowe that it were evel done, for suche tresoure maye
25 never be assembled but that it be the dispoilling of his roialme. And seithe that yf
a kinge be slowe to serche and enquere the deedis of the grete men of his people
and of his enemyes, he shal nat be oon daye ferme in his roialm. And seithe: "O,"
seith he, "tho people bene passinge evreux whan there is a kinge of goode dis-
crecioun and of goode counseill and wise in sciencez. And gretly bene the people
30 malevreux whanne any of thise thingis abovesaide fauten in a kinge." And seithe:
"Whanne a kinge dispreiseth or leveth any of the litil thingis undone that he is or-
deyned for to do, gladly he wole leve gretter thingis undone; and it apperith in
lyke wise as a litil sekenesse, with processe growth and distroith the body, but

2 **seith**, says. 3 **beleve**, belief. 4 **aungellis**, angels. 6–7 **puissaunce**, puissance/power. 14
14 **holly**, wholly. 15 **shamefast**, shamefaced; **peisable**, peaceful. 16 **wele attempred**, of good
temperament. 17 **obeissaunt**, obedient; **magesté**, majesty. 18 **roialme**, realm. 20 **tresoure**,
treasure. 25 **tho**, those; **passinge evreux**, exceptionally fortunate. 27 **malevreux**, unfor-
tunate; **fauten**, fault. 28 **dispreiseth**, dispraises, denounces. 30 **sekenesse**, sickness.

170 yf remedye be founde." And seith: "Yf a kinge beleve flaterers and the swete wordis
 of his enemye withoute takinge heede to his werkis, he is in aventure to be soud-
 eynly taken." And seithe: "It belongeth to a kinge that his sone be enfourmed in
 35 connynge: how he shal governe his people aftir him, and how that he shal be right-
 wose to his people, and how that he shulde haunte and love his knyghtis; and he
 shulde nat lete him use moche huntyng ne ydelnesse, but lerne him and instructe
 him for to have eloquence and make him to eschewe alle vanitees." And seith that
 40 it longeth to a prince whanne he wole have any servauntis to knowe first her
 maners and her condicions, and how thei bene governed in here houses and with
 theire felashippis. And yf he undirstande hem of goode governaunce in all thees
 45 thingis aboveside, and that thei be paciente in their adversitees, reteigne hem
 hardily for servauntis — and othirwise nat. And seith: "Yf thu have a trewe frende
 50 that loveth thee wel, thu shuldeste take him bettir thanne fader, moder, brother,
 or any othir kynne, desieringe thi deth for successioun of thi goodes." And seith
 55 that comounly everythinge seketh and wolde have his owen lykenesse. And seith:
 "Ho that wol nat be chastised with feire wordis shulde be corrected with sharpe
 correccioun." And seith that the grettest richesse of this worlde is helth of body.
 And seith that obeisaunce done by love is mor ferme thanne that that is done by
 60 lordshipp or cruelté. And seith that the | experiences bene the verrey chastisinges
 50 and the foresight of the ende of thingis that shulle come to goode ende. And seith
 that goode renomme is right feire and goode in this worlde and it putteth awey the
 peyne of the othir. And seith that oon is bettir to holde his peas thanne for to
 speke with an ignoraunt, and to be alloone than to be fellashipped with evel folke.
 And seith: "Whanne a kinge hath evel tecchis, bettir is to a man that knoweth him
 65 nat thanne it is to him that is a gret maistre in his houshalde." And seith that bettir
 it is to a womman for to be bareyn than bere a childe that hath evell tacchis. And
 seith that the compayne of a poure wiseman is bettir than his that is a riche man
 and an ignoraunt. And seith that by the wyse bene sought oute humblesse, good
 70 wille, pité, and prvaciuon of synnes. And seith: "He that wole have wisdame, he
 muste studie and reede in studieng, and he is full ignoraunte that weneth to have
 it by othir abilité." And seith: "Ho that maketh faulte to his Creatour, by grete
 75 reasoun, he muste do it to alle othir." And seith: "Believe nat him that seith himself
 that he knoweth trouth and dothe the contrarye." And seith that ignorauntis wole
 nat absteyne hem from their bodily will and love nat their lyfe, but oonly for here
 80 pleasaunce; what diffence that ever thei have in the contrary, in lyke wise as chil-
 dren enforce hemself specially to eete swete thingis whanne it is defended hem.
 Nevertheles, it is in another maner with wise men, for thei love nat her lyffe, but
 oonly in doyng goode deedis and leevynge alle slouthfull dilectaciouns of the
 85 worlde. And seith: "How maye a man parreye the werkis of he that attenden to the
 goode ende of perpetuel perfeccioun with the werkis of hem that wole none othir

30–31 **but yf**, unless. 32 **aventure**, danger. 33 **enfourmed**, informed. 34 **connynge**,
 wisdom. 34–35 **rightwose**, righteous. 35 **haunte**, visit. 38 **her**, their. 39 **here**, their. 41
 hem, them. 46 **feire**, fair. 49 **verrey**, true. 51 **renomme**, renown. 53 **alloone**, all alone.
 54 **techis**, customs. 56 **tacchis**, habits. 60 **weneth**, believes, supposes. 61 **Creatour**,
 Creator. 64–65 **here** **pleasaunce**, their pleasure. 65 **diffence**, defense. 66 **defended**,
 forbidden. 67 **her**, their. 68 **dilectaciouns**, delectations. 69 **parreye**, parry (block).

but the delytes transitories?" And seith that he maye nat be taken for wise that laboureth in that that may noye and to leve that that he maye do good inne. And seith that wise men bere the thingis that bene sharpe and bitter as wele as thei were sweete as hony, for thei knowe th'ende shal be as swete as hony. And seith: "That it is good and profitable thinge to do wele to hem that deserve it. And it is grete evyll to do wele to hem that deserve it nat; and ho that dothe it loseth his laboure and the thinge that is geven, in lyke wise as the reyne that falleth on the gravelle. And seith: "Blessed is he that useth his daies and his nyghtis in doyng covenable thingis, and that taketh nat in this worlde but that that he maye excuse him inne, and that applieth himself to goode werkis and leveth the evell." And seith: "A man shulde nat | juge another by his wordis, but by his deedis, for wordes bene comounly veyne, but the dedis maken knowe the hurtis and the profitis." And seith that whanne the almesse is geven to poure folkes, the almes profiteth in lyke wise as the medycyne that is covenably geven to the seeke folkis; and the almes that is geven to folkis that have no neede, it is even so as a medycyne that is geven withoute cause. And seith: "He is right happy that kepit himself from all unclennesse and that turneth him away from the heringe and the seyng therof." And seith that the most covenable dispence that a man maye do in his lyfe is that that is done in the service of God and in goode werkis. And the lasse dispence is that that a man spendith in thingis that bene necessarie, whiche that maye nat be excused, as for to eete, drynke, and slepe, in heling of sekenesse commyng, and the worste dispence that is dispended is that that is done in evell werkis.

2. HERMES

Hermes was borne in Egipte, and is as moche to seye in Greke as Mercury, and in Ebraw as Ennoch that was the sone of Jareth, the sone of Mathalabel, the sone of Quinart, the sone of Enoy, sone of Seth, sone of Adam; and was befor the grete flood, aftir the which was another floode that drowned all the cuntré of Egipte. And the seid Hermes wente in alle the cuntries eighty and two yeris, with seventy-two personnes of divers languages, which alwaies exhorted and stered the people to obeye God. And bilded an hundred and eight townes, whiche he replenysshed with sciencis and was the firste that fonde the connynge of sterres. And to the people of every clymat establihed the lawe and parteide covenably to their oppynyons, to the which Hermes the kingis that were in that tyme obeied and alle her lande also and alle that dwelled in iles, and constreyned hem to kepe the lawe of God, to seye trouth, and dispise the werlde. And commaunded to sey praiers, and praiers for to be made, and to faste every moneth | upon the Satirday. And distroyed the enemyes of the feith. And gafe money to the poure people of God, that is to knowe, to feble and impotent peple. And commaunded that men shulde ete fleshe of porke and of geet and suche othir lyke metis, and commaunded hem expressely that thei shulde kepe hem from dronkennesse. And stablissched many feestis at certeyne

71 **delytes transitories**, transitory delights. 72 **noye**, annoy. 74 **th'ende**, the end. 78 **covenable**, appropriate. 82 **veyne**, vain. 84 **covenably**, appropriately.

6 **stered**, steered. 8 **connynge of sterres**, astronomy. 9 **establihed**, established; **covenably**, appropriately. 10 **her**, their. 11 **iles**, islands; **hem**, them. 16 **metis**, meats.

tymes. And ordeigned also certeyne sacrifices at the entree of the signes of the sunne, and other sacrefices at the firste sight of the moone, and in the conjunctioun of the planetis that entre in theire mansions, and in their exaltaciouns and of the sight of hem; and offred sacreficis of alle thingis, that is to seye: of floures, of rooses, of greynes, of whete, of barley, of fruytes, of grapes, and buverages. And the same Hermes seith that it is not ynoch to thanke God oonly for the goodes that He geveth us. And seith: "O man, yf thou knewest God wele, thou shuldest never falle in the weyes that shulde leede thee to evyll." And seith: "Make nat youre clamours to God as ignorauntes full of corupte wille. And loke ye be nat inobediente to God, ne trespassours of the lawe. And lete no man do to his felawe othirwise thanne he wolde that shulde be done to him, but beth of oon accorde, and every man love other, and use fastinge and prayers in pure and clene wille, and constreyn youre wille to do goode werkis, lowely and withoute pride, in such maner that youre werkis maye make goode fruytes. And drawe ye away fro the compayne of evell folkis as theves and such as use fornycacions." And seith: "Bewar that ye be nat forsworne and that alle tymes trouth maye be founden in youre mouth. And beware that ye swere nat but outhir yee or naye. And loke that ye enforce you nat to make hem swere that ye knowe bene accustomed to lye, leste that ye be partyners of theire perjurye. Truste ye in God that knoweth alle secretis, and He shal juge you in right at the grete daye of jugemente that shal geve His graces and rewardes to the goode people and shal punyssh the evell people for here evell dedis." And seith: "Be ye in certeyne that to doute oure Lorde is the gretteste wisdame, and the gretteste dilectacioun that oon shulde have is in Hym from whens alle goodes comen, by the which the gatis of oure undirstandinge and wisdame bene opened. And God that loveth His seruauntis hath geven hem discrecioun and hath geven hem prophetis and ministres fulfilled with the Holy Gooste, by the which hath He shewed hem the secretis of the lawe and the trouth of wisdame, to that entent | that thei shulde eschewe the evell deedis and applie hemself to the goode dedis." And seith: "Use wisdame and sewe the lawe. Be mercifull and arraye you with goode techingis. Thenke weel on youre thingis, and haste you nat to moch in hem, and specially in punysshing of evell doers." And seith: "Yf any of you use any maners longinge to synne, be nat ashamed to withdrawe you and for to receive punysshemente therfore in schewinge good exsample to othir. And yf so be that he be nat punysshed in this worlde, he shal be punysshed at the grete Daye of Doome and shal be turmented with more gretter peyne and withoute pité." And seith: "Correcte youreselfe and sewe the wise men and lerne of hem goode vertues. And lete youre desire be for to gete you good renowne. And employe nat youre undirstandinge in malice and subtilté." And seith: "Kepe you fro hem that governe hemself by malice withoute trouth, and that oonly herken it withoute puttinge in dede." And seith: "Loke ye holde nat the cordes to noye the people and seke nat their hurtis by cautelis, for thei can nat be so hidde but that it shal be knowe in the ende." And seith: "Sette togodir the love of feith with the love of wisdame and constreyn youreself thereto; and yf ye do it, alle your tyme shall be in wyn-

21 floures, flowers. **28 beth**, be; **oon**, one. **34 outhir**, either. **38 here**, their. **39 doute**, be afraid of/respect. **47 weel**, well; **to**, too. **49 longinge**, belonging. **53 sewe**, follow. **56 herken**, hearken, heed, listen to. **57 cordes**, cords; **noye**, annoy. **58 cautelis**, deceitfulness.

nyng, and of this noble vertue shal come to you more profite thanne to assemble
 golde, sylver, or other tresours that be nat durable, for it shal be to you a tresour
 in another werlde that ever shal endure and never have ende.” And seith: “Bethe
 65 all oone withinne and withoute; and or that ye speke, loke that ye speke in suche
 wise that youre language be nat contrary to the wille of your herte.” And seith:
 “Make you lowely and obbeye youre lawes and youre princes, and honoureh your
 grettest ministrours. Love God and trouth, and geve true counseile to that ende
 that ye maye more surely with youre goode penitence be in the weye of salvacioun.”
 And seith: “Yelde your thankinges to God in tyme of tribulacioun and of pros-
 70 perit , in tyme of povert , and of riches.” And seith: “Ye shal nat eete but of your
 dedis, and kepe you that ye eete nat unjustly, and that ye be lever to have povert 
 in doyng goode dedis thanne ricches in synne, for ricchesses losen and goode
 dedis abiden. And kepe yourself from moche laughing and from mokking of
 othir.” And seithe: “Yf ye perceyve another in any tecche of lewednesse, yet mocke
 75 him nat dishonestly, but loke that ye thenke that God hath made us alle of oon
 matier, and he that mocketh is nat sure, but in lyke wise it might befall to him.
 Wherfore ye shulde thanke God that He hath kepte you from such mischesis in
 fol. 4r tyme passed and in tyme presente, and beseche Him of His mercy | that He wolde
 80 kepe you in tyme that is to come.” And seith: “Whanne the enemyes of the feithe
 disputen with you with harde and sharpe wordis, answer ye hem agen with swet-
 nesse and humilit , and beseche God that He wolde redresse His creatures to good
 beleve and to everlastinge salvacioun.” And seith: “Be nat to besy of language in
 85 counseile. And holde your tungis tyed before youre enemyes, as he that sekith the
 rodde to be betyn.” And seith: “Ye maye nat be juste withoute that ye dreede God,
 by the which ye resceive the Holy Goost that shal open you the gatis of Paradise by
 the which youre soulles shull joyefully entre in with othir that have deserved the
 everlastinge lyfe.” And seith: “Eschewe the company of evel folke, from enemyes,
 90 from dronken men, and ignorauntis. Ande whanne ye thenke on any good deede,
 dothe it anone leste it be lette or rescowed by any wille of the contrary.” And seith:
 “Loke thu have none envye yf thu see any good thinge come to him that hath an
 evel hert, for he shal nat be stable and his ende shal be evell.” And seith: “Make
 95 children to be taught in their childehode or thei knowe any gret evell, and so in
 hem thu shalt nat synne.” And seith: “Honoureh and praieth God with good wille,
 and adresse alle youre desires to God and thanne He shal areise hem and helpe
 you where that ever ye be, and shal delyver you from alle perellis and shal make
 meke alle your enemyes undir youre goode praiers.” And seith: “Whanne ye wole
 100 faste, make clene youre soullis of alle filth and that youre fastinge come with a pure
 herte and evell thoughtis to be put oute therof, for God takith hem for foulle and
 evell. And lyke as ye do abstinen e of meetis, in lyke wise shulde ye absteyne you
 from synnes, for it sufficeth nat to God that a man dothe abstinen e of meetis and
 applieth himself to do evell deedis.” And seith: “In youre fastinge, visite the hous

63 Bethe, be. **64 or**, ere (before). **67 ministrours**, ministers. **69 Yelde**, Yield. **71 lever**,
 rather. **73 abiden**, remain. **74 tecche**, touch. **76 matier**, matter. **82 beleve**, belief; **to besy**,
 too busy. **84 betyn**, beaten; **dreedee**, dread. **88 thenke**, think. **89 dothe it anone**, do it
 anon (soon); **rescowed**, rescued (taken back). **92 or**, ere (before). **94 areise**, raise (fulfill).
95 perellis, perils. **100 meetis**, meats (foods).

of oure Lorde and beth in youre praiers withoute grete pompe, but in swetnesse and in lowelynesse. And whanne ye shul be gladde in youre houses and make youre feestis to youre welewillers, have remembraunce upon Goddis people and departe with hem of youre goodis.” And seith: “Comforde the people that bene in anguysshe and in hevynesse and comforde prisoners, and heele the seeke, clothe the naked, feede hem that have hungir, geve hem drynke that bene thirsty, herberowe the pilgrymes, make satisfaccioun to youre creditours, and suffre youre wrongis paciently.” And seith: “Loke that ye nat discomforde hem that bene in affliction, but helpe hem with swete and pleasaunte wordis. And yf it be suche that have done you harme, forgeve it hem lowely and lete it suffice you the peyne that thei suffre.” And seith: “Enforce you for to gete you frendis, and firste preveth hem or that ye put to grete truste | in hem leste ye shal have harme and repente you.” And seith: “Ho that God highteth or lifteth up in this worlde shulde take that arisinge for nowt, and nat to take himself therfore more herre thanne oon of his fellowes. For God hath made the poure and the riche alle of oon creacioun, to the regard of the whiche alle bene egall.” And seith: “Bewar that in youre hate ther go no lewed worde oute of youre mouthe, for it is thinge that is dishonesté and shal engendre peyne.” And seith: “Ho that refreyneth his angre and settith a bridell on his tunge and speketh attemprely and kepith his tunge clene, he surmounteth alle othir.” And seith that it is nat conveniente for him that wolde have connynge that he shulde seke it by merites ne for money, but oonly by dilectacioun, for it is more precious thanne alle othir thingis. And seith: “Verry wisdame is gefte of fortune, true jugemente of discipline, and sleynge of alle evellis.” And seith: “That kinge is noble and good that, in his realme, leveth the evel lawe for the goode.” And seith: “To be liberall in tyme of poverté and necessité is commendable, paciente to forgeve whanne a man maye avenge his wrongis.” And seith: “Ho that honoureth wise men and loveth trouthe and doth goode dedis and enforceth himself to lerne connynge and goode maners shal fynde that maye please him in this worlde and in the othir.” And seith: “He is unhappy in this worlde and in the other that hath nothre wisdame ne doctrine.” And seith: “Ho that will nat teche that he knowith in connynge and maners, he shal be partener in ignoraunce with the evel people. And ho that denyeth to teche connynge to him that it is covenable to, he ought to be depryved of his benefetis in this worlde; and of the seyenge naye to, he is wors thanne the ignoraunt which is of evel wille.” And seith that liberalité is more worthe in connynge thanne in ricches, for the renowne of the wise abideth and the ricches loseth. And seith: “Man shulde nat offendre ne hate him that hath done him any offence, but shulde do him good for evel, for the werkis of the wiseman bene knownen in thre maners. That is to seye: to make of his enemye his frende, and he that knoweth nat to make him knowe, and of the evel to make him good.” And seith: “He maye be taken for good whanne othir men resceyven of his goodnesse,

104 **welewillers**, well-wishers; **departe**, share, distribute. 106 **heeple the seeke**, heal the sick. 107 **herberowe**, harbor (give shelter to). 108 **wrongis**, afflictions. 112 **preveth**, prove. 115 **nowt**, naught; **herre**, higher. 117 **egall**, equal. 119 **bridell**, bridle. 120 **attemprely**, temperately. 121 **connynge**, intelligence. 123 **Verry**, True. 125 **leveth**, leaves behind. 127 **Ho that**, Whosoever. 131 **nothre**, neither. 133 **connynge**, practical advice; **covenable**, appropriate.

and he that loveth as moche the weele of othir as of himself." And seith that grete connynge maye litil availle in a covetouse man, but smal connynge profiteth in him that withdrawith his corage from covetise." And seithe that deth is lyke the strooke of an arrowe, and the lyfe is lyke as the arrowe is sette for to come." And seith that pitee is more grete to have mercy upon foolis thanne uppon wisemen. And seith: "Ho that holdeth hym | nat suffised with that that he hath, deserveth to have no more." Ande seith that a reportour othir a contrever of talis, outhir he menys evel to him that he tellith the tale, or ellis he is fals to him of whome he reporteth. And seithe that derisioun and mockerye putten awey feere, lyke as the fyre brenneth and distroioeth the woode. And seith that the envious man is frende to a man in his presence and enemye in his absence, and is a frende in worde and enemye in dede. And seith that an envious man is nat good but to dispreisinge of othir men. And seith: "He is right sure that is withoute blame, and he is ful evel ensured that is in grete blame." And seith: "Beth ware how ye obbe to covetise, for covetise wole nat obbeye to you." And seith: "Ho that asketh counsel of othir begynneth to profite himself." And somme asked him a question — what it was that moste troubleth and hurteth a man. He aunswere and seid: "Envye and wrath." And thanne was asked him a question — whi the wisemen helde hem more at the gatis of riche men thanne the riche men helde hem at the gatis of the wisemen, and he aunswere and seide that the wisemen sewen the prouffite of connynge. And seith: "Ho that hath witte and discretion and shewith it nat in dede, he is as a tree withoute fruyte." And seith: "Ho that is wise knoweth ignoraunce, and he that is ignoraunte knowith it nat, and he that knoweth nat himself, with moche peyne he shulde knowe othir." And seithe that there be two maner of people: that oon is that sechith and can nat fynde, and that othir that fyndeth and profiteth nat. And seithe that wisdame is as the peerle that is founde in the bottom of the see, which a man maye nat have but by hem that can dyve downe to the bottom of the see and fynde it. And seith: "He maye nat be of parfite connynge but he be chaste in himself." And seithe that dissiplyne is the ornament of witte, by the which discreciooun shulde be aourned as moche as a man might." And seith: "It is nat honest to chastice oon man in presence of anothir, and chastice the tother aparte." And seith: "Whanne a man excuseth himself of his blame ofte, it makith him recorde error." And seith: "The ignoraunt is but litel natwithstandinge that he be olde, and the wise is grete though so be that he be yonge." And seith: "The worlde dispreiseth every daye him that he was wonte for to worship, and the erthe etith him, the whiche he was wonte for to geve mete to." And seith: "Men maye knowe the foole by his wordis and the wiseman by his dedis." And seith that fewe folke have envye to a man whanne he is deed, but he seith that many folke wole lye upon him. Ande | seith: "Beth gladde and mery, and that sufficeth to angre the envious man." And thei asked him whi he wolde nat be maryed, and he answered: "Ho wole swymme in the see and maye nat, how wolde he swymme and bere oon in his necke?" And seith:

142 weele, weal (success). **144 covetise**, covetousness. **148 othir**, or; **outhir**, either; **menys**, means (intends). **150 brenneth**, burns. **152 dede**, deed. **161 sewen**, pursue; **prouffite**, profit. **166 sechith**, seeks. **167 peerle**, pearl; **see**, sea. **169 parfite**, perfect (ideal). **171 aourned**, adorned. **172 tother**, other. **175 dispreiseth**, dispraises (denounces). **176 etith**, eats. **179 deed**, dead. **181 maryed**, married. **182 bere**, bear.

185 "Kepe thee fro the company of a jangeller that ressemblith suche a thinge that shyneth whanne a man is ferre from it and whanne it is nygh it is right nowt." And seith: "Ho that taketh upon him for to do evel to another for thee, in lyke wise wol he do for another agenste thee." And seith: "Ho that preisith thee in any vertue that is nat founde in thee, he maye wel noye thee and make that thu shalt nat undirstande the vice that is in thee." And seith: "Wrath troubleth resoun as moche as it troubleth a man to do goode werkis, and the evell dedis at leyser." And seith: "Ho that laboureth in that that maye nat profite, he leveth for that the labour that shulde profite him." And seith: "The shame that men suffre for the condicions of evel folke troubleth and empechith the concupiscence of them." And seith: "Whanne thi frende hath erred agenste thee, yet departe thee nat from his love as longe as thu mayste fynde any maner that it myght be redressed." And seith: "Good and true is he that forgeth lightly that thinge whiche that his frend hath trespassed inne." And seithe: "It isbettir thu chastice thiself thanne be chasticed by othir." And seith: "The goodis that bene of ignorauntis bene lyke the herbes that growen upon dongehilles." And seith that evell fellashippes bene lyke as a tree sette on fyre, where oon bough settith afyre another. And seith: "The aunswere of somme thingis is a man for to holde his peas." And seith: "The noblest thinge in this worlde is man, and the moste noble thinge that is in man is reason, by the whiche he undirstondeth justice and departeth himself fro synne." And seith: "The foole knowith nat himself lightly." And seith: "An ignoraunt troveth lightly that oon thinge is another, and he that is doutefol makith many doutes or he maye undirstande it." And seith that it is right comendable bothe in heven and in erthe to have a true tung. And seith: "It apperteigneth nat to kinges ne princes to geve lordship and might but to people that bene petevous, and for that thei shulde love him as the fadir loveth the children." And seith that the ende of a resonable soulle is for to knowe trouthe, and the ende of sensualité is lyf, and the ende of corupte lyfe is peas. And seith: "It ought suffise to be venged of his annoye whanne the adversary partie askith forgevenesse." And somme asked him what was fraanchise, and he aunswere: "Delyveringe of silver." And seide: "Geve to hem that bene unknownen for the love of hem that bene | knownen; and forgeve to hem that have bene agenste thee, for hem that have holpen thee." And seith that the lyffe of this worlde is so shorte that no man ought conceive in his herte any enemyté to another. And seith: "Stablissheth thine angre with thi pacience and thyne ignoraunce with thi providence and wisdame." And seith that it is a good token in a childe to be good whanne that he is shamefaste, for he shewith himself that he shal have good tyme. And seith: "It is good to do wel whanne thu arte in good prosperité, for peraventure thu shalt have no power whanne thu arte in adversité." And seith: "Ho that dwellith in a provynce that hath a vengeable lorde, no rightwis justice, ne good leeche, nor plentevous market, ne no rennyng rever, he putteth in grete aventure him and his

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183 **jangeller**, a jester. 184 **ferre**, far; **nygh**, near. 185 **wol**, will. 189 **leyser**, leisure. 192 **empechith**, impeaches. 198 **dongehilles**, dunghills. 200 **peas**, peace. 203 **troveth**, trusts. 206 **apperteigneth**, appertains. 207 **petevous**, merciful. 210 **annoye**, annoyance. 211 **fraanchise**, generosity. 214 **holpen**, helped. 215 **enemyté**, enmity. 216 **Stablissheth**, Establish. 219 **peraventure**, perhaps. 221 **vengeable**, vengeful. 222 **rennyng rever**, running river; **aventure**, jeopardy.

goodis." And the seid Hermes charged Kinge Amon, seyeng: "The first thinge that I commaund thee is to drede God and obbeye him." And seith that alle men that have lordship over the people shulde have thre thingis in her mynde: firste, of the people that bene his subjectis; the secunde, though so be that thei be undir his lordship yet shulde he to his power kepe hem in fredame and nat in bondage; the thridde is that lordship maye nat longe endure. And seide: "O Amon, it behoveth thee to kepe thi soulle in pure trouth by wille and worde. And thou shuldest nat be sloughthfull to distroie the evell belevers and to constreyne hem to obbeye God. And coveite nat to treete with hem that bene of mysbeleve for no good by the which thu maiste make hem to disobbeye God. And loke thu gadre no ricchesses but yf thei be truly gotten. And knowe it wel that the people wolde alweies obbeye to good rule; and the realme maye nat fare wel but yf the people encres, for whanne the people bene loste and gone, the prince shal regne oonly over himself. And therfore considre oonly to thi soulle; and make the store of that, that may be helpinge therto in anothir worlde. And yf it fortune so to the that thu shalt go to the werr in thyne owen persone, loke thu bewar that thyne enemyes take thee nat dispourveied. And whanne thu shalt shewe thee to bataille, loke firste that thi people bene wele enfourmed and comforted and alle thi fighting men that thei be wele arαιed and at alle tymes redy. And beware that thyn enemyes overcome thee not sodeinly, but encrece thi wacche and thyne espies, to that entente that thu shalt knowe the governaunce of thyn enemyes. And loke ye bewar that youre enemyes deceyve you not. And yf so be that thu commaunde thi people to do anythinge, loke thu serche secretly whedir thei do it lyke as thu haste commaunded hem. And yf thu so do, thei wole drede thee more. And yf thu commaunde thi secretaire to make a lettre, loke thu seale it nat unto the tyme that thu haste | sene it, for many oon have been deceyved therby. And bewar that thu be nat to familier with alle that thu knowest and shewe nat alle the governaunce of thi people, but to them oonly that thu haste wel preved, and that thu knowest and undirstandeth hem for true men. And loke thu governe thee so wisely that thi knightis and thi people mowe be rejoissed of thi companye, and that thei maye have a joie and allowe thee in thi good governaunce, and that thei maye joie and delite in thi good rule. And loke thi sleep be suche as maye be sufficient to thyne hert, and entremete thee not but of true thingis, and alle thingis that thu doste maye be founded upon trouth withoute skornyng. And loke thu tary nat longe upon suche execusioun that thu muste nedis do. And loke thu be debonair and gracious to forgeve. Susteyne and love hem also that laboure in the grete alquemie. That is to seye: the labourers of the erth, suche as sowen the seedis and planten fruytes and alle other labourers by the whiche is proufite unto the people and knighthode multiplied, and the houses full of ricchesses, and the realmes susteyned by the whiche alle suche thingis is necessarie to be wel saved and kepte. And it is a commowne wele to worship every man aftir

227 **fredame**, freedom. 231 **mysbeleve**, unbelief. 232 **gadre**, gather. 234 **encres**, increase. 238 **werr**, war. 238–39 **dispourveied**, unprepared. 240 **enfourmed**, informed. 241 **araied**, arrayed. 242 **wacche**, watch; **espies**, lookouts. 246 **secretaire**, secretary. 248 **to, too**. 250 **haste**, has; **preved**, proved. 251 **mowe**, may. 254 **entremete**, associate. 255 **doste**, do. 256 **execusioun**, excuses. 258 **alquemie**, alchemy. 262 **wele**, weal (benefit).

his discreciooun, condicioun, and science, to that entente that the people maye knowe the goode and to do good to hem that sechen connynge, for this cause that thei shulde have greetir wille to lerne, and that thei wil entendre to their studie, and that alle the provynce that thei be inne maye be the bettir for hem. And also that ye make diligence to punysshe the evell doers as soone as ye goodly maye. And ho that wol do myscheve in thi realme or in thi lordship, anone make smyte of his hede openly afore the people, to that entente that the people maye take example: to the theef, kutte of his hande; the robbours of highweyes, lete hem be hanged to that entente that the weyes maye be more sure; the sodomites, lete hem be brente; and the men that bene taken in fornycacioun, lete hem be punysshed aftir the state of ther personys, and the wifes that bene founden in like wise aftir the same fourme. Also, kepe thee fro the talis of lyers, but punysshe hem openly; and lete thyne herte reste in excercise of trouthe. Also visite the prisoners oones in a moneth and delyver hem that owt to be deliverd, and do hem good. And tary nat longe for to punysshe suche as have deserved punycioun; and make kepe wele the tothir unto the tyme that thu knowe the trouth of her werkis. And kepe thee wele that thu use nat to moche for to do aftir thyn own counsell oonly, but be counselled by men of good discreciooun and age, whiche bene experte in many thingis. And whanne | thu fyndest a treue man and a rightwos, take thi counsel of him; and othirwise reporte thee to the moste holsom counsel, and God wil helpe thee." And seith: "He is a noble man that useth goode dedis, and thes dedis bene justice, chastité, and to geve frely withoute askinge." And seith: "It longeth to every man for to seche connynge, and to fortifie it in himself withoute doutinge of aven-
 tures that bene for to come, and kepe himself that he be nat lifte up in pride, nothir by ricchesse, nor by lordship. And loke his will, his seyengis, and his dedis maye be founde true, and thanne shal God love him and his successors." And seith that no man maye escape at the Daie of Doome, but by thre maner thingis, that is to seye: for his discretion, for his chastité, or for his goode dedis. And seith that alle thingis perisshen saulf goode dedis, and all thingis maye be hidde but nature. And seith that alle thingis maye be better redressed thanne evell maners, and alle thingis maye bene achieved but the commaundemente of God. And seith: "It is no merveille though he be good that loveth no covetyse, but it were grete merveille to see a covetouse man good." And seith: "Putte nat an evel doer to execucioune to hastily, but that he have some leyser to repente him." And seith that the erringe of wisemen is like the bothum of a shippe that is nat drowned himself, and maketh othir for to be drowned." And seith that fyaunce is a maner of bondage, and diffi-
 aunce is libertee. Ande seith: "Whanne that a kinge maye nat refreyne his voluntary wille and his coveytises, howe maye he reprove his servauntis? And whanne he maye nat repreve his own servauntis, how maye he redresse his own people, and namely them that bene ferre fro him? Thanne it is conveniente to a kinge firste to

263 science, intelligence. **265 greetir**, greater. **268 wol**, will. **269 of**, off; **afore**, before, in front of. **270 of**, off. **272 brente**, burned. **276 owt**, ought. **277 punycioun**, punishment. **278 her**, their. **279 to₁**, too. **281 rightwos**, righteous. **282 holsom**, wholesome. **291 saulf**, save (except for). **294 merveille**, marvel. **296 leyser**, leisure; **erringe**, erring. **297 bothum**, bottom; **drowned himself**, drowned itself. **298 fyaunce**, promise. **298–99 diffi-
 aunce**, deceit. **302 ferre**, far.

305 be maistir over himself and aftirwarde in due ordre over alle othir." And seith that a kinge ought nat to be fulle of suspessioun, for suspessioun makith the people to withdrawe hem fro him, and also he shulde nat have no suspessious man in his housholde, and specially suche as bene accusours, contryvers, and reportours of talis behinde a man. For yf the kinge suffre suche paciently in his hous, with grete peyne shal he have any sufficient servaunt or true counsellour."

3. ZAC

fol. 7v | Zac seith: "Ho that hath no power over his witte, he hath no power over his anger." And seith that a wise prince shulde nat by his wille be at debate with oon that is gretter and of more power thanne he is himself. And seith: "Whanne a kinge hath conquered and overcomen his enemye, he shulde kepe him and mayntene him in goode custumes, in justices, and in fredame, in pacience, in pardouns, and in othir goodnesses, for in suche wise a man makith him that was his enemye his frende." And seith: "Yf a kinge assemble an uteragious thresour and dispendith it nat upon thes thingis whiche thei were ordeigned to, he shal lose bothe his thresoure and his realme." And seith that the kingis subjectis bene to him as the wynde is with the fyre, for whanne the fyre is light in that place where that there is no wynde, he laboureth himself to brenne the faster. And seith: "A kinge shuld knowe hem that servyn him and establisshes every man aftir his degree, firste aftir his wis-dame, his discreciooun, and his trouthe. And he shulde geve hem aftir her deservynge, for oftentymes thei geve to the mysruled people whiche never deserved it, and thanne it shal withdrawe the courages of hem that have bene his true servauntis, and so in short tyme he shal have so many of thes nougthy people that it shal nat lye in his power for to delyver hem fro him." And seith that a prince shulde nat lerne alle thingis, for ther ben many thingis that a prince shulde nat knowe.

4. ZALQUAQUINE

fol. 8r | Zalquaquine seith: "Ho that knowith the daye, he wol aryse more erly." And seith that men resceyven their goodis that thei have in erthe of her Creatour notwithstanding that thei do synne, yet bene thei bounden to thanke God of the goodes that He hath sente hem and to aske forgevenes of her evell dedis. And seith: "Many thingis semyn goode and ben moche preyed that aftir be moche blamed, and many thingis ben displesaunte at the begynnyng whiche aftirwarde bene gretly desired." And seith: "It is bettir to thee to have grete nede thanne for to borow at him whiche thu haste no truse inne." And seith: "Yf thu woldeste teche a foole, thu shalt make him more fool thanne he was before." And seith: "I have grete merveile of hem that done abstynence of mete, whiche that noyeth the body, and absteyneth nat hemself fro synne, whiche noyeth the soule." And seith: "Lete scilence be multiplied in you, for it shal put away periles, and use trouth, whiche is the lernyng of talis." And seith: "Ho that wole kepe wele the lawe shulde leve

1 **Ho**, who. 4 **mayntene**, maintain. 5 **fredame**, freedom. 7 **thresour**, treasure. 11 **brenne**, burn. 12 **hem**, them. 13 **her**, their. 17 **delyver**, remove.

1 **Ho**, who; **wol**, will. 2 **her**, their. 3 **bene**, been. 4 **her**, their. 6 **displesaunte**, unpleasant. 8 **teche**, teach. 10 **merveile**, marvel; **mete**, food; **noyeth**, annoys. 13 **wele**, well.

15 of his good to his frende, and to be gracious to him that he knowith that wil nat
denye justice to his enemye, and to kepe from alle thingis that touchith his dis-
honour."

5. HOMER

fol. 8v | Omer was a vercifiour in the olde tyme, and was of the land of Grece and of the
grettest estate of the Grekis, and was aftir Moyses fyve hundred and thre skore yer,
5 whiche made many goode thingis and alle the vercifiours of Grece followed his
disciplyne. The whiche Omer was taken and solde lyke a bonde man and put into
prysoun. And oon came to him that wold have bought him and asked him of whens
he was. He aunswere and seide that he was of fadir and modir. And efte he asked
him and seide: "Wilt thou that I shal bye thee?" And he aunswere him and seide:
10 "To what entente doste thou aske me counsell of thi money?" And thanne he asked
him agen: "To what thinge arte thou good?" He aunswere him agen: "For to be
deliverd," and laye longe aftir in prisoun and at the laste he was deliverd. And was
a man of faire stature and wel shapen and leved an hundred and eight yeris. And
heraftir followe his seyengis, that is to seye: "He maye be called wise that can re-
freyne his tunge." And seith: "Yf thou wilt use counsell, it shal be to thee grete reste,
15 and laboure to othir." And seith that the lyfe of frendeship is to leve withoute
fraude or baret. And seith: "Be conversaunte with goode men, and thu shalt be oon
of hem; and yf thu be in felaship of evell men, thu shalt folowe her fellaship." And
seith: "He is a liberal man that applieth himself to goode and clene werkis, and that
doth hem in dede, before or he have any occasion to be lette." And seith: "Whanne
20 the herte is hool in connynge, it shyneth in vertues." And seith that debate is the
fruyte of evel thought. And seith: "A man that is to stille of his speche, he is com-
ounly a man that hath but litil undirstandinge." And seith: "The mouthe shewith
that that lyth in the herte." And seith: "Man shewith by his semblaunt that that lyth
25 in his herte before or he speke it." And seith: "It is merveile that a man maye be
likened to God, and doth his peyne to make himself lyke a beeste." And seith: "Be-
ware that thu take nat upon thee suche thingis whiche thu mayste be accused of,
for yf thu do it, thu shal be the cause of thyne owen accusacion." And seith: "Peyne
30 thiself for to gete goode thingis, for by hem thu shalt lose the evel thingis." And
seith: "There was somtyme a wiseman whiche was in the see in a shippe, and by
fortune the ship perysshed. And this wiseman eskaped with gret peyne into a litil
35 ylonde, and there, beyng allone uppon the brynde of the see, drough a fygure |
of geometry. And there come certeigne maryners and fonde him there, and there
thei toke him and brought him to the kinge of the same cuntré and tolde him of
the aventure: how he eskaped, and what he had made upon the see brynk. Wher-
fore the kinge commaunded in alle his cuntré that every man shulde enforce him-
self for to gete hem thingis that myght abyde though their navire were broken in
the see. That is for to seye: for to lerne connynge and to do goode dedis." And seith

1 *vercifiour*, poet. **4** *bonde man*, slave. **6** *efte*, again. **7** *bye*, buy. **8** *doste*, do. **10** *deliverd*,
released. **14** *leve*, live. **15** *baret*, conflict. **16** *her*, their. **18** *doth*, does; **or**, ere (before);
lette, hindered. **19** *hool*, whole; **connynge**, knowing; **shyneth**, shines. **20** *to*, too. **22**
semblaunt, appearance. **23** *merveile*, marvel. **28** *see*, sea. **30** *ylonde*, island; **drough**, drew.
35 *navire*, navy.

that man berith upon himself two byrdons: oon before and anothir behinde — and thes that bene before him bene the errors and the vices of othir folkis, and these that bene behinde him bene his owen propre viciis. And seide to his sone: “Kepe thee from vices and covetyses, for and thu be covetous, thu shalt be poure.” And seith: “Yf thu be paciente, thu shal be preyed; and yf thu be proude, thu shalt be dispreyed.” And seith: “A good man is bettir thanne alle maner beestis, and in lyke wise an evel man is wors and more foule thanne any beest of the erthe.” And seith that wisdame is thinge of grete power, whiche causeth every man to do their craftes by good reason. And seith that knowelech is bettir thanne ignoraunce, for by knowelech a man maye eschewe to falle in the fyre, and by ignoraunce there may no man eschewe no perell ne hurtie. And seith that this werlde is the hous of tempeste, and of marchaundyse, for somme by their goode dedis departyn with wynnyng, and the tothir departen in losse for their symple governaunce. And seith: “By grete diligence a man cometh to have his entente, and dialectacion is a swete instrumente; the swete wordis putte aweye grete noyaunce. And to promyse a thinge and nat fulfille it, it is the puttyng away of love.” And seith: “Ho that hath grete power in this werlde maye nat rejoysit longe, and ho that hath noon, he is dispreyed.” And seith: “There maye nat be a fouler thinge thanne for to be a lyer, and there maye no good thinge be in a lyer.”

6. SOLON

fol. 9v | Zalon establisshed the lawe in Athenes and compyled many bokis of goode predicaciouns, and was of the same cité of Athenes, whiche was replenysshed of many wyse men in tho dayes, and made certeigne versis by whiche he taught a man that he shulde flee from his owen propre wille. And seith: “Whanne thu wilt do anythinge, sewe nat in alle thinge thyne owen wille, but seche counsell, for by counsell thu shalt undirstande the trouth of thingis.” Somme asked him a questioun — whiche was the moste dyffuse thinge to a man? And he aunsuered and seide: “To knowe himself and to kepe him in fredom, and that he speke nat in placis where that he aught nat to speke inne, and to kepe himself from that anger that he maye nat be amended by, and coveyte nat that thinge that he maye nat have.” And seith: “The thingis of this werlde, lawes and othir, bene susteyned by two maner of thingis, that is to seye: undir the swerde and under baner.” And seith to oon of his disciples: “Kepe thee fro mocking, for mockinge engendreth hate.” And seith that the vertues of man bene nat of his owen gefte, but these that bene geve him by his werkis. And somme asked him what thinge shulde be holde liberal, and he aunsuered and seide: “He that usith liberalitee and coveyteth nat othir mennys goodis.” And somme asked him what thinge was sharper thanne a spere, and he aunsuered: “the tunge of an evel man.” And a riche man asked him what maner goodis were thei that he hadde, and he aunsuered and seide: “My thresour is suche that no

37 berith, bears. 40 and₂, if. 42 dispreyed, denounced. 45 knowelech, knowledge. 48 marchaundyse, commerce. 51 noyaunce, annoyace.

2 predicaciouns, exhortations; cité, city. 5 sewe, follow; seche, such. 7 dyffuse, renowned. 13 fro, from. 15 holde liberal, considered generosity. 16 mennys, men's. 19 thresour, treasure.

20 man maye have it, but yf it be by my wil; and it is nat the lasse for nothing that I
 geve awey therof, but thu mayste geve awey none of thi richesse but it wole be the
 lasse." And seith: "Yf thou wilt have the love of thi frende, be stedfaste and true to
 him; and yf he erre, suffre hym." And seith: "Oon aught nat to preyse a man of
 25 gretter goodness than is in him, for himself knoweth wel the trouth whedir he sey
 soth or nat." Anothir asked him how a man shulde gete him frendis, and he aun-
 suered: "In seyng worship of men behinde here backis." And seith: "A good soulle
 sorowith not ne rejoissith nat but whanne she maye see goode thingis and none
 30 evell thingis, nor she soroweth nat but whanne she seth alle evell thingis ande
 noone goode; and the good soulle that seth all the worlde seeth the goode thingis,
 and the evell thingis so entremedled that she owethe nat gretly to rejoisse nor
 gretly to make sorowe." And Zalon loste his sone and beganne to wepe, and oon
 fol. 10r asked him a question — | what it dede profite him for to wepe. And he aunsuered
 and seide: "I wepe that that profiteth." And seith: "A kinge that dothe right and
 35 justyce shal regne and governe his people. And ho that dothe wrong and violence
 sekith anothir kinge for to regne for him." And seith: "It longeth to a lord firste
 to redresse himself and thanne othir men aftir him, and ellis it were lyke as he
 wolde redresse his owen schadowe before himself." And thei asked him how were
 townes and citees wel governed. He aunsuered and seide: "Whanne that princes
 worken aftir the lawes."

7. ZABYON

Zabyon was a grete defensour of his frendis, and he had suche frendis whiche
 a kinge hadde thought for to slee. And whan Zabyon knewe therof he wente unto
 hem for to helpe hem agenste the same kinge. And thanne the king assembled
 5 grete people and discomfited hem, and there was Zabyon taken, and the kinge
 commaunded that he shulde be gretly turmented in caas that he wolde nat telle ho
 were thei that were consentynge for to make him werre. And Zabyon aunsuered
 and seide: for no peyne that myght be done unto him, he wolde never telle any-
 thinge that shulde hurte his frendis; and evyn forthwithall, he, beyng in an en-
 10 gyne, boote of his owen tunge to that entente that he shulde have no power for to
 accuse his frendys. That same Zabyon leved forty-eight yer, and heraftir folowe his
 seyngis. Zabyon seide to his dissiples: "Yf ye leese anythinge, loke ye seye nat that
 ye have loste it, but seye that ye have made restitucion of that that was nat yours."
 And seide to oon of his dyssiples: "Geete thee many freendys, and thei shull aswage
 15 thi thoughtis." And seith: "A wyseman shulde kepe him from weddynge of a feyre
 wyffe, for many oon wolde have her love, and by that the wyf might sette thee lasse
 by here husbande." And seith that alle evell is in dilectacion of money. And oon of
 his men came to him and seid that he hadde but oon soone and he was deed, to

20 lasse, less. **21 richesse**, material wealth. **25 soth**, truth. **26 seyng**, saying; **here**, their.
28 seth, sees. **30 entremedled**, intermingled. **32 dede**, did. **34 ho**, who; **dothe**, does. **36**
ellis, else.

1 defensour, defender. **2 slee**, slay. **4 discomfited**, defeated. **5 wolde**, would; **ho**, who.
6 werre, war. **8-9 engyne**, engine (torture device). **9 boote**, but. **11 leese**, lose. **13 Geete**,
 Get. **17 deed**, dead.

fol. 10v the whiche he seid | that he knewe wel that he was mortall, and nat immortall. Ande
 20 seith that a man aught nat to doute ne feere the deeth of the bodye, but oonly the
 deeth of the soulle. Thanne it was aunsuered him, seyng thus: "Wilt thou seye that
 25 a resonable soulle maye deye?" And he aunsuerd and seide: "Loke whanne a reson-
 able soulle is converted into the natur of a beest withoute usynge reason, nathwith-
 standinge that it is a substaunce incorruptible, yet it is taken for deed for it losith
 30 the lyffe of undirstandinge." And as he wente by the see-syde, he sawe a yong man
 syttinge on the stronde, weepynge and sigheng for the advercitees of this worlde.
 And this Zabyon came unto him and seide: "Soone, be nat in dyspeire, for and thu
 were never so riche and thu were in the myddes of the see in peryle of thi body and
 35 of thi goodis, yet woldest thu wysshe no goodis but that thi body myght oonly be
 saved; and yf thu were a kinge, and taken into pryon and thyne enemyes wolde
 slee thee and depryve thee of alle thi goodis and thy realme, thu woldest nat desire
 noon erthely thinge, but oonly the deliveraunce of thi body." The yonge man auns-
 40 uered him and seide that he seide true, and thanne seide Zabyon to him: "Loke
 that thu thenke that and alle thes perilles hadde come to thee and thu haddest
 eskaped hem, thu woldest have bene wele contente of the state that thu standiste
 inne at this tyme." And so departed the yonge man from Zabyon gretly comforted.

8. HIPPOCRATES

Ipocras was dyssiple to Esculapius the secunde, and was of the lynage of Escu-
 lapius the firste, of the whiche lynage were two kingis. And of the seid Ypocras
 began firste the science of medycyne, the whiche he shewed and taught to his
 5 children, and commaunded hem that thei shulde nat shewe it to no straungiers,
 but oonly fro the fadir to the sone, and so it shulde alweis abide in hem. And
 10 commaunded hem that thei shulde dwelle alwey in the myddes of Greece, in thre
 fol. 11r yles, and Ypocras was of the ile of Chau, for thanne was loste the studye of the |
 tother two iles in his tyme. And the oppynyon of the first Esculapius was that men
 shulde use fysyk by experiance oonly, and seide that fesyk was never founden but
 15 by experiance; and in that wyse, fesyk was used nine yere, unto the tyme that there
 came anothir fesian, whiche was called Ancyas, and helde an oppynyon that
 experiance withoute reasoun shulde do grete harme. And were used bothe their
 20 two oppynyons seven hundred yere, unto the tyme that there came anothir fesysyan,
 whiche was named Bramaydes, whiche dispreised experiance, seyenge: "To moche
 harme myght come therof." And seide that as in the feete of medycyne, men
 shulde use by reasoun oonly. And lefte behynde him thre dyssiples, whiche thre
 25 weren of diverse oppynyons; for the toon used his crafte by experiance oonly, and
 the tothir used by reason oonly, and the thridde by subtilté and enchauntement.
 And this was used seven hundred yere unto the tyme that there came anothir
 fesysyan, whiche was named Platon, whiche serched diligently the seyengis of his
 30 predecessours in that science, and knewe wele and cleerly that experiance oonly

25 **stronde**, beach. 26 **and**, if. 27 **myddes**, midst. 31 **deliveraunce**, rescue. 33 **thenke**, think.
 1 **lynage**, lineage. 5 **alweis**, always. 6 **myddes**, middle. 7 **yles**, islands. 8 **tother**, other.
 9 **fysyk**, physic (medicine). 11 **fesian**, physician. 14 **dispreised**, denounced; **To**, Too.
 15 **feete**, feat. 17 **toon**, one.

was nat good, and also that reasoun oonly suffysed nat. And thanne he toke the bookis of alle the oppynyons aboveseide and brente hem that were made of subtilté and enchauntementes, and the bookis that were made of experience only — and the bookis that were made of reason and experience togedre, he withhelde hem and kepte hem and commaunded that thei shulde be used. And aftir that, this Platon dyed and lefte the crafte of medycyne with fyve of his dyssiples, of the which he ordeigned oon for to heele men that had seeknesse in the body, and anothir he taught for to leete blood and for to seere, and the thirde he taught for to heele woundys and clense hem, and the fourth he taught for to heele soore yghen, and the fyfte he taught to sette togedir boonyss whanne thei were broken. And aftir these men came the secunde Esculapius, whiche serched diligently alle these oppynyons and in especial the oppynyons of Platon, the whiche he used and helde for true and resonable. And lefte aftir him thre dyssiples, that is for to seye: Ypocras and two othir. Of the which tweyne of hem deyed and lefte noone alyve but Ypocras, whiche was in his tyme a parfite man in vertues, and used experience and reasoun togedir. The whiche Ypocras, whanne he sawe that the science of medycyne was lyke to have be loste, in as moche as his two fellaws wer deede, whiche were wonte to dwelle in the two iles aboveseide, and that he was lefte al aloone in the ile of Chau, chase for the moste profitable thinge the connynge of experience and reason togedir and wolde | that it were shewed and taught nat oonly to his children and frendis, but generally to alle these that were apte for to lerne it. And dampned certeigne oppynyons of the same science, and he compiled certeigne thingis therto in shorte wordes, and commaunded his two soonys, whiche were at that tyme maistres of the same science, that thei shulde teche it generally, seyenge that it were more covenable thinge to shewe the same science to straungiers that were able thanne to her frendys that wer unable. And as he commaunded hem, so was it done, and that hath dured unto this daye. And duryng his lyfe, he taught many straungiers that same cunnyng, takinge their assuraunce. It happened upon a tyme that a kinge of Perce, whos name was Dasser, sente to the kinge of the ile of Chau, whos name was Pillate, praynge him that he wolde sende him Ypocras, and sente him worde that he wolde geve him an hundred besauntes of golde. And at that tyme, the cuntré of Greece was devyded into many realmes, of the whiche somme of hem payed trewage to the kinge of Perce, and namely the isle of Chau; for the which the seide Pillate commaunded Ypocras that he shulde go to the kinge of Perce, for to heele the people of the pestilence that regned amonge hem. Ande also for the grete hurte that myght falle to him and to his ile in caas that he wente nat, and also that the seid Pillate had no power to withstande the kinge of Perce. To the whiche Ypocras aunsuered that he wolde never goo to heele the enemyes of Grece; and also the people of the towne that he dwelled inne seyden to the kinge Pillate that thei hadde lever dye thanne Ypocras shulde go from hem. And Ypocras was aftir Nabugodonosor an hundred forty-six yere, and made many bookis of fesyk, of the whiche we have thirti, and thei muste be studied by ordre;

23 brente, burned. **29 leete**, let; **seere**, cauterize. **30 yghen**, eyes. **31 boonyss**, bones. **36 parfite**, perfect. **40 chase**, chose; **connynge**, learning. **43 dampned**, denounced. **44 soonys**, sons. **45 maistres**, masters; **teche**, teach. **46 covenable**, appropriate. **48 dured**, endured. **50 Perce**, Persia. **52 besauntes**, bezants. **54 trewage**, tribute.

we have othir bookis also that Galyen compiled. And Ypocras was but litil of body,
 65 crokebacked, and had a grete hed and was passinge pensyf, and of litil language,
 and loked moche downewarde to the erthe, and helde allweys in his hande a
 fleeme for to lete blood or ellis a braunche which was holsome for the yghe sight.
 And leved eighty andiftene yere, of the whiche he emplied in studye sevenetene
 70 yer and alle the remanent of his yeris he was maistir. And heraftir followen a partie
 of his seyngis. Ande seith: "Suretee in poverté is more worth thanne feere in
 ricches." And seith that the lyffe is shorte and the peyne is longe, experience is
 74 perylous and jugement is daungerous. And seith that the helthe of body is in hem
 fol. 12r that wole nat be ydell, but putte hemself in excercyse of doyng goode dedis, and
 that he shulde nat fylle his body with superfluyté of meetis and drynkes. And seith:
 80 "A man is bettir | to make lasse a thinge that noyeth thanne to encres a thinge that
 helpith." And seith that the herte is turmented with two passyons, that is to seye
 with sorowe and thought, for sorowe is a passyon that toucheth thingis that bene
 passed, and thought is dreede of thingis that bene for to come. And seith: "That
 85 soulle is loste that hath none othir joye but upon the covetyses of this worlde." And
 seith: "Ho that wol have the lyffe of his soulle, he muste turmente it and slee it in
 this worlde." And seith that true love maye be wel between two wysemen, but never
 betwene two foolys, notwithstandinge that thei be lyke in foly, for the wysdame
 goth by ordre and maye accorde in oon maner of seurté but in foly is none orde-
 naunce, and therfore fooles maye never accorde in love. And seith: "A man shulde
 90 nat swere for thingis but by ye and by naye." And seith: "Holde you contente with
 that that aught suffyce you, and so shal ye never have surfeete; for by that maner,
 thu shalt be the nerre unto God, for God hath no surfeet; and thanne the more
 that thu holdeste thee content, the more thu shalt be withdrawnen from malices and
 evell dedis. Also withdrawe you fro synne and seche the ende of vertues and good-
 95 nesses." And seith: "Ho that will be free, coveyte nat that thu mayste nat have or
 ellis thu shalt be bonde." And seith that a man shulde be in this worlde as a shame-
 faste man at a grete feste, of the which whanne a man offreth him the cuppe, he
 resceiveth it, and yf it be nat geven him, he taketh it not ne askith it not. And seith:
 "Yf thu wilt have that that thu coveyteth, loke thu coveyte nat that thinge that thu
 100 mayste nat have." And oon asked him a questyoun of evell and foulle thingis, to the
 which he aunsuerd nothinge. And thanne it was asked him whi he aunsuerd nat,
 and he seide that the aunsuer of suche thingis is not ellis but "holde his peas." And
 seith that this worlde is nat perpetuel and abidynge, "and therfore loke ye deferre
 not in any wyse for to do goode deedis and in lyke wyse for to gete you a good
 name." And seith: "He that knoweth nat trouth is bettir excused yf he do it not,
 thanne he that is wel enfourmed of trouth." And seith that cunnyng is lyke a sper-
 yte and werke is lyke the body; and cunnyng is lyke the roote of a tree and the
 deede is like the braunchis; and cunnyng is lyke a thinge that is engendred. And
 seith: "Take a litell cunnyng at a tyme, to that entente that thu mayste come to

65 **crokebacked**, hunchbacked; **passinge pensyf**, very pensive. 67 **fleeme**, surgical lancet; **holosome**, wholesome. 73 **wole**, will. 74 **meetis**, meats. 75 **noyeth**, annoys; **encres**, increase. 79 **covetyses**, coveted things. 80 **slee**, slay. 82 **folye**, folly. 83 **goth**, goes; **seurté**, surety. 87 **nerre**, nearer. 92 **feste**, feast. 97 **peas**, peace. 101–02 **speryte**, spirit. 102 **cunnyng**, wisdom.

- 105 more, for yf thu woldest take more at the firste thanne thy witte wolde suffyse, it myght gretly hurte thee."

9. PYTHAGORAS

fol. 12v | Pyctagoras seide that it was a passinge good thinge for to serve God and to make holy alle his humanytees; to preyse the worlde and use justice and other goode dedis; to absteyne himself fro synne. And also he seith: "It is good for to have cunnynge, for to knowe the trouthe of thingis; and every man for to love othir; and also to use fastingis; and men shulde studye for to lerne and to teche the men and the wymmen." And also he ordeigned for to speke congruly, and seide that the soulle is everlastynge, and covenable for to resceive meritis and peynes. And he was so attempre in his diete that he was never gretter, ne smaller, ne more leene, oon tyme thanne another. And he was right subtile and loved bettir to do wele to his frendis thanne to himself, seyenge that the goodnesse of a frende shulde be knownen. And compiled two hundred eighty volumes of bookis, and was borne in Fanus. And seide that the evel nat durable is bettir thanne the good nat durable, and that was wretyn in his signet and on his girdel. And seide also that oure creacion cometh of God; also, it is convenyente that oure soulles retorne to Him. And seith: "Yf thou wilt knowe God, enforce thee nat to moch for to knowe men." And seith that the wiseman takith none heede to serve God with wordis oonly, but with dedis. And seith that it is wisedame for to love God. And seith: "Ho that loveth God wole do the dedis that God loveth; and he that loveth to do the werkis that God loveth, he is of God; and he that is of God is nygh his neyghbour." And seith: "God is nat worshipped by sacrifices and othir thingis as bene offred unto him, but oonly by acceptable wille." And seith: "Ho that spekith moche, it is a token that he hath but litil knowelech." And seith: "Loke thou have alweye remembraunce, in everything | that thou doste or makeste, that God is by thee and seeth what thou dost; and by that thou shalt be shamefaste for to do amys. And God allone knoweth man that is wise and dredith Him, and therfore merveylle thee nat though men knowe nat thee." And seith that God hath no more covenable thinge upon the erth thanne the soulle that is pure and clene. And seith that a man shulde speke of noble and goode thingis; and yf it be not his ease for to speke, at the leest lete him heere hem that spoken of goode thingis. And seith: "Loke thou eschewe alle fylthes as wel of thiself as of othir persones, and specially of thyn own self." And seith: "Looke thou gete thi goodis of this worlde truly and in worshipfull maner, and loke thou dispende hem in lyke wise." And seith: "Whanne thou herest any lesingis, loke thou be paciente in the heryng of hem; and do suche deedis that the people aught nat to seye evell." And seith: "Attende to the helth of thi body and loke thou tempre thiself in etynge and drynkynge, of lyenge with wommen, and in alle othir labours; and do so with thi power that othir folkis shulde have no cause to envye thee." And seith: "Be nat to outeragious a spender, and be nat suche a

1 **passinge**, surpassingly. 3 **synne**, sin. 5 **teche**, teach. 6 **congruly**, correctly. 7 **covenable**, appropriate. 13 **wretyn**, written. 15 **to moch**, too much. 17 **Ho**, Who. 19 **nygh**, near. 23 **doste**, do. 24 **amys**, amiss. 25 **merveylle**, marvel. 32 **herest**, hear. 33 **lesingis**, lies. 35 **etynge**, eating. 37 **to₂**, too.

negarde that thu shalt be servaunt to thi goodis, but loke thu have attemperaunce
 and mesure, whiche that bene profitable to alle thingis." And seith: "Loke thu be
 40 wakin ge in thi council, for thi slepinge shal make thee partener with the deth." And seith: "Medle nat with that thinge that thu haste nat adoo of." And seithe that
 the talis of a jangeller, his preyers and his sacrefices, bene displeasaunte and con-
 trarie unto God. And seith: "It is bettir a man to blame himself thanne to blame his
 45 frendis." And seith: "He that holdeth himself nat contente maye nat abide trouth." And seith: "He that hath no cunnyng, he hadde as leef be blamed as preised." And seith: "Take hem for thi germeynes that helpen thee to lernynge." And seith:
 50 "The juge that dothe nat his jugementis rightwosly deserveth to have all evel." And seith: "Kepe thi tunge and speke no vileyinous thingis, nor also that thu here
 hem not." And seith: "Stablisshethisself that thu maiste governe thi lyffe by wyse-
 55 dom." And seith: "A man shulde nat enforce himself in this worlde to make grete
 bilingis, ne that he shulde leeve grete goodis behynde him, aftir his deth, to the
 servyce of othir folke, but he shulde enforce himself to gete and gadre suche
 60 thingis as maye proufyte him aftir his deth." And seith: "It is bettir for a man to lye
 in a woode and to beleeve stedfastly on God thanne for to lye in a bedde of cloth
 fol. 13v of golde and | make any doutes of God." And seith: "Make thi marchaundises that
 thei maye be spirituall and nat corporall, and undir that fourme thi wynnyng shal
 65 be good." And seith that pitee is the fundacion of the feere and drede of God. And
 seith: "And thu woldeste renne in any thought that cometh upon thee, thu muste
 70 defende thee." And seith: "Make redy thi soulle to resceive thingis whiche that
 bene covenable and longynge to thee, be it good or evel." And seith: "Put oute fro
 thee the vanytees of this worlde, for thei hurte the reasoun." And seith: "Thu
 shuldeste nat sleepe in the nyght unto the tyme that thu haste remembred thee of
 75 alle the dedis that thu haste done in the daye: yf thu have erred and wherinne, and
 yf thu have done anythinge that thu oughtest nat for to have done, or ellis that thu
 haste nat done thingis that thu shuldest have done. And yf thu fynde that thu haste
 done any evel thinge, repente thee and beseche God of mercy. And yf thu have
 done any good thinge, loke thu be glad and thanke God hertily. And this wise
 76-78 doyng, thu maiste come to His grace." And seith: "Whanne thu wilt begynne to
 do anythinge, firste beseche God that He wole helpe thee to perfourme it." And
 seith: "Yf thu have be in fellaship with any man whiche was nat covenable to be thi
 felawe and true frende, yet kepe alwaies that he be nat thyne enemy." And seith:
 "Preve men by her werkis, and nat by her seyengis, for thu shalt fynde many that
 wole do evel and speke faire wordis." And seith: "A man shulde nat erre, and yf he
 erred, he shulde knowe his errore and kepe himself from dronkennesse." And
 seith that wyne is enemye to the soulle, for yf he take to moche, it shal corupt his
 dedis in suche wise as a man shulde joyne fyre and fyre togodre. And seith: "A man
 shulde be obeisaunt to his lord and nat oonly so moche that his liberte shulde be
 80-82 uttirly empeched." And seith that it is more covenable thinge for a man to dye
 to moche, too much.

38 **attemperaunce**, moderation. 42 **jangeller**, jester. 45 **as leef**, as soon. 46 **germeynes**,
 kinsmen. 47 **rightwosly**, righteously. 48 **here**, hear. 49 **Stablisshethisself**, Establish. 53 **prouf-
 yte**, profit. 55 **marchaundises**, merchandise. 58 **And**, If; **renne**, run. 66 **beseche**, beseech.
 67-68 **and this wise doyng**, in this way of doing. 72 **Preve**, Prove; **her**, their. 75 **to
 moche**, too much.

thanne for to put his soulle in everlasting derknesse. And seith: "Lette nat for to
 80 do goode dedis though so be that thei be nat pleasinge to the worlde." And seith:
 "Loke thu do thi power that thu maiste alwaye kepe thi soulle in good estate, how-
 soever it falle of thi body." And seith that the pure and clene soulle hath no delite
 in erthely thingis. And seith: "Go nat the weyes where soulles growen." And seith:
 "It behoveth thee to seche for thiself and nat for thi good." And seith that it is nat
 85 conveniente for to do all that a man coveiteth, but do that that longeth unto him.
 fol. 14r And a man shulde knowe the tyme for to holde | his peas and the tyme for to speke.
 And seith: "Ho that restreyneth not and kepith nat his soulle withinne his body,
 that place shal be as a pitte." And seith: "He is free that lettith for no maner of cov-
 eytise to do his devoir to the savyng of his soulle." And seith: "Put oute of thi will
 90 alle coveityses, and thanne trouthe shal be shewed unto thee." And seith: "A man
 maye nat knowe so wel as for to enquere." And somme asked him ho him seemed
 that was free. He aunsuerd and seide: "He that was boonde to honestee." And
 seith: "He is nat verry pacient that endureth as meche as he maye, but he is pacient
 95 that substeyneth and endureth over possibilite." And seith: "In like wise as a leech
 is nat holden for good where that othir men healyn, and can nat heale himself, in
 like wise he maye be called no good governour that commaundeth odir for to es-
 chewe vices and can nat kepe himself therefro." And seith: "The worlde varieth
 oon tyme with thee, another tyme fro thee; thanne, yf thou maye rule it, thenke that
 100 thou wilt reule it wele; and yf it reule thee, thou muste meeke thiself." And seith:
 "Moch evel cometh to doome beestis, for thei speke not and to men for thei have
 to moche language." And seith: "With grete peyne maye he be greved that maye
 withstande himself from foure thingis. That is for to seye: from to grete hastynesse,
 105 and he repente himself; from pride, for it shal cause him to have hate; from par-
 reynge with hisbettir, for he shal be depressed; from pertinence, perdition." And
 sawe a man speikinge lewedly, and wele and ryally arraied, to whome he seide:
 "Outher speke aftir thyne arraye or ellis clothe thee aftir thi language." And the
 king of Cecile preied him that he wolde dwelle with him, to whome he aunsuerd
 110 and seide: "Thi dedis bene contrarye to proufite, and thyne office distroioith the
 foundement of the feithe, and for that cause I wole nat dwelle with thee, for that
 leech is nat seure that amonge his seeke men wexeth seek himself." And seide to
 his dissiples: "Coveite no maner of thingis that oon hath for ther qualite or for ther
 115 knowelech, but gete hem that bene loved of hemself." And seith: "Yf thou wilt that
 thi soone or thi servaunt make no maner faulfe, thu secheste that thinge that is
 outh of nature." And seith: "The soulle is in dilectacioun and joie amonge the
 goode men, and in sorowe and hevynesse amonge the badde men." And seith: "The
 120 wiseman thenkith upon his soulle as diligently as doth another upon his body." And
 seith: "Take suche to thi frendis as that thu seest followe trouthe." And seith:
 fol. 14v "Thenke before or thu werche." And seith: "In lyke wise as the leech maye nat |
 goodely heele the seek man withoute that he telle him the trouthe of his seeknesse,

84 seche, beseech. **86 peas**, peace. **88–89 coveytise**, covetousness. **89**
devoir, duty. **96 odir**, others. **100 doome beestis**, dumb beasts. **103–04 parreyng**,
 bickering. **105 ryally**, royally. **106 Outher**, Either. **107 Cecile**, Sicily. **110 leech**, physi-
 cian; **wexeth**, waxes (becomes). **113 soone**, son; **secheste**, seek. **116 thenkith**, thinks. **118**
 or, ere; **werche**, work.

120 in lyke wise a man maye nat be wel counseilled of his frend, but yf he telle him the trouthe of his matier, nor he shal nat longe have his love." And seith: "In many enemyes lithe parfite truste, for oon takith heed to the tother." And whanne Pictagoras sate in his chayer, he spake of suche chastisingis and seide: "Dresse youre feete and also youre paas and gothe wisely. Attempre youre coveityses and youre helth shal dure. Use justice and ye shal have love, and geve nat to grete dilectaciouns to youre body, for ye shal nat suffre aftir the advercites whanne thei come." And seith: "I allowe nat the ricchesses that bene lightly and freely loste, nor thes richesses that bene gotten and holden by fals coveityse and by caytifenesse." And he sawe an olde man that was ashamed for to lerne, to whome he seide: "Whi hast thou shame for to lerne? Cunnyng is more worth to thee in the ende of thi dayes thanne it was in the begynnyng." And seith: "Yf thou wilt dispreyse thyne enemye, loke it appere nat by thi countenaunce that he is thyne enemye." And seith: "A kinge ought to thenk diligently upon the estate of his realme and to visite it as ofte as the good gardener dothe his gardeyne." And seith: "The kinge shulde be the firste man that shulde kepe the lawes, and aftir him thei that bene moste nexste him and moste privé frendis." And seith: "It belongeth nat to a kinge for to be proude, nor use nat oonly his owen counsell, nor to put himself in no place but he knowe it wele, nor to ryde in derke nyghtis; but he shulde be gladde of visage, in loking and salewinge goodely the people, and be conversaunte goodely among hem but nat to famylier, for the people can considre right wel suche thingis. And the wommen that shulde serve the quene shulde be of fifty yeris or above, and his men and servauntis shulde nat be to olde, to lewde, ne maugracious. And whanne the kinge wol sleepe, leete him have alweies somme of his men aboue him for to kepe him, whiche he shulde punyssh and thei made faute of their attendance; and that he bewar that he eete nat of the meete that a jellous womman geveth him, ne of no suspecte persone." And seith: "Thei that desiren the coveityse of their bodies, thei arne boonde to her witte, and thei that desiren spirituell thingis bene boonde to resoun." And seith: "A good man thenketh ofte upon his synnes, and an evel man thenkith moche upon his vertues." And for his wyfe was deed in a straunge cuntré, somme came to him and asked him whedir | there were any difference for to deye in a mannes owen cuntree or in another cuntrey. He aunsuerd and seide: "Where that ever a man dwell, alle is oon weye into anothir werlde." And thei asked him what was the moste delectable thinge to man, and he aunsuerd: "That thinge that man desireth." And seide to a yonge man that wolde nat lerne: "Childe, yf thou wilt nat lerne, thou shalt have the peyne of no cunnyng." And seith: "God loveth him that wol nat obbeye to his evell thoughtis." And seith that goode wordis bene the beste messis that God maye be presented with. And seith: "Loke before or thu desire anythinge of God that thu do suche dedis as God maye be pleased with."

122 **lithe parfite**, lies perfect. 124 **paas**, pace; **gothe**, go; **Attempre**, Temper. 125 **to**, too. 128 **caytifenesse**, churlishness. 131 **dispreyse**, dispraise/denounce. 136 **privé**, privy. 138 **derke**, dark. 139 **salewinge**, saluting. 142 **to lewde**, too ignorant; **maugracious**, ugly. 144 **and**, if. 147 **arne**, are; **her**, their. 149 **deed**, dead. 157 **messis**, masses.

10. DIOGENES

Dyogenes was called of somme folke Chyennyne, that is to seye “he havyng a condicioun of an hownde,” and was the wisest man that was in his tyme, and dispreised gretly the worlde, and laye alwaies in a tunne whiche had nat but oon bothum, the whiche he wolde alwey turne aboute whanne him luste to save him from the grete heete of the sonne, and fro the wynde. And he wolde have none othir hous, and wherever that he wente, he hadde this tunne with him and alwey where that the nyght felle upon him, there wolde he reste in his tunne. And eete and dranke at alle tymes whanne he hadde any hunger, were it nyght othir daye, were it in the streeete or in any othir place, withoute havyng any shame. And so he 5 leyyd and he helde him wel content with two gownes of wollen cloth, and in suche wise was he governed unto the tyme that he decessed. And somme asked him a questioun — whi his surname was called Chyennyne. And he aunsuerd and seide: for he abbayed to fooles and worshipped and pleased wismen. And the grete Alisaundir came to this Diogenes uppon a tyme for to | speke with him, and Diogenes 10 fol. 15v sette but litil by him. And so Kinge Alisaundir asked him whi he sette so litil by him, seenge that he was a mighty kinge and nothinge withstode him. To whome he aunsuered and seide: “What have I to done with my servauntis servaunte?” Thanne seide Alisaundre: “How maye I be servaunt to thi servaunte?” Diogenes 15 seide: “Yes, for I am lorde above all covetise and holde him undir my feete as my servaunt, but covetise is thi maister and thu arte his servaunte, wherfore thu servest 20 him that is my servaunt.” Thanne seide Alisaundir: “Yf there be anythinge that thu wilt aske me that maye helpe thee in this worlde, I wole geve it thee.” Diogenes aunsuerd: “It were no reasoun that I shulde aske thee anythinge where that I am riccher thanne thu arte, for that good that I have sufficeth bettir unto me thanne 25 alle the grete quantité of ricchesse that thu haste.” Thanne Alisaundir asked him a questioun — ho shulde putte him into the erth whanne he was deed? “Forsothe,” quod he, “he that wolde nat saver the stynke of my careyn.” And thanne seide Diogenes: “He is nat good that kepith himself fro evell dedis, but he is good that doth 30 goode dedis.” He sawe a yonge man that was of right goode maners, to whome he seide: “The grete goodnesse that is in thee hath made right faire thi visage.” And somme asked him whanne it was tyme to eete and he aunsuerd: “What tyme that a man hath his appetite and hath meete, and also he that hath nat wherof, whanne- 35 soever he maye have it.” Thanne it was asked him what maner of men shulde be called frendis. He aunsuerd and seide: “Thei that have but oon soulle in divers bodies.” And thanne he sawe a yonge man whiche shulde be maried, to whome he seide that a litil reste engendred grete labour. And it was asked him a questioun — from what maner thinge a man shulde kepe him fro. And he aunsuerd and seide that a man shulde kepe him fro the enemyté of his frende and fro the begilinge of his enemye. And men asked him whi that he dispreised so the people, 40 and he aunsuerd: “I dispreise the evell peple for their evel leyyng, and the good

2–3 **dispreised**, denounced. 3 **tunne**, basin/barrel. 4 **bothum**, bottom; **whanne him luste**, when it pleased him. 5 **heete**, heat; **sonne**, sun. 7 **eete**, ate. 8 **othir**, or. 10 **levyd**, lived; **wollen**, woolen. 13 **abbayed**, turned from. 17 **done**, do. 19 **covetise**, covetousness. 22 **wole**, will. 26 **ho**, who. 27 **quod**, said; **saver**, savor; **careyn**, carrion. 32 **meete**, food. 38 **enemyté**, enmity.

people for thei leve amonge the evel people." And he sawe a childe whiche was ledde to be buryed, to whome he seide: "Thu arte deliverd of grete peyne." Ande seith: "In lyke wise as the body empeireth in the colde wynter whanne it is froste and snowe, in lyke wise the errorr apperith in a man whanne he is angry and wroth." And as he stoode, he sawe a man that pursewed a theef for to have taken him, to the which he seid: | "I have grete merveil how the pryvē theef pursegeweth the open theef." And thanne it was asked him whi he wolde nat bye him an hous for to reste him inne, and he aunsuerd agen and seide: "I reste me for that that I have none hous." And seide to Alisaundir: "Loke thu thenke nat thiself the bettir for thi grete beauté, for thi fair clothingis, nor for thi faire ridinge, but oonly for thi goodnesse and thi fredome. And whanne that thu takest for evel that that thu seest in othir men, loke thu bewar that thu have nat that same evel in thee. And whanne thu seest an hounde that hath forsake his maistir for to sewe thee, caste stonyis at him and chaase him awey, for in lyke wise he wole forsake thee for to go with a nothir." And it was asked him whi he eete so in the streeete, and he aunsuerd and seide: for he was hungry in the streeete. And he sawe a man whiche preyed God for to sende him wisedame, to whom he aunsuerd and seide: "His preyers sufficed nat in lasse thanne he wolde labour himself for to lerne firste." And seith: "The moste profitable thinge that longeth unto man is for to speeke but litil." And seith: "It is dishonesté and lewdnesse to geve laude to a man of a thinge that he never dede." And in the tyme of Diogenes, ther was a peyntour whiche had lefte his crafte, and was becomen a phesician, to whome he seide: "Thu knoweste wele that a man might see at his yghe clearly thi fautes whanne thu were a peyntour, but now thei maye nat be knownen, for thei bene hidde undir erthe." And he sawe a faire man whiche was a foole, of whome he seide: "See ye there a faire hous wherinne is herborowed an evel hooste." Another tyme he sawe a fool sittinge upon a wyndowe of stone, of whome he seid: "There sittes oon stone upon another." And it was asked him what maner thinge was love, and he aunsuerd and seide: "It was a mal-adie that came to the people by to grete ydelnesse, and for to be excercised in othir thingis." And it was asked him what maner thinge was ricches, and he aunsuerd: "A man to absteyne himself from covetise." And it fortuned that Diogenes was taken with seeknesse, and his frendis came to him and vesited him, and bade him not to be douteful, and that it come to him by the sonde of God. And he aunsuerd hem and seide that it was to him the gretter feere and doute. Upon a tyme he sawe an olde man that dyed his heiris of his hed, whiche were white, and made hem black, to whome he seide: "Thu maiste wel hide thi white heiris, but thu maiste nat hide thyne age." Also, he sawe a foole that ware a ryng of golde, to whome he | seide: "It makith thee more fool thanne it makith thee fair." And seith: "It is bettir and thu be diseased that thu go to the leeche thanne to abide til the leeche come to thee; and in like wise, I seye of the leeche of the soule." And seith: "Whanne thu

41 **leve**, live. 42 **delivered of**, rescued from. 43 **empeireth**, is impaired. 45 **wroth**, wrathful. 46 **merveil**, marvel; **pryvē**, privy (secret). 47 **bye**, buy. 49 **thenke**, think. 53 **maistir**, master; **sewe**, follow; **stonyis**, stones. 58 **in lasse**, unless. 59 **longeth**, is fitting. 60 **of**, for; **dede**, did. 61 **peyntour**, painter. 62 **phesician**, physician. 63 **yghe**, eye. 66 **herborowed**, harbored. 72 **seeknesse**, sickness. 73 **sonde of**, sending of. 75 **heiris**, hairs. 76 **maiste**, may. 77 **ware**, wore. 79 **and**, if; **leeche**, physician.

wilte correcte any man, shewe nat that thu doest it by vengeaunce, but do lyke as the leeche dothe to the seek man, that is to seye: softly and easily. But whanne thu wilst correcte thiself, dispose thiself as the seek man dothe to the leeche." And it was asked him a question — how a man myght do for to kepe himself from anger. And he aunsuerd and seide that a man shulde have alwey in his remembraunce that he shal nat be served himself at alle tymes, but that he muste nedis serve othir men somtymes; and that at alle tymes men wil nat obbeye him, but it is convenyente to him for to obbeye otherwhiles; and as othir maye nat allwaies endure with him, but he must suffir and endure of othir; and so remembre himself and it shal appese his ire. Upon a tyme he sawe a gestour before Kinge Alisaundir as he was at his meete, and this gestoure in his seyenge gave outeragious grete laude unto Kinge Alisaundre. And whereas the people gave gretly here entente for to here his geest, this Diogenes began for to eete faster thanne he dede before. And thanne men asked him whi he herkened nat that songe and those fair wordis. Diogenes aunsuered and seide: "Forsythe," quod he, "I do more profitable thinge thanne for to here lesingis." And seide: "What is worthe to thee alle thi thankingis, for thu shalt never be the bettir for hem." And seith: "Speke nat before a straungier unto the tyme that thu haste herde him speke firste, that thu maiste undirstande whedir his lernynge be bettir thanne thyne. And yf thou see that he speke bettir and wiselier thanne thiself, holde thi peas, lerne of him. And yf it be nat so, thu maiste speeke the more surely." And seith to his dissiples: "Loke ye obbeye you amyably to hem that wille with good will geve you here counsell." And somme asked him what was beste thinge for his soulle, and he aunsuerd and seide: "That thinge that maye nat be overcomen with covetyse." Ther were somme delicious men that blamed him for his levynge, to whome he aunsuerd and seide: "It is wele in my power for to lefe aftir your lyffe yf it pleased me, and it is nat in youre power to leve aftir my levynge." And somme seide unto him that thei herde diverse persones speke right ungodely wordis in his absence, to whom he aunsuerd and seide: "Though othir men hadde beaten hem that seyden so oute of my presence, it shal be nothinge to me." And he sawe cer | teigne folkis which soughte the love of wommen by gefcis, by gownes, by silver, and by jewellis, to whome he seide: "Ye teche the wommen for to love ricchesse and thei be nat worthy thereto." And seith: "He is a churle that aunsuereth dishonestly to him that speketh lewedly to him, and he is a noble man that aunsuerith him paciently." And seith: "Ther is no bettir thresoure thanne wisdame and discretion, nor gretter poverté thanne ignoraunce, ne bettir frendis thanne goode maners, nor bettir governaunce thanne fortune, nor bettir creaunce thanne good techinge." And seith that seeknesse is the pryon of the body, and hevynesse is the pryon of the soule. And a man that was of grete lynage dispreised him upon a tyme, to whome he aunsuerd and seide: "The gretenesse and the highnesse of my lynage is begonne at me, and that of thyne is comen oute of thee." And the seide Diogenes was a man of litil language, wherefore somme men asked him whi he spake no more thanne he dede. He aunsuerd and seide that the vertue of

90 **gestour**, jester. 92 **here**₁, their; **here**₂, hear; **geest**, jest. 96 **lesingis**, lies. 100 **peas**, peace. 101 **amyably**, amicably. 102 **here**, their. 106 **leve aftir**, live according to. 109 **beeten**, beaten. 111 **teche**, teach. 114 **thresoure**, treasure. 116 **creaunce**, belief. 118 **lynage**, lineage. 120 **begonne**, begun.

a good man was in his eerys. And somme seide unto him that there was oon that
 125 wolde slee him, and he aunsuerd and seide that “the man shulde do more harme
 to himself thanne to me.” There was a man that spake villeynously to him, to the
 which he wolde geve none aunsuer; thanne it was asked him whi he wolde nat aunsuer,
 and he seide: “I can no mor dishonoure him thanne he hath dishonoured
 130 himself, for he hath contryved blame and seide villany to him that never dede him
 trespass.” And there was a man that asked him counsell, how he myghte wrath his
 enemye. He aunsuerd him and seide: “Loke thu be right good.” And seide: “Yf thu
 wilte that thi goodnesse be gretely shewed to estraungiers, take hem for litil or
 135 nought to thiself.” And seith: “Yf thu geve power to thi wyfe to sette oonly here
 feete upon thyne, on the nexste daye she wole sette him upon thyne hed.” And
 seith that womman is an harme that maye nat be eschewed. And seith: “Hosomever
 he be that doth good for the goodnesse of the good oonly, he shulde do it before
 every man withoute thanke or blame.” And men asked him whanne a man myghte
 140 knowe his frende, and he aunsuered agen: “In his necessites, for in prosperité
 every man is a frende.” And men seide to him grete velanye, notwithstandinge he
 was nat wroth; thanne it was asked him whi he was so paciente. He aunsuered and
 145 seide that “these men that have spoken this to me, outhier thei have seide truly of
 me, or ellis thei have made lesynges. And yf thei have seide truly upon me, I ought
 fol. 17v nat to be wrothe with hem | for seyenge of trouthe. And yf thei have seide untruly
 by me, I ought to be lasse wrothe, for thei wote nat what thei seye.” And he sawe
 a man that hadde so moche language that no man myght make him holde his pes,
 to whome he seide: “Frende, thu haste two eres and but oon mouth, by the whiche
 150 thou shuldeste double as meche here as speeke.” And Alisaundir asked him how he
 myght geete the grace of God, and he aunsuered: “In doyng goode dedis.” Diogenes
 sawe a faire yonge man that dede grete peyne for to lerne, to whome he
 seide: “My sone, thou doste right wele, for it is thi wille for to assemble goodnesse
 with thi beauté.”

11. SOCRATES

Socrates is as moche to seye in GREEKE as “keper of justice,” and he was maryed
 agenste the custume whiche was this: thei used at that tyme for to marye goode
 folkis togodir to that entente that her lynage shulde dure the lenger amonge hem,
 and this Socrates was weddid to the werste womman that was in alle that cuntree.
 5 And by her he had thre children. And he wolde worship wisedome so moche that
 he dede grete empechemente to his successors, for he wolde nat lete his cunnyng
 to be wretyn. And seide that science was a thinge whiche was faire and clene, wher-
 fore it was covenable that it shulde be put oonly in clene and pure couragis, and
 10 nat in the skynnes of deede beestis, nor in suche roten thingis. And therfore he
 made never booke nor shewed never booke to his dissiples, but oonly by worde and

123 **eerys**, ears. 124 **slee**, slay. 129 **wrath**, enrage. 131 **wilte**, want. 140 **outhier**, either. 141
 ellis, else; **lesynges**, lies. 143 **wote**, know. 144 **pes**, peace. 145 **eres**, ears. 147 **geete**, get.

1 **maryed**, married. 3 **her lynage shulde dure**, their lineage should endure. 6 **empechemente**, harm; **cunnyng**, wisdom. 8 **covenable**, appropriate; **couragis**, hearts. 9 **deede beestis**, dead beasts.

disciplyne. And that he lerned of Timee, whiche was his maistir, for whanne the seide Socrates was in his childehode, he seide to his maistir: "Whi wole ye nat suffre me to write the lernyngis that ye shewe me?" Timeo aunsuerd him and seide: "Doste thou coveyte more the olde skynnes of beestis thanne the noble undirstandinge of man? Loke," he seide, "yf oon meete thee in the weye or in the felde and aske 15
fol. 18r counsel of thee upon any questyone, | shulde it be good to thee for to bydde him tary unto the tyme that thu myght go hoome to thyne house and serche thi booke? It were moche more thy worship for to aunsuere him forthwithall." "Forsothe," quod Socrates, "it is sothe." "Thanne," quod he, "loke thu kepe wele in thi mynde 20
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that thu lerneste, and nat oonely in thi booke." And Socrates helde him alwaies of that oppynyon. And defended that no man shulde worshippe ydolles, but he wold that the Creature of alle thingis were worshipped, and not the ydolls, for thei bene made of the propre handis of men. And for that techinge the seide Socrates was dampned to the deth by twelve juges of Athenes, and it was ordeigned that he shulde drynke certeyne poysons. Wherfore the kinge of the same cuntree was right wrothe that he was condempned, but he might nat revoke that sentence; neverthelatter, he gafe him as longe respite as he might. And that same kinge hadde a shippe whiche was charged with divers thingis that shulde be geven to the ydolles at certeyne tymes, and were brought in that shippe to offre in the temple. And that kinge hadde a custume to do no jugemente specially of manrys deth unto the tyme that his shippe was come home from Athenes, which was nat at that tyme come, and also it taryed lenger thanne it was wonte to do, for because that the wynde was contrarye. Wherfore oon of the fellowship of Socrates, whiche was named Euclites, came to him to the pryson and tolde him that the kingis shipp shulde come home on the morowe, and therfore, quod he, "it were right necessarye that we geve foure hundred pecis of golde to youre keper to that entente that he wolde lete you escape outh of pryson, and thanne ye might go to Rome and duelle there. And thanne mayste thou have but litil feere of hem of Athenes nor of the kinge nouther." To whome he aunsuerd and seide that "alle the good that I have is nat worthe foure hundred pecis of golde." Thanne Euclites seide to him: "I wote wele thu haste nat so grete fynaunce, but thyne othir frendis and I have ynough for thee, and we wole geve it with right a good will to thi keper yf it please thee for to save thi lyffe." To whom Socrates aunsuerd and seide: "This citee in the whiche I muste suffre the deth inne is the right place of my generacioun and of my birthe, and here thei wole putte me to dethe withoute deservynge and for none other thinge but that I repreve hem for here unjuste dedis. That is for thei wole nat beleve on the true God and to leve the worshipping of the ydoles. Wherfore as the people of myne owen nacyon wolde do to me persecucioun for that I susteyne trouthe, in lyke wise whiche weye that ever I wente amonge straungiers thei wolde do the same. | fol. 18v
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For I wolde never holde my peas for to seye trouth nor for to dispise lesinges. And certeignly the Romeyns wolde have lesse pitee upon me thanne the people of this towne, whiche I am borne inne." Thanne seide Euclite to him that he shulde have

11 **maistir**, master. 19 **quod**, said. 22 **Creature**, Creator. 24 **dampned**, damned. 26 **condempned**, condemned. 30 **mannys**, man's. 32 **wonte**, accustomed. 38 **nouther**, neither. 40 **wote**, know. 41 **fynaunce**, finance. 45 **here**, there. 48 **nacyon**, nation. 50 **peas**, peace; **lesinges**, lies.

55 consideracion of the sorowe and peyne that his wife and children shulde have aftir his dethe. And he aunsuerd and seide that it were bettir for hem for to be here thanne atte Roome, "for here thei maye have of youre counsel and be undir your good governaunce." And it happened upon the thirde daye that the dyssiples of Socrates comen erly to him as thei were wonte to do, and thanne thei fonde that the twelve juges hadde bene there and made for to bynde him. And thanne his dissiples aboveseide asked him many doutefull questyons touching the soule, to whome he spake longe in that same matier, and with as gladde cheer as ever he dede in his lyffe, wherof thei merveilled gretely to see so grete constaunce in a man that was so nygh the deth. And oon of his dissiples seide unto him, whiche was named Simon: "Maister, I knowe right weel that it is a grete greef and peyne to thee for to teche and lerne us whiles thu arte in this grete trouble; and nat for to teche us, it is gret hurte, for there shal nat leeve behinde thee in erthe any man of so good doctryne." To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "Loke ye leve nat to enquere alle that ever ye wille, for youre inquysicion is my pleasaunce." And thanne thei asked him of the state of the worlde, and of the composition of the elementis, to the whiche he aunsuerd hem gretly. And aftir he seide to hem that "the houre of my dethe is right nyghe. I wole go reste and seye my prayers to that entente that I shal have no grete peyne aftir my deth. And therfore I praye you that ye departe hens for awhile, yf it please you." And thanne he wente in to an hous and seide his prayours. And aftir that he came out agen and called his wife and his children, whiche he chasticed fulle suetely and taught hem many goode thingis. And whanne he hadde done, he badde hem go her waye fro him. And whanne thei were gone, Euclytes asked him: "What ordenaunce haste thou made for thi wyffe and thi children?" He aunsuerd none othir thanne: "I was wonte, that is for to seye that thei shulde do here peyne for to do wele to all folkis, and that thei shulde make redy her soulles to Him that made all thingis." And even forthwithall there come oon of the juges to him with the poysen that he shulde drynke, and seide unto him: "O Socrates, knowe right wele that I am nat he that makith thee for to dye, for I wote wele that | thou arte the beste man that ever entred into this lande, but I am sent hidder by the juges, whiche have commaunded me for to slee thee. And here is the medycyne that thou muste drynke, and loke thou take it paciently, for as moche as thou maiste nat eschewe it." Thanne Socrates aunsuerd and seide: "Frende, I wole take it with good herte, and I wote wele that thou arte nat gilty." And even so he toke the medecyne and dranke it. And whanne his frendis sawe him drynke it, thei made a grete crye and wepten passinge soore. And thanne Socrates blamed hem and seide: "I have sente away the wyffes fro me for by cause thei shulde nat do as ye do." And thanne he toke himself for to walke a litil. And seide: "O Lorde God, have mercy upon me." And anon aftir his senewes began to wexe stark, and his feet began to wexe colde, and thenne he leyde him downe and thanne oon of his dissiples toke a prycke and pricked him in the feet and asked him wheder he felte any of the prickinge. He aunsuerd and seide: "Naye." And so the coldenesse wente up

59 **doutefull**, respectful. 61 **dede**, did; **merveilled**, marveled. 62 **nygh**, near. 63 **weel**, well. 64 **teche and lerne**, teach and instruct. 67 **pleasaunce**, pleasure. 72 **hens**, hence. 74 **suetely**, sweetly. 75 **her**, their. 78 **here**, their. 83 **hidder**, hither. 88 **passinge**, surpassingly. 91 **senewes**, sinews; **wexe stark**, grow stiff.

95 to his sydes and Socrates seide unto hem: whanne this colde is come to the herte, thanne he shulde dye anone. And thanne Eucytes seide unto him: "O trusty maister, the welle of cunnyng and wisedome, wille ye correcte us as longe as youre good speeche maye laste?" And he aunsuerd and seide: "I wole correcte you none othirwise in my deynge thanne I dede in my levyng." And thanne he toke the honde of Euclytes and leyde it upon his visage, and thanne seide Euclytes unto him: "Sir, commaunde me whatsomever ye will." And he gave him none aunsuer, but lyfte up his yghen to hevyn and seide: "I presente my soule to the Maker of alle the worlde." And even so he deyed, and Euclytes closed his yghen and his mouthe. Ande Socrates lefte twelve thousand dissiples, and dissiples of his dissiples. And in his lyffe devyded the people in thre ordres, that is to seye: in prestys, kinge, and people. And seide that preestis shulde preye to God for hemself, for the kinge, and for the people. And the kinge shulde praye for himself and for his people, and the people shulde praye for the kinge oonly. And Socrates was a man of reed colour, and of a competente gretnesse, a faire visage, and his hed was balled, litil of language, full of thought, lokinge moche downewarde to the erthe. And whanne he spake, he stered alweye his firste fynger. He leved forty and two yere and he had wretyn in his seal: "pacience and good beleve in God maketh man to overcome." And in his girdelle was wretyn: "by the consideracion and foresight of the end of thingis | is gotten the salvacion of the soule and the body." And establisshed lawes, whiche he sente into the eest, into the west, into the north, and into the southe, in so moche that alle people were governed by hem. And seith: "The firste thinge that thu muste sette sadly thyne herte to is for to kepe dyvine justice, serve and obbeye the wille of the same, nat oonly in doynge sacrifices, but as wel that thu do nat injuste thingis, and that thu swere none othis in begilinge the people." And seith: "In lyke wise as the seeke man is ealed of his maladie by the vertue of his medecyne, in lyke wise is the evel man ealed of evelnesse by the vertue of the lawe." And somtyme he seide to his dissiples: "I am the seeder, and the vertues of the soule bene seedis, and the studie is the dew wherof thei take here moysture, wherfore yf the seedis be nat clene, and the watir nat suffisaunt, that seed that is sowen maye nat profite." And seith: "Men maye merveyle upon that man that forgetith the goodes that bene perpetuell of the tothir worlde for the goodis of this worlde, whiche bene so litill durable." And seith: "The good soule loveth the goode dedis and commaundeth hem to be done, and the evel soule loveth evel dedis and commaundeth hem to be done." And seith: "The good soule planteth goodnesse and bringeth forthe frute of salvacion, and the evel soule planteth wrecchidnesse and his frute is dampnacion." And seith: "A man maye knowe the good soule by that that he wole resceive trouthe lightly, and the evel soule by that that he wole resceive lightly lesingis." And seith: "Whanne a persoone is in doute of doutefull thinges and is wele affermed in thinges that bene openly knownen, it is a signe that he is of a good undirstandinge." And seith: "The goode soulles bene right sorowfull of the evell dedis, and the evell soulles bene right sorowfull of goode dedis."

96 **dye anone**, die anon (soon). 100 **honde**, hand. 102 **yghen**, eyes. 105 **devyded**, divided; **prestys**, priests. 109 **reed**, red. 110 **balled**, bald. 111 **stered**, steered. 112 **beleve**, belief. 113 **girdelle**, girdle. 117 **sadly**, seriously. 120 **ealed**, healed. 123 **here**, their. 124 **suffisaunt**, sufficient. 126 **tothir**, other.

And seith: "That man that sewith covetises leseth hem fynally, and he shal be by hem dishonoured, and ho that hatith covetises shal gete ynoch and in the ende he shal be wele commended." And seith: "The good soule kepit wisedam, and othir bene saved by him, and the evel soule leseth himself and othir bene loste by him." And seith: "The soule knoweth alle thingis. Wherfore he that knoweth the soule knoweth alle. And ho that knoweth it nat knoweth nothinge." And seith: "He that is a keytef to himself be resoun, he muste be moche more to another man." And seith: "A litil techinge sufficeth to a good soule, and an evel soule maye nat profite with moche techinge." And seith: "There bene six maner of people that bene never withoute hevynesse, that is to seye: he that can nat forgete any annoye that hath be done unto him; | an envious man that duelleth amonge people whiche bene newly come up to ricchesses; the thridde, ho that hathe duelled in a place and other men have hadde the proufite, and he hadde never a deel proufite; the fourthe, a riche man that is fallen in povertee; the fifthe is he that enforceth himself to come to an estate whiche is nat convenyente for him; the sixte is he that hath duelled with a wiseman and hath hadde no profite, nor nothinge lerned." And seith: "He that peyneth himself to teche a man of evel courage is lyke him that wolde overmaistir a yonge hors, and yf he wole nat geve him an harde bytte, he shal never come to the ende, for to overcome him." And seith: "A man shulde nat take hym for angry that is oute of vanytees." And seith: "He that is to moche amonge men, it draweth no grete love amonge hem; and he that withdrawethe him to moche, it requereth enmyté. Wherfore it is beste that a man governe himself evenly." And seith: "Ho that doth wele is bettir thanne the wele, and he that dothe evel is wers thanne the evel." And seith: "Cunnyng is sought by man, but discrecion is the gifte of God." And seith that wisdame is the leeche of the lawe, and moneye is the sekenesse, and whanne the leeche maye nat helpe himself, how shulde he help anothir? And seith: "Thu shalt nat be alle parfite yf thou hatest thyn enemye. What arte thou thenne whanne thou hateste thi frende? And there bene but two men that bene lowable in their lyfe, that is to seye: he that can speke and spekith, and the tothir is he that seth, hereth, and undirstandeth." And seith: "This worlde is lyke an higheweyle that is full of thistilles, for anone as a man entreth in amonge hem, thei wil pricke him; and yf a man knowe that weye, he wole leve it." And seith: "Ho that loveth the worlde hath not but labour, and ho that hateth it hathe reste." And seith: "He is right symple that is incerteyned for to go oute of this worlde and enforceth himself to make grete bieldingis." And seith: "The worlde is lyke a fyre that is wele kyndled, wherof a litil is good for to conduyte oon the weye; and ho that taketh to moche therof, it wole brenne him." And seith: "Ho that settes his thought upon the worlde loseth his soule, and he that theynketh wele on his soule hateth the worlde." And seithe: "Ho that loveth the worlde maye nat faile, but he shal faile in oon of two thingis, that is to seye: he shal faile in the enmyté of a grettir man thanne he is himself, or in the dispreysinge of oure God." And seith:

137 sewith covetises, pursues covetous things; **leseth**, loses. **143 keytef**, churl. **147 duelleth**, dwells. **149 never a deel proufite**, no share of profit. **154 overmaistir**, oppress; **bytte**, bit. **156 to**, too. **158 enmyté**, enmity. **160 Cunnyng**, Cleverness. **163 parfite**, perfect. **165 lowable**, allowable. **166 seth, hereth**, sees, hears. **167 thistilles**, thistles. **170 incerteyned**, assured. **172 conduyte**, conduct. **173 to moche**, too much. **174 theynketh**, thinks.

fol. 20v "That man that getith him enemyes travailed for his owen distruccioun. And yf there be many men that hates him, he ne is oute of the aventures of evel | fortune." 180 And seith: "This worlde is but a passage unto another worlde, and thanne he that furnesshith himself of suche thinges as bene necessarye to his passage shal go the more surely oute of peryll." And seith: "Beth nat to besy for to gete grete thingis of this worlde, but beth as the birdes of the eyre that seken no more in the mornynge whanne thei go from the tree but their refection for that daye; and in lyke 185 wise the wilde bestis that gone downe fro the hilles for to seche their levynge and aftirwarde, at nyght, repayren home agen." And seith: "Errour is knownen for evel at the ende; ho that wole sewe it by the which a man shal knowe rightwisnesse the bettir aftir errour." And Platon wolde have made a journey, and prained Socrates that he wolde teche him how he shulde be governed, and he seide unto him: 190 "Dowte thee of hem that thu knowest and go nat oute of the highwaye, ne go nat in the heete, nor in the nyght, nor eete not herbes that thu knowest not. Loke thu kepe the highewaye, though so be that it be aboute. Also rebuke nat him that is oute of the good waye, for he shal be thyne enemye." And somme seide to Socrates: "What is the cause we see thee nat wrothe?" He aunsuerd and seide: "For I have nat 195 that that constreyeneth the people to angre, that is to seye: grete habundaunce of rycchesse." And seith: "Kepe thee that thu duelle nat with a womman but yf grete nede constreyne thee." And seith: "Two thingis ben gretly to be allowed amoung othir thingis, that is to seye: lawe and wysdame, wheroft men lerne many goode thingis." And seith: "Ho wil have that he coveiteth, loke he coveyte that thinge that 200 he maye have." And it happened that Socrates was in felaship with a riche man in an highwaye, and fortuned to mete with thefes, and thanne seide the riche man: "I am right gretly hurte yf thei knowe me." And Socrates seide that it shulde be grete good to him yf thei hadden knoweleche what he were. And seith: "A man shulde use his tyme in this worlde in oon of tweyne maners, that is to seye: in that that he 205 desireth to have joye in this worlde and in the tothir, or ellis that he wolde have a good renowne in this worlde." And seith: "This worlde is dilectacioun of an houre and sorowe of many daies, and the tothir worlde is light pacience and longe joye." And seith: "Whatsomever ho be that techith thee a worde of wisedame, he doth thee more good thanne he gafe thee his thresour." And seith: "Swere nat by God 210 for any maner wynnyng of sylver, though so be that it is true that ye swere, for somme shull have suspeyson that thu seiste nat truly, and othir men wole | wene that thu swerest for coveityse of the money." And seith: "Yf thi frend be wroth with thee, loke thu suffre him paciently duryng the tyme of his angre, and aftir that, aswage him graciously." And seith: "Advyse you how that ye gefe your giftys, for 215 somme men geven to hem that have no nede, and refuseth to geve hem that have nede." And seith: "Whanne thu wilt gete thee a frende, loke thu seye wele of him, for the begynnyng of love is for to seye wele, and evel seynge is the begynnyng of haate." And seith: "A kinge shulde withdrawe him from evel folke, for th' evel dedis that be done in his fellowship shal be taken for his." And seith: "Lyfe withoute

179 **aventures**, chance. 182 **to besy**, too busy. 183 **eyre**, air. 184 **refeccion**, food. 185 **seche**, seek. 186 **repayren**, return. 187 **sewe**, pursue; **rightwisnesse**, righteousness. 191 **heete**, heat. 194 **wrothe**, angry. 195 **habundaunce**, abundance. 196 **but**, except. 200 **felaship**, fellowship. 201 **thefes**, thieves. 211 **seiste**, say; **wene**, believe.

220 lernynge is nat lyfe of man. And the gretteste sureté is to holde goode oppynyons, and to restreyne coveityses, and hate evell dedis." And seith: "Ho that errith and repentes him whanne he knoweth the trouthe of his errorr hath deserved pardon." And seith: "He that medilleth him for to correcte every man getis him haate for the moste partie." And seide to a man whiche seide unto him that he was of a poure lynage, "If I be lasse worthe for my lynage as thu seiste, thi lynage is lasse worthe for thee." And seith: "To putte awey anythinge that he knoweth nat the trouthe whi he shulde do so, it is a token of ignoraunce. And the beste in alle thingis is the hony." And seith: "The people bene in this worlde lyke as the fygures ben in a book, for whanne a leef is opened, a man maye see what is in the mergyne and that that is on the tothir side is hidde." And seith: "Ho that rennyth soore is gretly wery." And seith: "Yf the witte of a man have nat the sovereignté above alle othir thingis that ben in man, he shal be overcomen, and brought to nought by hem." And seith: "He is a beest that discerneth nat betwene the good and the evel." And seith: "He is a good frende that kepit a man from harme, and good lyfe is acqysicion and dispence moderated." And wrote to the king in this maner in recomfortinge of him whanne his sone was deed, and seith: "God hath stabbisched this worlde with houses of tempeste and the tothir worlde with houses of delices and of grete geftis, and the tempestis of this worlde bene the occasions of giftes in anothir worlde." And seith: "No man shulde take himself for a wise man." And seith: "The worlde techith hem that abyden by hem that bene gone." And seith: "The worlde is perdition to the toon, and to the tothir." And seith: "Ho that trustith to this worlde is deceyved bothe in suspessyon and in thought, and the comynge of thingis to the wil of man makith him lose his mynde." And oon of his dissiples gave | him a gifte, and thanne he began to wepe. And thanne it was asked hym whi he wepte; he aunsuerd and seide: for because he hadde resceived that gefte, whiche shulde cause the man that gave it him to take awey a partie of his worship. And seide: "Loke thu be in like wyse to thi fadir and thi modir as thu woldeste that thi children shulde be to thee." And seith: "Loke thu be nat to wroth, to joieful, ne to gladde, for thei bene fooles dedis." And seith: "A man ought to be ashamed to speke of that that is shame to do." And seith: "Refreyne the evell willes of thi youthe, for it shal be the beste gowne that thu maiste were." And seith: "Loke thu do thi power that no man ought for to seye evel of thee, though so were that it were lesingis, for every man knoweth nat trouthe, and yet every man hath eerys." And Platon asked him yf he wolde aunsuere him of thre thingis and he wolde be his dissiple, and oon of his questyons was what maner of men thei were that a man aught to have moste pitee upon; the secunde, for what cause the workingis of man turnen to evel; and the thridde, what thinge were beste to do that a man might resceive the goode rewardis of God. And he aunsuerd and seide that there were thre maner of men whiche a man shulde have pitee upon, that is for to seye: he that is in the governaunce of an evel man, for he hathe nothinge but sorowe of alle that ever he seth or hereth; the secunde is to see a wise man be gov-

220 **sureté**, surety. 223 **medilleth**, meddles. 224 **partie**, part. 228 **hony**, honey. 229 **leef**, leaf (page); **mergyne**, margin. 230 **rennyth**, runs. 231 **wery**, weary. 235 **modered**, moderated. 236 **deed**, dead. 237 **delices**, delights. 241 **toon**, one. 246 **partye**, part. 248 **to₂**, too. 251 **were**, wear. 254 **eerys**, ears. 261 **seth**, sees.

erned by a foole, for he is ever in sorowe and in hevynesse; the thridde is a liberal man that is undir the subjeccioun of a caytif, for he is in gret anguysshe. And seith that the dedis of man bene evell whanne he hath good counsel and wille nat use it, and of hem that have ricches and dispindith hem not. And the good rewarde that men resceiveth of God is whanne a man obbeyeth him entierly unto Him, and kepit hymself from synne. And thanne came Platon to him and was his dyssiple alle his lyfe. And Socrates seide: "Dispreise deth and it shal be the lyfe of thi soule, and sewe justice and ye shal be saved." And seith: "The wise man restith whanne he fyndeth trouth, and the ignoraunt restith whanne he fyndeth vanytees." And seith: "The wise man must speke with the ignoraunte as the leeche dothe with the seek man." And seith: "Ho that hath the pleasaunce of this worlde, it maye nat be but he shal falle in oon of two thingis, that is to seye: he shal nat have that he coveteth, or ellis he shal lese that that he hath with moche peyne gadred togadir." And seith to oon of his dyssiples: "Sone, loke it suffice thee to eete that mete that wole put away thyne | hunger, and drynke that wole staunche thy thurste. And loke thu thenk wele on thi soule, sewe goode werkis, and lerne wisedame of the beste men that thu canste fynde in thi tyme. And eschewe these nettis that women have for to take men inne, for thei bene the hurters of wisedame and make men for to sewe mysgovernaunce." And seith: "He that loveth this world is lyke him that entreth into the see, for yf he skape, men wole seye, 'it is by the happe of fortune,' and yf he deye, men wole seye, 'he was deceyved.'" And seith: "He that seketh the worlde is like him that seeth zarab and belevyth that it is water, and rennyth so faste for to drynke therof that he is wery, and whanne he cometh therto he fyndes nothinge, and thanne is he more thirsty thanne he was before; zarab is a light that apperith in medowes, and it is lyke, ferre of from a man, as it were watir by shynnge of the sonne, and whanne a man cometh nygh it, thanne there is nothinge." And seith: "Man hath peyne in this worlde, what estate that ever he be of, for there shal nothinge be lefte him of his wynnyng of his dialectacons, and no man par-severith and thei have contynuelly anguysshes, outhir by losse of frendys or othirwise." And seith: "The love of this worlde maketh mennys eerys deaf, that thei maye nat undirstand wysedam, and blyndeth here yghen in suche wise that it taketh aweye the light of trouthe." And seith: "The love of this worlde makith a man to have envye, and kepit a man from goode dedis." And seith: "Ho that wole use trouthe is served with a gretter maister thanne the kinge." And seith: "That man is nat free that serveth othir men thanne himself." And seith: "Loke thu affeme nothinge onlasseth thanne thou knowesthe the verrey trouthe." And seith: "Loke thu do nothinge but it be covenable and longeth to thee for to do, and loke thu begynne nothinge, but yf thou maye bringe it to a good conclusion." And a riche man seide unto him: "O Socrates, whi arte thou so poure?" To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "If thou knewest poverté wele, thou woldest have gretter pitee upon thyne poverté thanne on myne." And seith: "It is the gretteste merveyle of the worlde to

263 **caytif**, churl. 266 **of**, from. 269 **sewe**, pursue. 274 **lese**, lose. 278 **nettis**, nets. 280 **mysgovernaunce**, bad judgment. 281 **see**, sea; **skape**, escape; **happe**, whim. 282 **deye**, die. 283 **zarab**, a mirage (see note); **rennyth**, runs. 286 **ferre of**, far off. 287 **sonne**, sun. 289–90 **parseverith and**, perseveres if. 290 **outhir**, either. 291 **mennys eerys deaf**, men's ears deaf. 292 **here yghen**, their eyes. 297 **onlasseth**, unless; **verrey**, veritable. 299 **but**, unless.

see a wiseman wrothe." And seith: "Deth maye nat be eschewed, and there aught no man to doute him but he that useth grete inyquyté and litil justice, and hath doute of dampnacion aftir his dethe." And seith: "The goodnesse of dethe is openly shewed, for by dethe is made the transmutacion of this worlde of shame and of vanytté to the worlde of worship, the endles worlde, the everlastinge worlde; from the worlde of vanyté and foly to the worlde of wisdame, of reasoun, and trouthe; and fro the worlde of labour and turment | to the worlde of consolacion and reste. fol. 22v

305 310 And it is merveille of him that douteth the deth and dothe contrarye thingis to his salvacioun." Ande seith: "The deth is right light to him that is acerteigned that it shal come to him hastily." And seith: "He that levyth a good lyfe shal dye a good deth." And seith: "It is bettir to deye thanne to leve in shame." And seith: "The deth is reste of the covetouse man, for ever more and more his covetises multiplyen and his peynes, and therfore the deth is mor covenable to him thanne the longe lyfe." And seith: "The dethe of an evel man getith grete reste to the good man." And seith: "The dethe is good bothe for the goode people and evel people: to the good people, for the rewarde that thei shull have for their goode dedis, and to the evel people for thei shull do no more synne ne harme to the people." And seith: "The lyfe jugith indirectly amone the levers, and the deth directly amone the deede." And seith: "A man shulde nat weepe for him that is slayne, for he that sleeth unjustly dampneth himself." And seith: "Ho that is aferde of anythinge shulde kepe himself and do his power in suche maner that he maye be in sureté, and in lyke wise he that douteth the peynes that he shal have aftir his deth, for synne shulde werke in suche maner in his lyfe that he shulde eschewe the perille that shulde folowe." And seith: "Whanne thu woldest do anythinge, loke that thu see before wherfore thu doste it; and yf thu can undirstande that the ende therof shal be good, do it; yf nat, withstand it." And seith: "It is bettir to a man to passe with the lasse thanne for to aske of him that thenkith himself that a litil gifte geven by him is a grete gifte, and that he thenkith himself that he hath done gret grace to othir folkis." And seith: "Allowe nat the levyng nor the gefte that is geven to thee of him that dishonoureth thee, for the harme of the disworship is more hurte unto thee thanne alle the avauntage that thu hast wonne therby." And this he lerned in his age, wherfore somme seiden unto him: he ought to be ashamed for to lerne in his age. And he aunsuerd and seide that the grettest shame that an olde man might have was that he hadde nothinge lerned. And he fonde a yonge man which had folily dispended and wasted his goodis in so moche that he was fayne for to eete olyves for hunger, to whome he seide: "Yf the olyves had bene as goode to thee in the begynnyng as thei be now, thu shuldeste have had at this tyme good ynough." And seith: "There is no difference betwene a lyer and a grete teller of tydingis." And seith: "The nobleste thinge that children seche is cunnyng, by the whiche thei | eschewe for to do evell dedis." And seith: "The beste wynnynge that a man maye have is for to gete a good frende." And he herde somme that seide that a man were more sure for to holde his peas thanne for to speke moche, for in to

315 320 325 330 335 340 fol. 23r

304 **doute**, fear. 307 **vanytté**, vanity. 316 **getith**, provides. 320 **jugith**, judges; **levers**, living. 321 **deede**, dead. 322 **aferde**, afraid. 328 **withstand**, do not do. 329 **lasse**, less. 332 **disworship**, discredit. 333 **avauntage**, advantage. 337 **folily**, foolishly; **fayne**, glad. 341 **tydyngis**, tidings; **seche**, seek. 344 **peas**, peace.

345 moche spekinge men maye erre, and he aunsuerd and seide that it myght nat be undirstande in hem that speken well. And seide: "There is lasse proufite in him that holdes his peas thanne is in him that spekith wele, and the spekinge harme is gretter thanne he that holdes him stille." And seith: "Oon knoweth the wiseman by that he holdes his peas and that he herith what men seyne." And seith: "A man maye knowe a foole by his moche language." And seith: "He that wole nat holde his peas but is constreynd by othir for to holde his peas is the lasse to be praised." And seith: "Ho that holdeth his peas so longe, til oon make him speke, is more for to allowe thanne he that spekith so moche that he is boden holde his peas." And seith: "A man hath power over his worde as longe as it is withinne him, and whanne it is onys spoken it is oute of his power." And seith: "Ho that hath power to refreyne his tunge hath power to refreyne alle his othir willes." And seith: "A man to holde his peas and for to speke is good in many places." And seith: "Yf a man speke, men knownen by his language whedir he be discrete or not. And yf he holde his peas, men wote nat what he is." And seith: "Whanne a man wole speeke he muste considre and se what he wole speke, for it is bettir he considre it thanne anothir." And seide to oon of his dissipples: "Whanne thu spekiste, loke thu speke goodely, or ellis holde thi peas." And seith: "Ho that holdes his peas and herkeneth shal knowe and lerne by the tales of other men, and ho that spekith othir shal knowe and lerne by his wordes." And seith: "Sette nat by the deth, for he hath no grete bitternes but the feere of himself." And thei asked him what was the beste getynge. He aunsuerd and seide: "That thinge that a man encresith in dispendinge it." And seith: "Dronkenesse undoth a man." And seith: "A man shuld never aske counsell of him that hath sette alle his herte on the worlde, for he wole geve no counsell but oonely to his owen pleasaunce." And seith: "The good counsell shewith ofte tymes the ende of the deede." And a womman seide unto him: "Thu olde dotarde, thu haste a lewde visage." To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "Thu arte a myrrour that is so trouble and derke that the beauté of my visage maye nat be seene therinne." And seith: "He is right discrete and wise that wole kepe wel a manrys counsell, and ho that discoverith it is a foole." Ande | seith: "A man shulde kepe the secretis that bene shewed unto him, but he is more to be allowed that kepith secrete that thinge that he is nat commaunded for to kepe." And seith: "Yf thu maiste nat kepe thyne owen secrete, moche lasse wole he kepe it that thu tellest it unto." And thei asked him why that a wise man asked any counsel. He aunsuerd and seid: "For he douteth himself, leste his wille be medled to moche with his witte." And seith: "If he that useth suete thingis considred wel that he shulde nedis use egre thingis, he wolde passe with the lasse." And seith: "He that is of goode maners is of good and sure lyfe, and is loved of the people, and he that is of evell maners is even the contrarye." Ande seide to oon of his dissipples: "Sone, loke thu truste nat on this worlde, for it wole never paye that it promyseth." And he chastised his dissipples in seyenge: "Accustumre youreself to holde you contente with a litill. And knowe youreself, for that is beste. And that small thinge that

fol. 23v
346 **undirstande**, understood. 349 **seyne**, say. 350 **moche language**, incessant talking. 353 **boden**, asked to. 355 **onys**, once. 359 **wote**, know. 360 **se**, see. 362–63 **herkeneth**, listens. 364 **he**, it. 367 **undoth**, undoes. 372 **derke**, dark. 374 **mannys**, man's. 379 **to moche**, too much. 380 **suet**, sweet. 381 **egre**, eager.

cometh to you, loke ye sette it nat at a litel, for it maye right wele encrece and multiplie. But loke ye gete you frendis in good love, and loke ye shewe hem never no grete hate." And somme asked him what difference ther was betwene trouth and lesyngis. He aunsuerd and seide: "As moche difference as is betwene the eere and the yghe." And seith: "Ho that asketh more thanne suffisaunte that that he hath availleth him of nothynge." And seide to oon of his dissiples: "Loke thu truste nat to moche in tyme, for it failleth incontynente to hem that putten her trust therinne." And seith: "Sone, ware that thu be nat deceyved by the beauté of thi youthe, ne by the helth of thi body, for the ende of thyne helth shal be seeknesse and the ende of thi seeknesse shal be deth, and thu maiste nat eschewe the seeknesse of this worlde, for there is no joye withoute sorowe, ne cleernesse withoute some maner of derkenesse, ne reste withoute labour, ne congregacion withoute devyson." And seith: "The evell fortunes of this worlde bene grete hurtes to somme folke, and to somme folke grete good and grete helpe." And seith: "Whanne the worlde makith thee for to be joied upon thyne enemye, in like wise it wole make thyne enemye enjoye upon thee." And seith: "Ho that stablissmeth himself in a covenable place is the more ensured from the perilles of this worlde." And seith: "Ho that is fulfilled of the joies of this worlde is fulfilled of thre thingis, that is to seye: of poverté, for it shal nat falle to him to have ricchesses at his wille; of sorowe; and empechemente withoute any expedicioun." And seith: "Loke thu telle never thi secrete to him that is wroth | whanne thou prayes him to kepe it counseyle." And it was asked him by another whi that the see was salte, to whome he aunsuerd and seide: "Gefe me the prouffite that thou shalt have therof and I shal telle thee." And oon asked him what he hadde wonne in his cunnyng. He aunsuerd and seide that he was lyke a man that sate upon the see-syde lokinge upon the symple and folisshé people that were wrapped in the wawis. And seith: "Fredome is to serve a good man, and the more that he servyth him, the more free he is." And seith: "Sewe nat coveitises and thou shalt reste thee in alle placis." And seith: "Ho that wole have frendys, loke firste whedir he maye refreyne hem of her covetises. And yf he maye do it, leve with hem, and yf thou maiste nat, depart from hem." And seith that wommen have nettis made redy and bente for to take men inne, by the whiche nettis no man maye be taken but thei that wole be taken of her owen wille or suche folkis as knowe hem not. And seith: "There is no gretter empechemente thanne the ignoraunce of wommen." And he sawe a womman that bare fyre in her honde, to whome he seide: "The more hoote berith the more colde." He see another womman that was seek, to whome he seide: "The evell restith with the evel." And he sawe another womman that men ledde to the justice, and many othir women that wente with here wepten faste, and thanne he seide: "The evel wepeth for the evel that hath loste herself." And he sawe a yonge mayden that lerned for to write, to whom he seide: "Multiplie nat evel upon evel." And seith: "The ignoraunce of man is knownen in thre thingis, that is to seye: whanne a man hath no thought for to use reasoun, the secunde is whanne a man wole nat refreyne himself from coveitise,

387 **encrece**, increase. 391 **suffisaunte**, sufficient. 393 **incontynente**, unreliable. 401 **joied**, joyful. 405–06 **empechemente**, hindrance. 406 **expedicioun**, assistance. 411 **folisshé**, foolish. 412 **wawis**, waves. 416 **leve**, live. 417 **nettis**, nets. 418 **her**, their. 420 **bare**, carried. 421 **hoote berith**, hot carries. 422 **seek**, sick.

the thridde is whanne a man is governed by his wiffe as wel in that that she knoweth nat as that she knoweth." And seide to his dissiples: "Wille ye that I shal teeche you howe ye maye escape from alle evelis?" And thei seiden: "Yee." Thanne he seide unto hem: "For anythinge that maye be, kepe you that ye obbeye nat to wommen." Thanne thei seide unto him agen: "What seiste thu of oure goode modres, and of oure goode sustres?" He aunsuerd hem and seide: "Lete it suffise you that I have seide, for alle bene lyke to evel." And seith: "Ho that wole gete cunnyng, loke that he put nat himself under the governaunce of wommen." He sawe a womman that peynted her visage and he seide unto her: "I likken thee to the fyre, for the more woode that a man putteth therto, the gretter is the heete." And another tyme thei asked hym | what him seemed of wommen. He aunsuerd and seide that wommen were lyke a tree whiche is called adelpha — adelpha is a tree, the faireste of the worlde to loke upon, but he is all full of venyme. Thanne thei asked him whi that he blamed wommen so moche, seenge that he hadde never comen into this worlde yf thei had not bene, ne noone othir man nouthir. To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "Wommen bene lyke the date tree whiche is fulle of prickes that prycken, and hurten men whanne thei comen to nygh it, yet natwithstandinge, it berith goode datis and swete." And thanne thei asked him whi he fledde so from the wommen. He aunsuerd and seide: "For I see hem comounly flee fro the goode, and do the evel." And seide that an unthryfty fellowe shulde never be withoute a wyffe. And there came a womman to him and seide: "Wilt thou have any othir thanne me?" And he aunsuerd her: "Arte nat thou ashamed to offre thiself to him that wil nat have thee?" And thei asked him to what maner of science it were beste for a man to sette his childe unto, and he aunsuerd and seide: "A man shulde sette his childe to suche sciencis as bene profitable bothe in this worlde and in the tothir." Thanne thei seide unto him: "Whanne wilte thou begynne for to gete goode vertues?" He aunsuerd and seide: "Whanne I begynne to refreyne my will." And seith: "Whanne a man entendith so diligently for to gete cunnyng that he taketh none heed of skornynge nor of dispreysinge of othir folkes, thanne is he wyse." Somme seide unto him that the wordis that he hadde seide were nat beleved, to whome he aunsuerd and seide: "I recche never so that the wordis were goode and resonable, and I rekke nat moche though thei that have herde theim have nat beleved hem." And seith: "He is good and in the gretteste estate of bountee that enforceth himself for to have goodnesse. And he is in the secunde estate that enforceth himself to have good by othir men. And ho that settis by nouthir of hem is not to be preyed." And seide to oon of his dissiples: "Loke thu be nat envyous of that that is nat durable, but loke ye be envyous of that that is perpetuell." And seith: "Putte reasoun and discreciooun before thee in alle thingis, and thu shalte be the bettir garnysshed to th'execucioun of hem." And seith: "Loke thu lette nat for to do wele, though it so be that it is nat knownen." And somme seide unto him that his face was right foulle. He aunsuerd and seide it was nat in his power for to make his face, wherfore, quod he, "I ought nat to be blamed though my face be foulle, for that that is in my power I can wele araye it and | make

434 **sustres**, sisters. 437 **peynted**, painted. 441 **he**, it; **venyme**, venom. 443 **nouthir**, neither. 451 **science**, i.e., course of study. 459 **recche**, reckon (suppose). 467 **th'execucioun**, the execution.

it fair, but that that thou haste in thi power, thou haste dishonoured it." And seith: "Loke thou be true to him that is in fellaship with thee, and that oweth thee good-wille and trusteth unto thee, and thou shalte be the more sure to eschewe an evel ende." And seith: "Do to other lyke as thou woldeste that thei shulde do to thee. And do but that that thou woldest were done to thee." And seith: "A man is corrected by exeryence and taught by the wysedome of the world." And seith: "Somme have more delyte to gete a good renowne thanne for to gete golde or sylver." And seith: "Pacience is a stronge castell, and hastynesse engendreth repentaunce, and worship is the fruyte of trouthe." And seith: "Thi frendys worshippen thee for thi trouthe and thi loyalté, and thi goodnesse shal be knownen by leyser that maye prouffite thee." And seith: "It suffiseth a man to knowe that ought to come every daye in the worlde, for by that he may lerne newe science." And seith: "He oughte to be worshipped that wolde weel to every man, and ho that wolde evell to othir putteth himself in grete perill, and thei that kepen him maye litil profite him, but the juste man abideth surely." And seith: "A man that kepeth himself weel getis a grete wynnynge. And the man that sette not by himself nor by his soulle leesith himself. Ho that is paciente dothe wele. And he shal nat repente, and he that holdes his peas is saulf." And seith: "Do goode deedis and thou shalt gette joye." And seith: "The compayne of wyse folkis is reste, ande the compayne of a foole is laboure." And seith: "To have a littile and suffisaunte, it is worshipp; and to have moche withoute suffysaunte, it is shame." And seith: "Whanne that thou canste nat, loke thou aske. And whanne thou haste erred, correcte thiself. And yf thou have done evell, repente thee; and aftir that thou haste repented thee, beware that thou falle nat agen in the same. And loke thou make none avaunte of tho thinges that thou haste wel done." And seith: "Ho that yeldes ageyne to him that dothe wele is partener of his good deede." And seith: "Loke thou fellaship nat with that man that knoweth nat himself." And seith: "That man is in grete reste that at no tyme is wrothe." And seith: "That man aughte to be called a wele disposed man that kepeth attemperaunce in his dyete, and in his spekinge." And seith: "Shame thee not for to here trouthe hosomever seye it, for trouthe is so noble that it worshippeth every man that shewith it." And seith: "That that kepith a man from shame | is bettir thanne the ricchesse that shame getis him." And seith: "Many folkis can nat parceyve any shame in hemself, but thei can fynde to seye shame of alle othir folkis." And seide to a man that was overcomen in bataille and fledde: "Thu doste evel to flee the worshipfull deth for to leve in shame and dishonoure." And seide to his wyfe that wepte whanne thei toke him oute of the pryson to slee him: "Wherfore wepest thou, wyffe?" And she aunsuerd: "Ought nat I to weape," quod she, "whanne thei leeden thee to be dede wrongefully?" To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "Haddest thou lever that thei hadde ledde me to the deth with right?" And seith: "Ho that erreth before or he knowe the trouthe is worthy for to have pardon, but he that erreth wilfully is nat worthy for to have pardone." And seith: "Wyne and wisedame maye nat be togedir, for thei be somewhat contrarye." And seith: "Sufferaunce is a castell

475 **woldeste**, would. 479 **castell**, castle; **engendreth**, engenders. 481 **leyser**, opportunity. 484 **wolde weel**, wishes well. 487 **leesith**, loses. 489 **saulf**, safe. 495 **avaunte**, boast; **tho**, those. 500 **dyete**, diet. 503 **parceyve**, perceive. 510 **lever**, rather. 511 **or**, ere. 513 **Sufferaunce**, Patience.

515 that kepit the wiseman from doyng of lewed and evell werkis, and it is the highweye for foolis for to falle in alle evell and lewed werkis." And seith: "Kepe youre angre secretly yf thou mayste none othirwise delyver thee therof." And seith: "That that a foole lesith maye nat be recoverd, but a wise man maye lese nothinge." And seithe that a sage foole blamed a wyse man, wherfore oon of his fellowes asked him levee that he myght avenge him, to whome he aunsuerd and seide: "A wise man geveth no leve for to do evel." And seith: "Alle thinges bene susteyned and strengthed by justice." And seide: "Be ye certeyne whatsomever ye do; it maye nat be hidde though it so be that it appere nat at the firste tyme, yet in processe of tyme it shal come oute." And seith: "A good name is bettir thanne ricchesse, for ricches loseth and the good name dureth, but wisedame is a ricches that nouther wasteth ne loseth." And seith: "Kepe thee frome dronkennesse, for the witte that is occupied by wyne is lyke to an hors that casteth downe his maister." And seith: "Loke thu take heed to the governaunce of him whiche thu takeste thi counsell of, for yf he governe evel his owen thingis, by resoun he shulde governe thyne in the same wise, for he shulde love hem bettir thanne thyne." And seith: "Loke thu breeke nat the lawes that bene profitable to the peple." And seith: "Poverté is bettir thanne ricchesse that is evell gotten." And seith: "A man withoute connynge is as a provynece withoute a kinge." And seith: "A kinge shulde chese him to his seruaunte that he knewe for good and true, before or he were kinge." And seith: "Ho that maketh every man lyke good maye nat have hem | alle for frendys." And seide to his dyssiples: "Commytte alle your thinges to God, and loke ye excepte nothinge." And seithe: "Loke that thu take nat thi synnes for litil and magnyfye nat thi goode dedis, for yet thu shalt have nede to bettir." And seith to his dissiples: "Loke ye beware of the worlde and thenke that it is a thistell wherupon ye muste needis steppe." And seith: "Lyke as thes men that usen their bodily witte kepe hemself from angre afore the kinge, by gretter reasoun men shulde kepe hem from angre that bene before God, that is for to seye: in alle places, for God is presente overall." And seith: "He that wil nat be lightly wroth, it is more peyne whanne he is angry to make him colde thanne thei that bene soone angry, like as the fyre of grene wode and moyste is more hootter thanne the tothir whanne it is weel sette afyre." 540 And thei brought before Socrates certeyn folkes whiche putte upon him many grete injuryes, and he aunsuerd hem and seide: "Yf ye knowe any othir wynnyng of me, loke ye gete it." And there was done more reverence to anothir thanne to him, wherfore oon asked him whedir he had any envye therat. He ansuerd and seide: if he wiste that the tothir had more cunnyng thanne he, he wolde have had envye thereat, and of nothinge ellis. And seith: "Wisedame and good name be nat founden but in goode persones, wherfore thei be bettir thanne riccheses that be founden in foolis and in evel peple." And seith: "Thi soulle shulde thenke for to do weel and thi body aught to helpe it." And seith: "What that thu haste hidde in thi courage, loke thu shewe it nat oute to every man." And a man that sawe Socrates arayed in a poure clothinge seid unto him: "This is nat Socrates that hathe geven the lawes to the people of Athenes that is thus symply arayed." To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "The true lawe was nat made by good clothinge, but by science

516 **delyver**, release. 517 **lesith**, lose. 519 **leeve**, permission. 530 **breeke**, break. 532 **chese**, choose. 533 **or**, ere. 543 **grene**, green. 544 **hootter**, hotter. 549 **wiste**, knew.

and vertue." And seide to his dyssiples: "Dispreise the deth and in lyke wise drede it." And seith: "It apperteigneth to a wyse man that he knowe what his soulle is."

12. PLATO

fol. 26v | Platon is as moche to seye as "accomplysshed," and was of Grece by his fadir side of the good lynage of Esculapius and of his moder side of the lynage of Zalon, whiche stablissed many lawes, as it is seide here beforne. And the seide Platon lerned firste the science of poetrye, and it pleasid him moche for to lerne it, but the 5 cunnyngre displeased him. And he dwelled with Socrates the space of fyve yeris. And aftir the deth of Socrates, the seide Platon undirstode that in Egipte were somme of the dissiples of Pictagoras, to whome he yede and proufited gretely with hem and afterward retourned agen to Athenes. And there he sette up two scooles, and ledde a ful true lyfe in doyngre many goode dedis, and norysshed the poure. And thei of Athenes wolde have geven him the lordship and the governaunce over hem, and he refused it, for because he fonde hem of evell disposicion, and knewe wele 10 that he myght nat lightly chaungen her condicions. And also he wiste wele yf he wolde correcte hem as he ought to do, thei wolde have done with him as thei dede with Socrates. And the seide Platon leved sixty-one yere a man of good disposicion 15 and of goode maners, of grete pacience, and departed gretely his goodis with his frendes, and with straungiers. And he had many dissiples amonge whiche he hadde tweyne whiche oon of hem was called Zenocrates and the tothir was called Aristotle. And aftir the deth of Platon thei helden the scooles. And the seide Platon shewed 20 his science by allegorye, to that entente that his cunnyngre shulde nat be undirstanden but yf it were of suche men as had subtile and grete wittes. And he lerned of Thymeo and of Socrates, and composed fifty-six bokes, and preached the people, seyngre in this wise: "Yelde graces to God for His goodis and His mercy, for He hath made you alle egalle, in so moche that the myghty man maye nat save himself by his myght. And sembleably for the witte that He hathe geven you, and ye thenke 25 nothinge to Hym but yf it be necessarye, good, and covenable." And seith: "Loke ye be nat covetous upon the good, for God hath ordeigned that we shulde have suffisaunce in this worlde here and in the tothir worlde. And that suffisaunce is called sapience, the whiche ye oughte to have with the beleeve of God, whiche bene the keyes of goodnesse, by the whiche ye shull entre into good wynnynge in levynge of alle tho thinges that maye drawe to any hate and evel will. For yf ye wiste how somme thingis that ye preyse bene foulle and evell, ye shulde have hem more in hate 30 thanne in love. Adresse youreself and correcte youreself, and thann do your | peyne to amende and correcte othir. And yf ye do it nat, ye dampne youreself. And also I seye you that thinge that hathe made me moste gladde hath bene that I sette 35 never by golde ne sylver, for I have had more delyte in science thanne I have hadde for to assemble any sylver. For yf I hadde sette my herte upon sylver or golde, I shulde have hadde many an hevy thought, and now I have gladnesse, whiche

3 stablissed, established. **4 science**, i.e., intellectual pursuit. **5 cunnyngre**, cleverness. **7 yede**, went. **22 Yelde**, Yield (Give). **23 egalle**, equal. **24 thenke**, think. **25 covenable**, appropriate. **26–27 suffisaunce**, sufficiency. **27 tothir**, other. **28 beleeve of**, belief in. **30 tho**, those. **33 dampne**, damn. **35 ne**, nor; **science**, wisdom.

encreſith in me of the getynge of connyngē. And knowe it wele that golde and sylver bene evell. There bene ſomme cuntrees that a litil of the unyornes boon or 40 juery is bought for a grete ſomme of golde and sylver, and in ſomme oþir places thei geven glasse, laton, or oþir thingis for as moche golde; wherfore and it wer good in iþelf, it ſhulde be loved egally overall, as wiſedame is chosen and borne forthe in alle londes." And ſeith: "Laboure to gete vertues and ye ſhal be ſaved." And ſeith: "Allowe nat ſuþe thingis as be nat to be allowed, and loke ye blame nat 45 theſe thingis that oughte to be allowed." And ſeith: "Enforce you nought to gete theſe thingis that wole be ſoone loſte, and loke that ye ſewe youre goode prede-cessours. Arraye you with justice and clothe you with chauſtē, and ſo ye ſhal be bleſte, and youre dedis ſhulle be wele allowed." And ſeith: "Custumbe paſſeth alle 50 thinges." And ſeith: "The evell maners deſtroye and dampne the goode maners, lykewiſe as the bitternesſe of the woode that is caſted alloes deſtroyeth the ſwet-nesſe of the hony." And ſeith: "A wiſeman ſhulde never thenke on that thinge that he hath loſte, but he ſhulde thenke to kepe wele the remenaunt." And ſeith: "Ho 55 that wil do no good to his frendis whanne that he maye eaſily do it, he ſhal lose hem whanne that he hath neede to hem." And ſeith: "Sapienſe is good, for a man maye nat take it as he doþe oþir temporell goodis." And thei asked him in what maner thinge a man ſhulde knowe a wiſe man. He aunsuerd and ſeide: "Whanne a man wil nat be wroþe for the iŋuryes that be done unto him, and that he wil nat 60 rejoſe himſelf whanne that men preyſen him." And thei asked him how a man might venge him on his enemys. He aunsuerd and ſeide: "By doyng ſo wele that ye maye cauſe hem to be goode." And ſeide to his diſſiples: "Enforce you to wynne ſcience, by the whiche ye maye redreſſe youre ſoules ande enforce you for to kepe the lawe in ſuþe wiſe that your Creatour oughte to be contente." And he ſaw a 65 yonge man whiche had ſolde his lande that was fallen to him by ſucessyon of his fol. 27v fadir, and | he diſpendeſt yt in grete feestys, to whome he ſeide: "The erthe eteth the men and thu etest the erthe." And thei asked him why that ſcience and threſoure myght nat be joyned to gedir. He aunsuerd and ſeide: "For because that oone maner thinge ac̄compliſhēd maye nat be tweyne." And ſeith: "Ho that truſteth in his fortune and is none oþirwiſe occupied to proſiue himſelf with goode dedis, the goode ſhal reſorte aboue him as doþe the arrowe that hath ſmeten a ſtone." And ſeith: "Ho that techith oþir men goode and doþe none himſelfys lyke a man that 70 with a candelle geveſt light to odir men and none to himſelf." And ſeith: "He aught nat to be caſled a kiŋe that regneth oonly upon bonde men, but he that regneth and governeth the free men." And ſeith: "He ſhulde nat be caſled riche that hath aſſembled grete tresour, but he that diſpendes his ricchesses worshipfully in his propre ſervyce." And ſomme asked him how a man might kepe himſelf that he ſhulde nat be ned. He aunsuerd and ſeide: "Yf a man be riche, lete him leve attemprely. And yf he be poure, lete him putte him lightly to laboure." And thei 75 asked him with how moche goode a man ſhulde holde himſelf contente. He aun-

39 **unyornes**, unicorn's. 39 **boon**, bone. 40 **juery**, jewelry; **ſomme**, ſum. 41 **laton**, latten (a metal alloy); **and**, if. 46 **ſewe**, follow. 50 **alloes**, the aloe tree. 51 **hony**, honey. 55 **temporell**, temporal. 59 **venge him**, avenge himſelf. 64 **diſpendeſt yt**, ſpent it; **feestys**, feasts; **eteth**, eats. 65–66 **threſoure**, treasure. 69 **ſmeten**, ſtruck. 70 **techith**, teaches. 71 **odir**, other. 77 **attemprely**, moderately.

80 suerd and seide: "With so moche that he shulde nat neede to flater othir men." And seide to his dissiples: "Whanne ye ceese of youre studye, take youre disportes in goode storyes." And seith: "The wise man shulde nat coveyte the ricches of his frende, leste he wolde take grete displeasir." And seith: "Dispreise nat a litil good whanne thu maiste do it, for a litil good thinge is right grete." And seith: "It is mor covenable thinge to a kinge for to thenke upon himself and on the governaunce of his realme by the space of a daye thanne for to daunce an hool yere." And seith: "Ho that werkith by wisedome shal knowe the thinges and devyde the toon fro the tothir. And he that worcheth by ignoraunce shal mysknowe the thinges and be in doute of hem; to worche by trouthe is to establishe alle thinges in here right places; and to worche by lesyngis, it disordeigneth alle thingis, and putteth hem 90 oute of her propre places." And seith: "Thu shalt never be paciente as longe as thu arte covetous." And somme asked him how he had lerned so moche cunnyng. He aunsuerd and seide: "For by cause that I have mor oyle in my lampe thanne wyne in my cuppe." And it was asked hym what man were moste expediente to governe a towne. He aunsuerd and seide: "He that can governe wel himself." And it was 95 asked him what man ought beste to be called wyse. He aunsuerd and seide: "He that counseilleth moche and that maketh moste doutes." And seith: "The | vessellis fol. 28r of golde bene preved by her sowne whedir thei be hool or broken; in lyke wise the men bene preved and knownen by her wordes." And thei asked him what people were moste ignoraunte in her dedis. He aunsuerd and seide: "Thei that moste usen 100 her owen counseill, and thei that by defaute of good advys dispose hemself hardly to thingis." And thei asked him what man dede himself moste wronge. He aunsuerd and seide: "He that mekith himself to him that he oweth nat to do." And seith: "The ignorauntes juden the beautee or the foulenesse lyke as thei seen by the condicions of the people." And seith: "He fyndes wisedame that sekith it by the right weye; and many oon erreth in wisedame, for thei seke it not by the right weye, and blameth it withoute cause." And seith: "He that is ignoraunte of the right 105 wey of sapience knoweth not himself, and he that knoweth not himself is moste ignoraunte of alle othir ignorauntes." And seith: "He is wise that knoweth ignoraunce, and he is ignoraunte that knoweth it not." And seith: "Such angre is worshipful that bryngeth oftetimes shame to gladnesse." And seith: "A kinge is lyke a grete rever that cometh oute of litill brookes, wherfore yf the grete rever be salte, the litill brookes shull be salte." And seith: "Kepe thee in bataille that thu 110 truste nat to moche to thyne owen streyngthe in dispreisinge of thyn owen resonable witte, for somtyme the witte suffiseth for to overcome withouten streyngth, but with a grete peyne maye a man overcome by force withoute that he use his natural witte." And seith: "Worde withoute dede is lyke a grete habundance of watir that drowneth the men withoute doyng himself any proufyte." And seith that a man 115 that is full of suspessyon, it maketh him for to be of evell maners, and to leve unrightwosly. And seith: "Loke ye use nat any maner dilectacyons of this worlde unto

82 **Dispreise**, Denounce. 85 **hool**, whole. 87 **worche**, works; **mysknowe**, misunderstand. 88 **here**, their. 89 **disordeigneth**, disorganizes. 90 **her**, their. 92 **by cause**, because; **oyle**, oil. 97 **bene preved by her sowne**, put to the test by their sound. 100 **defaute**, lack. 103 **juden**, judge. 111 **rever**, river. 113 **to moche**, too much. 116 **habundaunce**, abundance. 118–19 **leve unrightwosly**, live not righteously.

120 the tyme that thu knowe that witte and reasoun accorden therto, and yf thu be accorded with thes tweyne, thu shalt knowe the faire fro the foulle, and in what maner thei differyn." And seith: "Thes realmes lesen whanne thei bene to negligente of here werkis, and to diligente in ydelnesse, and also in that thei truste to moche upon fortune, with more that thei entende not for to fylle the lande with people. And thei losen also whanne the werres enduren longe tyme." And seith: "The ende of indignacyon is to be ashamed of himself." And thei asked how a wiseman might be troubled. He aunsuerd and seide: "Whanne he is constreyned to fol. 28v lerne trouthe of an ignorant. And | seith: "Whanne thu seeste a man full of parfyte discreciooun, knowe for certeyne that coveytyses bene right seeke and feble in him." 130 And seith: "Dispreyse nat a litil thinge, for it maye growe more." And seith: "Loke thu chalenge nat a man whanne he is angry, for at that tyme thu shalte nat redresse it." And seith: "Loke thu be nat gladde of the evel fortune of othir men, for thu wotest nat howe it wole turne agenste thee." And seith: "Stable thi witte on the right syde, and trouthe on the lefte syde, and thu shalt be free." And seith: "Thre 135 thingis do men harme: the firste is to see a man that hath bene riche falle in povertee, the secunde is to see a worshipful man dispreyed, and the thirde is to see a wise man mocked with ignorauntes." And seith: "Loke that thu fellaship nat with evell folkes, for any maner good that thei wole promyse thee." And seith: "Whanne a roialme is in prosperité, the covetyses bene as servauntes to the wise- 140 dome of the king, and whanne he is in adversité, the witte is servaunt to the covetyses." And seith: "Loke thu desire not that thi werkis be to hastily don, but loke thu coveite that thei be wele done." And seith: "A man is more bounden to holde him contente for a goode worde of his prynce thanne that there were geven him grete gefitis." And seith: "The gefitis that bene geven to goode folkes abiden 145 restitucioun, and the gefitis that bene geven to evell folkes endeuseth hem to aske more." And seith: "The evel people sewen the malices of men, and dispreyseth the propre bountees lyke as the flye sittes upon corupte thinges, and levyth the hoole thinges." And seith: "Haste nat to faste for to preyse a thinge til that thu knowe right wele that it be worthy to be preyed." And seith: "The wise man shulde nat 150 highe himself agenst an ignorant, but meeke him to him, and thanke God that He wolde of His grace make him herre thanne he. And he shulde do his peyne to putte him oute of doute, and to bryng him agen unto trouthe, for yf a man shulde repreve him lewedly, it were cruelté, and to governe him gentilly, it is a redusynge into goodnesse." And seide to hem that disputen: "Thes that enqueren the trouthe 155 of thinges, thei aught nat to be hated, for their questyon falleth in a conclusyon; but he that entendes for to overcome anothir maye lightly have cause of hate, for eche man wolde enforce himself to bryng his fellowe to his entente." And seithe: "Whanne thu askest of any man anythinge for to leve thee or for to geve thee, and he refuse for to do it, have more shame on thee for thyne askinge thanne of him that seith thee naye." And seith: "That man | maye nat governe moche people that maye nat governe his owene soule oonly." And seith: "A wise man shulde aske curteysly and lowely and with fewe wordes, lyke as the watir leeche that draweth more

122 **lesen**, lose. 123 **here**, their. 125 **werres**, wars. 128 **parfyte**, perfect. 129 **seeke**, sick. 133 **wotest**, know. 137 **with**, by. 145 **endeuseth**, induces. 146 **sewen**, pursue. 148 **to₁**, too. 150 **highe**, exalt. 151 **herre**, higher. 156 **entendes**, intends. 161 **owene**, own.

blood of a man symply withoute noyse thanne that thinge that pryketh more faster and maketh grete noyse." And seith: "A man of feble courage annoyeth lightly of that thinge that he loveth." And Platon seide these wisedams that follewien aftir: "Knowe God and drede Him. Enforce thee for to lerne wisedome and to teche othir men more thanne of daily werkis. Loke thu desire nothinge of God but yf it be profitable but requere Him of that good that shal allewayes be durable." And seith: "Love nat oonly thi good lyfe, but love more pryncipally thi good ende." And seith: "Putte nat thy wynnynge in these thingis that bene withoute thee, ne tarye nat to do wele to hem that have deserved it unto thee, unto the tyme that thei aske thee." And seith: "That man is not wise that joieth himself in worldly prosperitees and is troubled in his adversaries." And seith: "The lewednesse of mannys witte is knownen by moche spekinge; thenke firste, speke, and do, for the thinges meven lightly. And loke thu be nat to gretely wrothe, for yf thu custume thiself therto, the wrath at somme tyme shal be agenste thee." And seith: "Yf thu have entencion to gefe anythinge to a nedy man, loke thu abyde nat for to do it til on the morowe, for thu wotest never what shal falle of thee or that tyme; and gefe to hem that maye nat laboure, ne wynne anythinge." And seith: "Be nat oonly wyse in seyenge, but in dede, for the wisedame of the worde perissath in this worlde, and the wisedame of dede is profitable to the everlastinge worlde." And seith: "God taketh him for noble that dothe goode werkis, though so be that he holde his peas, and holdes for evell the prayers and the sacrifices done by evell dedis." And seith: "Yf thu laboure in wele doyng, thi peyne shal be nothinge, and the good that thu doest shal be perpetuel." And seith: "Yf thu have dilectacioun of synne, thi dilectacion shal be nothinge, and thi synne shal abide alleweyes. Loke thu have in remembraunce that daye that thu shalt be called, and where thu shalt here nothinge but good, for thanne the tunge of the jangeler shal cese, the thoughtes shull faille, the yghen shull be troubled and wexe derke, manhode shal be consumed to erthe, and thi mynde in like maner shal be broken that thu mayste nat smelle the stynke of thi body, ne how the wormes shulle sowke thi roten flesh. fol. 29v Have in thi mynde also that in the place that thu shalt go to, the | governours and the sergeautes shull bene egall, and there maye helpe no frende. Wherfore loke thu lerne good disciplyne, for thu shalt nat knowe the houre of thi departyng. 195 And knowe for certeyne that among alle the giftes of God, sapience is the moste excellente." And seith: "Yelde agen to the goode, and geve pardone to the evell. Thenke alweye on that thu haste to done, and loke thu put nat thi truse in thingis that bene meovable. And kepe thee wel, that thu do none evel thinge for any dylectacioun of wynnynge. And kepe thiself that for the joyes that bene varyable thu leese nat the joyes perdurable. Love wysedame, and herken the wiseman. Obeye to thi Lorde. And do nothinge but in dewe tyme, and yet loke how thu doste it. And kepe thee from spekinge of wordes that be nat profitable. Loke thu bere thiself never the herre for thi ricchesse. Loke thu be nat in dispeir, though there falle to thee evell fortunes. Make thee even with alle folkis, and dispreyse no man for his 200

175 **meven**, move; **wrothe**, angry; **custume**, accustom. 177 **entencion**, intention. 178 **wotest**, know; **or**, ere. 183 **peas**, peace. 187 **here**, hear. 191 **sowke**, suck. 193 **egall**, equal. 196 **Yelde**, Yield. 198 **meovable**, moveable (changeable). 200 **herken**, listen to. 201 **dewe**, due.

205 humylitee, and that that thou takest nat for evel unto thee, thou shuldest not challenge anothir yf he do it. Also, thou oughtest nat to desire to have thonke for that thinge that is nat in thee. Loke thou do nothinge whiche thou woldest dispreyse a-
 210 nothir yf he dede it. Thu shuldest do these thinges that bene goode and covenable, though so be that thou wer not commaunded for to do hem, and loke thou eschewe alle uncovenable things." And seith: "A wyse man shulde take his errorr as for grete and his goodnesse as for litil." And seith: "It is a lewde thinge to you to cutte awey the deede wode of the vynes and the superfluytees of hem, and to leve with-
 215 inne youre body the coveityses and othir evell thingis. And lyke as we shulde kepe us from the grete multitude of meetys for the helthe of oure bodies, by a greter reason we ought to refreyne us from vices for the salvacion of oure soulles. And ho
 220 that joyneth his gentilnesse to the noblesse of goode maners, he is for to be al-
 lowed. And he that suffiseth himself of the gentilnesse that cometh to hym by his fadir withoute lernynge or getynge of any othir goode condicions oughte nat to be holden for noble." And seith: "Yf thou feele thiself that thou be more true to the
 225 kynge thanne othir and thi wagis be but even with here wagis or lesse, thou shuldest nat be sorrowfull, for thi wages shull be durable and theirs shull not." And seith: "Yf any man have envye to thee or seith evel of thee, sette not therby and thou shalte have pees of him, for he asketh no more but to falle at noyse with thee." And seith:
 230 "A man shulde kepe wele the festefull dayes, that is to seye: that he shulde do none evel dedis specially. Ande | the higher that thou arte lyfte up in estate, the more shuldest thou meke thee to the people, to that entente that the love of the people shulde abyde with thee yf any myschief shulde falle unto thee." And seith: "With
 235 grete peyne a man shal kepe the love of his frende that wole rebuke hym rege-
 240 rously of his erroours." And seith: "A wise man shulde chese goode men to his ser-
 245 vauntes, in lyke wise as men chesen the goode erthe to do her labours inne." And seith: "Yf thou have a litil errore medeled with othre thinges that bene goode, it is doutefull, for errorr is an evel humour. Wherfore yf he be medled with goode thinges, it is to doute, for yf there be an evel humour in a persone in contynuaunce of tyme, he is lyke to distroye alle the remenaunte of othir goode humours, with-
 245 oute that it maye be voided awaye." And seith: "Whanne thou shalt serve any lorde, loke thou shewe nat thiself to be his fellowe but in thre thinges, that is to seye: in feith, in witte, in pacience. And beware of alle thingis that he perceyve not that thou woldest be in thi wille even to him, that is to seye: in estate, in clothinge, and in delices. And yf thou take upon thee to be more wyse thanne thi maistir, he wole nat love thee bettir." And seith: "Yf thou wilt undirstande the nature of any man, gefe him thi counsell upon somme thinge, and by that thou shalt knowe his inyquyté, his goodnesse, and his malice." And seith: "Thes men that bene of churlyssh condi-
 245 ciouns undirstonden that suche persones as thei have done any good to shulde alleweyes be bonde unto hem. And the worshipfull men take it where that thei do any good thing, that thei be bounde for to do it. The goodman can grete thanke to that man that geveth to his possibilitee, and aftir the satisfaccioun of him that resceyveth it; and the churle can nat thanke the gefer, but oonly of the qualité of

206 thonke, thanks. **214 meetys**, meats. **220 here**, their. **223 pees**, peace. **224 festefull**, festival. **226 meke thee**, make yourself meek. **229 chese**, choose. **232 he**, it. **234 he**, it. **244 bonde**, bound. **245 can**, can give.

the gifte." And seith: "Whanne thi servauntes reherse thi vertues before thee, thu shuldeste beleve that at that tyme thi vyses were hidde withinne thee; wherfore thu shuldeste truste more in thiself that thu knowest thanne the wordes of straungiers." And seith: "Whanne thu seest a man that hath bene large and liberal became a kaytiff and have no wyffe, and a joiefull man be malencolyous withoute cause, it is a token that withinne shorte tyme there shal come to him some grete myschef." And seith: "Whanne thu haste spoken to thyne enemye, beware that thu obbeye nat to wrath, for it shal be gretter enemye to thee thanne to him." And seith: "Eschewe wrath as moche as thu mayst, for it wil nat lete a man see the ende of thingis. And whanne thyne estate is growen | and borne up, do thi peyne to satisfye the people and for to gete thee frendes, for it is the strengest castell that thu maiste holde thee inne." And seith: "Whanne thou seest any man ymagine anything agenste thee, loke thou laboure to gete him for to love thee by getilnesse and by equyté rather thanne by vengeaunce, for harme is greefe to bothe parties, and equyté is profitable to alle folkes." And seith: "Bounté is lyke to the palme that berith late his frute but thanne he kepit it longe withoute corupcioun." And seith: "A man shulde correcte the people gentilly and easily, and ellis he shal be in labour and in noyse with hem." And seith: "A covetous man resseyveth and holdeth gladly and is of grete gaderinge." And seith: "The man of leest myght is he that hathe no power to kepe his owen counsell, and he is moste myghty that maye overcome his owen ire; and the moste paciente is he that can beste hide his povertee, and he is moste attempre that hath suffysaunce." And seith: "Loke thou make thee nat served of any man suche servyce as longeth nat unto thee or ellis that is agenste thi nature, though so be that he were highely bounden thereto." And seith: "Kepe thee that covetyse make thee nat to be a flaterer, for thu shalt lose mo benefyces of the soulle thanne thu shalt wynne of benefetes for thi body." And seith: "Whanne a man is olde, his vertues bene lasse preised and his vyses and fylthes more taken heed of, and also the more a man is riche, the more feere he hath." And seith: "Ire, covetyse, and other affeectes of the soulle have a certeigne quantité by the whiche the estate of man is governed and adressed. And yf that quantité excede, it distroioith the man, and by wrath a man shal preve it; the whiche maye be lykned to salt that salteth the flesshe, for ho that putteth to moche salt upon his mete, it distroyeth it and loseth it, and sembleably of othir thingis." And seith: "There is oon thinge that resembleth a childe, another that resembleth a man that is at ful power, and another that resembleth an olde man. Whanne the rentes and revenues of a realme surmounten the dispence of a kinge, and of his householde, that same realme oughte to be called a childe; that is for to seye that the lande is like to be durable by reasoun, for it is encresinge. And yf the rentes and revenews be even egall, that same realme maye wel be called a man at ful age. But and the dispences surmounten the revenews of the realme, it oughte | to be called an olde man; that is to seye: the realme shal endure no while." And seith: "A kinge that regneth in right and justice is kinge of his people, and whanne a kinge regneth in wyckednesse and in violence,

251–52 **kaytiff**, wretch. 258 **strengest**, strongest. 260 **equyté**, equity. 262 **Bounté**, Bounty; **berith**, bears. 263 **he**, it. 265 **resseyveth**, receives. 272 **mo**, more. 279 **to moche**, too much. 280 **sembleably**, likewise. 282 **rentes**, expenses. 286 **and**, if.

290 though so be that his people take him as for kinge, yet certeignely thei wole enclyne her wille to anothir." And seith: "Obbeye to hem that done thee good, and to hem that outhir geveth thee or levyth thee anythinge of hers; and holde hem for thi lordis for suche people bene thi lordes." And seith: "Somme kinges and pryncis have grete affeccioun to kepe up the estate of somme lynage of her subjectis whiche that thei be. And in that thei erren gretly, for alle these that bene of oon lynage bene nat of oon estate, ne of oon condicioun, but thei varye in here estates, and amynuse the bountees of oon lygne, like as the erthe chaungeth and is hurte by sowynge contynuelly oon maner seed on the same." And seith: "It longeth not to a gret lorde to be conversaunte over gretly with his people, ne be to famylier with hem, for thei wole preyse him the lasse, for the nature of a people is to dispreyse eche oon of hem othir. And he that is conversaunte amone hem shal be lyke as thei be." And seith: "Whanne a man is withoute shame, he is blynde in his thought, for he thenkith nat before the dede the shame that shal folowe aftir to him." And seith: "The bontees of kinges ben aftir the disposicion and consideracioun of sight that thei have unto her lawes. And the defaute of their bontees is aftir the quantité of the delayenge of hem. For by observacioun of the lawe, the kinges done to the people that that thei might, and are bounden to do, and take awey also thes thingis that thei ben bounden to restreyne. But whanne thei have nat rewarde to the lawe, thei take fro the people suche thingis as thei shulde leve hem, and geveth hem nat suche thinges as thei shulde have, wherfore many periles fallen to kinges, to their subjectis, and to their realmes." And seith: "Whanne the fader dothe nat his peyne to instructe and teche his childe by crafte or cunnyng or othirwise wherby he maye gete his levyng, the sone is nat bounden to aunsuere to the necessitees of his fadir." And seith: "Whanne a kinge taketh thee unto him, loke that thyne askinge be lasse of him thanne thu supposest that he wol geve thee, and whanne thu arte allone with him, speke nat to him of thyne owen matiers, but loke thu shewe him somme thinge that shulde be profitable and pleasaunte to him." And seith: "Reporte never a tale to a kinge of his enemye other thanne he hath seide. | And loke thu be nat a reportoure of tales nor tydingis, for oones he wole parceyve thee for a lyer and wil sette the lasse by thee, and he wil have thee allewaiers in suspessyoun." And seith: "Whanne thu shalt do or sey anythinge bettir thanne anothir that is as good as thiself, beware that thu make none avaunte therof, for it shal empeyre thi goode deede, and it shal cause thee to be hated and to be envyed of thi fellowe." And seith: "Loke thu blame nat him that thu haste preyed." And seith: "God suffreth the felon unto the tyme that he do agenste the stableschinge of the lawe, but thanne He punnysshith him comounly." And seith: "Whanne a man spekith merily, men wole the more gladly her him." And seith: "Aske counsell of olde men, and nat of alle, but oonly of hem that have experience and have sene many thingis." And seith: "He is thi kinge that is of good and true renown in his lyfe, and of the whiche men remembre and speke wel of aftir his deth." And seith: "A maistir aughte nat to be recommended for his grete science but for because that he eschewith vyses." And seithe: "Whanne thu seest a man dye

290–91 **enclyne her**, incline their. 296 **here**, their. 297 **amynuse**, weaken. 300 **to**, too. 303 **thenkith**, thinks. 305 **her**, their; **defaute**, default. 309 **leve**, leave. 319 **oones**, once. 323 **empeyre**, impair. 324 **of**, by. 327 **her**, hear. 329 **sene**, seen.

that is of thi complexion and of thyne estate, thenke thanne that it shulde nat be longe til thu were in the same condicoun." And seith: "Loke thu juge never til thu here the parties speke." And seith: "Loke it plese thee nat to be ydel and slowe. And truste nat to moche in thi goode fortune. And repente thee never of thi goode dedes." And seith: "Ho that wole flee shame and dishonoure, loke he eschewe the occasyons of hem." And seith: "Ho that hathe an humble estate and consydre wel his entree and his yssue in this worlde is moche for to be recommended." And seith: "Love maketh to be hidde the evelnesse of othir, and hate maketh to be hidde the goodnesse." And seith: "He is full of wykkednesse that commaundeth othir to do suche thingis as he wolde nat do himself, and is wroth for he dothe hem nat; wherfore his wrath wole nat lete him thenke of the ende of his werkes, for his witte is so derke that the sunne maye nat shyne upon it." And seith: "The yghe of the lover is knowe by the lokynge upon that that he loveth." And seith: "Suffre with good herte the peyne that thu haste for evell dedis. And yf thu have evel for goode dedis, yet loke thu be nat wrothe therfore." And seith: "A delicious man taketh his delytes before or he see wheder he do wel or evel." And seith: "He is a negarde and a kaytef that wil nouther geve ne leeve to the nedys, namely of that that he hath above his estate." And seith: "Enforce thee not | to redresse a man that is corupte, for he had lever a sette thee in his estate thanne thu shuldeste corecte him." And seith: "That man that is full of injury excuseth him alweies by custume, and the rightewos man by reasoun." And seith: "Whanne thu spekest with oon that undirstandeth nat as wel as thiself, thu muste telle him the ofter thi tale for to make him undirstande thee." And seith: "That man profiteth nat in connynge that wil nat gete it lyke as it were by stelthe." And seith: "Whanne thu techest a dissiple that is of rude witte, loke thu speke to him derkely at the begynnynge, and aftirwarde declare it pleynly." And seith: "Somtyme the counsel of a yonge man is good, but the counsel of the olde man is bettir at the begynnynge, and the counsel of him that is lyke as wyse as thiself shal be more worth to thee thanne thyne owen, for thi wil that maye hurte thi witte is nat in him." And seith: "Be nat to redy to susteyne and defende othir that shal make lasse thi goodnesse." And seith: "The goode men multiplyen her governaunce, and the evel people here corupcioun." And seith: "Loke thu sette nat a litol by thyne enemye, though so be that him semyth but right feble, for he maye do thee more annoye thanne thu wenest fore." And seith: "Susteyne nat so moche other folkes in her errour that thi goodnesse maye be lasse therfore." And seith: "The lordship of evel folkes is nat covenable, though so be that it shewe good at some tyme, yet shal the ende be evell." And seith: "The grettest distruccioun that a reame maye have cometh by hem that bene to high-herted, and also of suche as have gretter estate thanne thei have deserved, and more thanne longeth to hem. Werfore thei dispreise hem that bene bettir and wyser thanne thei be, and the ordenaunce of the reame is perverted and troubled. Wherfore it were right expediente for a kinge that he ordeigned and stablised the people in suche place and suche estate as thei have deserved, and pourveye for the

344 **yghe**, eye. 345 **knowe**, known. 348 **or**, ere. 349 **negarde**, miser; **kaytef**, churl; **nouther**, neither; **nedys**, needy. 353 **rightewos**, righteous. 361 **to**, too. 363 **her**, their. 364–65 **him semyth**, he seems. 365 **annoye**, annoyance; **wenest**, supposed. 366 **her**, their. 369 **reame**, realm. 374 **pourveye**, purvey.

375 offices and nat for officers." And seith: "Witte is more honorable thanne wille, for wite hath stablished the lorde of the tyme of the whiche wille wolde make thee servaunte." And seith: "He is of right a grete herte that douteth nat the peyne of poverté." And seith: "Alle men of goode condicions maye suffre other of what condicions that ever thei bene of." And seith: "He that hath goode vertues is sub-
 380 stancialy a noble man, and he that hath hem accydently maketh himself noble and is nat." And seith: "He is right goode that serveth a kinge in loyalté and the people in pitee, | and ho that is nat deceyved in his estate, and ho that is nat in dispeire for anythinge that falleth to him." And seith: "Take thi counsel of thi matiers of him that is even to thee, that is to seye: of hem that have had sembleable matiers be-
 fol. 32v fore, for he knoweth wel the remedy therfore." And seith: "Loke thu be nat wroth with thi lorde, though so be that he geve thee charge of alle his werkes." And seith: "Whanne the goode asken anythinge of gytte or of borowinge and it is taken hem, thei thenke nat but to restore it agen outhir by servyce or ellis to pay it; and though thei bene warned, yet thei thenke none harme to hem that have warned hem. But the evell done the contrarye, for thei thenke never for to paye agen, and hates hem that wole seye hem nay for to leve hem." And seith: "At somtyme the enemyes bene more profitable thanne the frendes, for thei wole kepe hemself that thei falle nat in suche vyses as her enemyes have. And so a man maye kepe him fro the feere of hem. And a man shulde do his peyne to kepe his goodes that he maye
 385 the bettir withstande the evel wille of his enemyes." And seith: "Loke thu do nothinge to thi power but suche as thi witte hath preved before." And seith: "Loke thu felaship not with evell folkes, for thi nature shal take of hers, though so be that thu semest nay." And seith: "Have alwaye favour to use goode counseill, for though so were that it felle nat to thee as thu thenkest, yet shal it be comforde to thee that thou haste done as moche as is in thee." And seith: "A man shulde loke ofte in a myrrour. And yf he fynde that his vesage shewe faire in the myrrour, it shulde be grete shame to him that he shulde do any lewde dedis. And yf he fynde his vesage nat clene, it were to grete shame to him to joyne two lewdnesses togedres." And seith: "Whanne a wiseman drynketh swete drynke, he shulde allewaye thenke on the bitter medecyne." And seith: "The ende of goodnesse is himself." And seith:
 390 "Yf a man understande with good herte what odir seyne, it is lyke as he were contente with the same wordes." And seith: "No man shulde merveille of age, nor though the heiris wexen white of an olde man, but a man shulde merveille of the substaunce of witte that is abeden in him; wherfore it longeth to you to be shame-
 395 faste whanne ye shal be olde. And kepe you that ye do nat lewde werkes. And yf thou mayntenest any oppynynoun agenest a noble man and that thou overcomest him by
 400 reasoun, he wole love thee and preyse thee the bettir; and yf thou overcome | a man of churlyssh condycioun, he wole hate thee and praise thee the lesse." And seith:
 405 "Whanne a man taryeth to do his werkes til tyme come that he muste nedis do hem, he shal fynde himself oftentymes in grete necessité." And seith: "He that etes good mete is norisshed by it, and he that etes evell metes hathe no more but the substaunce of hem." And seith: "It is to grete peyne and laboure for a riche man to counturfete a poure man, and for a wise man to counterfete an ignoraunt, and
 fol. 33r
 410
 415

384 **sembleable**, similar. 397 **hers**, theirs. 401 **vesage**, visage. 406 **odir seyne**, others say.
 408 **heiris wexen**, hairs become. 409 **is abeden**, abides (dwells). 415 **etes**, eats.

for a stronge man to counterfete a feble man, and comonly there falle grete aduersytes to hem that done it." And seith: "Dronkennes is forfendyd in a kinge, for whereas a kinge is made keper of a reame, it were a lewde thinge yf he coude nat kepe himself." And seith: "Amonge alle othir that kinge is gracious and blessed that encresith and kepith the state and the lordship that his predecessours have lefte him, and he is unhappy that maketh hem lasse, or ellis prevee thereto." And seith: "Alle thingis that bene of custume bene at somtyme taken for goode and somtyme for evell, excepte trouthe that every man kepith and oughte to kepe for good." And seith: "Goodnesse constreyneth the goode to love eche one other, and evelnesse constreyneth the evell for to hate eche one othir. A true man shal love another, and a juste man also, but ye shal ever see that oo lyer shal hate another, and oo theef to take another, and wolde have him distroyed." And seith: "A man of corage that is constaunte is alweyes governed by good counsell, and he that is alweyes of a feble corage disposith himself to abide the comoun fortune." And seith: "It longeth to the kingis lieutenaunt for to have power over the people. And yf the kinge were cruel, he shulde do his peyne for to attempre him by gentilnesse. And yf he were to debonair, he shulde cause him to be more rigoreux." And seith: "It is nat covenable to have a man in a reame that aughte or myght governe the reame as feasibly as the kinge but yf it were oonely in his absence; and by a gretter reasoun and there be many of hem, it shal be so moche the worse for the reame." And seith: "The evell folkes beleven lesingis lightly and evell reportes of othir men to that entente that thei maye have the bettir cause for to do evell, and that alle evell maye the bettir be accustomed in hem." And seith: "Loke thu travaile nat to do by dede that that thu maiste do by worde." And seith: "Loke thu make nat thyne habitacioun in that londe where that the dyspenses passen the wynnynge, nor there as the evell men bene maisters over the goode men, nor where as the lordes folde nat here trouth." And | seith: "Alle trouthe is not for to seye." And seith: "He that lerneth connynge oonly for wynnynge and for practyk, he is nat holden for noble; but he that getes it oonly for noblesse of the same ought to be called for noble." And seith: "Yf thou wilt have the love of a foole, loke thou folowe his wille, be it resonable or not. And yf thou wilt have the love of a wiseman, shewe him alle thinges that bene resonable to the purpos, though so be that thei be nouther profitable ne pleasaunt unto him." And seith: "Whanne thou spekest with thyne adversarye, beware that thu telle him nat the secrete of thyne entente, for thanne thu sheweste him the place where he shal smyte thee, in like wise as the white is sette in a butte to shewe the archier where he shal shete." And seith: "Thu shuldest nat seye naye of thi love to him that requereth it whanne that thou knowest wherfore he wolde have it. And yf he desire it for the goodnesse that is in thee, the love maye endure and be stedfaste, but yf he coveyte it oonly for his goode or for to helpe himself in any othir maner by thee, the love shal nat be stedefaste unto thee." And seith: "A wise man shulde gete and norysshe, litill and litill, the love of his frende in goodely maner and covenable dedis, like as a man noryssheth a childe

421 **forfendyd**, forbidden. 424 **prevee**, privy. 429 **oo**, one. 433 **longeth to**, is proper for. 434 **attempre**, temper. 435 **rigoreux**, rigorous. 438 **and**, if. 443 **londe**, land; **passen**, surpass. 445 **here**, their. 446 **practyk**, practical matters. 454 **shete**, shoot.

diligently fro the houre of his natvytee; and as an ympe that is newe sette that berith erely or late his fruyte, lyke as a man is diligente in the governaunce therof.” And seith: “He is of churlysshe condicoun that mekith himself to an ignoraunte, and ho that serveth a man for covetyse to have his good.” And somme asked him: “How maye we putte aweye the covetyse frome alle the parties of oure body?” He aunsuerd and seide: “In what place that ever it be that coveityse is inne, reasoun is in the same, by the whiche a man maye redresse alle evell dedis and discerne betwene the good and the evell. And therfore ho that is governed by reasoun maye lightly eschewe alle maner coveityses.” And thei asked hym by experience in what maner might good counsel be geven. He aunsuerd and seide: “By right grete ex-
 465 perience or by natural witte.” And seith: “An evel lorde, an evel meyne.” And seith: “Loke thu enforce thee to quyte him ageyne that hath done thee good, and yf thou have nat wherof for to do it in dede, yet thanke him with goode wordes. Nothwithstandinge, thu shuldeste nat holde thee contente unto the tyme that thu haddest quytte it in dede aftir thi possilité.” And seith: “Yf thou haste done or seide vylene to any man though so be that it be litill, thou oughtest nat to sleepe seurely
 470 unto the tyme that thu haste made | him a covenable satisfaccioun.” And thei asked him yf a man myghte do alleweye wele. He aunsuerd and seide: “Ye, for doyng wel was to gefe laude and thankinge to God, and to put oute of his thoughtes and his myndes alle maner of covetises, and thes two thinges a man maye do alleweyes.” And thei asked him by what thinge a man myght knowe a wiseman. He aunsuerd and seide: “Whanne he dothe nothinge that is harmeful to othir, and that he kepit
 475 him from lyeng for any prouffite that maye falle unto himself.” And seith: “He is nat parfyte that for any doute levith for to do right and resoun.” And thei asked him what men were moste able to lerne cunnyng. He aunsuerd and seide: “Thei that forgeren lightly the aventures that ben passed, and thei that turne awey here thoughtes from thinges that bene impossible to be hadde.” And seith: “The fyre staunchith nat by leyeng to of woode, but for defaute that thei leye noon to, and in lyke wyse connynge wexeth nat lesse in a wise man though that he shewe it, but it encresith gretely. And also yf a man shewe it nat but kepe it withinne himself, it wole wexe lasse, wherfore a man shulde nat be skars for to shewe it to another the
 480 goodnesse that he can.” And seith: “Hope is the begilinge of courages.” And as Plato sate oones in his chayer for to reede, and somme of his dissiples asked him whi he redde not, he aunsuerd and seide: he abode the herkeners. And anone came Aristotyl, whiche was his dissiple, and thanne seide Plato: “Now lete us speke, for the herkeners be comen.” And he seide that oonly by Aristotle. And seith: “It is evel done for a man to make himselfe poure, but it is wors for a man for to make himself wycked. And whanne thu haste a frende, it is right expediente that thu be a frende to his frendes.” And seith: “He is a fool that holdes himself wyse, though so be that he be wele arayed or wel horsed.” And seith: “He is good that endureth
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461 **natvytee**, nativity. 462 **erely**, early; **his**, its. 463 **mekith himself**, makes himself meek. 465 **parties**, parts. 471 **meyne**, populace. 472 **quyte**, requite. 475–76 **vylene**, villainy. 484 **parfyte**, perfect. 486 **aventures**, fortunes; **here**, their. 488 **staunchith**, is staunched; **leyeng to of**, laying down; **but for defaute that thei leye noon to**, but when they do not lay any. 489 **wexeth**, increases. 491 **skars**, hesitant. 493 **sate oones**, sat once. 494 **herkeners**, listeners.

lightly and suffreth oon that is more mighty thanne he, and he is bettir that suffreth oon that is febler thanne he." And seith: "A wyse man shulde nat serve but him that him semethe that he be lyke of goode condycions." And seith: "The vertues that bene sharpe and bytter at the begynnyng bene in the ende right swete, and the vices that bene swete at the firste tyme bene in the ende sharp and bitter." And seith: "The true lordes bene by here grete trouthe possessyoners of the thresoure of here people." And seith: "Loke thu fellowship nat with hem that seyne evel by othir folkes, for even soo will thei do by thee." And he sawe how somme folkes wepten over a | dede body, to whome he seide: "Loke ye wepe nat for this man, nor for his synnes, but wepe for youre owen synnes." And seith: "He is an evel man and a nygarde that can nat knowe the goodnesse that a man dothe to him." And seide: "I have wonne none othir thing in connynge but that I knowe wele I am not wyse." And seith: "The evell thoughtis dystroien and corupte a man and put him oute of al good ordenaunce. And a man shulde nat corecte a childe to sharpe, for it wol make him haate and flee the scoole, by the whiche he shal lerne to be a trewaunte, and at the end to be withoute connynge." And thei asked him whi that aged men enforced hem to kepe her thresoure and her rycches. He aunsuerd and seide: "For thei love bettir aftir here deth to leeve it to here enemyes thanne be in here lyffe in the daungier of here frendes." And seith: "Nature is servaunte to understandinge." And seith that connynge is the peyntyng of the soulle, and peyntyng maye nat goodly be leyde upon a thinge on lasse thanne the place be made clene, wheron it shal be leyde." And seith: "Debate is the capteyne of evell folkes, and wrath is here governoure." And seith: "Connynge is so good that it maye nat be loste as othir accidentes." And Aristotle asked him wherby he knewe a wise man. He aunsuerd and seide: "In that that a man preyseth nat himself for his connynge, and also that he endureth paciently withoute wrath for to have connynge; and also that he be at no tyme lyfte up by the pleasaunce of flaterers or by preysingis." And thei asked him what maner of man had worste condycions. He aunsuerd and seide: "He that taketh plesyr for to seye evel of alle folkes." And yet thei asked him what thinge it was that was leste curable. He aunsuerd: "The dyshonoure of a foole." And seith: "Yf thou wilt knowe to what man thu arte moste lyke unto, take him that thou lovest withoute cause." And seith: "It semyth to an evel man that oone dothe him grete velanye whanne he seith wel of a good man." And seith: "The good wyse man preyseth his predecessors and the evel man blameth hem." And seith: "He that useth his tyme in anger, in covetyse, and in othir vices in his youthe hath a thenkyng therof comonly in his age; and yet it gryvyth him that he maye nat folowe his olde rule, savyng oonly his power maye nat serve him for the feblenesse of his membres. But he that useth goode vertues in his youthe, though so be that it greve him, yet shal he be of the bettir name in his age." And seith: "A covetous man is more enclyned to avenge any injurye that a man hathe done | unto him thanne for to recover any good dede." And seith: "Though so be that thu be olde, yet be nat ashamed for to lerne, though so be that a childe teche thee, for the gretteste ignor-

503 semethe, seems. **506 here**, their. **511 nygarde**, villain. **514 to**, too. **515 trewaunte**, truant. **517 her**, their. **521 on lasse**, unless. **522 capteyne**, captain. **529 plesyr**, pleasure. **536 gryvyth**, grieves. **538 membres**, limbs.

545 aunce that maye be ys that a man is shamefaste for to lerne." And seith: "A wyse man rejoiseth moche whanne he knoweth that by his cunnyng he is escaped from the vyses of this worlde, and the malyces of the same; in lyke wise as a man is escaped oute of a ship where alle his fellowes bene peryssed in his sight." And he taught his dyssiples, seyenge: "Whanne ye bene very of studyenge, go and loke upon the storyes." And thanne thei asked him whiche of all the wyse men was moste accomlysshed. He aunsuerd and seide: "He that moste counseilleth and 550 douteth moste unto the tyme that he hathe founde the weye of trouthe." And thei asked him ho was moste lewde in his werkes. He aunsuerd and seide: "He that is leste governed by wysedame, and he that leste discerneth betwene good and evel." And thei asked him from whens came the subtilté of undirstondynge. He aunsuerd and seide: "Of the right cleere and pure nature, and to be conversaunte in his lyfe 555 amonge wyse men." And thei asked him ho is of moste complete bountee." He aunsuerd and seide: "He that can refreyne his ire and to withstande his owen will." And thei asked him ho was moste cleene and moste free from alle lewde dedis. He aunsuerd and seide: "He that to his power maketh discreciooun his lieutenaunte, and he that maketh of predycacioun his bridell, of pacience his governour, and 560 doute of the dethis secretarye."

13. ARISTOTLE

fol. 35v | Aristotle is as moche to seye in the language of Greeke as "fulfilled of bountees"; and his fadir was named Mecynachus, and was a passinge wise man in phesyk, and was a phesycian to Kinge Alysaundres ayel. And the seide Arystotle was borne in a citee whiche was called Stragyre, and was as nygh of the fadir syde as of the 5 moder syde of the lynage of Esculapyus, of the whiche is made mencyon heretofore, whiche was the beste lynage of alle Grece. And whanne Arystotle was of the age of eight yere, his fadir brought him to the cytee of Athenes, whiche at that tyme was named the citee of wyse men. And there he made him for to lerne gramer and rethoryk and the bookis of poetis. And there he studyed by the space of nine 10 yere and profyted gretely, for at that tyme somme men sette right moche by thees sciencis aboveiseide, and helde oppynyoun that thei were the ladder wherby men myght clymbe up to alle othir sciences. And somme othir were wysemen at that tyme as Pyctagoras, Pychoras, and many other, helde hem as for nothinge, and mokked hem that lerned thes sciencis, seyenge that suche sciences as gramer, 15 rethoryk, and poetrye were nat covenable to gete any connynge where wysedam was inne; and that gramere was noughe but for to teche children, and poetry for to telle fables and compose lesynges, and rethoryk for to polysshe and make faire his wordes and sette hem pleasauntly togeders. And whanne Aristotle herde thes 20 thinges, he merveylled gretely and was gretly ameved agenste hem that helden suche openyoun, and enforced himself to his power for to susteene gramaryens,

546 peryssed, perished. **547 wery**, weary. **552 leste**, least. **560 doute**, fear.

2 passinge, surpassingly; **phesyk**, medicine. **3 ayel**, uncle. **4 nygh**, near. **5 lynage**, lineage. **9 rethoryk**, rhetoric. **11 sciencis**, i.e., courses of study. **15 covenable**, appropriate; **connynge**, cleverness. **16 teche**, teach. **17 lesynges**, lies. **19 merveylled**, marveled; **ameved**, moved. **20 openyoun**, opinion; **susteene gramaryens**, sustain grammarians.

the poetes, and the rethorycyenes. And seide that sapience myght nat excuse himself from the sciences aboveseide, lyke as resoun was the instrumente of sapience; and it apperith openly, ho that wole knowe anything, he muste have it by reasoun, for in that God hath geven a prerogatyf to man over alle othir beestis for the 25 moste worthiest, to that entente that amonge alle men he is holde moste noble and most righthows that useth reasoun, and he that moste covenably rescveyeth in his herte the derke thingis, and he that pronownceth hem in tyme and in place covenable. And forasmeche as sapience is the moste noble of alle other thingis, it shulde be shewed by the bettir reasoun and in the moste covenable maner, by 30 wordes most propre and as shorte as a man coude goodely shewe hem withoute fol. 36r empechemente of error, for yf a resoun be shewed unparfytely | the name of science lesyth and he that redes it is in defaute, and thanne the heerers bene in doute. And whanne Aristotil had lerned the sciencis aboveseid, he lerned etyque 35 and the foure sciences of theologie. And lerned of Plato in a place whiche was called Lopedimie in the terroyre of Athenes, and at that tyme Arystotle was seventene yere of age. And whanne Plato wente the secunde tyme into Cecillé, he lefte Arystotle in his place in the same towne of Lopedume in the whiche he lerned his science. And aftir that Plato was dede. The Kinge Phelyp sente for Arystotle, the 40 whiche wente to him to Macedoyne and dwelled with him alle his lyfetyme, where he shewed his grete connynge. And aftir the decesse of the seide Phelyp, the grete Alysaundir his sone regned. Ande whanne Alysaundir departed from Macedoyne for to go unto the regyoun of Dayse, Arystotle retourned agen into Athenes; and there he abode ten yer, and there he studyed til he was a passinge soveraigne cler. 45 And it happened for envye a preest appeched hym to the cetezeyns and tolde hem that he worshipped nat the ydolles lyke as othir dede in that tyme, the whiche thinge was shewed anon unto Arystotle; and sodeynly he departed and wente to a town whiche was called Stragye, wherinne the seide Arystotle was borne: for he doubted that yf he had taryed any lenger in Athenes, thei wolde have done by him as thei dede by Socrates, to whom thei gafe the venyme for to drynke, wheron he 50 deyed, and for that cause oonly that he repreved alle hem that dede worship the ydolles, as it is more pleynly declared before. And in the seid town of Stragye he ordeigned a place where that he helde his scooles and there he taughte many goode thinges to the people, and dede his peyne for to do wele to the people, as for to gefe almes to the poore, and to mary the poure maydens and orphelynes. 55 And he gaf also to alle hem that had luste to studye of what estate or degree that he was of. And also he bilded and made newe the seide towne of Stragye, and there he stabbisshed lawes that kinges helde hem in grete worship and in grete reverence, him and alle his dedis. And aftir he deyed in the sixty-fourth yere of his age, and the people of the seid towne of Stragye token his boony and leide hem in a tombe

21 rethorycyenes, rhetoricians. **21–22 himself**, itself. **23 wole**, will. **24 prerogatyf**, prerogative. **26 righthows**, righteous. **31 empechemente**, accusation; **unparfytely**, imperfectly. **32 lesyth**, loses; **defaute**, error. **33 etyque**, ethics. **34 of₂**, from. **35 terroyre**, territory. **36 Cecillé**, Sicily. **40 decesse**, death. **42 Dayse**, Dacia. **44 appeched**, accused; **cetezeyns**, citizens. **45 dede**, did. **49 venyme**, venom. **50 repreved**, criticized. **54 gefe**, give; **orphelynes**, orphans. **55 luste**, desire. **59 boony**, bones.

60 in the place where thei holde here counsellys for the weel of the towne, and as wel
 for the grete goodnesse that was in him as for the love that thei loved him. And
 thei dede him so grete reverence and had so grete affeccion in that toombe where
 fol. 36v his boonyss laye | inne, that whanne thei were in any perplexitee of any grete thing,
 thei wolde go and dispute theire matiers as nygh as thei myghte to the saide
 65 toombe, and there thei wolde abyde unto the tyme that thei knew the trouthe of
 here matiers. And thei hadde suche an hoope that yf thei helde here counsell nygh
 the toombe where as Arystotles bonys laye inne, as it is seide before, that here
 wittes shulde be the gretter and the more subtile to here undirstandinge. And thus
 70 thei dede for the more worship to him aftir his deth and to shewe also that thei
 were right sory for the losse of so good a man. And this same Arystotle had many
 kinges and many kingis sones to his dyssiples, and composed wel an hundred
 bookes, of the whiche we have at this tyme eightene of logyk, and eight of nature,
 the booke of etyques, the booke of polletyques, the booke of metaphesyk, whiche
 75 is named Detheologie, and the booke of the engynes of geometrye. And Plato
 repreved him for he wrote his connynge in bookes, to whome Arystotle aunsuerd
 and seide, in excusynge himself, that it was a sure and notable thynge for hem that
 loved science, for thei shulde lose nothinge that thei had lerned, but thei shulde
 80 fynde it agen in here bookes: "wherfore it is good that we make bookes, by the
 whiche men maye lerne all maner scyence, for whanne that manrys mynde is loste,
 it maye be recoverd agene by the meane of bookes. And sothely, thei that haten
 science shulle nat proufyte therinne, though so be that thei have bookes; and
 though thei have bookes, yet thei sette nat by hem, and so thei departen wors and
 85 with lasse connynge thanne before. And I have ordeigned my bookes by suche
 condycions that the wysemen shulde undirstonde hem, and the ignorauntes for to
 have litil profyte." And Arystotle helde gladly in his hande an instrumente of the
 sterres; and Arystotle seide: "He that hadde a good name in this worlde, and the
 90 grace of God with all, ought nat to aske none othir thinge." And seide to Alysaundir:
 "Redresse thiself firste, for yf thou be nat wele redressed, with gret peyne thu
 shalt redresse thi people; and yf thou be in erroure, thu mayste nat wele governe.
 The passynge feble man maye nat wele comforte othir men, and there maye no
 95 man wele redresse anothir but he first begynne at himself, and therfore yf thou wilt
 fol. 37r putte awye the fylth of othir men, clene thiself firste, or ellis thou shalt be as the
 seeke leche that can nat heele himself nor othir men that bene in the same mal-
 adye." And seith: "That thinge that redresseth beste the nedys of the people is for
 to have a rightwose lorde. And that thynge that | moste hurtes hem is to have a
 100 corupte lorde." And seide: "Kepe thee from covetyses, for yf thou thenke wele
 theron, thou shalt fynde that it is nat lowable for to have worship in this worlde and
 shame in anothir, for this worlde is but an hous of passage for to go into anothir.
 And yf thou wilt be ryche, suffyse thee with that that thou haste, for that man maye
 never be ryche that holdeth him nat contente with that that he hathe, be it never

60 here, their; **weel**, welfare. **66 here**, their; **hoope**, hope. **71 to**, as. **73 etyques**, ethics;
polletyques, politics; **metaphesyk**, metaphysics. **74 Detheologie**, On Theology; **engynes**,
 formulas. **79 manrys**, man's. **80 sothely**, truly. **81 proufyte**, profit. **83 lasse**, less. **86**
sterres, stars. **92 ellis**, else. **93 seeke leche**, sick leech (physician). **94 nedys**, needs. **96**
covetyses, coveted things. **97 lowable**, allowable.

so litil." And seith: "The cursednesse of this worlde is good to knowe, for there maye no man be worshipped withoute dysworshippyng of other." And seith: "If it happened that of an evel dede there felle to thee some maner of good, or of a good dede there felle to thee some maner of harme, yet loke thu eschewe allewaiers the evel dede, for thu shalte ellis be begiled at the ende. But loke thu do wel alleweyes, for at the ende thu shalt fare the bettir." And seith: "What thyng that is preyed upon thee, loke thu blame it nat upon anothir man." And seith: "Loke thu do to no man othirwise thanne thu woldeste he dede to thee. Refreyne thi will. Eschewe covetyse. And loke thu hate no man. Kepe thee from envye. And yf any man erre ageyns thee, yet for all that have him nat in thyne indignacioun, for there maye no man eschewe errorr and kepe thee from suche covetyses that shulde empêche thi reasoun and destroye trouth." And seith: "Loke thu use nat thi lyfe in suche thingis as bene unprofitable, and also put thee in the fellowship of wysemen, and studye in here bokes. Flee leesynges, for the lyers lyen not but for that thei recche not of reasoun of here soulle; and the leest harme that may come to a lyer is that no man wole beleeve that he seyth; and yet natwithstandinge, a man maye bettir kepe himself frome a theef thanne from a lyer." And seith: "The hertys of goode men accorden soone togedir, lyke as the reyne is lightly medled with the watir of the see; and the hertes of evel folk accorden nat lightly, though so be that thei be alweye togedre, lyke as beestis maken moche of othir and soudeynly thei fallen at debate." And thanne he taughte Alisaundir, seyenge to him: "The firste thinge that ye shal do: establissh youreself, and that ye geve nat youre goodes awey but to hem that loven and sewen trouthe. And loke ye do rygorous peynes to hem that loven falsheed and dothe harme to othir folkes." And seith: "Yf thou have a dowte in anythinge, loke thou have recours to the wyse men; and yf the wyse men dyspreyse thee, loke thou be nat wrothe therfore, for there is no man but he hath somme vyce, and yet he hath many othir goode vertues, and therfore a man shulde nat lette for to aske hym counsell." | And seide to Alysaunder that "to moche people wole hurte thee and annoye thee, for thei maye nat helpe thee." And seith: "Justyce is a mesure that God hath stabbisshed upon the erthe, by the whiche the feeble bene defended fro the myghty and the true man fro the lyer. And he is right a grete foole and foulle deceyved that wil dyspreise that noble dysposicion." And seith: "The wyse man knoweth the ignoraunte for he was oon himself somtyme, but the ignoraunte was never wyse, and therfore he myght never knowe wysedame." And seide to Alisaundir: "Knowe right wele that all besynesses of the reame that longen to thee be but litill; and yf thei be generall withoute comytinge to other, and yf so be that thu commytte the grete thingis to othir men and takest upon thee the smale thingis, thu shal parceyve right wele that in tyme to come grete hurte shal falle unto thee or ellis sooner thanne thu wenyste." And seith: "Lyberalté is for to gefe to the nedy people or ellis to him that hathe deserved it, or to him that

102 **dysworshippyng**, denouncing. 105 **ellis**, otherwise. 110 **erre**, err. 111–12 **empêche**, impeach (hinder). 114 **here**, their. 115 **recche**, suppose; **here**, their. 118 **reyne**, rain; **medled**, mingled. 119 **see**, sea. 123 **sewen**, pursue. 126 **dyspreyse**, denounce. 128 **to moche**, too many. 135 **besynesses**, business. 138 **parceyve**, perceive. 139 **wenyste**, suppose; **Lyberalté**, Generosity.

is in wille for to deserve it. And loke that the gyfte be meetely aftir the power of the gever, for he that geveth over his possibilié oughte to be called a wastoure and not liberal." And seith: "Wysedame is as a thinge that defendith the soulle and the myrroure of reasoun. O what he is wele at ease that enforceth himself for to gete it, for it is the fundacioun and the roote of alle noble thingis. And by it we maye have the good ende and to kepe oureself from alle grete turmentis." And seide: "O Alysaundir, if thu wilt use thi lordship otherwise thanne thu oughteste, envye shal falle upon thee and of envye shal come lesynges, and of lesynges hate, and of hate injustyce, of injustyce injurye, of injurye bataile, and by bataile the lawe shal peryssh, and thi possessyons shull be loste. But and thu use thi lordship as thu aughteste, trouthe shal growe in thy reame and by trouthe shal come justice, and from justice love, and frome love grete geftys and sureté, by the whiche the feyth shal be mayntened and thy people encresed." And seith: "Ho that stablisseth his reame to be servaunt of the lawe, he shulde regne; and ho that seweth the lawe, it maketh him to encrese." And seith: "A kinge shulde be of grete courage, and thenke what shal falle of the ende of his dedis, curteys and debonayre. He shulde also refreyne his wrath where that him oughte to do it, and to shewe it there as it is nedfull; and kepe him also from covetyses, | to leve truly and to governe him as nygh as he maye aftir his predecessours, and to ordeigne for his people lyke as thei be and as thei have deserved; and defende and kepe the lawe and the feyth, to do wele at alle tymes and to be stronge. And yf the strengthe of the body faile him yet lete him have the strengthe of courage, by the whiche he shal be assured in alle his nedfull thinges and at the leste weye that same strengthe shulde suffyse him." And seith: "That kinge that governeth himself wel by his wysedame is worthy to have grete laude." And seide: "O Alysaundir, gete thee ricchesses that wole nat passe aweye, a lyfe that wole nat chaunge, a reame that maye nat be take awey, thinges that bene perpetuell. And loke thu be petevous, and nat oonely suche pitee as maye cause thee for to have harme therby, but loke thu do punyciou on hem that have deserved it withoute dyfferryng. Laboure for to fortifye the lawe, for in that is the drede of a lorde. And whanne thu mayste take vengeance of thyne enemye, loke thu deferre it not unto anothir tyme, for the statis of this worlde chaungen soudeynly." And seith: "Thu oughtest nat to hate him that seith trouthe, nor tempte nat him that kepith his feythe." And seith: "Stablysse the feithe in the begynnyng of thi regne, and it is bettir that thu amende and corecte aftir the exsample of thi predecessours thanne thi successours shulde amende it in exsample of thee." And seith: "Worship the goode folkis, and by that thu mayste gete the love of thi people. And sette nat all thyne entente on this worlde wherinne thu shalte nat longe abyde. Worship sapience and fortifye it in goode maners by goode maisters, by dyssiples, and by scolers; honoure hem and helpe to paye her dispence, and holde hem of thyne housholde lyke as thu seest that they have profyted in science, and thu shalte

141 meetely, fitting. **145 fundacioun**, foundation. **149 bataile**, battle. **152 sureté**, surety. **153 mayntened**, maintained; **encresed**, increased. **154 seweth**, pursues. **156 curteys**, courteous. **158 leve**, live. **163 leste**, least. **167 petevous**, merciful. **169 dyfferryng**, differing. **171 statis**, states. **173 Stablysse**, Establish. **176 Worship**, Honor. **177 entente**, intent. **179 her dispence**, their expenses.

fynde that grete worshippe and profyte shal come to thee therfore." And seith: "He
 is of grete corage and of good dyscretion and of a true feythe that taketh paciently
 his aduersytees, for oon can nat knowe a man in his prosperitees." And seith: "Thu
 shuldeste thenke that the moste feble of thyne enemyes is more stronge thanne
 thiself." And seith: "Thu shuldest as wel cheryssh the knyghtes in tyme of peas as
 in tyme of were, for yf thou wilte nat please hem nor sette by hem in tyme of peas,
 they wole quyte thee wel ynough in tyme of werre, whanne thou shalt have neede
 unto hem." And seith: "The gretteste proufyte that thou mayste do to thi reame is
 for to putte awey the evel people and to rewarde wele the good people." And seith:
 "That man is of evel condyciouen that taketh none | heede but to the vyses of othir
 men, and that preyseth himself in dyspreysinge othir folkes." And seith: "It is bettir
 to deye worshipfully thanne for to lefe in shame." And seith: "The wysedame of a
 man that is of poure lynage is worshipfull, and the foly of him that is of grete lyn-
 age is the grettest shame that maye be, and covetyse is the thing that moste taketh
 awey the name of gentilnesse." And seith: "A good governoure shulde take his
 people as his kynne, and his kynne as his frendes, and not as his thresoure or his
 heritage, and delyte himself in that that he hath of his people rightwosly, and nat
 of that that he hathe by yviolence." And seith: "There shulde no man be ashamed
 for to do justyce." And seithe: "If the kinge be nat rightwose, he nys not kinge, but
 a yvolente man and a raptour." And seith: "The evell folkes obeyen for feere, and
 the goode obeyen by her goode dedis, and whanne a man knoweth these two
 maner of peple, a man shulde do wele to the goode folkes and chastyse rigorously
 the evel people." And seith: "Thyne angre shulde nat be to sharpe ne to lighte."
 And seide in a pystel whiche he sente to Alysaundyr that the kinges bene wor-
 shipped for thre maner causes, that is to seye: by institucionis of goode lawes, by
 conquestis of regyons, and of landes that bene deserfe for to fylle hem with people.
 And he wrote also to Alysaundir that he shulde nat at all tymes correcte the people
 with rygour, for the people maye nat at alle tymes kepe hemself oute of defaute.
 Wherfore a man shulde at somme tyme pardone here trespasses; and yf so be that
 a man muste nedys do punycioun, a man shulde shewe that he were constreyned
 in maner for to redresse it, and nat to shewe that he doth it vengeably. And he
 sawe a man whiche had his hande kutte of for a thefte that he had done, and
 thanne he seide: "For because that he toke awey othir mennys thinges, thei have
 taken awey that was his." And seith: "How shulde oon foole love anothir whanne
 he can nat love himself?" And seith: "Thu mayste nat be bettir loved of thi people
 ne to have thi lordship for to endure thanne for to do wel to thi people, for yf thu
 greeve hem and hurte hem though so be that thu be lorde over here bodyes, yet
 shalte nat thou be lorde over her courages. And knowe right wele that it is grete per-
 yll for a man to wrath his people in many maners, for he shal nat be wel beloved
 of hem." And seith: "He is right an happy man that can chastyse himself by othir
 men." And seith: "Fortefye youre soulles and | departe you from thes covetyses
 that destroyen the feble coragis." And seith: "There is nothinge that maketh a man
 lasse worthy thanne to make his avaunte of the goode dedis that he hath done."

187 **quyte**, quit (leave). 192 **deye**, die; **lefe**, live. 197 **rightwosly**, righteously. 199 **nys not**,
 is not. 200 **raptour**, thief. 204 **pystel**, letter. 208 **defaute**, error. 209 **here**, their. 211
vengeably, vengefully. 217 **here**, their.

225 And somme seide unto him: "What is the cause amonge you wyse men that ye be nat wrothe whanne any man wole teche you?" He aunsuered and seide: "For we take it for a profitable thinge." And seith: "He that hath no power for to do wele yet at the leest weye lette himself from doyng evel." And seide to his dyssiples: "Loke ye have foure eeres, of the whiche lete tweyne of hem be redy for to here these thinges that profyten, and the tothre tweyne for to forsake the thinges that be nat profitable." And thei asked him what was the moste profytable thinge that myght be to the world. He aunsuerd and seide: "The dethe of evell folkes." And seith: "A man maye never knowe a persoone so wele as whanne he is in his gret lordship and myghte." And Arystotle seith: "Of alle thinges in the worlde the lighteste thinge is moste easiest for to beere but oonly connynge, for the more that a man hathe therof, the lighter he shal bere it." And thei asked him what was the moste covenable thinge for a discrete man to have. He aunsuerd and seide: "These thinges that leven with him yf he escaped oute of the perell of the see naked." And seith: "Of alle connynge a man shulde chese the beste, lyke as the bee chesith oute the beste thinge of the floure." He hadde a place whiche was his enherytaunce, whiche he put to the rule of othre folkes, for he wolde nat come there himself, and thei asked him whi he wolde nat go see his lyfelode. He aunsuerd and seide: "For he that moste ofte vesiteth his places is moste oftentymes wrothe." And seith: "The tunge of a foole is the keye of his secretes." And seide to oon that was slowe to lerne: "If thu wilte nat take peyne upon thee for to lerne, thu shalt have the peyne as he that knoweth nat whiche is moche gretter thanne the tothir." And seide to oon of his dyssiples: "Loke thu bewar that thu fellowship nat with that man that knoweth nat himself." And seith: "Thei that bene enclyned at alle tymes and abandoune hemself unto vyses maye never resceyve encrece ne profyte in science." And seith: "If thu wilt gefe unto thi body all his willes and lustes, it shal be the wors for the body in his helth and othir thinges, and the soulle shal falle unto perpetuel dampnacioun." And seith: "Ho that is enclyned uttirly to fornycacioun, at the ende he shal have no worship therof." And seith: "A man that is joieful, it is grete peyne to make him wrothe, and a liberal man | maye nat be envyous, ne a covetouse man shal never be ryche." And seith: "A man is preved by his dedis lyke as the golde is tryed by force of the fyre." And oon of his dyssiples compleyned unto him upon oon of his fellowes and seide he hadde done hym wronge, to whome he aunsuerd and seide: "I wol nat beleve thi tale oonly agenste thi fellawe, for I wol nat beleve his tale agen thee." And seith: "In lyke wise as the reyne maye nat proufyte unto the corne that is sownen upon the stone, knowe right wele that in lyke wyse the studye of a foole maye nat prouffyte." And seith: "The tunge of a man shewith his wysedame and his foly." And seith: "Experyence correcteth a man and techeth a man to leve wele." And seith: "Wysedame shewith faire and honestly the rycchesse of a ryche man and hydeth the poverté of a poure man." And thei asked him what was good language and speche. He ansuerd and seide: "For to speke but litill, and that," he seide, "shulde be spoken with grete reasoun and able for to be allowed." And he wrote to Alysaundir: "Ye seeme to be a noble and a myghty kinge, and I knowe wele ye be so, and yet ye shal be gretter with that that ye wole

fol. 39v 228 **eeres**, ears. 234 **beere**, bear. 238 **chese**, choose. 239 **enherytaunce**, inheritance. 241 **lyfelode**, livelihood. 248 **encrece**, increase. 262 **leve wele**, live well.

ordeigne youreself to governe youre people truly, for yf ye do so, thei wole obbeye you the more. And yf ye wole take aweye her goodes and leve hem so litill that it maye unneth suffyse hem to leve upon, ye shal be lorde of a poure people, and ye shal be lykened to him that loveth bettir to governe the beestis thanne the men. And there maye nat be a more uncovenable thinge to a prynce thanne to coveyte the goodes of his people." And thei asked him in what thinge a man shulde holde his peas inne though so were that it were true. He aunsuerd and seide that a man shulde nat comende himself. And seith: "A litil trouthe is good, for ho that ableth himself to trouthe, it shal falle the more unto him." And seith: "Reasoun maketh man to surmounte alle othir beestis, wherfore and a man lacke reasoun he is a beest." And seith: "Amonge alle thinges the newe bene beste, excepte love — for the elder that love is, the bettir it is." And oon whiche was called Abraquis, lorde of sciences, asked him what maner thinge shuld he lerne firste that wolde gete wysedame. And he aunsuered that he shulde lerne firste that science that shulde governe the soulle, for because that it is perpetuel, and more noble withoute any comparison thanne anythinge that we have. And | thei asked him how that the soulle myght gete wysedame. He ansuerd and seide: "In lyke wyse as the seeke man maketh the phesycyan by his sekenesse, and as the blynde man undirstandeth the colours by hem that seen hem." And oon asked him how maye a soulle knowe himself. He aunsuerd and seide: "Whanne a soulle lacketh wisdome, he shal nat knowe himself, nor none othir, lyke as a sighte withoute light that maye nat see himself nor none othir." And seith: "Alle thinges have propirtees, and the propirté of dyscrecioun is to chese the goode thinges." And seith: "The lordes have gotten by her studye and by her laboure for to escape the grete perilles whiche causeth hem to come to good ende, and thes thingis that be geten with delytes and sportes come to a smal ende. And ye maye see comounly thees townes that good laboure is inne bene wele replenysshed of people and wele holden up; and thees townes that bene full of vyces fallen to destruccioun." And seith: "Haste of spekinge maketh men for to erre many tymes." And seith: "I have grete merveyle how he that a man seith wel by withouten cause can accept it, and also how he that men seye evel by withoute cause can be wrothe." And seith: "Men have in gretter cheertee that thing that is dere bought, or ellis gotten with moche peyne, thanne that thing that cometh lightly to a man and withouten peyne." And seith: "Loke ye be nat lyke the bultyng cloth that casteth oute fro hym alle the meeple and floore, and kepith himself the branne." And seith: "A man shulde nat gefe a childe the governaunce of the people, nor to him that knoweth nat the occupacions of this world, nor to him that hath grete joye in covetyses, nor to him that wole do his dedis withoute deliberacioun, nor to him that is to vengeable." And seith: "There is no difference betwene a childe of age and a childe of maners; what age that ever he be of for the condycions of men be shewed by here werkes and nat by the tyme." And seith: "It is nedful to a man yf he wole be goode that he be abled therto as for to knowe trouthe and for to do it in dede or ellis that he lerne it by anothir, for of himself

269 **her**, their. 270 **unneth**, inadequately. 275 **ableth**, enables. 277 **and**, if. 284 **seeke**, sick. 285 **phesycyan**, physician. 291 **her**, their. 298 **cheertee**, esteem. 299 **dere**, dearly. 301 **bultyng cloth**, cloth used for sifting flour; **meeple**, meal. 302 **branne**, bran. 305 **to vengeable**, too vengeful. 307 **here**, their.

310 he maye nat understande it. And he that wole nat lerne it by another maye never
 be good." And seith: "The goodnesse is devysed in thre maners: the firste is to the
 body, the secunde is to the soull, the thirde is withoute the body. And the moste
 fol. 40v noble is the goodnesse of the soulle, the whiche goodnesse appereth in doyng
 315 goode dedis, and in usynge of that goodnesse is founden the verrey trouthe of sci-
 ence." And seith: "Wysedame is founden in man by longe lernynge, and goodnesse
 320 cometh by good custume." And seith: "We oughte to knowe the signes that the
 condycions of men shewen by the dilectaciouns withoute forthe whiche shewen by
 here dedis, for he that absteyneth him oonly from his pleasaunce and fro the
 bodily dilectaciouns, he aughte to be called a man wele attempred. And he that
 325 absteyneth himself from dilectaciouns and is sory therfore shulde be called am-
 bycious, and so of othir thinges." And seith: "There bene many that knownen the
 goode maners and done hem nat, and thei resemble the seeke folkes that asken
 counsell of the leeches and do nat aftir hem, and lyke as here bodyes ben ferre
 330 from helthe, so bene the soulles ferre from blessednesse." And seith: "To do wele
 is a thinge that man hath neede of to lerne, and yet it is somewhat peynefull for to
 come thereto. But for to do evel, men come lightly to it, for he seith to sheete aferre
 at a marke is but a lite thinge, but it is ful harde for to hitte it; and in many maners
 335 we maye be evell, but we maye nat be goode but in oone." And seith: "The lacke
 of connynge is cause of evel, for many erron in usinge of her werkes that thei
 shulde do by ignoraunce, for thei wote never whanne thei do wele nor whanne thei
 340 do evell." And seith: "Olde men loven togedre but children done nat, for the olde
 mennys delytes bene gretely even and the yonge dyfferen in many maners." And
 seith: "The accomplesshememente of felicité of man is for to gete him frendes, for a
 man aloone maye never have felicité in himself, for the perfeccioun of felicité is to
 345 do wele to other. And therfore he that hath an indignacioun of the goode deedis
 that bene done by othir folkes is altogedir oute of felicité." And seith: "He hathe
 neede to frendes that hath gretely for to do, be it wele or be it evel, for yf it go evell
 he hathe nede of helpe of his frendes; and yf it go wele it is necessarye that he
 make joye and solace with his frendes." And seith: "Ho that loveth God truly hath
 350 wysdame, and he that hathe wysedame and dothe the dedis theraftir is beloved of
 God and is full redy to do wele to him agen." And seith: "The evell folkes susteyne
 the perilles by the force of here bodyes, and the goode suffren the perilles by the
 force of here soulle, for the wysdame of the goode men is nat in the streyngth of
 fol. 41r here | handes, of here armes, or in here othir membres, which is the streyngthe of
 345 othir dombe beestis, but the goode pacience of the soulle withstandeth gladly the
 grete perilles of coveityses and othir delites in full hope for to have a good ende."
 And wrote to Alysaundir, seyng in this wise: "Thu oughteste wele to obbeye the
 worldly thinges of God, for he hathe geve thee that thu woldest have, and that
 thinge that thu haste desired of him." And seith: "Knowynge is lyfe, and ignor-
 aunce is deth. And therfore he that knoweth is alyve, for he undirstandeth that he
 dothe, and he that knoweth nat is deed, for he undirstandeth nothinge that he

314 **verrey**, veritable. 319 **wele attempred**, temperate/moderate. 320–21 **ambycious**,
 ambitious. 324 **ferre**, far. 326–27 **sheete aferre at a marke**, to shoot at a distant target.
 329 **erren**, err; **her**, their. 342 **here**, their. 345 **dombe beestis**, dumb beasts. 351 **deed**,
 dead.

dothe." And seith: "Men maye nat undirstande withoute enformacion of dyscipleyn, lyke as here sight maye nat see withoute lighte the schappes of thingis." And seith: "The longe passinge of tyme maketh a mannes dedis olde and defaceth here traces, and thanne there abideth nothinge but good renowne and love that abideth in the hertis of here successors, for here goode dedis that thei dede in here dayes. And therfore enforce thee for to conquerre thee a good name, whiche at no tyme shal faille, and for that good renown thi noblesse shal endure." And seith: "The foole is as a man that falleth in a deep watir, and yf he ley honde upon thee, he wole drowne thee with him; and yf thou flee fro him, thu arte seure." And seith: "Lesynge is an infirmyté of the soule, for by the meane of reasoun he shulde nat lye." And seith: "The most stedfaste wyseman is he that wole nat pronounce his matiers unto the tyme that he hathe wele undirstande hem. And the beste spekinge man is he that spekith nat unto the tyme that he be wel purveyed of his language. And the beste werkeman is he that wole nat begynne his werkes til that he hath wele advysed and discussed hem in his herte. And there is none that oughte to thenke more thanne the wiseman, for it is right nedful that he knowe his matiers right wele, or he be wel acerteigned in hem." And seith: "The men bene more enclyned to coveityses thanne to reasoun, for coveityse is accompanied with hem in her childhode, and reasoun cometh nat to hem unto the tyme that thei come to parfite age." And seith: "The children dispreysen and haten here maisters for, at that tyme that the maister techeth hem, thei conceyve nat the goodnesse that maye come to hem therby, but thei feele oonly the laboure of the lernynge." And he called Alisaundre | and asked him questions of the governaunce of the lordes and of the people, to whome Alisaundir aunsuerd right wele. And yet natwithstanding that, Aristotle bete him with a rodde. And thanne somme asked him what was the cause that he beete him so withouten any trespassse. He aunsuerd and seide that "this childe is ordeigned for to be a grete kinge. And for to kepe him lowely, therfore, I beete him, for he wol ful hastily be right proude." And seith: "If thu maiste redresse any man, loke thu do it as thu woldest do to thyne owen self." And a yonge man asked him whi he was so poure, to whome he aunsuered: "My poverté offended me never, nor dede me never harme, but thyne hath done thee harme, and yet wole do thee moche more." And seith: "The worlde is lyke a gardeyne, wherof the dyches be lykened to realmes; and the realmes be maintened by the lawes whiche the kinge hath stablysshed. The kinge is mayntened by his knyghtes, the knyghtes bene governed by money, the money cometh of the people, the people is governed by justice. And so is all the world."

14. ALEXANDER

The grete Alysaundir was sone to Kinge Phelip of Macedoyne, whiche regned seven yere. And a grete lord of his lande, whos name was Chaus, was the cause of his death, for that he loved the moder of Alisaundir and enforced himself as moche

352 **enformacion**, information. 360 **seure**, sure (safe). 364 **purveyed**, provided. 371 **parfite**, perfect. 378 **lowely**, humble. 384 **dyches**, ditches.

3 **moder**, mother.

5 as he might for to have her, and she wolde in no wise consente to him. Wherfore he thoughte for to slee the kinge here husbande to th'entente whanne that he were dede, he shulde wedde the quene, and so for to regne over that reame. So it befell that aftir the deth of a kinge that was named Pilate, whiche in his tyme was subjecte to Kinge Phelip, his sone anone aftir the deth of his fadir disobeyed Kinge Phelip.

fol. 42r 10 And the same Kinge Phelip sente a grete partie of his knyghtis agenste him; | and the tother partie of his people he sente with Alysaundir to besege a towne whiche was named Sarapye, that rebelled of newe agenste Kinge Phelip. And so the seide kinge was lefte right destitute of people, and this seide Cahus assembled alle the people that he myght make, and came agenst Kinge Phelip and discomfited him and hurte him unto the deth, wherof the towne was gretely troubled and meoved.

15 15 And even as this caas felle, came Kinge Alisaundir home from his viage, and fonde his fadre almoste deed, and his moder was in prysyon in the hondes of this Cahus. Thanne was Alisaundir gretely stered and wrothe, and nat withoute cause. And anone as he was ware of the seid Cahus, he pulled oute his swerde for to have smeten him. Thanne was he ware that Cahus helde his moder, and withdrew his strook for doute of his moder, leste he shulde have hurte here. Thanne seide his moder unto him: "Sone, kille this cursed man and leve nat for me!" Thanne Alisaundir smote him that he felle to the erthe, and broughte him unto his fadir, whiche hadde yet a litil lyffe lefte in him, and seide unto his fadir: "Kinge, lo, here is thyne enemy. I wole that he dye of thyne handes, and so shalt thu be venged."

20 25 And thanne Kinge Phelip aroose up with grete peyne and killed Cahus, and anoone aftir he deyed himself. And Alisaundir made him buried with grete worship, and thanne he regned aftir him. And yet before or Kinge Phelip deyed, he put Alisaundir to the rule of Aristotle, whiche taughe him right worshipfully, and was of right grete undirstondinge. And whanne Kinge Phelip was nygh the deth, he called Alysaundre to him and made him kinge, and sette the crowne upon his hed and made him sytte in the roial seete and made calle alle the princes and charged hem that thei shuld take him for here lorde. And thanne he called Aristotle and prayed him that he wolde teche Alysaundir somme good thinge in his presence before he shulde departe oute of this worlde. And so he dede. And anoone aftir the deth of Kinge Phelip, Alysaundre spake to his men and seide: "Faire lordes, I wole nat have any maner lordship over you but wil be as oon of you, and what that pleaseth you I shal holde me right wel agreed. And I wole love that ye love. And I wole hate that ye hate. And I wole in no wyse bee contrarie to youre dedis. But I that hate fraudes and malice and have alleweyes loved you while my fadir leved, and yet do | and shal do, counseile and praye you that ye drede God and that ye obbeye Him as youre sovereigne. And chesith Him for your kinge that ye see wole be obeysante to God, him also that wole beste thenk upon the state of the people, he that shal be moste debonaire and merciful to the people,

30 35 39 fol. 42v 41

5 **slee**, slay; **here**, her; **th'entente**, the intent. 6 **dede**, dead; **reame**, realm. 8 **fadir**, father. 10 **tother**, other. 13 **discomfited**, defeated. 14 **meoved**, moved. 15 **viage**, voyage. 17 **stered**, agitated; **wrothe**, angry. 18 **ware**, aware; **swerde**, sword. 19 **smeten**, struck. 20 **doute**, fear. 21 **leve**, leave off. 24 **wole**, wish. 27 **or**, ere. 29 **nygh**, near. 32 **here**, their. 33 **teche**, teach. 36 **oon**, one. 39 **dedis**, deeds. 41 **chesith**, choose.

45 he that kepeth beste justice, and he that wole helpe the feoble man in his right agenste the stronge man, and he that wole beste dispose his body to the profites of the comoun wele, and him that wole nat for no dilectaciouns or delites be slowe for to kepe you or defende you, by the whiche ye shal be kept frome alle evell by the meane of his goode werkys, and he that moste hardily wole put himself in daungier of deth agenst your enemyes. For suche a man oughte to be chosen for kinge and none other." And whanne his people hadde herde his grete reasons aboveseide and undirstode his grete discreciooun, thei were gretly abashed. Thenne thei aunsuerd him, seyenge in this wyse: "We have right wele undirstande and herde thi reasons, and we have resceived and resceive thi counseile. Wherfore we wole and praye thee that thu regne and governe us for evermore. And we undirstonde that there is none so worthy nor have so wele deserved for to be oure kinge." And right so thei chase him, and crowned him to here kinge, and thei gave him the blessinge, and preyed God hertily for to mayntene him. To whome he seide: "I have herde the prayour that ye have made for me, and also that ye have with a good herte made me kinge, wherfore I beseche almighty God with alle humblenesse that He wole afferme the love of me in youre courages, that for any dilectacioun He suffre me not to do anythinge but it be to you profitable, and to me honour and worship." And anone he sente oute his lettres to alle the goode townes of his realme, and to alle this princes, aftir the fourme as hereaftir shal folowe:

64 | Alysaundir, kinge of Macedoyne, to suche and suche, sende greetinge. Almyghty God is my Lorde and yours, my Creatour and yours, maker of heven and of erth, of sterres, of mounteyns, of the see, and of alle other thinges whiche hath put in my courage verey knowelech of Hym and of His drede, and hath stablissched me to His servyces. Also He hath bounde me for to kepe His people and in my childe-hooode hath sette me in the highest estate of this werlde. Wherfore I thanke Him lowely of so noble a begynnynge, and I beseche Him hertily to be my good meane, that I maye be brought to the goode ende. And ye wote wel that youre faders and oures have worshipped ydoles that myght nouther noye ne helpe, see nor heere, ne have nouther reasoun ne undirstondinge. And we oughte to have grete shame for to worship thes ymages that we have made with oure handes. Wherfore I wole that fro hens forthe ye have verrey beleeve in the true God and that ye serve Him and honoure Him.

70 | And aftir that he sente lettres to his knightis, by the whiche thei knewe his lyffe and his wille, and that his entent was to helpe hem to his power, wherof thei were right gladdie and joifull. And aftir that thei hadde resceived his lettres, thei comen to him wele garnysshed of suche thingis as longen unto knyghthode, and he ordeigned hem goode wages. And whanne thei sawe that he was so wise, so liberal, so stronge and of so grete a courage, so curteys and of so goode condycions, so

75 | And aftir that he sente lettres to his knightis, by the whiche thei knewe his lyffe and his wille, and that his entent was to helpe hem to his power, wherof thei were right gladdie and joifull. And aftir that thei hadde resceived his lettres, thei comen to him wele garnysshed of suche thingis as longen unto knyghthode, and he ordeigned hem goode wages. And whanne thei sawe that he was so wise, so liberal, so stronge and of so grete a courage, so curteys and of so goode condycions, so

46 **wele**, weal (wealth). 54 **wole**, want. 56 **chase**, chose; **here**, their. 59 **beseche**, beseech. 67 **sterres**, stars; **see**, sea. 68 **verey knowelech**, true knowledge; **stablissched**, established. 71 **of**, for. 73 **ydoles**, idols; **nouther noye ne helpe**, neither harm nor help. 76 **hens**, hence; **verrey beleeve**, true belief. 81 **wele garnysshed**, well equipped. 83 **curteys**, courteous.

85 rightwos and so fulle of pitee to poure men and feble men, dredynge and obbey-
 fol. 43v nge God, and enclyned himself so gretely to His servyce, thei thought hemself that
 he shulde be a grete and a mighty | lorde and that he shulde by his grete wor-
 thynesse make hem grete maisters. Wherfore thei served him with alle here hertis.
 And his fader Kinge Phelip payed every yere of custume a trewage to the King
 Dayre, whiche was kinge of Perce, to that entente that he myghte sytte in peas. And
 90 therfore Kinge Dayre sente his men to Alysaundre for to resceive the payemente
 of the trewage, as is before seide. To whome he aunsuerd and seide that the henne
 that gave thes eggis was dede, and so thei wente her weye, and hadde non other
 aunsuere. And whanne Alysaundre began to regne, the londe of Grece was in so
 95 grete devysioun that thei hadde divers kinges, and eche oon of hem was in debate
 with other; and for because of that devysyon the Kinge Alysaundre scomfyted hem
 everych aftir other, and was lorde over hem alle. Wherfore and thei hadde bene
 alle oone, he hadde nat so lightly conquered hem. And he was the firste man that
 100 made the lordeship of Greece undir oon lorde. And thanne it fell in his courage
 for to go and conquere alle the reames of the Occidente, and so he dede, and
 regned over hem. And aftir that he wente into Egipte, and there he bilded a cité
 nygh to the greene see and called it Alysaundre aftir his name; and this was done
 in the seveth yere of his regne. Aftir that he wente into the land of Desteme, and
 105 from thens into the londe of Armenye. And whanne Dayre, the kinge of Perce, had
 herde the aunsuer that Alysaundre had sente him by his messangiers, and herde
 also of his grete dedis and how that he come and shulde hastily entre in the lande
 of Tyre, wheroft he had grete indignacioun. And thanne anoon he sente his lettres
 110 unto the people of the same cuntrey, seyenge as here aftir follewith:

110 Dayre, kinge of kinges, to the people of Tyre, sende gretynge. It is comen to
 myn undirstondinge that the theef whiche is openly knownen named Alysaundre,
 115 with alle the power that he can make of othir theeffis, is goynge unto your land.
 Wherfore I praye you that ye wol take him and alle his compayne and alle his
 beestis and armures, and caste hem alle into the see and drowne hem. And as
 touchinge the theef that calleth himself her lorde, loke ye take and bryngē him to
 120 me in alle possible haste, for I knowe certeignely that youre wysedams and youre
 myghtis bene grete ynough for to accomplyssh a gretter thinge thanne that is,
 fol. 44r seyngē that thei of Grece bene | but of easy deedis and of litil value. And loke that
 in this be none excusacioun.

120 Yet natwithstandinge these lettres, Alysaundre regned over the same people.
 And from thens he wente forth into the lande of Kinge Dayre of Perce and logged
 him upon a ryver, whiche was named Usyoche. And whanne Dayre herde thes
 tydinges, he was passingely wrothe and wrote his lettres to Alysaundir in this
 maner:

84 **rightwos**, righteous. 87 **here hertis**, their hearts. 88 **treweage**, tribute. 89 **peas**, peace.
 91–92 **the henne that gave thes eggis was dede**, the hen that laid these eggs was dead. 92
 her, their. 94 **devysioun**, division. 95 **scomfyted**, defeated. 99 **Occidente**, the East. 101
 Alysaundre, Alexandria. 103 **Armenye**, Armenia. 112 **armures**, armors. 113 **her**, their.
 116 **value**, valor. 117 **excusacioun**, reason for excuse. 119 **logged**, lodged. 121 **pas-**
singely wrothe, surpassingly angry.

Dayre, kinge of kinges, and lorde of alle the worlde, shynynge as the sonne, to
 125 Alysaundre, theef. Thu oughtest to knowe that the kinge of heven hathe stablished
 me to be kinge of alle the erthe, and hathe geven me the ricchesses, the honoures,
 the highnesse, the noblesse, the streyngthe, and the lordship of the same. Nat-
 withstandyng, I have herde that thu, with many othir theefis, arte so bolde to come
 and logge thee upon the ryver of Usyoche and doyng harm in my lande. And yet
 130 moreover, thu letest calle thiself kinge and thu woldest have the croune, and I
 knowe wele that it comethe thee of grete pride, and of the foly of Greekis. Wher-
 fore I sende thee worde and commaunde thee that, as soone as thu haste seene
 these lettres, thu wilt, incontynente, put thee oute of thi grete foly, for thu arte but
 135 a childe of no valure, fulle of foly, and thu oughtest nothinge make comparyson
 unto me. And yf thou refuse this, thu shalt curse the tyme that ever thu sawe my
 lande. And I sende thee a coffre full of golde, to that entente that thu shalt knowe
 fol. 44v that I have ricchesse ynough, by the whiche I may put in ure alle thinge that I wole
 take upon me. And I sende thee an appyl, whiche is rounde, in token that alle the
 140 worlde is in myn honde. And I sende thee a bagge full of smale seedes, | in token
 that I have grete multytude of knyghtis. And in lyke wyse I sende thee a scourge,
 in token that thu shalte be corrected by me lyke as a childe.

And whanne Alysaundre had sene his lettres and undirstonden his messangers,
 he commaunded anoone that thei shulde be taken and to bynde here handes
 behynde hem, and made oon pulle oute a swerde, lyke as he wolde have smeten of
 145 here heidis. And then the messangiers seyden to Alysaundre: "Sir, we have merveile
 of thee that thu wilt put us to the deth, for it is nat accustumed that the messan-
 giers that comen from kinges, for any maner message that thei bringe, shulde be
 putte to deth, ne have any maner harme, namely whanne thei be avowed by him
 150 that sendeth hem." To whome Alysaundre aunsuerde: "Youre lorde holdeth me as
 for a theef, and nat for a kinge, wherfore and I put you to deth I do lyke as a theef,
 and nat as a kinge. And therfore the offence herof is in your lorde, that hathe sente
 you to me as a theef, and nat as a kinge." Wherupon thei aunsuerd and seide:
 155 "The kinge Dayre knewe thee nat wele, but we knowe thee and undirstonde wele
 the grete worshippes, and the grete goodnesse that is in thee. Wherfore we besech
 thee that thu wilt graunte us grace of oure lyves, and we shull shewe thi worship to
 Kinge Dayre, and bere witnesse of that we have seene in thee." To whome
 160 Alysaundre aunsuerd: "For because that I see youre humblenesse and that ye re-
 quere me of mercy, I forgeve it you to that entente that ye maye knowe and under-
 stande my mercy, and that I have pitee upon meekenesse, and rygour upon
 pryd." And commaunded that thei shulde be hadde to here meete and that thei
 were honestly served; and made write a lettre of an aunsuere unto Kinge Dayre,
 aftir the forme as heraftyr follewith:

Alysaundre, soone of Kinge Phelip, to Dayre, whiche weneth himself to be
 kinge of kinges, dradde and douted of the sterres, and also calleth himself the

123 **sonne**, sun. 129 **letest calle thiself kinge**, allow yourself to be called king; **croune**,
 crown. 135 **coffre**, coffer (chest). 136 **ure**, here. 137 **appyl**, apple. 142 **here**, their. 143
 of, off. 144 **merveile**, marvel. 149 **and**, if. 155 **bere**, bear. 158 **rygour**, rigor. 159 **hadde**
 to **here meete**, taken to their food. 162 **weneth**, believes. 163 **dradde and douted**,
 dreaded and feared.

165 lighte of God and of the worlde. How maye it be possible that so grete a lorde that lighteth alle the worlde as the sonne dothe shulde in any wise doute and drede so poure a creature as Alysaundre is? But this I knowe wele, that thi pride maketh thee to undirstonde that thu arte God, whiche is to the grete outerage, for a man that is dedly maye nat be God, but it is in God to take awey the lordshippes and the lyves of men at His pleasir. Wherfore, it is a | juste cause and a rightwos to God to have His grete indignacyoun upon that creature that dare take upon him the name of His swete Creature, and applieth himself to be as grete as He. And knowe right wele that it is fully myne entente with the special grace of Him that hath made me for to be in right hasty tyme before thee, and for to offre thee bataile. And I recommaunde me to Him, which I have grete truse inne, that shal helpe me for to abate thi grete pride. Thu haste also lete me wete that thu haste grete quantyté of golde, of the whiche thu haste sente me a coffre fulle, and that betokeneth that thu shalt paye me trewage. Also, thu haste sente me a rounde appyl, whiche betokeneth that I shal have alle thi lande in my possessyoun. Thu haste also sente me a scorge, in token that I am he that God hathe ordeigned for to chastyse thee and to correcte thee, and for to be thi lorde and thi kinge. And in lyke wise thu sendest me a bagge of smale seedys, whiche betokeneth that I shal assemble alle thi knyghtes and myne togedir, and shal do hem more good thanne thu doste. And as touchinge the coffre wherinne the golde was that thu sendest me, it shulde be a true signe that thi thresoure shulde be myne. And moreover, thu haddest wente for to have made me aferde with thi grete wordes, makinge mencyon of thi grete puyssaunces. Knowe right wele that I have a truse in God that I shal destroy thee to the utmest, in so moche that thu shalte be exsample to alle othir.

190 And thanne he sealed his lettres and toke hem to the messangers to bere unto here lorde, and made geve hem alle the golde that thei brought with hem in the coffre. And whanne thei come to Dayre, whiche was here lorde, thei fonde the vicary of Dayre whiche Alysaundre had discomfited and sende him a prisoner agen to his maister. And so Alysaundre wente forthe conquerynge and getynge many citees and at the laste he came to a towne of the kinge Dayre that was called Quylle. And there thei shette the gates agenste him, and thanne Alysaundre ordeigned that the towne shulde be take, and thanne brente, wherupon oon that dwelled in the towne come oute to Alysaundre and seide unto him: "We have nat shette the gates agenste thee, but we doute that the kinge Daire, to whome we be subjectis, wolde ellis put us unto the deth whanne that he knewe that we opened the gates agenst thee." Thanne | Alysaunder aunsuerd him: "Open me the gates and I shal promyse you that I nor none of my men shulle entre into the towne unto the tyme that I have discomfyted the kinge Dayre. And I wole that ye knowe the trouthe that I owe to hem that wole obbeye me." And thanne thei opened the gates and brought oute mete and drynke to the hoost. And, natwithstondinge that the gates of the towne were sette open, yet there was no man so hardy to entre into the towne. And fro thens Alysaundir departed and spedde him so faste that he came

171 **Creature**, Creator. 175 **wete**, know. 177 **trewage**, tribute. 185 **aferde**, afraid; **mencyon**, mention. 185–86 **puyssaunces**, powers. 189 **here**, their. 191 **vicary**, priest; **discomfited**, defeated. 195 **brente**, burned. 197 **shette**, shut; **doute**, fear. 198 **ellis**, otherwise. 199 **agenst**, for. 201 **discomfyted**, defeated. 203 **hoost**, host (army).

to the place where Kinge Daire laye with alle his grete hoost. And there thei fowghten togedre fro the mornynge unto the myddes of the daye, and there was an outragious bataile and grete shedinge of mannes blood. And, at the ende, the partie of Kinge Dayre was discomfyted and the Macedoynes aboden in the felde as conquerours. And whanne Dayre sawe the grete discomfyture of himself and of his peple that were slayne and hurte, he toke him to the flighte. And ther his wyfe was taken, his soone, and his doughtir, and put in warde by the commaundemente of Alysaundir. And thei followed the chaace upon Kinge Dayre til thei come unto a grete revere that was strongly froren over. And there he passed over the yse, but the multitude of people that followed him were drowned by brekinge of the yse. And so Dayre escaped but with a fewe people and wente to an hous, where here ydolles were inne for to aske counsel of hem. But in conclusyon he fonde no conforte in hem. And thanne he bethoughte himself and seid that he wolde put him to the wille of Kinge Alysaundre, for he undirstode wele that he was a worshipful man, and a true man. Wherupon he wrote his lettres by the whiche he preyed Alysaundre that he wolde have mercy on him, and on his wyfe and on his children, and he wolde in alle possible haste delyver him alle the thresoure of Perce, and alle the thresoure that was his and his faders before him. Wherof Alysaundre toke but litil heed and sette but litil by his offre, and so pursegued him forthe, til he came into Ynde, whedir that he was fledde. And whanne Alysaundir came so nygh to Dayre that he myght see him with his yghe, two baronnes of Kinge Dayre thought that thei wolde fulfille the wille of Kinge Alysaundre and hurte Dayre unto the dethe. Thanne seide Dayre unto hem: "Feyre lordes, ye done evel | and ye remembre you full litel of the grete goodnesse that I have done to you before this tyme. And I wote wele that Alysaundre wole cunne you no thanke, for I doute nat but he wole put you to deth therfore, anoon as he knoweth it, for it longeth unto a kinge to avenge the dethe of another kinge." And with that he fell downe of his hors to the erthe. And or he was fully deed came Alysaundre upon him and wyped his vesage and seide unto him, weepynge with his yghen: "Kinge Dayre, aryse up and be nat aferde of me, for I wole that thou shalt be kinge stille of thi provynce. And I swere to thee by the name of God that I wole gefe thee puyssance roial, and that thou shalt regne, and I shal restore thee ageyne alle maner thinges that bene taken from thee. And moreover I shal helpe thee and conforte thee agenste thyne enemyes, for I am beholden to thee for the goode meetes and drynkes that I had in thyne hous, for I was therinne whanne thou knewest me nat. And therfore aryse up and conforte thee nothinge, for kinges shulde more paciently suffre and endure the oppressiouns and the peynes thanne other men of lower degree. Also, I praye thee telle me ho hathe thus hurte thee." To whome Dayre seide: "O Alysaundre, loke thou be nat to proude, nor make nat thiself higher thanne longeth to thyne estate, and truse nat to moche on this world, and lete this be a suffysaunte myrroure unto the seenge what is falle of me. But I preye thee hertily that thou wilt worship my moder, and take here as thyne owen, and my wyfe as thi suster. And

212 warde, custody. **214 revere**, river; **froren**, frozen; **yse**, ice. **216 here**, their. **218 be-thoughte himself**, thought to himself. **225 Ynde**, India. **226 yghe**, eye. **230 wote**, know; **cunne**, give. **232 of**, off. **233 or**, ere. **236 puyssance roial**, royal power. **241 discom-forte**, dismay. **244 to**, too. **246 what is falle of me**, what has befallen me. **247 here**, her.

250 yf it please thee, thu shalt have my doughtir in mariage, and thus thu shalte do me
 grete worship." And even as he hadde made an ende of his tale, he passed oute of
 this worlde, and Alysaundir made wasshe him with aumbre and muske, and lete
 berye him in a riche clothe of golde, and made arme hem of Grece and of Perce,
 and sette ten thousande before the beere, and ten thousande behynde, ten thou-
 sande on the right syde, and ten thousande on the lefte syde. And every man bare
 his swerde naked in his hande, and Alysaundre wente before with alle his prynces
 255 and his grete lordes; and in this wyse he lete carye the bodye of Kinge Dayre unto
 his sepulture, and there he was entered with grete worship. And even at the bur-
 yenge he lete take the two baronnes that killed him, wherof the men of Perce were
 passinge gladde, and from thens forthe thei loved Alysaundre the bettir, and
 fol. 46v 260 preysed him gretely for his rightwos jugemente. | And thanne Kinge Alysaundre
 made aske Kinge Dayres doughter whedir she wolde have him to here husbande,
 and she was right agreeable thereto, and thanne she was broughte unto him. And
 whanne that was doone, Alysaundre ordeigned that her brother shulde regne for
 him. And thanne he made for to brenne alle the bookees of payennes, and made to
 265 translate alle the bookees of astronomye and of phylosophye, and sente the trans-
 lacionis into Grece, and made to brenne alle the exempleres, and in lyke wyse alle
 suche houses wherinne thei hadde here sacrifices, and made slee alle the preestis
 of the lawe, and lete bylde there many townes, and filled hem with people whiche
 he broughte oute of other londes. And as Alysaundre was goyng forthe with his
 270 armee agenste another payen, there came lettres to him from his moder, lyke as
 the tenoure maketh mencyon heraftir:

275 Moder of Alysaundre to Alysaundre here sone, somtyme feeble and now right
 stronge and sette up by the wille and the myght of God, I grete thee wele. Sone,
 loke thu be nat to proude, ne be nat to lowly for any estate that maye falle to thee,
 and knowe right wele that the grete estate whiche thu arte inne maye falle for a litil
 thinge. Also, sone, kepe thee from covetyse, whiche is a thinge that gretely noyeth.
 Furthermore, sone, I praye thee that thu sende me alle the thresoure and moneye
 that thu haste assembled unto this tyme.

280 And whanne Alysaundre had redde his lettres, he asked of the wysemen yf thei
 coude expowne those lettres. And thei seide naye. And thanne Alysaundre called
 to him oon of his secretaryes and commaunded him to wryte a lettre unto his
 moder, "by the whiche thu shalt certefye her the noumbr and the quantyté of my
 thresoure, and the place where she shal fynde hem, for it is oonely that she cov-
 eyteth for to here of myne estate." And from thens Alysaundre departed for to go
 agenste the kinge of Ynde, and so he muste nedes passe thurgh many desertis. And
 thanne he wrote a lettre to that kinge, lyke as it shal folowe:

285 Alysaundir, kinge of kinges of this worlde, to the kinge of Ynde, sende gret-
 ynge. My God, my Creature, hath kept me, defended me, and holpen me to con-
 quere landes, in suche maner that I have overcomen myne enemyes and brought
 here londes and lordshippes unto my hondes, and hath ordeigned me in this

250 **aumbre**, amber. 252 **beere**, bier. 256 **entered**, interred. 263 **brenne**, burn; **payennes**,
 pagans. 265 **exampleres**, exemplars. 266 **here**, their. 267 **lete bylde**, allowed to be built.
 271 **here**, her. 273 **to₁ and ₂**, too. 275 **noyeth**, annoys. 283 **here**, hear. 284 **muste nedes**
 passe, had to pass. 287 **Creature**, Creator; **holpen**, helped. 289 **here**, their.

fol. 47r 291 worlde for to avenge Him upon His mysbelevyng peple | that denye Him. Wherfore I praye thee that thu wilte beleeve in Him, whiche is the Maker of alle thinges, thi Lorde and myne, and thu wilt worship Him and none other, for He hathe deserved it wel unto thee for the goode deedis that thu haste founde in Him, and beleeve my counsell. And I wole that thu sende me the ydolles that thu doste worship in signe of trewage. And yf thou wilte do these thingis, thou shalt be sure. And yf thou do it nat, I swere thee be my God that I wole override thi lande and distroye it, and I shal do so moche agenste thee that I shal geve exsample to alle other men for to speke of thee. And thu knoweste wele how God hathe shewed agenst the kinge of Perce and how that He hathe holpen me agenst him. Wherfore thou oughtest to desire nothing but oonely the peas.

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And upon this, Porrus, the kinge of Ynde, made an aunsuer whiche was right evel and sharpe. And thanne Alysaundir with alle his hooste entred into his lande, and fonde that Porrus hadde made redy his armee for to come agenste him, and in his armee he had ordeigned a grete quantyté of olyfauntes and wolffes that were wele accustumend and wel taught to fyte. And whanne Alysaundre had perceyved this grete ordenaunce, he had grete merveille therof, and called his fellashippe to him and asked here counsell therinne how thei might withstande thees beestis aboveseide, and thei coude geve him no counsell therinne. And thanne anoon he lete calle alle the werkemen of his hooste and made hem for to make twenty-fourre thousand ymages of brasse, and made sette hem on a rowe upon cartes of yren, and filled hem full of drye woode and made sette hem by rowe in the fronte of the batailles. And whanne his enemyes comen nyghe, thei sette fyre in the cartes. And whanne the batailles were assembled, the olyfauntes and the wolffes aboveseid token the ymages of bras with here teeth, lyke as thei had bene men, and the fyre brente many of hem. And the remenaunt were so aferde that thei wente backe upon here owen meyne, and dede moche harme amonge hem. And so the people of Alysaundre escaped the grette perell of thees beestis, and anoone the two batailles wente togodre. And that bataille endured twenty dayes, in suche wyse that moche peple was slayne on bothe parties. And thanne spake Alysaundre to Porrus and seide it was no worship to a kinge for to lose his knyghtes, but save hem as moche as he myght: "And thu seest wel | that oure people lesyn. Lete us suffre it no lenger, but lete us two fight hande for hande. And whiche of us overcometh other, leete him have the lordeship of the tothir." And thees wordes were grete pleasaunce to Porrus, for he was a grete man of stature, and Alysaundre was but of a litil stature. And as thei foughten togodre upon the condycion aboveseide, the people of Porrus hooste sette up a grete crye, wherof Porrus was gretely abasshed. And sodeynely he turned him to hem for to undirstonde what it mente. And with that, Alysaundre smote him betwene the shuldres so grete a strooke that he felle downe ded. And whanne the people of Ynde understande that here kinge was slayne, natwithstandyng the promysses that were made before, thei wolde have foughten. And thanne Alysaundre asked hem why thei wolde fight, and what here cause was sethen that here lorde was slayne. And thei aunsuerd: for because that

294 **wole**, wish. 295 **trewage**, tribute. 296 **be**, by. 304 **olyfauntes**, elephants. 305 **fyte**, fight. 307 **here**, their. 310 **yren**, iron. 312 **batailles**, battle-lines. 314 **here**, their. 316 **meyne**, men. 321 **lesyn**, lessen. 329 **here**, their. 332 **sethen**, since.

thei wolde deye worshipfully. Thanne Alysaundre seide unto hem: "I wole assure alle hem that wole caste of here harneys to the erthe that thei shull have none harme, and thei that wole nat, on here owen perille." And thanne anone every man toke of his harneys, and so seced the bataille. And afterwarde Alysaundre dede hem moche goodnesse, and made Porrus to be worshipfully enteered, lyke as longed unto a kinge. And thanne he lete take alle his thresoure and his harneys and departed oute of Ynde, and wente to thees parties where the people bene named Brachemos, whiche sente many wysemen to Alysaundre whanne thei herde of his comynge, whiche saleweden Alysaundre and seide unto him: "Sir, thou haste no matier for to make us werre, nor for to owe us any evel will, for we be poure and humble and we have nothinge but wyesdame. And yf thou wilt have it, praye to God that He wole geve it thee, for by bataile thou shalt nat have it." And whanne Alysaundre had herde hem speke, he made alle his knyghtes for to tarye, and with a smal fellowship wente with hem into her cuntree for to serche wheder thei seide trouthe or not. And whanne he entred into here lande, he fonde poure men, wommen, and children alle naked, gaderynge fruyte and herbes in the feeldes. And there he asked hem many questyons, of the whiche thei aunsuerd hym ryght wele to his pleasaunce. Thanne he seide unto hem: "Loke that ye asshe me any-
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thinge that maye be to youre profite and to the | people, and I wole geve it you with right a good wille." And thanne thei aunsuerd to Alysaundre, seyenge in this wise: "Sire, we aske nothinge of thee but that thou wilte lete us lefe perpetuelly." And thanne seide Alysaundre: "How maye a man make the lyffe of othre perpetuel, whanne he maye nat encrece his owen lyfe an houre? That power is nat in any levyng man." Wherupon thei aunsuerd him: "Syn that thou knowest certeynely that none ertely man maye graunte this, whi doste thou enforce thiself for to destroye so grete thinges in this worlde and to assemble also the grete thresours that thou fyndeste, and knowest nat the houre that thou shalt leve hem?" Thanne Alysaundre seide unto hem: "I do nothinge of myself. My God hathe sente me to enhaunce His lawe in this worlde, and to destroye the mysbelevers. Ye knowe wele that the wawes of the see meoven nat but by the constreynte of the wynde, and in lyke wyse if it hadde nat be commaunded me by God, I coude nat have meoved it of my propre nature. But whiles I leve, I wole obbeye the commaundemente of God, for I knowe wel that I come into this worlde alle naked, and so shal I passe oute therof." And thanne he sente lettres to Aristotle of the merveilles that he hadde seen in Ynde, and asked him counsel how he myght kepe the regiouns that he hadde conquered. And from thens he passed unto the lande of the Swanne. And whanne he approched nygh unto the same lande, the kinge sente unto Alysaundre his croune withoute obbeysaunce, seyng in this wyse that it was more covenable and bettir employed in Alysaundre thanne in his persone. Wherupon he sente him a presente of an hundred thousande pounde sylvere, a thousande and fyve hundred pounde of plate of golde, two hundred pounde weight of precyous stones,

333 **wole**, will. 334 **of here harneys**, off their armor. 336 **seced**, ceased. 337 **enteered**, interred. 338 **longed unto**, was fitting for. 341 **saleweden**, saluted. 342 **werre**, war. 345 **tarye**, tarry. 346 **her**, their. 350 **asshe**, ask. 353 **lefe**, live. 354 **othre**, others. 356 **levynge**, living; Syn, Since. 359 **leve**, leave. 362 **wawes of the see**, waves of the sea. 364 **leve**, live. 367 **kepe**, maintain (govern).

375 two thowsande of fyne furres, an hundred sadellis, an hundred apples of ambre, the weight of two thousande pounde of harneys, two hundred pounde weight of a tree whiche is called alloes, and a thousand habregeons with as many helmes; the whiche giftes Alysaundre resceived and sente worde unto him ageyne by his messangiers that he shulde beleve in God and leve alle othir beleevies. And aftir thes things done he wente forthe estwarde into Turkye, conquerynge and getynge the landes. And there he bylded many townes in divers places, and ordeigned diverse 380 kinges that fro thens forthwarde shulde yelde him trewage. And from thens | he retourned into the weste partyes. And he wolde nat beleeve lyghtly alle reportes that were broughte unto him by his subjectis on lasse thanne he might see it or knowe it openly. Wherfore he wolde go himself divers tymes secretely and vesyte his lordeshippes, and to enquere of other necessitees, and he nat knownen. And upon a tyme he came to oon of his townes and there he sawe come before the juge 385 two men whiche were in grete debate; of the whiche, the toon seide in compleynynge to the juge: "Sir juge, I have bought an hous of this man, and in the same hous, longe sethen that I boughte it, I fonde a thresoure that was hidde in the erthe, whiche was nat myne. And I have offered and wolde have delyvered it unto him, and he wolde nat take it. Wherfore I praye you, sir juge, that ye wole compelle him for to take it, for I wote wele I have no right therto." And thanne the juge 390 commaunded the tothir partye for to aunsuere. Thanne seide the partie: "Sir juge, knowe ye for certeyne that thresoure was never myne, but I bylded an hous in that place whiche that was comowne to every man for to bylde inne. And therfore have I no cause for to have it." Wherupon thei bothe requered the juge that he wolde take it himself, to the whiche the juge aunsuerd: "Sythen ye that have the herytage have no right therto, what maner right myght I have therto, that am but a straunger to the heritage? And also I herde never of suche a thinge before this tyme; for ye wolde excuse yoreself of the taking therof and wolde leye the charge upon me, and therinne ye do evell." And thanne he asked of him that fonde the thresoure 395 yf he hadde any children. He aunsuerd and seide that he hadde a sone; and in lyke wise he asked the tother, and he seide that he hadde a doughtir. To whome the juge seide: "Lete make a mariage betwene the doughtir and the sone, and lete this thresoure be geven to hem in encresinge of here lyfelode." And whanne Alysaundre hadde herde this jugemente, he merveilled gretely and seide to the juge: 400 "I wende never that in alle the worlde a man shulde have founde so true men ne so true a juge." Thanne the juge aunsuerd to Alysaundre as to a man that he knewe not and seide: "Is there any place that men done othirwise?" "Forsothe," quod Alysaundre, "yee, in divers landes." Thanne the juge asked him, in merveillinge 405 gretely, yf it reynd in that londe, or ellis that the sonne schoone therinne, as ho shulde seye God ought nat | to sende reyne ne sonne ne any othir thinge that were fruytfull in that lande, where rightwose justyce is nat kepte. And thanne had Alysaundre more merveille thanne he hadde before, and seide to the juge: 410

374 **sadellis**, saddles. 375 **harneys**, armor. 376 **alloes**, the aloe tree; **habregeons**, suits of chainmail. 378 **leve**, leave. 380 **bylded**, built. 383 **on lasse**, unless. 384 **vesyte**, visit. 387 **toon**, one. 389 **sethen**, since. 392 **wote**, know. 393 **tothir**, other. 397 **Sythen**, Since. 405 **here lyfelode**, their livelihood. 407 **wende**, thought. 411 **reynd**, rained; **sonne schoone**, sun shone.

415 “Suche people as ye be bene affermed in heven and in erthe.” And from thens Alysaudre departed and came by a citee where that alle the houses were of oon height, and at every doore of the houses was made a grete dyche, in the whiche citee was never a juge. Wheroft he hadde grete merveille and asked of the cetezeyns alle a rowe wherof thees thinges served. To whome thei aunsuerd: “Firste,” thei seide, “for the outeragious highnesse of the houses: love and justice maye nat be longe togedre in a citee.” And as touchinge the dyches that bene before the houses, thei aunsuerd and seide that thei were the propre houses wherinne thei shulde go in haaste, and lengeste abyde in hem. “And as touchinge the cause that we have no juge,” thei aunsuerd and seide that every man dede good justyce upon himself, wherfore thei had no neede of any juge. And Alysaudre was wele contente with hem and so departed. And somme seyne that Alysaudre knewe by astronomye, or by aunsuers of trees where he had been, that he shulde deye upon a pamente of yren, and under the coveringe of golde. So it happed anone aftir that he toke a grete heete, wherupon his noose felle on bledinge, and bledde so gretely that he waxe passinge feble, that he myght no lenger sytte on horsebacke. And so he lyghte downe of his hors in the feelde and anoone a knyght caste downe his coote of yron upon the erthe. And Alysaudre leened him upon it, and anothre leyde a cloothe of golde upon him for to keepe the sonne frome him. And whanne he had advysed and consydered thees thingis, it felle in his mynde that was shewed to him of his deeth as it is seide before. And seide that alle men myghte heere: “Feir lordis, I am at the deth,” and called to him a secretarye, and commaunded him to wryte his lettres to his moder as herafre follewith:

420 Alysaudre, servaunte, sone to a servaunte, whiche hathe alleweye applyed his bodye to gete ertely thinges, and hathe stablysshed his soulle in anothir worlde, to my deere moder, with that also that I rested never in this worlde. And I muste nedys of necessyté make my dwellinge in an hous ferre hens. Wherfore I praye thee, moder, that thu wilt nat ressemble in fragilité ne in feblenesse of herte to othir fol. 49v wommen, | lyke as I, thi sone, have not willed to ressemble othir men. And knowe for certeyne that I have no sorowe for my dethe, for I was incerteine therof before, 430 and in lyke wyse thu oughtest nat to make sorowe syn that thu knewest before that I was a man mortal. Wherfore, moder, I sende thee thes lettres in hooke that thu shuldest be recomforted of my dethe by hem. And loke ye do so that myne hooke maye take effecte by the seide lettres, and thu knoweste wele that I have leved longe in this worlde, wherof thu haste ynowgh to thenke upon, and nat upon my 435 deth. And also, I wote wele that thu shalt come soone aftir me, and yf thu thenke wel therupon, thu shalte forgete the dethe of alle othir and doth non other thinge thanne I have desyred you and prayed you, for the signe of a true lover is for to do to him that is beloved lyke as he requereth and prayeth. And knowe wele, moder, that the people wole undirstande thi maners and thi dyscrecioun; wherfore, 440 moder, bethe of good conforte and of grete courage, and thenke also, moder, that alle thees creatures that have generacion of corupcioun shulle retourne agen to

417 **dyche**, ditch. 418 **cetezeyns**, citizens. 427 **pamente**, surface. 429 **noose felle on bledinge**, nose began to bleed. 430 **waxe passinge**, became surpassingly. 431 **of**, off; **coote of yron**, coat of iron. 435 **heere**, hear. 441 **ferre hens**, far hence. 445 **syn**, since. 450 **wote**, know. 455 **bethe**, be.

the same matier that they were made of. Looke also that alle the goode and worthy people that ever weren bene deede. Looke also how many faire habytacyons bene fallen downe into ruyne. And with that also have in consyderacioun that I never 460 sewed the condycions of feoble and litell kinges, and therfore in lyke wyse take nat upon you the condycions nor the maners of feoble moders, but lete thi comforde be aftir the highnesse of thi lenage. And knowe right wele that alle the thinges that God hathe made, thei were at the begynnyng right litill and feoble, and aftirwarde thei grewe bettir and were made more herre, and aftirwarde thei 465 wexen more feoble and at the laste come to nought. And yet I preye you whanne that ye bene ascerteyned of my dethe, that ye lete make a grete place where ye maye have togedre alle the men of the londe whiche is called Lybye, of Europe, of Assye, and of Macedoyne, and lete crye that every man, of what estate or degree that he were of, shulde come at suche a daye as was assigned for to eete and drynke 470 at a rounde table. And whanne alle people be comen to that place, make another crye upon grete peyne that no man were so hardy for to eete but oonely thei that were never angred ne troubled for none adversyté that ever felle | unto hem.

fol. 50r

475 And this was the ende of his lettres, and anoone after he decessed. Thanne was he taken and putte in a coffre of golde, and brought unto the citee of Alysaundre and was ledde with grete reverence by the kinges, prynces, and othir lordes that kepte his testamente lyke as he hadde ordeigned it. And thanne aroos oon of the grete lordes whiche had the rule, and seide to the othir lordes: "Whosomewer wepte nat for other kinges oughte of right for to weepe for this, and ho that never merveilled upon noon adversyté, yet he oughte to merveille upon the deeth of this kinge." And thanne he seide to other folkes that thei shulde seye somme goode things for to recomforte the lordes and the people, which werne in grete trouble as for the deth of the moste noble kinge that ever was. Thanne oon of hem seide: "Alysaundre was wonte to kepe golde and sylver, and now golde and sylver kepith him." And he seide so for because that he was closed in a coffre of golde. And another seide that Alysaundre was parted from synnes and fylthes, and now he is with the goode that bene purfyed. And another seide: "Alysaundre was wonte for to chastice wel his men, and now is he wele chasticed." And another seide: "The kingis dredde him yestirdaye and the pourest of alle the people dredeth him nothinge this daye." Another seide: "Yesterdaye alle the world suffysed him not, and now a clooth suffyceth him." And thanne seide another: "Yesterdaye Alysaundre myght heere and noone durste speke before him, and now every man speketh before him, and he heereth no man." Another seide: "The more that Alysaundre was excellente, the more is his dethe grevous and peteuous." Thanne seide another: "Thei that sawe Alysaundre yestirday hadden grete feere of him, and now thei that see him doute hym nothinge." Another seide: "Alysaundre was he whiche his enemyes durste nat approche nygh, and now his frendes dyspreise him and wil nat see him." And so thei brought forthe his body to Alysaundre, and whanne he 480 485 490 495

458 **weren bene deede**, were are [now] dead. 459 **ruyne**, ruin. 460 **sewed**, pursued. 462 **lenage**, lineage. 464 **herre**, higher. 465 **wexen**, became. 467 **Lybye**, Libya. 468 **Assye**, Asia. 473 **decessed**, died. 474 **Alysaundre**, Alexandria. 481 **recomforte**, comfort; werne, were. 483 **wonte**, accustomed. 491 **heere**, hear; **noone durste**, no one dared. 493 **peteuous**, piteous. 496 **nygh**, near; **dyspreise**, denounce. 497 **Alysaundre**, Alexandria.

came nygh to the citee, his modir commaunded the citezeyns that thei shulde come
 500 oute with here for to meete the corps in the moste honourable wyse that thei
 myghte, and so thei deden. And whanne his moder was comen nygh to the chaare
 fol. 50v where he laye inne, she seide: "It is merveille how He that by His wysedame hathe
 made heven and erthe and hath stablysshed the realmes to hem that will | obbeye
 Him that He hath broughte thee in this estate." And with that worde she heelde
 here peas and myghte speeke no more at that tyme. And soone aftir that she seide:
 505 "O my goode sone, what I wolde geve with good wille, grete geftes, to him that
 wolde lete thee have in knoweleche how I fulfillle thi wille, whiche thu senteste unto
 me. And yet wolde I nat do so moche for the grete consolacioun that I shulde res-
 ceive therby, but oonly that I knowe wele that I shal tarye aftir thee but awhile.
 Sone, I praye to God save thee, thu haste bene good in thi lyfe and good muste thu
 510 be nowe thu arte deed." And so aftir the recommendacioun of Alysaundre notably
 done, he was buryed and thanne his moder lete ordeigne for thys grete feest afore-
 seide, and sente for alle thees regyounes lyke as Alysaundre hadde desired her in
 his lettres. And whanne the daye and the people were comen, she leete crye, lyke
 515 as it was reherced before, that no man shulde entre inne but oonly such as were
 never troubled in here adversitees. And as the houre of the dyner tyme passed and
 sawe no man that entred inne, she made hem to be asked whi thei wente nat to
 here meete. Thei aunsuerd and seide: "Thu haste charged us that none shulde
 entre inne that in any maner hathe bene troubled whanne he hath hadde ad-
 versytees of this worlde. Certeynely there is no one heere but that he hathe bene
 520 angry and troubled with the adversitees of this worlde, wherfore noone of us maye
 entre inne." And thanne she perceyved wele Alysaundre here sone that he was of
 that condycioun and seide: "O deere sone, I perceyve wele nowe that thu haste
 done grete peyne in thi lyffe to conforte me aftir thi deth, and how that thu were
 525 of so grete courage that thu woldest nat be wrothe for anythinge that felle to thee,
 shewinge me exsample that I shulde do in lyke wyse. And now I knowe why thu
 wrotest unto me thees thinges. And certeignly, sone, thy laste exsamples aftir thi
 deethe bene full lyke thy deedis in thi lyfe." And whanne Alysaundre beganne to
 530 regne, he was eightene yere of age and his regne dured seventene yere, of the
 whiche he emploied seven yere in batailles and grete conquestis, and ten yere he was
 in reste and wente and vesyted the citees and realmes that he hadde conquered.
 And he hadde the victorye of twenty-thre maner languages. And withinne two yer
 fol. 51r he seerched bothe the este and the weste, and the noumbre of | his knyghtes
 whiche he helde at his wages drowgh to the noumbre of thre hundred twenty-foure
 thousande, withoute his yemen and other men that were necessarye to the werre.
 535 And Alysaundre deyed in his thirty-fyveth yere. And he was reed of coloure. And
 oon of his yghen was greye, and the tother was blacke. He hadde litill teeth and
 sharpe. He hadde also a vesage lyke a lyoun, and he was right stronge. And of his
 childehod he loved wele bataille. And Alysaundre seide in his lyfe: "A man shulde
 be shamefaste for to do lewed thinges, as wel in his house before his wyffe and his

499 **here**, her. 500 **chaare**, chair (bier). 503–04 **heelde here peas**, held her peace. 513
 leete crye, let cry. 514 **reherced**, rehearsed. 515 **here**, their. 517 **here meete**, their food.
 524 **woldest**, would; **wrothe**, angry. 529 **emploied**, employed. 530 **vesyted**, visited. 533
 drowgh, drew. 534 **yemen**, yeomen; **werre**, war. 537 **vesage**, visage.

540 meynée as withoute before straungiers that maye see him; and though so be that no man maye see hem, yet shulde he forbere hem for hurtynge of his soule. And yf he have no shame for none of thees thinges, yet shulde he dreede God and be shamefaste for the love of Him." And he commaunded every daye thre tymes at his gate to make a crye that every man shulde worship God and kepe hem from synne.

545 And seithe: "The worlde is nat susteyned but by science, and the reames be nat redressed by any othir thinge, and alle thinges bene submytted to reasoun." Ande seith: "Wysedame is the messanger of reasoun." And it happened that Alysaundre passed by a towne in the whiche syx kinges somtyme reigned. Thanne he asked whedir any of here lygne were lefte. Thei aunsuerd him and seide: "Yes, a soone of oon of hem." Thanne he badde oon shewe him to the childe, and thanne thei aunsuerd him and seide that he was alwaye in the chircheyerde, wherof Alysaundre merveilleld gretely. Thanne he wente for to see him and asked him why he aboode alleweye in the chircheyerde, and what was the cause that he toke nat upon him the state of his fadir and of his predecessours and othir kinges, "seenge that the people of the towne wolde resceyve thee with a good wille, and in the same estate that thei were inne." To whom he aunsuerd and seide thus: "Right honourable kinge, I have a thinge for to do here in this place, and that thinge done I wole do that thu commaundeste me." Thanne Alysaundre asked him what he hadde for to do in the chircheyerde. He aunsuerd and seide: "I seeche the boones of my fadir, and of othir kinges, to dyssever hem frome othir mennys, but I fynde oon so lyke anothir that I can nat knowe hem." To whome Alysaundre seide: "Thu shuldeste seeche worship, and yf thu haddest a goode herte, thu shuldeste sewe the worshippes and the estate of thy fadir and of thi predecessours." Wherupon he aunsuerd | and seide: "Thenke nat but my herte is good." Thanne Alysaundre asked him wherinne he hadde so good an herte. He aunsuerd and seide: "I have founde lyfe withoute dethe and youthe withouten age, rychesse withoute povertee, gladnesse withoute sorowe, and helthe withouten seeknesse." "Now forsothe," quod Alysaundre, "of alle thees have I never oon." Thanne he seide to Alysaundre: "Aske hem of hym that hathe hem." Thanne seide Alysaundre that he sawe never man in his lyffe of so grete dyscrecioun. And as Alysaundre was in a place where that dailly and custumably he wolde here the requestes and desires of every man, and for the good speede of the comowne wele, there happened oon daye that there came no man to aske him anythynge, wherfore he seide that he wolde nat that daye were counted for oon of the dayes of his regne. And whanne he shulde feyghte with Kinge Dayre, oon come to him and seide that there were thre hundred thousande men with Kinge Dayre; and Alysaundre aunsuerd him and seide that a good cooke shulde nat be abasshed, though he sawe many motouns and othir beestis in the kechen. And there came to Alysaundre the patryarkes, whiche were prelates in that tyme. And seide unto him in this maner: "God hathe geven you power over many landes and reames to that entente that ye shulde have grete lynage of youre body for to

540 **meynee**, company. 542 **dreedē**, dread. 549 **here**, their. 559 **seeche**, seek; **boones**, bones. 560 **dyssever**, separate; **mennys**, men's. 562 **sewe**, pursue. 570–71 **custumably**, customarily. 571 **here**, hear. 573 **wolde**, wished; **counted**, counted. 574 **feyghte**, fight. 577 **motouns**, muttons; **beestis**, beasts; **kechen**, kitchen. 578 **patryarkes**, patriarchs. 580 **lynage**, lineage.

succede aftir you, wherfore it were right necessarye that ye hadde many wyffes." To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "It were to grete a shame to him that hathe conquered alle the myghtyest men of the worlde and thanne to be overcome with wommen." And thanne there came a man before him whos clothynge was alle to
 585 rente and torne, but he speke wele and aunsuerd wele, to whome Alysaundre seide: "I merveyle moche why thy clothinge is nat like thy speche, for there is a grete difference." To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "O myghty kinge, I maye of my self
 590 lerne and make goode reasouns and ye maye worshipfullly cloothe me." And thanne he gave him a gowne of his owen. And aftir that it happened that men
 fol. 52r broughte a theef to hangynge and muste needs passe forthe by Alysaundre, and,
 595 as he passed by the kinge, seide: "O noble kinge, save my lyfe, for I have grete repentaunce and sorowe for the evel dede that I have done." Thanne commaunded Alysaundre, for as moche as he undirstode that he was of grete repentaunce, that
 thei shulde hange him forthwithal. Ande | thanne there came a man unto him
 prayenge him that he wolde geve him twelve thousande pecis of moneye, to whome Alysaundre aunsuerd: "Thu arte nat of the valure for to have so grete a somme of
 600 moneye." Thanne the tothir seide agen: "Yf I be nat of the valure to have so grete a somme of moneye, yet are ye of the valure for to geve it me?"
 And Alysaundre asked Platon what longed to a kinge for to do. He aunsuerd
 605 agen and seide that a kinge aughte to thenke upon the good governaunce of his people, and the nexste daye follewinge he shulde do his peyne for to execute the same. And somme asked hym what thinge was moste profitable and most pleasaunte to hym in the getynge of his lordshippes. Thanne he aunsuerd and seide:
 610 "That I have hadde wherof to recompense hem that have done me servyce." And asked of Arystotle be whome he aughte to be counseilled in his needs, and thanne he aunsuerd and seide: "By him that hathe many servauntes and subjectis, and that
 615 can wele governe hem and make him thi resceyvoure of thi rentes and revenewes that hathe grete heritages and governeth hem wele." And a patryarche come to him and asked him what he shulde do with divers prysoneis that he hadde, wherupon he aunsuerd and seide that he was lorde over the people that was free
 620 and that he myght wele passe for to be lorde over the people that was boonde. And there come two men that were in grete stryfe before Alysaundre, to whome he seide: "The sentence that pleasith the toon displeasith the tother; wherfore and ye
 625 conseute you bothe to trouthe, it shal please you bothe." And somme asked him whi he worshipped more his maister thanne his fader, to whome he aunsuerd: "For I have of my fadir the lyffe but for a certeyne tyme, and of my maister I have the
 630 perpetuell lyfe. And I have nat in alle my lordship taken for so precious a thinge as for to have hadde puyssaunce to avenge myself upon hem that wolde offend me." And whanne the doughters of Kinge Dayre were taken, thei reported to Alysaundre that thei were passyngely faire, but he wolde never see hem for doute that he shulde do anythiinge to hem that were nat worshipfull. And seide: "It were a
 635 foule thinge to overcome the stronge men in bataile, and we to be overcome with wommen that bene prysoneis in oure pryson." And it happened that oon preeched

594 **forthwithal**, forthwith. 595 **pecis**, pieces. 596 **valure**, valor; **somme**, sum. 607
resceyvoure, receiver. 611 **boonde**, bound. 613 **and**, if. 620 **passyngely**, surpassingly;
doute, fear.

fol. 52v before him and made a longe sermowne, whiche annoyed | Alysaundre gretely. To
 625 whome he seide: "The predycacioun is nat to be allowed that is over the powere of
 the herers, but that is good that the herer is possible to bere it aweye." And somme
 asked hym how a man myghte gete the love of the people. He aunsuerd: "By
 630 doyng goode deedes unto hem, or ellis that ye do hem none harme." And seith:
 "Somme men profyten more by here enemyes thanne by here frendes." And
 thanne thei asked him how he myght be of so grete myght as he was, seenge that
 he was so yonge. He aunsuered and seide: "For by cause that I have done peyne
 for to gete me frendes, and I have geven to myne enemyes, and in this maner I
 have power over bothe." And seith: "He leesith that leesith his frendes, and nat his
 635 sone nor his thresoure." And seith: "Thes frendes that bene gotten by goodnesse
 bene more worthe thanne thei that bene gotten by force." And as Alysaundre wente
 for to pley and walke in the streetes, somme that were above in the wyndowes caste
 watir upon him, wenynge that he hadde bene oon of her fellowes. And whanne thei
 sawe that it was Alysaundre, thei were soore abasshed. Thanne he seide unto hem:
 640 "Bethe nat aferde, for ye have wette him that ye thought to wete." And as Aristotle
 taught him in the scole with many othir children of kingis, he asked of oon of hem
 what he wolde geve him whanne he wore a kinge. He aunsuerd him and seide: "I
 wole geve thee the reule and governaunce of alle thinges that bene necessarye to
 645 me." And in lyke wise he asked another, to whome he aunsuerd: "I wole geve thee
 a parte of my reame." And thanne he asked of Alysaundre: "What wilt thou geve
 me?" To whome he aunsuerd: "That I shulde do to morowe, enquere nat of me this
 daye, for whanne I see that I sawe never, I wole thenke that I never thought. But
 650 yf I shal regne as ye seye, I shal thanne do that ye shal thenke that it is covenable
 for me to do." And thanne seid Aristotle unto him: "Withouten faille I knowe wele
 that thu shalt be a grete kinge, for thi vesage and thi nature shewith it." And
 thanne Alysaundre spake to oon whiche was his lieutenaunte, that had be longe
 655 with him, and at any tyme he coude never empeche him of no vyce nor put any
 blame in him. And seide unto him: "I am nat wele apayed of thy servyce." Wher-
 upon he aunsuerd: "What is youre cause?" Thanne seide he agayne: "For because I
 am a man, and therfore it is convenyente and | needes muste be done that at somme
 660 tymes I muste needes erre; and for because thu haste bene so longe with me, thu
 art nat wyse ne no suche man as longeth to be my lieutenaunte, where thu haste
 knownen my defautes and haste nat shewed hem unto me. Wherfore thu arte nat
 true unto me." And seith: "Resoun empecheth never a man for to gete connynge,
 665 but slouthe dyspreyseth it." And somme men asked a wiseman whiche was named
 Nychomaque what was the cause that men obbeyed so gretly and so lightly to
 Alysaundre. And thanne he aunsuerd: "For because that he hathe in himself goode
 vertues and that he hath also kepte goode justyce, and also that he hathe bene and
 is of good conversacioun and of right excellente governaunce." And two men
 desired him that he wolde geve hem the doughtyr of a ryche man to here wyfe, of
 the whiche oon of hem was ryche and the tothir poure, and thanne he gave her to
 the poure man. Thanne Alysaundre asked him whi he gave her to the pour man,

626 **herers**, hearers. 629 **here**, their. 633 **leesith**, loses. 637 **wenynge**, believing. 638
 soore, sorely. 639 **Bethe**, Be. 640 **scole**, school. 641 **wore**, were. 650 **be**, been. 651
empeche, impeach (accuse). 652 **apayed**, pleased with. 659 **slouthe**, sloth.

wherupon he aunsuerd: "For because the riche man is ignoraunte and able to wexe poure, and the poure man is wyse and is able to for to be ryche." And Alysaundre asked of a wyse man by what maner of thinges the reames myght be kepte in the beste estate, and he aunsuerd and seide: "By the obbeysance of his people and by the justyce of the kinge." And oones as Alysaundre faught in a bataile, wommen come agenste him and anoone he withdrew him and seide to his people: "Yf we conquer this assemble where as wommen bene inne, we shul nat be taken for worthy, and yf thei happened for to overcome us, it shulde be oure perpetuel shame. Wherfore, I wole nat feyghte with the tothir men as longe as the wommen be in here felaship." And seith: "Do wele to othir men yf thu wilt that thei wole do wele to thee." And seith: "It is perylous thinge to abyde so longe in the see, til the season wexe outeragious and the grete wyndes begynne to aryse, while a man maye departe oute therof in faire wedyr; and in lyke wyse I seye by hem that haunten the courte of prynces." And seith: "It is a lewed thinge to make many wordes and do but litill dedis, and it is righte a fayre thinge to him that putteth his dedis in effecte or he make many wordes therof." And seith: "The moste lowable freedom is for a man to kepe him from ambyciou." But whanne his | fader commaunded him that he shulde dyligently heere his maister, he aunsuerd agen and seide that he wolde nat oonely heere hym, but he wolde accomplyshe it to his power. And seide: "It was a gretter fawte to lacke discrecioun thanne to lacke ricchesse."

15. PTOLEMY

Ptholomee was right a wyse man and he hadde understandinge specially in foure sciences, that is to seye, in geometrye, musyke, arsmetyque, and astrologye, and made many noble bokes, amonge whiche oon of hem was called Almageste, that is, Of Astrologie. And he was borne in Alysaundre, whiche stondeth in the londe of Egypite, and there he made his consyderacions in the tyme of Kinge Adryan, and made his seyenges upon his consyderacions at Roodes. And Tholomee was no kinge, though so were that somme men called him a kinge, and he leved seventy-eight yere. And seith: "The wyse man oughte to doute and dreede God to that entente that his thoughtes shulde be the more oftenner redressed to have the knoweleche of his graces." And seith: "He is wyse that stablyssheth his tunge for to speke of God, and he is a foole that wille nat knowe it." And seith: "He that is moste enclyned to his owen wille is nexste the wrath of God." And seith: "The nerre that thu drawest to thyne ende, of reasoun thu oughtest to do thi peyne for to do wele." And seith: "Wysedame abydeth no more in the herte of a fool thanne a thinge that passeth lightly and maketh haste for to go his weye." And seith: "Goode wysedoms and goode instruccions bene two felawes togedre." And seithe: "A man of good wysedome maye not deye, and a man of good undirstondynge

667 **wexe**, become. 676 **here**, their. 678 **wyndes**, winds. 679 **wedyr**, weather. 682 **or**, ere; **lowable**, praiseworthy. 684 **heere**, hear (listen to). 686 **fawte**, fault.

2 **musyke**, music; **arsmetyque**, arithmetic. 3 **oon**, one. 4 **Alysaundre**, Alexandria; **stondeth**, stands. 6 **Roodes**, Rhodes. 8 **doute**, fear. 10 **stablyssheth**, establishes. 12 **enclyned**, inclined. 13 **nerre**, nearer. 16 **felawes**, fellows. 17 **deye**, die.

19 maye nat be poure." And seith: "Wysedame is a tree that maketh the herte grene
 fol. 54r and geveth frute to the tung." And seith: "Kepe thee wele that thu despute nat
 with him that hath no | knowelechinge, and telle nat thi counsel but to him that
 can wele kepe it." And seith: "Ho that wil leve wele, loke he take nat to herte alle
 25 aduersytees that falle unto him." And seith: "A grete hous putteth his maister in
 many merveilles." And seith: "Loke thu speeke rightwosly though it be agenste
 thee as wel as with thee." And seith: "Yf thu shalte nedes be wrothe, yet lete nat
 thyne angre abyde to longe with thee." And seith: "The hertes of goode folkes bene
 the covertures of the secrete thinges." And seith: "A man that is nat defoullde maye
 right wele chastice othir." And seith: "Ho that asketh counsel of wyse men, though
 so be that it falle him wele or evel, he oughte nat to be blamed." And seith: "He
 30 that hydeth his connynge, he is nat sure that he erreth nat." And seith: "It is bettir
 for a prynce to sette his people in good rule thanne for to have grete habundaunce
 of knyghtes." And seith: "A man shulde punnysshe evell doers by other evell doers,
 lyke as a pece of yren is fylded with a fyle of yren." And seith: "Suretee putteth awey
 35 hevynesse, and feere lettith gladnesse." And seith: "Goddes wordes profyten nat
 hem that have here hertes to the worlde, no more thanne to moche meete or
 drynke dothe hem that bene seeke." And seith: "It is an outeragious foly for a
 man to speke moche of suche matiers as bene beyonde his undirstondynge." And
 seith: "Men bene of two natures: somme conne never holde hem contente whanne
 40 thei fynde ynough, and othir fynde nat though so be that thei seeke ynough." And
 seith: "The envious man othirwhile holdeth him wele contente to leese his goodes
 in hurtynge of anothir." And seith: "The men bene cause of getynge of the money,
 and money is cause of getynge of men; and that man that his science excedith his
 witte maye be lyke a feoble shepeherd that hath a grete flocke of sheepe for to
 45 kepe." And seith: "He that hathe holly sette his undirstondinge in flesshely delytes
 is more bonde thanne an esclave." And seith: "In as moche as a man is areysed into
 gretter lordship thanne anothir, so moche more greef it is to him for to falle." And
 seith: "Thought is the keye of certeynté." And seith: "The reffews of a caytef is
 better thanne the largesse of a wastoure of goodes." And seith: "Thu mayste do
 50 nothinge more aggreadable to God thanne to do wele to him that hathe done thee
 offence." And seith: "Yf thu wilt be rightwos, loke thu fellaship thee nat with fooles
 fol. 54v ne boystous people, | but be alleweyes in the felaship of hem that can more good
 51 thanne thiself." And seith: "The soulle maye never be deceyved by his hope unto
 the tyme that the body take his ende." And seith: "Folye is the gretteste enemye
 that man maye have." And seith: "Good wille is the foundemente of alle goode
 werkes, and the goode werkes is the messangier of the tother worlde." And seith:

18 **herte grene**, heart green. 20 **knowelechinge**, knowing. 21 **Ho**, Who. 23 **merveilles**, marvels; **rightwosly**, righteously. 24 **nedes be wrothe**, need be angry. 25 **to**, too. 26 **covertures**, coverings. 27 **othir**, another. 29 **erreth**, errs. 30 **habundaunce**, abundance. 32 **pece of yren**, piece of iron. 33 **lettith**, abates. 34–35 **to moche meete or drynke dothe hem**, too much meat or drink does to them. 35 **seeke**, sick. 37 **conne**, can. 39 **leese**, lose. 41 **science**, learning. 42 **feoble**, feeble. 43 **holly**, wholly. 44 **bonde**, bound; **esclave**, slave; **areysed**, raised. 46 **certeynté**, certainty; **reffews**, refuse; **caytef**, churl. 47 **mayste**, may. 49 **rightwos**, righteous. 50 **can**, are capable of. 51 **his**, its. 52 **Folye**, Folly. 53 **foundemente**, foundation. 54 **tother**, other.

- 55 “He that taketh the good oppynyoun and leveth the evel dothe grete reste to his herte.” And seith: “Seeknesse is the charter of the body.”

16. ASSARON

Assaron seith that a kinge in his reame maye be hurte by fyve thinges specially. The firste is by grete droughte, as myghte be no reyne in two yere. The secunde is by outeragious dyspence over the revenues of his reame. The thridde is in to moche usynghe of wommen, of wyne, of huntynges, and pleyes. The fourthe is to be evel of maners, to do evell thinges, and also to be to cruel in puttyng his people to over-grete peynes. The fyfte is to have many enemyes and adversaries. And seith: “The most notable maners and moste easfull unto man bene in two thinges, that is to saye: firste, for to be liberall; secunde, for to be true of his language.” And seith: “The man that is liberal maye nat leve evel, and he that seith truly maye nat be dyshonoured; the humble man maye nat be hated, the wele attempred man maye nat be seeke; and that persone that diligently attendith to his labours, it is merveille and he repente.” And seith: “A kinge oughte nat to putte his truste in hym that is called a covetous man, ne in him that is comen from grete povertee to grete ricchesse, ne in him that the kinge hath put awaye from his goodes and his lordeshippes, nor in him that hathe suffred divers hurtes by the ordenaunce roial, nor in him that hathe any freendlyhed to the kinges enemyes; and of all thes | persones the kinge shulde be wele ware or he gave hem any lordeshippes or governaunces.” And seith: “It is impossible for a man to kepe himself oute of defaute that is sodeynely plucked up in grete magnificence with a kinge withoute that he hadde gretly deserved it.” And seith: “Whanne that a kinge knoweth that any of his men ordeyneth any debate agenste him, he shulde hastily and withoute abidynge knowe the trouthe of the dede, and the quantité therof, and whedir it be done by verrey wille or by ignoraunce, or wheder he be accustumed for to do so, or whedir it be lykly that he wolde falle agen in the same; and upon any of alle thes poyntes he shulde make remedye hastily.” And seith: “The servauntes of a kinge shulde shewe in servynge him their vertue, their feythe, and the noblesse of here lynage, to that ende that the kinge myght knowe hem the bettir and to do to every man lyke his deservynge.” And seith: “Yf a king have in as grete love the evell and untrue men as he hathe the goode, men oughte nat to take him for a kinge, and he shal nat longe tyme regne.” And seith: “Yf the kinges counselloure, his phesycian, and his confessoure medell hem of othir thinges thanne suche as longeth unto here offices, the kinge shal be alleweys hurte, and he shal be evermore seeke in body and soule, and at the laste have an evel endyng.” And seith: “Ho that hydeth the trouthe from his maister and aske counsell of his frende and nat shewe him the

55 **leveth**, leaves; **dothe**, does.

1 **reame**, realm. 2 **reyne**, rain. 3 **dyspence**, dispense (spending). 7 **easefull**, easy. 9 **leve**, leave. 10 **wele attempred**, temperate. 11 **seeke**, sick. 12 **and**, if. 15 **ordenaunce roial**, royal ordinance. 16 **freendlyhed**, friendliness. 17 **ware or he gave**, wary ere he give. 18 **defaute**, default. 18–19 **sodeynely**, suddenly. 22 **dede**, deed; **verrey**, true. 26 **feythe**, faith; **here**, their. 31 **medell**, meddle; **longeth**, belong.

35 sothe of his matier, he destroyeth his owen self." And seith: "A kinge shulde nat commytle to othir men suche thinges as he shulde do himself." And seithe: "The moste secrete counsell of a kinge is consentynge, and his goode werkes bene his grettest thresoure, and amoneg men the truest is beste, and the beste rycchesse bene thees that bene wele and truly gotten." And seithe: "A kinge oughte to commytle his besynesses to him that he hathe preved in feithe and trouth and in good governaunce; and yf he can fynde none suche, thanne take him that hathe bene alwey conversaunte amoneg wyse men." And seithe: "A wyse kinge and of good undirstonding amendeth meche, and maketh good his counsellours." And seith: "Whanne a kinge that is of good discrecioun hathe two hasty thinges for to done, he oughte to begynne at the moste noble of hem; and yf it happen that thei be lyke of oon gretenesse, yet | begynne at that that maye leest recover agene in tyme commynge." And seithe: "Yf a kinge be merciful, his thinges shulle speede wel, and his wysedame shal availle in tyme; and yf he be true, his people wole gretely joye in him; and yf he be juste, his regne shal longe endure." And seithe: "Kinges shulde gete hem goode name, and good renowne softly and by good mesure, for by outerage it shal nat longe endure." And seithe: "It longeth to a kinge that is a conqueroure to see that good justice be sette in the reames that he hathe gotten; and though so be that it is an harde thing for to gete hem, yet it is more harder and more peyne for to keepe hem." And seith: "The moste fulfilled of witte is he that can knowe himself and departe nat from Goddes obeysaunce for any occasyon that maye come to him, and ho that contynuelly yeldeth graces to God of the goodes that He hathe sente him." And seith: "The evel lawe is the love of evell folkes, and it maye no lenger endure thanne the shadowe of a clowde." And seith: "The wyse man enforceth himself to flee fro harme, and the fool dothe grete peyne for to fynde it." And seithe: "Whanne a wyse man that is an officer of the kinges heere the kinge seye anythinge that maye hurte him, or his reame, or his people, he shulde shewe the kinge exsamples of storyes of his predecessours, or other storyes to the same purpos, that the kinge maye undirstonde that it is seide for himself."

17. LOGINON

4 fol. 56r Loginon was borne in Ethiope, and lerned his science in the lande of Dystay in the tyme of Davyd the Prophete, and was an esclave boughte of a Jewe for thirty marcis. And his maistir loved wele for to pleye at the dyse, and before his gate ranne a rever; and as his maistir and another man upon a daye played at the dyse, thei made | suche a wager that hosoever wanne it shulde do whatsomever the tother wolde commaunde him, or ellis he shulde drynke alle the watir that passed by the gate. And so it happened that his maister loste, and thanne the tothir badde him

35 **sothe**, truth. 38 **thresoure**, treasure. 40 **besynesses**, occupation; **preved**, proven. 43 **amendeth meche**, amends much. 48 **wole**, will. 55 **obeysaunce**, obedience. 56 **yeldeth**, yields. 60 **heere**, hears.

1 **Ethiope**, Ethiopia; **science**, wisdom. 2 **esclave**, slave. 3 **marcis**, marks (unit of currency); **wele**, well; **dyse**, dice. 4 **rever**, river. 5 **wanne**, won; **tother**, other. 6 **ellis**, else. 7 **badde**, bade.

that he shulde fulfille his commaundemente, and the leeser aunsuerd and seide
 10 that he was redy for to abide his jugemente. And thanne he seide unto him: "Thu
 shalte geve me alle that ever thu arte worthe, or ellis thu shalt drynke all the watir
 in this ryvere." And thanne he that hadde loste desired of the tothir that he
 myghte have oon daye of respite, and the tothir graunted him. And so he aboode
 15 in his hous in grete thought how he myght do and escape oute of this grete perylle.
 And as he was thus in his thoughte, his servaunte Loginon come inne at the gate,
 20 whiche broughte inne on his necke a grete burdeyne of woode, and salewed his
 maistir, his maister havynge so grete thoughte that he herde nat Loginon. Wher-
 fore Loginon seide unto him: "Shewe me, maistir, the cause of thi sorowe, and I
 shal shewe thee the beste remedye that I can." And thanne his maistir tolde him
 25 alle the case how it was. Thanne Loginon seide unto him that he shulde nat be
 abasshed in any wyse, and he wolde geve him counsell, seyenge to him in this wyse:
 "Maistir, thu shalte aske of him whedir he wille that thu shalt drynke alle the watir
 that is conteyned at this tyme in the ryvere, or ellis alle the watir that contynuell
 30 renneth therinne. And I knowe wele he wole aunsuere thee that thu shalte drynke
 no more but that is conteyned withinne at that tyme. And whanne he hathe seide
 so, thu shalte bidde him stoppe the revere that it shulde renne no more, and
 thanne thu shalt be redy for to drynke alle the watir that is conteyned withinne the
 same. And thus thu shalt save thi cause." And whanne the maistir herde the coun-
 35 sell of his servaunt Loginon, he helde it right good and was gretely comforted. And
 in the same maner he seide on the morne to him whiche hadde wonne the wager,
 and by this maner he eskaped oute of that perylle. And from thens forwarde, he
 made Loginon free, whiche before was bonde, and dede moche good unto him,
 and was taken aftirwarde for right a wyse man. And oon of his fellowes in tyme
 40 passed fonde him and asked him a questyon and seide: "Arte nat thu he that was
 wonte somtyme to kepe sheepe with me?" He aunsuerd and seide: "Yes." "How
 fol. 56v maye this be," quod the tothir man, "that thu arte | sette nowe in suche degree?"
 45 "I shal telle thee," quod Loginon. "By true seyenge and to be true, and nat lacches-
 singe anythinge that was profitable." And somme seyne that there appered a voyce
 unto him, whiche seide: "Wilte thu be a grete lorde upon the erthe?" He aunsuerd
 and seide: "Yf God wille that it be so, I shal obbeye it; but and He wole geve me
 choise to my pleasaunce, I wolde have peas." And thanne somme asked him whi
 he wolde nat be a kinge. He aunsuerd and seide: "For if I juge rightwosly, I myght
 nat eschewe the hate of many folkes, and yf I shulde dyssymule, I shulde drawe me
 away from the getynge of paradys. I love bettir," quod he, "to have suffysaunce in
 50 my povertee in this worlde, and for to gete the blessednesse of the tother worlde,
 thanne for to leese it for to be made highe in this worlde." And Davyd was in a
 place where many men speken, among whiche Loginon helde his peas. Thanne
 Davyd asked him: "Why spekest nat thu as thees othir done?" He aunsuerd and
 seide: "For there is no good spekinge but of God, nor good scilence but to thenke
 55 on God." And that Jewe that was maistir to Loginon gafe hym many goode things,

8 **leeser**, loser. 12 **oon**, one. 15 **salewed**, saluted. 16 **herde**, heard. 20 **wyse**, way. 21
 wille, wishes. 23 **renneth**, runs. 27 **herde**, heard. 31 **dede**, did. 36–37 **lacchessinge**,
 lacking. 37 **seyne**, have said. 39 **and**, if. 40 **peas**, peace. 41 **rightwosly**, righteously. 42
dyssymule, dissemble. 43 **paradys**, paradise; **suffysaunce**, sufficiency. 45 **leese**, lose.

50 the which he gave awey in almes, and lente it to the poure and needy folkes withouten any usurye. And by him the goodnesse of oure Lorde was gretely multipliyed. And somme seyne that he lefte alle his ricchesses and became a recluse in a temple, and there he duelled solitarilie unto his ende, and preached many goode thingis to his sone, seyenge: "Sone, do abstynence and refreyne thi wille, for yf thu dyspreyse the worlde and the dyvers aventures that fallen dailly therinne, in
 55 doyenge suche dedes that God hathe defended, thu desirest nothinge but the deth; but enforce thiself to eschewe the evell and sewe the goode, for the good sleeth and destroieth the evell." And seith: "Sone, loke thu speke alleweies of God, and God wole put in thi mouthe goode wordes. Sone, loke thu sette allewey thi dedes before
 60 thyne yghen, and othir mennys dedes behynde thee. Sone, yf thu see any synner, loke thu repreeve him nat of his fautes, but thenke on thyne owen, of the whiche thu shalte oonly yelde accomptes. Also, sone, empyle nat thi courage in the love of this worlde, whiche is nat but oonly a passing of tyme and also deceyveth hem that trusten in hit. Also, sone, suffyce of a litel, and coveyte nat the goodes of othir men.
 65 Sone, sette attemperaunce in thi levyng, and loke thu be fulfilled of wysedom, and be conversaunte amonge wyse men, and be suche meanes thu | shalt gete wysdame. Also, sone, loke thu be humble, moche pensyfe, and of fewe wordes but thei be true. Laugh nat to moche, and be no mocker nor dyspreiser of othir folkes. Be lothe
 fol. 57r to speke, for I have ofter repented me for moche spekinge thanne ever I dede for holdynge my peas. Sone, beware that the cok be none erlier awaked thanne thu. Sone, dreede God, and kepe thee from veyneglorye. Sone, loke thu be nat begyled
 70 to beleeve that thinge that is nat in thee, though so be that men wole put it unto thee by flaterye. Sone, if thu have any connynge, and thu dispose it nat to thee wele, it shal do thee more harme thanne proufyte. Sone, the more that oon knoweth God, the more he doutes Him. Sone, lerne good and teeche it to othir, for the doctours and here techinges bene likened to quyk spryngynge founteyns whiche
 75 seruen the people contynuelly and yet bene thei alleweye fulle. And knowe right wele, sone, yf a fool speke, he wole make himself mocked by his mysruled languague. And yf he holde his peas, he wole thenke evel. And yf he do any dede, it shal nat be good and yet he shal lose his tyme. Yf he sette himself for to studye, he shal lose his dyspence and shal nat profite him, and he shal be in dyspeire. And yf
 80 he have any good gowne, he wole wexe proude. And yf he aske anythinge, he wole aske it hatefully. And yf any man desire anythynge of him, he wole seye naye. And yf he geve a man oughte, he wole repreve him for it. And yf a man geve him oughte, he wole never conne him thanke. And yf any man telle him his counsell, he wole soone discover it. And he wole holde every man suspecte; and though he have but a litil powere, yet he wole secretlye seeche occasyone for to do evel. And yf he be a man of powere, he wole entreete his subjectes by violence. And yf oon
 85

55 dyspreyse, denounce; **aventures**, risks. **57 sewe**, pursue; **sleeth**, slays. **60 yghen**, eyes; **mennys**, men's. **61 of his fautes**, for his faults. **62 yelde accomptes**, yield accounts; **empyle**, employ. **65 attemperaunce**, temperance; **levynge**, living. **67 moche pensyfe**, very pensive. **68 to moche**, too much; **lothe**, loath. **71 dreede**, dread; **veyneglorye**, vainglory; **begyled**, beguiled. **73 connynge**, cleverness. **74 proufyte**, profit. **75 doutes**, respects. **76 here**, their; **fouteyns**, fountains. **81 dyspence**, dispense. **82 wexe**, become. **84 oughte**, anything; **repreve**, reprove. **85 conne**, give. **86 discover**, reveal. **87 seeche**, seek.

90 fellowship with him, he shal soone fynde him wrothe. And yf men flee fro him, he wole followe aftir. And yf oon correcte him, he wole do nought; and yet he shal haate him that correcteth him, and his felawes shulle haate him. And yf he speke, he wole needis be herde; and yf othir men speeke, he wole nat here hem. And whanne he is mery, it is oute of mesure; and whanne he is wrothe in lykewyse. And yf a man praye him to forgefe anothir, he wole nat in any wyse, for he loveth bettir decepcional thanne trouthe. And there shal no man putte him oute of his oppynyon, and alleweyes his oppynyons shull be unresonable. And that he | dothe evell, he holdes it for goode. And he is comounly slough and negligent. And yf it happen that he acorde with anythinge that pleasith him, he wole lowe it and comende it gretly; and yf it be contrarye to his wille, he wole gretely blame it and repreve it. Yf he studye or speke with wyse men, he wole nat meeke him in no wyse, nor wole nat gladly heere hem. And yf he be with gretter fooles thanne he is, he wole dispreyse hem and mocke hem; he wole commaunde hem to do wele, and he wole do werste himself; he wole bydde hem seye truly and he wole lye alweye himself. And there shal be grete dyscorde betwene his wordes and his dedes, for yf the tunge seye oon thinge, his herte shal thenke anothir. He wenyth that this worlde be the tothir worlde. And yf a man be riche, he wole calle him usurere. And yf a man be poure, he wole nat sette by him. And yf a man do wele, he wole seye that he is an ypcrite. And yf a man do evell, he wole defame him. And yf oon geve, he wole calle him a wastour of goodes; and yf oon gefe nat, he wole calle him a negarde. And yf a man be debonaire, he wole calle him a beest. And yf a man drawe from his companye, he wole seye that he dothe it for pryd. But the wyse man is even contrarye to alle thees condycions, for he is constaunte, abydinge juste, solycitude foryever, and humble, and can wel speke in tyme and holde his peas in tyme. He can and dothe wel. He hath mesure and puyssance. He is liberall to hem that wole aske him. A wyse speker, undirstandinge wele the wordes of othir men and his owen wordes, he wole shewe debonerly to othir men; and whanne he wole teche, he wole meove goode uestyons. And yf a man do him good, he wole conne him moche thanke. Ho that wole shewe him his counsell, he wil kepe it secrete and trusteth right wele in othir men. And whanne he geveth, he wil geve it gladly withoute reprovynge. He wole do to none othir man othirwyse thanne he wolle that shulde be done to him. Yef he be ryche, he wole never be more proude. Wheder he be ryche or poure he wole nat forgete God. He profytes alleweye in science. He beleeveth him that wole teche him. He wole never be wrothe with him that is gretter thanne he, and he wil never dyspreise him that is febler thanne he. He wole never aske anythinge that he hath no right to. He is resonable in his ansuers, and he wil seye nothinge but yf he knowe that he seith trouthe. He wil nat hyde his cunnynge; and the more that he fellashepith with men, the more thei love him. He wil constreyne | his wille to trouthe, whedir it wil or nat. He wil correcte himself in techinge of othir. He is lightly turned to do wel. Yf he beere any witnessesse,

89 **wrothe**, angry. 92 **here**, hear. 93 **mery**, merry. 94 **forgefe**, forgive. 97 **slough**, slothful. 98 **lowe**, praise. 100 **meeke him**, make himself meek. 103 **werste**, worst. 105 **wenyth**, believes. 108 **ypocrite**, hypocrite. 110 **negarde**, niggard; **drawe**, withdraws. 113 **solycitude foryever**, forever solicitous. 114 **puyssaunce**, puissance. 116 **debonerly**, debonairly. 117 **meove**, stimulate; **conne**, give. 121 **Yef**, If. 122 **science**, learning. 124 **febler**, feebler.

130 it shal be true. Yf he shal be a juge, he shal do rightwosly in alle things that longen to trouthe. Yf oon do him good, he wol quyte him ageyne with the same. He wil nat coveyte anothir mannes thinge. He taketh himself straunge in this worlde and hathe no grete thought but oonly upon his departyng. He dothe wele and commaundeth othir to do the same. He defendeth men to do evel, and he wil kepe himself from the same dede. And that thinge that lyth in his herte, the tunge shal shewe the same. And his wordes and his dedes shulle accorde. Sone, undirstonde wysedame and alle the propirtees that longen to it. And excercyse thee therinne withoute thenkinge on othir thinges, for whanne thu haste gotten it, thu shalt be ever in joye. And knowe right wele that it is nat gotten but oonely with deboneyretee and by wele kepinge of his tunge, and to kepe it more surely thanne his golde or his thresoure. Sone, loke thu lese nat thyne owen thinges for kepinge of othir mennys thinges, for thi propre thinges bene thi dedes, the whiche thi soule shal bere with here. And the othir ricchesses that leeven behynde aftir thi deth shulle be to othir folkes." And seith: "Sone, worship sapience and hyde it nat fro hem that desiren to have it and lerne it; and to hem that dyspreise it, loke thu shewe it nat." And seith: "Sone, ho that hathe mercy upon othir, othir shull have mercy on him. Sone, suffice thee with that thu haste, withoute coveitynge any good of othir mennys and that also thu knowest wele that thu mayste nat have." And seith: "Sone, resceyve wele and paciently the wordes of correccioun, and of predycacioun, though so be that thei be grevous and harde." And seith: "He is unhappy that hereth and nought undirstandeth; and yet is he more unhappy that hereth and undirstandeth and profyteth nat therwith. Sone, loke thu fellowship with hem that bene loved with God." And seith: "Sone, yelde graces to God for the goode dedes that He hath done to thee, and resceive hem in mekenesse. | Sone, yf thu haste done anythinge that thu semest is good, yet gefe nat thiself to grete laude therinne, for thu wotest never wheder God hathe resceived thi dede with good wille or not, for in alle werkes there bene comounly somme things in the contrarye, and the adversitee of the werkes bene the proude areyzed thoughtes. Sone, coveyte not the delytes of this world, but oonely suche as maye make thee nyghe unto God." And seithe: "Sone, confortee thee in God, love His obbeysance, and have hem in haate that displeasen Him. Sone, there is nothinge more acceptable thanne good witte, and the good witte is parfyte in ten condyciouns, that is to seye: firste, in a man that preyseth nat himself; the secunde, in wele doyng; the thridde, to holde him contente with these things that bene necessarie to his lyfe; the fourthe, to geve his goodes for the love of God; the fyfthe, willynge to do worship; the sexte, to kepe himself that he do no shamefull thinges; the seventhe, to lerne connynge alle daies of his lyfe; the eighte, for to kepe himself from angre; the nyneth, that he geve his love to all hem that desire to have it; the tenthe, to holde himself wors thanne othir men. For the people bene of two maners, for somme bene goode and somme bene evell, wherfore a man shulde meke himself to bothe — to the goode for that entente that thei wolde make him as oon of here fellowes; to the evell for because

131 **quyte**, requite. 135 **lyth**, lies. 139–40 **deboneyretee**, debonairity. 141 **lese**, lose. 143 **bere**, bear; **here**, it. 149 **predycacioun**, predication. 154 **mekenesse**, meekness. 155 **thu semest**, seems to you; **to**, too. 156 **wotest**, know. 162 **parfyte**, perfect (complete). 170 **meke himself**, make himself meek. 171 **here**, their.

thei wote nat whedir the goodnesse be hidde withinne hem, and that thei wole nat shewe it for veyneglorye. And in doyng thes thinges a man maye be taken for a wyse man. Sone, worship God and praye Him that He wole kepe thee frome an evel wyfe, and that He wole teche her, for there is thanne none othir remedye.”

175 And seithe: “Shewe to other the good that thu haste lerned, and fellowship nat with evel folkes, leste thu be oon of hem. And truste nat upon that hous where that men leven todaye and deyen tomorrowwe.” And seith: “Sone, enhabite thiself alweye amonge wyse men, for God lightenneth alweye ther hertes in wordes of wysedome, in lyke wyse as the goodes that growen on the erthe bene made moyste with reyne and with dew.” And somme | seyne that Luginon is buryed in a towne whiche is called Kardnalle, betwene the mesquitte and the market, and there bene entered seventy prophetes that deyed aftir Loginon, whiche the children of Israel helde so longe in hostage that thei deyeden for hunger. And whanne Loginon was nyghe

180 fol. 64r the deth, he beganne to wepe. Thanne his sone asked him yf he wepte for because he shulde deye or for the sorowe that he hadde for to leve the worlde. He aunsuerd and seide: “I weepe for none of thes two thinges, but I weepe for I have to go aweye, of whiche I sawe never the commynge ageyne, and yet I beere but litil meete with me and am charged with a gret burdeyne and wote never whedir I shal be dyscharged or not whanne I come to the ende of my weye.” And seide to his sone:

185 “Thu oughtest to drede God nat oonly for to be worshipped of the people. Sone, whanne thu comest in a place where thei speke of God, abyde there, for yf thu be a foole, thu mayste amende and become wyse, and yf thu be wyse, thi wysedame shal be encresed, and yf God sende hem any good, thu shalt have thi parte. But

190 195 and thu haunte thes places where men speke nat of God, even in the contrarye, it shal falle to thee.” And seith: “Sone, loke thu be aferde of the vengeaunce of oure Lorde as moche as thu mayste, and drede Him and consydre His grete puysaunce.” And seith: “Lyke as by large gevynge to his enemye maketh him his frende, in lyke wyse a man shal by his prude make of his frende his enemye.” And seith:

200 “The speche sheweth the wysedome of a man, and therfore a man shulde be wele ware what he seithe.” And seith: “A true man shal reste him, and the rewarde of a lyer is that whatsomever he seithe, no man wole beleeve him.” And seithe: “Telle nothinge to that man that wil nat beleeve thee, and aske nothinge whiche

205 210 thou knowest wel shal nat be geven thee, nor loke thu promyse nothinge but that thou mayste and wilt do it — namely at thyne owen requeste — and loke thou take nat upon thee that is impossyble, for to be done or for to be hadde.” And seith: “Thu shuldest of alle thinges flee the compayne of a lyere, and yf thou mayste nat eschewe him yet at the leste weye beleeve nothinge that he telleth thee.” And seith:

215 fol. 64v “Sone, loke thou sette thee not downe in the highest place, for it were bettir that men sette thee in an higher place thanne for to take thee oute of an highe place and sette thee in a lower.” And seith: “Sone, oones I commaunde thee yet that thu drede | God above alle thinges, for it is a rightful thinge and a prouffytable unto thee; and loke that alle thy thoughtes be allewey in Him, and in lyke wyse thy

172 **wote**, know. 174 **wole**, will. 178 **leven**, live; **deyen**, die. 182 **entered**, interred. 184 **deyeden**, died; **nyghe**, near. 188 **beere**, bear; **meete**, food. 189 **wote**, know. 194 **encresed**, increased. 195 **and**, if. 201 **ware**, aware of. 208 **lest**, least. 212 **prouffytable**, profitable.

wordes, for the spekinge and the thenkinge on God surmounteth alle other wordes
 215 and thoughtes, lyke as Himself surmounteth alle other creatures; and therfore men
 shulde obbeye Him natwithstondinge any commaundemente that maye constreyne
 any man to the contrarye. Sone, make prayoure thi jugemente, for prayoure is as
 a shippe that is in the see, for yf it be good, it shal be saved and thei that bene
 withinne it, and yf it be evel, it wil perissh, and alle hem that bene withinne it.”
 220 And seith: “A man maye lightly fynde his levyng and thinges necessarye for him
 in this worlde that dureth but litil with the creatures, but a man shulde purvey him
 of suche thinges as bene necessarye for to carye away with him whanne he gothe
 hens and shal departe oute of this worlde.” And seith: “How maye a man chaunge
 225 the willes of othir men that maye nat refreyne his owen propre wille?” And seith:
 “Good wille is oon of the goodnesses that God is served with, and for to herken
 suche thinges as bene lowable, God is wele agreed therwith. And goodely aunsuers
 bene gretly for to be allowed.” And seith: “Yf thu shuldest sende any man for to
 cheese a thinge, sende a wyse man; and yf thu canste nat fynde him, thanne go
 230 thiself.” And seith: “Beleeve nat that man that wole lye to thee for othir men, for
 he wole lye in lyke wyse to othir men on thee. And it is a more light thinge to
 remeve hilles from oon place to anothir thanne to make him undirstonde that
 hathe none undirstondinge.” And seith: “Loke thu do not that thinge that thu wilt
 235 thenke shame that anothir man shulde do it. And yet alleweyes have more shame
 to dysplease God thanne the people.” And seith: “There bene two maner of
 paciences in this worlde, wheroft the tone is he that endureth pacientely alle thinges
 that falle unto him, and the tother is he that can refreyne his wille.” And seith:
 “There bene thre maner of people whiche bene nat knownen but in thre maners,
 240 that is for to seye: the paciente maye nat be knownen but in his adversitee or in his
 wrathe, the worshipful man is nat knownen but in werre or in bataille, and the
 frende is nat knownen but in a mannes necessitees.” And seith: “Over alle maners
 and condycions the worste bene thees as follewith heraftir: oon is to have his
 fol. 65r frende in suspescyon, | anothir in dyscoverynge of secrete thinges, also to put
 truste in every man, further in spekinge moche of thinges that bene nat profitable,
 and also to be in daungier of evell folkes for any covetyse of worldly goodes.” And
 245 seithe: “The thoughte is the myrroure of man wherinne he maye see his beautee
 and his foulenesse.” And seith: “Loke thu beware that thu be nat full of sus-
 pescyon, for suspescyon putteth awye the love of folkes.” And seithe: “A man
 withoutte wytte and lernynge is lyke as a tree that bereth no fruyte.” And seith: “To
 be joyful, salewinge every man with good wille, to be liberall in gevynge and res-
 250 ceyvenge, and with a good wille to forgeve his evel wille to hem that have deserved
 it, maketh a man to be loved of every man.”

217 **prayoure**, prayer. 218 **see**, sea. 220 **levyng**, living. 222 **gothe**, goes. 225 **herken**,
 hearken. 226 **lowable**, praiseworthy. 228 **cheese**, choose. 231 **remeve hilles**, remove hills.
 235 **tone**, one. 236 **tother**, other. 239 **werre**, war. 240 **mannes**, man’s. 244 **covetyse**,
 covetousness. 248 **bereth**, bears. 249 **salewinge**, saluting.

18. ONESE

Onese seith: "Whanne men wexen olde, theire vertues bene lesse preyed, and theire ricchesse is more ferefull thanne the poure mannes." And seith: "The noble dethe is bettir and fairer thanne the foulle domynacioun." And seith: "Oon of the beste goodnesses that a man maye have is for to have a good felawe, wherfore loke 5 thou fellowship thee with goode men and thou shalt be oon of hem." And seith: "Oon of the moste inyquytees of the worlde is for to do velanye to a persone that is impotente." And seith: "Yf thou haste done any delyte, loke thou repente thee anone withoute taryenge til on the morne." And seith: "Thu oughteste for to conne 10 thanke to him that dothe thee good, of what estate or condycioun that ever he be of, with that he do it lyberally or with a good entente." And seith: "That man maye nat perceyve many thinges that maye nat perceyve and knowe himself." And seith: fol. 65v "Yf thou maiste have a durable love with anothir, loke | thou do thi peyne to en- 15 fourme him in goode maners." And seith: "Yf a kinge be juste and true, he shal be lorde over the comounes of his peple; and yf he be othirwyse, though so be thei calle him for here kinge, yet shulle thei have theire courages unto anothir."

19. MARCEDARGE

Marcedarge seith: "The besynesses of this worlde bene dressed by two thinges: oon, by science, whiche the soule is ruled by; and the tother, by solicitude, whiche bothe body and soule bene ruled by." And seith: "Men lette to do many evell 5 thinges whanne thei have a lorde that is douted and dredde." And seith: "The noblesse of lynage is right covenable for to resceive connynge." And seith: "The entente of a man shulde be to refreyne his courage from foule and lewed thinges, for the good levynge causeth a man to have good renowne, and also it getith him 10 a good ende. And he is right worshipful and excellente that is honourable in alle his dispoutes and where also that his undirstondinge surmounteth his wrathe." And seith: "Suffyce thee to be so wyse that thou knowest whanne thu doste wel, and to kepe thee from harme." And seith: "There is nothinge that is more unsytinge to 15 a man thanne to be evel taugte, and specially whanne he is comen of good lynage and noble." And seith: "Connynge is a lowable thinge, for the goodnessse of this worlde and of the tother bene founde oute therof." And seith: "A wyse man wil nat have of his prynce but that he hathe wonne by true seyenge and by goode dedes." And seith: "He is the goode lorde that peyneth himself to kepe his subjectes as he dothe his owne propre body, and that is nat so rigorous ne so oppressinge his peo- 16 ple that thei be constreyned to leeve his lordship, and also that is not so debo-

1 wexen, grow. **2 ferefull**, precarious; **poure mannes**, poor man's. **3 dethe**, death; **domynacioun**, domination; **Oon**, One. **4 felawe**, companion. **6 moste inyquytees**, greatest iniquities; **velanye**, villainy. **6–7 impotente**, powerless. **7 anone**, anon (soon). **8 taryenge**, tarrying; **oughteste**, ought; **conne**, give. **9 dothe**, does. **10 entente**, intent. **12 peyne**, pain. **12–13 enfourme**, inform. **14 comounes**, commons. **15 here**, their.

1 besynesses, business. **2 oon**, one; **science**, knowledge; **tother**, other. **3 lette**, forsake. **4 douted and dredde**, respected and feared. **5 lynage**, lineage; **covenable**, appropriate; **connynge**, cleverness. **6 entente**, intent. **7 levynge**, living. **9 dispoutes**, amusements. **10 doste**, do. **13 lowable**, praiseworthy. **14 tother**, other. **15 dedes**, deeds. **16 peyneth**, pains. **17 dothe**, does.

19 naire unto hem that thei dare dysobsey his commaundementes." And seith: "The
 fol. 66r moste gracious gever is he that geveth withoute askynge." | And seith: "In what
 place soever thu be inne, be it in dysportyng or othirwise with thyne enemye, loke
 thou make ever good wacche. And though so be that thu be strenger thanne he, yet
 25 shuldest thu labour for to gete the peas." And seith: "Lyke as it is grete peyne to
 fol. 61r the body of man to beere a thinge that is impossyble to him, in lyke wyse it is as
 grevous a thinge to a wyse man for to teeche a foole." And seith: "It is leefful to
 a man to be ryche." | And seith: "He is gretely unknownen and a grete nygard that
 canne a man no thanke of the goodnesse that he hath done to him, but yet is he
 moche wers that denyeth the goodnesse that hathe be done to him." And seith:
 "He that asketh nothinge but reason is able for to overcome his enemye."

20. THESCILE

Thescile seith: "Thu oughtest to love bettir the boystous and true wordes that
 bene profitable thanne the sweete wordes that bene medled with barate and
 flaterye, for somme medlen the venyme with sweete drynkes: and thes medecynes
 5 that sonnest geven heele bene bitter and of evel savoure." And seith: "It is an evel
 thinge for us to be desyerous of goode meetes for the body, and leve the coryous
 meetes that shulde refresshe the soulle." And seith: "A maryner dare nat put him-
 self into the see but yf the wynde be propre for hym, and we dyspose oure soule
 absolutely to alle maner of wyndes." And seith: "Thu oughtest to do suche thinges
 10 as bene moste profitable for the body and moste covenable to the soulle, and flee
 fol. 61v the contrarye." And seith: "He that counsellith other men wele ought by reasoun
 to counseyle | wel himself and to thenke wele on his soule, for ho that can honoure
 other men and dyshonoure himself it is right a sorrowful vyce." And seith: "In lyke
 wyse as it becometh a man evel that hathe a foulle body and a sluttyshe to be
 15 cladde in cloth of golde or sylke, in lyke wyse it is a lewde thinge to a man for to
 have grete beauté in his body and vysage and to be full of evell werkes." And
 seith: "Lyke as we are bounden of propre nature to kepe oure membres, and
 namely the heed that is moste pryncipal, meche more are we bounden to kepe that
 that geveth us suche knoweleche, that is to seye oure undirstondinge." And it was
 20 asked him how a man myght kepe himself from angre. He aunsuerd and seide:
 "Lete him bethenke hym wele that it is impossible that men shulde alleweyes ob-
 beye to hym, for he himself muste nedes serve at somme tymes othir men, wher-
 fore he maye not at alle tymes commaunde other men, but he shal be com-
 maunded himself. And also God seethe everythinge, and yf his thinges weren wele
 25 consydered, he shulde nat be at any tyme longe wrothe though so were that he
 were angred." And he sawe a man whiche was right fatte, to whome he seide: "Thu

20 **gever**, giver. 22 **wacche**, watch; **strenger**, stronger. 23 **peas**, peace. 24 **beere**, bear.
 25 **leefful**, permissible. 26 **nygard**, niggard. 27 **canne**, gives; of, for. 28 **moche wers that
 denyeth**, much worse that denies.

1 **boystous**, blunt. 2 **barate**, deception. 3 **venyme**, venom. 4 **sonnest geven heele**, soonest
 give healing. 5 **desyerous**, desirous; **meetes**, foods; **leve**, leave; **coryous**, exquisite. 7 **see**,
 sea; **wynde**, wind. 9 **covenable**, appropriate. 17 **heed**, head; **meche**, much. 23 **seethe**,
 sees. 24 **wrothe**, angry.

30 doste grete peyne for to breke the walles of thi pryson." And seith: "Whanne thou wilte corecte another man, loke thou shewe nat thiself lyke him that wole be avenged on his enemye, but shewe thiself lyke the leeche that speketh sweetely to his paciente, and whanne thou wilt corecte thiself, shewe thee as the seeke man dothe to the leeche."

21. GREGORY

Seint Gregory seith: "Recommaunde to God the begynnyng and the ende of alle thi werkes, studye and do peyne to knowe alle thinges, and holde and cheese | the beste." And seith: "Povertee is evel, but evell rycchesse ben wers." And seith: "5 Loke ye be constaunte and refreyne thyne yre, and take connynge for to lighte thee insteade of a candel, and thenke nat thiself to be that thou arte nat, for thou arte mortal. Take thiself as for a straungier and loke thou worship straungiers." And seith: "Whanne thi shippe is in grete tranquyllitee, thanne loke thou be aferde to be drownned." And seith: "A man shulde resceive with good cheere alle that God sendeth him." And seith: "The wrath of goode folkes is bettir to be chosen thanne 10 the worshipp of evell folkes." And seith: "Use the house of wyse men and nat of the ryche." And seith: "Dyspreyse nat a litil thinge, for it maye growe meche and amende, and endure paciently withoute vengeance."

22. GALEN

Gallyene was oon of the eight maisters of phesyk, whiche were chieff and moste excellente above alle othir maisters in the science of phesyk, wheroft the firste was named Esculapius, the secunde Gorus, the thirde Myrus, the fourthe Promenides, the fyveth Platon, the sixte Esculapius the secunde, the sevenethe Ypocras, the eighthe Galliene, after the whiche was never none lyke hym. And was borne aboute a two hundred yere aftir the commynge of our Lorde, Jhesu Cryste, and composed wele foure hundred bookes, grete and smale, amoneg whiche bene sextene that men studye inne that wole undirstonde the crafte of medecyne. His fader entended 5 gretely for to sette him to scole, and spended gretely of his good for his lernynge, and thanne he sente him into Ayse, after unto the citee of Pergame, and unto the 10 citee of Athenes, to Roome, and aftir that into Alysaundyr to seche where he myght fynde beste maisters; and there he lerned phesyk, geometrye, and gramer, and fol. 62v othir sciences. | And he lerned phesyk of a womman that was called Cleupare, 15 whiche taughte him and shewed many goode herbes, namely for sekenesse of wommen. And he duelled longe in Egipte for to knowe thes herbes, and longe tyme aftir he deyed nygh the citee of Descen, besyde the grene see in the marches of Egipte. And in his youthe he desired moche to have connynge demonstratyf and

26 **doste**, do; **breke**, break. 27 **wilte**, will; **wole**, will. 28 **leeche**, physician. 29 **seeke**, sick.

1 **Recommaunde**, Offer. 2 **peyne**, pain; **cheese**, choose. 3 **ben wers**, are worse. 4 **Loke**, Look; **yre**, ire; **connynge**, cleverness. 11 **Dyspreyse**, Denounce; **meche**, much.

1 **oon**, one; **phesyk**, physic (medicine). 7 **sextene**, sixteen. 8 **wole**, will. 9 **scole**, school; **good**, wealth. 10 **Ayse**, Asia. 11 **Alysaundyr**, Alexandria; **seche**, seek. 12 **gramer**, grammar. 16 **deyed nygh**, died near; **marches**, borderlands. 17 **connynge demonstratyf**, demonstrative knowledge.

20 was so soore sette for to lerne it that whanne he departed fro the scoole with other
 children, he cesed nat for to thenke upon that thinge which his maistir hadde
 taughte him. Wherfore his fellowes mocked hym and asked him why he wolde nat
 laughe and pleye with hem, to whome he aunsuerd and seide: "I take as moche
 pleasaunce in your pleyes as ye done in youre pleasyres, and I take as moche
 pleasure to thenke on my lesson as ye do on youre pleyes." Thanne somme seyden
 that the fader of this childe was right evrous for to be ryche and to have a wille to
 25 sette his childe to scoole that loveth connynge so moche. His fader was right a
 grete labourer, his ayel was a sovereigne maister of carpentrye, and the fader of his
 ayel was a connynge man in the mesuryng of londe, whiche longeth to the scyence
 30 of geometrye. And Gallyene was at Roome at the begynnyng of the regne of
 Anthonye, that regned nexst aftir Adryan, and there he made the book Dana-
 thomie, and many other tretyes. And somme seyne that many of Gallyens booke
 35 werne brente in a towne where thei were in kepinge, amounghe whiche were brente
 also somme of Aristotles booke, whiche were wreten with his owen hande, that is
 to seye Danaxogoras, Dandromachye, and a booke whiche oon Ruxus made of
 tecches. And at that tyme the kinges of Grece werne right besy for to breke downe
 40 the hilles for to fylle up the valeyes and to make pleyne weyes in theire cuntree, to
 bilde citees and to cloose hem with walles, and for to make the revers for to renne
 thurgh the townes, and in othir places where it was needfull, and to make alle othir
 things that were profitayle to the comon wele. And thei sette more theire hertes
 45 upon the good governaunce of here reames thanne of the delytes of here propre
 persones, and sette moche in here herte for to have goode studyauntes and goode
 clerkes, specially in phesyk. And there were grete men assigned for to gadre
 fol. 63r herbes, whiche werne broughte to the phesycians for to put hem in preef by ex-
 50 peryence; and whanne thei were | preved, thei were sente to kinges closed and
 sealed with here seales, to that entente that thei shulde nat be chaunged. And
 thanne the kinge sente hem to seeke folkes for here heele. And Gallyene seide:
 "Science maye nat proufyte to a foole, ne wysedome to him that wil nat use it." And
 seithe: "He that serveth truly is worthy to be rewarded." And seith: "Sorowe long-
 55 eth to thinges passed, and thoughte to thinges for to come." And Gallyene was of
 age eighty-sevne yere. And seith: "Moche people, grete lordes and othir, bene so
 fulle of ignoraunce that thei be more curyouse for to have goode horses and gay
 gownes and othir jewelles thanne for to gete goode tecches or noble condycions." And
 seith: "Somtyme the leeches were wonte to be maisters and reulers over the
 60 seeke persones, to make hem do suche thinges as thei wolde commaunde hem that
 were profitable to her helthe, and there durste no seeke man seye naye ne dis-

18 **soore**, sorely. 19 **cesed**, ceased. 24 **evrous**, fortunate. 26 **ayel**, uncle. 29–30 **Danathomie**, On Anatomy. 30 **tretyes**, treatises. 31 **werne brente**, were burned. 32 **wreten**, written. 33 **Danaxogoras**, Concerning Anaxagoras; **Dandromachye**, Concerning Andromachus. 34 **tecces**, blemishes. 35 **valeyres**, valleys; **pleyne weyes**, plain ways. 36–37 **revers for to renne thurgh**, rivers to run through. 38 **wele**, weal (benefit); **hertes**, hearts. 40 **here**, their; **studyauntes**, students. 42 **phesycians**, physicians; **preef**, examination. 43 **preved**, proven. 44 **here**, their. 45 **seeke**, sick; **here heele**, their healing. 46 **proufyte**, profit. 47–48 **longeth**, belongs. 50 **curyouse**, curious (desirous). 51 **tecces**, habits. 52 **wonte**, accustomed. 54 **her**, their; **durste**, dares.

55 obbeye, but anone he shulde be constreyned for to obbeye: wherfore thei resceyved here heele in shorte tyme. And now the leeches bene subjectes to the seeke folkes, and thei bene constreyned for to touche the pacientes but litel or noughe, and for to geve hem swete drynkes and of litil profyte: and so the seeke folkes lyve longe seeke and be nat holpen." And seith: "Somtyme thei that dranke leest wyne and wer most attempred in here levynge were moste worshipped and preyed, and now thei that bene moste glotons and ofteste drunken bene sette highest at the lordes boorde for to geve exsample to othir men to do the same." And seith: "Thu maiste teeche every man but oonely him that is withoute shame." And seith: "A man that knoweth himself wele is myghty to redresse himself wele. And I holde him right excelente that hathe good knoweleche of himself, for a man maye love himself so moche that he maye be deceyved and thenke himself that he is bettir thanne he is. And we see many that wene hemself thei bene goode and true and be nat, and alle thei that bene of that thoughte bene of litil discretion." And seith: "He is a juste man that maye do wronge and dothe it not; and he is wyse and discrete that knoweth that that is suffysaunt to be knownen for the good wille of every creature humayne." And seith: "Lyke as a man is seeke of a grete seekenesse and wil nat departe from the phesycian in hope that he shulde have his heele, in lyke wyse we shulde thenke upon oure soulles and leve nat unto the tyme that we maye come unto the state of helth." | And he sawe a man whiche kinges worshipped meche for his grete strength, and he asked what he hadde done that the kingis worshipped him so moche, and men seide unto him that he hadde lyfte an oxe upon his necke withouten helpe of any man, and bare him oute of the hous. Thanne Gallyene aunsuerd him, seyenge: [The rest of Galen's section is lost.]

fol. 63v 23. THE LAST PHILOSOPHERS

fol. 58v | Somme asked of oon whiche was named Protege whi that oon of his neyghbors made dye his heeres blacke. He aunsuerd and seide: "For because that men shulde aske him wysedome." And Plyves seith: "The more goodes that a fool hathe, the more lewedder he is." And somme asked of Araston what tyme was beste a man to lye with his wyfe. He aunsuerd and seide: "At alle tymes that a man wolde empeyre or make feoble his body." And thei asked of Dinicrate wherinne he perceyved his witte beste. "In that," quod he, "that I trowe myne undirstondynge be but litil." And seith: "The wyseman that agenseythe is bettir thanne the foole that agreeeth to alle thinge." Thanne oon of his dyssiples aunsuered and seide: "Awyseman wole nat agenseye but litil, but a fool wole agenseye alle." There was a wyseman whiche was called Azee and was a prysonere, whome his maister asked of what lynage he was of. To whome he aunsuerd and seide: "Enquere nat of my lynage, but oonely of my wysedome and of my prudence." And another, whiche was named Fyguanee,

55 **anone**, soon. 56 **here**, their. 59 **holpen**, helped. 60 **attempred in here levynge**, temperate in their living. 61 **glotons**, gluttonous. 62 **boorde**, board (table). 67 **wene**, believe. 69 **discrete**, discreet. 70 **suffysaunt**, sufficient. 73 **leve**, leave. 77 **bare**, bore.

1 **oon**, one. 2 **heeres**, hairs. 4 **lewedder**, most ignorant. 5 **empeyre**, impair. 7 **trowe**, believe. 8 **agenseythe**, rejects. 9 **wole**, will. 11 **lynage**, lineage. 12 **Enquere**, Inquire.

15 was a prysoner, an escalve, of whome oon that wolde have boughte him asked
 wherto he was good. He aunsuerd and seide: "For to be delyverd." And anothir
 asked of a boonde man yf he wolde be goode and he boughte him. To whome he
 aunsuerde and seide: "Elles I were nat good, wheder ye or any other boughte me."
 And seide to anothir: "That man dyspreyseth himself that dyspreyseth alle othir
 men and preyseth himself." And there was oon that prayed to God that He wolde
 fol. 59r kepe him from his frende. Thanne it was asked him: "Why prayest | thu more that
 21 God shulde kepe thee more fro thi frende thanne fro thyne enemye?" He aunsuerd
 and seide: "For I maye wele kepe me fro myne enemye, whiche that I put no truse
 inne, and nat fro my frende, whiche that I truse." And somme asked of a wyseman:
 25 "Whiche bene thes thinges that bene moste noble amonge alle worldly thinges?"
 He aunsuerd: "Hate foly, love wysedome, and be nat ashamed to lerne." And it was
 asked of oon Artasan: "Whiche bene the sciences that children shulde lerne?" He
 aunsuerd and seide: "Thes sciences that shull make hem moste eschewe ig-
 30 noraunce in her age." And thei asked of anothir why he sette nat by sylver. He
 aunsuerd: "For it cometh to people by fortune, and it is kepte by negardship and
 by covetyse, and comounly it is lewedly spended and folily, in evel usage." And thei
 asked of Luginon what he hadde wonne in his science. He aunsuerd and seide: "I
 35 have wonne so moche that alle the goode dedes that I have done I dede hem with
 good herte and with good thought and good undirstondinge, and nat as con-
 streyned by the lawe." And seith: "The love of a fool shal do thee more noye
 thanne his haate." And another seide to a man of Irelonde, by weye of manace: "I
 40 wole do peyne for to destroye thee." To whome the tothir aunsuerd: "And I wole
 do my peyne to appese thyne ire." And there came before the kinge three wyse-
 men, wherof that oon was a Greeke, the tothir was a Jewe, and the thirde was a
 Sarazyne, to whome the seide kinge seide that eche oon of hem shulde shewe him
 45 somme notable seyenges. Thanne the Greeke seide: "I maye nat correcte nor
 amende my thought bettir thanne my worde." And the Jewe seide: "I have grete
 merveile of hem that speken thinges that bene hurtefull, for his holdynge peas
 were moche bettir." And the Sarazyne seide: "I am maistir of my worde or I speke
 it; and whanne it is seide, I am his servaunte." And thei asked him who was the
 50 beste kinge. He aunsuerd and seide: "That kynge that is nat subiecte to his wille."
 And Assoras seide to an evel payer, whiche came to the seide Assoras for to borowe
 moneye, and he seide that he wolde leene him none. "And yet," quod he, "it shal
 nat be so evel to me for to warne thee, as it shulde be evel for to aske my money
 agayne whanne I hadde lente it." And seith: "The wyseman speketh at the leste
 fol. 59v wyse by ymagynacioun, evenly demenyng his thoughte, and the fool speketh by
 ymagynacioun withoute thoughte." And Theophrastes seide: "That man is wele con-
 dyкцион that can wele reporte the | goodnesse of folkes and hyde here malyces."
 And it was asked of Dystomes how a man myght do that he hadde no neede to

14 **escalve**, slave. 15 **delyverd**, delivered (set free). 16 **boonde**, bound; **and**, if. 17 **Elles**,
 Else. 18 **dyspreyseth**, denounces. 26 **sciences**, I.e., academic disciplines. 28 **her**, their.
 29 **negardship**, greed. 30 **covetyse**, covetousness; **spended**, spent. 32 **dede**, did. 34 **noye**,
 annoyance. 35 **by weye of manace**, by way of menace. 39 **Sarazyne**, Saracen (Muslim);
eche, each. 42 **merveile**, marvel; **peas**, peace. 43 **or**, ere. 44 **his**, its. 47 **leene**, loan. 50
demenyng, managing. 51–52 **condyкцион**, conditioned. 52 **here**, their.

55 othir men. He aunsuerd and seide: "Yf he be a riche man, lete him leve menely; and yf he be a poure man, lete him put himself in excercyse of laboure." And Nychomake seithe that there is no bettir doctour thanne dyscrecioun, nor so good prechour as is tyme. "And he is right diligente and besy that correcteth himself by othir and that geveth bettir exsample to othir men thanne to himself." And Cyne-cus seithe: "Medle thee nat to teche nor to governe the werkes of fooles, for though so be that thei feele the charge and the peys of here thinges greete, yet wote nat thei what thei be worthe no more thanne horses or other beestes that bene charged with golde or othir ricchesses, and at the ende thei wole conne thee no more thanke thanne the beestes done hem that leyne the grete burdeyne on here backes." And it was asked of Aunselyne why men were punysshed by here dedes and nat by here thoughtes. He aunsuerd and seide: "At the leest weye there be thre thinges that a prynce oughte for to eschewe. That is to seye: for to drynke wyne to moche; secondly, he shulde nat haunte to moche mynstralsye ne musycienes; the thridde he shulde nat haunte the foolyssh love of wommen. For these thre thinges shull empeche alle his othir thoughtes." And another seithe: "Thynges that bene done, to forgete hem is the medecyne, for it maye be noon other." And Pillothecus made an oxe of myre and donge, and made his sacrefyce therof to the ydoles, seyenge in this wyse: "I wol nat offre a quycke thinge that hathe soulle to that thyng that is deed and hathe no soulle." And seithe: "Trouthe is good to be seide wheere that it is profytale to every man." And seith: "Yf thu mayste nat atteyne to come to the connynge of olde wysemen, yet studye and see here bokes, lyke as the blynde men make for to sette lyght before hem whanne thei go to here soper, though so be that it do hem but litil profyte." And Quirarus seithe: "I merveille gretly of hem that blamen alle evell thinges that thei see on othir men, and thei seeme that same faire upon hemself." And Dymocrates seith: "Pacienc is a castell nat prynable, and grete haste bryngeth grete repentaunce aftir him, and hon-ouryng is fruyte of trouthe." And somme asked of Dyochomaces why the riche men were prouder thanne the wysemen. He aunsuerd and seide: "For because that the wysemen knewe oure Lorde before, wherfore thei durste never be proude, and the riche men take | but litil knoweleche." And thei asked him wheder were bettir for to gete wysedome or ricchesse. He aunsuerd and seide: "There be no ricchesses goode but yf thei be profitable in this worlde and in the tother, but wysedome is good overall." And men seide to Arystotle that thei herde a man seye right wele of him, and he aunsuerd hem and seide that he wolde deserve it unto him. And thei asked him in what maner. "In lyke wyse," quod he, "as the trouthe that he seithe." 70 And Octyphon seithe: "The herte of the people maye nat comprehendre over the possibilite of here undirstondinge, but thei maye conne lasse, lyke wyse as a man maye put lasse lycoure in a vessell thanne it holdeþe, but he maye put no more inne thanne it holdeth." And Orycas seithe: "A man of good understandyng maye

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90

54 **leve menely**, live frugally. 57 **prechour**, preacher; **besy**, busy. 60 **peys**, pace; **wote**, know. 62 **conne**, give. 63 **leyne**, lay. 66–67 **to moche**, too much. 67 **mynstralsye ne musycienes**, minstrelsy nor musicians. 70 **noon**, none. 71 **myre and donge**, mire and dung. 72 **quycke**, living. 73 **deed**, dead. 76 **soper**, supper. 80 **prynable**, pregnable. 83 **durste**, dared. 86 **tother**, other. 91 **here**, their; **conne lasse**, understand less. 92 **lycoure**, liquor.

95 overcome wel grete quantité of adversytees of this worlde, lyke wyse as the good maryner knoweth by experyence whanne he shulde put himself to the see." And Samaron seithe: "I have loste alle that I have, wherfore I am no more aferde." And Gesius seithe: "In alle thyne enterpryses, loke thu have more truste in thi connynge thanne in thi streyngthe." And Gregory seithe: "The peyntours maye wele peynte thynges that bene full lyke to that thinge that he peynteth it aftir outward, but of the thinges innewardē can no man make hem saulf nature." And the Kinge Cromesis called his brederne to him and seide: "Yf ye wole take me oonely but for youre brother, I wole shewe you that I am youre kinge. But and ye take me for youre kinge, I wole shewe you that ye be my brethren." And Tales Millesius seithe: "I merveille moche of hem that for getynge of good wole put hemself in perille of dethe every daye in the weye of marchaundyse or other weyes, as wel by lande as by watir, and wote never to whome her good shal be departed aftir here dethe nor how — and myght lightly gete connynge and with lasse peyne, by the whiche their good name myght gretely be commended aftir her deth." Wherfore oon seith in a proverbe: "He is nat deed as longe as his good name dureth." And Pyctagoras seithe: "Science hathe none enemyes but ignorauntes." And anothir seithe: "The tales of a fool bene as dyspleasaunte as the stynkyngē of a careyne is to hem that smellen it. And the fooles knowe no more the lewednesse of here wordes thanne the careyne may smelle his owen stynke." And thei asked of anothir how thei myght kepe hemself from drynkinge of to moche wyne. He aunsuerd and seide: "Loke ye take heed of the grete inconvenyentes that fallen by | men that bene dronken, and loke ye kepe you from drynkyngē to meche." And Eugene seithe: "I see men that asken for torches, candelles, and othir lightes for to see the meete that thei eten, but thei seche no lyghtes for suche thinges as bene necessarye to the soulle. That is to seye: by good doctryne, by wysedome, by reasoun, and undir-
100 stondynge." And Estrycon seithe: "The deth dyspleaseth every man saulf wyse men, and there is nothinge that putteth aweye the grete thought of deth so moche as dothe wysedome." And Adryan seithe: "Yf I hadde wysedome for nothinge elles but oonely for to dyspreise the deth, yet oughte I for to love it wele." And Hermes seithe: "The grettest profyte that I have founde in wysedome is that I have composed alle my thoughtes in oon." And Quirianus seithe: "Syn a man maye nat be withoute thoughtes, he shulde thenke on these thinges that ben perpetuell." And Quirius seithe: "Somme seyne it were good that every man were of oon condyciou,
105 but me thenketh it shulde nat be good, for every man wolde comaunde and no man wolde obbeye; and therfore me semyth that it is covenable in this worlde that oon commaunde and anothir obbeye." And Dimicrates seithe: "Whanne thu comest in straunge places, herken lightly othir men speke and consydre wele here seyenges. And yf thu see that thu mayste speke as wysely or wyselyer thanne thei, thanne speke and teche hem surely. And yf thu canste nat speke so wele as thei,
110
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95 **see**, **sea**. 98 **peyntours**, painters. 100 **saulf**, save (except for). 101 **brederne**, brethren. 102 **and**, if. 105 **marchaundyse**, mercantile activity. 106 **wote**, know. 108 **her**, their. 109 **deed**, dead; **dureth**, endures. 111 **careyne**, carrion. 112 **here**, their. 113 **his**, its. 116 to **meche**, too much. 118 **eten**, eat; **seche**, seek. 120 **saulf**, save (except for). 123 **dyspreise**, discount. 125 **Syn**, Since. 129 **me semyth**, it seems to me; **covenable**, appropriate. 131 **here**, their. 132 **wyselyer**, more wisely.

135 loke thu herken and lerne of hem." And seithe: "Peyne thee to lerne and to knowe before or grete thinges falle unto thee, as wyffe and children, labourages or other suche thinges falle upon thee." And Phelip the dyssiple of Pictagoras seith: "He ought nat to be holden for worthy that renneth upon anothir man that maye nat defende himself." And Silique seith: "Of alle the thinges of the worlde, meene is the beste, and the beste levyng in the worlde is to mesure his dispenses, for the wastynge of goodes is the keye of povertee, and also it is impossible for him to have the grace of alle folkes." And seith: "Loke thu bewar that thu be nat wrothe with him that seith trouthe; and have pacience, and it shal be good unto thee." And seith: "The evel lorde resembleth a man that is drunken, that in his drunkennesse fleeth from alle goode and faire vertues and loveth alle vyses and other lewednesses, and whanne his drunkennesse is passed, he dare nat for shame be aknowen of the lewednesse that he hathe done." And seith: "A kinge of good dyscrecioun ought nat to be deceyved, | though that many men offre hem to him in his prosperité; nor he shulde never the rather leve the worshippinge of his knyghtes and geve hem here wages, though so be he weene that he have but fewe enemyes, for in every place where he is, he shal have evermore adoo." And Moleyus seith: "He is nat riche that his ricchesses dure nat but litil, nor that maye likely be taken from him, ne suche also as duren longe, but the verrey true ricchesses bene thei that duren everlastingely." And Bratalyque seith: "The covetouse men have never reste, nor the negarde ne the suspicioius man maye nat have good lyffe." | And Phelyp, kinge of Macedoyne, seide unto hem that counselled him that he shulde brenne the citee of Athenes whanne he had wonne it: "It shulde seeme thanne," quod he, "that we were conquered, and we bene conquerours." And Archide seithe: "Thi tunge maye juge a leesynge withoute consentynge of the herte, and therfore it is a faire thinge that the tunge and the herte be of oon oppynyon." And seith: "Requere nat of God that thinge that thu maist fynde, that is to seye, suffysauntee, that every man maye have. But requere that oonely that suche thinge as thu haste maye suffyse thee." And Pictagoras seithe: "He that beleeveth not in the resurreccion of deede bodies is lyke a shadowe or a beeste that is dombe, or elles a tree that falleth lightly for a litil wynde." And seithe: "We shulde sewe oure werkes by deliberacion and by grete provysyon, and not by aventure oonly." And seith: "Yf thu wilte excede thyne enemye, loke thu calle him nat a jangelere, a foole, nor a sclauderer, ne full of othir vices, for thi blame shal be to him a grete worship." And seithe: "A man that wil be allowed in his werkes shulde have a good frende that wolde reporte him forthe." And seithe: "A man shulde chastyse the peple more by goode and humble wordes and sweete thanne by evell and sharpe wordes." And seithe: "Kepe thi frende above alle thinges, and consydre wele what a losse it is for to leese him, for though thyne hous falle, thu leesest no more but the walles, but in the losse of thi frende, thu shalt wynne many enemyes." And seith: "Whanne a man is in his

134 **herken**, hearken (listen). 135 **or**, ere; **labourages**, labors. 137 **renneth**, runs. 138 **meene**, restraint. 139 **levyng**, living. 144 **fleeth**, flees. 145 **aknowen**, reminded. 148 **leve**, leave (give up). 149 **here**, their; **weene**, believes. 151 **dure**, endure. 152 **verrey**, true. 154 **negarde**, niggard. 158 **leesynge**, lie. 159–60 **Requere**, Request. 160 **suffysauntee**, sufficiency. 163 **deede**, dead. 164 **sewe**, pursue. 165 **aventure**, happenstance. 166 **jangelere**, jester; **sclauderer**, slanderer. 171 **leese**, lose.

175 grete wrath, he is lyke an house that is sette on fyre, in the whiche for the quan-
 tytee and the noyse of the fyre the yghen maye nat see nor the eeres here. And lyke
 as a shippe by a grete and outeragious tempeste may nat be wel governed and
 ruled for the outerage of the tempeste, in lyke wyse a courage meoved with angre
 maye nat be wele governed ne appeesed, neithir by meanes ne steringes what-
 somever thei be. For anger is so cursed that a litol flame maketh lightly a grete fyre,
 180 and many tymes it is appeesed by scylence, lyke as the fyre is staunched by takinge
 fol. 66v aweye of the woode. And | also lyke as a drunken man hath no knowelech of his
 drunkennesse as longe as it dureth, and aftir that whanne he seeth anothir drunk-
 en thanne he knoweth in what estate he was himself, in lyke wyse it is of a man that
 185 is wrothe." And seithe: "We sene comounly the wommen sooner wrothe thanne the
 men, the seeke men sooner thanne the hoolle, and the oolde men sooner thanne
 the yonge men, wherby a man may knowe that angre cometh of feblenesse of cour-
 age." And a man disputed with his servaunte, to whome he seide: "Holle thi peas,
 190 boonde-mannes sone." To whome he aunsuerd: "I maye nat be the wors for my
 lyne, but thu mayste be lasse worthe for thi condycions." And seith: "A wyse man
 shulde seye these thinges that bene covenable, and othirwhile heere that thinge
 195 that apperteyneth nat to him." And seith: "Ther is nothinge that maye greve thi
 frende so meche as for to have hym in suspescyon." And anothir seithe: "Loke thu
 be conversaunte with thi fellowes in suche wise that thei wil wysshe and desire to
 have thee agen in here presence whanne thu arte departed from hem, and that
 thei myght weepe aftir thi dethe." And there was a man that wepte the daye of the
 200 nativitee of his sone, whome oon asked wherfore he wepte and hadde so grete a
 cause to be mery. He aunsuerd and seide: "For because my sone gothe towarde his
 dethe." And somme asked of anothir who were thoo people that were leest hated.
 He aunsuerd and seide: "Thei that maye nother helpe ne noye and that do nother
 good ne harme, for the evell haten the goode, and the goode the evell." And anothir
 205 seide: "Custome is harder to breeke thanne nature." And another seithe:
 "There bene two maner of abstynences: oon is by constreynte and the tothir is of
 good wille, whiche is the bettir." And anothir seithe: "Loke thu speke nat of thinges
 but suche as bene profitable. And loke thu eete no more thanne is necessarye for
 thy sustenaunce. And loke thu aske nothinge but that thu arte possible for to have.
 And loke thu pleyne thee not on thi frendes. And loke thu dyspeire thee not of
 210 thees thinges that thu maiste nat amende. And aske nothinge of a coveitouse man.
 And holde faste that thu haste lerned. And lerne that thu haste nat knownen before
 tyme. And geve of that that thu haste. Wryte in thi seal or in thi signet that the
 goode and the evell shull ende, and loke upon that oftentymes. And have pacience
 in thyne adversitees." And anothir seithe: "Oon of the thinges that makith a man
 215 sonnest to erre in his jugemente is short thenking | and hastynesse for to speke."
 And oon rebuked a wyse man, to whom the wyse man aunsuerd: "Thu reprevest
 me for I shulde amende my vices." And thei asked of anothir wyse man wherof
 profyted a good sone. He aunsuerd and seide: "He geveth dilectacioun to his fader

175 **yghen**, eyes; **eeres here**, ears hear. 178 **steringes**, steerings. 180 **scylence**, silence. 184
 sene, have seen. 185 **hoolle**, whole. 187 **peas**, peace. 188 **boonde-mannes**, bond-man's. 190
heere, hear. 191 **apperteyneth**, pertains. 194 **agen in here**, again in their. 198 **thoo**, those.
 199 **nother**, neither; **noye**, annoy. 201 **breeke**, break. 213 **reprevest**, reproves.

in his lyffe and putteth awey the doute of his deeth." And thei asked of anothir why he wolde have no sone. He aunsuerd and seide: "Whanne I see the love that a man hath to his sone and the grete peynes and sorowes that he hathe for hem, I had never be withoute him thanne have him." And somme seyden to another, that wente
 220 in a straunge vyage, that he shulde nat go, for he myght lightly deye by the weye. And he aunsuerd hem seyenge in this wise, that the deeth was in a straunge cun-tree, even as it was in his owen chambre at hoome. And thei asked of anothir what thinge was that that was nat good for to do, though so were that it were true. And he aunsuerd and seide: "A man that preyseth his owen goode deedes, though so
 225 be that thei be true; and also for to lye othirwhile it is good, in gevynge conforte to his enemyes and save his frende from the deeth; and trouthe is nat alweytes good to be seide." And thei asked him what thinge was moste delectable. He aunsuerd and seide: "That thinge that might nat longe abyde in oon state, and that that a man maye leest fynde." And seith: "A man that hathe wille to come to any goode,
 230 he shulde nat leeve it, though so were that he myght nat come therto at the firsste tyme, but he shulde do his parte for to recover it agen, for there falleth at oon tyme that falleth nat at anothir tyme." And seith: "The wyse man is never deceyved by flaterers and sweete wordes, lyke as the serpente is taken and eten of the peacocke for lokynge on the faire fedres of his taille." And seith: "A wyse prince shulde
 235 helpe hymself in the werre with goode and evell men in divers maners." And seith: "Yf thou have a man in hate, thou oughtest nat for that to hate alle his meynee." And somme seiden to anothir that a man had bought a booke and studyed nat therinne, to whome he aunsuerd and seide: "The bookes constreyne nat a man for to reede hem." And anothir seith: "Men shulde serve God in ten maners. That is to seye: yelde graces to God of the goodes that He hathe sente hem; suffre
 240 paciently the adversitees that thei resceyven; speke thinges that bene true; holde that thei promyse; juge truly; and to have good attemperaunce; to do wel aftir her power withoute requeryng; worship theire frendes; and forgrave also the fautes of theire | frende and of his enemyes; and desyre nat ne do nat to other men suche
 fol. 67v 245 thinges that he wolde nat have himself." And he was blamed for he gafe moneye to an evel man that was poure, and he aunsuerd unto hem that blamed him: "I have nat geven him the moneye as for an evel man, but as for a poure and a nedye man." And seith: "A man shulde worship the goode folkes in here lyfe, and prey for hem aftir her dethe." And seith: "The excercise of diverse werkemen putteth
 250 aweye the dilectacioun of the body." Thanne somme asked him how longe it was syn he was a wyse man. He aunsuerd and seide: "Sythen that tyme that I began to dyspreye my lyffe." Thanne he herde a man that rehersed leesynges and wordes that were impossible, to whome he seide: "Yif anothir tolde thee thes wordes that thou seyste, thou woldest nat beleve him, wherfore thou shuldest holde thi peas and thenke that men beleve nat thee." And Arystophanus seith: The victorye of worde
 255 is no victorye, but the verrey victorye is in dedes." And Anaxagoras seith: "The wyse man dredeth not the dethe, for wysedome governeth his undirstandinge,

220 *vyage*, journey. **233–34** *eten of the peacocke for lokynge*, eaten by the peacock for looking; **fedres**, feathers. **235** *werre*, war. **236** *meynee*, retinue. **239** *reede*, read. **242** *attemperaunce*, temperance; *her*, their. **243** *fautes*, faults. **248** *here*, their. **251** *syn*, since; *Sythen*, Since. **252** *leesynges*, lies. **254** *peas*, peace. **256** *verrey*, true.

his tung is voyce of trouthe, his herte is good wille, pytee and mercy bene his frendes, his feete bene the seechers of wysemen, his lordship is justice, his regne is mesure, his swerde is grace, his speere is peas, his arowe is salvacion, his knyght-hode is the counsell of wysemen, his arraye is streyngthe, his thresoure is disciplyne, the companye of goode is his love, and alle his desire is for to flee synne and to sewe and love God." And another wyse man seide that he hadde gone abouthe the barrage of a good towne, that is to seye, for to gadre a newe subseyde whiche the lorde of the towne had sette. Thanne oon seide unto him: "Arte thu nat wrothe with that thu haste done?" To whome the wyse man aunsuerd: "It is even soo with me lyke as I hadde dreemed it." And seithe: "The frendes ben of noble affeccion, wherfore a man shulde kepe hem wele and geete oon aftir another, lyke a colver that is pryvee draweth straunge doves to him and maketh hem pryvee." And a kynge asked of a wyse man who he wolde thenke shulde be a juge. He aunsuerd and seide: "That man that is nat meoved by flaterers, nor he that wole nat be overcomen with geftys, and he that is nat deceyved by faute of dyscrecione." And another seithe: "Sclaunderers bene worse thanne theefes, for theefes steele not but goodes, and sclaunderers taken and steelen aweye the worship of a man." And another seithe: "Worship geven to a man withoute cause, in the ende it shal be turned into shame." And another seith: "It were better to dwelle with a serpente thanne with an evel womman." And seithe: "Oon oughte to doughte the subtilitees and the engynes of his enemye yf he be wyse; and yf he be a foole, his cursydnesse." And another seithe: "The moste liberal man of the worlde is he that taketh for a grete thing the goodnesse that oon dothe him, and for litil the goodnesse that he himself dothe to othir men; and also he that holdes him contente with that he hathe, be he ryche or poure." And seithe: "The moste nygarde of the worlde is he that asketh over beesily a thinge aftir that that he is seide pleynly naye to and utterly refused." And another seithe: "Envye destroioeth the worlde, and weres it as the fyle dothe the yren." And another seithe: "Lyke as a man maye nat wryte in a letter that is wreten inne before onlasse thanne the writynge be defaced before, in the same wyse a man maye not putte the vertues and the noblesses in a body onlasse thanne the vices and the ordeures bene voyded oute therof." And another seithe: "Lyke as a man maye nat see allatoones with his yghe bothe the heven and the erthe, in lyke wyse a man maye not applye his witte bothe atoones to vertues and to vyses." And seith: "The verey true and stable love is whanne the frendes bene of lyke condycioun, for yf thei have divers and contrarye condycions, with grete peyne the love shal endure." And seithe: "The people aughte for to obbeye and doute the kinge and for to love him and dreede him." And somme asked him what tyme a mannes witte was parfyte. He aunsuerd and seide: "Whanne he speketh nothinge but allewey wele to the poynte." And another seithe: "The envious man hateth the liberal man, and the covetouse man is wrothe with that

259 **seechers**, seekers. 263 **sewe**, pursue. 264 **subseyde**, subsidy. 267 **dreemed**, dreamed. 268 **geete**, get; **colver**, dove. 269 **pryvee**, concealed. 272 **geftys**, gifts; **faute**, fault; **dyscrecione**, discretion. 273 **Sclaunderers**, Slanderers; **theefes**, thieves. 277 **doughte**, fear. 278 **engynes**, schemes. 282 **nygarde**, greedy. 283 **over beesily**, too forcefully. 284 **weres**, wears. 286 **onlasse**, unless. 289 **allatoones**, all at once; **yghe**, eye. 290 **atoones**, at once. 291 **vereys**, valid. 293 **aughte**, ought. 295 **parfyte**, perfect (pure).

that other men spenden." And another seithe: "Wynnynge may nat be with justifiacion, ne helthe with glotonye, frendeship with deceyvenge, justice with necesitee, noblesse with dysciplyne, love with prude, reste of herte with envye, wyse-dame and dyscreciooun with vengeaunce, nor processe withoute counsell." And another seithe: "Loke thu put not thi truste in a foole nother for love ne for neigheburhed that thu haste in him, for it were as good have the neigheburhed of an hous that is sette on fyre." And seithe: "He is right a grete enemye whos dedes bene felle and bitter, and his wordes sweete and curteys." And another seithe: "The wyse man dureth while the worlde dureth, and aftir his dethe | his ymage shal endure in the hertes of the people." And another seithe: "Ho that consydereth the ende of thinges, it helpeth him meche for to werche wele." And another seithe: "Thu shuldest love whedir thu be loved or not." And another seithe: "The foole wenyth alwey that God hathe employed nothinge wele but that He hathe geven unto him, and he weneth also that he coude have made the worlde bettir thanne God, though so be that he can nat wele governe his own persone." And another seithe: "Loke ye geve and do wele to the poure and needy people, for in so doyng, ye shal serve and please God." And another seithe: "It is bettir for a man to holde his peas thanne to contrarye and argue with a foole. And it is bettir to have the enemytee of an evel man thanne his frendeship. And it is bettir to have a sharpe lyfe in doyng wele thanne to have a plesaunte lyfe in doyng evel. And it is bettir to be withoute renoune thanne for to have it evel. And povertee is bettir thanne the ricchesse of caytefes. And it is bettir be poure withoute vices thanne ryche to be worshipped by synnes." And another seithe: "It is better a man knowe nat a kinge that is nat juste thanne to be his secretarie or nexste aboute him." And another seithe: "Yf thou geve any man for to be wele named therby oonely, it is no liberalté, for thou doste nat but for thi profyte." And another seithe: "Ho that pleyeth ungodely pleyes, it is a signe of pride and it shal gladly ende in angre." And another seithe: "He ne ys to be allowed in his levyng that taketh nat this daye as good or better as that that is passed." And another seithe: "Thu mayste nat have that thu desierest, but yf thou susteyne firste that thing that thu woldest nat have." And seithe: "The men shull be in thyne handes as longe as thei maye truste in thee." And somme asked of a wyse man why he wolde have no sones. He aunsuerd and seide: "For I have hadde ynough adoo to chastise my body, and to redresse my soulle, though I hadde none other to redresse and teche." And thei asked him ho it was that repented him moste in this worlde. He aunsuerd and seide: "The wyse man at the houre of his dethe that hath nat wrought aftir his wisdome, and that man also that hathe done wele to a nygarde." And thei asked him what thinge encresed the lawe. He aunsuerd and seide: "Trouthe." And thanne thei asked him what thynge sustened trouthe, he aunsuerd and seide: "Witte." And thanne: | "Ho governeth witte?" He seide: "The kepynge of a mannes tunge." "Ho kepeth the tunge?" "Pacience." "Ho maketh for to have pacience?" "The drede of God." "And what maketh a man to drede God?" "Spekinge of the dethe, and to knowe his freelté." And another

306 **dureth**, endures. 308 **werche**, work. 309 **wenyth**, believes. 314 **peas**, peace. 315 **enemytee**, enmity. 318 **renoune**, renown. 319 **caytefes**, churls. 325 **levyng**, living. 326 **desierest**, desire. 334 **nygarde**, niggard; **encresed**, increased. 335 **sustened**, sustained. 339 **freelté**, frailty.

340 seithe: "Superfluytee maketh the body seeke, the wyne troubleth the witte, wrathe is contrarye to sapience, but attemperaunce comforteth the herte; it putteth awey hevynesse and sendeth heele." And seithe: "Though so be that the wyse man be of lowe lynage, yet is he noble; yf he be a straungier, he is worshipped; yf he be poure, yet men have neede to him." And another seithe: "He that endureth nothinge in his youthe shal nat be in rest whanne he is aged." And another seithe: "The errore of a foole wexeth lesse by oftentimes thenkinge theron." And another seithe: "The tunge of a discrete man is in his herte, and the herte of a fool is in his tunge." And another seithe: "A man shulde contynuelly enquere and understande what men seyne of him, wherinne thei preyse him and wherinne thei blame him. Yf thei preyse him in his deedes, loke he use hem and do hem alweye; and yf thei blame him, kepe him wele that he falle no more in hem, withoute hatyng of hem that dispreysed his dedes." And seithe: "He is holden for the beste that meketh himself in his highnesse, and in his grete estate dispreyseth the worlde and is wele attempred whanne he is in his grete myghte." And thei desired of a wyse man to telle hem what was the defference betwene this worlde and the tother. He aunsuerde and seide: "This worlde is a dreeme and the tother is a thynge that is wakinge the mydde of the dethe, and we bene the vanytees and the dreemes of this worlde." And another seithe: "Natwithstondynge thy nature, accustome thiself alleweyes in suche condycions as bene lowable." And another seithe: "In afflyccyons, in grete beerdes, in longe heeres, is nat the servyce of God, but it is oonly to kepe himself from vices and to applye his werkes in goode vertues." And another seithe: "To speke wele is bettir thanne to holde peas wele." And another seithe: "I was accompanied with ryche men and I sawe here clothinge and here araye and other bettir thinges thanne myne were, wherof I hadde so grete envy and malencolye that I myghte have no reste; thanne I fellashipped me with poure men and thanne was I in rest." And another seithe: "Lyke as a feoble sighte maye not see in his propre fygure, in lyke wyse the soule that is not clene | maye not perceyve clearly the verrey goodnesse." And another seithe: "Lyke as the children that bene in the modre wombe entre into the worlde with peyne and sorowe, and aftirwarde bene joyefull whanne thei wexe grete and have felte the swetnesse and delyces of this worlde, in lyke wyse the men sorowen at here dethe and aftirwarde gone to a betir worlde where thei bene gretely enjoyed." And another seithe: "Lyke as the goodnesse of wyse men is allewey amendynge, in lyke wyse gone the malyces of a foole in empeyerynge." And another seithe: "Yf thu correcte a wyse man, he wole cone thee thanke, and yf thu teche a foole, he wole dyspreyse thee." And another seithe: "He is a frende that in thy neede abandoneth himself and his goodes at thy pleasure." And another seithe: "The governour of a wyse man is pacience, and pride governeth a foole." And another seithe: "That man is slowe in his besynesse that comounly is envyous of other mennes besynesses." And another seithe: "It is good

340 **Superfluytee**, Superfluity; **seeke**, sick. 341 **attemperaunce**, temperance. 342 **heele**, health. 346 **wexeth**, becomes. 352–53 **meketh himself**, makes himself meek. 353–54 **wele attempred**, temperate. 355 **tother**, other. 359 **lowable**, praiseworthy. 360 **beerdes**, beards; **heeres**, hairs. 362 **peas**, peace. 363 **here**, their. 364 **malencolye**, melancholy. 366 **his**, its. 368 **verrey**, true. 370 **wexe**, grow; **delyces**, delights. 371 **here**, their. 374 **empeyerynge**, impairing; **cone**, give. 375 **teche**, instruct. 378 **besynesse**, business.

380 for a man to enquer twyes of a thinge, for the firste enquiryre is trouthe and the secunde is dyscrecioun." And anotheris seith: "Trouthe is a messangier of God, wherfore a man oughte gretely to worship it for the love of his maister." And anotheris seith: "Ho that encreseth and multiplyeth his temporell goodes, he shal amyneuse the spirituell goodes." And anotheris seith: "Thei that dreeden and beleeven in God stedefastely have no delectacioun but oonely in Him and in His werkes." And anotheris seith: "The moste true werkes bene thei by the whiche men obbeye the pleasures of God; and the werkes of the body joyned with the werkes of the herte bene more true thanne the werkes of the herte oonely." And anotheris seith: "The evel men bene wors thanne deede careynes, veny whole, leouns, or serpentes; and in lyke wyse there is nothinge better upon the erthe thanne the goode creature, and in the same wyse there is nothinge worse thanne the evel creature." And seith: "He that areyseth himself in a gretter estate thanne longeth unto him dothe grete peyne to have the wordes of envyous folkes." And anotheris seith: "He that wole have reste in his lyfe muste kepe him from foure manere thinges: the firste is that he make no sorowe though a man lefe that he wolde were dede; the secunde is yf any man deye whiche he wolde have for to lefe; the thirde is though he may nat have that he coveyteth; the fourthe is though he see fortune areyse another man of a lower degree thanne he is himself." | And seith: "That thinge that maye moste kepe a man oute of alle empechementes is for to be litil conversaunte amonge the people." And anotheris seith: "The evel kinge is lyke a careyne that maketh alle the erthe abouthe him for to stynke." And anotheris seith: "The wyse men bene not contente of the profyte that falleth oonely to hem, but in lyke wyse of the profyte that falleth to othir men. And the fooles empeche not onely hemself, but thei travaile allewayes for to empeche othir men." And anotheris seith: "A foole for a litil wynnynge dysposeth himself lightly to the weyes of fortune." And seith: "Thu mayste nat be so wele arrayed in any wyse as with trouthe." And another seith: "A man that absteyneth himself from angre and covetyse, it is a vayleable thinge in this worlde and in the tother." And seith: "He that geveth good counsell and aftirwarde shewith himself of good dyscrecioun ought to be holden for wyse." And anotheris seith: "Loke thu leve nat for to do wele though so be that thi goode dedes be not knownen, for the good deede is so good in itself that it shal worthe goode ynough to thee." And seith: "A man of good dyscrecioun shulde nat put himself in excercise of thinges that bene impossible, ne make his dyspenses gretter thanne his wynnynge, ne promyse more thanne he maye paye." And anotheris seith: "A man maye nat have but povretee and laboure in his lyfe, for yf he eete not he shal deye anone. And yf he eete any more thanne him oughte, it wyl greeve him and he shal nat sleepe wele. And yf he eete to outeragously, he shal be seeke. And yf he eete to litel, he shal deye for hunger, wherfore it is an harde thinge and a straunge to be longe in suretee." And anotheris seith: "Loke thu truste nat in him that forswereith him by his feithe for any worldly thinges." And anotheris seith:

380 *enquer*, inquire. **384** *amyneuse*, lessen; **dreeden**, dread. **389** *deede careynes*, dead carions. **392** *areyseth*, raises. **395** *lefe*, [would] rather; **dede**, dead. **399** *empechementes*, impeachments (accusations). **403** *empeche*, impeach (accuse). **407** *vayleable*, valuable. **410** *leve*, leave. **411** *dedes*, deeds. **413** *dypsenses*, expenditures. **415** *eete*, eats. **416** *anone*, anon. **417** *to*, too; **seeke**, sick. **420** *forswereth*, perjure.

“Idelnesse engendereth ignoraunce, and ignoraunce erroure.” And anotheris seith: “Thu shalte fynde overall coverynge, vytaile, and places for to abyde inne, but and so be that these thinges that bene necessarye to thee suffyse thee not, thu shalte be boonde to covetyse.” And anotheris seith: “In longe sleepynge is no profyte, but grete hurte in the contynuaunce; and he shulde keepe him that he use not halfe his lyfe in ydelnesse.” And anotheris seith: “The goode soule wole have no grete reste in this worlde here.” And anotheris seith: “Kepe thee frome fellaship of a lyere in alle besynesses, be thei grete or smale.” And anotheris seith: “Ho that loveth thee for vanytees and worldly thinges, he wole hate thee for the same thinges. But he that loveth thee for the perpetuell goodes shal alleweyes be encresed | in thi love.” And anotheris seith: “Governe thee so wele that thu mayste kepe thee frome evelly doynges, and thanne suffyse thee with the goode dedes that thu mayste do aftir.” And anotheris seith: “Ho that wole knowe wheder his soule be clene or foulle, lete him consydre his delectacioun. And yf he delyte him in profitable thinges and withoute ende, his soule is noble and worthy. And yf so be that he sette his delectacioun in foulle thinges that bene transytorye and unprofyttable, his soule is foulle, for everythynge rejoysseth with his sembleable.” And anotheris seith: “He is blessed that gothe the righte waye, for he shal the sonner fynde the ende of the weye that he gothe to; and he that gothe oute of his weye, the more he gothe the further he is from his weyes ende.” And somme asked of a wyse man what was parfyte folye. He aunsuerd and seide: “He that weneth to come to goode estate by evelly werkes, to love falschede and hate trouthe.” And somme asked him what was the ende of folye. He aunsuerd and seide: “To love ricchesses and truste every man to moche.” And thei asked him what is the sygne of litol syght and litol knoweleche. He aunsuerd and seide: “To truste in him that hathe deceyved men before tyme.” And suffyse thee of the translacioun of morall seyengis of phylsophye.

Here endeth the booke of morall seyenges of phylsophres, translated oute of Frenshe into Englysshe.

422 **vytaile**, food. 427 **lyere**, liar. 436 **transytorye**, transitory. 437 **his sembleable**, its likeness. 438 **sonner**, sooner. 440–41 **parfyte**, pure. 441 **weneth**, believes.



EXPLANATORY NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS: **B** = *Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*, ed. Bühler (1941); **CA** = Gower's *Confessio Amantis*; **CT** = Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*; **G** = Pierpont Morgan Library MS G.66; **MED** = *Middle English Dictionary*; **OED** = *Oxford English Dictionary*; **S** = Scrope, *Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers*, ed. Schofield (1936).

These explanatory notes cannot hope to provide a complete accounting for the source of every proverbial statement in *Dicts and Sayings*. That task would be a separate book in its own right. Instead, I have attempted to contextualize this rather heterogeneous body of lore by identifying the people and places named in the text, as well as noting points that may be of interest to students and general readers. Those interested in tracing the source of particular quotations should begin by consulting Whiting's *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings Mainly before 1500*. Readers are also invited to consult the thorough notes to Knust's *Bocados de Oro*, the Spanish translation of the original Arabic ancestor of *Dicts and Sayings*.

1. ZEDECHYE

- 1 *Zedechye.* Schofield posits that Zedechye is either the Egyptian deity Set (the evil god of trickery, murderer of his brother Osiris) or Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve after Cain and Abel (S, p. 206n2). Either is possible, given that the text draws on both ancient Egyptian and Judeo-Christian-Islamic mythologies, though Seth's peaceable wisdom seems more in keeping with the ethos of Zedechye's philosophy.
- 5–7 *to obeye to kinges and princes that God hath sette on erthe for to governe and reule and have puissance over the people.* As I discussed in the Introduction, medieval wisdom literature tends to endorse a conservative political ideology, one that encourages—or often demands—respect for authority and obedience to the laws of God and temporal rulers. For the best studies of this phenomenon, see the work of Louis, especially “Authority,” and “Proverbs and the Politics.”
- 16 *And seith.* “And [Zedechye] says.” This rhetorical formula of dropping the subject (proseopesis) is characteristic throughout *Dicts and Sayings*. Usually the subject will appear in the first saying (e.g., “the same Hermes seith” [Hermes, line 23]), after which we get the formula “And seith” as a header (lines 24, 32, etc.). Compare “Pyctagoras seide” (Pythagoras, line 1), then “And seide” (line 12), “and seith”

- (lines 15, 16, 17 [twice], 20, 21, 22, etc). The “And(e)” is written with a large capital that serves as a marker to help the reader to locate individual sayings.
- 80–82 *A man shulde nat juge another by his wordis, but by his deedis, for wordes bene commounly veyne, but the dedis maken knowe the hurtis and the profitis.* See also Pythagoras, lines 72–73; Loginon, lines 104–05; and The Last Philosophers, lines 304–05. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W642.

2. HERMES

- 1–2 *Hermes was borne in Egipte, and is as moche to seye in Greke as Mercury, and in Ebrew as Enoch.* The conflation of Hermes, here meaning both the Greco-Roman deity and the Egyptian philosopher Hermes Trismegistus, with Enoch goes back at least as far as the fifth century AD, when the Byzantine historian Zosimus used their names interchangeably (see Pearson, “Enoch in Egypt,” p. 220). The path by which these three figures — an Egyptian philosopher named Hermes, the mythological messenger of the gods known to the Romans (not, as is said here, to the Greeks) as Mercury, and the biblical descendant of Adam from Genesis 5:18–24 (where Enoch’s death is not reported, only that he “walked with God”) — came to be considered references to the same individual is a complex one that begins perhaps as early as the fifth century BC, when the Greek historian Herodotus (b. 484 BC) regularly translates references to the Egyptian Thoth — the scribe of the gods, inventor of the art of writing, and reportedly himself the author of the Book of the Dead — with the name Hermes (e.g., Herodotus 2.67, where the city of Thoth is termed “Hermes polis”; compare also 2.138). This correspondence inevitably led to confusion between this Egyptian Hermes and the Greek Hermes (i.e., Roman Mercury), so one of Thoth’s epithets, “very great,” was attached to Egyptian Hermes’ name: thus Hermes Trismegistus (“Hermes the very great-great” or “Hermes the thrice-greatest”). In medieval tradition, Hermes Trismegistus was believed to have been a powerful wizard and alchemist, as well as the author of the so-called Hermetic writings, a collection of metaphysical treatises (dating no earlier than the first century AD) that integrate Greek and Near Eastern philosophical ideals. Since Thoth was said to be the inventor of writing, and the accumulated legends about Hermes Trismegistus included some talk about how he did not die but instead went straight to paradise, this Egyptian Hermes figure was in turn eventually associated with Enoch (on whose place in paradise and connection with the invention of writing see, e.g., *Cursor Mundi*, lines 1467–72). In the *Dicks*-tradition this confusion goes back at least as far as the Spanish version, *Bocados de Oro* (ed. Knust, p. 88). Thus, despite the epithet of Trismegistus given to the one, the Egyptian Hermes and Greek Hermes became deeply entangled in the minds of later writers — so much so that biblical Enoch could be, as here, further associated with Roman Mercury via the intermediary equation of each with the name Hermes.
- 8 *connynge of sterres.* Hermes is here credited with establishing the science of astronomy, but see the notes to Pythagoras, line 1, and The Last Philosophers, line 103, for two genuine pioneers in this field.

- 15 *commaunded that men shulde ete fleshe of porke.* We would expect the phrase to be “shulde not ete,” since consuming pork would have violated the dietary restrictions of both Islam (the culture in which *Dicts and Sayings* was originally composed) and Judaism (the early lines of the Hermes section read like a catalog of Jewish practices, most likely because of the association of Hermes with Enoch). This “not” may have been removed accidentally or deliberately by later Christian translators.
- 24 ff. Bühler advises readers to compare Hermes’ proverbs to those found in Dunbar’s *Hermes the Philosopher* (*Dicts and Sayings* p. 324). This poem (*Poems of William Dunbar*, ed. Small, pp. 108–09) includes a number of maxims that would not be out of place in *Dicts and Sayings* (e.g., “Follow on petie, fle truble and debait” [line 17]), but overall Dunbar offers advice that is far more amiable (e.g., the refrain: “Without glaidness availis no tresure”) than what we find in this section of *Dicts and Sayings*. In early editions of Dunbar the poem is called *Hermes the Philosopher* because its opening couplet (“Be mirry and glaid, honest and vertewous, / Ffor that suffisis to anger the invyous,” ed. Small, p. 108) is attributed to Hermes Trismegistus. Modern editors, however, do not consider this couplet to be part of the poem, and therefore the poem now has lost its association with Hermes. In his edition of Dunbar’s works, Conlee entitles the poem *Without Gladness No Treasure Avails*, after the refrain. See also the note to line 180, below.
- 27–28 *lete no man do to his felawe othirwise thanne he wolde that shulde be done to him.* The first of many proverbial expressions derived from the Golden Rule (“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”), most famously expressed in Matthew 7:12: “All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you also to them. For this is the law and the prophets.” Compare lines 212–14. See Whiting D274.
- 63–65 *Bethe all oone withinne and withoute, and or that ye speke, loke that ye speke in suchwise that youre language be nat contrary to the wille of your herte.* For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W631.
- 66 *Make you lowely and obbeye youre lawes and youre princes.* See the explanatory note for Zedechye, lines 5–7.
- 177–78 *Men maye knowe the foole by his wordis and the wiseman by his dedis.* For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W578.
- 180 *Beth gladde and mery, and that sufficeth to angre the envious man.* This statement is attributed to Hermes in William Baldwin’s *Treatise of Morall Philosophy*, and for a time was believed to be the opening couplet of a Dunbar poem. See the note to lines 24 ff., above.
- 223 *Kinge Amon.* Ammon, or Amon-Ra, was the supreme god in classical Egyptian mythology. In the Hermetic tradition he appears as a legendary king who receives Hermes’ teachings on good kingship.
- 258 *the grete alquemie.* Alchemy is a running theme throughout the Hermes section, and with good reason, since Hermes Trismegistus was seen as the father of alchemy. The “alchemy” referred to here is farming — not the simple planting

- practices of ancient peoples, but the practical science of agriculture that began to develop in the Middle Ages. Understanding agriculture as a kind of “alchemy” continued into early modern times with the rise of farmers’ almanacs.
- 262 ff. *a commowne wele.* Hermes moves from the “alchemy” of farming to another kind of practical lore: the organization of society. The philosopher argues that when each man works according to his “discrecioun, condicioun, and science [intelligence],” it is beneficial to himself and to society as a whole.
- 267 ff. *to punnysshe the evell doers.* Hermes gives a precise punishment that symbolically fits each crime: the traitor is decapitated, the thief has a hand cut off, the sodomite is burned alive, etc. In all cases there is the powerful spectacle of *public* punishment, so that the people may learn from these examples and then “reste in excercise of trouthe” (line 275).
- 275 ff. *visite the prisoners oones in a moneth and delyver hem that owt to be deliverd.* Hermes advocates evenhanded justice; those who deserve punishment must be punished thoroughly, but those who have paid the penalty should be eligible for “parole.” Moreover, it is the king’s responsibility to seek out the counsel of wise men (a penal review board, so to speak) to assist him in making fair judgments about each case. Returning to the theme of alchemy (see the note to line 258), we might consider Hermes’ advice in this passage to be a kind of “alchemy of justice.”
- 291 *alle thingis perisshen saulf goode dedis.* Hermes stresses the practical value of good deeds (see especially lines 283 ff.). Compare to the morality play *Everyman*, where the allegorical character “Good Deeds” is the only one whom *Everyman* can bring with him to the grave.
- 295–96 *Putte nat an evel doer to execucioun to hastily, but that he have some leyser to repente him.* Hermes argues that the purpose of punishment is not only retributive, but also rehabilitative, in that a criminal should have the opportunity to reform his ways. This “alchemy of reform” (see the note to line 258), however, applies also to the state: if the government acts with care and prudence, it can be sure that it is dispensing justice and not simply vengeance.
- 299–300 *Whanne that a kinge maye nat refreyne his voluntary wille and his coveytises, howe maye he reprove his servauntis?* The king must be an example to all, for if the head of the body politic goes astray, so too will the limbs. The Hermes section of *Dicts and Sayings* is in the tradition of medieval texts that offer advice to princes, and in such a narrative one of the most important virtues that a leader must cultivate is restraint in his words and deeds (the French word *mesure* is often used in chivalric tales). A king who is ruled by excessive willfulness finds himself in danger of losing his realm. See also the note to Diogenes, line 17.
- 302–03 *Thanne it is conveniente to a kinge firste to be maistir over himself and aftirwarde in due ordre over alle othir.* Hermes begins to conclude his section by emphasizing that self-understanding is the key to good kingship.
- 304 *a kinge ought nat to be fulle of suspensioun.* The philosopher’s final point is crucial: just as good kingship and self-understanding are intimately linked, both are also readily destroyed by suspicion.

3. ZAC

- 1 *Zac.* Zac, or “Tac,” is probably the Egyptian god Thoth (S, p. 207n16). See the explanatory note for *Hermes*, line 1. This brief section seems to be a coda to the *Hermes* chapter, for Zac too deals mainly with the issue of good kingship.
- 7–9 These lines endorse generosity, one of the most important virtues a king could possess. Treasure was the lifeblood of medieval heroic culture; a good lord amassed wealth so that he could distribute it to his followers as a reward for their loyalty and military service. We see this ethos at work in the so-called *comitatus* (‘fellowship’) of Anglo-Saxon literature, where the members of the war band demonstrate their deep fraternal love through the symbolic exchange of treasure (see in particular *Beowulf*, *The Battle of Maldon*, and *The Fight at Finnsburg*). The bad king in Anglo-Saxon literature is one like *Beowulf*’s Heremod, who hoards his wealth and thereby prevents it from being circulated.
- 11 ff. That is, the king is the head of the body politic. If he makes good decisions by appointing and supporting wise and virtuous counselors, the kingdom will prosper; if, however, he supports the *noughty* people, the social hierarchy will break down and he will be faced with anarchy.
- 17–18 *And seith that a prince shulde nat lerne alle thingis.* Interestingly, Zac does not specify what a king should *not* know. Perhaps what the philosopher means is that a ruler should not be told of the more nefarious tasks his henchmen are undertaking so that the king himself can maintain what we would today call “plausible deniability.”

4. ZALQUAQUINE

- 1 *Zalquaquine.* Schofield identifies Zalquaquine with Aesculapius, son of Apollo and tutored by the centaur Chiron (S, p. 207n17). In the Homeric tradition he is a great physician slain by Zeus, who fears that man would become immortal under Aesculapius’ care. By Roman times Aesculapius was revered as a deity himself.

5. HOMER

- 1 *Omer.* His true identity has been lost to history, but tradition indicates that he was the blind poet who composed the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in the eighth or ninth century BC. He did not, however, “write” these poems in the conventional sense; the Homeric epics are the products of oral formulaic composition and were passed down orally for many years before they assumed their current written form. For the pioneering work on oral formulaic poetry, see Lord, *Singer of Tales*. In the Middle Ages, however, Homer’s tales were known mainly through Latin paraphrases and retellings. The most common were the alleged eyewitness accounts of Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis, whose (probably fictitious) testimony exists in Latin prose narratives dating to the fourth or fifth century AD. These texts provided the ultimate source material for virtually all medieval

accounts of the Trojan War. See Frazer, *Trojan War*. Another important source for Homeric material in the Middle Ages was the *Achilleid*, an unfinished epic poem of Publius Papinius Statius (c. AD 45–96).

vercifiour. This sounds like more of a renaissance word than a medieval one, but an early form of “versifier” was in use in England as early as 1340 (*OED*).

2

and was aftir Moyses five hundred and thre shoure yer. In encyclopedic works like *Dicts and Sayings*, an event or a person’s life is often dated in relation to major biblical episodes. This practice is pervasive in the historical narrative of Higden’s *Polychronicon*, for instance, but perhaps the most famous medieval example is Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of Britain*, which contextualizes the deeds of Brutus and the other legendary kings by explaining to the reader what else was going on in the world at that time. The following passage from Geoffrey illustrates this tradition well, and also happens to include a reference to Homer himself:

Gwendolen reigned for fifteen years after the death of Locrinus, who had himself reigned ten years. As soon as she realized that her son Maddan had grown to man’s estate, she passed the sceptre of the realm to him, being content herself with the province of Cornwall for the remainder of her life.

At that time the prophet Samuel was reigning in Judea, Aeneas Silvius was still alive and Homer was considered to be a famous rhetorician and poet.
(Trans. Thorpe, p. 78)

Higden (through his anonymous English translator) notes that there is confusion about when Homer lived: “somme men say that he was in the c. yere, other in the cxliⁱⁱ yere, and mony men in the clxxx., after the takenge of Troye. And mony men suppose that Omerus was a fore the takenge of Troye” (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 2, p. 441).

4

The whiche Omer was taken and soldē lyke a bonde man. I have been unable to track down the origins of the tradition of Homer as a slave.

39–40

Kepe thee from vices and covetyses, for and thu be covetous, thu shalt be poure. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting C494.

6. SOLON

1

Zalon. This is Solon (c. 630–c. 560 BC), an Athenian statesman renowned for his wisdom. Something of a progressive, he instituted reforms that made Athenian government more equitable, and introduced a law code more moderate than that of his predecessor Draco, whose name survives in our modern adjective “draconian” (overly harsh).

Zalon establysshed the lawe in Athenes. Compare this nearly identical passage by Higden’s anonymous English translator: “Salon . . . 3afe lawes to men of Athenes” (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 3, p. 97).

4

he shulde flee from his owen propre wille. The need for man to restrain his “unruly will” was an issue that many medieval writers addressed. See the note to Diogenes, line 17, and the note to Hermes, lines 299–300.

- 12 *undir the swerde and under baner.* That is, symbols of military might.
- 19–22 Here Solon distinguishes between spiritual and material *thresour*. He notes that the treasure of the wise man (virtue and wisdom) is such that he never loses any by giving it away; material wealth, on the other hand, is an inferior *thresour*, for once it is given, it is gone.
- 33 *I wepe that that profiteth.* A cryptic statement. Perhaps it means that Solon laments that weeping is considered a “profitable” means of expressing grief, whereas presumably a wise man should accept death more stoically.

7. ZABYON

- 1 *Zabyon.* Schofield notes that in the Arabic version of *Dicts and Sayings*, this philosopher is named Zenon (S, p. 208n25). The most famous sage with this name is Zenon (or Zeno) of Citium (c. 344–c. 262 BC), the Greek philosopher, mathematician, and astronomer who studied with the Cynics and later was the founder of the Stoic movement. Given the chronological arrangement of the philosophers, however, Zeno of Citium, who lived after the likes of Socrates and Plato, probably would not appear so early in the text. More likely this is Zeno of Elea (c. 490–c. 430 BC), a member of the Eleatic School, whose members questioned everyday perceptions of reality.
- 16 *And seith that alle eveli is in dilectacion of money.* For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting E176.
- 24 *a yong man.* Although the speakers in *Dicts and Sayings* tend to offer most of their counsel to the powerful — as befits a text that owes much to the “Mirror for Princes” narratives that present advice to aristocrats — here Zabyon speaks at length to an ordinary young man. As I explain in the Introduction, works of medieval wisdom literature often adopt a narrative framework in which an older man addresses a younger man, usually in the context of a father giving advice to his son; see, for instance, *How the Goode Man Taght Hys Sone (Trials and Joys*, ed. Salisbury, pp. 233–45).

8. HIPPOCRATES

- 1 *Ipocras.* The Greek physician Hippocrates (c. 460–c. 377 BC), whoever this shadowy, quasi-historical figure may have been, is regarded as the father of medicine. His work (and that of his disciples, much of which was attributed to him) remained popular throughout the Middle Ages.
- Esculapius the secunde.* Although the chronology would be off considerably, I would tentatively identify this character with Asclepiades of Bithynia; see the explanatory note for Galen, line 4.
- 1–2 *Esculapius the firste.* The family of Hippocrates claimed descent from the mythological Aesculapius. See the explanatory note for Zalquaquine, line 1.

- 7 *the ile of Chau.* Cos, the island on which Hippocrates was born.
- 11 *Ancyas.* Possibly Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius (c. 475–525 AD), the Roman politician and Neoplatonic philosopher who wrote his great treatise *The Consolation of Philosophy* while awaiting execution for charges of treason against the city's Germanic overlord, Theodoric. Boethius remained a towering intellectual figure throughout the Middle Ages, and his work is arguably the major philosophical influence upon the writings of Geoffrey Chaucer.
- 14 *Bramaydes.* I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 20 *Platon.* See the explanatory note for Plato, line 1.
- 50 *Dasser.* This is most likely Darius II (d. 404 BC), who reigned during Hippocrates' life and increased Persia's influence in Greece during the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta.
- 51 *Pillate.* Here the king of the island of Cos, but otherwise unknown to me. The name and the narrative context (a ruler being asked to give up a man in his custody) suggest the author is invoking the biblical Pontius Pilate in this tale.
- 62 *Nabugodonusor.* Nebuchadnezzar (d. 562 BC), king of Babylonia, known as much for his warlike ways as for his construction of the famed Hanging Gardens of Babylon. The medieval traditions of Nebuchadnezzar, derived from the Book of Daniel, cast this ruler as an arrogant tyrant.
- 64 *Galyen.* See the explanatory note for Galen, line 1.
- 71 *the lyffe is shorte and the peyne is longe.* See Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, line 1: "The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne." This maxim is, in fact, attributed to Hippocrates, and is often quoted in Latin: *ars longa, vita brevis*.

9. PYTHAGORAS

- 1 *Pyctagoras.* Pythagoras (c. 580–c. 507 BC), the Greek mathematician. His work with mathematics led him to create a complete philosophical and religious system rooted in numbers. His followers maintained a secret society and obeyed the ascetic lifestyle and rigid moral code that their founder set forth. The Pythagoreans made a lasting impact on Greek thought, in that most subsequent philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle, were heavily influenced by this tradition. The impact of the Pythagoreans can be seen, for instance, in the geometric theories of Euclid (fl. 300 BC) and his disciples, and in the study of musical harmony — medieval tradition held that Pythagoras discovered the mathematical ratios behind harmonic intervals when he heard the sound of differently weighted hammers falling simultaneously upon a blacksmith's anvil. For another medieval account of Pythagoras' life and teachings, see Higden's version (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 3, pp. 188–212).
- 10–11 *the goodnesse of a frende shulde be knownen.* For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting G337.

- 11 *two hundred eighty volumes of bookis.* Today nothing is known of Pythagoras' actual writings. The Latin *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum* has the same number ("CCLXXX libros" [ed. Francheschini, p. 428]), while the earlier Spanish *Bocados de Oro* (with some variation among manuscripts) puts the number at 180: "ciento e ochenta libros" (ed. Knust, p. 133).
- 12 *Fanus.* Samos, the birthplace of Pythagoras.
- 13–15 *And seide also that oure creacion cometh of God; also, it is convenyente that oure soules retorno to Him.* Pythagoras sounds like a proto-Christian here. In reality, the philosopher and his followers believed in the transmigration of souls, the notion that souls reincarnate into different — and not necessarily human — bodies. Higden (through his anonymous English translator) puts it this way: "Pictagoras putte sawles after this deth corporealle to goe from body to body" (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 3, p. 197).
- 72–73 *Preve men by her werkis, and nat by her seyengis, for thu shalt fynde many that wole do evel and speke faire wordis.* See also Zedechye, lines 80–82; Loginon, lines 104–05; and The Last Philosophers, lines 304–05. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W642.
- 86–87 *the tyme for to holde his peas and the tyme for to speke.* Pythagoras appears to have read Ecclesiastes 3:7. See Whiting T315 for numerous literary appearances of the maxim.

10. DIOGENES

- 1 *Dyogenes.* The Athenian philosopher Diogenes (c. 412–c. 323 BC), who lived as a beggar, is today the best-known proponent of the Cynic school, which stressed the importance of rejecting desires for physical pleasure, material goods, etc., and living a life of virtue (their conception of the supreme good) and self-control. The Cynics proved to be the major influence upon the important later Stoic movement. For another medieval account of Diogenes' life and teachings, see Higden's version (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 3, pp. 306–20).
- Chyennynne.* The word "Cynic" is derived from the Greek *kunikos*, or 'doglike' (compare Latin *caninus*, 'of a dog; canine'), an epithet Diogenes and his fellows earned for their aggressive moralizing and their crude lifestyle. For a study of how the Cynic movement was viewed in postclassical Europe, see Matton, "Cynicism and Christianity," and Kinney, "Heirs of the Dog."
- 3 ff. *laye alwaies in a tunne.* Florence Kossoff notes that medieval and renaissance art and literature depict Diogenes as living in a barrel, but sources from the classical period show him living in a huge clay receptacle for wine (Greek *pithos*, Latin *dolium*). By the Middle Ages, though, wine was being stored in wooden barrels, so the image was transformed as the classical sources were translated into vernaculars. See Kossoff, "Parmigianino and Diogenes." Note also that Gower uses the very same word, "toune," in his version of this story (CA 3.1210).

- 13–14 *Alisaundir.* There is a long medieval tradition involving the repartee between Alexander, the great conqueror, and Diogenes, the impudent man living in a barrel. See especially Gower's amusing narrative of this story in the *Confessio Amantis* (3.1201–1313). See Cary, *Medieval Alexander*, pp. 275–76, for a chart detailing the many manifestations of this episode in medieval European writings. There are two distinct versions of the story. In the one found in *Dicts and Sayings* and the tradition based upon the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais (e.g., Higden's *Polychronicon*), there are only two speakers, Alexander and Diogenes; in Gower's version, which is perhaps drawn from the Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, Alexander first sends an anonymous knight to parley with the philosopher. See Itô, "Gower's 'Diogenes and Alexander.'"

- 17 *What have I to done with my servauntis servaunte?* In this version of the famous motif of "the servant of my servant," the vice that Diogenes exposes is covetousness, one that is often linked to the literary Alexander. Gower, however, uses this motif to illustrate another of Alexander's traditional faults: his dangerous willfulness. Gower places this exchange in Book 3 of the *Confessio*, which deals with the sin of wrath, and is intended to teach the lover to restrain his unruly will. His Diogenes states the "servant of my servant" anecdote as follows:

Will is my man and my servant,
And evere hath ben and evere schal.
And thi will is thi principal,
And hath the lordschipe of thi witt (3.1280–83).

With will as his master, Alexander has become corrupted by his pursuit of ephemeral worldly glories, a criticism that, to me, evokes the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* and that work's condemnation of King Arthur's excessive willfulness in his attempt to conquer all of Europe. For a study of the problem of Arthur's will, see Peck, "Willfulness and Wonders."

- 23–25 In *Dicts and Sayings*, this response replaces the customary reply, in which Diogenes tells Alexander to get out of his sunlight. For instance, the anonymous fifteenth-century translator of Higden's *Polychronicon* has Diogenes remark: "Y desire that þou wolde stonde owte of the sonne, and lette hyt not to schyne in to myne howse" (ed. Lumby, vol. 3, p. 309). In the *Confessio*, Gower puts it this way:

Thanne hove out of mi sonne,
And let it schyne into mi tonne;
For thou benymst me thilke gifte,
Which lith noght in thi miht to schifte.
Non other good of thee me nedeth (3.1307–11).

Diogenes has proven himself to be mightier than Alexander because there was nothing the king could give the philosopher and nothing he could take away from him. As Peck notes: "The king compulsively wages wars under the illusion of power in hope of conquering faraway lands; Diogenes enjoys the sun at home in his tub, a sun far beyond the emperor's grasp. The tale makes it clear that Diogenes, not Alexander, is the true king" (*Kingship and Common Profit in Gower's Confessio Amantis*, p. 87). This well-known anecdote can be traced back to the

Roman Stoic philosopher Seneca. See Cary, *Medieval Alexander*, pp. 275–76, for a chart listing other medieval versions of this exchange.

132–34 These lines contain a good example of the misogyny typical of medieval wisdom literature.

134 *woman is an harme that maye nat be eschewed.* For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W527.

146–47 Alexander’s portrayal in the Diogenes section is indicative of his characterization throughout *Dicts and Sayings*. In my lecture entitled “One of These Things Is Not like the Others,” I argued that the king’s many appearances in this work combine to show him evolving from an arrogant tyrant into a submissive pupil, an arrangement meant to promote one of the author’s central objectives for *Dicts and Sayings*, the encouragement of obedience to intellectual authority. The first few anecdotes involving Alexander and Diogenes, including those about the servant and the gift, showed a vain and imprudent Alexander humbled by wisdom. Their next few exchanges (e.g., lines 49–55, 90–96) centered on the philosopher’s teachings, in which the king himself was given no opportunity to respond, but simply received the wisdom of Diogenes. This final anecdote about obtaining the grace of God demonstrates that Alexander has learned from the philosopher. Diogenes needs no parable, lecture, or witty maxim, for the king is now fully receptive to his teachings. When we meet him again in Aristotle, however, we witness him having to acquire that wisdom all over again. The reason is that the text presents three separate Alexander narratives, all telling very different stories, but all with one idea in common — their depiction of Alexander as a character who is constantly *evolving*. Through his discussions with wise men or his observations and experiences in the world, Alexander evolves from a vain tyrant into a wise king, and a better man. Reminiscent of Jeffrey Jerome Cohen’s famous assertion that gender is never a static identity but rather a process of “becoming,” the author of *Dicts and Sayings* has depicted a kind of perpetual “Alexander-in-progress.” This portrait of Alexander is meant to serve as an example for the audience. We too are encouraged to undergo this process of submissively receiving the author’s wisdom, learning from it, and applying it to our conduct. This is part of the main purpose of *Dicts and Sayings*, and, indeed, is one of the few strong threads that bind together this otherwise heterogeneous text. Dutiful and docile, Alexander does what the author wants us all to do: accept and internalize the teachings that he has ascribed to Diogenes and the other wise speakers. Cameron Louis argues that in this type of literature, the characterizations of “submissive learner” and “wise speaker” function as “a rhetorical device to validate the truth of the words recorded” (“Authority,” p. 117). For the author of *Dicts and Sayings* there was no better way to demonstrate the supremacy of intellectual authority than to invoke a world-conqueror, only to have *him* be conquered, repeatedly, by a power far greater than his own.

11. SOCRATES

1 *Socrates.* Among the greatest in a long line of Athenian philosophers, Socrates (c. 470–399 BC) left no writings, so we know his teachings only from the work

of his disciples, primarily Plato. Socrates saw virtue and knowledge as one and the same, and emphasized self-analysis above all. He was forced to commit suicide after being charged with impiety and the corruption of the youth of Athens. Plato's dialogues *Crito* and *Phaedo* provide the ultimate source for the extended narrative of the philosopher's death, but since Plato was known to the Muslim world mainly through paraphrases and summaries (Marmura, "Medieval Islamic Philosophy," p. 22), the original author of *Dicts and Sayings* may have obtained this material from a secondhand source. For another medieval account of Socrates' life, death, and teachings, see Higden's version (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 3, pp. 270–94). Socrates was an important figure in medieval Islamic philosophical thought. Muslim scholars "monotheized" Socrates as readily as their Christian counterparts did (Alon, *Socrates in Mediaeval Arabic Literature*, p. 65), adapting his tenets to fit with Islamic theology. Taylor argues that

[Socrates] is consistently presented as maintaining an elaborate monotheistic theology, neo-Platonist in its details, and his condemnation and death are attributed to his upholding faith in one true God against the errors of idolaters. This allows him to be seen as a forerunner of Islamic sages (as he was seen in the West as a proto-Christian), and to be described in terms which assimilate him to figures venerated in Islam, including Abraham, Jesus, and even the Prophet himself. (*Socrates*, 86)

It would be a mistake, however, to say that the philosopher was fully "converted" to Islam. As Alon notes, "Socrates assumed in Arabic literature the stature of a moral rather than a strictly religious personality. His 'religiosity' was merely a vehicle for introducing him to a Muslim public, who were more susceptible to religious terms" (*Socrates in Mediaeval Arabic Literature*, p. 93).

1–5

The story of the henpecked Socrates and his shrewish wife Xanthippe was part of Greek folklore, and was told and retold throughout the Middle Ages. See, for instance, Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (3.639–730). Chaucer's retelling is quite memorable because it occurs as part of Jankyn's book of "wicked wives" in The Wife of Bath's Prologue:

No thyng forgat he the care and the wo
That Socrates hadde with his wyves two,
How Xantippa caste pissee upon his heed.
This sely man sat stille as he were deed;
He wiped his heed, namoore dorste he seyn,
But "Er that thonder stynte, comth a reyn!" (*CT III[D]727–32*).

Christine de Pizan (1365–c.1429), however, offers a very different conception of Xanthippe in her *Book of the City of Ladies* (2.21.1):

The noble lady Xanthippe possessed great learning and goodness, and because of these qualities she married Socrates, the greatest philosopher. Although he was already quite old and cared more about searching for knowledge and researching in books than obtaining soft and new things for his wife, the valiant lady nevertheless did not stop loving him but rather thought of the excellence of his learning, his outstanding virtue, and his constancy, which, in her sovereign love and reverence, she considered to be a sign of his excellence.

Upon learning that her husband had been condemned to death by the Athenians because he had attacked them for worshiping idols and had said that there was but one God, whom one must worship and serve, this brave lady could not bear it, but completely disheveled, overcome with grief and weeping, she quickly rushed to the palace where her husband was being held, and she found him among the deceitful judges who were administering to him the poison to end his life. Arriving just at the moment when Socrates was about to put the cup to his mouth to drink the poison, she rushed toward him and angrily tore the cup from his hands and poured it all out on the ground. Socrates reproved her for this and urged her to be patient and comforted her. As she could not prevent his death, she was very grieved and said, 'What a great wrong and what an enormous loss to put such a just man to death wrongfully and sinfully.' Socrates continued to console her, saying that it was better that he die wrongfully than justifiably, and so he died. But the grief in the heart of the woman who loved him did not abate for the rest of her life. (trans. Richards, pp. 130–31)

For a discussion of how Socrates' family life is depicted in the medieval Islamic tradition, see Alon, *Socrates in Mediaeval Arabic Literature*, pp. 52–56.

- 11 *Timee*. Timaeus, the Athenian wise man featured in Plato's dialogue of the same name.
- 21–25 Muslim scholars, like their Christian counterparts, saw Socrates' execution for impiety as a narrative with strong symbolic resonance for their own faith. Alon argues that for Islamic thinkers, the significance of this story "originates from the symbolism of his voluntary death, the good spirit with which he welcomed it and his firm belief in an after-life, all of these being beliefs also shared by various streams of Islam" (*Socrates in Mediaeval Arabic Literature*, p. 86). Muslims writers simply omitted any aspects of Socrates' story that did not fit well with Islamic religious principles, for they were evidently "reluctant to connect Socrates in any way with paganism" (p. 87). See Alon, *Socrates in Mediaeval Arabic Literature*, pp. 61–87, for a full discussion of how Socrates' trial and death are depicted in the medieval Islamic tradition.
- 25 *the kinge of the same cuntree*. Athens in Socrates' time was not, of course, a "kingdom." Here the author has reshaped the political landscape to something more familiar to the text's medieval readership
- 33 *Euclytes*. Crito, the friend of Socrates, who visited him in prison in an effort to help him escape the day before he was to be executed. See Plato's dialogue of the same name.
- 37 *go to Rome*. An anachronistic reference, given that in Socrates' day Rome was just one of many competing Mediterranean city-states and not yet the world power it would become in the ensuing centuries.
- 43–52 In Plato's dialogue *Phaedo*, which recounts Socrates' final hours, the philosopher accepts his unjust death readily and gracefully. Later Christian writers would see the parallels with Christ's death and often depicted Socrates as a kind of proto-Christian who dies for his unstinting belief in the true God.

- 63 *Simon*. Probably Simmias, one of the main speakers in Plato's *Phaedo*.
- 105–06 *thre ordres, that is to seye: in prestys, kinge, and people*. This statement reflects the foundation of medieval social theory, the Three Estates (an idea rooted in the Indo-European model of tripartite society): those who pray, those who fight, and those who work.
- 166–68 *This worlde is lyke an higheweye that is full of thistilles, for anone as a man entreth in amonge hem, thei wil pricke him; and yf a man knowe that weye, he wole leve it*. Compare to line 180, and see the note for that line.
- 180 *This worlde is but a passage unto anothir worlde*. Compare Egeus' speech in Chaucer's Knight's Tale: "This world nys but a thurghfare ful of wo, / And we been pilgrymes, passyng to and fro" (CT I[A]2847–48). See also Aristotle, line 98. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W663.
- 247–48 *Loke thu be in like wyse to thi fadir and thi modir as thu woldeste that thi children shulde be to thee*. A variation on the Golden Rule. See Whiting D274.
- 285 *zarab*. Latin *zaraph*, French *zaras*, probably meaning "mirage" (S, p. 209n43).
- 349–50 *A man maye knowe a foole by his moche language*. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting F401.
- 354–55 *A man hath power over his worde as longe as it is withinne him, and whanne it is onys spoken it is oute of his power*. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W605. Compare The Last Philosophers, lines 43–44.
- 386 *knowe youreself*. Much of the wisdom given for each of the philosophers is spuriously attributed, but "know thyself" remains the epitome of Socrates' doctrine of self-knowledge. Schofield notes that many other sayings in this section "show parallels to words of Socrates as given in Plato" (S, p. 209n38).
- 416–51 These lines contain perhaps the most severe and thoroughgoing misogynist rant in the entire work. Bühler notes that in a different English translation of *Dicts and Sayings*, "Earl Rivers omitted these lines and wrote: And the said Socrates had many seyinges ayenst women whiche is not translated" (p. 345). The gist of this rant is that women are accused of being inherently false; though they may seem beautiful or wholesome on the outside, on the inside they are wicked creatures whose only motivation is to lead men into carnal temptation.
- 437–38 *I likken thee to the fyre, for the more woode that a man putteth therto, the gretter is the heete*. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W560.
- 440 *adelpha*. "A fabulous tree" (MED). Schofield adds that Caxton identified this tree with the chestnut (S, p. 210n47).
- 475–76 *Do to other lyke as thu woldeste that thei shulde do to thee. And do but that that thu woldest were done to thee*. Another appearance of the Golden Rule. See Whiting D274.
- 497–98 *Loke thu fellowship nat with that man that knoweth nat himself*. See the note to line 387.
- 543–44 *the fyre of grene wode and moyste is more hootter thanne the tothir whanne it is weel sette afyre*. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W563.

- 558 *It apperteigneth to a wyse man that he knowe what his soule is.* This is a variation on “know thyself.” See the explanatory note for Socrates, line 387.

12. PLATO

- 1 *Platon.* The towering philosopher Plato (c. 428–c. 348 BC) was the student of Socrates, teacher of Aristotle, and founder of the Academy, a center of philosophical research. He presented his philosophies primarily in dialogue form, where Socrates is the major character and mouthpiece of his beliefs. For another medieval account of Plato’s life and teachings, see Higden’s version (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 3, pp. 340–58).
- 2 *Esculapius.* See the explanatory note for Zalquaquine, line 1.
- 5 *Zalon.* See the explanatory note for Solon, line 1. Plato was, in fact, descended from Solon on his mother’s side.
- 5 *Socrates.* See the explanatory note for Socrates, line 1.
- 7 *Pictagoras.* See the explanatory note for Pythagoras, line 1.
- 14 *sixty-one yere.* Though there is some manuscript variation, in the Spanish *Bocados de Oro* (the first translation of *Dicts and Sayings* from its original Arabic) Plato’s age at the time of his death is given as 41: “quarenta e un annos” (ed. Knust, p. 203). The Latin translation of *Bocados de Oro*, *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum*, has the same number as the English: “LXI annis” (ed. Francheschini, p. 462). Outside of the *Dicts and Sayings* tradition, Hugh of St. Victor claims in his *Didascalicon* (an encyclopedic pedagogical text written in Paris in the late 1120s) that “Plato died writing in his eighty-first year” (trans. Taylor, p. 98).
- 17 *Zenocrates.* Zenocrates of Chalcedon, one of Plato’s most distinguished students.
- 21 *Aristotle.* See the explanatory note for Aristotle, line 1.
- 21 *Thymeo.* Timaeus. See the explanatory note for Socrates, line 11.
- 83–85 *fifty-six bokes.* So also the number in the Latin *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum*: “LVI libros” (ed. Francheschini, p. 462). In the earlier Spanish *Bocados de Oro* (though there is some variation in the manuscripts) the number is 57: “cinquenta e siete libros” (ed. Knust, p. 204).
- 92–93 *It is mor covenable thinge to a kinge for to thenke upon himself and on the governaunce of his realme by the space of a daye thanne for to daunce an hool yere.* These lines seem to be a criticism of court indolence, but even if the author had no particular court in mind, this passage fits well with the general “Mirror for Princes” theme that is so prevalent in *Dicts and Sayings*.
- 92–93 *For by cause that I have mor oyle in my lampe thanne wyne in my cuppe.* This statement evokes Jesus’ parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1–12). In this tale, the five unwise virgins are denied entry into a wedding (symbolically, the kingdom of heaven) because they were unprepared and off seeking oil for their lamps when it came time to enter.

- 207–08 *Loke thu do nothinge whiche thu woldest dispreyse anothir yf he dede it.* Another variation on the Golden Rule. See Whiting D274.
- 329–31 *He is thi kinge that is of good and true renown in his lyfe, and of the whiche men remembre and speke wel of aftir his deth.* In the heroic tradition of classical and early medieval literature, a man would strive to win a glorious reputation that would endure after his death. In Homer's *Iliad*, for example, great champions like Achilles and Hector wager their lives to win *kleos aphthiton* ("imperishable fame"); additionally, during the funeral of Beowulf, the last of a litany of virtues describing the hero (and, indeed, the last word in the entire poem) is that he was *lofgeornost* ("most eager for fame").
- 375–77 *Witte is more honorable thanne wille, for wite hath stabbisshed the lorde of the tyme of the whiche wille wolde make thee servaunte.* For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W419. On the dangers of excessive willfulness, see also the notes to *Hermes*, lines 299–300, Solon, line 4, and *Diogenes*, line 17.
- 400 ff. *A man shulde loke ofte in a myrrour.* It was a common belief in the Middle Ages that physical appearance was associated with moral character. A man who was not handsome was already considered morally suspect, so he should not commit an evil deed and thus combine *two lewdnesses togedres* (line 403).
- 414–15 *Whanne a man taryeth to do his werkes til tyme come that he muste nedis do hem, he shal fynde himself oftentymes in grete nécessité.* This maxim remains good advice for modern-day students.
- 453–54 *in like wise as the white is sette in a butte to shewe the archier where he shal shete.* In archery, the "white" is the target, and the "butt" is the mound or erection upon which the target is set.
- 461 *ympe that is newe sette.* That is, a tree that has been grafted recently. Grafted trees were called "imp" trees.
- 471 *An evel lorde, an evel meyne.* The king as head of the body politic; as he goes, so go the masses. See the note to *Hermes*, lines 299–300.
- 512 *I have wonne none othir thing in connynge but that I knowe wele I am not wyse.* This saying echoes the wisdom of Socrates in Plato's *Apology*.

13. ARISTOTLE

- 1 Aristotle (384–322 BC) was one of the most influential philosophers in the history of Western civilization. His voluminous writings cover not just philosophy, but science, poetry, and virtually every subject imaginable. Aristotle began his career as a student at the Academy under Plato, and later was a tutor of Alexander the Great. For another medieval account of Aristotle's life and teachings, see Higden's version (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 3, pp. 358–72). When Chaucer speaks of "the philosopher" he means Aristotle, but perhaps the greatest literary tribute to Aristotle in English is Book 7 of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, on the education of the king. This part of the *Confessio* — as well as the Aristotle section

of *Dicts and Sayings* — is based upon *The Secret of Secrets*, an originally Arabic text that enjoyed widespread circulation in Europe. Spuriously attributed to Aristotle, *Secretum* (or *Secreta*) *Secretorum* (*The Secret of Secrets*), or *Sirr al-asrâr* as it was first known in Arabic, purports to be the philosopher's letter of advice to Alexander. The best study of the *Secret* tradition is Williams' *Secret of Secrets*. Williams explains that *Secret* was probably based on some genuinely Aristotelian materials and then expanded:

Translated from Greek into Arabic probably in the eighth century, the base text was taken up by an unknown compiler . . . in the middle to late ninth or early tenth century and turned into a *Mirror for Princes* in seven or eight books . . . A succession of revisers working over the next two hundred years added bits and pieces to this primitive SS, transforming a *speculum principis* into a compendium of general information useful for a prince but usable by just about anyone. (*Secret of Secrets*, p. 30)

The work was extremely popular in Europe by the early fourteenth century; for the Middle English versions, see *Secretum Secretorum: Nine English Versions*, ed. Manzalaoui.

- 2 *Mecynachus*. This is Nichomachus, the father of Aristotle and physician to the Macedonian King Amyntas II.
- 3 *Kinge Alysaundres*. See the explanatory note for Alexander, line 1.
- 4 *Stragyre*. Stagira, the birthplace of Aristotle.
- 5 *Esculapodus*. See the explanatory note for Zalquaquine, line 1.
- 13 *Pythagoras*. See the explanatory note for Pythagoras, line 1.
- Pychoras. This may be Epicurus (341–270 BC), the Greek philosopher who taught that people should devote their lives to pleasure, which he defined as serenity — not the carnality or gluttony that has become associated with the word *Epicurean* today.
- 35 *Lopedimie*. Plato's center of learning was the Academy in Athens. The name *Lopedimie* seems to suggest the small region of Epidauria, in which the chief community, Epidaurus, was home to a famous healing center and cult of Aesculapius.
- 38 *Kinge Phelyp*. Philip II (382–336 BC) of Macedonia is best known today as the father of Alexander the Great (see the explanatory note for Alexander, line 1), but he was a cunning warlord in his own right, and his strengthening of the Macedonian army paved the way for his son's conquests. For another medieval account of the life of Philip, see Higden, cap. XXVI (ed. Lumby, pp. 382–90).
- 49–50 *wheron he deyed*. In reality Aristotle died in Chalcis, not Stagira.
- 58 *he deyed in the sixty-fourth yere*. In the Spanish *Bocados de Oro* (the first translation of *Dicts and Sayings* from its Arabic original), the philosopher is said to have died at 68: “sesenta e ocho” (ed. Knust, p. 246), while the Latin translation of the Spanish has 63: “anno LXIII” (ed. Francheschini, p. 490).
- 74 *Detheologie*. Presumably this is Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.

- 98 *this worlde is but an hous of passage for to go into anothir.* See the note to Socrates, line 180.
- 107–08 *Loke thu do to no man othirwise thanne thu woldeste he dede to thee.* The Golden Rule again. See Whiting D274.
- 191–92 *It is bettir to deye worshipfully thanne for to lefe in shame.* Death before dishonor is a central tenet of the classical and early medieval heroic ethos. See the note to Plato, lines 329–31.
- 242–43 *The tunge of a foole is the keye of his secretes.* For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting F413.
- 279 *Abraquis.* I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 383–87 Note the role that money plays in this social hierarchy. Surprisingly, perhaps, this is not an interpolation of late medieval protocapitalism. In the Spanish *Bocados de Oro*, money (“el haver”) plays the same role as in the later English translation: “el rrey es pastor, e mantienese por la caballeria, e la caballeria [gobiernase por] el haver, e el haver [ayuntase] del pueblo, e el pueblo es siervo de la justicia, e por la justicia endereçase el mundo” (ed. Knust, p. 276). The later *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum* provides the same sentiment: “leges rex statuit; rex vero per miliciam manutenetur; milicia vero pecunia gubernatur; pecunia autem a populo colligitur; populus vero est iusticie servus; iusticia vero regitur mundus” (ed. Francheschini, p. 508). Like much of the Aristotle section, the ultimate source of this passage is *The Secret of Secrets*. I quote from an English translation of the text that is contemporaneous with the English versions of *Dicts and Sayings*: “The kyng is þe pastour that is defended by his lordes and estates. His lordes ben stipendaries susteyned with moné. Money is fortune that is gadered of the subgettes. Subgettē ben seruauntes subiectes to Justice. Justice forsoth is that by himself intended, in the which is the helth of subgettes” (the “Ashmole” version, *Secretum Secretorum*, ed. Manzalaoui, p. 71).

14. ALEXANDER

- 1 *Alysaundir.* The son of Philip II of Macedonia, Alexander (356–323 BC) conquered a vast empire spanning from Greece to the western frontiers of India. As a young man he ruled much of central Asia, but his huge empire collapsed shortly after his death. Alexander had a rather ambivalent reputation in the Middle Ages, in that he was remembered as both a brilliant military leader and a brutal imperialist. The primary source for the life of Alexander in *Dicts and Sayings* is the Greek romance known as Pseudo-Callisthenes, so named because it was once attributed to the Greek historiographer who accompanied Alexander’s expedition until the king turned against him and had him killed. The original Pseudo-Callisthenes was composed sometime after 200 BC (Cary, *Medieval Alexander*, p. 9). There are several redactions. The earliest (Alpha) was translated into Latin by Julius Valerius in the fourth century and entitled *Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis*; an abbreviated form, called the *Julius Valerius Epitome* (or the *Zacher Epitome*), was widely circulated and often appears in manuscripts with *Epistola Alexandri Magni ad Aristotelem magistrum*

suum de situ et mirabilibus Indiae (The Letter of Alexander the Great to His Teacher Aristotle on the Geography and the Marvels of India). A later “Delta” recension does not survive in its original Greek but can be found in a Syriac translation and a tenth-century Latin translation by Leo, archbishop of Naples. Leo’s version was revised in the eleventh century into the I¹ version of the *Historia de Preliis Alexandri Magni*, which adds new material, such as Alexander’s conversations with Dindimus (Bunt, *Alexander the Great*, pp. 6–7). The *Historia de Preliis*, existing in three redactions, provided the source material for many English Alexander romances; the I³ redaction, for instance, was the source for *The Wars of Alexander* (Bunt, pp. 27–29). As in many of the texts inspired by Pseudo-Callisthenes, the *Wars* presents, Bunt writes, “a heroic and philosophical Alexander, well aware that he is mortal, and that pride is a constant danger, but yet succumbing to the vice himself; in short, a hero who may be larger than life, but is still recognisably human” (p. 31). *Dicts and Sayings* contains some alterations to the basic story found in Pseudo-Callisthenes: most significantly, here the exiled Egyptian pharaoh Nectanebus—who is secretly Alexander’s father in the original version—is nowhere to be found, and Alexander is the son of Philip.

Kinge Phelip of Macedoyne. See the explanatory note for Aristotle, line 33.

- 2 *Chaus*. His name is Theosidos in Pseudo-Callisthenes. This is Pausanias, a nobleman and member of Philip’s bodyguard, who had a long-standing grievance against the king.
- 7 *Pilate*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 11 *Sarapye*. The town is called Methone in Pseudo-Callisthenes.
- 65–77 Here Alexander instructs his people to stop worshiping idols and turn instead to the one true God. As Cary notes, “[t]he portrait of Alexander contained in [Dicts and Sayings] belongs to the Oriental tradition; he appears as a philosopher king, bent on the suppression of idolatry” (*Medieval Alexander*, p. 23). Indeed, in the Middle Ages the legendary Alexander often was co-opted into the monotheistic fold. Bunt notes echoes of Vulgate Psalms 113:5 and 134:16 in this passage (*Alexander the Great*, p. 72).
- 88–89 *King Dayre, whiche was kinge of Perce*. This is the Persian king Darius III (r. 336–330 BC), who rose to power amidst a series of bloody coups. When the Macedonian army pushed into Persian territory, Darius seriously underestimated Alexander’s determination and military strength. After a series of humiliating defeats, he was murdered by his own subordinates.
- 102 *Desteme*. In Scrope’s translation of *Dicts and Sayings*, the town is called Estam. “In Arabic, this town is el-Farama, a city which lies to the east of Tinnis in Egypt” (S, p. 213n96).
- 106 *Tyre*. Established by the Phoenicians, this crucial port city in modern-day Lebanon was besieged and taken by Alexander in 332.
- 120 *Usyoche*. The Oxus River, today known as the Amu Darya.
- 194 *Quylle*. The town is called Abdera (located in Thrace) in Pseudo-Callisthenes.

- 216 ff. The extended narrative recounting the death of Darius is marked by several interesting elements. First, the two enemies reconcile, speaking well of one another after their long and bitter conflict. Alexander also shows great courtesy by promising to look after Darius' family. His magnanimity here is consistent with the typical portrait of Alexander in the Pseudo-Callisthenes tradition, in which the king is cast as a great hero and a man of virtue. In *Dicts and Sayings*, the author makes it clear that Alexander's victories over Darius and later the Indian king Porrus are a "result of his moral and philosophical superiority" (Bunt, *Alexander the Great*, p. 72). Even more interesting, perhaps, is Darius' dying speech: "O Alysaundre, loke thu be nat to proude, nor make nat thiself higher thanne longeth to thyne estate, and truse nat to moche on this world, and lete this be a suffysaunte myrroure unto the seenge what is falle of me" (lines 243–46). The moralizing tone in this passage is similar to what we find in the *Historia de Prelis* (particularly the I³ recension), where Darius' speech becomes a warning against pride (Bunt, p. 9).
- 301 *Porrus, the Kinge of Ynde.* In the Alexander tradition, Porus was a king in what is now India; he opposed Alexander, was defeated by him, and then entered into an alliance with him and thus was allowed to retain control of his territory.
- 340 *Brachemos.* These are the famous "naked philosophers" whom Alexander encounters in many of the medieval romances. As Bunt elaborates, "this episode resembles the story of Alexander's meeting with the Gymnosophists in the romances which derive from the *Historia de Prelis*, but gives more emphasis to Alexander's rejoinder to the question of the Brachemos why he exerts himself so much" to destroy everything and amass treasures (*Alexander the Great*, p. 72). Alexander replies that "he acts in obedience to God's command, who has sent him" to uphold God's law and punish unbelievers (pp. 72–73).
- 368 *Swanne.* I have been unable to identify this "land," but it is so named in *The Prose Life of Alexander*. There are several instances in Pseudo-Callisthenes, and in later Alexander tales, in which the inhabitants of a city or region surrender to Alexander without a fight.
- 379 *estwarde into Turkye.* Obviously the geography is off, but in the Middle Ages "Turkey" often referred more generally to the vast steppes of Central Asia.
- 427 *by aunsuers of trees.* Tree of the Sun and the Tree of the Moon, which speak to Alexander and prophesy his impending death. The earliest known reference to the trees can be found in the fourth-century *Res gestae Alexandri Macedonis* of Julius Valerius (ed. Rosellini, pp. 145–50), whose work is a Latin translation of the earliest (Alpha) recension of Pseudo-Callisthenes. See Cary, *Medieval Alexander*, p. 337n137, for a list of later medieval texts that cite this anecdote.
- 428–29 *he toke a grete heete, wherupon his noose felle on bledinge.* Here *Dicts and Sayings* departs from the standard account of Alexander's demise in Pseudo-Callisthenes, where the king is felled by poison.
- 476 ff. Here the great lords of Alexander's empire pay homage to the dead king at his funeral. The episode parallels a similar scene found in many versions of the *His-*

toria de Prelis, where philosophers gather at Alexander's grave; they each "pronounce an epigrammatic, if platitudinous, comment on the transience of human glory. The ultimate source of this scene is the *Disciplina Clericalis* of Petrus Alfonsi, a Spanish Jew who became a Christian and who travelled widely in Western Europe" (Bunt, *Alexander the Great*, p. 10).

538 *And Alysaundre seide in his lyfe.* While most of the preceding text was biographical in nature and drawn from Pseudo-Callisthenes, from this point the remainder of Alexander's section is devoted to his maxims. Though he was always regarded as more of a warrior than a philosopher, Alexander was often depicted as a learned wise man in medieval Islamic writings. See Southgate, "Portrait of Alexander in Persian Alexander-Romances." Southgate notes that "[i]n Persian romances Alexander is learned himself, and he surrounds himself with philosophers at his court and on his expeditions . . . The notion of Alexander as a philosopher-king originated in a didactic genre consisting of lives of philosophers followed by a collection of their wise sayings" (p. 282). Thus works like the original Arabic version of *Dicts and Sayings* influenced Muslim Alexander romances. In such texts Alexander is depicted as a great hero, sage, protector of man, and prophet, but he is also human, and has human failings like avarice (Southgate, p. 284).

660 *Nychomaque.* Perhaps Nichomachus, the son of Aristotle (named after Aristotle's father).

676–77 *Do wele to othir men yf thu wilt that thei wole do wele to thee.* Another manifestation of the Golden Rule. See Whiting D274.

685–86 *It was a gretter favte to lache discreciooun thanne to lache ricchesse.* This is an interesting final statement for Alexander to make. How, ultimately, are we to view Alexander's place in this work? He is the only speaker who was not a thinker by trade, yet he is the most prominent character of all: in addition to his own section — the longest of any — he recurs throughout the Diogenes and Aristotle sections. It is not a uniform characterization throughout. As Bunt notes,

[t]he picture of Alexander presented in *The Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers* is . . . not entirely consistent. Whereas the sections dealing with his own life portray Alexander as a wise and devout ruler, other episodes make him simply the recipient of wise admonitions, or, in the case of the famous Diogenes anecdote, sound a distinctly critical note. (*Alexander the Great*, p. 74)

For my own analysis of Alexander's inconsistent portrayal in this text, see the note to Diogenes, lines 146–47.

15. PTOLEMY

1 *Ptholomee.* Ptolemy (c. AD 100–c. 170), Claudius Ptolemaus, was a Greek mathematician, astronomer, and geographer whose work had an enduring impact on medieval thought.

2 *fourre sciences.* This refers to the *quadrivium* (geometry, music, arithmetic, astronomy), which, combined with logic, grammar, and rhetoric, constitute the seven liberal arts in classical tradition.

- 3–4 *Almageste, that is, Of Astrologie.* Ptolemy's greatest work was called *Almagest*, a thirteen-volume compendium of the Greek world's knowledge of astronomy. The geocentric model of the universe that is propounded in *Almagest* would endure until the sixteenth century.
- 5–6 *Kinge Adryan.* The Roman emperor Hadrian (r. 117–38), who reigned during part of the life of Ptolemy.

16. ASSARON

- 1 *Assaron.* He remains a mystery; neither Schofield nor I could identify him. Michael Livingston suggests — quite ingeniously, in my estimation — that Assaron may be a woman, specifically Fatima Az-Zahra, daughter of Mohammed (personal communication). Her connection to philosophy is by no means tenuous: Az-Zahra was the namesake of a Cairo university called Al-Azhar, one of the intellectual beacons of the medieval Muslim world. The Arabic transmission of *Dicts and Sayings* text is not known, but it is possible that an early redaction of the text passed through the university that bears Az-Zahra's name.
- 4 *of wommen, of wyne, of huntynges, and pleyes.* In this context the word *pleyes* refers not to drama, but to frivolous amusements; compare Galen, lines 20–25. The Spanish *Bocados de Oro* lists the same items in the same order: “mujeres e vino e caça e trebejos” (ed. Knust, p. 321); it is the same also in the later *Liber Philosophorum Moralium Antiquorum*: “mulierum, vini, venationis et laxamenti multiplex usus” (ed. Francheschini, p. 535). However, in place of *pleyes*, Scrope has “were” (war), translating “guerre” in his French source.

17. LOGINON

- 1 *Loginon.* Known in Arabic lore as Loqman: “The name is famous in Arabian tradition in connection with proverbial literature. There are three distinct personages; this Loqman appears to be Loqman the Sage, who is reputed to have been an Abyssinian freedman living at the time of David in the district of Elah and Midian. His grave was said to be at Ramlah in Judea with the 70 prophets stoned to death by the Jews in one day. He is supposed to have left a volume of proverbs or exempla” (S, p. 213n88).
- Dystay.* See the explanatory note for Alexander, line 102.
- 2 *Davyd the Prophete.* The author of *Dicts and Sayings* plays fast and loose with chronology at many points, but this is an especially striking case: Loginon is placed in the time of David the Prophet, later King David of Israel, who would have lived around 1000 BC. The story of David's youth as God's anointed one, along with the famous story of David and Goliath, is recounted in 1 Kings (1 Samuel) 17.
- 45 *Davyd.* See the explanatory note for Loginon, line 2.
- 104–05 *And there shal be grete dyscorde betwene his wordes and his dedes, for yf the tunge seye oon thinge, his herte shal thenke anothir.* See also Zedechye, lines 80–82; Pythagoras,

lines 72–73; and The Last Philosophers, lines 304–05. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W642.

120–21 *He wole do to none othir man othirwyse thanne he wolde that shulde be done to him.* The Golden Rule makes another appearance. See Whiting D274.

146 *Sone, ho that hathe mercy upon othir, othir shull have mercy on him.* This line presents still another variation on the Golden Rule. See Whiting D274.

182 *Kardnalle.* I have been unable to identify this location.

mesquitte. That is, a mosque. *Mesquita* was an early modern word for mosque, from the Spanish *mezquita* (*OED*).

18. ONESE

1 *Onese.* Bühler notes: “In the Latin texts this philosopher is called Avesius, Erelius, Eveleus, Evelius, and Anesius. In the French texts Onese is usual” — although Anese, Nese, Eveze, Orose, and Uries are recorded as well. “Rivers has Anese, while Ashby writes Enesius” (B, p. 372n250 3–4).

19. MARCEDARGE

1 *Marcedarge.* Schofield notes that “it seems more probable that this is an Arabian sage whose fame has not spread beyond his own land. I am unable to find any trace of him” (S, p. 213n91). Bühler adds: “In the Latin MSS. the philosopher is called Macdargis, Medargis, Medardus, and Medarges.” In the French texts, it appears as Magdarge, Macdarge, Madargue, Ardarge, Madarge, Sacdarge, Mardarge, Mardaige, and Matdarge (B, p. 372n250 21–26). This individual could be St. Medardus (c. 456–c. 545), a man of deep piety and formidable intellectual prowess, who became bishop of Noyon in 530.

20. THESCILE

1 *Thescile.* Schofield suggests that this is “Basilus” (S, p. 213n92), by whom I assume she means St. Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea, among the most celebrated of the fourth-century Church doctors. He was one of the “Three Cappadocians,” along with Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa.

12 ff. See the note to Plato, lines 400 ff.

21. GREGORY

1 *Seint Gregory.* Saint Gregory (c. 540–604) is known today as Pope Gregory the Great (r. 590–604), one of the most celebrated medieval popes. In many ways he laid the foundation of the medieval Church: he instituted sweeping papal and ecclesiastical reforms, argued for a more rigidly hierarchical Church structure

with the pope firmly at the top, established the power of the pope as a political figure (the ruler of Rome and the surrounding Papal States), and wrote many influential treatises (such as *Pastoral Care*, a guidebook for Church administration). The presence of a major Christian figure seems incongruous in a text from the Muslim world, but Gregory is not a late interpolation — his section appears as early as *Bocados de Oro*, the Spanish translation of the Arabic original and the earliest version of *Dicts and Sayings* that I have been able to consult directly.

22. GALEN

- 1 *Gallyene*. Galen (c. 129–c. 200) was a Greek physician and proponent of the study of anatomy (he demonstrated, among other things, that arteries carry blood), and the most brilliant medical mind of his age. Galen wrote hundreds of works that spread across Europe and the Islamic world; his authority in medical matters was nearly unquestioned in the Middle Ages.
- 3 *Esculapius*. See the explanatory note for Zalquaquine, line 1.
- Gorus*. This may be Gorgias of Leontini (c. 485–c. 380 BC), the Greek Sophist who believed that there is no such thing as objective knowledge or truth. The Sophists were philosophers who traveled throughout Greece teaching rhetoric. They were harshly criticized by later thinkers for charging payment for their services and for teaching persuasive tactics instead of more “serious” pursuits; such criticism has led to the negative connotations of words like *sophist* and *sophistry*.
- Myrus*. Though the chronology would be off, this could be Marinus, an anatomist of the first century AD who was greatly admired by Galen.
- Promenides*. Parmenides (b. c. 515 BC), a Greek philosopher who founded the Eleatic School, which taught that change is not real and that motion is an illusion of the senses. Zeno of Elea (see the explanatory note for Zabyon, line 1) was one of his greatest disciples.
- 4 *Platon*. See the explanatory note for Plato, line 1.
- Esculapius the secunde*. A curious reference, most likely meant to be Asclepiades of Bithynia, a scholar of physiology who flourished in the first century BC.
- Ypocras*. See the explanatory note for Hippocrates, line 1.
- 6 *Jhesu Cryste*. This is the only overt reference to Jesus Christ in *Dicts and Sayings*.
- 10 *Pergame*. Pergamum, in western Asia Minor. Galen was born there in 129.
- 13 *Cleupare*. A woman named Cleopatra, “called ibn Abi Oseibi’ā, a woman doctor from whom Galen learned much in medicine pertaining to women. She is mentioned in his works” (S, p. 213n95). Women physicians were, needless to say, out of the ordinary, but not without precedent; perhaps the most famous example from the Middle Ages was an eleventh-century doctor and medical professor named Trotula of Salerno, who wrote about women’s health issues. There are

doubts, however, about whether she was actually the author of the works attributed to her.

- 16 *Descen.* See the explanatory note for Alexander, line 102. Galen actually died sometime after 200 in Rome, where he spent much of his life as physician to the powerful (such as the emperor Marcus Aurelius).
- 28–29 *at the begynnyng of the regne of Anthonye, that regned nexst aftir Adryan.* That is, the Roman emperor Antonius Pius (r. 138–61), who followed Hadrian (r. 117–38).
- 29–30 *Danathomie.* This is *On Anatomy*, or *On Anatomical Procedures*, a fifteen-volume work that ranks as one of Galen's most important contributions to the study of medicine.
- 33 *Danaxogoras, Dandromachye.* These references are obscure, but *Danaxogoras* clearly refers to Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (see the explanatory note to The Last Philosophers, line 256). In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle critiques and revises Anaxagoras' conception of *nous* (Mind), the infinite, supreme, rational force that set in motion and guides the universe. *Dandromachye* probably refers to Andromachus, Nero's personal physician, who is frequently mentioned in Galen's writing.
- 33–34 *a booke whiche oon Ruxus made of tecches.* Rufus of Ephesus was a medical philosopher who flourished around the end of the first century AD. Presumably the book dealt with skin diseases and deformities.

23. THE LAST PHILOSOPHERS

- 1 *Protege.* This is likely Protagoras (c. 490–c. 420 BC), a Greek Sophist philosopher who specialized in rhetoric. He was a friend of Pericles but had to flee Athens because of his heretical agnosticism. He is best known as the main character of Plato's dialogue of the same name. See also the note for Galen, line 3 (*Gorus*).
- 3 *Plyves.* I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 4 *Araston.* Perhaps Ariston, the father of Plato, said to be descended from the earliest kings of Athens.
- 6 *Dinocrate.* Dinocrates of Rhodes, a Greek architect hired by Alexander the Great to design the city of Alexandria.
- 11 *Azee.* Possibly the same as Zac (see the explanatory note for Zac, line 1).
- 13 *Fyguanee.* I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 26 *Artasan.* I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 31 *Luginon.* See the explanatory note for Loginon, line 1.
- 43–44 *I am maistir of my worde or I speke it; and whanne it is seide, I am his servaunte.* Compare Socrates, lines 354–55. The *Sarazyne* (“Saracen”) who speaks this maxim is the only overtly described Muslim in the entire text; clearly the English *Dicts and*

- Sayings* has traveled far from its Islamic roots. See *Loginon*, line 182, for this text's sole reference to a mosque.
- 46 *Assoras*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 51 *Theophrastes*. Theophrastes Eresius (c. 372–287 BC), a Greek philosopher widely regarded as the father of botany.
- 53 *Dystomes*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 56 *Nychomake*. See the explanatory note for *Alexander*, line 660.
- 58–59 *Cynecus*. Perhaps a generic name for a Cynic philosopher. See the explanatory note for *Diogenes*, line 1.
- 64 *Aunselyne*. St. Anselm (AD 1033–1109), archbishop of Canterbury, was a brilliant theologian famous for his proof of the existence of God. Anselm believed that God was inherently rational, and thus so was all of His creation. His argument on knowing God by knowing his creation provided an intellectual basis for empirical science and humanistic studies.
- 70 *Pillothecus*. Most likely a tenth-century saint named Philoteus the Presbyter.
- 77 *Quirarus*. Perhaps the important Roman deity Quirinus.
- 79 *Dymocrates*. Democritus (c. 460–c. 370 BC) was the Greek philosopher credited with expounding the theory that matter was made up of tiny indivisible particles called atoms.
- 81 *Dyochomaces*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 87 *Arystotle*. See the explanatory note for *Aristotle*, line 1.
- 90 *Octyphon*. Schofield notes that “Octavian” should be “Antoninus,” to agree with the text’s French and Latin predecessors (p. 214n98).
- 93 *Orycas*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 96 *Samaron*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 97 *Gesius*. Perhaps Gesius Florus, the first-century AD governor of Judaea, known for computing the number of pilgrims to the Second Temple during one Passover festival; or Gesius Petaeus, a translator who lived during the time of Zeno (r. 474–91), emperor of the eastern half of the Roman Empire during the period when the western part fell to Germanic invaders.
- 98 *Gregory*. See the explanatory note for *Gregory*, line 1.
- 100–01 *Kinge Cromesis*. This may well be Croesus, the wealthy and powerful king of Lydia (r. 560–47 BC), an ancient state in Asia Minor. His defeat at the hands of Cyrus the Great brought Lydia into the expanding Persian Empire.
- 103 *Tales Millesius*. Thales of Miletus (c. 636–546 BC) is among the very earliest known Greek philosophers. Astronomy and geometry were among his many fields of study, but today he is remembered for arguing that the universe is made

up of one basic material, which he believed to be water. Higden (through his anonymous English translator) has this to say about Tales:

Tales Millesius, the firste of the vij. wise men, was in the tyme of Romulus . . . This Tales Millesius serchede firste amone the Grekes philosophy, the causes of heuyn, and the strenȝte of thynges naturalle, whiche science he distribuite after to the peple in iiiij. destincções, as in to Arsmetrike, Geometry, Musike, and in to Astronomy . . . That philosophre and diuine, serchenge the natures of þinges, seide afore the defawtes of the son and of the moone, trawenge that humor [i.e., water] was the begynnenge of alle thynges. (*Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. 3, pp. 63–65)

- 109 *Pyctagoras*. See the explanatory note for Pythagoras, line 1.
- 116 *Eugene*. Perhaps Eugenius, the name of several medieval popes.
- 120 *Estrycon*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 122 *Adryan*. Perhaps the Roman emperor Hadrian, or one of several medieval popes of this name.
- 123 *Hermes*. See the explanatory note for Hermes, line 1.
- 125 *Quirianus*. If not the important Roman deity Quirinus (originally a Sabine god, and later identified by the Romans with their legendary founder Romulus), then possibly one of several Christian saints bearing that name.
- 130 *Dimicrates*. See the explanatory note for line 79, above.
- 136 *Phelip the dyssiple of Pictagoras*. Perhaps Philip the Opuntian, about whom little is known. For *Pictagoras*, see the explanatory note for Pythagoras, line 1.
- 138 *Silique*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 150 *Moleyus*. This may be Melissus of Samos (b. c. 470 BC), a philosopher of the Eleatic School and a follower of Parmenides. See also the note for Galen, line 3 (*Promenides*).
- 153 *Bratalyque*. I have been unable to ascertain his identity.
- 153–54 *The covetouse men have never reste, nor the negarde ne the suspicio[n] man maye nat have good lyffe*. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting M52.
- 154–55 *Phelyp, kinge of Macedoyne*. See the explanatory note for Aristotle, line 38.
- 157 *Archide*. Perhaps Petrus Archiater, the personal physician of Theodoric the Great (c. 454–526), the Ostrogoth overlord who conquered Italy in the 490s and later ordered the execution of the philosopher Boethius.
- 162 *Pictagoras*. See the explanatory note for Pythagoras, line 1.
- 244–45 *desyre nat ne do nat to other men suche thinges that he wolde nat have himself*. Another variation on the Golden Rule. See Whiting D274.
- 256 *Anaxagoras*. This is Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (c. 500–c. 428 BC), the Greek philosopher and astronomer. A friend of Pericles and other Athenian luminaries,

and said to have been a teacher of Socrates, Anaxagoras is recognized as the first major Athenian philosopher, but his views were not well accepted in his own time (or even by his successors) and he was ultimately driven out of Athens.

304–06 *He is right a grete enemye whos dedes bene felle and bitter, and his wordes sweete and curteys.* See also Zedechye, lines 80–82; Pythagoras, lines 72–73; and Loginon, lines 104–05. For other manifestations of this maxim, see Whiting W642.

368–72 *Lyke as the children that bene in the modre wombe . . . aftirwarde gone to a betir worlde where thei bene gretely enjoyed.* These lines evoke a passage from Jesus' last discourse to His disciples:

And he said to them: Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while, and you shall not see me; and again a little while, and you shall see me? Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice: and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labour, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into this world. So also you now indeed have sorrow: but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice. And your joy no man shall take from you. (John 16:19–22)

447–48 *translated oute of Frenshe into Englysshe.* This refers to the immediate source of this version of *The Dicts and Sayings*, Guillaume de Tignonville's *Dits Moraux*.



TEXTUAL NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS: See Explanatory Notes, p. 117.

1. ZEDECHYE

- 1 *which*. So G. B emends to *by which*.
26 *goode*. B: *good*.

2. HERMES

- 5 B follows G in printing Roman numerals, but I have spelled out all Roman numerals as words. The scribe's manner of writing some of the longer Roman numerals, however, occasionally makes it unclear which number he means to represent, so some of my interpretations of his numerals are conjectural.
36 *Truste*. B: *Trust*.
182 *swymme*. So G. B follows, though mistakenly treating this as a necessary emendation for MS *swymne*.
221 *a vengeable lorde*. B emends *a* to *no*, but given that the basic meaning of *vengeable* is "vengeful," I would argue that the reading in G is more likely.

4. ZALQUAQUINE

- 7 *And*. G: *nd* preceded by a blank space for a capital *A*.

5. HOMER

- 8 *To what entente*. G: *To* inserted above *what* by main scribe.
31 *of geometry*. G: written in the lower right margin.
36–37 *And seith that man berith upon himself two byrdons*. A word is canceled out between *man* and *berith*.

6. SOLON

- 26–28 *A good soulle sorowith not ne rejoissith nat but whanne she maye see goode thingis and none evell thingis*. B adds *for she rejoissith* after *sorowith not ne rejoissith*, but such an emendation is not necessary.
32 *him a question*. The *-tion* of *question* is inserted below the end of the line.

7. ZABYON

- 18 *Ande*. G: *nde* preceded by a blank space for a capital *A*.

8. HIPPOCRATES

25 *he.* I follow B in adding.

9. PYTHAGORAS

14 *retorne.* G: *r* is added above the line.

18 *he.* G: word added above the line.

53 *And.* G: *nd* preceded by a blank space for a capital *A*.

10. DIogenes

73 *not.* I follow B in adding.

94 *nat.* G: word added above the line.

11. SOCRATES

22 *thei.* G: *e* added above the line.

104 *twelve thousand.* B reads the numeral in G as *xij m^l*, but the raised “l” should not be mistaken as Roman numeration for “fifty”; *m^l* here is, instead, an abbreviation for Latin *millia*, meaning “thousand.” This reading is supported by S, which reads *xij^m*.

112 *had.* G: word added above the line.

114 *thingis.* G: *ingis* added below the line, this being at the end of the MS page.

151 *nat.* G: word added above the line.

342 *thei.* G: word repeated at the top of the next MS page.

353 *he₂.* I follow B in adding.

406 *And.* G: *nd* preceded by a blank space for a capital *A*.

416–17 *wommen.* G: *wommien*, with the *i* marked for deletion.

423 *women.* G: *wo* added above the line.

503 G: a repeated *Many* is canceled.

12. PLATO

4 *him.* G: word added above the line.

34 *seye you.* So G. B emends: *seye to you*.

84 *to₁.* G: word written above the line.

88 *to₁.* G: word written above the line.

110 *that.* G: word written above the line.

174 *do.* B adds *after* to fill a gap following *do*.

192 *thu.* G: word added above the line.

223 *to.* I follow B in adding.

233 *to doute.* G: the phrase *oute of* is canceled and *to* written above it.

250 *that.* I follow B in emending from G’s *than*.

338 *consydre.* B: *consydrith*.

437 *a.* G: word added above the line.

456 *And.* G: an extra capitalized *A* is in the margin next to this word.

13. ARISTOTLE

54 *to₁.* I follow B in adding.

85 *gladly.* I follow B in emending from G’s *glally*.

87 *grace.* So G. B reads *graces*.

- 128 *counsell.* G: *sell* written below the line, this being the end of the MS page.
 190 *to.* G: word added above the line.
 219 *for.* My addition.
 276 *And.* G: *A* is missing.

14. ALEXANDER THE GREAT

- 32 *thei.* I follow B in emending from G's *the*.
 40 *counseile.* So G. B reads *I counseile*, mistaking a virgule for the first person pronoun.
 130 *comethe thee of.* B suggests *comethe of thee* or *comethe to thee of*.
 178 *me.* So G. B omits.
 235 *shalt.* I follow B in emending from G's *shat*.
 245 *nat.* G: word added above the line.
 250 *ten thousande.* B, G: *x m^l*. See textual note to Socrates, line 104. Here, too, confirmation can be found in Scrope: *x^m*.
 256 *sepulture.* So G. B reads *sepulcure*.
 309–10 *twenty-four thousand.* B, G, Scrope: *xxiiij m^l*. See textual note to Socrates, line 104.
 533–34 *thre hundred twenty-four thousande.* B, G: *cccxxiiij m^l*. Scrope: *cccxiiij^m*. See textual note to Socrates, line 104.
 595 *twelve thousande.* B, G: *xij m^l*. Scrope: *x^m*. See textual note to Socrates, line 104.
 617 *And.* B inserts *seid* after this word, but there is no obvious need for this emendation.
 624 *annoyed.* G: *noyed* written below the line, this being the end of the MS page.
 650 *had.* I follow B in adding.
 656 *nat.* So G. B inserts *not*, indicating that the word is missing from G, but it is not.

15. PTOLEMY

- 20 *hath.* I follow B in adding.

16. ASSARON

- 35 *sothe.* I follow B in emending from G's *soore*.

17. LOGINON

- 146 *And.* G: *nd* preceded by a blank space for a capital *A*.
 151 *is he.* So G. B: *he is*.
 153 *And.* G: *nd* preceded by a blank space for a capital *A*.
 154 ff. From this point the text is badly disarranged in G. I have followed B in restoring the proper order. See B's introduction (p. xxxviii, n3), which explains the correct ordering of the MS. See also Bühler, "Speculations on the Collation of a Lost Manuscript."
 167 *angre.* So G. B: *angree*.
 206 *impossyble.* So G. B: *impossible*.

18. ONESE

- 4 *goodnesse*. I follow B in emending from G's *goodnesse*.
 13 *And*. G: *nd* preceded by a blank space for a capital *A*.

19. MARCEDARGE

- 2 *whiche*₂. So G. B emends to with *whiche*. See textual note to line 3.
 3 *by*. So G. B omits silently, forcing an emendation (see textual note to line 2).
 20 *moste*. So G. B: *most*.

22. GALEN

- 34 *tecches*. G: *tecches and*, followed by a gap of about one inch.
 43 *to kinges*. B adds *the* after *to*.
 78 The last part of Galen's section is missing, probably because G is so badly
 disarranged toward the end. These lines were most likely lost in the
 shuffle.

23. THE LAST PHILOSOPHERS

- 6 *Dinicrate*. So G. B: *Dimicrate*.
 20 *prayest*. G: word written below the line, this being the end of the MS page.
 54 *lete*. So G. B: *let*.
 120 *Estrycon*. B: *Escrycon*. It is difficult to determine whether the scribe has meant
 to form a *t* or *c* with the third letter: the ascender breaks the midline (as
 a *t*), but the crossbar does not break the left plane of the ascender (as a
 c). I have opted for a *t* in my reading partly on the basis of Scrope, which
 reads *Esterion* (though with the variant *Escription*).
 162 *not*. I follow B in adding this word to the sentence so that it makes better
 sense with the proto-Christian nature of what the Pythagoras character
 is saying. Moreover, Pythagoras and his followers were known to have
 believed in the transmigration of souls.
 181 *And*. G: word repeated at the top of the next MS page.
 209 *haste*. G: another word is cancelled out following *haste* (*wryke*).
 213 *whom*. So G. B: *whome*.
 242 *to*₁. G: word added above the line.
 263 *he*. I have added to make better grammatical sense.
 284 *worlde, and*. In G a space of over an inch is left between *worlde* and *and*;
 instead of simply *and*, G reads *A and*.
 382 *wherfore*. So G. B omits.
 444 *And*. In G a space of a few inches is left before the beginning of this new
 sentence.



GLOSSARY

aferde <i>afraid</i>	e(e)re <i>ear</i>
and <i>and; if</i>	eete <i>eat</i>
ano(o)ne <i>anon, soon</i>	efte <i>again</i>
avaunte <i>boast</i>	egall <i>equal</i>
aventure <i>danger, risk</i>	ellis <i>else; otherwise</i>
ayen <i>again</i>	empeche <i>impeach, accuse</i>
 	encrese <i>increase</i>
ben(e) <i>been, have been, are</i>	enquere <i>inquire</i>
be(e)re <i>(v.) bear</i>	entente <i>intent</i>
beth(e) <i>be</i>	evel <i>evil</i>
bo(o)nde <i>bound</i>	
brenne <i>burn</i>	fader <i>father</i>
 	feble <i>feeble</i>
careyne <i>carriion</i>	feithe <i>faith</i>
che(e)se <i>choose</i>	fellaship <i>fellowship</i>
clene <i>clean</i>	foryeve <i>forgive</i>
condempned <i>condemned</i>	fro <i>from</i>
conn(e) <i>give</i>	
connynge <i>intelligence, learning, wisdom, wit, cleverness</i>	gadre <i>gather</i>
covenable <i>appropriate, suitable</i>	gode <i>good</i>
covenably <i>appropriately, fittingly</i>	gothe <i>goes</i>
covetise <i>covetousness</i>	greeve <i>grieve</i>
cuntré <i>country</i>	grete <i>great</i>
 	grevous <i>grievous</i>
de(e)de <i>deed; dead</i>	
deth(e) <i>death</i>	hath(e), haste <i>has, have</i>
dilectacioun <i>delectation</i>	hem <i>them</i>
discomfit <i>(v.) defeat</i>	hens <i>hence</i>
discreciooun, dyscreciooun <i>discretion</i>	he(e)r(e) <i>her, their; here; hear</i>
discrete <i>discreet</i>	herre <i>higher</i>
dispreyse <i>denounce</i>	herte <i>heart</i>
do(ne), doste, doth(e) <i>do, does</i>	ho <i>who</i>
doute <i>doubt; fear; respect</i>	holly <i>wholly</i>
dure <i>endure</i>	
	ignoraunt <i>ignorant person, idiot</i>

jangeler <i>jester</i>	perylle <i>peril</i>
kepe <i>keep</i>	petevous <i>piteous</i>
kutte of <i>cut off</i>	peyne <i>pain</i>
lasse <i>less</i>	phesyk <i>medicine</i>
leeche <i>leech, physician</i>	pleasaunce <i>pleasure</i>
lefe, leve <i>live; leave</i>	pleye <i>play</i>
lenage, lynage <i>lineage</i>	poure <i>poor</i>
lerne <i>learn</i>	preve <i>prove</i>
le(e)se <i>lose</i>	preyse <i>praise</i>
lesingis <i>lies</i>	pro(u)f(lyte) <i>profit</i>
liberall <i>generous</i>	puyssaunce <i>puissance</i>
loke <i>look</i>	quoth, quod <i>says, said</i>
londe <i>land</i>	reame <i>realm</i>
lowable <i>praiseworthy</i>	rever(e) <i>river</i>
lynage <i>lineage</i>	reyne <i>rain</i>
maistir <i>master</i>	ricchesse <i>riches</i>
meche, moche <i>much</i>	rightwos <i>righteous</i>
medle <i>meddle</i>	scolars <i>scholars</i>
meove <i>move</i>	see <i>see; sea</i>
merveille <i>marvel</i>	seek <i>sick</i>
me(e)te <i>meat, food</i>	seith(e), seyenge <i>says, saying</i>
meynee <i>company, group, retinue</i>	seke <i>seek</i>
mo <i>more</i>	seme, semethe <i>seem, seems</i>
moder <i>mother</i>	sethen <i>since</i>
moneth <i>month</i>	sette <i>set</i>
nat <i>not</i>	sewe <i>entreat, pursue, follow</i>
naye <i>no</i>	shewe <i>show</i>
ne <i>not, nor</i>	slee <i>slay</i>
nede(s) <i>need</i>	soore <i>sore</i>
no(u)thir <i>neither</i>	sooth(e) <i>truth</i>
noye, noyeth <i>annoy, annoys</i>	speke <i>speak</i>
nygh <i>near</i>	swerde <i>sword</i>
of <i>of; off</i>	syn(ne) <i>sin; since</i>
oon <i>one</i>	tac(c)he, te(c)che <i>teach, teachings</i>
or <i>or; ere</i>	tal <i>tales</i>
outher <i>either</i>	thanne <i>then; than</i>
outeragyous, outeragously <i>outrageous, outrageously</i>	thei <i>they</i>
parfite <i>perfect, pure, ideal</i>	thenke <i>think; thank</i>
passinge <i>surpassingly</i>	thi(ne), thy(ne) <i>your</i>
peas <i>peace</i>	tho <i>those</i>
	thu <i>you</i>
	to <i>to; too</i>
	toon, tone <i>the one</i>

tother, tothir *the other*

thresour *treasure*

trewage *tribute*

trouthe *truth*

tunge *tongue*

velanye *villainy*

verrey *true*

we(e)l(e) *well; weal*

wene, weneth *believe, believes*

wepe *weep*

werk(es) *work*

wer(r)e *were; war*

wexe(n) *become*

weye *way*

whanne *when*

whedir *whether*

wiste *knew*

wol(e), wolde *will, would, want to*

wonte *accustomed*

wote *know*

wretyn *written*

wroth(e) *angry*

wyf *wife*

ye *you*

y(e)f *if*

yghe, yghen *eye, eyes*

yren *iron*



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THEMATIC INDEX

This index covers the major recurring themes that have been central to *Dicts and Sayings* since its inception in the Middle East. I have broken down the basic thematic categories (“Envy,” “Kingship,” etc.) into subgroups that contain one or more proverbs; the individual proverbs, in turn, are identified by chapter and line numbers. The themes are arranged alphabetically, as are the subgroups within each category. Unlike a traditional index, however, I have not provided a reference for every instance in which a key word or phrase appears. Rather, the entries indicate when a given word is an essential part of a proverb; passing references — for instance, the word “king” in “King Alexander defeated his foes” — have been omitted. Additionally, this index is geared toward identifying the proverbial wisdom contained in *Dicts and Sayings*, so in most cases I have not provided entries for words that occur in the handful of lengthy narratives that are scattered throughout the text (e.g., Socrates in his dying moments, accounts of Alexander’s battles, etc.). However, if the narrative is less like a discrete tale and more like a rudimentary framework meant simply for conveying precepts (e.g., the advice Loginon addresses to his son), I have included entries for words that appear in these passages.

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