

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 00877742 7













217

(43)

BOETHIUS

*“ . . . My wordes here and every part  
I speke hem alle under correccioun.”* LATHER

LE  
B6734  
.75

# BOETHIUS

AN *ESSAY*

BY

HUGH FRASER STEWART, M.A.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

235376  
26.8.29

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS  
EDINBURGH AND LONDON

MDCCCXCI

91

1891

LIBRARY OF THE  
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
GEORGETOWN, GEORGIA

B  
659  
Z7S7

Dedicated to

THE REV. JOHN EARLE, M.A.

RECTOR OF SWANSWICK,

AND

RAWLINSONIAN PROFESSOR OF ANGLO-SAXON IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

AS AN UNWORTHY TOKEN OF

GRATITUDE AND ESTEEM.





## PREFACE.

---

THE original essay, of which these pages are a development, won the Hulsean Prize at Cambridge in December 1888. My excuse for their appearing so long after the event, must be the rare leisure of a schoolmaster's life; my excuse for their appearing at all, lies in the conditions of the founder's will. The trustees of Dr Hulse's benefaction generously granted me, more than two years ago, permission to expand and improve my manuscript; but an essay of this kind can never be more than prodromic and tentative, and the subject is too wide to be adequately treated in a single volume of reasonable dimensions. Some of the chapters, notably those which deal with the influence of Boethius on medieval thought and literature, would furnish material each for a separate treatise.

With regard to the present work, I ought perhaps

to specify how and in what degree it differs from my original scheme. The part that remains intact is chaps. i., iii., and iv. Chaps. ii. and v. had to be rewritten—the one because I could no longer honestly say that I agreed with Dr Hodgkin's explanation of the 'Trial,' the other because I could no longer regard the 'Anecdoton Holderi' as conclusive evidence of the authenticity of the Tracts. Chap. vii. is entirely new, and will, I hope, fill up a gap in the argument. Chap. vi. has been altered beyond recognition. The pages of it which deal with 'Beowulf' may seem a little out of place in a chapter professedly confined to vernacular translation; but, to be honest, I could not refrain from airing my views on the sources of the strange philosophical element in that poem.

My warmest thanks are due to those friends who have helped me in my work,—to Professor Hort for reading chap. vii. in manuscript; to M. Paul Meyer for performing a like office for chap. vi., and offering many suggestions and some invaluable criticism; and above all to Professor Earle, who has crowned a long course of kindness by allowing this little book to go out with his name inscribed upon it.

# BOETHIUS.

---

## CHAPTER I

### A GLANCE AT THE CONTROVERSY ON BOETHIUS.

---

*Authorities.*—The volumes of Nitzsch and Hildebrand mentioned in this chapter have been of great assistance to me in following the course of what may be called the Boethian controversy.

---

HE who in our day would enter on a study of Boethius is confronted at the very threshold by the question, "Was the writer of the 'De Consolatione Philosophiæ' a Christian?" This, the first of all questions to which the modern student requires an answer, does not seem to have troubled the readers of the old Roman in the middle ages, on whom his



influence was so real and so profound, much less the scholars of the Renaissance. For although it was to him, more than to any other, that Europe was indebted for an acquaintance with the higher flights of Hellenic thought, at a time when the original vehicle of its expression seemed lost beyond hope of recovery, yet men soon forgot the great teacher and translator in their delight at the new gift of a Greek literature, free to all the world.

A series of dogmatic tracts, a close intimacy with certain prominent Christians of his time, and a tragic death almost coincident with a threatened persecution, had all helped to invest Boethius with a halo of sanctity to which he had in reality but little claim. For more than a thousand years, from the eighth to the eighteenth century, he was generally accepted as the undoubted author of the tracts above mentioned, and as a martyr for the Faith into the bargain. Alcuin (735-804) has a word of praise for the treatise 'Quomodo Trinitas,' and there are traces of another treatise of Boethius in his book 'De Fide Trinitatis.' Paul the Deacon in the same century calls him *vir catholicus*,<sup>1</sup> and this title is emphasised not long afterwards by Ado,

<sup>1</sup> In Muratori rer. Italicar. scriptor., tom. i. p. i., Mediol., 1723, p. 103.



# CONTENTS.

---

CHAP.	PAGE
I. A GLANCE AT THE CONTROVERSY ON BOETHIUS, . . . . .	1
II. BOETHIUS AND THEODORIC, . . . . .	15
III. THE 'CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY,' . . . . .	55
{V. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE 'DE CONSOLATIONE,' . . . . .	81
I. GOD, . . . . .	81
II. THE UNIVERSE, . . . . .	84
III. FORTUNE, . . . . .	90
IV. CHANCE, . . . . .	90
V. EVIL, . . . . .	91
VI. PSYCHOLOGY OF THE 'CONSOLATION,' . . . . .	92
VII. FREEWILL AND PREDESTINATION, . . . . .	96
V. THE THEOLOGICAL TRACTS, . . . . .	108
I. DE TRINITATE, . . . . .	110
II. UTRUM PATER ET FILIUS ET SPIRITUS SANCTUS DE DIVINITATE SUBSTANTIAL- ITER PREDICENTUR, . . . . .	127
III. QUOMODO SUBSTANTIE BONÆ SINT, . . . . .	131
IV. DE FIDE CATHOLICA, . . . . .	138
V. LIBER CONTRA EUTYCHEN ET NESTORIUM, . . . . .	141





VI. ON SOME ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS OF BOETHIUS'S	
LAST WORK, . . . . .	160
I. 'BEOWULF,' . . . . .	163
II. ALFRED, . . . . .	170
III. THE PROVENÇAL POEM, 'BOECE,' . . . . .	178
IV. NOTKER, . . . . .	190
V. SIMUN DE FRAISNE'S 'ROMAN DE FORTUNE,' . . . . .	198
VI. ANONYMOUS WRITER AND JEHAN DE MEUN, . . . . .	200
VII. PIERRE DE PARIS, . . . . .	206
VIII. ANONYMOUS POET, . . . . .	208
IX. JEHAN DE CIS, . . . . .	212
X. FRERE RENAUT DE LOUHANS, . . . . .	213
XI. CHAUCER, . . . . .	214
XII. JOHN THE CHAPLAIN, . . . . .	229
XIII. AIBERIO DELLA PIAGENTINA AND OTHERS, . . . . .	232
XIV. MAXIMUS PLANUDES, . . . . .	234
XV. FRA ANTONIO GINEBREDÀ, . . . . .	236
XVI. PETER OF KASTL, . . . . .	237
VII. BOETHIUS AND THE SCHOLASTIC PROBLEM, . . . . .	241
APPENDIX—	
A.—SYNOPSIS OF MS3. OF THE THEOLOGICAL TRACTS, . . . . .	258
B.—AN INDEX OF PASSAGES IN CHAUCER WHICH	
SEEM TO HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED BY THE	
'DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIÆ,' . . . . .	260
APPENDUM TO P. 218, . . . . .	270
INDEX, . . . . .	271



archbishop of Vienne,<sup>1</sup> who, in the 'Breviarium Chronicon,' distinctly states that Theodoric put Symmachus and Boethius to death *pro catholica pietate*. This tradition, whether it had its first origin in the words of Ado or only received a fresh impulse from them, would naturally bring the theological writings of the patriot-statesman into special prominence. By the thirteenth century it had taken so firm a root, that Vincent of Beauvais did not hesitate to refer their composition to an attack on his orthodoxy, which Boethius was bound to defend.<sup>2</sup>

There is a faint fore-note of the future debate to be heard in the commentary on the 'Consolation' ascribed to Bruno of Corvey (tenth century), where it is remarked that the spirit of this book is not exactly a Christian spirit,—that there are many thoughts in it that savour too much of Platonism, and are at variance with the teaching of the Church. But this early commentator, with a critical perception which allows him to join hands across the centuries with Baur and Hildebrand, was ready to admit that the writer's object was not to dispute the truths of Christianity, but only to open to the unlearned the sealed books of Greek philosophy.

<sup>1</sup> A.D. 800-875.

<sup>2</sup> Spec. Hist., xxi. 15 ; xvii. 56.

John of Salisbury (1110-1180), on the other hand, while he recognises to the full the charm and value of the 'Consolation,' does not attempt to justify or explain the absence from it of the incarnate Word.<sup>1</sup>

The question lay dormant for a long while, such later commentators as Murmellius<sup>2</sup> and Grotius<sup>3</sup> making no effort to reconcile the apparent discrepancies existing in the different branches of Boethius's work, till at the beginning of the last century Gottfried Arnold, with scant ceremony, deprived him of all title to the authorship of the tracts, and dubbed him simply pagan.<sup>4</sup> The flame which this spark kindled has burnt fiercely enough round the *Boethiusfrage* ever since—in Germany and France, at least; and Hand went even further than Arnold had gone, in denying to Boethius any outward connection with Christianity at all.<sup>5</sup> Twenty years later Obbarius followed on the same side, defending this position at greater length.<sup>6</sup> In our own time the chief combatant of Boethius as a theologian has been F. Nitzsch, who, while he denies the authenticity of the

<sup>1</sup> Polieratic., lib. vii. cap. 15.

<sup>2</sup> See his commentary in Migne, lxiv. c. 1240.

<sup>3</sup> Proleg. ad Hist. Goth., &c. Amsterdam, 1655.

<sup>4</sup> Unparteiische Kirchen- und Ketzehistorie. 1700.

<sup>5</sup> Hallesche Encyklopädie von Ersch und Gruber. 1823.

<sup>6</sup> In his critical edition of the *De Consolatione*. Jena, 1843.

tractates, admits the probability of at least an outward adherence to Christianity on the part of a Roman statesman who held high office under a Christian government, was hailed as friend by a circle of cultivated Christians, and, finally, was closely connected by marriage with a nobleman of conspicuous piety.<sup>1</sup>

To this formidable list of German learning and research must be added the names of Le Clerc, Judicis de Mirandol, Du Roure, and Jourdain. Of these four French writers, the only one that deserves our particular attention here is M. Charles Jourdain, who some thirty years ago endeavoured to cut the knot of the question by the ingenious hypothesis that the theological tractates attributed to the philosopher were the work of an African bishop of the same name—not an uncommon one, it would seem, in the sixth century—who was exiled to Sardinia under the persecution of the Arian king Thrasamund, suffered martyrdom there, but lost his identity in the more conspicuous personage of his Roman namesake.<sup>2</sup> But the indiscreet zeal of M. Jourdain led him into the same error into which Hand and Obbarius had

<sup>1</sup> *Das System des Boethius.* Berlin, 1860.

<sup>2</sup> *Mémoires présentées à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, tome vi. 1860.

fallen. He did not see that by cutting off Boethius from all connection with Christianity, he put him outside the pale of political life at Rome in the reign of Theodoric—a heretic king, it is true, but one who always upheld the tradition of his predecessors from Theodosius onwards, that a profession of Christianity was the indispensable qualification for holding office, and who never repealed the stringent laws against paganism laid down in 390.

The first writer who made any systematic attempt to vindicate Boethius's Christianity was Glareanus.<sup>1</sup> Unable to harmonise the philosophy of the 'Consolation' with the theology of the tracts, he adopted the simple if somewhat audacious expedient of exalting the latter at the expense of the former. In other words, he challenged the authenticity of the 'Consolation.' It is almost unnecessary to say that this absurd supposition has not found favour with modern critics. The equally extravagant theory started by Gervaise, that in the person of Philosophy Boethius allegorically concealed our Lord; that the consolatory apophthegms addressed by her to the pupil, "whom she had nourished on all the learning of the Eleatic and Academic schools," are the utterance of the Word of God,—went no further than its author's

<sup>1</sup> Preface to the Basle edition of 1546.

‘ Histoire de Boëce ’<sup>1</sup> and died a speedy death. Happily for Boethius, his orthodoxy has found more trustworthy though perhaps less ingenious champions. We may not, indeed, cite as such Berti<sup>2</sup> or Francheville<sup>3</sup> or Richter<sup>4</sup> or Suttner<sup>5</sup> or Schündelen,<sup>6</sup> for they all considered the ‘ Consolation ’ an unfinished work, and the five books which have come down to us as nothing more than the foil against which Boethius intended by-and-by to set the immeasurable superiority of the consolations afforded by the Christian religion. The upholders of this theory take their stand on certain *validiora remedia*, which Philosophy at the very outset of the dialogue promises that she will presently apply to her suffering disciple, and which they maintain she has not yet applied when the book breaks off. It is undoubtedly true that the work is two-thirds over before she sees fit to fulfil her promise, and exclaims “ Sed quoniam te ad intelligendum promptissimum esse conspicio, crebras coacervabo rationes ”;<sup>7</sup> but from this point forward

<sup>1</sup> Histoire de Boëce, sénateur romain. Paris, 1715.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to the Leyden edition of 1611.

<sup>3</sup> Nouvelle Traduction. A la Haye, 1744.

<sup>4</sup> Translation of the Cons. Leipzig, 1753.

<sup>5</sup> Programm des Eichstätter Lyceums. 1852.

<sup>6</sup> Theologisches Litteraturblatt. Bonn, 1862, 1870, 1871 (different articles).

<sup>7</sup> Cons., iv. pr. 2. But see p. 61, and ep. Cons., ii. pr. 5.



her utterance continues to gain in vigour and authority: the subjects attacked are more difficult, and consequently the arguments advanced are more elaborate, and demand a keener attention and a more robust intelligence, than those of the earlier books; the bursts of song with which her tired listener was wont to be refreshed are heard at rarer intervals, and the prose passages are of longer breath.<sup>1</sup>

Besides, the arrangement of the dialogue, its gradual growth from the merely rhetorical and apologetic to the speculative, the way in which the threads—and they are many and perplexed—are gathered together in Philosophy's closing speech, appear to me irresistible evidence of the completeness of the whole.

An interesting and very plausible explanation of Boethius's position was offered by G. Baur in 1841.<sup>2</sup> According to him, Boethius was both philosopher and theologian, but philosopher first and theologian afterwards, taking in this last capacity a curious interest in subtle points of dogma, which he endeavoured to illustrate by the light of pagan learning.

<sup>1</sup> Even before this, in Bk. iv. pr. 6, she says: "*quamquam angusto limite temporis sæpti tamen aliquid deliberare conabimur*,"—words which show that Boethius had some suspicion how short his time was, and that what he had to say must be said quickly.

<sup>2</sup> *De Boethio Christianæ doctrinæ assertatore.* Darmstadt, 1841.



Dr Hildebrand shows, in his recent work on Boethius and his Christianity, that he is of much the same way of thinking.<sup>1</sup> To be chronologically consistent, this book ought to be noticed with those written after 1877—*i.e.*, since the discovery of the ‘Anecdota Holderi’; but the author, as he tells us himself (*op. cit.*, p. 19, note 2), did not hear of the fragment in question until his investigation of the tracts was practically finished, and was led to believe in their authenticity on purely internal evidence. With regard to the ‘Consolation,’ he considers that Boethius meant it to be a sort of “*apologia pro vita sua*,”—a defence of his labours in the cause of philosophy. There is a great deal to be said for this view. But I think the learned doctor makes too much of the influence which Christianity had upon Boethius in writing his last work, and he seems sometimes a thought too subtle in his endeavours to read between the lines. R. Peiper, to whom we owe the first critical edition of the tracts,<sup>2</sup> does not go very deep into the controversy, and confines his choice, based upon MS. evidence, to the first three (see p. 109). It is not easy to see

<sup>1</sup> Boethius u. seine Stellung zum Christenthume. Regensburg, 1885.

<sup>2</sup> In the Teubner Text edition of the Consolation and Tracts. Leipzig, 1871.

why he refuses to include the fifth, which, as Usener remarks, has very nearly as good MS. right to be considered genuine as the others. There can be little doubt, however, that he is perfectly justified in rejecting the fourth, "De Fide," and not all Biraghi's ingenuity and keenness of sight<sup>1</sup> can convince us that this tract was not inserted before the book against Nestorius by some mistake. Of this more anon, when we come to examine the religious writings more closely.

The name of the venerable Girolamo Tiraboschi is entitled to more respect than his compatriot's; but although there is much sound sense in his remarks on Boethius's influence on scholasticism, he does not offer us much assistance towards solving the question of his Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Puccinotti<sup>3</sup> and Bosizio<sup>4</sup> are two more Italians who appear between them to have written a good deal on our author, but I have not had the advantage of seeing their works.

<sup>1</sup> To which he lays claim in his *Boezio, filosofo, teologo, martire a Calvenzano*. Milan, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, tom. iii. parte i. Florence, 1806.

<sup>3</sup> *Il Boezio, &c.* Florence, 1864.

<sup>4</sup> (a) *Memoria intorno al luogo del supplizio di Severino Boezio*: Pavia, 1855; (b) *Sul cattolicismo di A. M. T. S. Boezio*: Pavia, 1867; (c) *Sull' autenticità delle opere teologiche di A. M. T. S. Boezio*: Pavia, 1869.

I have purposely reserved to the last the most important piece of external evidence we possess as to the authenticity of two at least of the tracts. This is the so-called ‘Anecdoton Holderi,’ a fragment found about 1877 by Alfred Holder<sup>1</sup> on the last page of ‘Codex Augiensis,’ No. cvi.<sup>2</sup> This MS., which came, as its name implies, from the monastery at Reichenau (Augia Dives), and now reposes in the Grand-Ducal Library at Carlsruhe, is a tenth century copy of the ‘Institutiones Humanarum Rerum’ of Cassiodorus. The fragment, however, with which we are concerned seems to have no connection with that educational treatise beyond a common authorship.

It consists of a title and dedication, and three paragraphs, — the first giving an account of the works and character of Symmachus, the second performing a like office for his son-in-law Boethius, and the third dwelling at somewhat greater length on the learning and dignities of Cassiodorus.

The paragraphs relating to Symmachus and Boethius are worth transcribing in full:—

“Symmachus patricius et consul ordinarius, vir

<sup>1</sup> Hermann Usener, in his exhaustive monograph on the subject—Bonn, 1877—speaks of the discovery as quite a recent one.

<sup>2</sup> The famous Codex Augiensis is of course the Græco-Latino uncial MS. of St Paul’s Epistles, now in Trinity Library.

philosophus, qui antiqui Catonis fuit novellus imitator, sed virtutes veterum sanctissima religione transcendit. Dixit sententiam pro allecticiis in senatu, parentesque suos imitatus historiam quoque Romanam septem libris edidit.

“Boethius dignitatibus summis excelluit, utraque lingua peritissimus orator fuit. Qui regem Theodoricum in senatu pro consulatu filiorum luculenta oratione laudavit. Scripsit librum de sancta trinitate et capita quædam dogmatica et librum contra Nestorium. Condidit et carmen bucolicum. Sed in opere artis logicæ id est dialecticæ transferendo ac mathematicis disciplinis talis fuit ut antiquos auctores aut æquiperaret aut vinceret.”

The original work, of which this tantalising excerpt is all that has come down to us, seems to have been a letter on the literary history of his own family, written by Cassiodorus about 522. There are two reasons for fixing on this date. The letter stands addressed to Rufius Petronius Nicomachus, Magister Officiorum. To this name Usener would add Cethegus, surmising that it was indistinctly written in the MS., and so was left out by the copyist. (It is surely more natural to suppose that it was passed over by inadvertence.) Now Rufius Petronius Nicomachus Cethegus is perfectly well

known as Consul in 504, and Master of the Offices in 522, and this date corresponds exactly with the consulship of Boethius's sons (522) mentioned a few lines below it.

Dr Hodgkin appears to accept unquestioningly all that Usener has to say on the 'Anecdoton,' and speaks of our certain knowledge that Boethius wrote the tracts.<sup>1</sup> I am unable to regard the German editor's conclusions as final. His commentary on the fragment is indeed a marvel of microscopical investigation, but he is guilty of one glaring inconsistency;<sup>2</sup> and the glib way in which he assigns this sentence to the epitomatiser and that to Cassiodorus does not inspire confidence. In a disconnected scrap of MS. like this, who shall draw the line between copy and original?

It is laying too great a burden on the 'Anecdoton' to claim for it that it puts the authenticity of the tracts beyond the range of doubt. The handwriting is not earlier than the tenth century; the date of the supposed original is partly based upon a conjecture, however plausible; the Latin of it is too bad; the

<sup>1</sup> Italy and her Invaders, vol. iii. p. 566.

<sup>2</sup> In one breath he speaks of the title of the MS. as having been tampered with (p. 8), and in the next he supports its genuineness by the fact that Cassiodorus is not called "præfectus prætorio" (p. 71)!

praises of Cassiodorus (“vir eruditissimus . . . dum laudes regis facundissime recitasset”) are too loudly sung for the words to be those of that writer himself. Still, no one will deny its great value as contributory evidence, and it remains a formidable weapon in the hands of the champions of Boethius’s Christianity.



## CHAPTER II.

## BOETHIUS AND THEODORIC.

---

*Authorities.*—The ‘Anonymus Valesii,’ described in the text; the writings of our author himself, and especially the ‘Consolation’; the ‘Variæ Epistolæ’ of Cassiodorus, which Dr Hodgkin has translated *en abrégé* (London, 1886), supplemented by the ‘Anecdoton Holderi’; some of the letters of Ennodius, bishop of Pavia, and the same writer’s ‘Parænesis Didascalica.’ For the general history of the period I have consulted Du Roure’s ‘Histoire de Théodoric le Grand’ (Paris, 1846), Deltuf’s ‘Théodoric, Roi des Ostrogoths et d’Italie’; and of English historians, Gibbon in his ‘Decline and Fall,’ Milman in his ‘History of Latin Christianity (1854), and Hodgkin in the second and third volumes of his ‘Italy and her Invaders’ (Oxford, 1880 and 1885).

---

THE fall of the western portion of the empire which Constantine had founded dates in reality from the death of Valentinian in 455. That prince, the last of the house of Theodosius, had, by his vacillating policy and extravagant taxation, driven crowds of his subjects into voluntary exile, and cleared the

way for the hordes that hovered over the entry of every road that led to Rome, and that swooped down on the defenceless city like vultures on a wounded tiger. The history of the latter part of the fifth and of the beginning of the sixth century is the history of the rivalry between Huns and Vandals, Visigoths and Ostrogoths, for the prize of Italy.

From the inhabitants themselves, the degenerate descendants of the Fabii and Metelli, there was little resistance to be feared. The old Roman spirit was dead, and the feeble senate was powerless to stem the torrent of barbarian conquest. The successors of Valentinian in the palace of the Cæsars disappear at the rate of one in every two years, and this in itself is sufficient witness to the violence of the changes that shook that proud fabric, and to the rottenness of the political and social life of the age.

It was reserved for Odovacar, the rough young soldier whose high destiny was foretold by Saint Severinus,<sup>1</sup> to administer the *coup de grâce* to the stricken empire. We know nothing certain about his origin beyond the fact that he was the son of one Edecon, identified by Gibbon, but with great improbability, with the Edica who was left on the bloody

<sup>1</sup> See the story in Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 527.



field of Bolla, where the power of the Scyri was once and for ever broken.<sup>1</sup> After a life of wandering amid the wild tribes of Noricum, the young barbarian found his way to Italy at a time when it was filled with a soldiery envious of the good fortune of their brethren in Spain, in Gaul, and in Africa, and clamouring for their share of the spoil,—for a third part of town and vineyard and field. Orestes the patrician, who, although he had for sufficient reasons refused the purple in favour of his son Augustulus, was still the real sovereign of the West, resisted such an outrageous demand. This resistance was Odovacar's opportunity. Putting himself at the head of the disaffected troops, he stormed and sacked Pavia, and caused Orestes, who had fled thither at the first alarm, to be put to death. The wretched Augustulus, whom he deemed unworthy of his vengeance, he was content to sentence to a luxurious exile in the Lucullan villa.<sup>2</sup> He had now only to stretch out his hand to grasp the imperial sceptre, but experience had taught him that this was a dangerous bauble. He accordingly addressed a letter through the Roman senate to the emperor Zeno at

<sup>1</sup> For an exhaustive discussion on the parentage of Odovacar, see Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. pp. 528-530.

<sup>2</sup> On the bay of Naples, the famous seat of Lucius Lucullus, the conqueror of Mithridates.

Constantinople, in which he formally advocated the abolition of the Western empire, and begged to be invested with the title and rank of patrician. The prospect of an undivided rule from Byzantium to Britain flattered Zeno, and he readily gave his assent.

Odovacar kept strictly to the letter of his proposal, and although after seven years he revived the consulship of the West, he never showed any inclination to fill the office in person, but confided it to trustworthy Roman officers. From 476 to 490 he ruled the land with justice and tolerance, protecting it by his arms from the active aggressions of barbarians on the frontier, and by his prudent administration from the still more dangerous oppression of his own turbulent soldiery. But Odovacar's successful course was now to be crossed by one of the most romantic and pathetic figures in all history. This is not the place to dwell at length on the early life of Theodoric the Ostrogoth, but a brief sketch of it is necessary to a right comprehension of the causes that led to the passage of the Isonzo, where Italy once again changed masters. The son of Theudemir the Amal and Erelieva his wife,<sup>1</sup> he was born in 454,

<sup>1</sup> She is generally spoken of as his concubine. Dr Hodgkin (*op. cit.*, vol. iii. p. 15) inclines to the view that the union between her and the Amal was sanctioned by the Church, although the woman was of inferior rank to the man.

on the very day of the Ostrogothic victory over the Huns. At the age of eight he exchanged the rough roving life of his father's camp for the comfort and ease of the royal court at Constantinople, where he remained for ten years as a hostage for the alliance which the emperor had entered into with the barbarians. It cannot be said that the young Amal profited greatly by the careful education bestowed on him, for, if we are to believe the statement of the 'Anonymus Valesii,' he could to the last only sign his name through a stencil. When his father died in 474, Theodoric succeeded to the hereditary leadership of the Ostrogoths, and soon gave evidence that his hand was better fitted to the sword than the style. He appears to have been an active agent in the restoration of Zeno when he was driven into exile by the usurper Basiliscus; and the various military enterprises in which he was engaged between the years 477 and 488, now for the emperor against his revolted generals, now for his own hand against his patron, gave him a wide experience. So that when the cautious Zeno tried to check the growing power of his young ally by pitting against him his namesake Theodoric Strabo (the squint-eye), an unscrupulous adventurer, who, jealous of his rival's superior birth and influence, was for ever scheming to

supplant him in the favour of the Gothic people, he found that the hostage of Constantinople, the nursing of the court, had, like the lion-cub of Æschylus, become too formidable to be trifled with. Accordingly, he was only too glad to fall in with the Amal's suggestion that he should pass over to Italy and win her from Odovacar to the Roman empire once again. Towards the end of 488 Theodoric left Wallachia at the head of an enormous multitude—we have no certain knowledge of its exact number, but the lowest computation puts it at forty thousand fighting men, with their wives and families, amounting in all to something like two hundred thousand souls.

The march went on all through the winter of that year, and the spring and early summer of the following, amid dangers and difficulties the magnitude of which it is not easy to measure. For besides the anxiety of providing provisions for a whole nation, there was the active resistance of the wild tribes to be reckoned upon, through whose territory the road to Italy lay. Notwithstanding a great and signal victory over the Gepidæ, who barred the passage of the Ulca, innumerable other conflicts with the same Gepidæ or with the Sarmatians kept Theodoric and his host on the farther side of the Alps until August 489, when he at last descended into Italy, to find

Odovacar confronting him on the banks of the Isonzo. Step by step the stubborn king was driven back, from the Isonzo to Verona, from Verona to Ravenna, where he held out for three years till hunger and despair forced him to capitulate. A treaty was arranged by John, archbishop of Ravenna, and it seemed as if Odovacar was to reap in Theodoric's clemency the reward of his own forbearance towards Augustulus fourteen years before. Not only were his life and safety assured to him, but it was agreed upon oath that the rule of Italy should be equally divided between conqueror and conquered. A week's holiday of friendship and parleying was crowned by a banquet held to celebrate the union of the rival kings. Odovacar came in all confidence, in answer to Theodoric's invitation, and was in the act of receiving the petition of two suppliants, who held him by the hand in the earnestness of their appeal, when a couple of soldiers placed in ambush in the hall rushed forth to slay him. "But when they saw him," writes the chronicler,<sup>1</sup> "they were afraid, and would not set on him." Upon this Theodoric ran up, and with a brutal jest and rough reply to Odovacar's helpless call on God—*πῶ ὁ Θεός*;—cleft

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Antiochanus, in Karl Muller's *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum* (Paris, Didot, 1841-72), tome v. p. 214a.

him from chin to loin. Nor did the furious Ostrogoth rest content with one victim. Odovacar's brother was shot down as he fled through the palace garden ; his wife Sunigalda was starved to death in prison ; and their son Ocla was sent as a hostage to Gaul, whence he presently escaped only to meet a bloody death at the hands of his father's murderer.

Thus did Theodoric seal in blood his charter of conquest. But when once his vengeance was glutted, when once he had received the emperor's consent to his mastership of Italy, he devoted himself heart and soul to the carrying out of Odovacar's prudent plan of government. For thirty-three years the realm enjoyed peace and prosperity ;—peace, for Theodoric, as often as his northern frontier was threatened by Gaul or German, moved his court from Ravenna to Verona<sup>1</sup> or Pavia, whence he could easily check any barbarian advance ; prosperity, for he was sagacious enough to see that it was to the real interest of Italy that Goths and Italians should be rigidly kept apart, the former receiving the long wished for *tertiarum distributio*, as a reward for past services, and as an inducement

<sup>1</sup> Theodoric's connection with Verona survives in the name " Dietrich of Bern," under which he figures in the old High-German romances of the middle ages.



to protect the rights of the natives; while these last were encouraged to cultivate without let or hindrance the rich resources of the land, which revived wonderfully during these quiet times. He thus restored to Italy something of her ancient splendour and supremacy, and the ambassadors who crowded to Ravenna from every country in Europe went away filled with wonder at the wisdom of the king and the magnificence of his court.<sup>1</sup>

It was during this last expiring flicker of Roman glory that Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius<sup>2</sup> moved across the scene; and his is one of the names that reflects lustre on the reign of Theodoric, while it lays the stigma of undying shame on the memory of the senate which pronounced his most unmerited condemnation, and of the king who had it carried out.

We cannot be certain of the exact year of his birth, but it most probably fell somewhere this side of 480 A.D.<sup>3</sup> His father, Aurelius Manlius Boe-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Decline and Fall*, c. 39; and *Var.*, 6, 9; 7, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Boethius, and not Boetius, is the way the name should be written. See *Usener, Anec. Hold.*, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> The limits of the date of his birth are 475 in the one direction and 483 in the other. We know that he died in 524, and just before his death we hear him speaking of the signs of premature decay, of the old age of sorrow, that he bears upon his body—

“*Intempestivi funduntur vertice cani  
Et tremit effeto corpore laxa cutis.*”—*Cons. i. m. 1.*

Now grey hairs cannot be called untimely at the age of fifty. He

thius, was the trusted servant of Odovacar, and under that monarch filled successively the posts of præfectus urbi (this he held twice), præfectus prætorianus, and consul (in 487). He dying while his son was still a boy, the education of the young Anicius was intrusted to friends of high standing in the state. These friends were, according to tradition, none other than his own kinsmen, Festus and Symmachus, the latter of whom further testified his affection for his ward by bestowing on him the hand of his daughter Rusticiana. The tradition that Boethius was first married to one Helpes, daughter to Festus (was the name of his other guardian chosen for the sake of symmetry ?), has long been given up. It rested solely on the insecure foundation of a supposititious tombstone at Pavia, which bore witness to the virtues and wifely devotion of a Sicilian lady who was led to Rome by love for her lord, whose name, be it remarked, does not appear in the epitaph at all.

It will not, I think, be stretching conjecture too far to assume that Boethius's first acquaintance

must have been born after 475. Besides, Ennodius, born about 473, writes of him and to him in quite a fatherly way (*Parænesis Didiscalica*, Migne, 63, c. 254 ; *Letters*, Book vii. No. 13), which he could hardly have done to a man who was only a few years his junior. On the other hand, neither could his sons, who were elected consuls in 522, have been much less than twenty, nor their father less than forty at the time. He was therefore born before 483.



with Theodoric dated from the year 504, when, as a lad of twenty, he must have seen that celebrated entry into Rome, when the heretic conqueror was welcomed to the city of St Peter by the shouts of the people and the reverence of priests and Pope. A youth so distinguished by birth, fortune, and accomplishments would naturally command the early notice of the Amal, whose presence at Rome just then was in great measure due to his wish to win the favour of the leading men there, and who would be only too glad of the chance thus offered him of ingratiating himself with them by a ready recognition of the powers and promise of their rising generation. Besides, it is easy to imagine the charm which such a personality would exercise on the barbarian king, who could appreciate in others the culture that had been bestowed upon himself in vain. For Boethius, though young in years, was already old in learning. A born student, he chose to pass his hours of leisure with his books rather than in the spectacles and amusements, the battles of the Blues and Greens, that engrossed the Roman youth. The diligence with which he devoted himself to the pursuit of knowledge was rewarded by an unusual versatility and an encyclopædic erudition. No branch of science or art remained long

neglected or unattempted by him; and, thanks to the liberal training of his guardian, he enjoyed the rare privilege of being able to read the Greek philosophers in their own tongue.<sup>1</sup>

As Horace made it his chief boast

“Princeps Æolium carmen ad Italos  
Deduxisse modos,”

so it was the literary object and aim of Boethius to import Greek wisdom into his native land. To this end he translated the works of Pythagoras on music, of Ptolemy on astronomy, of Nicomachus on arithmetic, of Euclid on geometry, of Archimedes on mechanics. Finally, he sought to bring the whole of Greek speculative science within the range of Roman readers; and though he did not live to see the attainment of his ambition, he managed to give to the world in something less than twenty years, of which several were absorbed in the discharge of public duties, more than thirty books of commentary on, and translation of, Aristotle. These embraced nearly all the logical works of the Stagyrice—

<sup>1</sup> See Cassiodorus, Var., i. 45. There is not the smallest foundation for the tradition that he was educated at Athens. Cassiodorus distinctly says, “Atheniensium scholas longe positus [not *positas*] introiisti.” The undoubtedly spurious ‘De Disciplina Scholarium’ is the only one of the works attributed to Boethius that breathes a word on the subject, and such an exceptional training would have been sure to receive mention, either by himself or by one of his friends.

the 'Topica' and the 'Analytica,' the 'Categoriæ' and the 'De Syllogismo'—and they further make good their author's title to the inheritance of the Academy in the West, and mark him as the pioneer of the scholastic philosophy. But Boethius did not confine his pen within the limits, however wide, of pagan learning. He rushed, with more ardour perhaps than discretion, into the lists of theological controversy, and endeavoured—not to identify the old philosophy with Christianity, as some of the new Platonists were inclined to do, but—to apply its methods to the treatment of doctrinal difficulties.

The favour of the king and the traditions of his own family—the Anicii had been distinguished in the public service for the last six hundred years—combined to bring him into early contact with great affairs. At the age of thirty he was introduced into the senate with the title of patrician, an honour usually reserved for faithful and tried servants on their retirement from public life; and the year 510 saw him elected sole consul. Undoubted as his qualifications both of character and intellect were for a high position of trust, it must be a source of unceasing regret that he felt himself bound to give practical illustration to Plato's theory that the happiest states are those which are governed by

philosophers,<sup>1</sup> that he ever brought himself to exchange the seclusion of his own library for the turmoil of the Senate House. Within those walls, shining with glass and ivory, on which he had lavished all the adornment that taste could suggest or money could buy, he would have found a rest which the dusty struggle for office and distinction could never give, and his beloved books would have proved more faithful friends to him than the cowardly colleagues who condemned him without a hearing to disgrace and death. Happily he had leisure even in the busy time of his consulship to continue his literary and mechanical work, and we find him called away from his ordinary duties, now to construct a water-clock for Theodoric's brother-in-law, Gundobad, king of the Burgundians, now to select a harper for the court of Clovis the Frank, now to help convict the guards' paymaster of an attempt to cheat the men with light coin. Higher still and higher he rose in the esteem and confidence of the king, till in the year 522 the cup of his pride was filled by the elevation of his two boys, Symmachus and Boethius, to the dignity of the consulship. On this occasion he was chosen to pronounce the customary panegyric on his royal

<sup>1</sup> Rep., vi. 487.

master, who showed his appreciation of the zeal and loyalty of the panegyrist by appointing him *magister officiorum*—a post which involved constant attendance on the king's person, and which, as he tells us, had never before been bestowed on a *privatus*.

But all the honours heaped upon him only serve to heighten the tragedy of his sudden fall. A burst of ill-timed enthusiasm for the ancient Roman liberty aroused the slumbering suspicion of the Ostrogoth, who soon showed that he could hate as well as he had loved; while the servile and nerveless senate was easily induced to hand over without a murmur the noblest of its number to his vindictive vengeance.

The circumstances of his arraignment and condemnation are important enough to claim a closer attention, and involve a scrutiny of one of the most interesting, as it certainly is one of the most perplexing, state-trials on record. Moreover, the very truthfulness and common honesty of Boethius, apart from any question of political wisdom, are here at stake, and so I must crave the reader's indulgence while I endeavour to cast upon the case the different lights afforded by the 'Anonymus Valesii,' by Procopius in his 'Gothic War,' by Boethius himself in the 'Consolation of Philosophy,' and by Cassiodorus in his 'Miscellaneous Letters.'

The authorship of the fragment which takes its title from its discoverer, Henri de Valois, the seventeenth century scholar, and is to be found appended to the history of Ammianus Marcellinus, may in all probability be ascribed to Maximian, bishop of Ravenna from 546 to 556.

After a description of Theodoric's decrees for the protection of the Ravennese Jews, whose synagogue had been destroyed by the Christians, there follows this account of the trial of the senators :

“From this time the devil found occasion to subvert the man [Theodoric], who had been hitherto governing the state well and blamelessly. For he presently ordered that the oratory and altar of St Stephen, by the fountains in the suburb of the city of Verona, should be thrown down. He also commanded that no Roman should carry arms—no, not so much as a knife.

“Also, a poor woman of the Gothic nation lying under a porch, not far from the palace of Ravenna, brought forth four dragons ; two of which were seen by the people borne along in the clouds from the west to the east, and cast into the sea ; two were carried off, having one head between them. A star with a torch, which is called a comet, did appear,



shining brightly for fifteen days, and earthquakes happened frequently.

“After this the king began suddenly to chafe against the Romans whenever he found occasion. Cyprian, who was then Referendary,<sup>1</sup> and afterwards Count of the Sacred Largesses, impelled by greed, laid an information against Albinus the patrician, on the ground that he had sent letters to the emperor Justin, which were hostile to the king’s rule.

“As he was denying this before the court” (“*revocitus dum negaret*”), “Boethius the patrician, who was Master of the Offices, said to the king’s face: ‘False is the information of Cyprian; but if Albinus did it, then both I and the whole senate did it with one consent. It is altogether false, O lord, my king!’ Then Cyprian with hesitation brought forward false witnesses, not only against Albinus, but also against Boethius, his defender. But the king was laying a snare for the Romans, and seeking how he might destroy them: he put more trust in the false witnesses than in the senators. Then Albinus and Boethius were taken in custody to the

<sup>1</sup> The *referendarius* held a post in the royal court of appeal, to which we have no corresponding term in our legal system. His duties appear to have included the casting into an intelligible form the claims of either side in a lawsuit.

baptistery of the church. But the king sent for Eusebius, prefect of the city of Ticinum, and without giving Boethius a hearing, passed sentence upon him. The king sent and caused him to be put to death on the Calventian property,<sup>1</sup> where he was held in custody. He was tortured for a very long time with a cord bound round his forehead, so that his eyes started; then at last in the midst of his torments he was killed with a club.”

Two more short quotations from the ‘Anonymus,’ and the reader will be in possession of the whole story of Theodoric’s vengeance,—of that pitiful exhibition of barbarian fury which mars the last page of a record, else one of the fairest in the history of Italy. In the first we have the epilogue of the tragedy, the death of Symmachus.

“Meanwhile Symmachus, the head of the senate, was brought from Rome to Ravenna. The king, fearing lest grief for his son-in-law should lead him to attempt something against his rule, had him accused and killed.”

The second, which narrates Pope John’s ill-fated mission to Constantinople, is necessary to my present purpose only in so far as it throws light on the later tradition which numbered Boethius among “the

<sup>1</sup> The modern Calvenzano, in the province of Milan.



noble army of martyrs." This tradition was based upon a confusion of dates. The persecution of the Catholics, threatened but never carried out by Theodoric, is not heard of until after the execution of Boethius. The cause of this unkind promise is to be found in the proclamation against the Arians which the emperor Justin issued in the year 524. Behind the religious zeal which was the ostensible motive of this measure, it is easy to trace a wish to wean the Italians from their allegiance to the Ostrogoth. Theodoric felt this, and was no doubt indignant, and not unnaturally, that the studied toleration of his long reign should be so ungratefully requited by his eastern colleague.<sup>1</sup> And so he prepared to retaliate, and despatched the reluctant Pope John to Constantinople to make known his intention to the court there, and to demand from Justin that all heretics who had been compelled against their will to conform to Catholicism should be allowed to return to their own particular forms of heterodoxy.<sup>2</sup>

Despite his protestations, the unfortunate John was hurried on board ship, together with five other bishops, and in due course arrived at Constantinople.

<sup>1</sup> For the relations between the King of Italy and the Cæsar of Constantinople consult Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, vol. iii. chap. x.

<sup>2</sup> This seems to be the meaning of "ut reconciliatos hæreticos in Catholica restituat religione."

“And Justin the emperor,” we are told, “came out to meet him as he had been the blessed Peter himself, and after giving him audience promised that he would do all else that was required of him, but that he could not by any means suffer the restoration to the Arian faith of those who had given themselves over to the Catholic religion. So when Pope John came back from Justin, Theodoric took him by craft, and laid the ban of his displeasure upon him.<sup>1</sup> After a few days John died.”<sup>2</sup>

Writing less than a generation after the event, with the words of the imprisoned philosopher ringing in his ears, and hatred of the persecuting Ostrogoth rankling in his heart, Maximian would naturally be inclined to side with Boethius. Besides, a certain propensity for the marvellous and impossible should make us careful how we accept his account of things as strictly accurate. But in recounting the story of Boethius, there was little scope for the lively imagination that shows itself in the wonderful birth of the dragons, and the signs in the heavens that went before Theodoric's fit of frenzy. And

<sup>1</sup> “Et in offensa sua eum esse jubet.”

<sup>2</sup> I have ventured, for the sake of clearness, to present these two last excerpts from the ‘Anonymus’ separately, although in the original the death of Symmachus is mentioned incidentally in the course of the narrative of Pope John's mission.

evidence so nearly contemporary, and so strikingly coincident with Boethius's own version of the matter, is entitled to the fullest measure of consideration.

It will be seen that Procopius, the Byzantine historian (500-565 ?), bears out the words of the 'Anonymus.' "Symmachus and Boethius, his son-in-law," he tells us in the first chapter of the first book of his 'Gothic War,' "both of noble birth, were chiefs of the Roman senate, and became consuls. Their pre-eminence above their fellows in the practice of philosophy, their zeal for justice, the assistance they offered with their wealth to the poverty of many, strangers and fellow-citizens alike, the great renown they acquired,—all this combined to stir up the hatred of villanous men. And when they laid false information Theodoric believed them, and slew the two men, on the charge of plotting a revolution, and confiscated all their property." Let us now hear what Boethius himself has to say on the subject.<sup>1</sup> After enumerating his various services in the cause of his countrymen against the oppression of greedy Gothic officials,<sup>2</sup> he under-

<sup>1</sup> Cons., i. pr. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Of special interest is his defence of the companions against an edict of coemption (a fiscal measure which allowed the State to buy provisions for the army at something under market price), which threatened to ruin the province. Hodgkin, by a comparison of this

takes to justify his defence of the senate's dignity and privileges which has brought about his present undeserved disgrace. "To save Albinus the consular<sup>1</sup> from the punishment consequent on a prejudiced trial, I braved the hatred of the informer Cyprian. It might well be thought that in so doing I incurred animosity enough, and indeed the very fact that my love of justice had left me no place of safety with the court-party ought to have rendered me more secure with the others. Now, who were the informers who struck me down? Basilius, whom pressure of debt—he was long since expelled<sup>from</sup> the king's service—drove to denounce me. Opilio and Gaudentius, who, on account of their countless and various crimes, had been ordered into exile by a royal decree. When they would not obey and sought sanctuary, and the king discovered it, he proclaimed that unless they had left Ravenna by a given day, they should be driven out with the brand of shame on their brows. Could any measure be more stringent? And yet on that self-same day they laid information against me, and their information was admitted.

passage with certain letters of Cassiodorus (Var., iii. 20, 21, and 27), describing the disgrace of one Faustus, prætorian prefect, identifies him with the governor whom Boethius dared to oppose. See *op. cit.*, vol. iii. p. 533.

<sup>1</sup> A member of the Decian gens—Consul in 493.

“Had my services merited this reward, thinkest thou? Or did the previous condemnation of those men invest them with a right to accuse? Had Fortune, then, no shame, if not for the innocency of the accused, at least for the infamy of the accuser? But thou wouldst know the heads of the charge under which I am arraigned. They say that I have desired the safety of the senate. How desired it? They accuse me of having prevented an informer from producing documents which were to prove the senate guilty of treason. What sayest thou, O my teacher? Shall I deny the charge for fear of putting thee to shame? But I did desire it, and shall never cease to desire it. Shall I plead guilty? Farewell, then, to the task of confuting the informer. Shall I call it a crime to have desired the safety of that illustrious order? It is true that by the decrees it issued against me it did its best to make it a crime. But stupidity, defeating as ever its own objects, cannot alter the rights of things, and, following the teaching of Socrates, I do not deem it right either to hide the truth or to confess a falsehood. Be this as it may, I leave the question to be weighed by thy judgment, and that of the wise. Still, in order that posterity may not miss the connection and the truth of the matter, I have com-

mitted an account of it to writing. As to those forged letters by which I am accused of having hoped for Roman freedom, what need is there to speak of them? Their forgery would have been patent had I been allowed to make use of the confession of the informers themselves,—a form of evidence which in all cases carries the greatest possible weight. (Indeed, what freedom is there left us to hope for? Would there were any!) I would have answered in the words of Cassius, who, when he was cited by Gaius Cæsar, the son of Germanicus,<sup>1</sup> on the charge of being privy to a conspiracy against him, replied, ‘Had I known it, thou shouldst never have known it.’ Nor in this affair has grief so dulled my sense as to make me complain that wicked men have tried to outrage virtue; but I am exceedingly astonished that their hopes have been crowned with success. For to desire that which is evil is perhaps in the nature of our mortal weakness, but that every rogue should have power to carry out his designs against innocence is, under God’s surveyance, monstrous. Hence not without reason did one of thine own disciples question — ‘If God indeed is, whence cometh evil; and whence cometh good, if He is

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Caligula.



not?'<sup>1</sup> But let us grant that it was natural that evil-minded men, who were thirsting for the blood of all good citizens, and of the whole senate, should have sought my destruction, in whom they saw the champion of both citizens and senate. Did I deserve the same treatment from the senators? Thou dost remember, as I think, since thou wast ever with me to direct all my words and actions—thou dost remember, I repeat, that day at Verona when the king, thirsting for our general destruction, sought to extend the charge of treason lodged against Albinus to the senate as a body, and with what indifference to my own safety I upheld the honour of the whole order. Thou knowest that these my words are true, and that I have never boasted where my own merit was concerned. For a man lessens in a measure the inward joy of a self-approving conscience as often as he makes a parade of what he has done, and is paid for it with fame. Thou seest clearly what has been the result of my integrity. In place of the reward of real virtue, I am undergoing the penalty of fictitious guilt; and was there ever a confessed criminal who found his judges so unanimous that some of them did not give way, either from a knowledge of the frailty of mortal

<sup>1</sup> Epicurus, in the *De Ira Divina*, cap. xiii.

nature, or from a consideration of the circumstances that wait on Fortune, to which all men alike are liable? If I were charged with having attempted to fire the temple of God, to slay His ministers with sacrilegious sword, to compass the death of the good and honourable,—even then sentence should have been pronounced on me in my presence, and not until I had confessed or been convicted. As it is, all on account of an excess of zeal for the senate, I have been condemned to death and loss of rights, unheard and undefended, while nearly five hundred miles away. Truly, its members deserve that no one could ever be convicted on a like charge!<sup>1</sup> Those who brought the accusation knew well what it was worth; and so, to darken it with the admixture of some real crime, they lyingly asserted that ambition for advancement had led me to stain my conscience with sacrilege. But thou, who hast thy dwelling ever within me, didst drive far from my bosom's throne all desire for earthly things, and sacrilege could not find a place before thine eyes. Day by day thou didst instil into my ears and into my meditation the saying of Pythagoras, 'Follow

<sup>1</sup> "O meritos, de simili crimine neminem posse convinci!"—*i.e.*, they deserve, for their pusillanimity on this occasion, that no one should ever be found to brave a tyrant's anger in defending their rights.



God.' Was it likely that I, whom thou wast forming to perfection, to the very likeness of God, should seek the assistance of the foulest and vilest spirits? Besides, my unsullied hearth and home, the honoured friends who frequented it, my wife's father, a man without reproach and winning esteem by deed as well as name,<sup>1</sup> are my champions against all suspicion of such a charge."

And so he goes on, complaining to his divine consoler that they have besmirched her own robe in thus attacking the most devoted of her disciples, while he inveighs loudly against the unkind Fortune that suffers the innocent to be punished and lets the guilty go free.

Against this impassioned apology it is only fair to set the indirect evidence of Cassiodorus on the other side. The 'Variæ Epistolæ' of this writer are a collection of despatches concerning the administration of the kingdom, composed at the command and in the name of Theodoric and his successors. The bulk of them are addressed to Italian and Gothic officials; and overcharged as they are with laborious erudition and rhetorical adornment—to repeat his

<sup>1</sup> I retain the MS. reading, "æque actu ipso reverendus," and regard the expression as equivalent to "suis ipsius actibus reverendus." Cf. Obbarius's note on the passage.

barbarian master's orders in the simple and straightforward form in which they were doubtless issued would have been impossible to the garrulous and conceited old Italian—they afford us a most instructive insight into the scheme by which Theodoric sought to govern the land he had won with his sword.

We know something of the career of Cyprian from two of these letters ('Variæ,' v. 40, 41), and we may form a fair conception of the man from the hints they contain. The first of them announces to Cyprian his elevation to the *comitiva sacrarum largitionum*, the most important financial post in the kingdom; the second recommends the newly appointed officer to the notice of the senate.

Cyprian, we are told, was the son of one Opilio, who held office under the unfortunate Odovacar. The father had nothing to leave behind him but an honourable name, but the young man soon began to make his way in the world, thanks to his own ability and the early favour of Theodoric, with whom his duties as Referendary<sup>1</sup> brought him into close and frequent communication. He seems to have been gifted with a wonderful power of placing the two sides of any question clearly and rapidly

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 31, note.

before the court, and to have been able to state a complicated case just as well in the open air, as he rode by the king's side, as in the dry legal atmosphere of the council chamber.

The practical training, so much more valuable than any amount of theory, in which he had been schooled, stood him in good stead when he was despatched on an important diplomatic mission to Constantinople, and the imperial presence had no terrors for one who was familiar with the awful majesty of the Ostrogoth.

"Nihil tibi post nos potuit esse mirabile," Theodoric is made to say by his secretary, dead to all sense of humour. The envoy's knowledge of three languages, and his natural nimbleness of mind, enabled him to cope successfully with even the slippery Greeks.

What the precise object of this mission was we have no means of knowing, but we may guess that it was the occasion on which the intrigue between the senate and the emperor was discovered which brought about the trial at Verona.

The letter goes on to say that Theodoric has, in accordance with his usual procedure, thoroughly proved and tried the man whom he has chosen to honour, and that he has not found him wanting

in any respect. Above all, Cyprian possesses faith, that most excellent gift, the bond of friendship between man and man, the pledge of reverent obedience to God. He is invited to enter upon the duties of Count of the Sacred Largesses, at the third Indiction (524-5),<sup>1</sup> and exhorted so to bear his honours in that office that the king may advance him yet higher.

The words of the document before us, together with those of a similar letter to Cyprian's brother, Opilio, which I shall notice next, make up a seemingly honourable record of public service. But a close consideration of it, and a comparison with the statements of Procopius, of the 'Anonymus,' and of Boethius himself, will, I think, enable us to see that the two accounts are not absolutely irreconcilable, and that the qualities which won Theodoric's admiration and Cassiodorus's concurrence are not such as would exclude the lower motives attributed to the informers by what may be called the counsel for the defence. Here we have a clever young lawyer, prac-

<sup>1</sup> The Indiction was an ever-recurring cycle of fifteen years, instituted, or, to speak more accurately, formally adopted by Constantine in 312. One such cycle began in September 522, and so the third Indiction from this date will be 524-5. For full explanation of the history of the system, and the method of computing it, see Hodgkin's *Cassiodorus*, p. 125, and "H. B." in *Dict. Christian Ant.*, s. v. "Indiction."

tically a self-made man, whose chief claim to distinction lies in his ready wit and mental agility, thanks to which he can state a case with such absolute impartiality as often to satisfy either of the contending parties,—“*alternæ parti indiscreta laude placuisti.*” At the risk of appearing paradoxical, I would say that scrupulous fairness of this sort is by no means incompatible with a certain strain of unscrupulousness, and that a man who could deliberately shut his eyes to the superior rights of one side or the other in a lawsuit, need not necessarily have been blind to his own interests. I do not for one moment mean so far to lose sight of the difference between the intellectual and the moral power as to suggest that the one implies the other. I would only remind the reader that success in the law, as in every other profession, has sometimes been known to depend on the energy with which a man can push his own advancement, and the coolness with which he can regard the claims of others. It is easy to imagine that Cyprian would look with envying eyes on the honours heaped upon Boethius, and that he would not be sorry for an opportunity of taking from him his share in the king’s affections and adding it to his own. And now with Boethius’s voluntary championship of the accused senator came an unexpected

chance. The hesitation (there is no question of reluctance, as Dr Hodgkin would seem to imply<sup>1</sup>) with which the 'Anonymus' tells us he extended his indictment to Boethius, may be accounted for by the flutter which the sudden appearance of that pattern of loyalty as the protector of treason would cause in the court, and further by a not unnatural doubt as to how the king would take an attack upon his Master of the Offices.

The event shows that his hesitation was baseless. Treason was abroad, and Theodoric meant to stamp it out, putting sternly aside all claims of friendship or of former services. And thus we see that as Boethius fell, involving in his ruin his father-in-law, Symmachus, and all his family, so Cyprian rose, carrying with him into the sunshine of royal favour Opilio, his brother, and Basilius, his connection, the former of whom shortly<sup>2</sup> received that same office of *comes sacrarum largitionum* which had become in a manner hereditary in his family.

Cassiodorus, who retained his post of quæstor, with its attendant duties of secretary and pamphleteer, under Athalaric, the boyish successor of Theodoric, writes in the warmest terms about the merits

<sup>1</sup> "With regret, but of necessity, Cyprian enlarges his charge."  
—*Op. cit.*, vol. iii. p. 545.

<sup>2</sup> In 527.



of a man whom we have lately heard Boethius denounce as a condemned felon. The letter, addressed to Opilio ('Var.,' viii. 16), is particularly interesting, as it appears to contain a covert allusion to the trial of Boethius.

"You are to enjoy," the king writes, "all the privileges and emoluments which were allowed to your predecessors. Heaven grant that those who stand firm in the strength of right action be not shaken by any machinations of calumny. Time was when even judges were harassed by informers. But do you put away fear, you with whom is no fault. Enjoy the fruits of your office. We lay on you the same honours that adorned your brother; do you imitate his faithful service. For in following him, you take honourable precedence of many. He was a man whose opinion was highly respected, whose steadfastness was proved. Under our great forerunner he bore himself blameless, and administered justice to the admiration of all." (Why, then, that sentence about the machinations of calumny, we are entitled to ask?) "It is easy to gauge the value of his services, for under a successor who had not known him, the whole court could not abstain from singing his praises."

In the companion letter of recommendation to the

senate ('Var.,' viii. 17), the friendly rivalry of the two brothers is held up to admiration. With characteristic tautology, Cassiodorus assures his readers that while the one preserves constancy in his friendships, the other makes a point of fulfilling his promises ("Amicitia ille præstat fidem; sed magnam promissis debet iste constantiam"); that the one is free from avarice, and the other a notorious stranger to covetousness. Both have been faithful servants of the king and trusted friends of their colleagues. Opilio's manner of life (*victus*) has found favour with the Goths, and his judicial decisions have satisfied the Romans. Indeed the fact of his having been so often chosen arbiter in private suits is sufficient testimony to the esteem in which his integrity is generally held.

An honourable alliance with the house of Basilius is also touched on. Here we have a possible allusion to that Basilius who was "long since expelled the king's service" (*vide supra*, p. 36). The name, indeed, appears to have been a not uncommon one at the time; but all the actors in this drama are so closely connected with one another, that we may with the greatest probability assume the identification. It may be mentioned here that in the 'Variæ,' iv. 22, 23, the case is discussed of two senators—



Basilus and Prætextatus—who are charged with practising magical arts. They were handed over for trial to a board, on which Symmachus served with four others; and at this point we lose sight of them, for there is nothing to show how the trial went. One thing, however, is certain—that disgrace and withdrawal from public life would, in the existing state of the law, immediately have followed on a sentence of guilty. In our absolute ignorance of the issue, it would be dangerous to insist too strongly on the coincidence; but at least it is not without the bounds of possibility that this trial for magic gives us the key to Boethius's objection to his informer Basilus, "*olim regio ministerio depulsus.*" Dr Hodgkin lays great stress on these letters of Cassiodorus, so flattering to the memory of the brothers Cyprian and Opilio; and he is inclined to attribute Boethius's passionate invective to the jaundiced mind of a student-statesman who, utterly unable to look upon things from any point of view but his own, would, when his vanity was affronted, sacrifice the cause of truth and the credit of his colleagues without a scruple. That Boethius was a man of harsh and hasty judgment, impatient of ignorance or dulness, unable to brook opposition in any form, I am prepared to admit. For instance, he calls his colleague

Decoratus, with whom he had been associated in some public office, "a wretched buffoon and informer"—"nequissimus scurra delatorque" (Cons., iii. pr. 4); what is more, he puts the unkind words into the mouth of his heavenly mistress. Now the only Decoratus we hear of at this date was a young man of great promise as an advocate, who had risen to be quæstor, winning in that capacity Theodoric's highest esteem and confidence. The king sought to honour his memory, for he died young, by advancing his brother Honoratus to the office he had left vacant. (We may be sure that Cassiodorus, who is here again our informant, will not let slip the opportunity of inserting a sententious remark about unconscious prophecy when he lights on two such significant names.) These official encomiums are always to be received with a certain reserve, but in this instance it would seem that the praise was not unmerited. A letter of Ennodius (iv. 27) testifies to the value set upon the young man's friendship by that worthy but wearisome bishop of Pavia.

But I do not see that we are justified, knowing what we do of the character of Boethius—of his high aims as a philosopher and a statesman, of his unshaken relations with Symmachus, the flower of

integrity and uprightness—in imputing to him such a gross and inexcusable misstatement of fact, to call it by its mildest name, as we are bound to do, if we believe Opilio's past career to have been spotless. It must be remembered that Cassiodorus is writing merely as the mouthpiece of a barbarian monarch, and that the letters of his Miscellany, for all their wealth of "wise saws and modern instances," do not carry much conviction with them on questions of moral character.

And if Theodoric, who, barbarian though he was, had an intimate knowledge of human nature, could be led away by the plausible representations of clever informers into an act of blind cruelty, such as the condemnation of Boethius and Symmachus undoubtedly was, it is not unnatural that his well-meaning but not very discerning secretary should have fallen into the same mistake, and have recommended to Amalsuntha, the daughter of Theodoric and mother of the young Amal, those men who had won her father's approbation, as worthy to hold high office in the state.

The rigid silence, barring these hints in the letter to Opilio, which he guards on the question of the trial, and which Dr Hodgkin interprets as unfavourable to the king's decision, does not, to my mind,

indicate anything more than an unquestioning adherence to his royal master's verdict, which as a true servant he must regard as irrefragable.

Gibbon's extraordinary statement that "the characters of the two *delatores*, Basilus and Opilio, are illustrated not much to their honour in the epistles of Cassiodorus,"<sup>1</sup> is not borne out by the facts. The quaestor, speaking for the king, does unhesitatingly hold them up to the admiration of his countrymen; but *malo cum Platone errare*, and I for one would rather have to condone an error of judgment or an easily explicable piece of time-serving in Cassiodorus, than be driven to brand Boethius a liar with his last breath.

Whatever view we may take of the trial of Boethius, whatever value we may place on his apology, it must be freely acknowledged that failure was the end of his career as a practical statesman. The teller of the story of his life has no words with which to close it other than those with which he began it—a real regret, that must be shared by all who even at this distance of time have learnt to know and admire "the last of the Romans," that he should ever have chosen to forsake the life of contemplation for which he was so excellently fitted, for

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, chap. xxxix. n. 95.

one of action in times when tact was more necessary to success than truthfulness, and at a court where the breath of suspicion was so quickly fanned into the desolating blast of hatred. And his was not that barren contemplation where the thought is of the inferior quality which finds its proper expression in action, but that kind which Wordsworth praised as producing works "which, both from their independence in their origin upon accident, their nature, their duration, and the wide spread of their influence, are entitled rightly to take place of the noblest and most beneficent deeds of heroes, statesmen, legislators, or warriors." For an insight into the man's personal character, with its excellent qualities of devotion to wife and children, of loyalty to his friends, and unselfish zeal in the cause of the oppressed, we are indebted to the letters of Cassiodorus and Ennodius and his own great work. But we may search the pages of the 'Consolation' in vain for the Christian virtues of humility and long-suffering. He reproveth himself through the mouth of his divine consoler for petulance and impatience: the hints he lets fall in the course of this book and elsewhere lead us to suppose that he was fully aware of his intellectual superiority over his contemporaries. It is doubtless true that every honest and sincere worker always

knows the relative value of his powers, and of the results produced by them. A self-consciousness of this kind is not in itself in any way repugnant to the spirit of Christianity; it is nothing but the grateful acknowledgment of God's loan of talents. It is also true that the vaunted modesty of great minds, from Socrates downward, is too often assumed, and the merest affectation. But the total want of sympathy with the ignorance of the mass of mankind which our author everywhere betrays, is essentially opposed to the teaching of Him who thanked God that He had revealed unto babes the things that He had hid from the wise and prudent.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE 'CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY.'

---

Rudolph Peiper has published a handy text with variants, &c., in the 'Biblioteca Teubneriana.' Leipzig, 1871. The vol. of Migne containing the 'De Cons.' is lxiii.

---

IT is a relief to turn from these gloomy details of suffering and death to the famous work for which we are indebted to that short year of prison life. My excuse for disregarding the probable chronological order, and taking the 'Consolation of Philosophy' before the religious tracts, lies in the obvious connection of that book with the sad story with which we have been occupied, in its indisputable authenticity, and in the larger insight it affords us into the character and mental attitude of the writer. For while, for reasons that shall presently appear, I cannot bring myself to see in the 'Consolation' Boe-

thius's confession of faith, or a tacit rejection of Christianity; while I look upon both it and the dogmatic chapters rather in the light of *prolusiones*, though of very different scope, and composed under very different circumstances,—yet it has for us the higher value in that it contains a fairly systematic, and in some measure original, scheme of philosophy. The recollection of earlier studies and modes of thought is so palpable in the various themes of the 'Consolation,' that the book may well stand as the summary of Boethius's metaphysic; and there are gleams of spontaneity amid its general artificial constraint, which are noticeably absent from the other writings of the great Roman translator. Thus the most important as well as the most grateful duty of the student of Boethius is to make himself early acquainted with this, his author's most characteristic utterance. To this end I purpose giving a short analysis of the five books: I shall then proceed to examine the philosophical system it encloses, endeavouring to show how far it was borrowed from existing systems, and to what extent it was influenced by that religion in which its founder was born and bred.



## BOOK I.

As Boethius lay in prison, longing for death to come and set him free from the misery of premature old age, and beguiling the weary hours with verse-writing, the favourite accomplishment of his happier days,<sup>1</sup> a mysterious visitor stood suddenly before his tear-dimmed eyes. It is a woman, whose gleaming glance and bright complexion are in strange contrast with the years her generally venerable appearance proclaims, a form belonging to a bygone time. Her stature is beyond description wonderful, for now she raises her head to knock against the sky, and now she shrinks to the common measure of men. She is clothed in a robe of her own weaving, whose gossamer web has stood the wear of ages, though there are rents in it that tell of rough usage at the hands of ignorant men. On the lower hem is woven a  $\pi$ , on the upper a  $\theta$ ,<sup>2</sup> and they are connected by a series of lines arranged like the steps of a ladder. In her right hand is a book, in her left a sceptre. The sight of the Muses who are

<sup>1</sup> It is tantalising to read in the *Anecdoton Holderi* of a *Carmen Bucolicum* by the same hand that penned the *De Consolatione*.

<sup>2</sup> Standing for *θεωρητική* and *πρακτική*. Boethius himself renders these two words by *speculativa* and *activa* respectively, in the first dialogue on the *Isagoge* of Porphyry.

waiting and weeping at the prisoner's bedside rouses her wrath, and she chases them away with words of contumely. Such sirens as they are not the fitting consolers of one who has been brought up under the shadow of the Porch and the Academy. She substitutes for their enervating elegies a sublimer strain of her own, gently reproving her hearer for his gloom and depression, and promising to cure him of his sickness. But first he must recognise who she is, and pronounce her name. Boethius gazes at her, but a strange lethargy binds his tongue, and it is not until she has wiped away his tears with gentle hand that he knows her for his beloved mistress Philosophy, the nurse of his early years and his oldest friend. He marvels at her deigning to leave her serene habitation in order to visit a poor prisoner; but she assures him that she has never yet abandoned those who truly love her. Anaxagoras and Zeno and Plato all enjoyed the consolation of her presence in their distress. But the physician must know the full extent of the patient's wound, ere she can lay on him her healing touch; and so she listens attentively to his story of the injustice and the wrong that have brought him to his present pass. The memory of his woes inspires Boethius; he cries aloud on God, the ruler

of the spheres, to declare why, when all things go their round unswerving and unchanged, man alone wanders at will, working wickedness; why the innocent lie helpless at the mercy of blind Fortune. His divine visitor hears him out, and then compassionates him on his banishment, or rather his self-imposed exile, from his true home. She has been aware of his wound long since, but it is deeper than she had supposed. Her remedies must be cautiously applied, and in increasing power, as the strength of the patient grows. He shall lay bare his inmost heart to her, and confess that indeed he knows not what he is, nor what man himself is. There is One above who rules and orders all things; but the manner of this ordering is beyond the ken of the sufferer's weakened intellect. Here, however, is a spark of good from which a bright flame may presently leap up. But it will need time.

## BOOK II.

Philosophy now proceeds to prove that in reality Boethius has no right to blame Fortune. He has taken upon him, fully aware of what he was doing, the yoke of her fickleness, whose very essence is mutability. All the possessions the loss of which

he is now lamenting are Fortune's own property, and she can withdraw them at will. She had showered upon him the blessings of friends, riches, knowledge, and renown. Had any one of her votaries received more at her hands? To these arguments he answers with the words which Dante borrowed and made immortal<sup>1</sup>—"Of all the miseries of Fortune, the cruellest misfortune is to have been happy once." Philosophy replies that there are remaining to him blessings as precious as those he has lost. The noble Symmachus still lives, unscathed save by the pain another's sufferings are causing him. Rusticiana is left, and so are the young consulars, in whom their father and grandfather live again. How few there are who would not gladly change with even his present sad condition. True happiness lies within the man himself, and not in the gifts of Fortune, whose nature is so changeful, whose value is so variable. He who is master of himself possesses a gift which he will never wish to lose, which Fortune will never be able to take from him.

To know or to be ignorant of Fortune's fickleness

<sup>1</sup> "Nessun maggior dolore  
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice  
Nella miseria."

is equally disastrous to the man on whom her favour falls; for all ignorance implies unhappiness, and this particular knowledge engenders gnawing fear. At this point in the colloquy the divine physician begins to apply her *remedia validiora*. What, she asks, are Fortune's gifts, and which of them carries happiness with it? Is it money? But money must leave the purse before it can purchase felicity; nothing is more graceless than avarice. Is it the flash of jewels, or the beauty of the land and its fruits? But no man can really claim these as his own. Is it position and power? But the attainment of these lies within the reach of the vilest of mankind. And as nature abhors contraries, gifts which fall to the lot of the wicked can have no real good in themselves. Is it a great name? Here Philosophy has laid her finger on a tender spot. Yes, cries Boethius. I want scope for action, to keep green and fresh the virtue that I know is in me. It is then explained how narrow are the limits of human glory. This earth is but a tiny speck in the vast system of the universe: how contemptible must the splendour of a single city, much more that of one of its inhabitants, appear to him whose gaze is familiar with the infinity of the heavens. In the time of Cicero the fame of the Republic, then in its

flower, had not spread across the Caucasus; how "cribbed, cabined, and confined" must have been the renown of even its noblest citizen. Again, what one time and one nation looks upon with approval, another will unhesitatingly condemn. So a man must be content with a name bounded by his own epoch, and known to his contemporaries only. As to the glorious title of philosopher, it is one thing for a man to cheat himself into the belief that he is one, but quite another really to deserve the name. However, Philosophy has at the last a good word to say for Fortune. When that cruel goddess changes her deceitful smile to a frown, and in so doing proclaims her changeful nature, then she is indeed true; then, and then alone, can she lead men back to the only Good, from which she has lured them away in the time of their prosperity.

### BOOK III.

The patient feels his strength returning under the inspiring words of Philosophy, and declares that he can support a yet further increase in the potency of her remedies. She thereupon leads him into a discussion of the supreme Good, and of the craving of humanity to attain to it. It is this that makes



them so eager for the superficial and fleeting pleasures of Fortune; the very diversity of their desires—some seeking riches, others fame, and so on—points to some sovereign Good which shall satisfy every longing.

All men, even the most degenerate, are impelled to seek Good, each in his own way, and with more or less discernment. But wherein lies the true Good, the object of their aspirations? Not in wealth, for in the amassing of riches a man must needs rob his neighbour. Nor yet in an honourable position, for the climbing to office involves the preliminary humiliation of the canvass for votes. Nor again in power, for that is a possession surrounded with intrigue and danger. And assuredly it does not lie in pleasure, for that implies servitude to the basest of all things, the body.

All these are insufficient, and but fragmentary parts of some great whole that contains them all. Before entering on the search for this whole, the Father of all must be invoked, without whose aid no undertaking can come to a successful issue. After the invocation follows the proof. God is good, for there is nothing better than He; nay, He is the perfection of goodness, and therefore the true Good must reside in Him. But happiness has been



acknowledged to be the true Good. Therefore happiness resides in God, and is none other than God; for accident cannot be predicated of Him, nor can He, who is best of all, be separated from the true Good. Men can to a certain extent participate in happiness, and in virtue of that participation attain to divinity.

All creatures make for happiness, and therefore seek God. Evil, notwithstanding the paradox, has no real existence; for God, who can do all things, cannot do evil.

#### BOOK IV.

Boethius confesses the truth and beauty of his teacher's words, but complains that the chief cause of his doubt and misery is still untouched. The fact that the universe is under the rule of a just and all-powerful God only makes the presence of evil in the world the more strange and lamentable; for evil *does* exist, if it be in appearance only, and its votaries succeed and flourish, while the good are often oppressed. It would indeed be direful, replies Philosophy, if in a well-ordered household, with which God's universe may fitly be compared, vile vessels were honoured and precious vessels despised.

But this is not the case. If our previous arguments hold, then it must follow that the good are always powerful, the wicked always powerless; for it is the essential characteristic of impotency to fall short of or miss the object of its aim. Now, while all men alike are conscious of the impulse towards Good, the good alone can attain thereto, the wicked never; for they start with a misconception of its nature, and an ignorance of the roads by which it may be reached. True, they may obtain the thing which their inclination leads them to seek, but never the thing which they really desire; for that, we have seen, is Good.

Again, it is quite wrong to suppose that the wicked are ever rewarded. In the mere loss of Good they suffer the most terrible chastisement that can be inflicted; their very freedom to work wickedness is a further aggravation of their punishment, and if their eyes were not blinded and their understanding darkened, they would rejoice in every correction laid upon them as one step more out of the mire in which they are plunged. Even the power which Philosophy does not deny that they possess—of a certain kind—is born of impotency, for they have power only over evil, and that is less than nothing. Plato was right when he said<sup>1</sup> the wise alone have power to do

<sup>1</sup> Gorgias, 507c.

what they will ; the wicked only arrive at the fulfilment of their inclination.

Nor is this all. The wicked cannot be said to exist any more than evil exists, for that alone *is* which keeps its nature and preserves its order. By disobeying the natural impulse towards Good, the wicked man has violated the law of his nature, and is become nothing more than a dead body, the ruin of a man that once was.

To return to the question of rewards and punishments, a threefold chastisement lies on the wicked, —firstly, in the will, secondly, in the power to work evil, and thirdly, in the accomplishment of the same. How gladly would I see them relieved of this burden, cries Boethius bitterly. It will disappear, answers Philosophy, even sooner than you hope, or they look for. For in the swift course of human life there is nothing comes so late that the waiting for it can appear long to an immortal soul. The great hopes and lofty scaffolding of wickedness often come down in unexpected ruin. But even supposing no such limit be set to wickedness, still if, as we believe, iniquity begets misery, a man must be ever the more miserable the longer he lives in iniquity. It is well for him that death comes quickly to put an end at once to his wickedness and his wretchedness.

After Boethius has acknowledged the fairness of both premise and conclusion, his teacher goes on to establish the theory which has already been put forward that punishment is a real benefit to the wrongdoer. He puts a question concerning the future punishment of the soul, and it must be allowed that the answer he receives is exceedingly vague and indefinite. "Dost thou not reserve," he asks, "any other penalties for souls after the death of the body?" "Assuredly I do reserve very grievous ones, of which, in my opinion, some, whose object is to punish, are rigorous; while others, whose object is to purify, are merciful. But I have no mind to speak now on this matter."

These discussions naturally lead on to the subject of Fate and Providence. The divine Intelligence, enthroned in the citadel of its own simplicity, hath devised a method for directing the variable order of things. Contemplated in its sublime and pristine purity, this method is called Providence; with regard to, and in connection with, the things it acts upon, it is what the wise men of old called Fate. In other words, Providence is the supreme Reason that orders all things; Fate is the instrument which, in the hands of Providence, binds together all things, and keeps them each in its proper place. Providence

holds all things in an equal embrace, however diverse, however numerous, they may be. Fate sets all things in motion, apportioning to them their convenient times, forms, and places. Fate is dependent on Providence and emanates from it, though the two are of very different character. It is by means of Providence that God assigns to everything that is to be done its stability and individuality. It is through Fate that He has His orders carried out at different seasons and in different ways. What the intermediary agents between Providence and Fate may be, Philosophy does not take upon herself to assert.

“Whether it be through certain divine spirits which wait on Providence that Fate is carried out, or by the soul, or by the submissive service of the whole of nature, or by the heavenly motions of the stars, or by angelic virtue, or by the varied skill of demons, or by some of these, or by all of them, that the chain of Fate is woven—this is certainly clear, that Providence is the motionless and simple mould of all that is to be, while Fate is the moving coil and temporal order of all that which the divine Simplicity has ordered to be carried out.”

In proposing these alternatives, Philosophy only wishes to emphasise the immobility of Providence as distinguished from the flexibility of Fate. The

relation between these two is further illustrated by the analogy of concentric circles. There are some things which rise above the order of Fate; thus those things which are firmly fixed close to the divine Simplicity stand without the moving order of Fate. That which lies farthest away from the primary Intelligence is entwined in closer meshes of Fate; and conversely, things are the more completely freed from Fate, the nearer they approach the hinge of all things. As reasoning is to the intellect, as that which becomes to that which is, as time is to eternity, as the circle is to its centre, so is Fate in all its moving succession to Providence in its motionless simplicity. It is Fate that so rigidly binds together cause and effect, that to our eyes there is sometimes an apparent confusion and misordering of things. We must remember that there does exist a method which directs and disposes all things for good. Nothing is left to wilful chance—everything is under the rule of Providence; and even those things which have fallen out of the path marked out for them, are directed into some other path by that order which embraceth all things. *'Αργαλέον δέμε ταῦτα θεὸν ὡς παντ' ἀγορεύειν*, and it is not given to man either to grasp with his intelligence or to explain in words all the intricate machinery of God's



designs. Let us be content with our knowledge that the same God who hath begotten all things doth dispose and order them for good, and that, while anxious to keep in His likeness all that He hath brought into being, He driveth all evil, and all that is unlike Him, beyond the bounds of His kingdom by means of the order of fateful necessity.

As a final conclusion, Philosophy argues that all fortune is good, since it only comes by God's good will. The approach of that which is falsely called ill-fortune should nerve the wise man to the fight—that fight against either fortune in which all you who are advancing towards virtue must engage; against ill-fortune, lest it overwhelm you, against good fortune, lest it undermine you. The middle way between the two must be boldly seized and held.

### BOOK V.

The six sections in prose and five in verse of this book are taken up with an elaborate discussion on the compatibility of man's freewill with God's foreknowledge in a universe where nothing exists without its proper cause, and where all is under the rule of a good and wise Governor.

But, asks Boethius, in all this rigid bond of cause



and effect is there no place for liberty of choice? For if God knows all things and cannot be deceived, that of necessity must come to pass which His prescience has foreseen. Thus freewill disappears and necessity takes its place. Communion with Him becomes impossible, prayer is rendered useless, for how can an earthly demand affect the course of things that have been already immutably fixed on high? Philosophy's answer opens with a definition of eternity, which, as distinguished from perpetuity, is the whole and complete possession of interminable life, and this can be attributed to God alone. Nothing that suffers the condition of time, though it neither ever began to be, nor should ever cease to be (as in Aristotle's opinion was the case with the world), nor yet though its life should stretch into an infinity of time, can rightly be called eternal. "And so if we would assign to things their proper names, we shall say with Plato that God is eternal, and that the world is perpetual." God, being eternal, includes in His divine perception all things that have happened, that are happening, and that shall presently come to pass.

Just as our seeing a man walking does not lay upon him any constraint to continue or to stop walking, so this foreknowledge of God does not

necessitate the actions which it contemplates. It must be called Providence rather than Previdence, in order that no confusion may arise between the free-will of man and the divine ordering of the world.

But this very consciousness that all our thoughts and actions lie outstretched before God's all-seeing eye doth lay on man a certain necessity—a necessity so to live that nothing he can do or think may be out of tune with the divine harmony of His rule. "Wherefore the freedom of choice remains inviolate for mortal men ; and those laws are not unfair which lay down rewards and punishments for wills bound by no necessity. Furthermore, there is One that looks down from on high, God, who hath foreknowledge of all things, the ever-present eternity of whose sight agrees with the future quality of our actions, assigning to the good reward, and punishment to the wicked. It is not in vain that we lay our hopes and prayers before God, for when they are right they cannot be without effect. Turn you from vice and ensue righteousness, uplift your mind to worthy hopes, in all humility direct your prayers to heaven. A strong necessity to live uprightly is laid upon you if you would not cheat yourself, since all your actions take place before the eyes of a Judge who seeth all things."

So ends the 'Consolation of Philosophy,' not, if I have read it aright, with any abrupt termination, as many have maintained, but rather with a serene and noble epilogue, which affords a grateful, and without doubt an intentional, contrast to the restlessness and petulance—for it is nothing less—that marks many passages in the earlier books. Philosophy has kept her promise and fulfilled her mission. She has raised her disciple gently and tenderly from the depths of depression and despair in which she found him to a calm and reverend trust in God. She has shown him the emptiness of earthly things and the sovereign beauty of heavenly things; and there is no indication that Boethius had it in his mind to pursue the search for comfort any farther. Nor does the fifth book betray any signs of haste or want of finish. True, it falls short of the fourth book by some two hundred lines, and of the third by close on four hundred; but, on the other hand, it comes within thirty lines of the second, and is longer than the first by near a hundred; while the comparative infrequency of the songs and lyrics with which the writer is elsewhere so willing to vary his prose, only points to a feeling in his mind that metre was not the proper vehicle for the careful synthesis and elaborate inductive development which was required

by so serious and unusual a subject as Freewill and its compatibility with Providence. Indeed, he has told us as much himself in a previous passage (Cons. iv., pr. 6), where—the question under discussion being the relations between Fate and Providence—he puts these words into Philosophy's mouth: "However much you may delight in the attractions of music and poetry, you must put off that pleasure for a little time while I weave a chain of orderly connected arguments."

The peculiar form of mingled prose and verse in which the 'Consolation' is cast is known to scholars as the *Satura Menippæa*, and takes its name from the Cynic Menippus of Gadara (fl. 60 B.C.)

Terentius Varro, the herald of the Ciceronian age, was the first among Latin authors to turn to account Menippus's method, which was excellently suited to his purpose—namely, a merciless and indiscriminate exposure, from a cynical standpoint, of all existing systems of philosophy. Varro's example was followed nearly a century later by the younger Seneca, who employed the *Satura Menippæa*, not much to his credit, for his scurrilous lampoon on the dead emperor Claudius. In his 'Apokolakuntosis Claudii' (the "Gourdification" of Claudius) the ungrateful philosopher does his best to vilify the memory of a

benefactor for whom, when living, he had no words to express his admiration.

The satire seems to have had some vogue during the reign of Nero, for besides this diatribe of Seneca's, we meet with it in Petronius Arbiter's great farrago of wit, wisdom, and obscenity, of which the principal fragment remaining to us is the 'Cena Trimalchionis.'

Boethius borrowed nothing from these works beyond the hint for the literary form in which to clothe his moral and philosophical maxims. Nor was his debt considerable to his immediate predecessor in the *Satura Menippæa*, Martianus Capella (fl. 430 ?), whose extraordinary book 'De Nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiæ'—which, by the way, enjoyed an almost equal popularity with the 'Consolation' during the early middle ages—is marked by an extravagance and pedantry to which the later writer offers no parallel even in his least happy moments. It may, therefore, be safely claimed for our author that he was the first to apply the form of the old Greek medley to the serious treatment of philosophical questions,—that he was the first to invest it with any sort of dignity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This account of the *Satura Menippæa* is mainly taken from Teuffel, *Geschichte der Römische Literatur* (1875), §§ 28, 3 ; 165, 3 ; 289, 7 ; 452.

Whereas his forerunners had heedlessly jumbled prose and verse, falling into the latter sometimes in the very middle of a sentence, he is careful to balance nicely the one against the other, choosing the moment with consummate art for the insertion of a song which shall carry on, and give emphasis to, the thoughts on which he has already exercised the full force of his pedestrian rhetoric and logical argument.

The regular appearance of poetry in the midst of a prose that (to us at least) is always difficult and sometimes dry, was doubtless intended to serve a double purpose : in the first place, to relieve the strain on the writer, without sensibly lowering the tone of the dialogue ; and secondly, to refresh the reader with a constant and agreeable variety. My excuse for dwelling at such length on the Menippæan Satire must be my conviction that the 'Consolation' owed much of the popularity it afterwards enjoyed to the form in which its hard sayings were presented. Most men, when they are for reading philosophy, like to have it conveyed to them in as easy and intelligible a shape as possible.

No one will question the inferiority of Capella's work to that of Boethius, both in point of subject-matter and execution. And what is true of him is equally true of the other writers of the time, one



and all. There is no doubt that Boethius brings us nearer to the Augustan age than any other Latin for three hundred years. To take his prose first. For all its affectation and excess of ornament,—I am here concerned with the 'Consolation' alone—it is temperate and simple in comparison with the bombast of Cassiodorus, which, in its turn, is infinitely preferable to the intolerable effusions of Ennodius. And yet these writers were reputed models of style, and on them fell the burden of the correspondence and literature of the court; while even Priscian, the famous Byzantine grammarian, betrays a strange unfamiliarity with good Latin.

If, then, we bear in mind how the intellectual vigour of the Latin race had been drained by three centuries of internal strife and corruption and deadly struggle with the barbarian; if we take into consideration the influence wrought by theological controversy, with its incessant demands for fresh terms with which to express thoughts that no writer of the golden age could ever have entertained—we shall be ready to forgive Boethius his occasional aberrations from the style of Cicero.

Obbarius has sagaciously remarked<sup>1</sup> that most of the expressions which offend an ear accustomed to

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, Proleg., i. 21.



the language of the Augustan period can be traced back to præ-classical authors. This tendency is not by any means peculiar to late Latin writers. A certain pedantry and archaic affectation is one of the commonest characteristics of every unspontaneous literature and art, and often follows as a natural reaction from the over-refinement and prejudice of a classical age. When we come to Boethius's verses, we feel at once that we are standing on surer ground. He displays an exceptional ingenuity and versatility in the employment of the various metres which he presses into the service of his Muse, and writes elegiacs, hexameters, asclepiads, sapphics, hendecasyllabics, and iambics, with equal address and correctness. His skill in this province of literature won the warm admiration of critics as fastidious as Casaubon and Julius Cæsar Scaliger, the latter of whom declared "quæ libuit ludere in poesi, divina sane sunt; nihil illis cultius, nihil gravius, neque densitas sententiarum venerem, neque acumen abstulit candorem. Equidem censeo paucos cum illo comparari posse."<sup>1</sup>

I do not suppose that the modern reader will be prepared to give an unqualified assent to this opinion of the great scholar of the Renaissance. But on the

<sup>1</sup> Poetices liber vi.

other hand, he will surely not be so unfair to our poet as to say with Sitzmann that there is hardly a verse in Boethius that does not seem to have been taken from Seneca. Boethius has borrowed freely from Nero's tutor, as Peiper's index at the end of his edition of the 'Consolation' testifies; nor indeed did he fail to lay Ovid and Horace, Virgil and Juvenal, under contribution when it suited him. But while he does not scruple to appropriate words and phrases, and sometimes whole passages, from the 'Medea,' from the 'Hippolytus,' from the 'Hercules Furens' and the 'Cætæus'—in fact, from nearly every one of Seneca's plays in turn—he generally manages to give them the impress of his own genius, and his imitation is hardly of a kind to justify the old German's hasty generalisation. He sometimes shows a terseness and a brevity which are absent from the work of the older poet. Take, for instance, the fifth metrum of the second book ("Felix nimium prior ætas"), and compare with it the descriptions of the former age in the 'Medea' (301 *seqq.*), the 'Hippolytus' (524 *seqq.*), and the 'Octavia' (390 *seqq.*),<sup>1</sup> where for the same idea that Boethius expresses in thirty lines Seneca employs seventy or eighty.

It is worthy of notice that the obligation of

<sup>1</sup> I quote from Farnabius's edition of the tragedies (London, 1624).

Boethius to his forerunners is most apparent in his treatment of mythological subjects; while in the metra of a purely philosophical character, such as iii. 9 and 11; v. 3 and 4, he owes nothing to any Latin poet. These at any rate show that he was quite able to walk alone. But there is a class of critic that takes a singular delight in running down similarities of expression in this and that artist. It should always be remembered that, as Mr Russell Lowell wisely says, the question of originality is not one of form but of substance; and that the greatest poets—Chaucer, Shakespeare, Molière—have been the most unblushing borrowers. Plagiarism, after all, is only blameworthy and in the nature of a crime, when the loan is not repaid with interest—when the imitation falls of the original; and a writer who can put a new dress on an old thought, though he may not lay claim to originality nor rise to true greatness, will always command the applause and gratitude of his fellow-men.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE 'DE CONSOLATIONE.'

---

*Authorities.*—Friederich Nitzsch, 'Das System des Boethius,' Berlin, 1860. A. Hildebrand, 'Boethius und seine Stellung zum Christenthume,' Regensburg, 1885.

---

## SECTION I.—GOD.

A THINKER of Boethius's mould and circumstances could not fail to be eclectic; and his philosophical system is a mixture of Platonism (both in its original form and as Proclus and Plotinus taught it), Aristotelianism, and Stoicism. To begin with the influence exercised on him by the Attic philosopher, we see that his conception of God is purely Platonic. To be sure, we seem to trace the teaching of Christianity in his treatment of some of the divine qualities—for instance, God's prescience in relation



to man's freewill. The compatibility of human freedom with a divine government of the world was not a question that disturbed the older philosopher at all, who suffered to pass unchallenged the apparent contradiction between that absolute freedom of choice which he claimed for the soul, and the involuntary character of vice and ignorance. But those who are anxious to derive Boethius's theory on this subject from a Christian source, are apt to overlook the fact that it is already present in the teaching of Proclus and the Neoplatonists. And although Boethius is clearly out of sympathy with these philosophers when they attempt to foist the old heathen gods into their system as an offset against Christianity, he has none of that uncompromising hatred of all that savours of Polytheism that distinguishes the early Christian controversialists.

With characteristic caution he keeps the *via media*, and in a highly significant passage (iv. 6, 51) exhibits a complete indifference as to the agency by which the divine commands are put in execution. But he is careful not to fall into the Charybdis of Pantheism in avoiding the Scylla of Polytheism—that is, as far as the Physic of the Stoics is concerned. Such expressions as *naturæ anima* (iii. m. 9), *natura rerum* (i. pr. 5; iii. pr. 4), are not the





utterance of a disciple of the Porch (whose all-pervading principle was immanent in nature), but are taken straight from the 'Timæus'—indeed the ninth metre of the third book is, in Nitzsch's words, nothing but *ein ganzer Abschnitt des Timæus versificirt*—and his natural law is simply the expression of the will of a transcendental God, who is over and above the world, the only Father of things, the producer of all natures.

On the other hand, phrases of this kind—and they abound—are very far from landing him on Christian territory. His "Father" of all things is a purely physical conception—the *πατήρ τοῦδε τοῦ πάντος* of the 'Timæus,' and something very different from the loving Father of the New Testament. But the Deity of the 'Consolation' is a much more definite being than the Deity of Plato's dialogue, who is merged in the Ideas which served Him as a copy for His universe; and although it would not be difficult to find passages both in the 'Timæus' and elsewhere to match the kindly firmness, the perfect knowledge, the righteous wrath, the care for His creatures, which Boethius attributes to God, there would seem to be no doubt that the Roman philosopher had a clearer notion than the Greek of God's personal existence. Thus he does

not shrink from the expression “to converse with God,”—*colloqui cum Deo*,—in speaking of the necessity and efficacy of prayer. It must be owned that such personal epithets as *præsens* and *amicus*, if not strictly Platonic, are applied to the Deity by both Cicero (‘Tusc.’ i. 27) and Seneca (‘De Prov.’ i. 44 ; ii. 6). Our philosopher, however, returns to Plato when he speaks of God as *livore carens* (iii. m. 9); and his use of the word “love” in such phrases as *cælo imperitans amor* (ii. m. 8) and *æternus et cunctis communis amor* (iv. pr. 6) is an echo of the *φίλια* of Empedocles, conveyed to us through the medium of the ‘Timæus.’ It is the concord that keeps the universe together, and has no sort of connection with the *ἀγαπή* of St John’s Gospel.

## SECTION II.—THE UNIVERSE.

Although neither the *χώρα* of Plato nor the *ἕλη* of Aristotle bear much resemblance to the dualism of Mani, still both one and the other philosopher were manifestly embarrassed by the existence of matter. It is now necessary to determine what position Boethius assumed with regard to this question; and here if anywhere we have a crucial test by which the Christianity of our author must stand

or fall. The Christian revelation distinctly states that "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Now Boethius quotes with approval the axiom "ex nihilo nihil"; and while he is careful not to include the efficient cause within the limits of this precept, he gives his emphatic assent to it as far as concerns the material substrate, and his thoughts seem to dwell with affectionate regret on the blissful days of philosophy when no one ventured to dispute its truth—"nam nihil ex nihilo existere vera sententia est cui nemo umquam veterum refragatus est" (v. pr. 1). Such an expression of regret would be impossible on the lips of an earnest student of the Bible. He goes on to develop the theory of the world's origin, not in any Christian spirit, but wholly under the influence of Aristotle.<sup>1</sup> Thus God is not only the cause but the end of all things (iii. pr. 12). All creatures naturally seek a sovereign Good—seek happiness. This impulse often takes a false direction, making them pursue some part of Good, such as wealth or fame or friendship, and fall short of that Good which is One, and comprises all the rest.

This highest Good or sovereign happiness must exist in reality, and not merely reside in the imag-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Nic. Ethics, Bk. i., *passim*.

ination;<sup>1</sup> the presence of an incomplete Good or of an imperfect happiness, which we know by experience is always with us, argues a complete Good, a perfect happiness, for it is not possible that the complete should grow out of the incomplete, but *vice versâ*.

We see here that Boethius does not attempt to prove the existence of God, but rather the existence of a perfect Good which must be identical with God. He does not start with the idea of completeness, and work out from it a proof of God's existence; he takes the existing incomplete as his point of departure. In a word, the implicit proof of God's existence is cosmological, and very different from the ontological proof put forward by Augustine. Over and above this proof there is the physico-theological proof, as Nitzsch points out, referring to the passage in iii. pr. 12, where Boethius gives the name of God to that something without which the created world could not hold together, nor be set in motion. ✓

Once again, the attributes of inaccessibility (v. pr. 3), simplicity (v. pr. 6), and purity (iv. pr. 6), which he predicates of his Divinity, are not drawn from the Christian vocabulary. "The eternal God

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Nic. Ethics, Bk. i. c. 6.

possesses and embraces in one instant the fulness of eternal life;" "In Him is life immovable;" "He sits enthroned in the citadel of His simplicity;"—expressions like these recall to one's mind the mental position of a Proclus rather than that of an Augustine.

Augustine had won his way by the spiritual experience of a lifetime to the clear knowledge of One who is absolutely good, who is absolute Unity, whom he could nevertheless approach and apprehend. Proclus's primary object was to keep God apart from the world of His creation. He is a pure, inaccessible, simple Essence,<sup>1</sup>—exactly the phraseology of Boethius, be it remarked,—and the Creator must be inferior to εἶν in so far as concerns the predication of energy and working power. To the same origin must be referred the *dæmonum varia sollertia* which Boethius speaks of as a possible intermediary agency between Providence and Fate, mentioning in the same breath with it *angelica virtus*, which is as certainly a trace of Christian, as the former is of Neoplatonic, influence. It is clear that Boethius was acutely sensible of the difficulty Proclus felt about confounding the transcendental Essence with the created world; accordingly we find him taking his

<sup>1</sup> De Prov., 50-52.

predecessor's Fate as the intermediary, dependent divinity, and his Providence as the primary Essence. In considering this point the reader must be careful to bear in mind the grand difference between the Neoplatonic and the Stoic doctrine of Fate. The disciples of the Porch looked upon *εἰμαρμένη* simply as one of the names of the all-pervading Principle, and identified it with Providence, *πρόνοια*, while the Neoplatonists held it to be distinctly inferior to, and dependent on, Providence. Boethius, here as everywhere else, takes his stand somewhere between the two extremes of opinion. Proclus arranged his divinity in three grades—(1) *Πρόνοια*, the pure Essence; (2) *Νοῦς*, the divine creative Intelligence; and (3) *Εἰμαρμένη*, which has the ordering of corporate and sensible things. Our philosopher identifies *Πρόνοια* with *Νοῦς*, and assigns to *Εἰμαρμένη* a higher place than that which it held in the Neoplatonic system: for him it is the expression of the divine Reason in its connection with the created world. The Stoics, as I have pointed out, regarded all three as immanent in nature, and as nothing but various titles of the Cosmic Soul. This naturally brings us to a closer consideration of God in His relation to nature. We have seen that Boethius does not exclude from his system a cer-



tain substrate, that his *prima divinitas* did not "in the beginning create" the world, but built it up<sup>1</sup> from pre-existing matter.<sup>2</sup> Impelled by no external causes, He ungrudgingly shaped it after His own divine image, and taught it to carry out the scheme of perfection in accordance with which it had been formed. Mutual love, *alternus amor*,<sup>3</sup> is the bond that keeps the whole together, while every being, under the impulse of a certain self-love implanted in it by Providence, seeks to maintain its own independent entity. Over all God sits enthroned, surveying the work with serene, all-comprehending eye, and fulfilling the promptings of His divine intelligence through the agency of Fate. For the time-relations between the Creator and the creation Boethius goes back to the Platonic distinction between perpetuity and eternity, from which Proclus and his followers had strayed through a misconception of 'Timæus,' 41*c*. They imagined that Plato assigned to the world a co-eternity with God, whereas he had only predicated of it a life of endless duration and not at all that simultaneous and complete comprehension of all time which is the characteristic

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Conditor et artifex rerum," i. m. 5. Cf. also iv. pr. 6; iv. m. 6.

<sup>2</sup> "Pepulerunt fingere causæ materiæ fluitantis opus"—iii. m. 9.

<sup>3</sup> The *φιλία*, *i.e.*, of Empedocles and of the Timæus.



of eternity. Boethius lays great stress on the incompleteness of the world, which can only afford to mortals a semblance of the true Good (*imagines veri boni*), inasmuch as having once *become*, it cannot last for ever (iii. pr. 9). Over and above these limitations to the completeness of the physical world, he mentions three agencies—Fortune, Chance, and Evil—which appear to restrict the sovereign rule of God in nature.

### SECTION III.—FORTUNE.

I say intentionally “appear to restrict,” because he loses little time in stripping these forces of all reality. For instance, Fortune, which he distinguishes from Fate, is merely an instrument in God’s hand for the correction and education of man, and however harmful and capricious she may appear to his limited intelligence, she is really good in whatever guise she comes.

### SECTION IV.—CHANCE.

Again, Chance, he tells us, far from being something that wilfully violates the divine order, is rather the fulfilment of one side of that order. If it were in no wise bound by a chain or sequence of causes,

it could have no existence at all, for "*ex nihilo nihil.*" Chance is, according to Aristotle's definition, "the unexpected event of an action brought about by a confluence of causes foreign to the object proposed." Now these concurrent and confluent causes are the effect of that order which proceeds by a necessary sequence, and, taking its rise in Providence, assigns to each and all their proper time and place.

#### SECTION V.—EVIL.

To the mind of Boethius evil is what it was to the mind of Plato, nothing but a shadow and a semblance; for God, who can do all things, cannot do evil. How, then, can evil exist? Certainly experience teaches us that something that we call physical evil is present with us, but, far from being evil in reality, it is an instrument for good, and its infliction is the greatest benefit that can be conferred upon the wicked.<sup>1</sup> Moral evil, however, presents a difficulty different in kind and in degree from physical evil, and the arguments advanced by Boethius to disprove its reality are somewhat feeble and commonplace. Thus, he speaks of the victims of moral evil as non-existent, as mere moral corpses, not seeing

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Prot., 323, 4; Gorg., 472, 3; 477; 479; 508; 523; 525.

that the power to strike dead or wither implies a certain lively vigour and reality.

Although he seems to be so far in accord with Christian doctrine that he looks upon moral evil as in no way limiting God's goodness, and on sin as the fruit of man's own wilful disobedience and free choice, as a disease of the soul and nothing more,<sup>1</sup> still he is very vague and doubtful on this point, and chooses rather to confess the wickedness of the majority of mankind than to include, with Augustine, the whole world in one sweeping condemnation. Indeed, he recognises the possibility of man's attaining to perfection, and that without any assistance from divine grace. The notion of a world lost in sin and in need of a Redeemer is one that does not suggest itself to him at all.

#### SECTION VI.—PSYCHOLOGY OF THE 'CONSOLATION.'

The stoical conception of the soul as a blank tablet which receives external impressions from the material world, finds no place in Boethius's psychology. On the contrary, he dismisses it with contempt and opprobrium, and adopts in its stead the Platonic doctrine of Ideas at rest within the soul, which only

<sup>1</sup> "Ad iudicium veluti ægros ad medicum duci [sc. improbos] oportebat, ut culpæ morbos supplicio researent."

need the quickening power of sensible perception to arouse them. In developing this portion of his scheme Boethius adheres to the time-honoured division of science into sense, imagination, reason, and intelligence. Man is a rational and mortal creature, akin to God through his reason and understanding. Although he may become like God in virtue of his powers of reason, he may never hope to attain to that intelligence which is the peculiar characteristic of the Deity; sense and imagination are both of them subject to reason—nay, they are absolutely dependent on it for their very existence. At this point we seem to catch upon the air the faint premonitory sounds of the great battle of the middle-age philosophy, the controversy between the Nominalists and Realists. It will be the business of a later chapter to discuss the nature of the point disputed, and to inquire more particularly into the position our author occupies with regard to the rival camps. I fancy he will be found halting somewhere between them, uncertain with which of the two to cast his lot. The influence of Plato, which it is easy to see was strong upon him as he wrote the 'Consolation,' inclined him to declare in favour of Realism in that book; but he only touches lightly on the question, and recourse must be had to other writings of his,

notably the two commentaries on the 'Isagoge' of Porphyry, before a definite opinion can be formed one way or the other.

*A* "The soul is of divine origin,<sup>1</sup> and it is upon a constant communion with the divine elements of knowledge that all its science and knowledge depend.<sup>2</sup> By an inborn impulse it is led to seek Good, though in many cases it falls short of its goal through weakness, misconception of its duty (iv. pr. 2), or contact with the material body.<sup>3</sup> Now the highest Good is God, and he who attains to the Good becomes in a measure divine through participation."

The road by which this highest Good is to be reached is not very clearly indicated.

"... e cælo descendit γνῶθι σεαυτόν,"

wrote Juvenal; and although Boethius does not actually cite the Delphic maxim, he implies assent to it by his remarks on the ends which are set before humanity. A man's first duty is to know

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Hic [*i.e.*, Deus] clausit membris animos celsa sede petitos"—iii. m. 6.

<sup>2</sup> If iii. m. 9 is founded on the Timæus, v. m. 3 may claim a Platonic origin with equal right. The theory of reminiscence, which is the prominent theme of the Meno, is closely reproduced—*e.g.*,

"Sed quam retinens meminit summam  
 Consultit alte visa retractans  
 Ut servatis queat oblitus  
 Addere partes."

<sup>3</sup> "Obruta mens cæcis membris"—v. m. 3. Cf. iii. m. 6; iv. m. 7, &c.

himself in order that he may shortly become convinced of the utter worthlessness of external goods (ii. pr. 5 and 6). He must conquer Fate; he must free his soul from the fetters of the body and let it soar to heaven on the wings with which Philosophy will fit it, calling the while on God to help him in his effort to rise above the earth (v. pr. 3 and 6).

This, then, is the ethic of Boethius,—to seek the highest Good in God, to lead a pure life, knowing that every movement and every deed takes place in His eternal presence.

The thought is noble, the words are not wanting in inspiration, but no one surely will have the hardihood to maintain that either thought or expression are particularly Christian. A moment's consideration of his doctrine of evil will bring this out into stronger relief. To it, as has been said above (p. 91), he denies all real existence, and so precludes the necessity of redemption for sinful man; for sin brings its own punishment with it, and passion has power to weaken but not to destroy.<sup>1</sup> Wickedness is a sickness of the soul which should move our pity rather than our indignation.

<sup>1</sup> Contrast "convellere sibi que totum [hominem] extirpare non possunt" (i. pr. 6) with "timeate eum qui potest et animam et corpus perdere in gehennam"—Matt. x. 28.







## SECTION VII.—FREEWILL AND PREDESTINATION.

This theory of sin, so different from the Christian doctrine of original sin, brings us by a natural transition to freewill, which belongs to all intelligent beings by right of their reason and power of discernment. All, however, do not possess it in an equal degree, for while heavenly substances are endowed with unrestricted freedom of choice and an incorruptible will, human souls hold these gifts in varying proportion, according as they rise above the material to the spiritual. Sometimes they are too weak for the burden, and then, losing all intelligence, they sink and become involved in chains of deepest slavery (v. pr. 2).

Theorising such as this flows straight from the Platonic spring, and one would search long and vainly through the library of Christian philosophy to find its equivalent there.

It has already been seen (p. 71) how Boethius tried to reconcile human freewill with divine pre-science by comparing and contrasting God's knowledge of that which is to be with our knowledge of that which is. In support of his argument he takes as examples the fulfilment of some natural law, as the sun rising, or the performance of some obvious



act of freewill, as a man walking. It only remains for me to point out that the solution of this problem is simply an amplification of the Platonic and Neoplatonic doctrine. Proclus so far modified the teaching of his master, as he found it in 'Phædrus,' section 248, that he assigned to the soul either an ethereal or an earthly body. But he went a step further and predicated of it, even in pre-existence, a body corporeal. Boethius, with his wonted discretion, strikes a compromise, accepting Plato's incorporeal soul *as well as* both the ethereal and the material body with which Proclus clothed his souls, reserving yet a lower grade for the soul that is blinded by sin.<sup>1</sup> This side of Boethius's psychology deserves one word more. He distinctly says (v. pr. 2) that man's immaterial spirit is most at liberty when it is employed in the contemplation of the divine Intelligence: it enjoys less freedom when it has entered into a body, and still less when it is bound to earthly members, the depth of slavery being reached when it gives itself over to vice and loses sight of God (*vide supra*, p. 94). We have here no Christian allegory

<sup>1</sup> We might possibly find here a recollection of Augustine's doctrine of the necessity laid on natural man, were it not for the contradictory passage already quoted, p. 72, which savours too strongly of Pelagianism.



—as Pierre Cally<sup>1</sup> would have us believe, rendering the *beatae mentes* of Boethius by “souls in contemplation,” and seeing in the other two classes a reference to man’s state before and after the fall—but simply an extension of the Platonic theories I have just been discussing.

—The scheme of reward and punishment laid down in the fourth book of the ‘Consolation’ speaks for itself and needs scarcely any comment. No one can fail to be struck with the Stoical ring of these passages: “studium ad peiora deflexens, extra ne quaesieris ultorem; infeliciores eos esse qui faciant quam qui patiantur iniuriam” (iv. pr. 4);<sup>2</sup> while the observations on punishment after death at once recall the ‘Gorgias,’ 525 B, and ‘Phædo,’ 113 D, though, indeed, the notion of “pœnalis acerbitas” is altogether foreign to Plato.

Catholic commentators like Suttner and Hildebrand are naturally disposed to lay stress on the “purgatoria elementia,” and entirely overlook the passage in the ‘Gorgias,’ which is so significant that I may be excused if I reproduce it intact: *αἰσι δὲ οἱ μὲν ὠφελοῦμενοί τε καὶ δίκην δίδόντες ὑπὸ θεῶν τε καὶ*

<sup>1</sup> In his edition of the Consolation, published in 1680 (Delphin).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Juvenal, xiii. 1, *seqq.*; Seneca, De Ira, ii. 30, 2; iii. 26, 2.



ἄνθρώπων οὗτοι οἱ ἄν ἰάσιμα ἁμαρτήματα ἁμαρτῶσιν · ὁμως δὲ δι' ἀλγηδόνων καὶ ὀδυνῶν γίγνεται αὐτοῖς ἡ ὠφελεία καὶ ἔνθαδε καὶ ἐν Αἴδου· οὐ γὰρ οἶόν τε ἄλλως ἀδικίας ἀπαλλάττεσθαι.<sup>1</sup>

It now remains to be seen what are our philosopher's views on the resurrection of the body, that sheet-anchor of fifth-century theology. He undoubtedly believes in an immortality, as his allusions to punishment after death declare, but he only admits, with Plato, the immortality of the soul. The ethereal body, which he borrows from Proclus, applies only to the pre-existence of the soul, and there is not a word to warrant our extending it to the dead, or identifying it with the spiritual body of 1 Cor. xv. 44, *seqq.* And such a material resurrection as both Jerome and Augustine looked for would have shocked his metaphysical habit of mind; for however practical and dialectical Boethius shows himself in his other earlier writings, in the 'Consolation' he is chiefly concerned with the search after an ideal which shall lift him out of himself.

We have now come to the end of our survey of the philosophical system of Boethius, and must pause a moment to gather up the threads that will

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Thompson's note on this passage, and therewith Seneca, Cons. ad Marc., cap. 25.



lead us out of the labyrinth. It is often well to call in the aid of synthesis at the close of a process of analytical inquiry.

The system of the 'Consolation' may be succinctly described as Platonic, modified by Aristotelianism; and as a Roman of Boethius's tastes and education could not help having an intimate knowledge of Cicero and Seneca, there is nothing surprising in the strong dash of Stoicism that tinges the whole. But while he often echoes the doctrines of Proclus and Plotinus, he studiously avoids any attempt to blend Christ with Plato, such as was made by Synesius and the pseudo-Dionysius in the fifth and sixth centuries.

We find him in strenuous opposition—notwithstanding all that Hildebrand has to say to the contrary<sup>1</sup>—to the Christian theory of creation, and his Dualism is at least as apparent as Plato's. We find him coquetting with the anti-Christian doctrine of the immortality of the world, and assuming a position with regard to sin which is ultra-Pelagian and utterly untenable by a Christian theologian. We find him, with death before his eyes, deriving consolation not from any hopes of a resurrection, of seeing God in this flesh, but from the present con-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 86-94.

tempt of all earthly pain and ill which his divine mistress, "the perfect solace of wearied souls," has taught him.

And certain expressions which are looked upon by some commentators as so many finger-posts, scattered up and down throughout the five books with careful carelessness, and pointing to an intention in the writer's mind rather Christian than otherwise, prove on closer inspection to be but false guides.<sup>1</sup> Let us examine them one by one.

(a) "Purgatoria elementia" (iv. pr. 4). This I have already dwelt on long enough (*vile supra*, p. 98), and may pass on without further remark to—

(b) "Quo vero quisquam ius aliquid in quempiam, nisi in solum corpus, fortunam loquor, possit exercere" (ii. pr. 6). Here we have, not a reminiscence of Matt. x. 28, "Fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul," but simply an abridgment of Seneca's words, "errat siquis existimat servitatem in totum hominem descendere . . . pars meliora . . . excepta est . . . corpus itaque quod domino fortunæ tradidit" (Sen., *De Benefic.*, iii. cap. xx.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is only fair to say that Hildebrand recognises the truth of all the ensuing points.

<sup>2</sup> Cf Sen., *Cons. ad Helv.*, cap xi. *ad finem*.

(c) "Tulit crimen iniqui justus" (i. m. 5). Our thoughts naturally go back to "the just for the unjust," but Boethius is here merely enlarging on the unrighteous sentence passed on himself.

(d) "Iam vos secunda mors manet (ii. m. 7). The "mors secunda" of which he sings refers to the loss of renown; it may indeed be compared for the thought with Eccles. ix. 10: "Quodcunque facere potest manus tua, instanter operare; quia nec opus, nec ratio, nec sapientia, nec scientia erunt apud inferos, quo tu properas"; but certainly not with *θάνατος ὁ δεύτερος* of the Apocalypse.

(e) "Huc omnes pariter venite capti quos ligat fallax . . . libido." (iii. m. 10). These remarkable words appear at first sight to have been, and very possibly were, suggested by the Sermon on the Mount. But though the wording is similar, the feeling is very different.

(f) "Est igitur summum bonum, quod regit cuncta fortiter, suaviterque disponit" (iii. pr. 12). This is strangely like Wisd. viii. 1: "Attingit vero a fine usque ad finem fortiter et disponit suaviter"; indeed it is altogether too like to be anything but a reminiscence. But just as in the last quotation, so here, similarity of expression by no means implies identity of thought. And if we regard Boethius as a Chris-

tian by outward profession at least, there is nothing surprising in such echoes of Scripture. It is rather a cause for wonder that in the last utterance of a writer whom we believe to have produced serious disquisitions on subtle points of Christian doctrine, such echoes are not far more frequent.

(g) "Nam ut quidam me quoque excellentior ait: ἄνδρος δὴ ἱέρον δέμας αἴθερες οἰκοδομήσαν" (iv. pr. 6). Many and various have been the conjectures offered as to who this "some one more excellent than Philosophy" can be—almost as numerous as the attempts at emending the manifestly corrupt text.<sup>1</sup> Sources as wide apart as Hermes Trismegistus and God speaking to us by the mouth of Christian Theology have been suggested—this last by Hildebrand (*op. cit.*, p. 141), who, while he despairs of hitting on the right reading, declares the thought to be Christian. Now to my mind both thought and expression appear thoroughly Platonic, and Hildebrand's arguments to the contrary altogether unsatisfactory. There is a passage in the Second Alcibiades, § 292, which bears a remarkable resemblance to the words in question. Socrates says: Ἄρ' οὖν οὐχὶ εἰδώς τι πλέον ἡμῶν ὁ

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Peiper's critical note on the passage. The "quidam me excellentior" he does not hesitate to identify with Parmenides, and compares Parm. *περὶ φύσεως*, 116 and 146, *seqq.*

ποιητής, οὐ καὶ ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ λόγου ἐπεμνήσθην, τὰ δεινὰ καὶ εὐχομένους ἀπαλέξειν ἐκέλευεν ;<sup>1</sup>

The phraseology, indeed, does recall that of Ps. xxxiv. 20, Wisd. iii. 1, &c., just as the “*vasa vilia et vasa pretiosa*” of iv. pr. 1 recall the words of St Paul in 2 Tim. ii. 21, and the “*Huc omnes pariter venite*” of iii. m. 10, the words of Christ in Matt. xi. 28. And we should perhaps explain them as an unconscious reminiscence of familiar expressions, whose original application Boethius was not particularly careful to bear in mind. It is significant that he always acknowledges a debt to Plato or Aristotle: even in places where he does not mention them by name, the teaching of the Academic or of his great pupil is framed in language that leaves no shadow of a doubt as to the source from which it springs.

The circumstances of Boethius’s life make it almost impossible to believe that he was other than a professing Christian before he fell in disgrace. How can this profession be reconciled with the system we have just been examining—a system which, while it is not directly antagonistic to Christianity, bears the impress of absolute indifference to it? The general opinion on the subject may be roughly divided into

<sup>1</sup> Since writing the above, I have seen a note by Mirandol in his translation (Paris, 1861), where this passage of Plato is quoted.

two classes. First, there are those for whom the 'Consolation' is an insurmountable obstacle to the theological tracts; secondly, there are those who accept the tracts and regard the 'Consolation' as a sort of palinode, the notification of the writer's final withdrawal from the Christian faith. I shall reserve all argument with the former of these classes until the tracts come under consideration. The other view makes it exceedingly difficult to account for such an unusual change of front. We should have to believe that Boethius felt that after all, logic, whether applied to questions of metaphysic or theology, was but cold comfort in the prison-cell or on the scaffold; and so explain the pronouncedly Platonic turn his philosophy takes in the 'Consolation,' after having been based on Aristotle hitherto, and fostered by a constant worship of dialectic. We must then class Boethius with those hearers of the Word whom our Lord likened to the stony ground on which the blessed seed falls, who have no root in themselves, and stumble under the stroke of persecution. One could better have understood an open attack on the religion that has profited him so little—some fierce revulsion against a faith that failed him so utterly in his hour of need. Now there seems to me to be an alternative explanation at once simpler



and more in accord with common experience. The 'Consolation' is intensely artificial. Every page of it smells of the lamp. The verses in it have the smoothness and polish of marble, but they have also its coldness. Here is nothing that suggests a heart beating itself out against the bars of its prison. The prose, though it sometimes rises to a certain height of passion, often stiffens into the dull formality of a logical treatise. So, too, many of the themes elaborated, the tricks of Fortune, the misery of the wicked, and the like, are hardly of a kind to lead one to look on the work as a definite statement of ultimate religious conviction. There is really little depth of argument in the earlier books, and the later ones are in the main rather speculative than devout.

Bearing all this in mind, let us now see what Boethius was doing when Philosophy entered to him. He was writing poetry to pass the time and ease his pain. This, to my thinking, gives the clue to the motive of the 'Consolation.' The gloom and silence of the dungeon, the terrible consciousness of desertion by his friends, the enforced idleness, would have driven any ordinary man mad, much more one of Boethius's vast mental activity and insatiate appetite for work. He tries verse-writing, but finds that it



does him more harm than good, leaving him exhausted and unstrung; his present excited mood is not the one for theology; a philosophical dialogue with occasional interludes of song shall be his diversion, and help him to bear the ghastly companionship of his own thoughts. Whenever his bitterness overmasters him and he is giving way to the sense of his wrongs, he can call in a physician who will enable him to pause and look dispassionately on the uncertainty of human wishes and his miserable state; who will brace his faculties, and perhaps recover for him something of his ancient skill in reasoning. This consummation is certainly reached towards the end of the dialogue, where the pupil proves himself by no means unequal to the severe catechetical discipline to which his mistress subjects him. But the passages where the writer lets his heart speak and gives his brain a rest, of which the fine peroration to the fifth book is a notable example, show that Boethius, had he chosen, might have touched a chord within us which no amount of logical thrust and parry can set vibrating.

Whatever the motive of the 'Consolation' may have been, it remains a very noble book, and is, for me at least, by far the most interesting example of prison literature the world has ever seen.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE THEOLOGICAL TRACTS.

---

*Authorities.*—Hildebrand and Nitzsch, as before. The analysis of each treatise has been made straight from the Latin text in Peiper's edition.

---

WE now come to the religious writings of Boethius—that side of his versatile genius which will, I fear, prove the least attractive to the general reader. But although their intrinsic value may not be of the very highest, although they betray many faults of youth and inexperience (I have heard them described as so many Hulsean essays!), still they have a distinct interest attaching to them as coming, if we believe the ‘Anecdoton Holderi’ and the almost unbroken tradition of the middle ages, from the same hand that wrote the ‘Consolation of Philosophy,’ and as forming one more link in the chain that connects Boethius with the Schoolmen.

The best way of bringing out this interest will be, I think, to give a careful analysis of them, in order as they come, preserving just so much of their original form and style as will illustrate the author's method, and keeping back all detailed criticism of their respective merits and shortcomings until the survey of each one is finished.

There are five tracts generally ascribed to Boethius, and this is the order in which they almost invariably appear in the MSS. :—

I. De Trinitate.

II. Utrum Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus de  
Divinitate substantialiter prædicentur.

III. Quomodo Substantiæ bonæ sint.

IV. De Fide Catholica.

V. Liber contra Eutychem et Nestorium.

This list corresponds very well with that of the 'Anecdoton Holderi' and with the testimony of Alcuin (735-804) and Hincmar of Rheims (ninth century), the former of whom makes mention of I. and quotes from it,<sup>1</sup> while the latter was evidently familiar with I., II., and V. Bruno of Corvey (tenth century) ascribes I. and V. to Boethius. Notker of St Gall (†1022) translated passages from I. Haimo (tenth century) couples I. with the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide supra*, p. 2.

'Consolation'; and Abelard (†1142) gives praise to Boethius's books on the Trinity and against Nestorius. The evidence of the succeeding ages is of secondary importance, as it is simply a reiteration of the above. Suffice it to say that until the beginning of the last century the authenticity of the dogmatic treatises remained practically unchallenged.

Having said so much, I will proceed to the analysis of—

### I.—DE TRINITATE.

It opens with a preface addressed, according to the consensus of MSS. titles, to his dear friend and father Symmachus, in which the writer confesses the interest he has for some time past taken in certain difficult questions of doctrine. Their truth, indeed, has already been established by Augustine, but he hopes to throw some further light on them by means of his logical training. These few pages are intended for his critic's eye alone, and not for the crude, unappreciative judgment of the general public. He begs him to read them in the same spirit as that in which they have been written. No man may hope to attain perfection. He has done his best, and can do no more.

*Chapter i.*—The Catholic faith on the Holy Trinity

in Unity is this. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. Therefore Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, and not three Gods.

Now the Arians, who usurp the name of the Catholic religion, ascribe grades to the Persons, and so introduce plurality into the divine Substance. For the essence of plurality is difference. Three or more things can differ (1) by race (*genus*), (2) by kind (*species*), (3) by number (*numerus*). Diversity of accidents is the cause of the difference by number. Thus three men do not differ by race or by kind, but only by their accidents; and in the absence of all other accidents there will always remain the accident of place. Therefore accidents are the cause of plurality.

*Chapter ii.*—The speculative sciences are three in number—viz., *Physics*, which employ rational methods, and comprise those things which have motion and whose form is separated from their matter neither by abstraction (as in mathematics) nor in reality; *Mathematics*, which employ systematic methods (*disciplinaliter*), and comprise things which have no matter and therefore no motion; and *Theology*, which employs intellectual methods (*intellectualiter*), and deals with the absolute pure form at once immaterial and motionless—in other words, with the divine



Substance. All being depends, not on matter, but on the form which is imprinted on it. For example, a statue is called a statue, not on account of the bronze of which it is cast, but because of the form it has received; and the bronze is not called bronze because of the earth of which it is made, but because of the form imprinted on it. Finally, the earth is not earth *quâ* formless matter, but *quâ* dryness and weight. But the divine Substance is pure form without matter. It is what it is, and is absolutely simple; other things not being what they are, for each owes its being to the parts of which it consists. Thus man is body *and* soul, not body *or* soul. In part, then, he is not what he is. But that which has no part is only one, and is what it is. That is really *one*, also, wherein is no number, which has no substrate, because it is pure form and subject to no accidents; for it is the matter on which form is imprinted that receives accidents.

*Chapter iii.*—The threefold repetition of “God” in naming the Trinity does not involve number. For there are two kinds of number—one with which we enumerate, the other which resides in the things enumerated. Of these two, the former always involves a certain plurality; the latter does not involve any. When ye name the same thing three times,





calling it each time by a different name, we do not enumerate three different objects, but one and the same object—as, *e.g.*, when we say *ensis, mucro, gladius* (each of which words designates the same object), or repeat thrice the word “sun.” So we must make mention of the divine Substance in a threefold manner, but carefully avoid describing it as a threefold God, as do the Arians when they draw distinctions of merit between the Persons, and thus destroy the unity of the Godhead. The examples from material objects given above prove that not every repetition of a unit involves plurality, but they do not prove that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are only different titles of God, as *ensis, mucro, gladius*, are only different names for one and the same thing; for while Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are indeed the same thing, the Father is not the same person as the Son, &c. And here we are confronted by another kind of plurality. We must be very careful how the different predicates are referred to God.

*Chapter iv.*—According to Aristotle there are ten predicates—substance, quality, quantity, relation, place, time, condition, position, passivity, and activity. The signification of each of these depends on the subjects with which they are associated. In



movable. So, too, the category of place is no real attribute. True, we can say of a man that he is in the market, but that is an accidental and not a real attribute, like "white" or "long." Now God is not in any place, but all places are present to Him. The other accidentals do not concern Him in any way.

*Chapter v.*—The category of relation (*ad quid*) will not help us much to realise the absolute qualities of a thing; some external must come to its assistance with which it may be compared. Now the nature of a thing is not altered by relation. Take, *e.g.*, the relative conceptions "master" and "slave." If you remove "slave," you remove at the same time the predicate of master, but the real nature of the subject remains the same as before. This may seem to apply equally well to the category of quality, but in reality it does not—*e.g.*, white loses its being when the quality of whiteness is taken from it. So, then, relative predicates do not affect the real nature or being of the thing with which they are associated. Relation, however, indicates a reference, not necessarily to something else, but sometimes to the same thing. For instance, if I approach a man on the right, he becomes left with regard to me without being left by nature; if I approach him on

the left, he becomes right with regard to me without being right by nature. He is right or left simply by my means.

If father and son, then, are relative predicates, and only differ from one another by their relation to one another, these predicates involve not a *real* but only a *personal* difference in God's nature. God did not become Father by the addition of something to His nature: the procreation of the Son was natural to Him.

Thus the three Persons are separated by no difference, but where there is no difference there can be no plurality, hence there must be unity. So is the unity of the Trinity established.

*Chapter vi.*—The Trinity is secured by the removal of simple unity through certain relations; the Unity is maintained through the absence of all diversity in the Divine nature.

Applied to God, then, relation signifies the relation which a being bears, not to something external, but to itself. It is true that such a relation is not to be found in our dependent natures; but that is due to *cognata alteritas*. We can only hope to comprehend this mystery by an exercise of simple intelligence (the divine instrument of understanding) and God's help.

*Epilogue.*—The writer anxiously awaits his critic's judgment on this his attempt to illustrate with logic and reason a position which involves the truth of the Faith. Prayer must make up for any deficiency in the work.

We have seen that the evidence of the MSS. and the tradition of the middle ages from the ninth century onwards both speak in favour of Boethius as the author of the tracts. The *onus probandi* therefore lies with those who impugn their genuineness, and I might rest satisfied with defending them against the attacks of such. But I hope with Hildebrand's aid to be able presently to show that they have, besides, certain positive claims on internal grounds to be considered the work of the Roman statesman.

The main objection to their Boethian origin is the 'Consolation' itself, and the argument supporting the objection amounts to this,—that a man who, with death staring him in the face, turned for comfort to heathen philosophy, could not have written on points of Christian doctrine.

I hope I have shown with sufficient clearness that the 'Consolation' is all too artificial to be looked upon as a serious confession of faith. But even to those who prefer to look upon it as such, who see

in it the sum of all Boethius's thought and aspiration, the existence of these dogmatic chapters should not cause offence. It is surely both unfair and unreasonable to insist that all a writer's achievements, however different in kind and date, should be measured by the same rigid standard; and a change of opinions, a modification of religious views, does not involve a loss of identity. We are at liberty, it must be remembered, to assign to each and all of the tracts whatever place we see fit in the list of Boethius's works, and there is no reason to prevent, but rather every reason to encourage, our putting them at the outset of his career.

*Secondly*, it is urged that the writer of the 'De Trinitate' displays a dependence on Augustine such as we may not look for in Boethius.

But Boethius's genius was imitative rather than initiative, and nothing if not dependent. His best energies were spent on the adapting the writings of the Greek philosophers to the requirements of Roman readers. And if in philosophy he was content to take his stand on Plato and Aristotle, why in theology should he be deemed too proud to stoop to ask help of Augustine?

*Thirdly*, we are told that we know of nothing in the life of Boethius which could have led him to



take up arms in defence of the doctrine of the Trinity.

We know very little indeed of the life of Boethius, but there is no need to ransack his writings or those of his contemporaries for the motive of the tract before us. His reasons for writing on the great Christian mystery are given as clearly as words can speak at the beginning of chap. v.: "Age nunc de relativis speculemur pro quibus omne quod dictum est sumpsimus ad disputationem."

The application of the Aristotelian predicate "relative" to the Godhead—this was the object he had in view. Whether he attained this end or fell short of it shall shortly be discussed.

*Fourthly*, "this tract has no polemical or practical tendency, such as is never absent from all disquisitions of that time on the Trinity. Arianism, on the contrary, is treated from a merely antiquarian point of view, suitable to a century later than the sixth."

Because we possess controversial treatises of the fifth and sixth centuries on the Trinity, shall we therefore say that there could not be one of that date written in an uncontentious spirit? The answer to the preceding objection covers this one also. Boethius had it not in his mind to defend the Chris-

tian religion against the onslaught of any particular heresy, but simply wished to illuminate it by logic and exact reasoning. There was indeed no call for him to undertake the duties of an Œcumenical Council—no fresh schism which demanded a fresh declaration of the Faith. For Arianism, although it was not yet crushed out of existence, only lingered on among the barbarians—the Vandals in Africa and the Goths in Italy—who were moved more from policy than of conviction to continue their opposition to the Nicene Creed. Theodoric's reign had been a model of toleration, and it cannot have been until years after the composition of this tract that his abortive attempt to persecute the Catholics took place. The Eastern Church had long been at rest from the fierce disputes that distracted it under Valens; and Augustine, with his 'De Trinitate,' had finally dispelled the difficulties that veiled the Trinity in Unity from the minds of the Western Fathers, whose vision was not so clear in the contemplation of the mystical side of Christianity as that of their more imaginative oriental brethren.

*Fifthly*, the style is said to be different from that of Boethius, its only point of likeness lying in its scholastic colouring. Now although I do not think

that much stress can be laid on similarity of style where there is any suspicion of forgery or imitation, yet the 'De Trinitate' has much in common with the other authentic writings of Boethius. Nitzsch himself, although it is he that puts forward this objection, admits that the *Schreibart* of the pseudo-Boethius is not unlike that of the real man. There are, of course, expressions in the tract that must jar upon the sensitive student of the Golden Age; but even the pages of the 'Consolation,' which bears signs of such careful elaboration, and is written in better Latin than had appeared at Rome for many a long year, are full of barbarisms.

The Roman idiom, for which this critic says the author has no feeling, seems to me to be not altogether absent from the Introduction, while it would hardly find much scope in so unclassical a subject as the predicaments in their application to God. The strangeness of most of the terms is excused by the necessity laid upon the writer to give expression to entirely new thoughts. That Boethius did not hesitate to experimentalise in this way, is seen from his First Dialogue on Porphyry.

Besides these main objections, there are one or two isolated phrases to which Nitzsch takes par-

ticular exception. The most noticeable of these is the sentence, "Ad aliquid vero omnino non potest prædicari" (*sc. de Deo*), which, if it be not a gloss, as Nitzsch himself suggests, does certainly expose the writer to the charge of obscurity and confusion, when he is presently discovered discussing the manner in which Relation can be predicated of the divine Essence. But the confusion is due, not to a momentary forgetfulness or want of logic on the writer's part, but to the radical defect of his work. Any attempt to apply the categories to God must end in disaster; and although Boethius struggles manfully with them, and tries to simplify matters by postulating a twofold relation—1, that of one thing to another, *ad aliquid*; and 2, that of a thing to itself—he is left after all at variance with Aristotle, whose definition of Relation is "that which is predicated of, or stands in relation to, something else."<sup>1</sup>

Another phrase upon which Nitzsch bases a substantial charge is the *secundum philosophos* of chap. iv. He submits that this is an expression which Boethius, himself a philosopher, would not have used. The objection does not seem to me to merit much remark. In the Introduction the writer had

<sup>1</sup> Categor., c. 7.

acknowledged the debt he owed to philosophy generally, and therefore saw no necessity for encumbering his little book with the list of the wise men who attributed immortality to the heavenly bodies—for this is the point at issue—especially as he intended it solely for the eyes of a learned friend who would readily understand his allusion.

I should perhaps say a word on the apparent contradiction between the division of the speculative sciences in this tract and that which Boethius gives in the First Dialogue on Porphyry. There he classifies them as *intellectibilia*, *intelligibilia*, and *naturalia*.<sup>1</sup> How are these to be reconciled with the theology, mathematics, and physics of our treatise? The *intellectualiter* of the tract corresponds, of course, to the *intellectibilia* of the dialogue, and *rationaliter* will apply to *naturalia*, but *disciplinaliter* does not seem at the first blush to have much connection with *intelligibilia*. I believe the true solution of the difficulty to be that suggested by Hildebrand, who sees mathematics included in the class *intelligibilia*. In other words, this *intelligibile* is the epithet applied to every object of knowledge to be comprehended by *intelligentia*, as distinguished from *intellectus* (the divine instrument of intelligence, which

<sup>1</sup> In Porph. a Vict. trans., Dial. 1, Migne, lxiv. c. 10.

alone can raise us to the contemplation of God), and from *ratio*, which is only capable of comprehending *naturalia*—the objects, that is, of the material world.

Let us now consider what the internal evidence is for attributing the 'De Trinitate' to Boethius.

In the first place, the division of Difference into the generic, specific, and individual, is exactly the division we find in the translation of the 'Topica' and in the commentary on the 'Isagoge.'

In this case, not only the thought but the mode of expression is identical. It may be objected that this identity is due to the familiarity of the forger or imitator with Boethius's work. And I am ready to concede that the coincidence, though remarkable, is not convincing. An identity of thought conveyed in different terms would better serve my purpose. But this I find a little later on in the tract, when one of what we may call Boethius's pet theories appears in a form unknown to any of his other writings. It is the contrasting of God's eternity with the perpetuity of the world—a Platonic doctrine which he had made peculiarly his own, and which he intrudes into both the 'Consolation' and the 'De Trinitate' at a point where it is not essential to the development of his argument. It cannot, indeed, be said to be out of



place in the 'Consolation,' v. pr. 6, where Boethius is examining the condition and means of knowledge of the divine Substance, but it is developed at greater length than the occasion strictly requires. But in the 'De Trinitate,' where his primary object is the relative in its application to God, he goes out of his way to treat of the predicaments of time and place. In both works the thought is referred to the ancient systems: in the former, Plato's name is given as its originator; in the latter, the general expression *secundum philosophos* is used.<sup>1</sup>

The 'Consolation' teaches us to say with Plato that the world possesses life without limit, and must be called perpetual; while God embraces at one glance the fulness of life, and He alone can rightly be termed eternal. With Him there is perfect immovability, the consequence of an eternal Present.<sup>2</sup>

The 'De Trinitate' gives as the opinion of philosophers that the heavenly bodies are always. So, too, is God; but the word "always" means something very different when applied to Him to what it does when applied to His creation. It is, in fact, hardly appropriate to Him, inasmuch as it suggests a certain change and movement. The divine

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> "Vitæ immobilis presentarium statum"—Cons., v. pr. 6.



Now is ever-present, immovable, and so produces eternity.<sup>1</sup>

In view of the exact correspondence of the thought in the tract, "God is eternal, Time is always," with the thought in the philosophical book, "God is eternal, the world is perpetual," we can hardly do otherwise than admit the probability of a common authorship.

To sum up, I am convinced that in the 'De Trinitate' we possess a genuine work of Boethius—not, indeed, written in the full vigour of his maturity, but before his logical apparatus, so to say, was in working order. Is there any reason to prevent our looking upon it in the light of a learned exercise, suggested, if not imposed on him, by his guardian Symmachus? I do not see that this view would militate with the MS. title, which, although it speaks of the writer as a patrician, and of consular rank, no doubt ran originally, "Domino Patri Symmacho De Trinitate Boethius." A copyist who knew anything of the life of the famous statesman, and the titles he died possessed of, would be loath to leave his name thus barely stated.

<sup>1</sup> "Divinum vero nunc permanens neque movens sese atque consistens æternitatem facit"—De Trin., iv.

II.—UTRUM PATER ET FILIUS ET SPIRITUS SANCTUS  
DE DIVINITATE SUBSTANTIALITER PRÆDICENTUR.

The treatise ‘De Trinitate,’ if once established as authentic, carries with it the two letters addressed to John the Deacon, whom tradition unhesitatingly identifies with Pope John, fellow-victim with Boethius to the wrath of Theodoric. A glance at the synopsis of the MSS. in Appendix A. will at once show how nearly connected all three writings are. The variations in the titles of II.—some MSS. announcing the theme in full, others in an abbreviated form, while the rest give nothing but the name of him to whom the letter is addressed—are easily explained. For in the first place, the motive of the letter is given in the opening sentence; and secondly, the presence of the author’s name at the head of the ‘De Trinitate’ would be a good excuse for not repeating it in a work that follows as a sort of supplement. This argument will apply equally well to the ‘De Hebdomadibus,’ which the MSS. are content to introduce with the words, “eiusdem ad eundem.” That the ‘Anecdoton Holderi’ vouchsafes no specific information about these two letters need cause no surprise. “Capita quædam dogmatica” is a sufficiently exact description of a couple of

treatises, of which the one is too brief and too dependent to deserve a separate notice, while the other is too metaphysical to be included in a list of religious writings. For the medieval tradition with regard to them I must refer the reader to pp. 258 and 259.

The fact that John the Deacon is chosen to grace the title rather than John the Pope is favourable to the theory that the tracts were juvenile compositions. The contention that the copyist must have thought that the letter "Utrum Pater" (II.) was addressed to John before his elevation to the pontificate, seems to me a desperate piece of special pleading.

Nitzsch has the same objections to II. that we have already heard from him on the subject of I. He adds, however, to the charge the count of unwarranted and unacknowledged borrowing from Augustine. It is true that our writer says nothing that Augustine had not already said, and that this letter is evidently inspired by the 'De Trin.' of the great African Father. But this only goes to prove what I have already suggested, that in matters theological Boethius was a mere amateur, fond of trying his hand on difficult questions of dogma, and anxious to have the opinion thereon of friends more competent to judge than himself. It must be ad-

mitted, in passing, that he seems pretty well convinced of the force of his reasoning and conclusions.

The writer is careful not to stray from the lines laid down by Augustine, and claims for his structure the foundations of the Catholic faith (“*viam indaginis hinc arbitror esse sumendam unde verum omnium manifestum constat exordium, id est ab ipsis Catholicæ Fidei fundamentis*”).

No one will deny that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, taken separately, are substances; but if we take them all three together, we get not three substances but one. This unity of the divine Substance cannot be split up or divided in any way. Now it is not the union of three parts making up a whole, it is simply one. Everything that can be affirmed substantially of the Divinity as a whole may be affirmed of each of the Persons composing that Divinity—*e.g.*, the predicate God. Now this predicate is a substantial predicate, and so are those others of truth, justice, incommutability, wisdom, goodness, power, and all such as can be applied to each of the Persons separately. Those predicates, on the other hand, which can be affirmed of the individual Persons but not of the collective Divinity, cannot be called substantial (*e.g.*, the term Father cannot be affirmed of the Son nor of the Holy Ghost, and so *mutatis*



*mutandis*). They are rather relative terms, for the Father must be some one's father, the Son some one's son, and the Holy Spirit some one's spirit. Similarly, the Trinity cannot be substantially predicated of the three Persons, for neither Father nor Son nor Holy Ghost are Trinity, but the Trinity consists in the diversity of the Persons, the Unity in the simplicity of the Substance, and a term which takes its origin from persons cannot be applied to substance. Wherefore Father, Son, Holy Ghost, Trinity, are terms which can only be affirmed relatively of God. All such other attributes as have been mentioned above can be affirmed substantially of God.

“I pray you let me know if all this be in keeping with the Faith; or if you happen to hold a different view on any point, consider my words yet closer, and where you can, make faith join hands with reason.” One would think that there was little to note in such a straightforward statement of a not very difficult doctrine; yet it was his commentary on this tractate (and on the longer letter to Symmachus) that exposed Gilbert de la Porrée to the charge of heresy brought against him by Bernard of Clairvaux at the Council of Rheims in 1147. Gilbert held that God's essence, divinity, and grandeur were





not God, but the form which made him God; while Bernard maintained the orthodox belief that the divine Essence, Form, Nature, Truth, Divinity, and the like, were God—for if Form were not God, but that which made God, then it would be greater than God.

Bernard praised the orthodoxy of our treatise; and, indeed, though Boethius does not go so far as the French bishop in his identification of the attributes with God, he affirms them substantially of the Divinity.

Gilbert extended to God the same arguments that he was fond of applying to man, that as man is man *quâ* form, so God is God *quâ* form; that the Persons did not make God by themselves, but by the Divinity with which they are identical. But Boethius never tried to assert that the three Persons were not God by themselves, but only that *Trinity cannot be predicated substantially of God*.

### III.—QUOMODO SUBSTANTIÆ BONÆ SINT.

The origin of the second letter to Deacon John was on this wise. John had asked Boethius<sup>1</sup> to explain somewhat more fully (*Postulas ut paullo . . .*

<sup>1</sup> It will be noticed that I assume for the moment that this letter was really written by Boethius to John. The question of authenticity will be discussed hereafter.

*evidentius monstrem*) the essential goodness of substances—a question which had come up in the course of the “*Hebdomades*,”<sup>1</sup> and which, from its very strangeness, demanded a further development. Boethius promises to do his best, and makes excuse for brevity and obscurity by his wish to avoid the ridicule of the unintelligent multitude. He proposes to treat the subject on mathematical lines, and accordingly lays down nine preliminary axioms. To save space, I will only give those ones that are necessary to a clear comprehension of my analysis of the tract.

“5. *Diversum est tantum esse aliquid et esse aliquid in eo quod est. Illic enim accidens hic substantia significatur.*”

<sup>1</sup> Hildebrand (*op. cit.*, p. 289, *seqq.*) finds in this word not merely a reference to the author’s classification of his shorter works (as Migne, *ad loc.*), but the name of a literary society, of which Boethius, Symmachus, John, and probably Cassiodorus were members, meeting once a-week to read papers and hold discussions on philosophical and theological subjects. He regards all the tracts as papers read before the society, or a further development (as in this case) of questions suggested at its meetings. This interpretation, if it be the right one, as I am inclined to believe, would justify the writer’s anxiety to keep the results of his learning and research to himself and his friends, and explains the wilful obscurity of his style; for a reader with the discussion of the subject fresh in his mind would have no difficulty in filling up any gaps in the reasoning. Any way, it throws a new light on the cultivated society of Rome under Theodoric, and brings us into close sympathy with this little band of friends who thus laid the foundation of those literary and philosophical societies with which we are so familiar to-day.

“ 6. Omne quod est participat eo quod est esse, ut sit. Alio vero participat, ut aliquid sit: ac per hoc id quod est participat eo quod est esse, ut sit. Est vero, ut participat<sup>E</sup> alio quolibet.

“ 7. Omne simplex esse suum et id quod est unum habet.

“ 8. Omni composito aliud est esse, aliud ipsum est.”

Armed with these axioms, he begins by proving that substances are not good by participation nor by essence, and that therefore they are not good at all,—a fallacy which he loses no time in upsetting by the demonstration that they *are* good, not indeed by essence, but by virtue of existence (“in eo quod sunt, bona sunt”).

*Proof a.* All things make for Good; everything makes for that which it is like; therefore all things are good.

Now they must be good in one of two ways—either by participation or by substance. If by participation, then they are not good in themselves, and so they do not make for Good. If not by participation, they must necessarily be good by substance. But those things whose substance is good are good in respect of that which they are; but they owe all that which they are to real Existence

(axiom 5). Their existence, therefore, is good. But if existence be good, those things which are, are good in virtue thereof; existence and goodness are identical terms for them. Substantials, therefore, are good, and being good, they must be like the supreme Good (axiom 8), and so are that Good itself, since nothing can be like Good save Good itself. Hence all things that are, are God, for God is the supreme Good. "Quod dictu nefas est." Wherefore substantials are not good; goodness is not in them, therefore they are not good by right of existence. Neither are they good by participation, therefore they are not good in any way. -

*Proof b.* There are many things which, though they cannot be separated from matter in reality, can be separated by an effort of the mind and considered abstractly—*e.g.*, the properties of a triangle can be conceived apart from matter. In imitation of this mathematical process, let us abstract the notion of goodness from the supreme Good. Let us now repeat our first proposition, that all things that are, are good, and see in what way they could be good if they had not derived their goodness from the supreme Good. Now their goodness is not identical with their existence, for if, for example, we take a substance which is good, white, heavy,

round, we must admit that each of these qualities springs from a different cause : if each were identical with the substance, then weight would only be another name for colour, colour for goodness, and so on. Then *esse* and *aliquid esse* would be two different things, and substances would be good without in the least degree possessing goodness itself. If, on the other hand, they were none other than Good and had no attributes but goodness, then they would not be things but the causes, or rather the cause, of things; for goodness pure and simple is the characteristic of the one sole Good. But they are not simple, nor are they independent, but derive their existence from the will of the only Good. Now in the case of the prime Good, goodness and existence are identical; the secondary Good derives its existence from the prime, the source of the existence of all things. Herein lies the solution of the difficulty; though things be good in virtue of existence, yet they are not like the prime Good. If their goodness did not come from It, they might be good, but not in virtue of existence. They might, for instance, be good by participation (as a white thing is white, a round thing round, &c.); but their existence could not be good unless it were derived from Good. And so, after we have mentally ab-

stracted the prime Good, we see that things which derive from It may be good, but not in virtue of existence. Furthermore, since they could not exist really (as distinguished from abstractly) unless the true Good had produced them, therefore their existence is good. And unless they had derived from that Good, though they might be good, yet they could not be good in virtue of existence, since they would be *outside* Good, and not *from* it.

Now we need not say that white things are white in virtue of existence, for they take their being from the will of God, but not their whiteness—since He who made them is good, indeed, but not white. So they are simply white because such was the will of One who is not white; but those things which He willed should be good are good in virtue of existence. It might be thought that on these grounds all things should be just, since He is just who willed that they should be. This is not so; for to be just has reference to an act, to be good has reference to existence. Existence and action are indeed identical with Him, but not with us who are not simple (axioms 7 and 8). Although it is not possible that with us goodness and existence should be identical, still it is possible for us to be good “in eo quod sumus.” (So *Proof a* is wrong.)



In a word, all things are good, but all things are not just. Good is a general term, just, a specific; but species cannot be applied to all things.

Wherefore some things are just, others are something else, but all are good.

Is there anything in the method, temper, or thought of this letter that would warrant our seeking some other source for it than the intercourse of Boethius with his friends? The mathematical proof is exactly the one which we might expect that he, an acknowledged master in the science, would be likely to employ. That he did employ it sometimes is shown by the following passage in the 'Consolation' (iii. pr. 10): "I will go a step farther" (it is Philosophy who is speaking on the *summum bonum*), "and following the example of geometricians, who deduce from their preceding demonstrations consequences which they call *πορίσματα*, I will present thee with a sort of corollary." We meet with the same contempt for the irreverence and frivolity of the common herd, the same proud reserve, the same shrinking from publicity, that characterise the book on the Trinity.

Lastly, one of the principal themes of the 'Consolation,' the striving of all created things after God,



and their derivation from God (iii. pr. 11 and 12), runs all through the little work before us and receives an almost identical treatment. A reader who bears in mind the foregoing analysis will at once see the intimate connection of its arguments with these sentences of the 'Consolation': "Dost thou allow, or dost thou not allow, that everything that is good, is good by participation of Good? I allow it" (iii. pr. 11).

"All things then seek unity? They do. But I have proved that unity is identical with the highest Good? You have. All things, then, seek the highest Good, which may henceforth be defined as that which all things seek" (iii. pr. 11).

#### IV.—DE FIDE CATHOLICA.

Before entering upon an examination of the 'Liber contra Eutychem et Nestorium,' I must say a few words about the 'De Fide Catholica,' which immediately precedes it in most MSS. It consists of a brief survey of Bible history and an exposition of the great truths of Christianity, such as the doctrines of the Trinity, of the redemption of a lost and sinful world, of Christ's twofold nature and single person, of the resurrection of the body,—in

dealing with all of which the heresies of Arius, Pelagius, Mani, Nestorius, and Eutyches are severally refuted. It ends with a statement of the duties and hopes of the Church militant, looking, as it does, for the coming of Christ and a union with Him and with the angelic host on high. A single reading of it is sufficient to convince one that this is no work of Boethius's. Thought, style, and language are all against its authenticity, while the external reasons for its rejection are overwhelming. Up to the ninth century it is unknown, and it is found in MSS. of the tenth, without title and without those glosses with which the other tracts are so plentifully adorned. It was absent from the document which Gilbert de la Porrée employed for his commentary on Boethius, and Abelard makes no mention of it. Indeed, Renatus Vallinus, in the Leyden edition of the 'Consolation' and tracts (1656), is the first to give it the title under which it appears in subsequent editions. Luigi Biraghi adduces for it the evidence of a diptych at Monza. (I describe it from one of the lithographs in Biraghi's book.)<sup>1</sup> This represents a man seated, with toga disarranged and an expression of deep melancholy on his face; his left hand clasps

<sup>1</sup> "Boezio filosofo," &c. *Vide supra*, p. 10.

a roll; at his feet, to right and left, are two tablets inscribed with letters. The writer claims to have succeeded where Gori<sup>1</sup> and Frisi<sup>2</sup> both acknowledged themselves defeated, and deciphers the tablets as bearing the names of the 'Consolation' and a book against Basilius the informer, each signed with the name, and setting forth the rank and honours, of our philosopher. The writing on the roll is declared to be "In fide Jhesu maneam," and thereon is founded a long defence of Boethius's martyrdom and the genuineness of the 'De Fide.' After all that has been said on the subject, no one will be ready, I suppose, to reopen his mind to the worn-out belief that Boethius was a martyr; and even if Biraghi's conjectures be correct, which cannot be decided away from the diptych itself, they prove absolutely nothing with regard to this undoubtedly apocryphal book. In a twelfth century MS. of the works of Boethius in the Cambridge University Library (Dd. 6, 6) this tract is ascribed to *Sancto Severino*. This may possibly give the key to a solution of the difficulty. There were upwards of a score of *Sancti Severini* before the seventh century, of whom one was the famous Apostle of Noricum, and another, Bishop of Cologne (?) and the author

<sup>1</sup> Thesaurus vet. dipt., ii. p. 248.

<sup>2</sup> Mem. di Monza, vol. iii.

of a *Doctrina De Sapientia*.<sup>1</sup> May it not be this last—he is at any rate the sort of man—to whom we should refer the ‘De Fide’? A scribe knowing the name Severinus chiefly in connection with A. M. Severinus Boethius, the reputed martyr, would easily have been led into combining the tract in question with other works of an apparently similar nature. I have no doubt that on inspection other MSS. would be found to bear the same title.

#### V.—LIBER CONTRA EUTYCHEN ET NESTORIUM.

In this, the longest and indubitably the most interesting of the Boethian tracts, we have a work of a very different character. Animated by a certain religious ardour which we may vainly look for in the rest, it bears traces of a finer touch and a more thorough mastery of the subject in hand. It is, in a word, quite worthy to take an honourable place beside the letters of Leo and Cœlestine as a protest against the heresies which caused the first great schism between the Western and the Eastern Church. Moreover, it betrays a considerable originality of thought and treatment, whereas the treat-

<sup>1</sup> So says Pezsius, *Anecd. Thes.* iv. part 2, p. 1. See, too, Fabricius, *Bibl. Lat. Med. et Inf. Æt.*, s. v. “Severinus.”

ise on the Trinity and the letter to Deacon John are simply elaborations of Augustine's theme. Here theology is in no way sacrificed to philosophy, although, as we shall presently see, it is on the development of certain logical sequences that the value of the work depends. I shall proceed as usual to analyse the whole before attempting to consider the method of treatment or the probable circumstances of its composition.

*Introduction.*—The writer begins by telling of a certain stormy assembly at which he was present when a letter from a bishop combating the heresy of Eutyches was read and discussed. Interest in the subject and surprise at the gross ignorance of most of the audience led him to consider the question more profoundly, and he now lays the result of his cogitations before his friend (Deacon John?) for his judgment and sanction. His object has been in the first place to confute the errors of Eutychianism and Nestorianism, and in the second to establish the Catholic faith on the nature and person of Christ. He must begin, however, by defining what he understands by these two terms.

*Chapter i.*—Nature must be thrice defined to match the threefold ways in which we are accustomed to employ the word.

1. Nature is the totality of all things, be they substances or accidents, which can be comprehended by man's understanding. But the term must not be restricted to objects perceptible through the medium of the senses. It is applicable to God and to matter as well (by matter the writer undoubtedly means Aristotle's first matter, that which can be discovered by human understanding, not that which discloses itself to pure intellect).

*Or*, 2. Nature is applicable to substance only. All accidents are thus excluded, and it becomes simply that which can do or suffer. Now Aristotle confines this term to bodily substances only. All accidents are thus excluded from nature, which must accordingly be defined as the principle of movement, acting by itself and not through any intermediary accident.

*Or*, 3. Nature is the specific difference that clothes any object with its distinguishing form. This last view is tenable if we confine our attention to one thing, whose essential and distinctive peculiarities are summed up in the expression "its nature."

*Chapter ii.*—Reverting to definition 1, the writer shows that the conception nature embraces a far wider field than the conception person; for accidents can never be endowed with personality. He next







divides substances into the corporeal and the incorporeal, but quickly leaves the former to dwell on the latter, which he subdivides into animate and inanimate beings. Animate, sentient beings are either intelligent or unintelligent. The term person can be applied only to individuals: of all earthly creatures, man is the only one to which it can be applied. In placing God and the angels in the same class with man, as he presently does, he departs from his original premise, which separated corporeal from incorporeal beings.

*Chapter iii.*—Person now receives a more accurate definition. It is the indivisible substance of a rational, understanding nature. Hence it follows that a person must be both rational and individual. The etymology of the word person next engages his attention, and he takes the opportunity of laying stress on the superior flexibility of Greek as compared with Latin. *Persona* is of course a translation of *πρόσωπον*, the actor's mask, but the full meaning which we attach to the word is rather to be found in *ὑπόστασις*. It is always best, he observes, to go back to the Greeks for a clear understanding of such conceptions, for they originated with them, while the Latins only know them through translation. So he proceeds to give the derivation of *essentia* and *subsistentia*,



the one from εἶμι through οὐσία, the other from οὐσιώομαι through οὐσίωσις. These last terms can only be applied to universal and generic ideas whereas ὑπόστασις and *persona* apply to individuals alone, because nature subsists in them only as a receiver of accidents.

He ascribes to matter, following the directions of Aristotle, the potentiality of existence, which potentiality becomes actuality by the agency of form. Upon it all being depends in order to become a substance—an individuality.<sup>1</sup> As it would be confusing to bestow the title of ὑπόστασις, *substantia*, on unintelligent beings, a special term, *essentia*, has had to be invented to designate the higher forms of existence.

He next considers the above conceptions in their relation to God and man. Beginning with man, he shows that he possesses (1) essence, because he is; (2) subsistence, because he is not an accident received by another object; (3) substance, because he is capable of receiving accidents himself; (4) personality, because he is an intelligent individual.

To God, on the other hand, belong (1) essence, for He is the source of all things; (2) subsistence, for the same reason that man possesses it; (3), being, for

<sup>1</sup> Cf. De Trin., c. ii.



He is being and a definite being. This last attribute comprises (3) and (4) of man's attributes. Our author's next sentence clears him from the charge of Tritheism, to which his last conclusions might seem to expose him. Substance, he says, in the sense of that which is subject to accidents, cannot be predicated of God, for He is the origin of all things. It is further true that the three hypostases or substances which he attributes to God are not quite in accord with the teaching of the Church. And he himself recognises the difficulty ("nisi tres in Deo substantias ecclesiasticus usus excluderet"), but his object is to show that substance cannot be applied to God in the same sense that it is applied to man, and not to ventilate any heretical opinion.

*Chapter iv.*—Nestorius held that each of Christ's natures, the human and the divine, demanded a separate personality. The effect of this belief is not merely to divide Christ into two, but even to destroy His identity altogether; for a distinct name can only be given to that which possesses individual unity. The second consequence of the Nestorian error is the disappearance of all miracle in God becoming man. The human nature in Christ would be due to that want of inner communion with God which is the cause of our humanity; and the miracle performed



by God in Christ's person would be no greater than that which He has often manifested in the persons of the saints, each of whom would thus become a very Christ, not in the metaphorical but in the real sense of the word. The divine and human natures of Christ, if not combined in the unity of a person, must stand further apart than man does from the beast, which both belong to the same natural family of living beings.

The result of such conclusions as these would be the upsetting of the whole fabric of the Christian faith. For Nestorius, by denying that God could clothe Himself in our nature, deprives mankind of the *need* of a redeemer, and God could only redeem that nature which He had taken upon him. And so the Old Testament were all in vain ; and the words of the prophets, which told of the coming of a Christ to save the world, were spoken to no purpose.

*Chapter v.*—He now gives his closer attention to Eutyches and his monophysitic heresy. Although it was not against Nestorianism that the present treatise was principally directed, the foregoing refutation of that heresy was necessary for a clear understanding of the middle course steered by the Catholic Church between it and the opposite extreme of Eutychianism, with which the author now grapples.



While Nestorius inferred a double personality from the double nature of Christ, Eutyches believed that unity of the person involved unity of the nature. He could not deny the separation of the divine from the human nature before the union in the person, but he refused to admit it after that union had taken place. The precise moment that he assigns for the union is not certain. Boethius lays before us two alternative periods,—(a) the moment of generation, or ( $\beta$ ) the moment of resurrection—the opening and the closing scene of our Lord's life on earth. If at the moment of generation, He must have, or not have, derived his earthly body from the Virgin Mary. If the former hypothesis be the true one, we must suppose a separate creation, and a mere passage of our Lord's body through the body of the Virgin. If the moment of resurrection be given for the effecting of the union, the difficulty still remains—mankind is still in Adam's sin and unredeemed, for God could only have redeemed that nature which He had taken upon Him. He now returns to *a*.

Without the aid of the Virgin, man's nature either must have, or have not, been wholly and completely undertaken. But to accept the former alternative would be to disregard all the teaching of the Old

Testament, which derives the Christ from the stock of Abraham and Jesse; while by believing the latter, we should make God a liar. For then were Christ's body but a deceiving phantom, or something different from our human bodies. To what purpose, then, the tragedy of His life and passion? God, as has been often remarked already, could only redeem that nature which He had in very truth taken upon Himself. It is this last conclusion that Boethius turns against Nestorians and Eutychians alike, both of which start with a misconception of the meaning of nature and person.

*Chapter vi.*—If Christ derived His human body from the Virgin Mary, then three alternatives present themselves—

- Either* (1), Godhead was changed into manhood;  
*Or* (2), manhood was changed into Godhead;  
*Or* (3), both natures were so blended that each lost its proper essence and gave place to some third condition.

Now of these, (1) is impossible and incredible, and (2) is put out of the question, if we believe that God took upon Him a human body and soul at the birth of Christ. For there can be no interchange between things corporeal and things incorporeal, and *vice versâ*. Things corporeal can only interchange

when both possess the same substrate, as water and wine, minerals and plants. Incorporeal bodies have no substrate at all, therefore the human soul cannot be interchanged with the Godhead, nor the body of man converted into the divinity of God.

(3), too, is quite impossible; for while water and honey, for example, can so blend and mingle that each loses its separate identity, it is because these substances possess qualities which can pass into one another, and act on one another; and this does not apply to Godhead and manhood.

*Chapter vii.*—Having thus crushed both Nestorianism and monophysitism, he proceeds to establish the Catholic doctrine—“Christum in utrisque et ex utrisque naturis consistere.”

Christ is not only composed of two natures, but subsists in two distinct natures. The example he adduces in support of this position is that of a crown composed of gold and precious stones, where each factor preserves its separate nature intact; and although they could exist apart, yet *quâ* crown, they have only one existence. The miracle of this communication of the proprieties of the two natures he explains by the single personality acting by the *communicatio idiomatum*. Man suffered, and so did God, inasmuch as He had taken man's nature

upon Him. And so the man Christ is called the Son of God, not because the human nature passed into the divine nature, but because the human nature was united to the divine in one person. One and the same is perfect God and perfect man—God of the substance of His Father, and man of the body of His mother. And so the Catholic faith does away with the necessity for a fourth hypostate, that of the human nature. “Fitque in eo gemina natura geminaque substantia, quoniam homo Deus, unaque persona, quoniam idem homo et Deus.”

He closes this chapter with an enumeration of four possible combinations of the natures and person in Christ. These are—

- (1) Two natures and two persons—Nestorianism.
- (2) One nature and one person—Eutychianism.
- (3) Two natures and one person—Catholic faith.
- (4) One nature and two persons, which is manifestly absurd.

*Chapter viii.*—“Quis fuerit status vitæ Christi.” Boethius here deals with the monophysitic conclusion that Christ must have participated in Adam’s sin by taking upon Him Adam’s nature and flesh. The orthodox conclusion is induced by a comparison of three possible states or conditions of man with regard to sin :

- (1) The state of innocence before the Fall ;

- (2) A hypothetical state of impeccability, bestowed on him by God as the reward of obedience to His will—an impeccability precluding sin and therefore death; and
- (3) His present state of sin and death.

He shows that Christ has taken unto Himself something from each of these states—from (3) His passion and death, from (2) His freedom from sin, and from (1) His subjection to the necessities of the human body; and then brings the treatise to a reverent close with the words of the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done. Deliver us from the evil one."

*Epilogue.*—As in each of the other theological writings, he begs for his critic's friendly judgment and direction if he have strayed from the right path.

Although, as I have already observed, the 'Liber contra Eutychem et Nestorium' shows more real religious feeling than the rest of the tracts attributed to Boethius (with the exception, perhaps, of the spurious 'De Fide'), yet the treatment throughout is markedly philosophical, and, if I may say so, artistic. The very notion of contrasting the two great heresies and making them serve as a foil to the orthodox belief is characteristic of a logician, and hardly one that would suggest itself to the fifth-century controversialist. The loving way in which the writer

lingers round the terms "nature" and "person," the skill with which he demonstrates where and how Eutyches and Nestorius are at fault, the calm statement of his propositions and his reasonable deductions therefrom, all tend to place this treatise in a different plane from the ordinary polemics of that date. We may, I think, fairly refuse to put it later; for Nitzsch, who would assign to the composition of the 'Quomodo Substantiæ' (I.) an age subsequent to Boethius, states positively that this book must have been written about 451, the year of the Council of Chalcedon,—in the generation, that is, immediately preceding our author. He says that it is inconceivable that the very shibboleth of the Church party should have been designated as new and strange by a writer some fifty years after the Council had put Nestorianism *hors de combat*, that the doctrines of the double nature and single person should have been first brought to his notice by such a letter as the Introduction describes.

The answer to this objection is the obstinate fact that between 483 and 518 the question of the nature of Christ did seriously engage the minds of Western theologians and that Pope Gelasius himself (†496) wrote a book upon it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Usener, *op. cit.*, p. 54.



The date of Boethius's tract is not difficult to fix approximately, the limit in the one direction being the year just mentioned, 518, when the schism was healed and the two Churches reconciled, and in the other the first decade of the sixth century, when our author began his public life.

It has been suggested with great probability that the episcopal letter spoken of in the introduction was the one addressed to Pope Symmachus by the eastern bishops.<sup>1</sup> This letter is dated 512, just two years after the consulship of Boethius and in the very heat of the struggle with Constantinople. There is indeed a curious correspondence between the points it raises and the answers given by the writer of the 'De Persona.' Thus the bishops beg for enlightenment as to the middle way between the diabolical errors of Eutyches and Nestorius which he is at such pains to point out. If the clergy showed hesitation in the matter of Christ's personality, how can we be surprised that a layman should be struck by the novelty of certain expressions connected therewith? "Ex duabus et in duabus naturis Christum consistere,"—this is the burden of the letter, and Boethius dwells at length both on it and on the accompanying question of

<sup>1</sup> Epistola orientalis ad. Symm. ; Mansi, t. viii. p. 222 *seqq.*



the "adunatio." Perhaps we may find in the bishops' difficulty about Nestorianism Boethius's reason for dealing with it before engaging with the great rival heresy, which he tells was the main object of his attack.

The further objection raised by Nitzsch, that this letter was the work of several bishops, while the Introduction to our tract speaks of only one, seems to me as captious as his other against the *secundum philosophos* of the 'De Trinitate.' In connection with this I must mention another passage where Boethius records his dissent from Aristotle in terms which at first sight seem less respectful than those which so devoted a follower of the Stagyrte would care to utter. "Sicut Aristoteles ceterique et eiusdem et multimodæ philosophiæ sectatores putant," he says in the course of his definition of nature ('In Eutychem,' I.) This definition differs from Aristotle's, in so far as the Greek philosopher restricted nature to corporeal beings, while the Latin extends it to God and the angels. But a nearer inspection shows us that the word in which the sting lies—if sting there be, for *multimodus* is not necessarily a word of contempt: cf. Lucr., i. 894; Livy, xxi. 8—does not apply to the master at all, but to the various schools that claimed descent from him;

and we know that Boethius, eclectic as he was, had little patience with views which did not satisfy his reason.<sup>1</sup>

But even supposing that all I have said on the probable authenticity of Tracts I., II., and III. be true; supposing that in the 'Anecdoton Holderi' we possess the long-wished-for evidence of a learned contemporary; supposing that Boethius was the author of Tractate V.,—and apart from the general contention we have so often heard before, that his other authenticated writings bear no trace of Christianity, there is really nothing to prevent us considering him as such,—there still remains the difficult problem as to the motives which led to its composition: What can have induced the statesman and philosopher, who had hitherto busied himself with theology only so far as it gave him scope for the exercise of his logical faculty, to rush with such ardour into the monophysitic controversy? It will be a great help towards solving the problem if we bear in mind that the question of the one person of Christ was, at the time I write of, fraught with an interest quite as much political as religious.

Ever since 484, the year of the mutual excommunication of Acacius and Felix, the see of Rome

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Cons., v. pr. 1, where he attacks the Stoics

had been fighting for the primacy with the see of Constantinople. This estrangement of the pontiffs could not fail to extend to the political relations of the two capitals, especially after Odovacar's assertion of his right to control the papal election, which, even if it were scornfully repudiated after the tyrant had disappeared, indicates significantly enough how closely connected were the interests of the bishop and the ruler of Rome.

And although Theodoric shrank from meddling in Church disputes—arbitration in the rivalry between the popes Symmachus and Laurentius was not courted but most unwillingly accepted by him—yet he was fully aware of this identity of interests, and saw clearly how essential it was to his own political supremacy that the Church of Rome should maintain the ascendancy which was hers by right of apostolic succession and all the great traditions that still surrounded her name.<sup>1</sup> Thus there was every inducement for a politician to win the favour of both his royal master and ghostly father by throwing in his lot with the Roman Church in her strenuous

<sup>1</sup> I regret that the space and time at my disposal forbid me to go further into this most interesting question. For a full account of Odovacar's decree, and Theodoric's dilemma, the reader should go to Hehle, *Conciliengeschichte*, Bd. ii. 164, and Hodgkin, *op. cit.*, vol. iii., chaps. iv. and xi.

endeavour to get Acacius anathematised and the council of Chalcedon restored to honour ; while the very subtlety of the points at issue would add zest to the task, if the politician were one who knew his intellectual superiority over the mass of his contemporaries, whose whole leisure was devoted to science, and who would be glad to profit by any opportunity to keep the weapons of his dialectic free from rust.

Let me not be misunderstood. I would not for one moment disparage the zeal which marks the tract before us, or impugn the conviction of its writer ; only it seems to me that he would probably take a more lively interest in a question that bore so directly on the liberty of Rome than in those which exercised his learning and ingenuity, and nothing more.

Those who believe that Boethius's faith was not strong enough to bear the ordeal of desertion by his friends and an unjust condemnation, will doubtless trace some of his later coolness towards Christianity to the very fervour of this tract. For if, as I believe, he had the welfare of his city as much at heart as anything else when he wrote the 'De Persona,' the mere thought of it, as he lay in prison at Pavia, must have added poison to the cup of his suffering.

He may be imagined arguing to himself something after this fashion. "Rome has wrung from Constantinople the confession of her primacy, only to fall a victim to a tyranny at home which has crushed out of life the little there was left of her ancient spirit. Theodoric has only had to let his suspicion be awakened by the growing intimacy between Justin and our Church, to let her feel how little he really cares for orthodoxy or heterodoxy, so long as the land enjoys peace and justice, and he has the administering of both. Of what avail, then, that earnest attempt to raise the Faith above the mire of heresy? of what avail that double stroke for old Rome and the Church? Surely it were better, now that death is so near, to put away the memory of such wasted efforts and misdirected energy, and return to the consolation of her who has never failed me, whose methods I was wrong to apply to questions both dangerous to attempt and profitless when mastered. Come then, Philosophy, be once more my guide and my teacher! Show me once again how man in his miserable strivings after partial happiness misses the whole, the only Good."

## CHAPTER VI.

ON SOME ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS OF BOETHIUS'S  
LAST WORK.

BOETHIUS wrote long and bitterly on the fickleness of Fortune, and quoted the stories of Cræsus and Paulus Æmilius as examples of it. There could be no better instance given than the way in which the star of his own renown has paled and set. From being the favourite author of our ancestors, he has passed into the limbo of exploded philosophers. Of ten educated men, you shall not find one to-day who knows more than his mere name, and perhaps the title of his great book; ninety-nine in a hundred would be unable to give the smallest detail of his life and work. But if he wins no applause from us now, he once enjoyed a meed of fame such as falls to the lot of few writers of antiquity. Of the part he played in the middle ages as the preserver of



Greek philosophy, and especially of Aristotelianism, I hope to speak in the next chapter. My present object is to trace something of the influence of the 'Consolation of Philosophy'—"that golden volume," as Gibbon calls it—on one side of medieval literature, that of vernacular translation.

The causes of this influence are not far to seek. As I have already said, Boethius stood illumined by the last glories of the old world, ere it sank into what we are pleased to call the darkness of medievalism, and men would bear the vivid impress of that noble figure in their minds long after his masters and teachers, and the sources from which he drew his inspiration, had been allowed to fall into oblivion, not to be revealed before the dawn of the new learning.

Then the subject of his book—steadfastness under stress of misfortune, and the transient nature of all human happiness—is one which is always latent in the thoughtful mind, and only needs the kindling touch of sympathy to start into life; and this, the last utterance of a steadfast race, could not fail to find an echo in the hearts of all those who knew what injustice and misfortune meant. There is, besides, in the 'Consolation of Philosophy' a remarkable medieval note, an anticipation of thought



in virtue of which its author is brought as close to Villon, as he is to Cicero and Horace in virtue of style and expression.

“Mais où sont les neiges d’antan ?” sang the vagabond poet of Paris, when he would bring home the lesson that death puts an end even to renown. “Where are the bones of the faithful Fabricius ? where are Brutus and Cato the stern ?” is the form which this sentiment, unknown to classical Latin, takes in the ‘Consolation’ (ii. pr. 1).<sup>1</sup> His very anthropomorphism, his realistic personification of Fortune and Philosophy, would commend him to middle-age writers. Is there not, for example, something of their own quaintness in his picture of Philosophy frowning up the hem of her robe to dry the prisoner’s tears ? So strongly does this note assert itself, that I venture to say that any one who has read and re-read the ‘Consolation,’ and then turns the leaves of some fifteenth-century MS. translation, will find little or nothing anachronistic in the scarlet-and-blue bedhangings, the fur robes and extravagant “hennins,” which figure in the miniatures.

<sup>1</sup> It has been pointed out to me that Mr G. A. Simcox has been beforehand with me here (*Hist. Lat. Lit.*, vol. ii. p. 442). I do not think that any one who reads the “*Ballade des dames du temps jadis*,” with Boethius’s lines in his head could fail to see the likeness. Still I am very glad to have for my statement the support of so acute a critic.

The springs and influences of literature in the early middle ages were so entirely the same for the whole of Western Europe, that I shall not attempt to hunt down translations of Boethius in any one country before turning to another, but shall for the nonce at any rate treat them as they come in chronological order. But before entering on a search after translations of Boethius, I have a word to say which should not be without interest to all readers and writers of English, on some traces of the 'Consolation' in the poem of 'Beowulf' (eighth century?)

#### SECTION I.—'BEOWULF.'

*Authorities.*—I have enjoyed the privilege of a sight of Professor Earle's translation, now printing. The text I have used is Heyne's (4th ed., Paderborn, 1879).

This, the earliest and greatest of our secular epics, was probably the work of a North-Anglian, who took for his subject the deeds of the Gothic hero Beowulf, and especially the deliverance of the banquet-hall of Hrothgar, king of the Danes, from the monster Grendel. The limits of my subject forbid me to linger long over this noble poem, with its vigour of picturesque description—now of the start of a warship, bearing forth into the unknown the dead body of a king; now of the wolf and the raven at work on

a battle-field where dead hands hold out the spear stiffly against the cold grey of the morning; and with its swinging verse full of the large air of the northern seas. But there is one feature in its style which merits our particular attention, and that is the constant intrusion, in season and out of season, of philosophical and Christian reflections into the midst of the romantic material. The writer will halt on the brink of a stirring adventure, or check the full current of a dramatic episode, to give utterance to some sententious apophthegm on the government of the universe or the instability of human affairs. It has been suggested that such passages are glosses from a later, probably a monkish, hand; but if, as we have reason to believe, the poet of *Beowulf* was a man of education and culture,<sup>1</sup> nothing is more likely than that he should have sought to qualify the pagan element, unavoidable in narratives of blood and battle, with corrective reflections of a more elevated character, drawn from his learned studies. The most remarkable of these passages occurs at the beginning of what may be called the 17th fit.

<sup>1</sup> Professor Earle, who sees in *Beowulf* something authoritative, and possibly even reproof to royal persons, has pitched upon Higerht, Offa's archbishop of Lichfield, as a likely man to have written the poem, and suggests that it may have been intended for the benefit of that monarch's young son, Egferth. This theory was expounded in the 'Times' of October 29, 1885.

Beowulf has come to hand-grips with Grendel, and has driven the monster, reft of an arm, to slink back to his native swamps and die. The king has, in a speech of singular beauty and solemnity, given public thanks to God for His great deliverance, and has received the young Goth as his son. He now orders the restoration of Heorot, and proclaims a feast and a giving of gifts to the strangers. "To each one of those who had made the voyage with Beowulf did the captain of warriors give a precious gift at the mead-bench, an old heirloom; and gave orders to compensate with gold for that (missing) one whom Grendel had atrociously killed, as he would have killed more of them, had not the Providence of God, had not Wyrd, stood in his way;—and, the courage of that man. The Ancient One ruled then, as he now and always doth, over all persons of human race; therefore is prudence each-where best, forecast of soul. Much experience of pleasant and of painful must he make, who long here in these struggling days brooks the world." Lines like these sound strange amid the noise and clatter of a banquet; and of themselves, apart from their position, they are interesting and noteworthy in the highest degree. For a careful scrutiny of them reveals Wyrd, the pagan goddess, the blind unswerving

dispenser of destiny, in strange conjunction with the Christian's God. Out of some dozen times that Wyrð is mentioned in the course of this poem, there are only three where she appears as dependent on God. The most important of these passages we have just seen; the others occur at lines 2527 and 2815 respectively. Line 2527 forms part of Beowulf's words to his men on the eve of his last fight. He has to contend once more with the accursed race of monsters, but this time it is no fiend in human guise like Grendel that bids him brace himself for battle, but a fiery worm or dragon, which, in revenge for the loss of a great treasure it had in keeping, has spread ruin over the Gothic land. For Beowulf, now old in years and honours, has succeeded to the possessions of his kinsman Heardred, and he must needs defend his inheritance. So speaking in boastful words for the last time, he declares that he will go forth to meet the monster, and that he will not go back a foot's breadth from the encounter, but will abide the issue "as Wyrð allots us, and the governor of every man."

In line 2815 we have the aged warrior's very last utterance: he has slain the dragon, but not before it has inflicted a mortal wound on him with its fiery breath. In noble words he gives thanks

to God for that He has suffered him to win so much wealth for his Leeds. Now his last hour is come. Fate has swept away all his kinsmen into eternity, and he must after them. He invests with his golden collar and coronet the young thane who alone stood beside him in that grim warfare, and so passes to his rest.

In each of these passages we have clear evidence of the pious mind of the poet,—of his wish to paint his hero's life and death as altogether worthy of an ideal knight; in a word, an anticipation of the chivalry that was to be a chief influence for good in the middle ages. But in neither do we sound a depth of philosophy such as is reached in the first quotation. This philosophy, of which the key-note is the working of fate with and under God, the compatibility of human prudence with divine providence, can only have been suggested, I venture to think, by the last two books of the 'Consolation,' which are devoted to a consideration of freewill and its connection with God's government of the world. Moreover, that the poet of the 'Beowulf' had Boethius in his mind when he wrote these lines is sufficiently proved by the fact that two of them are translations of passages in the 'Consolation,' if not accurate, yet too closely resembling to be a mere coincidence.



Thus "prudence is best, forecast of soul," cannot fail to recall the "rerum exitus prudentia metitur" of 'De Cons.,' ii. pr. i. and "much experience of bitter and of sweet must he have who brooks the world," although, indeed, it is a sentiment which will find utterance in literature as long as there are minds to think and hands to write, seems to owe the form in which it is here presented to the 'Consolation,' ii. pr. 4, where Philosophy exclaims, "Quam multis amaritudinibus humanæ felicitatis dulcedo respersa est!"

To sum up, these verbal similarities, added to a quite unusual treatment of the problem of freewill, which, although it is here condensed into half-a-dozen lines, is yet almost identical with that adopted by Boethius in the last two books of the 'Consolation,' make up, as I venture to think, a formidable array of evidence in favour of the theory that the philosophical element in 'Beowulf' is derived from the Latin work. Moreover, it must be borne in mind how very limited was the number of purely philosophical books at the command of an eighth-century writer. As I shall presently show, the whole of the ancient Greek library on the subject before the eleventh century begins and ends with a few volumes of Aristotle and the 'Timæus' of Plato.

In Alcuin's celebrated catalogue of the York collection, which for three centuries was without a rival at home or on the Continent, the only writers, besides Boethius, who have any claim to be called philosophers are Aristotle, Cicero—and his name is qualified by the epithet *rhetor*—Cassiodorus, and Lactantius. The name of Seneca, which is noticeably absent from the list, will at once suggest itself to the student of medieval literature as one likely to have afforded assistance in treating the question of Providence. But neither he nor any of these others had ever made freewill and its compatibility with divine providence the subject of his speculations in the same way that Boethius had done. We must go back to the 'De fato et providentia' of Proclus for the view of the problem under which it is here regarded. And it has already been seen (chap. iv.) how closely the teaching of Boethius resembles that of the Neoplatonist on this subject. But there is nothing to suggest that the poet of the Beowulf, whoever he was, drew his philosophy straight from the Platonic spring, but rather the reverse, inasmuch as the phraseology of Boethius retains in his mind its integrity.

## SECTION II.—ALFRED (849-901).

*Authority.*—I have used Rawlinson's text of Alfred's translation. Oxford, 1698.

First in chronological order after the 'Deeds of Beowulf' comes another Anglo-Saxon work, King Alfred's translation of Boethius's book, which, apart from the immense personal interest attaching to any literary achievement of this great king, commands our closest attention in virtue of the prominent place it holds in the first translating movement of modern Europe. The circumstances of this new literary activity under Alfred offer a singular parallel to the revival of letters in the fifteenth century, after the long silence of the Wars of the Roses. For eighty years and more the land had been in a wild welter of blood and desolation. The last sounds of the long and deadly strife between Mercia and Wessex had hardly died away, when the hoarse war-cry of the Danes began to ring round the coast from Northumberland to Ayr. Christianity, and all the culture and refinement that were tied up with it, had suffered heavily during the fifteen years that preceded the founding of the English kingdom under Egbert; and now the barbarian invaders, that swept

the land in a storm of conquest, bade fair to stamp it out altogether. At the time when Alfred ascended the tottering throne of Anglo-Saxon power, learning was sunk to so low a state that, as he tells us himself, there was scarcely a man throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom who could read Latin. This is not the place to follow him through the details of his long struggle with the Danes, and we must pass quickly on to the moment when he had barely and almost miraculously rescued his nation from perdition, and had at last breathing-space to address his great mind to the problem of reconstruction and education. For this purpose he summoned to his court a small band of learned men,—Werferth from Mercia, Grimbold from Flanders, John of Saxony, Asser, his biographer, and Plegmund, who rekindled his enthusiasm for classical studies.

It gives additional lustre to the name of Boethius that such a king as Alfred, inquiring after those books which might with most advantage be set within his subjects' reach, should have chosen the 'Consolation' to represent philosophy in the little library he was preparing for their use. The names of the companion volumes of the selection are a strong testimony to the esteem in which our author was held by the Saxon king and his advisers.

Beda's 'Ecclesiastical History,' the story, told in unrivalled manner, of English Christianity—in a word the Church history *par excellence* of the nation; Orosius's 'Universal History,' whose words were accepted and revered as classical by all students through the middle ages down even to Dante, who does not seem to have known much beyond; Gregory's 'Pastoral Care' and 'Dialogues,' of which the former was to serve as a rule of conduct for the clergy amid the growing needs of a nation newly awakened to freedom and a higher spiritual and intellectual life—the latter as an antidote to the poison spread by the countless coarse stories which were all the people had to amuse them. Nor is this all. If, as is most probable, Alfred and his literary movement gave the first centralised force to the Saxon chronicle, we have further instance of the capital nature of the selection in which Boethius figures as the pattern of the philosopher.

In view of Alfred's literary motive and personal tastes, the reader of his translations must not look for any strict adherence to the original. He expands and curtails as the spirit moves him. He adds a whole chapter on the geography of Germany to the history of Orosius; he interweaves with the 'Soliloquies' of Augustine many a page from that

precious hand-book, which, alas! has not come down to us, wherein he was wont to jot down his passing thoughts and impressions. But if he left his mark on the works of Orosius and Beda, it is in his translation of Boethius that Alfred's personality is most strongly stamped. The theme was a congenial one. He, too, had had some taste of changing fortune in his own life; he, too, had felt the shock of a fall from high estate; and though he had now won his way to his throne again, and could look calmly back at the dangers and vicissitudes he had come through, he would not for that reason feel the less sympathy with the Roman patriot whose only crime—no crime, indeed, in Alfred's eyes—was that he had lent an ear to the prayers of those who would fain be delivered from the yoke of a barbarian tyrant. This very sympathy, while it blinded his judgment with regard to Theodoric, whom he is never tired of abusing, led him to identify himself so entirely with Boethius, that the latter is often quite lost sight of, the king taking his place and giving utterance to sentiments of which the Roman never dreamt. Thus in his seventeenth chapter (corresponding to Book II. prose 7 of the Latin) he takes the opportunity of setting forth his ideas as to the duties of a monarch, and of recording his desire so to live that after life



his memory should still shine bright in the good works he had wrought.

That Alfred had from the first no intention of adhering closely to the text before him, either in thought or form, is shown by his changing the original arrangement of five books of alternate verse and prose into forty-two chapters, and by his substituting for the two persons of the dialogue, Wisdom and Reason in place of Philosophy; and now the Mind, now Boethius, now the personal pronoun, in place of the Philosopher. It is impossible to assign an adequate cause for this frequent change of the grammatical subject; when once his mind had taken fire at some suggestion in the text, he seems to have cast aside his cloak of translator, and to have been sublimely careless in whose mouth he placed the lessons of faith and fortitude which were to lead and guide his readers. In his *naïve* and delightful preface, he pleads "the various and manifold occupations which often busied him in mind and body" in excuse for any imperfection of scholarship or obscurity of meaning. His method of dealing with the difficulty and obscurity of the Latin is summary. He finds out the gist of the philosopher's meaning, and proceeds to adapt and weld it to his liking, as he thinks will be most

profitable to the readers of his time, adding here a homely illustration, there an explanatory note, now expanding the frequent sentences into a long paraphrase, and now cutting the knot of an abstruse passage by the simple expedient of omission, and interpreting the whole by the light of Christian doctrine. One would have thought that Boethius's verse, with its rigid metre and its strict antithesis of thought and diction, would have offered an almost insurmountable obstacle to a translator whose genius was rather initiative than obsequious; yet it is in his renderings of the Latin verses that Alfred shows most respect for his original. It is true that when difficulties begin to gather in the later books, he steers clear of verse altogether, and that on the other hand he cannot resist the temptation of making known to his unlearned reader—though it may cost him a score of lines to do so—the story of Ulysses or of Orpheus, which the Latin poet is content to indicate with a well-chosen epithet. But for all that, the rendering of the metres may be pronounced the most successful, as well as the most accurate, portion of the whole translation.<sup>1</sup> His

<sup>1</sup> It is debated whether the translation of the metres in alliterative verse ascribed to Alfred, and appended to the Consolation in Fox's edition, are the work of his hand; but it is proved beyond debate that the verse translation was founded on the prose.

prose is informed with intensity and fire, and possesses all the vigour and swing of verse.

In a work that is much more of an original composition than a translation, it is wellnigh impossible to point out categorically where and to what extent Alfred deviates from Boethius. His main additions to the original may, however, be roughly classed under three heads—historical (including geographical allusions, which came readily to his pen, fresh from a translation of Orosius), mythological, and Christian. Thus the first chapter is a brief abstract of the story of Boethius, his suffering and death under Theodoric, and that king's various oppressions. Chap. xvi. contains a further allusion to the Amal, supported by a comparison with that other tyrant Nero, together with an explanation of the causes that drove the kings from Rome. The mention of Cicero always calls up a note on his full name and on his title of philosopher.

Theodoric is again chastised in chap. xxiv.; and Nero and Antoninus, two chapters later, feel the full weight of Alfred's indignation.

The geographical allusions call for little comment. Whenever a name such as *Ætna* or *Circe's island* occurs, a note is added about its position and distinctive features.

The mythological element, on the other hand, is very prominent and interesting. The Saxon king was not a little proud of his ancient and classical lore, and lets no chance of displaying it go by. The labours of Hercules, the inhospitable habits of Busiris, the monstrous nature of the Hydra, the genealogy of Circe and her treatment of the companions of Ulysses, the story of Orpheus and his journey to the Shades, are all related at considerable length, and show a wide knowledge of Greek mythology. I have already drawn attention to the Christian form in which the translation is cast. The most casual reader of Boethius cannot fail to be struck by the strong theism that breathes through the pages of the 'Consolation,' which only required a few skilful turns and interpretations at the hands of its translator to show forth as a Christian, nay, almost as a dogmatic work. In Alfred's eyes, the city of Truth from which Boethius is exiled becomes the heavenly Jerusalem; the haven of quiet whither the wise man turns for shelter from the storms of life is Christ. The mention of the fiery lava-flood of *Ætna* suggests the Deluge; the universal rule of obedience to the Creator reminds him of one signal exception, the outbreak of the rebellious angels; the Titans piling Pelion on Ossa to reach to heaven find a parallel in

Nimrod's vain attempt to scale the sky with the Tower of Babel. When Boethius looked out and saw all creation hastening to its fixed goal, and the awards and penalties meted out to those who had done good and to those who had done evil, he turned to the Roman racecourse for a simile. Alfred repeats the illustration, and brings into contrast the race of which St Paul speaks, where "all run, but one receiveth the prize." He dwells with as much delight as Boethius, and at even greater length, on the infinite greatness of God; and over and above the noble invocation with which Philosophy ends her words of comfort, the West Saxon king crowns his work with a prayer to Him that He will keep him ever, through the merits of Mary the Virgin and Michael the Lord's servant, in purity and goodness, in thankfulness to Him, and in obedience to His commands.

### SECTION III.—THE PROVENÇAL POEM, 'BOECE' (*eleventh century*).

*Authorities.*—Das Altprovenzalische Boëthiuslied, &c. Fr. Hündgen. Oppeln, 1884. M. Paul Meyer has published the text in his 'Receuil d'Anciens Textes Bas-Latins et Provençaux.' I<sup>e</sup> partie. Paris, 1874.

We have now to cross the Channel and seek the South of France, where we shall find our author's

influence almost as active and apparent as it is in our own country. One of the very earliest monuments of Provençal that has come down to us is a fragment of a didactic poem on Boethius. At least, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, and seeing that the two hundred and fifty-seven surviving lines are devoted to the Roman philosopher and the lesson of his life, that they certainly are not the opening lines of the poem but take up the story at the moment when he was moved to chastise the wickedness of his time, we are fairly entitled to assume that the rest dealt with other incidents in his career, and possibly preserved more of the conversation between the prisoner and his heavenly visitant. What we have now before us is a mixture, as the reader, if he has not gathered as much from the foregoing paragraph, will shortly apprehend, of direct imitation of the 'Consolation' and a foreign element, springing either from some other Latin source or from the author's own imagination.

This interesting fragment is found in a solitary MS. of the eleventh century, now in the Public Library at Orléans.

I have said that we are taken at once into the middle of the story. To be strictly accurate, the first twenty lines, which obviously hang on to some-



thing that has gone before, serve as a sort of introduction to the rest. They proclaim the primary object of the poem, which is to hold up Boethius as a model of conduct before the eyes of the careless youth of the day, living in sin and impenitence and utter forgetfulness of God. The writer classes himself among those who "in youth speak foolishly in the folly of their heart," perhaps in order that his words may carry the more weight as coming from one who confesses to like passions with his readers.

Boethius, we are told, would fain correct the unrighteousness of his age;—"wicked as men were then, they are far more wicked now," adds the stern moralist. His efforts were unavailing, and only brought him to prison and disgrace. Now Boethius was a great lord, and of a noble presence—

"Donz fo Boecis, corps ag e bo e pros,"—

a philosopher without a peer at Rome.

He was count of this city, and found such favour with the emperor Mallio Torquator that he was raised to the command of the whole realm. But the title he held dearest of all was that of "doctor of wisdom."

Mallio's successor Teiric was an unbeliever, and would have nothing to do with the friends of the

true God, and Boethius had no mind to serve an infidel master; nay more, he took upon himself to chastise Teiric in a public speech. The latter in great anger determined to convict the daring speaker of felony, and to this end caused a letter to be written in the name of Boethius, in which he invokes the help of the Greeks, and promises to betray the city to them. To give the forgery every semblance of reality, the tyrant had the messengers to whom he had himself entrusted it, arrested and cast into prison. He then proceeded to incriminate Boethius. The next day on the Capitol, the common court of justice, where the unsuspecting senator and his peers were assembled, the emperor arrived to carry out his base design and make his accusation. Up sprang Boethius, whose conscience was clear of any such treachery, and sought to free himself from the charge. But to no purpose; his friends stood by and saw him cast into prison.

Up to this point the poet has followed, with uncertain step, indeed, and confused intelligence, a life, or rather two separate lives, of Boethius, preserved in numerous MSS., the one of which says: "tempore Deoderici" (there was then some excuse for the strange mutilation of the Ostrogoth's name) "regis insignis auctor Boethius claruit, qui virtute

sua es in urbe fuit"; the other: "Boethius iste de familia fuit Torquati Manlii, nobilissimi viri."

Hündgen accounts for the title "Count of Rome" by supposing that the poet took the *es* of the first quotation for an abbreviation of *comes*. But M. Paul Meyer reminds me that "comte" is the frequent translation of *consul*, and *vice versa*. Thus, for example, the 'Gesta Consulium Andegavensium' is the History of the earls of Anjou.

The *familia* of the second quotation, which is here nothing more nor less than our English "family," was apparently taken to mean "household"; and as the head of a household in which so distinguished a man as Boethius was a servant must himself have been a man of very exalted rank, he is given a place in the palace of the Cæsars.

For the rest of the narrative the poet has, in addition to these *Vitæ Boethii*, the philosopher's own words in the 'Consolation,' Book i., pr. 1. With these he interweaves, after the manner of his kind, a mass of pious reflection and Christian allegory, which are anything but Boethian in character.

Boethius, then, as he lay loaded with chains and overwhelmed with misery, directed his prayer to God, the refuge of all sinful men, complaining

(somewhat as the real Boethius does in *Cons.*, i. m. 1) that although his earliest essays were in the cause of wisdom, his muse is voiceless: now he cries like a child all the day long,—“all my inclinations are turned to weeping.” God is his daily hope and trust; from God came his honour, his sovereign position at Rome, of which he availed himself for the advancement of the wise, and not for God’s glory; wherefore God has deserted him and suffered him to lie in prison; helpless and destitute, he can do naught else by night or day than sorrowfully meditate. Then the sad refrain recurs, “All my inclinations are turned to weeping.”

Mindful of his mission as moral instructor, our Provençal is evidently determined not to let his feet stray into the paths of exaggeration. Thus he maintains that “there never was a man, no matter how much virtue he possessed, who could embrace the whole of wisdom”; but he qualifies this discouraging remark with the admission that Boethius was not at all lacking in wisdom; indeed one could hardly meet with a man endowed with so much of it. Witness his description of time and nature.

And now the poet takes the first metre of the *Consolation*’ and gives it a new application. In the

original, Boethius laments his unhappy fortune and premature decay; the Provençal gives us very little of Boethius, and a great deal of himself. Among other moralisations of a perfectly general character, which he puts into the philosopher's mouth, there is an elaborate fantasy of his own on the words, "qui cecidit stabili non erat ille gradu." These are, as the reader will remember, the closing line of the elegiacs with which the 'Consolation' begins, and simply mean that for all his outward show of firmness, Boethius was standing on the brink of ruin even in the days of his greatest prosperity. This is what grows out of it.

"His friends and kinsmen praised him much for his high position, his riches, and his trust in God." Boethius gives them one and all the lie. "For it is not as they said. It is not well with the man who stands on a fragile ladder, which is ready to fall every moment. The man who stands thereon stands not firm. And who is the man who stands on a firm ladder? The good Christian who believes wholly in God the Father, the Almighty King, and in Jesus, who had such goodwill that He redeemed us humbly with His blood, and in the Holy Ghost, which descends upon good men. Whatever his body may be, It teaches his soul. The good

Christian who stands on such a ladder will never fall into any torment." I have quoted this passage in its entirety, as being the best possible example of the writer's method of interpreting and adapting the Latin to his own purposes. The rest of Boethius's utterances at this point in the poem are in much the same strain. They contain some excellent advice on the advisability of a man's laying up a store of good deeds in his youth, that he may have wherewith to support him in his old age and win his way to heaven; a warning that grey hairs and infirmity of body do not come from age alone; and a deal of wise observation on the uncertainty of human riches and the obstinacy of death. One beautiful and striking simile deserves record:—

“Si cum la nibles cobrel jónr lo be má  
Si cobre avérs lo cor el christia.”

“As the mist covers the daylight at early morn,  
So cover riches the Christian heart.”

To Boethius as he lay lamenting there appeared a lady, the daughter of the king “who has great power.” We are not told her name, but the mention of the mighty ruler, the peculiar attributes with which she is invested (she has the keys of Paradise, and with them she can admit her friends to bliss), indicate the Christian Sapientia rather than the



pagan Philosophia. To the description of the visitor as she appears to Boethius in the 'Consolation' the Provençal adds several fresh features. The palace (note the change of locality) is filled with the brightness of her beauty; you might see for a distance of forty cities; the house wherein she enters would never need a light.

The eyes of superhuman brightness and penetration which are given to Philosophy in the 'Consolation' become a glance so keen that no man could hide before it; not even they who dwell beyond the seas could keep their hearts locked from her. In both descriptions she can make herself great or small at will; in both the lady is fair to look upon, but yet of ancient days. But there is considerable discrepancy in the details of her dress. Boethius speaks of it as spun of the finest threads, of cunning workmanship, indestructible, a web of Philosophy's own weaving. The Provençal poet cannot say what the robe is made of, but only that it is very good and of very fine material. Yet he goes on to describe it somewhat closely. Although it was made more than a thousand years ago by the lady's own hands of a web of her own weaving, age has not impaired its value; one border of it could not be bought for a thousand pounds of silver. Love and Faith are

the material of which it is woven. So fair and white and shining is it, that the beholder's sight is blinded.

The  $\pi$  and the  $\theta$ , together with the ladder of lines connecting them, which are mentioned as adorning the lower and the upper border of Philosophy's robe, but about which no explanation is vouchsafed by Boethius, have their signification fully set forth here, and an elaborate allegory is evolved out of them.

The  $\pi$  designates the earthly life, the  $\theta$  the heavenly law, "de céil la dreita léi." Thousands of birds are climbing<sup>1</sup> the steps of the ladder—steps

<sup>1</sup> The fact that the birds are made to use their feet rather than their wings for mounting to the upper letter called forth an ingenious suggestion from the late Herr C. Hofmann, who supposed that the translator read *avibus* instead of *quibus* (Sitzungsberichte of the Munich Academy, 1870, July 2). The passage in Cons. i., pr. 1, runs thus: "Atque in utrasque litteras in scalarum modum gradus quidam insigniti videbantur quibus ab inferiore ad superius elementum esset ascensus." But without attempting to explain the method of locomotion, I may remind the reader that the bird constantly appears in medieval art as a symbol of the soul, especially at the moment of death. At the miracle-plays it was a custom to let a bird fly when a person died—a crow for the impenitent thief and a white dove for the penitent one.

In Herrad von Landsberg's *Hortus Deliciarum*, a beautiful illuminated MS. of the twelfth century, evil spirits are represented by birds. And in the same work there is a Jacob's ladder whose rungs are the seven virtues by which man mounts to heaven. At the foot of the ladder is the dragon of the pit, ready to catch those who fall or descend.—(See C. M. Engelhardt's edition of the *Hortus*. Stuttgart—Tübingen, 1818. Plates VIII. and IX.)

not made of gold, but of some substance as good as gold,—“d’aur no sun gés mas mallor no son.”

Many of these birds turn back again; but some of them reach the  $\theta$ , at once assume another colour, and are received with great love by the lady.

Then follows the explanation of the allegory. The steps of the ladder are made of the different virtues—Almsgiving, Faith, Love, Loyalty, Generosity, Happiness, Truth, Chastity, Humility: together with each of these is mentioned the opposing vices against which they are intended to serve as safeguards. Every good man makes his own step—

“quascus bos òm si fáil lo so degra.”

The birds which arrive at the  $\theta$  are the righteous who have expiated their sins, who trust in the Holy Trinity, and set no store on earthly honours. The birds which come down from the ladder are those mortals who have been good in their young days and known wisdom, but with age have grown wicked and perjured themselves. The devil of the pit has them by the heel!

The poet, after remarking that the lady is of great stature for all that she remains seated, goes on to tell how she has in her right hand a book burning with fire, in her left hand a royal sceptre. The fiery book is the justice of God, wherewith unrepented

sins are burnt away (a man would do well to make friends early with *her*—she will prove a good mistress); the sceptre is the symbol of corporal justice.

With these words—

“*Zo significa justicia corporal  
de pec*”—

the fragment breaks off abruptly. It seems useless to conjecture whether there was much more to follow, or if in the Orléans MS. we possess the major part of the poem. It is, indeed, hardly conceivable that the writer would have been able to turn to account the metaphysics of the later books of the ‘*Consolation.*’ However this may be, if the object set forth in the first words of the fragment was all the teacher aimed at, he has sufficiently realised it in the course of these two hundred odd lines.

Before dismissing ‘*Boëce,*’ perhaps a word should be said on its metrical construction. For all that it is of Southern workmanship, it displays the salient characteristics of the Northern French epic.

The line consists of ten syllables, bearing the principal accent on the fourth: a *cæsura* follows immediately on this accent, dividing the whole into two distinct members—*e.g.* :

“*de gran folliá || per folledat<sup>1</sup> parllam.*”

<sup>1</sup> Or “*per foll edat*” (*propter stultam ætatem*).

## SECTION IV.—NOTKER.

*Authorities.*—‘Die älteste deutsche Litteratur,’ Piper (being the first volume of Kürschner’s ‘Deutsche National-Litteratur’). Berlin and Stuttgart. The same writer’s edition of Notker’s works, Bd. viii. of the Germanischer Bücherschatz. Freiburg and Tübingen, 1889.

Of equal importance, from a philological standpoint, is the old High-German version from the pen of Notker of St Gall. Here again we see the place that Boethius holds in the dawning literature of medieval Europe—a place which no other secular writer of antiquity can dispute with him. The reader of the foregoing pages will know something of the help given by the ‘Consolation’ in shaping the infant utterance of a great Romance language. Its influence on the grammar and phonetics of the *lingua theotisca* is no less remarkable. But this influence, interesting though it be, stands outside the scheme of the present chapter, and I cannot devote more than a few passing words to it, or treat it otherwise than as subservient to the general literary interest of the work before us.

And first with regard to the translator himself. He may be distinguished from his homonyms in the great Swiss monastery in any one of three ways:

by order of succession (he is Notker III., Notkers I. and II. being respectively the sequence-writer, and the doctor and hymnologist); by the personal defect which earned him the sobriquet of *Labeo*, "thick lips" (*they* were nicknamed, the one *Bal-bubus*, "the stammerer," the other *Piperis gramma*, "Peppercorn," from his fiery temper); or lastly—and this is the title by which we would rather know him—by the epithet *Teutonicus*, "the German," given him in virtue of his efforts on behalf of his mother-tongue, and of his position as the initiator of a great school of German translation.

He was born about 950, and died in 1022 of the plague which Henry II.'s army brought back with it from Italy after the campaign against the Greeks of the South. Introduced into the monastery by his uncle, the learned Ekkehart I., he presently rose to be director of the school there—one of the largest and most important in all Europe, which had been in existence long before the revival of letters under Charles the Great. He seems to have been a man of considerable personal charm: his pupil, Ekkehart IV., speaks of him with the warmest love and admiration; and his intellectual range and power may be gathered from the account of the writings, chiefly commentaries and transla-



tions, which occupied the leisure of his long and useful life.

These include, on his own showing in a letter to Hugo II., bishop of Sitten, Cato's 'De Moribus,' Virgil's 'Bucolics,' the 'Andrias' of Terence, Marci-anus Capella, Aristotle's 'Categories' and 'De In-terpretatione,' treatises on rhetoric and arithmetic, a psalter, part of the book of Job, Boethius's tract on the Trinity, and the 'Consolation of Philosophy.'

It is probable that all of these books were not written by Notker himself; it is almost certain that he only completed two books of the 'Consolation.' But if he did not actually do all the work, he at least inspired the workers, who carried out his in-tention so completely as to render it often impossible to distinguish the master's hand from that of the apprentice.

The translation which here concerns us opens with a short and fairly accurate sketch in German of the state of things at Rome in the days of Boethius:—

"St Paul promised those who in his time were awaiting the Last Day that it would not come before the Roman empire had fallen, and Anti-christ begun his reign." The author then touches lightly on the rules of Otacher and Thioterih, and

on the wresting of the latter's kingdom from him by Alderich, which marks the overthrow of Roman liberty. "When the Goths were driven out under Justinus Minor, there came the Langobards from the north and ruled Italy for over two hundred years. After them the Franks, whom we call Carlings, and after them the Saxons. So now is the Roman empire destroyed, according to the words of the holy apostle Paul."

With this prelude Notker proceeds at once to the "Conquestio Boetii de instabilitate fortunæ."

His method of translation is to give a sentence or group of words of the original (which he arranges for the sake of his pupils in as simple and straightforward a form as possible), followed by the German equivalent. This last is expanded, as the occasion seems to require it, by passages of explanation and paraphrase of varying length. One of the most remarkable features of his style is the way in which he has recourse to Latin to help him out of a difficulty with a turn of expression or a technical term which cannot be supplied from the German. For instance—

1. "Ecce laceræ camenæ dictant mihi scribenda" (the real order of the Latin being, "Ecce mihi laceræ dictant scribenda camenæ") he renders by, "Tie"

(*i.e.*, the Muses) “mîh êr lêrton<sup>1</sup> ioconda carmina, tîe lêrent mîh nû flebilîa.”

2. “Sed abite potius sirenes . . .” “sirenes sînt méretîer,<sup>2</sup> fône déro sânge intslâfent<sup>3</sup> tîe uérigen,<sup>4</sup> et patiuntur naufragium.”

Each section of prose or verse (I am here speaking of the original divisions of the book—Notker, of course, makes no attempt at a metrical version) has its appropriate Latin heading (*vide supra*).

One can hardly resist the temptation of comparing Notker's ‘Boethius’ with Alfred's; but it is obvious that, apart from their common characteristic of vernacular translation, there is no analogy between them. Alfred's primary aim was to place in the hands of his subjects a volume of philosophy from which he had himself derived help and comfort, and the result is a work of high artistic merit. Notker's object was to teach his scholars Latin through the medium of a book which, besides its intrinsic philosophical value, would readily lend itself to commentary and exegesis, and which was especially useful as an example of close logical argument: the result is a work of unsurpassed philological interest to modern scholars. This is not, indeed, what its

<sup>1</sup> Lernten.

<sup>2</sup> Sea creatures (*animal maris*).

<sup>3</sup> Fall asleep (*entschlafen*). <sup>4</sup> Mariners ferrymen (*Fährmann*).

author intended, but quite what we might have expected; for, as Piper says, Notker's method would only enlarge the learner's Latin vocabulary, and not at all impart to him the sound grammatical knowledge which is the basis of all education through language.<sup>1</sup> But while the German translation ranks far below the Anglo-Saxon as literature, it is not without a charm of its own, and is an admirable specimen of medieval annotation, with all its fine careless display of curious knowledge, and its delightful *naïveté* of illustration. Let me give a single example. When Boethius is describing the appearance of Philosophy as she stands by his bedside, he says: "Staturæ discretionis ambiguae (fuit). Nam nunc quidem ad communem sese hominum mensuram cohibebat, nunc vero pulsare cœlum summi verticis cacumine videbatur."

The translation runs as follows: "She was in her height of doubtful size; I could not rightly tell how tall she was. For now she came down to our measure (in that she sometimes considers human affairs), and anon she seemed to touch the sky with her uplifted head (in that she understands astronomy)."

I have said that Notker's main object was to teach his pupils Latin. He had, however, when

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 353.

he undertook this and kindred translations, another end in view beyond the mere editing of classical reading-books for his monastery's school, and one that touches us far more closely. He was fully aware of the virtue of the vernacular as a medium of education, and determined to carry to completion the scheme of which the outline had been drawn by Charles the Great two hundred years before ("inchoavit et grammaticam patrii sermonis," writes Einhart, the biographer of the Frankish emperor); in other words, he resolved to reduce to order and fix on a scientific footing the laws of accent and pronunciation which his countrymen unconsciously obeyed in speaking their own language. Hrabanus Maurus (776-856) had already been at work in the same direction, and had authorised the use of the circumflex and acute accents to designate long and short syllables. But it is to Notker, and especially to his 'Boethius,' that we must turn for our knowledge of Old High-German phonetics, of the exact quantity of its terminations and the value of its vowels.

In his letter to the bishop of Sitten he says: "Oportet enim scire quia verba theutonica sine accentu scribenda non sunt præter articulos, ipsi soli sine accentu pronuntiantur acuto vel circumflexo." And his practice in no way falls behind

his theory. We can appreciate, thanks to him, the difference between the diphthongs *úi, óu, éi, éu*, and *úo, íe, íu, ío*; between the vowels *i* and *u*, and the consonants *j* and *v*.

The change of *d* into *t*, *b* into *p*, &c. (in technical language, of initial voiced stop-consonants into voiceless consonants), is carefully recorded, as the following passage shows: "Sanctus paulus kehîez tîen dîe in sînên zîten uuândon des sûonetagen . táz er êr nechâme . êr romanum imperium zegîenge . únde antichristus rîcheson begóndi . Uuér zuîuelôt romanos íu uuésen állero rîcho hêrren . únde íro geuált kán ze énde dero uuérlte?"<sup>1</sup>

In a word, as Dr G. Eduard Sievers points out, he did for German phonetics, only even more fully, what Ormin did for those of England.<sup>2</sup>

The plan I had before me at the beginning of this chapter of dealing with the medieval translations in chronological order without having regard to the countries where they were made, has served well enough so far. But with the eleventh and twelfth centuries there comes a change over European literature. The stream which we have hitherto been content to regard as one, breaks up into a

<sup>1</sup> *Vide supra*, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> *Encycl. Brit.*, *sub voce* "Germany (Language)."



number of branches, which run further and further apart as time goes on. France and England, Italy and Germany, have from henceforward each a literature of their own, and each demands a separate consideration. The two last, under this new arrangement, will be found to be of small account; and England must now yield the precedence to France, for French, both in virtue of the number and the date of its translations, has the foremost claim on our notice.

---

*FRANCE.*

SECTION V.—SIMUN DE FRAISNE'S 'ROMAN DE FORTUNE'  
(*thirteenth century*).

*Authorities.*—M. Paul Meyer, as recorded in a note. 'Hist. Litt. de la France,' t. xviii. Thomas Wright, 'Biogr. Brit. Lit., ii. MS. in B. M., Roy., 20. B. xiv., f. 68\* (xiiiith cent.)'<sup>1</sup>

The earliest vernacular version of 'Boethius,' after Alfred's, that I have come upon in any language is the Anglo-Norman 'Roman de Fortune' of Simun de Fraisne. With regard to the literature of which it is an example, M. Paul Meyer has well said<sup>2</sup> that, however slight its intrinsic merit may be, it deserves

<sup>1</sup> I have marked with an asterisk those MSS. from which my quotations are taken.

<sup>2</sup> 'Bulletin de la Soc. des anciens, textes fr.,' 1880, No. 2.

a close attention, as representing the sustained effort which enabled the language and ideas of France to hold their own for so long on British soil.

But over and above the general interest of this literature, the present example possesses not a little of the genuine poetic instinct.

Our knowledge of its author, Simun de Fraigne (whose name appears in the initial letters of the first fourteen lines), may be summed up in a very few words. He was canon of Hereford, and the near friend of Giraldus Cambrensis. Indeed it is the date of Gerald's death, 1223, that gives us the clue to the period of Simun's literary activity. Besides a number of Latin poems, among them one in defence of the bishop-designate of St David's, he wrote a 'Vie de St Georges' and the 'Roman de Fortune.' This last is a reminiscence of Boethius, a variation on the description of Fortune in the early books of the 'De Consolatione.' It runs to sixteen hundred lines of eight-syllabled rhyming couplets, and is couched in the form of a dialogue between 'le clerc' and 'dame Philosophie,' who has the same part to play here that is assigned to her by Boethius, her business being to show the emptiness of earthly riches, honours, and delights. The poem is found in two manuscripts—the one in the British Museum

(as recorded above); the other, and apparently the more correct, in the Bodleian (Douce MSS. 210). Of these I have only been able to examine the first, and that under pressure of time; still I have seen enough to convince me that there is some ground for M. de la Rue's eulogistic notice in the '*Histoire Littéraire de la France.*'<sup>1</sup>

I will quote but one passage to show that the poet had a true feeling for nature—

“ Homme poet auer grant delites  
 Quant il veit en mai les flurs  
 Esemblant de veus plusurs  
 Quant il veit gardins florir  
 Ky frut deit le cors norir  
 Et veit ben leuer les pres  
 Et les champs revestuz de bles  
 Ses oils poet de joie pestre  
 Pur les bens ky il veit crestre.”

SECTION VI.—ANONYMOUS WRITER (*thirteenth century*)  
 AND JEHAN DE MEUN (1297-1305).

*Authorities.*—M. Léopold Delisle, '*Inventaire des Manuscrits,*' t. ii. M. Paul Meyer in '*Romania,*' t. ii., 1873. MSS. in B. M. Add. 21,602 (early xv.); Add. 10,341 (xv.) Harl. 4335-9\* (xv.) Harl. 4330 (late xv.)

Whatever may be our opinion of the character and aims of Philippe-le-Bel, Dante's

“ Mala pianta  
 Che la terra cristiana tutta aduggia,”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 822.

<sup>2</sup> *Purgat.*, canto xx. l. 43.

we cannot deny his statecraft and his skill in matters of finance. That he was also a friend to learning and letters is shown by the flourishing state of the University—there were more colleges founded under this king than during the whole thirteenth century—and by the numerous literary achievements of his reign. It was for his edification that Gilles de Rome, archbishop of Bourges, wrote his treatise, ‘*De Regimine Principum*,’ on the model of Aristotle’s ‘*Politics*’; it was to his command that Jehan de Meun translated the ‘*Rei Militaris Instituta*’ of Vegetius, the ‘*Merveilles d’Irlande*’ of Giraud de Barri, Abelard’s ‘*Letters*,’ Ealred’s ‘*De Spirituali Amicitia*,’ and the ‘*Consolation of Philosophy*.’ This last he dedicated and presented to the king with his own hands, if we may believe the miniature which appears on the first page of many manuscripts.

The prologue contains a courtly compliment to his royal master on his scholarship (“*ja soit ce que tu entendes bien le latin*,” &c.), a lengthy disquisition on the goal which mankind should make for, and on the profit to be drawn from the pages of the ‘*De Consolatione*’ (“*entre tous les livres qui oncques furent faiz cestui est souverain a despire les biens vilz et descevables*”), a sketch of Boethius’s life, and an explanation of his book.

So far so good. But now comes the difficult question, which is Jehan de Meun's translation? For there are two, entirely distinct, to which this prologue is affixed. The one is in prose, a word-for-word rendering: of this there are five manuscripts at Paris—the oldest, a fragment, dating from the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century. The other, a more scholarly performance, follows the scheme of the Latin original: of this there exists an infinity of manuscripts, both in Paris and London, besides several printed examples. M. Paul Meyer cannot allow the former to be J. de Meun's work at all;<sup>1</sup> but he offers no explanation of the dedicatory preface. M. Delisle, while he recognises the justness of M. Meyer's remarks, still speaks of the first as a "traduction en prose, par J. de Meun," and of the second as a "traduction en vers et en prose attribuée à J. de Meun."<sup>2</sup> And there the matter must rest. Whoever was the author of the first translation (which for the future I shall style MS. 1097, from the earliest complete copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale), there is an interesting point about it in connection with Chaucer, which has as good a right to be considered here as later.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 318.

Dr R. Morris, in his edition of Chaucer's 'Boëce'<sup>1</sup> (p. xiii.), has the following remarks: "Chaucer did not English Boethius second-hand through any early French version, as some have supposed, but made his translation with the Latin original before him. Jean de Méung's version—the only early French translation, perhaps, accessible to Chaucer—is not always literal, while the present translation is seldom free or periphrastic, but conforms closely to the Latin, and is at times awkwardly literal. A few passages, taken at haphazard, will make this sufficiently clear."

Unfortunately, Dr Morris's passages are not taken from any translation by Jehan de Meun. What they are taken from is an anonymous version made in 1477 "par un pauvre clerc désolé quérant sa consolation en la traduction de cestui livre." This was published by Colard Mansion in the same year, and may possibly have been written by the famous printer himself.<sup>2</sup> A reprint of it was issued by Antoine Vérart in 1494, of which there is more than one copy in the British Museum, where it stands catalogued under the name of "Jean de Méung." Hence, I presume, Dr Morris's mistake.

<sup>1</sup> E. E. T. S., 1868. Reprinted 1889.

<sup>2</sup> See Gustave Brunet, *La France Litt. au XV<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, p. 29.



Now the translation which we may safely look upon as Jehan de Meun's has evidently no connection with Chaucer. Half-a-dozen parallel passages will suffice to show that. But I am by no means so certain about the other.

Through the kindness of M. Louis Denise, of the Bibliothèque Nationale, I am enabled to set side by side with eight out of the twenty-eight passages selected by Dr Morris the corresponding renderings of MS. fr. 1097 in the Paris Library.

In the third column will be found some half-dozen passages which I claim are sufficient to establish Chaucer's independence of J. de Meun's translation, at any rate.

CHAUCER.	MS. FR. 1097.	J. DE MEUN.
And sorou haþ com- aunded his age to be in me.	Et douleur a com- mende que les aages me soit venuz.	Tant ay je au mains de compagnie En ceste dolereuse vie.
þilke deepe of men is welful þat; ne comeþ not in 3eres þat ben swete ( <i>i. mirie</i> ), but comeþ to wreeches often yclepid.	Beneure est la mort des hommes qui ne sembat pas es doulz ans ains vient aus dolereus apelee sou- vent.	Len devroit bien priser la mort Qui homme qui a son confort Ne surprent ne tolt sa liesse Mais quant il vient en sa tristece, &c.
Wepli compleynte.		Ma complainte plaine de pleur.
Wiþ office of poyntel.		(Je) metoie par escript.
Swiche . . . þat it ne my3te not be emptid.		De trop grand vigneur.
Comune strumpetis of siche a place þat men clepen þe theatre.	Ces communes puter- eles.	Ses vilz ribauldes.

CHAUCER.	MS. FR. 1097.	J. DE MEUN.
Neyþer ouer-oolde ne vnsolempne.	Dont la memoire nest pas moult ancienne ne non moult cele- brable.	
Among my secre rest- ing whiles.	Entre nos oiseus se- crets.	
þe houndys of þe pa- lays.	Chien du pales.	
Of þi masculyn chil- dren.	De ces deuz enfans malles.	
It deliteþ me to comen now to þe singuler vpþeþyng of þi wile- fulnesse.	Me delite en venir en sengle comblement de ta beneurte.	
<i>Emperie of consulers.</i>		<i>Lempire consulaire.</i> <sup>1</sup>
<i>In þe cloos. Of þilke litel habitacle.</i>		En ce meisme propri de cest brief habi- tacle.
þe brode shewyng con- treys of þe heuen, and upon þe streite sete of þis erthe.		Regart les contrees du ciel larges et grans et lestroit sieges de terres.
<i>Al þouz þat þe pleiþyng busines of men ʒeueþ hem honiede drinkes and large metes wiþ swete studie.</i>		Ja soit ce que li homme li doingent par jeu brevuages emmielles et larges viandes par doulz estude.

The reader is now in possession of a certain number of the passages in question. It would not, I suppose, take much more time and trouble to complete the tale. But this method of random selection, though it may serve well enough in the case of works of manifestly different scope and character, such as are Chaucer's 'Boëce' and Jehan de Meun's translation, is a poor

<sup>1</sup> M. Denise has sometimes gone beyond the letter of my request, and given me more of the French than I asked for. I am glad of the excuse to supply the English context (in italics) to match the surplusage.

and unsatisfactory test when we have to try two versions which have so many points of resemblance as 'Boëce' and MS. 1097. Nothing short of a thoroughgoing and systematic comparison of them could make an opinion on the subject worth having, and so I do not propose to offer one. I am only anxious that when excerpts are made from "the only early French version, perhaps, accessible to Chaucer," we should at least be sure that we have the right version before us.<sup>1</sup> When its turn comes, I shall pass Chaucer's work under review, and endeavour to show that it bears, on the face of it, strong evidence in favour of originality.

SECTION VII.—PIERRE DE PARIS (*thirteenth or early  
fourteenth century*).

*Authority.* — M. Ernest Langlois in 'Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits,' t. xxxiii., 2<sup>e</sup> partie, 1889.

The Vatican Library possesses (Vat. 4788) a prose version and commentary of the 'Consolation,' dated 1309, which we owe to a certain Pierre de Paris, the author of two other unknown translations. M. Langlois in his account of the MS. declares that

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, there is nothing in the mere date of the version either of J. de Cis or R. de Louhans which would put them out of our English poet's reach.

however it may be with the Latin original, the translation often stands in need of commentary.<sup>1</sup> The work is preceded by a long prologue in which Pierre explains his method of work ("je prendrai la lettre mot a mot, droytement, sans rien changer, et puis si la exponeray clerement," &c.), and then gives us the benefit of a study on 'Boethius.'

The translation of i. m. 1 begins as follows: "Je, Boece, qui ay fait ancienement les ditiés en l'estude florissant, hay las! je, plorable, sui contraint assenler les vertus tristes."

After an explanation three times as long as the translation, he goes on again: "Blessay les sciences depeciees qu'il me ditent choses de escrire, et les vers de la chaitivité si arosent mes balievers<sup>2</sup> de verais plors."

At the end the author submits his work to his patron, some high personage, perhaps the king, begging his indulgence and intelligent interpretation: "Je sui certain que tante est vostre debonaireté que vos suplerois toutes mes defautes et que par vostre entendement l'euvre sera dou tout clere a tous ceaus qui vodront avoir la conoissance."

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> *Bas-lièvres*—*i.e.*, the lower part of the cheek.

## SECTION VIII.—ANONYMOUS POET (138- ?).

*Authorities.*—M. Delisle, as before ; M. E. Langlois, in ‘Catalogue général des MSS. des Départements,’ t. vii. ; MSS. in B. M. Add. 26,767 (early xv.), Roy. 20. a, xix.\* (xv.)

Certainly during Chaucer’s lifetime, and most probably almost synchronous with his ‘Boëce,’ there appeared in France a translation which is generally known by the words of its first line—

“Celui qui bien bat les boissons  
[Est dignes d’avoir les moissons].”

Until 1873 it was accepted, on the authority of Buchon,<sup>1</sup> as the work of the famous Charles d’Orléans ; but in that year M. Léopold Delisle<sup>2</sup> proved beyond the shadow of doubt that the conjecture, however ingenious, was wrong, which ascribed this version to the prisoner of Agincourt. Buchon was led to it by a passage in the prologue, where the poet gives as the motive of his work a wish to calm the grief caused to a king Charles, who had quite lately mounted the throne, by the misfortunes of his subjects.

I have written it, he says—

“afin  
Que Charles roy qui a este  
Souef nourri nomme daulphin,

<sup>1</sup> Choix d’ouvrages mystiques, tome 21-23 (in the Panthéon littéraire).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 317.

En sa nouvelle mageste  
 Ne soit a courroux trop enclin  
 Quant voit son peuple moleste  
 De la baniere anticristin."

Buchon at once jumped at the conclusion that the young king was Charles VII. and the writer Charles d'Orléans, and proceeded to support his theory by the following arguments:—

1. Charles d'Orléans was something of a Latin scholar, and as such, likely to pride himself on his knowledge, rare in a man of his rank.

2. The handwriting of the Paris and Brussels MSS. is the handwriting of Charles d'Orléans's day.

3. The Brussels MS. has a princely look.

4. The royal personage of the prologue is addressed in terms of familiarity which would be unseemly in the mouth of other than one of his own family.

5. The style and feeling of the translation are in perfect harmony with the style and feeling of Charles d'Orléans's authentic poems.

The date he proposed to assign it was the moment of Charles VII.'s accession—*i.e.*, 1422.

To upset this ingenious fabric a single MS. of date anterior to 1422 is sufficient. Such a MS. exists in No. 14,459 of the Fonds français in the



Bibl. Nat., written in 1413. (There is one in Trinity Hall Library of 1406.) But M. Delisle's sagacity has enabled him to adduce a yet stronger proof.

To No. 1982 (Fonds fr. nouv. acq.) there is appended an epilogue which gives us the writer's name, Raoul d'Orléans. Now Raoul d'Orléans is perfectly well known as a copyist whose period of activity ranged between 1367 and 1396, and Charles d'Orléans was not born till 1391!

With these facts before us, it only remains to be seen what were the changes from dauphin to king in the latter part of the fourteenth century; and these were in 1364 and 1380, when Charles V. and Charles VI. respectively began to reign.

It is to the last of these years that we must in all probability assign the composition of "Celui qui bien bat les boissons."

Were it not for the mere pleasure of telling the story of M. Delisle's skill and judgment, and how he timely saved French literary history from a serious blunder, I need not have gone so minutely into the details of the case. For at Toulouse there has been found another manuscript of this translation, having an entirely unknown epilogue in thirty-two lines, which tells us by an amusing if somewhat

exasperating periphrasis that the poet was a native of Picardy, a monk of the order of St Benedict, that he had been Prior in Savoy, and further, that he had sat at the table of Louis II. of Bourbon, count of Clermont in Beauvaisis. As this nobleman became count of Ferez in 1382, we can have no difficulty in assigning an approximate date to his 'commensal.'<sup>1</sup>

Here, as elsewhere, I shall give part of the rendering of ii. m. 5 as a sample of the translator's style:—

“ Hee dieux come de grant excellence

Fu le premier temps dinnocence

Chascun des biens contens estoit

Que Nature lors lui donnoit

Point ne se vouloient dilater

Ne de lieu en lieu translater.

. . . . .

Quant jeune le jour auoient

Au vespre glans sans plus mangerent

Ilz ne sauoient questoit vin

Point ne cuilloient le raisin

Lors nestoit point les artifices

De clare de miel et despices.

. . . . .

Encor nauoit sonne trompete

Qui les gens darmes ammoneste

Ne sang par cruelles haynes

Nauoit fait les armes sanguines.

. . . . .

---

<sup>1</sup> Langlois, *Op. cit.*, p. 470.

Laz cum de male heure nez fu  
 (Cil) . . . qui par sa feruant auarice  
 Tant foux que par artifice  
 Celle chose qui veult celer  
 Nature ce fist reueler  
 Et terre tant parfont affine  
 Que cuers humains art et mine.”

There is a third version in a solitary MS., dated 1397, which M. Paul Meyer declares to be but “un vulgaire plagiat” of J. de Meun’s translation.<sup>1</sup>

SECTION IX.—JEHAN DE CIS (*fourteenth century*).

*Authority.*—M. Paulin Paris, ‘Les Manuscrits français,’ t. v., 1842.

The Bibl. Nat. possesses yet another fourteenth-century rendering, coming from the hand of a fellow-townsmen of Jehan de Meun. This common birthplace naturally led to a confusion of the two writers, and indeed the copyist of MSS. fr., No. 576 (fifteenth century) assigns it to the poet of ‘Le Roman de la Rose.’ But M. Paulin Paris in 1842 finally dispelled this illusion, and conjectured the author to be Jehan de Cis, a Dominican,<sup>2</sup> of whom mention is made in the epilogue of the translation beginning “Celui qui bien bat les buissons.”

The obscurity and affectation of the work we are

<sup>1</sup> Romania, 1873, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> Les MSS. fr., v. pp. 46 and 52.

considering are sufficient excuse for a fresh translation such as the one which used to be attributed to Charles d'Orléans.

SECTION X.—FRERE RENAUT DE LOUHANS.

*Authority.*—M. Paul Meyer in 'Romania,' t. ii., 1873, p. 272. MSS. in B. M., Roy. 19. a, iv.\* (early xv.); Eg. 2633 (xv.)

Passing over a prose translation into French by an Italian (fourteenth century) and a verse translation which M. Meyer has shown to be nothing more than a variation of "Celui qui bien bat les buissons,"<sup>1</sup> another verse translation must be remarked, which enjoyed a great vogue, to judge by the number of MSS. extant. Its date is fixed by the words of the epilogue as 1336, and the author's name, Frere Renaut de Louhans, is given by the initial letters of the nineteen octaves of the prologue.

Frere Renaut appears to have paraphrased rather than translated the 'Consolation.' Thus, in dealing with ii. m. 5, he is not content, like Boethius, to contrast the former with the present age, but divides the life of the world into four periods—the first, of innocence; the second and third, when agriculture and avarice respectively began; the last, our own, "plus mauvais que les quatre devant."

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 272.

I will quote a few lines as a specimen of his closer adhesion to the Latin:—

“Nestoiert perduz par outrage,  
 La glan mengoient du boscage  
 Quant jeune grant piece avoient  
 Clare ne pyment ne buvoient  
 Et ne savoient artifices  
 Comment le vin et les espices  
 Se doivent ensemble meller  
 Dieu ne leur vouloit reveler  
 Comment li drap se coulouroient  
 Tout vestu sur lerbe gisoient  
 . . . . .  
 Ilz buvoient a grant alaine  
 Leau qui vint de la fontaine  
 Car ne cognoissoient les vins.  
 Sur les arbres et sur les pins  
 Estoit leur habitacion ;  
 Navoient autre mancion.”

---

ENGLAND.

SECTION XI.—CHAUCER (1340-1400).

*Authorities.*—Ten Brink, ‘Chaucer-Studien.’ 1870. Furnivall, ‘Trial-Forewords,’ Chaucer Soc. Publ., 1871. Chaucer’s ‘Boëce,’ ed. Morris. E.E.T.S., 1868. MS. in C. U. L., li. 3. 21\* (early xv.)

But the middle-age writer upon whom, more than upon any other, Boethius left his mark, and with whom the English reader will probably feel most sympathy, is Geoffrey Chaucer, “the first founder and embellisher of ornate eloquence” in our language,

as Caxton reverently calls him. His acquaintance with the works of the Roman philosopher, which would seem to date from about the year 1369, when he wrote the 'Deth of Blaunche,' had ripened into a real intimacy by the middle of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties,—the period, that is, which saw the production of 'Troylus and Cryseyde,' the 'Parlement of Foules,' the 'Hous of Fame,' and the rendering into prose of the 'Consolation of Philosophy.' At this time, indeed, Chaucer must have known his Boethius almost by heart. 'Troylus and Cryseyde' teems with echoes and direct imitations of the Latin book, and Boethius is the *deus ex machina* brought in by the poet to help him out of the difficulty into which his treatment of the story, so different from that of Boccaccio, had led him. For it will be remembered that the Italian poet in the 'Filostrato' hastens over the courtship of Troylus to dwell upon the catastrophe and its after results, while it is just upon the scenes which Boccaccio neglected that Chaucer expended all his powers of humour and pathos. From Boccaccio we only get one more illustration of the line, "Frailty, thy name is woman"; from Chaucer a true love-story, the most beautiful of the middle ages, and perhaps of all time.



After Cryseyde has been wooed and won—in other words, when the poem has reached its culminating point of interest—Chaucer seems to shrink from the unwelcome task, which the development of the theme as he had it from Boccaccio set before him, of dragging his heroine in the dust; and so he calls in the aid of the ‘Consolation’ to account for her faithlessness.

“For al that cometh, comth by necessite ;  
Thus to ben lorne, it is my desteyne,”

cries Troylus, when he learns that his love is to be parted from him and carried back to the Grecian camp; and he goes on in the words of Boethius (Cons., v. pr. 2 and 3) to show how God’s foreknowledge must of necessity destroy man’s freewill, and that therefore Cryseyde and he, luckless pair, must accept and bow to the inevitable. He is interrupted in the midst of his meditations by Pandarus, and so never reaches the answer given by Philosophy to her imprisoned disciple, in which she tells him that the arm of God is not to be measured by the finger of man—that the divine prescience does not at all interfere with human freedom of choice. “Manet intemerata mortalibus arbitrii libertas” are among the last words she speaks to him. But to have developed the argu-

ment any further would have spoilt Chaucer's point: he wishes to excite compassion for his hero and heroine as the playthings of fortune and the victims of necessity. And while we may question the artistic value of the explanation, we cannot deny that it serves its purpose well enough. Cryseyde, with all her faults and weaknesses, is put beyond the reach of human criticism and reproof.

The translation of the 'De Consolatione' comes no doubt, in point of time, before the great poem which has been engaging our attention; but I am not at all disposed to subscribe to Mr Henry Morley's opinion that it is quite an early work. My reasons for venturing to differ from so high an authority will be best seen after a careful examination of the book: I shall accordingly reserve them till later. It possesses a double interest for us,—first, as an example of fourteenth-century prose, and secondly, as an instance—the only known one—of Chaucer's method of literal translation. I say advisedly literal translation, for although Chaucer often fails to catch the spirit of the Latin, he keeps, as a rule, so closely to the letter as to render necessary the interpolation of a multitude of glosses to make the meaning of many passages at all intelligible. Indeed it is open to question whether

the translator quite understood some of them himself. It would be very difficult, nay almost impossible, to say which of the explanations scattered broadcast over the pages of his 'Boece' were inserted by him as he worked, and which he simply turned into English as he found them in the text. Three at least must have been present in the MS. used by Notker for his version.

	CHAUCER.	NOTKER.
i. m. 1	Þe sorouful houre þat is to seyne þe deef.	Tiu léida stunda ih méino diu iungesta.
i. pr. 1	A. gregkysche P þat signifief þe lijf actif. . . . T þat signifief þe lijf contemplatif.	Táz chríecheska p. táz pezéichenet practicam vitam táz chît activam. . . . Theta tiu bezéichenet theoreticam vitam daz chît contemplativam.
i. pr. 4	Þilk comaundement of pictagoras þat is to seyne men schal seruen to god and not to goddes.	Táz phitagoras phylosophus spráh de non sacris, aldé de non diis. <sup>1</sup>

These explanations seem to fall naturally into two great classes—

(a) Parenthetical—*i.e.*, those which in a modern book might stand in the text, but between brackets.

(b) Exegetical—*i.e.*, those which we should relegate to the notes.

As examples of the first of these classes, let us take the following:—

<sup>1</sup> The reading  $\epsilon\pi\omicron\nu\ \theta\epsilon\epsilon\tilde{\alpha}$ , ἀλλ' οὐ θεοῖς seems to have been an exceedingly common one in a certain family of MSS.

ii. pr. 1 (Morris, p. 32)<sup>1</sup>—

þe floor of fortune, þat is to seyn . . . worlde  
(*area fortunæ*).

iii. pr. 5 (M., p. 76)—

þe grete weyzt, þat is to sein of lordes power or  
fortune (*moles*).

iii. m. 8 (M., p. 81)—

þe shynynge of þi forme, þat is to seien þe beaute  
of þi body (*formæ nitor*).

iv. m. 1 (M., p. 111)—

þe swifte carte, þat is to seyne þe circular moeuyng  
of the sonne (*volucrem currum*).

iv. m. 2 (M., p. 118)—

Wiþ so many wicked lordes, þat is to seyn wiþ so  
manye vices (*tot tyrannos*).

v. m. 1 (M., p. 152)—

By þilke lawe, þat is to sein by þe deuyne  
ordinaunce (*ipsa lege*).

v. pr. 6 (M., p. 175)—

It ne may nat unbytide as who seiþ it mot bitide  
(*non euenire non posse*).

The second class is a much smaller one, and therefore more easy to illustrate.

i. pr. 4 (M., p. 15)—

Theodoric's  
oppression. Whan þat theodoric þe kyng of gothes in a dere  
3er hadde hys gerneris ful of corne and comaundede  
þat no man ne scholde bie no corne til his corne  
were solde and þat at a dere greuous pris.

i. pr. 4 (M., p. 15)—

Coemption. Coempcioun þat is to seyn comune achat or bying  
to-gidere þat were establissed upon poeple by swiche  
a manere imposicioun as who so bouzte a busshel  
corn he moste geue the kyng þe fifte part.

<sup>1</sup> I quote from Dr Morris's edition of Boëce, E.E.T.S., 1868.

## i. pr. 4 (M., p. 21)—

The popular opinion that prosperity implies goodness and misfortune wickedness. As þus þat yif a wyȝt haue prosperite he is a good man and worþi to haue þat prosperite. And who so haþ aduersite he is a wikked man, and god haþ forsake hym and he is worþi to haue þat aduersite.

## ii. m. 1 (M., p. 33)—

Fortune likened to Euripus. Eurippe is an arm of þe see þat ebbith and flowiþ, and somtyme þe strem is on one syde and somtyme on þat oþer.

## ii. pr. 2 (M., p. 35)—

A definition of tragedy. Tragedie is to seyne a dite of a prosperite for a tyme þat endiþ in wrechednesse.

## ii. m. 7 (M., p. 60)—

Mors prima and mors secunda. þe first deef he clepiþ here þe departyng of þe body and þe soule. And þe secunde deef he clepeþ as here þe styntyng of þe renoun of fame.

## iii. m. 10 (M., p. 94)—

God a refuge from the world. þis is to seyn, þat ȝe þat ben combred and de-ceyued wiþ worldely affeccious comeþ now to þis souereyne good þat is god þat is refut to hem that wolen comyn to hym.

Now and again Chaucer recasts a whole passage, either because he was dissatisfied with his first attempt, or because he felt that the full force of the Latin could not be conveyed by a single rendering.

## iii. pr. 1 (M., p. 63)—

So þat I trowe nat now þat I be unparygal to the strokes of fortune as who seyth I dar wel now suffren al the assautes of fortune.

*Adeo ut iam me posthac inparem fortunæ ictibus esse non arbitrer.*

## iv. pr. 4 (M., p. 125)—

For þis þing þat I shal telle þe nowe ne shal not

seme lesse wondirful. But of þe þings þat ben taken al so it is necessarie as ho seiþ it folweþ of þat whiche þat is purposed byfor.

. . . *sed ex his quæ sumpta sunt æque est necessarium.*

Besides these longer glosses there are innumerable alternative versions of single words belonging by right to our class *A*—*maleficio* = malyfice or enchaumentz (M., p. 20); *imputare* = blamen ne aretten (M., p. 40); *fœdera* = byndyng or alliaunce (M., p. 159), &c., some of which possess a special interest in that they discover the writer in the very act of trying new words. Most have happily lived on, and are in common use with us to-day; but whether successful in his endeavour to enrich his English vocabulary or not, Chaucer always displays an excellent taste in his choice, and fully deserves Caxton's word of praise which I quoted at the beginning of the section.

It is a thousand pities that "compotent," the opposite of impotent, did not take root in our language; and the modern writer on freewill would be grateful for such a synonym as "arbitre" (*arbitrii libertas*). In connection with this word and another, "autumpne," which also appears here for the first time in English, there is a point well worth remarking. Each of them comes several times in the course



of the translation, and on the first occasion is left without comment. But when they occur again, Chaucer seems conscious that he is using words which after all require some explanation, and so he adds to the one, "that is to seyn the later ende of somer"; and to the other, "that is to seyn fre wille."

✓ And now I have to perform the unpleasant duty of dressing a formal charge against Chaucer's scholarship. There will be two main counts in the indictment—

(1.) Actual misrendering of words.

(2.) Errors arising from constructions misunderstood.

Instances of (1) are—

- i. pr. 4 (M., p. 16)—*Astrui*=lykned. This is perhaps a venial offence. I believe the right translation to be "added"; but it might possibly mean "opposed."
- ii. pr. 5 (M., p. 48)—*Sepositis*=subgit.
- iii. pr. 2 (M., p. 66)—*Afferre*=by-refte away.
- iii. pr. 8 (M., p. 80)—*Obnoxius*=anoyously.
- iii. pr. 8 (M., p. 81)—*Lyncei*=lynx (the beast, instead of Aristotle's Lynceus, the man).
- iii. pr. 12 (M., p. 103)—*Clavus*=keye.
- v. pr. 1 (M., p. 150)—*Principio*=prince.
- v. pr. 1 (M., p. 151)—*Compendium*=abreggynge. The word here requires to be rendered "gain," although, of course, it sometimes means "abridgment."

The mistaken constructions are many and various.

Chaucer thrice translates active participles having reference to persons as if they were substantives:—

- iii. pr. 4 (M., p. 74)—*Utentium* = usaunces.  
 iii. pr. 12 (M., p. 104)—*Detrectantium iugum* = a ȝok of mysdrawynges.  
 iii. pr. 12 (M., p. 104)—*Obtemperantium salus* = the sauynge of obedient þinges.

On the other hand, he sometimes gives to gerunds and substantives the force of participles referring to persons:—

- ii. pr. 5 (M., p. 45)—*Effundendo* = to hem þat dispenden.  
 ii. pr. 5 (M., p. 45)—*Coacervando* = to hem þat mokeren.  
 iv. pr. 1 (M., p. 109)—*Facinorum* = wicked felouns.

The relation of the dependent to the principle sentence is a constant cause of stumbling:—

- iii. pr. 9 (M., p. 83)—*Considera vero, re quod nihilo indigere, quod potentissimum, quod honore dignissimum esse concessum est, egere claritudinem quam sibi præstare non possit atque ob id aliqua ex parte uideatur abiectius.*

Consideren þan quod she as we han grauntid her byforne þat he þat ne haþ nede of noþing and is most myȝty and most digne of honour yif hym nedeþ any clernesse of renoun which clernesse he myȝt nat graunten of hym self so þat for lakke of þilke clernesse he myȝt seme febler on any syde or þe more outcaste.

Here Chaucer has actually forgotten the main verb.  
 A much needed gloss is appended to the passage, which saves the sense, but throws no light on the Latin construction.

skip to 225

iii. pr. 9 (M., p. 83)—*An tu arbitraris quod nihilo indigeat egere potentia?* Wenest þou þat he þat haþ nede of power þat hym ne lakkeþ no þing. (It is easy to see that *indigeat* and *egere* have changed places.)

On one occasion a word that should stand in the principal sentence is worked into the dependent:—

iii. pr. 7 (M., p. 79)—*Sed nimis e natura dictum est nescio quem filios invenisse tortores.* But it haþ ben seid þat it is ouer myche azeins kynde, &c.

As instances of promiscuous mistakes in translation I will take the following:—

ii. pr. 8 (M., p. 62)—*Fluctus avidum mare*=þe se so greedy to flowen.

iv. pr. 6 (M., p. 140)—*Quidam me quoque excellentior*=the moore excellent by me.

v. pr. 1 (M., p. 149)—*Auctoritate dignissima*=ful digne by authorite.

v. m. 3 (M., p. 159)— $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{Sed cur tanto flagrat amore} \\ \textit{Veri tectas repperire notas} \end{array} \right\}$  =note of soþe y-couered.

v. pr. 4 (M., p. 162)—*Positionis gratia*=by grace of possession.

v. pr. 4 (M., p. 163)—*Quasi vero credamus*=ryzt as we trowen.

v. m. 5 (M., p. 171)—*Male dissipis*=waxest yuel out of þi wit.

Over and above these grosser blunders, the translation bristles with what appear, to us at least, inappropriate or infelicitous renderings. Such are (a selection taken at random):—

i. m. 1 (M., p. 4)—*Laceræ camenæ*=rendyng muses.

i. m. 1 (M., p. 4)—*Ingratas moras*=a long unagreeable dwellynges.

i. pr. 4 (M., p. 16)—*Alieni ceris necessitudo*=necessity of foreine moneye.

- i. m. 5 (M., p. 22)—*Solitus iterum mutet habenas* = comeþ eft azeynes hir used cours.
- i. pr. 6 (M., p. 27)—*Velut hiantē valli robore* = so as þe strengþe of þe paleys schynyng is open.
- ii. pr. 1 (M., p. 31)—*Utē moribus* = use hir maners.
- ii. pr. 5 (M., p. 45)—*Largiendi usu* = by usage of large zeuyng of hym þat haþ zeuen it.
- ii. pr. 7 (M., p. 57)—*Commerci insolentia* = defaute of unusage entercommunynge of merchaundise.
- iii. pr. 4 (M., p. 73)—*Multiplici consulatu* = many manere dignites of consules.
- iii. pr. 12 (M., p. 105)—*Probationibus . . . ex altero fidem trahente* = proeues drawn to hem self hir feiþ and hir accorde cueriche of hem of oþer.
- iii. m. 12 (M., p. 106)—*Silvas currere mobiles* = þe wodes meueble to rennen.
- v. m. 5 (M., p. 176)—*Liquido volatu* = moist fleeyng.

It is, of course, not fair to reckon against the translator those passages where he has been led astray by a wrong reading in his text; but this is a convenient place for recording them:—

- i. m. 4—*ἐπὶ θεῶν* = men shal seruen to god and not to goddes. (The Cambridge MS. has “*deo et non diis sacrificandum*”—*vide supra*, p. 218).
- ii. pr. 5—*Postremo pulchritudinis* = the laste beaute. (The Cambridge MS. reads “*postreme*.”)
- ii. m. 5—*Arva* = armurers. (The Cambridge MS. reads “*arma*.”)
- iii. pr. 11—*Sede* = feete.
- iv. m. 7—*Immani* = empty.

Where now does this—to the general reader perhaps a little painful—examination of Chaucer's ‘Boece’

lead us? Not, I think, to the conviction that it is a work of the author's early youth, a mere student's exercise. It is surely most reasonable to connect its composition with those poems which contain the greatest number of recollections and imitations of its original; and Chaucer's first efforts are guiltless of these, while the writings of his middle and later periods are full of them. ~~Again,~~ while no one can deny that the translation abounds with slipshod renderings, with awkward phrases and downright glaring mistakes of a kind to make a modern examiner's hair stand on end, yet its inaccuracy and infelicity is not that of an inexperienced Latin scholar, but rather of one who was no Latin scholar at all. Given a man who is sufficiently conversant with a language to read it fluently without paying too much heed to the precise value of participle and preposition, who has the wit and the sagacity to grasp the meaning of his author, but not the intimate knowledge of his style and manner necessary to a right appreciation of either, and—especially if he set himself to write in an uncongenial and unfamiliar form—he will assuredly produce just such a result as Chaucer has done. ( We must now glance at the literary style of the translation. As Ten Brink has observed, we can here see as clearly as in any work

of the middle ages what a high cultivation is requisite for the production of a good prose.<sup>1</sup> Verse, and not prose, is the natural vehicle for the expression of every language in its infancy, and it is certainly not in prose that Chaucer's genius shows to best advantage. The restrictions of metre were indeed to him as silken fetters, while the freedom of prose only served to embarrass him; just as a bird that has been born and bred in captivity, whose traditions are all domestic, finds itself at a sad loss when it escapes from its cage and has to fall back on its own resources for sustenance. In reading 'Boece,' we have often as it were to pause and look on while Chaucer has a desperate wrestle with a tough sentence; but though now he may appear to be down, with a victorious knee upon him, next moment he is on his feet again, disclaiming defeat in a gloss which makes us doubt whether his adversary had so much the best of it after all. But such strenuous endeavour, even when it is crowned with success, is strange in a writer one of whose chief charms is the delightful ease, the complete absence of effort, with which he says his best things. It is only necessary to compare the passages of Boethius in the prose version with the same when they re-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 141.



appear in the poems, to realise how much better they look in their verse dress.

Let the reader take Troylus's soliloquy on Freewill and Predestination (book iv. st. 134-148) and read it side by side with the corresponding passage in 'Boece' (M., pp. 152-159), and he cannot fail to feel the superiority of the former to the latter. With what clearness and precision does the argument unfold itself, how close is the reasoning, how vigorous and yet graceful is the language!

It is to be regretted that Chaucer did not do for all the metra of the 'Consolation' what he did for the fifth of the second book. A solitary gem like "The Former Age" makes us long for a whole set.

Sometimes, whether unconsciously or of set purpose it is difficult to decide, his prose slips into verse:—

"It likeþ me to shew by subtil songe  
Wip slakke and delitable soun of strenges" (iii. m. 2).

"Whan fortune wip a proude ryȝt hand" (ii. m. 1).

"And þat þe leest isle in þe see  
þat hyȝt tile be þral to þe" (iii. m. 5).

And there are instances where he actually reproduces the original Latin metre:—

"O ȝe my frendes what or wherto auainted ȝe me to be weleful  
For he þat haþ fallen stood not in stedfast degree" (i. m. 1).

"Weyne þou joie  
Drif fro þe drede  
Fleme þou hope" (i. m. 7).

" He 3af to þe sonne hys bemes  
 He 3af to þe moone hir hornes  
 He 3af þe men to the erþe  
 He 3af the sterres to þe heuene  
 He encloseþ wiþ membres þe soules  
 þat comen fro hys heye sete.  
 þanne comen all mortal folk of noble seed  
 Whi noysen 3e or bosten of 3oure eldris " (iii. m. 6).

SECTION XII.—JOHN THE CHAPLAIN  
*(early fifteenth century).*

*Authorities.*—Warton's 'History of English Poetry' (1774-81), vol. ii., sec. 2. Todd's 'Illustrations of the Lives and Writings of Gower and Chaucer' (1810). MSS. in B. M., 18 a. xiii.\* (early xv.); Harl. 43 (xv½.); Harl. 44 (xv½.); Sl. 554 (xv½).

The reader will remember that we settled the probable date of Chaucer's 'Boëce' to be somewhere about 1380. Before another generation had passed, the hand of the translator was busy once more with the 'Consolation.' This time it is a verse rendering into eight-line stanzas, made in 1410 by a certain Johannes Capellanus. It is not easy to establish this writer's identity. For while the majority of MSS. are simply signed with the above name and designation, a copy of the book printed at Tavistock in 1525 qualifies the author as Johannes Waltunen (John Walton); one MS. further states that he was canon of Osney;<sup>1</sup> and another calls him, not Walton,

<sup>1</sup> Hearne, Præf. in Camdeni Annales, p. 133.

but Tebaud *alias* Watyrbeche.<sup>1</sup> The balance of evidence seems in favour of John Walton, who undertook the translation at the request of Dame Elisabeth Berkeley. It is at least certain that Johannes Capellanus is not John Lydgate, as Peiper, led astray perhaps by the B. M. Catalogue, affirms. The translator, whoever he was, did his work well, so far as I am able to judge from a cursory examination of the manuscripts in London. The student of our literary history will note with interest a passage in the prologue where the writer acknowledges his debt to Chaucer, and modestly disclaims all wish or power to compete with him or Gower:—

“ I have herd spek, and sumwhat have yseyn  
 Of diverse men þat woundir subtyllye  
 In metir sum and sum in prose pleyn  
 This book translated have full suffishauntlye  
 Into englissh tonge word for word well nye  
 Bot I most use the wittes þat I have  
 Þogh y may noght do so, yit noght for thye  
 With help of God þe sentence shall I save.

To Chaucer þat is floure of rethoryk  
 In Englisshe tong and excellent poete  
 This wot I wel no þing may I do lyk  
 Þogh so þat I of makynge entyrmete<sup>2</sup>  
 And Gower þat so craftily doth trete  
 As in his book of moralite  
 Þogh I to þeym in makyng am unmete  
 3it most I shewe it forth þat is in me.”

<sup>1</sup> Todd's Illustrations of Gower and Chaucer, Introd., p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Entremette.

But the importance of the translation does not lie, as far as our present purpose is concerned, in its literary merit, so much as in the fact that when the only poet of the reign of Henry IV.<sup>1</sup> took up his song, the theme should once more be the 'Consolation of Philosophy.'

For the sake of consistency, let me give the first and last stanzas of ii. m. 5 as a specimen of John the Chaplain :—

“ Full wonder blisseful was þat rap̄er age  
 When mortal men couthe holde hymself payed  
 To fede þeym self wit oute suche outrage  
 Wiþ mete þat trewe felde have arrayed  
 Wiþ acorne þaire hunger was alayed  
 And so þei couthe sese þaire talent  
 Thei had yit no queynt craft assayed  
 As clarry for to make ne pyment.

. . . . .

I wold our tyme might turne certanly  
 And þise maneres alwey wit us dwelle  
 But loue of hauyng brenneþ fervently  
 More fersere þan þe veray fuyre of helle  
 Allas who was þat man þat wold him melle  
 This gold and gemmes that were keuered  
 Þat first began to myne y can not telle  
 Bot þat he fond a parelous precious.”

---

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Warton, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

## ITALY.

SECTION XIII.—ALBERTO DELLA PIAGENTINA (fl. 1332)  
AND OTHERS.

*Authorities.*—Argelati, ‘Biblioteca degli Volgazarizzatori.’ Milan, 1767. Tiraboschi, ‘Storia della Letteratura Italiana,’ t. iv. and v. Florence, 1806-7.

The merits of Boethius received a more tardy recognition in the land of his birth, and apparently it was not until the fourteenth century was fairly on its course that an Italian translator took the field. It is true that Brunetto Latino, the great Florentine encyclopædist, the teacher of Dante, was accredited by Voigt,<sup>1</sup> on whose authority I know not, with a vernacular translation of ‘Boethius.’ I should not take the trouble to notice this error, which was exploded more than a hundred years ago, if Peiper had not perpetuated it in his list of *interpretes*.<sup>2</sup> The assertion that Brunetto translated the ‘De Consolatione’ was made in the first volume of Argelati’s ‘Biblioteca,’ only to be retracted in the fifth.<sup>3</sup> And if his evidence and that of Tiraboschi<sup>4</sup> is not

<sup>1</sup> Wiederbelebung des Klassischen Alterthums, p. 13: Berlin, 1880.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> i. p. 170; v. p. 429.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, t. iv. 477.

considered sufficiently convincing, let Thor Sundby's silence be added thereto, and there is little doubt upon which side the balance will kick the beam. The Danish professor, who is the final authority for Brunetto Latino, does not say a word about any such translation.<sup>1</sup> The mistake seems to have arisen from the fact that in a book published by Manni of Florence in 1735 Brunetto's 'Motti de' Filosofi' is found in close connection with a 'Boezio della Consolazione Volgarizzato da Maestro Alberto Fiorento.' We may confidently identify this translator with the Alberto della Piagentina who thus beguiled the hours of his incarceration at Venice in 1332.

"Io sono Alberto della Piagentina  
 Di che Firenze vera Donna fue  
 Che nel mille trecento trentadue  
 Volgarizzai questa eccelsa Dottrina  
 E per larghezza di grazia divina  
 Ne chiosai due libri et piue  
 Anzi che morte coll' opere sue  
 In carcere mi desse disciplina,"

he writes; and although he does not further enlighten us as to who he was, or why he was put in prison, still it is pleasant to think that Boethius's

<sup>1</sup> B. L.'s *Levnet og Skrifter*, Copenhagen, 1869, of which there is an Italian translation by Renier: Florence, 1884.



words could afford comfort and relief to this later tenant of an Italian dungeon.<sup>1</sup>

Argelati's list contains as many as ten translations<sup>2</sup> in manuscript, presumably before the fifteenth century, of whose different authors we know absolutely nothing, save that one was Fra Giovanni da Foligno, and another Messer Grazia da Siena, who undertook this work at the request of Nicolò di Guio in 1343.

Three other translators of the 'De Consolatione' before the Renaissance—a Greek, a Spaniard, and a German—claim a passing notice.

The first of these, both in point of time and interest, is Maximus Planudes.

---

GREECE.

SECTION XIV.—MAXIMUS PLANUDES (fl. 134—).

*Authorities.* — Fabricius, 'Bibl. Græca' (ed. Harles), tom. xi. C. F. Weber, 'Carmina A. M. T. S. Boetii Græce conversa per

---

<sup>1</sup> Tiraboschi (*op. cit.*, t. v. p. 623) is inclined to identify him with Albertino da Piacenza, professor of grammar at Bologna in 1315.

<sup>2</sup> Among them is mentioned "four books of the Consolation, translated by Brunetto Latino." The value of the entry will be best appreciated by Argelati's own note: "Stà nella Bibl. Magliabecchiana, come dall' Indice de MSS. che abbiamo riportato della medesima, e dalle nostre vecchie Schede, nelle quali notammo d'averlo veduto, e nulla di più."

Maximum Planudem.' Darmstadt, 1833. C. F. Weber, 'Dissertatio de latine scriptis,' &c. Cassel, 1852. E. A. Bétant, 'De la Cons. de la Phil.,' Traduction grecque de Maxime Planude: Geneva, 1871.

The rendering into his native Greek of the 'Consolation' is no discredit to the reputation of the learned monk of Constantinople, the compiler of the 'Anthology.' In it he shows himself a very skilful versifier, turning the various numbers of Boethius into their appropriate metres. There is a satisfaction in finding that right in the middle of the fourteenth century—we have reason to believe that Planudes lived till at least 1352—Greek verses were being written, which, if they are deficient in the finer qualities of the old poetry, are still dexterous and graceful.

The following lines, the beginning and end of ii. m. 5, are copied from Weber's edition:—

Ὦς ὄλβιος ὢν ὁ πρὶν αἰών,  
 μικροῖς ἀγαπῶν πεδίοσι  
 σπατάλαις τ' οὐκ ἔκλυτος ἄρχαις  
 σχεδίην τ' εἰς βουλευτὸν ἠθάς  
 5 δαιτ' ἀκροδρῦοισι ποιεῖσθαι.

25 αὐτ' ὀξύτερος πυρὸς Αἴτηνης  
 φιλοχρηματίας πόθος αὔξει  
 φεῦ, τις πέλε πρῶτος, ὅς ἀχθος  
 χρυσοῖο καλυπτομένοιο  
 κρύπτειν τε λίθους ἐθελόντας  
 σεπτὸν μάλα πῆμ' ἀνόρυξεν;

## SPAIN.

## SECTION XV.—FRA ANTONIO GINEBREDA.

*Authorities.*—Amat, ‘Diccionario de los escritores Catalanes.’ Barcelona, 1836. Incunable in Mus. Brit., ‘Boecio, De Consolacion.’ Sevilla, 1511.

Peiper’s words (*op. cit.*, p. lv) would lead one to suppose that there was no other Spanish translator of our author before 1500. But the prologue to the Seville edition of 1511 describes how the present version was undertaken at the request of a young noble of Valencia, “porque obra tan solenne no remaniesse imperfecta”; and mentions, among other foregoing translations, one, which left much to be desired, dedicated to the Infante of Mallorca.<sup>1</sup>

There is little to record of this Fra Antonio beyond the fact that he was a Dominican, and an ornament to his order, who died in 1395, but not before he had turned all the works of Boethius into Catalan. So at least says Amat (*op. cit.*, p. 295), although I have not been able to find cause why Fra Antonio should be credited with more than the rendering of the ‘Consolation.’

<sup>1</sup> I take it this prologue was prefixed to the first edition, 1493. It can hardly be that Fra Antonio is covertly attacking his own work.

That this rendering, despite its writer's pretensions, is far from perfect, will readily be seen from the following excerpt (ii. m. 5):—

“Tan buena era la vida de los premeros habitantes del mundo: que solamente querian aquellas cosas que eran necessarias a la vida e no querian superfluydad de vestes<sup>1</sup> ni de viandas: ni de riquezas,” &c.

---

GERMANY.

SECTION XVI.—PETER OF KASTL.

*Authorities.* — Pezius, ‘Thesaurus Anecdotorum Novissimus’ (‘Dissertatio Isagogica’ in tomum iv. p. xxiv),<sup>2</sup> 1723. Andreas, ‘Chronicon Generale’ (in Pezius, *lib. cit.*)

In the year 1401 Peter, Presbyter in Kastl, a Benedictine monk, is said to have written a translation of the ‘De Consolatione.’ Pezius, I know not on what grounds, suspects this to be the one which was printed, together with the Latin text and St

<sup>1</sup> A worm has made its hole through the middle of this word in the B. M. copy. I have restored it to the best of my ability.

<sup>2</sup> With the memory of a fatiguing *chasse au renvoi* fresh on me, I cannot resist entering a protest against Peiper's method of referring to Pezius. All the information he vouchsafes the unfortunate reader at this point is “Pezius's Anecd., p. xxiii.” Now, as the Anecdotorum Thesaurus is a vast work in six ponderous folios, to each one of which is prefixed an introductory dissertation, paged in

Thomas Aquinas's Commentary, by Coburger at Nuremberg in 1473. Peter seems to have been more successful as a literal translator than the Spaniard we have been discussing:—

“O wie gar vil selig ist gewesen das vorder alter das sich liess benügen an den getrewen veldern, und nicht ward verderbet mit der tregen oder unertigen überflüssigkeit, ungewont helte zeprechen das spat vasten mit der leichten aicheln . . . 25 Aber die inprünstig lieb zehaben das gut ist frayssamer dann das fewr des perges Ethna. Ach wer ist der erst gewesen unter den die gewollet haben das die gewicht des verborgen goldes und die edeln gesteyn solten verporgen beleiben. Wann der hat begraben hohgultig oder achtbar scheden.”

I have little doubt that other Germans besides Notker and Peter of Kastl tried their hand on Boethius, but I have not been able so far to find a trace of them.

Roman numerals, it involved no little time, and the turning of many leaves, to realise that p. xxiiii meant the twenty-fourth page of the *Dissertatio Isagogica in tomum quartum*. While I am on this subject, I may perhaps be allowed to call attention to the same editor's description of the MS. of the *Consolation and Tracts* in the Rehdiger Library at Breslau. He calls it simply “Rehdigerianus” (*op. cit.*, p. xiiii). Without doubt Thomas von Rehdiger (*ob.* 1576) was a great man, but strangers can hardly be expected to know instinctively that he founded a library (the Elisabeth-Bibliothek) in the town from which he took his name!

The beginning of the fifteenth century is in more than one way a convenient limit to set to this list of vernacular translations. But it must not be supposed that the story of Boethius's influence on mediæval literature is nearly told yet. I protest I am appalled at the amount I have left unsaid. He had a host of imitators in Latin, some of whom, such as Bernard Silvester, Alain de Lille, John de Gerson, Alphonso de la Torre, cannot be passed over in silence without regret. Much might be written about Boethius and Dante, and perhaps an explanation offered of the statement in the 'Convito' that the Roman philosopher was not known to many;<sup>1</sup> while to collect the references to Boethius in the 'Roman de la Rose,' the great 'Ars Amoris' of the middle ages, would necessitate an appendix longer than that which I have devoted to Chaucer. The same, though in a less degree, would, I fancy, hold good of Gower. Lastly, it remains to be seen how far such combinations of verse and prose as the 'Vita Nuova,' the 'Ameto' of Boccaccio, or the 'Voydit' of Guillaume de Machault, were inspired by the 'Consolation of Philosophy.' The subject is indeed fresher and altogether more attractive than that of the present chapter; but then it requires a

<sup>1</sup> See Morris in Chaucer's *Boëce*, p. ii, note.



far wider knowledge of medieval literature than I can lay claim to. And I feel that I have already used enough paper and tried my reader's patience too far. One word, however, must be said, before taking leave of Boethius, touching his connection with scholasticism.

## CHAPTER VII.

## BOETHIUS AND THE SCHOLASTIC PROBLEM.

---

*Authorities.*—First and foremost, Hauréau's admirable 'Histoire de la Philosophie Scolastique' (Paris, 1850), tome i., to which I owe more than can be recorded here. I have also consulted Cousin, 'Histoire de la Philosophie au xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle,' 9<sup>me</sup> leçon; Prantl, 'Geschichte der Logik' (Leipzig, 1855-70); Maurice's 'Medieval Philosophy' (London, 1857); and the first Appendix to Grote's 'Aristotle on the Theory of Universals.'

---

I HAVE already hinted at the paramount influence exercised by Boethius in his writings other than the 'Consolation' on the philosophy of the middle ages known to us under the name of the scholastic philosophy. If we would have a clear conception of this much-abused and much-misunderstood term, we must go back to its literal meaning, being before all things careful to have our minds free from the

weight of prejudice that has gathered against it during the last four hundred years—a prejudice which rose with the intellectual revolt of the Renaissance, and culminated in the flippancy and intolerance of the eighteenth century. Scholastic, then, means simply *taught in the schools*—in those schools which received their charter of foundation in the celebrated letter of Charlemagne, written in 787 to the bishops of France, wherein he recommends an immediate return to the long-neglected study of secular learning. In the numerous ecclesiastical seminaries that sprang up in answer to this call—at Tours, at Lyons, at Orléans, at St Gall, Reichenau, Ferrières, and elsewhere—the course of instruction was confined at the outset to writing, singing, and grammar.

Grammar soon brought in its train the sister arts of poetry and rhetoric. But if these last were looked upon with suspicion by the Church as dangerous, and conducive to the forbidden commerce with paganism, it would take yet longer to win her to a recognition of philosophy. Thus the seed sown by Charlemagne lay for more than a hundred years without any apparent promise of bringing forth. In the secular school of the Palace it was different. There the king had given Alcuin the Saxon and

Clement the Irishman full leave to share with their pupils, without fear of ecclesiastical interference, all the treasures of pagan learning to which they had the key; and so it is there that we first find in force that familiar distribution of the arts and sciences into the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*—the former comprising grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, the latter arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy—which made the beaten track for so many generations of teachers. We are here only concerned with the third branch of the *trivium*, dialectic—the foundation-stone on which the mighty edifice of medieval thought was reared. Before considering how that foundation-stone was laid, or what part our author had in its preparation, we must understand what the scholastic philosophy was, what were its aims and objects. It was not an elementary doctrine, as some<sup>1</sup> have supposed, to which the Schoolmen resorted as a solution of the difficulties that confronted them on the threshold of knowledge; for under its shadow every imaginable doctrine found its ardent partisans. It was not simply theology in another guise—theology militant, as distinguished from theology contemplative and mystic; for although its propounders were in all instances monks—to the

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, Tennemann in his *Manual*, vol. viii.

clergy alone was the responsibility of education intrusted—and although from time to time one of their number, from an excess of zeal for his calling, might be led to overstep the bounds that separate philosophy and theology, still the line of demarcation was, as a rule, carefully enough respected. It is true that when the upper air of metaphysics is reached, the philosophy and the theology of the Schoolmen do blend and merge themselves one in the other; but that is just because contemplation of the essence of being is the very summit of both these sciences. The primary object of the scholastic philosophy was an application of the doctrines of Aristotle to all problems of thought. We must remember that it was not by any means the real Aristotle whom these early doctors knew and followed, whose authority they cited with an almost religious awe, but an Aristotle moulded, and sometimes distorted, to suit the translator's mood, at first in the works of Porphyry and Boethius, and afterwards in those of the Arabs, Averrhoës and Avicenna. Till towards the end of the tenth century the Stagyrite was only known by a part of the 'Organon,' the 'De Interpretatione,' translated by Boethius, and the same writer's edition of Porphyry's 'Introduction to the Categories.'

The treatise on the 'Categories' falsely attributed to Augustine, which had for some time the credit of being a translation, was a mere abridgment. By the end of the century, however, we find it replaced by the authentic translation of the Roman philosopher, but even then the book was a rare one. When the grammarian Gunzo in 957 displayed his library before the admiring eyes of the monks of St Gall, he did not number an example of the 'Categories' among his hundred volumes. But that it did exist at this time is testified by Richer the chronicler, who states that about 985 Gerbert of Rheims was lecturing on the 'Introduction,' the 'Interpretation,' and the 'Categories' from the text of Boethius. These, together with the 'Timæus' of Plato, formed the whole of the old Greek philosophical library of the schools until the middle of the twelfth century, when it was enriched by the addition of all the works of Aristotle, translated from the Arabic into Latin, and brought from Spain by certain learned Jews. But though the true Aristotle was absent all this time, it must not be supposed that therefore the teaching of logic according to his methods was impossible. The want was supplied by some original tracts of Boethius—the "De Divisione," the "De Syllogismo Hypothetico," the "De Defini-



tion," and the like—which contained *en abrégé* most of the doctrines of the Stagyrite.

I have said that the principle of the scholastic philosophy was an application of Aristotelianism to problems of thought. The particular question which we are accustomed to associate with the middle ages is the one of the nature of genera and species. It must not be imagined that this great problem, which was to exercise the minds of the Schoolmen for nearly six centuries, rose and died with their system. It is one which, in the admirable words of Cousin, "à toutes les époques, tourmente et féconde l'esprit humain, et, par les diverses solutions qu'il soulève, engendre toutes les écoles."<sup>1</sup> It underlies the vague and unsystematic speculations of the early Eleatics, it begins to take form in the doctrines of Parmenides and Heraclitus, but it first finds its proper place in the colloquies of Socrates and the teaching of Plato. While Socrates subjected it to close analytical inquiry, it was left to his disciple Plato to maintain the real existence of universals apart from any subjective cognition—in a word, to assert the doctrine of Realism in its fullest and most unqualified extension. He taught that there existed in the world above us an idea, an archetype of every

<sup>1</sup> *Introd. aux œuvres inédites d'Abélard*, p. 68.

thing in the visible world; that these ideas alone were stable and permanent—that, indeed, they were the only true and knowable realities; that particulars were but shadowy copies of these eternal forms, and were knowable only by reason of their resemblance to them.

This is the theory which the Schoolmen succinctly described in the phrase, “*Universalia extra et ante rem.*” Its great danger lay in the wide gulf it placed between the world of thought and the world of sense, in its complete separation of the universal from the particular. Aristotle set himself in strong opposition to his master on this point, and approached the question from quite a different direction. Instead of working downwards from that which is most general to that which is most particular, he works upwards from the particular to the general, and places reality in the individual alone—the universal being a mere predicate of the particular. And predicates have no separate reality of their own, but only an adjective reality as accompaniments and determinants.<sup>1</sup>

The question, as brought before the notice of the early Schoolmen in Porphyry’s<sup>2</sup> ‘Introduction to the

<sup>1</sup> Grote’s Aristotle, App. I., p. 264. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*.

<sup>2</sup> 270-300 A.D.

Categories of Aristotle, ranged itself under three heads: (1) Do genera and species subsist, possess a real existence? or do they consist in the simple conception of the subject? (2) If subsistent, are they corporeal or incorporeal? (3) If corporeal, are they separate from sensible objects? or do they reside in these objects, forming something coexistent with them? Porphyry, indeed, has no sooner propounded these questions to his friend and pupil Chrysaorius, than he sets them aside as being altogether too profound for present investigation—*“altissimum enim negotium est huiusmodi et maioris egens inquisitionis.”* In other words, he refers them to metaphysics—to a branch of philosophy higher than that upon which he is for the moment engaged. But the students of the eighth and ninth centuries, who were first introduced to his work by Boethius, had no very clear conception of the exact province of metaphysics; and, knowing intuitively that this question of the nature of universals lay at the root of all inquiry, they could not waive it with the same unconcern. From Boethius, indeed, they might not expect any clearer utterance on the subject. Like Porphyry, he refrains from giving vent to the expression of a definite opinion. Two commentaries from his pen

on the Greek philosopher's 'Isagoge' have come down to us, the first based upon the translation by Victorinus, the second upon a new translation of his own. There is so much in this second and longer effort that is in seeming contradiction to the first, that the reader may well be momentarily at a loss to determine with which side Boethius casts his lot, —whether with the Realist or with the Nominalist. The event will show us that it is with neither the one nor the other. If he had rested content with his first commentary, we should have been compelled to rank him with the former. For, commenting on the evasive answer given by Porphyry to the question of the nature of genera and species, he distinctly says, "If you weigh the truth and correctness of things, it is impossible to doubt that genera and species really are."

That is to all appearance as candid a confession of Realism as Plato himself could have desired. And it has led so careful and profound a thinker as Maurice<sup>1</sup> to the conviction that Boethius decided in favour of Realism.

*Souvent homme varié*, however, and if a change of opinion were at any time permissible, it would surely be when one is dealing with the subtle and

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

dangerous problems suggested by species and genera. The very fact that Boethius was at the trouble of translating Porphyry anew on his own account, and of writing a second commentary on the same, proves that he was dissatisfied with his first essay. We should indeed be justified in disregarding altogether the two immature and incomplete dialogues on Porphyry, and giving our undivided attention to the five books of commentary. But in reality there is no need for this, since, as has been pointed out by both Rémusat and Hauréau, all that Boethius wishes to establish on the one and the other occasion is the fact that every predicate subsists within and conjoined to the thing of which it is predicated, and not without or separated from it; that things are substances, and that every substance is individual.

When he attacks the problem for the second time, he casts aside all doubtful formulas, and states in the clearest language that, according to Aristotle, genus is not a thing, because a thing is necessarily one in number, whereas it (genus) is common to more than one. But, object the Realists, who derive the particular from the universal, numerical unity is not the necessary condition of essence, and genera and species are essences which embrace a variety

of similar beings. To this objection Boethius replies in the words of Aristotle: If genera exist in virtue of their essential existence, this existence cannot be denied to that which contains them—namely, the *genus generalissimum*; hence genera are not in themselves beings, *entia*, but parts of the whole which embraces them. Now that which is one by nature is not divisible into parts, and so this whole which alone exists does not contain the genera: these, therefore, can have no existence.

As genera and species were the prime causes of the great middle-age controversy, the theme on which so many and different variations were woven, it is expedient to hear more particularly what our author has to say about them. The passage containing the ultimate expression of his teaching on this subject is to be found towards the end of the first book of the commentary on his own translation of 'Porphyry.' It is all too long to quote in its entirety; on the other hand, it would be dangerous to attempt a summary of such close and compact reasoning. I must therefore crave the reader's indulgence while I endeavour, by a judicious mingling of direct translation and compressed paraphrase, to set before him the opinion of Boethius on the scholastic problem.

“Since every conception arises from some object



to which it conforms, the conception of genera and species arises from an object, and must conform to it. They therefore do not merely reside in the intelligence, they exist in the reality of things. A conception which differs from reality is false; therefore, if the conception of genera and species arising out of reality does not conform to this reality, it must be false. We do not say that every conception is false which is not identical with the object from which it comes. It is only the conception of the union of two things that are by nature separate, such as a man and a horse united to form a centaur, that is false. By the process of abstraction and division we can realise a conception which does not conform to reality and yet is not false. Here it is no longer to the senses but to the mind that we must trust. For example, the mind can separate from the body and endow with existence such a thing as a line, which has no sensible existence apart from the body. In this way it is enabled to contemplate the incorporeal which is contained within, and owes its existence to, the corporeal. Now genera and species are contained or within corporeals or within incorporeals. If they are presented to the mind as contained within incorporeals, an incorporeal idea is at once formed. If they are presented to the mind as adherent to corporeals, they

can be abstracted and contemplated by themselves. It cannot be said that we have a false idea of a line because we contemplate it apart from the body to which it owes its existence. Genus, species, line, then, exist in corporeal and sensible things, but to understand their real nature we must conceive them apart from sensibles. Moreover, they are contained in particular objects, although they are known as universals. Species is only a conception formed from the substantial resemblance of a number of dissimilar individuals; genus is only a conception formed from the resemblance of a number of dissimilar species. This resemblance is *sensible* when it appears in the particular, it is *intelligible* when it appears in the universal. Universality and particularity have one and the same object; but it is universal when it is intelligibly conceived, it is particular when it is sensibly perceived in the things to which it owes its existence. Genera and species are in one way things and in another way conceptions, and in this sense they are incorporeal; and they are then conceived apart from bodies, as subsisting by themselves and not by anything else. According to Plato, genera and species are not merely conceptions in so far as they are universals; they are real things existing apart from bodies. According to Aristotle,

they are conceived as incorporeals in so far as they are universals, but they have no real existence apart from the sensible world.”

It is to Aristotle’s opinion that Boethius inclines, although, as I have said, he refuses to commit himself any further than Porphyry. He tells us himself that he considers it unseemly (*non aptum*) to decide between Plato and Aristotle. His position is happily described by Godefroi de Saint-Victor<sup>1</sup> (twelfth century), who represents him as preserving a discreet silence over the lively dispute between the two great philosophers :—

“ Assidet Boethius, stupens de hac lite,  
Audiens quid hic et hic asserat perite,  
Et quid cui faveat non discernit rite,  
Nec præsumit solvere litem definite.”

But an eclectic suspension of judgment of this kind was not likely to satisfy the Schoolmen, with their burning anxiety to know the why and wherefore of all knowledge ; nor would they be content to run in the safe middle way traced for them by all the commentators of Aristotle, from Porphyry to Boethius. And although in the eighth and ninth centuries Hrabanus Maurus and Eric of Auxerre steadfastly upheld the Aristotelian tradition, the standard of Realism was presently unfurled by Johannes

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Hauréau, *op. cit.*, i. p. 120.

Scotus Erigena, who came in the course of the ninth century to the court of Charles the Bald, filled with a vast enthusiasm for Plato, and a sovereign contempt for Boethius and all his school. In his enthusiasm he carried the realistic teaching of his master to the last extreme, and revived the old doctrine of *universalia ante et extra rem*. I have no time to devote to a study of this extraordinary man, who flashed like a meteor out of the darkest hour of the middle ages, and I must confine myself to a statement of my conviction that he was an earnest Christian, whose primary object was not to merge God and His Creation in one, but to keep the two apart,—to distinguish the divine from the human nature. But in his fierce wrestle with the logical formulas that chained and bound the Absolute and the Eternal, he found himself dangerously near the verge of Pantheism.

Hear his words on the nature of God: "When we are told that God is the maker of all things, we are simply to understand that God is in all things—that He is the substantial essence of all things. He, and He alone, really exists through and in Himself; He, and He alone, resumes in Himself all that resides in those things to which existence is attributed. Nothing of the things that are exists in reality through itself;

?  
glo  
Ba

but all things owe whatever in them is rightly understood to be to Him only who alone exists through Himself." In other words, he maintained that reality only resided in the incorporeal universal from which sensible individuals are derived. Whatever may be the errors into which the bold speculations of Erigena led him, we see that he did not shrink from a systematic and methodical review of all the questions which had received such opposite treatment at the hands of the followers of Plato and Aristotle respectively. One side or the other was eagerly espoused by the philosophers of his own and the succeeding ages, some of whom, like Remigius of Auxerre, followed the Irishman far enough, but shrank from his uncompromising profession of Realism. Others combated the teaching to the uttermost, without, however, bestowing a word of praise or blame on the teacher. The reason of this resolute silence on the part of friends and enemies alike is the fact that certain of his utterances on Grace and on the Eucharist savoured of heresy, and were condemned as dangerous to the faithful. It was not until the twelfth century that a voice, that of Wilbald of Cowey, was uplifted in defence of the greatest metaphysician of the middle ages.

We are now standing on the shore of the great

scholastic controversy. It is not within our power, if it were our desire, to set out on a voyage of inquiry on that deep and dangerous ocean. Let it suffice that we have seen the question of the nature of universals fairly launched by Porphyry and Boethius his translator, who provided a Latin nomenclature which, in the prevailing ignorance of Greek, was absolutely indispensable. But before we turn away from the scholastic philosophy, a word must be said upon its value in the history of thought. Although it was fated, together with all the subjects of that fierce debate, to fade and fall away, giving place to the new inductive spirit of the sixteenth century, it must not on that account be regarded as a useless and withered system. The middle ages, the dark ages as we have been taught to call them, were the period of silent preparation and steady self-teaching which must necessarily intervene between the death of an old world and the birth of a new. During such a period originality of thought and expression is rare, if not impossible: it is in the original treatment of a well-worn theme that the greatest minds show forth, and there are few greater in the history of philosophy than Johannes Scotus, Thomas Aquinas, and Dante Alighieri.



## APPENDIX A.

## SYNOPSIS OF MSS. OF THE THEOLOGICAL TRACTS.

---

*This table is based on the lists furnished by Peiper and Usener. I have added four manuscripts—one in the British Museum and another in the Cambridge University Library, and two in the Public Library at Orléans.*

---

A.—MS. containing tr. i., ii., iii., iv., and v., in which iv. appears with the regular title A. M. T. S. B. ex cons. ord. patric., &c.

Einsiedeln, 235 (cent. x. or xi.)

Here, contrary to the usual order, iv. follows immediately on i.

B.—MSS. containing only tr. i., ii., iii., and iv., in which iv. appears without title.

1. Tegeernsee, 765 (now at Munich, Lat. 18,765), (x.)

According to Usener (*op. cit.*, p. 56), this MS. has lost v. by mere accident.

2. Paris, Bibl. Reg. MSS. Lat. 1919 (xiv.), (Cat. cod. MSS. &c., Paris, 1744). ? title *ciusdem*.

C.—MSS. containing tr. i., ii., iii., iv., and v., in which iv. appears without title.

1. Bern., 510 (ix.-x.)

2. Mus. Brit. Harl., 3095 (x.)

3. Florent. s. Croce, 23, 12 (x.)

4. Florent. Ambros. (x.)
5. Orléans, fonds de Fleury, 226 (x.)
6. Vatic. Alexandr., 592 (x. or xi.)
7. Bern., 618 (xi.)? title.
8. Florent. Laurent., 14, 15 (xi.)
9. Orléans, fonds de Fleury, 232 (xi.)  
Entitled Boetius de fide.
10. Vatic., 567 (xi.)
11. Gotha, 103 and 104 (xi.-xii.)  
Instead of a title there is this note: *ista epistola in aliis  
libris non invenitur.*
12. St Gall, 768 (xii.)
13. Florent. S. Marco, 167 (xii.)
14. Camb. Univ. Lib., Dd. 6, 6 (xii.)  
At the foot of the page on which iii. ends there follows:  
*fundamentum catholice fidei a sancto Severino conscriptum.*  
(See *supra*, p. 140).
15. Rhediger Lib. in Breslau, s. iv. 3 (xii.-xiii.)
16. Vat. Alex., 1975 (xiii.)
17. Vatic., 4250 (xiii.)
18. Florent. Ottobon., 99 (xiii.)
19. Paris, Bibl. Reg. MSS. Lat. 2992 (xiii.) ? title *eiusdem.*
20. Paris, Bibl. Reg. MSS. Lat. 2376 (xiv.) ? title *eiusdem.*

D.—MSS. containing only tr. i., ii., iii., and v.

1. Vatic. Alexandr., 208 (x.)
2. St Gall, 134<sup>4</sup> (xi.)
3. Vatic. Alexandr., 1855 (xi.)
4. Valenciennes, 169 (xii.)
5. Florent. s. Croce, 22, 10 (xi.)
6. Vatic., 4251 (xiii.-xiv.)
7. Laon, 123 (xiv.)

E.—MSS. containing only tr. v.

1. Vatic. Urbin., 532 (x.)
2. Vatic. Alexandr., 166 (xi.)

## APPENDIX B.

AN INDEX OF PASSAGES IN CHAUCER WHICH SEEM TO HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED BY THE 'DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIE.'

## THE CANTERBURY TALES.

*Prologue.*

- 741-2....."The word should be germane to the deed."  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 12, 104 ; tr. 3019-20.<sup>1</sup>

*The Knightes Tale.*

- 67-8....."Fortune's wheel."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 28-9 ; tr. 871-3.
- 228 \*<sup>2</sup>....."Fortune's changes should be borne with equal mind."  
Ib. 44 ; tr. 897.
- 305-8....."Love is above all law."  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 12, 47-8 ; tr. 3063-5.
- 393-6 \*....."Providence knows what is best for man."  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 115-7 ; tr. 3991-4.
- 397-8....."The desire for riches ; their danger."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 5, 92-9 ; tr. 1309-22.  
Cf. Cons., ii. m. 5, 30 ; tr. 1351-4.  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 2, 15-6 ; tr. 1770-2.
- 404....."A drunken man cannot find his way home."  
Ib. 51 ; tr. 1820.

<sup>1</sup> The Chaucer I have used in making this list is the one in the Aldine Series (Bell, 1883) ; the Boethius is Peiper's edition in the Teubner Texts. *Tr.* refers to Chaucer's translation of the *De Cons.*, edited by Dr Morris for the E.E.T.S., 1868.

<sup>2</sup> I have marked with an asterisk all passages which I think are open to question, or such as might be referred to some other source besides Boethius.

- 408-9.....“False felicity.”  
 Ib. 2-5 ; tr. 1753-5.  
 Ib. 50 ; tr. 1817-9.  
 Cf. Cons., iii. m. 8, 1-2 ; tr. 2252-3.  
 Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 11, 115 ; tr. 2829.
- 445-56.....“Punishment of the innocent.”  
 Cf. Cons., i. m. 5, 25-48 ; tr. 526-48.  
 Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 1, 9-18 ; tr. 3096-104.
- 805-7.....“Destiny the minister of Providence.”  
 Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 30-47 ; tr. 3869-85 ;  
 esp. 32-4 ; tr. 3870-2.
- 1088.....“Crcesus.”  
 Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 32 ; tr. 877.
- 1981-3\*.....“The changing order of the world ; joy after woe,”  
 &c.  
 Cf. Cons., ii. m. 3, 14-5 ; tr. 1001-3.  
 Cf. Cons., ii. m. 8, 1-2 ; tr. 1679-80
- 2129-35.....“The chain of love.”  
 Ib. 9-15 ; tr. 1685-9.
- 2136-41.....“The world’s changes under the direction of a change-  
 less God.”  
 Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 21-4 ; tr. 3854-8.
- 2145-6.....Do. do. Ib. Ib.
- 2153-7.....Do. do. Ib. Ib.
- 2147-52.....“Every part is derived from a whole.”  
 Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 10, 15-7 ; tr. 2471-5.

*The Man of Lawes Tale.*

- 29\*.....“Merchants compass sea and land for riches.”  
 Cf. Cons., ii. m. 5, 14-5 ; tr. 1339-40.
- 197.....“The Firmament.”  
 Cf. Cons., i. m. 5, 1-4 ; tr. 502-4.  
 Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 8, 17 ; tr. 2226.  
 Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 12, 99 ; tr. 3010-4.  
 Cf. Cons., iv. m. 1, 7-8 ; tr. 3138-9.
- 323.....“Woe the end of human gladness.”  
 Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 61-2 ; tr. 1101-2.
- 382-5.....“Man’s ignorance cannot comprehend the working  
 of God’s Providence.”  
 Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 89-92 ; tr. 3951-4.  
 Ib. 117-9 ; tr. 3994-7.
- 715.....“The ruin of the innocent and the prosperity of the  
 wicked.”  
 Cf. Cons., i. m. 5, 25-48 ; tr. 526-48.  
 Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 1, 9-18 ; tr. 3096-104.

- 830-1 ..... "The end of sensual pleasures is sorrow."  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 7, 1-7 ; tr. 2176-85.

*The Prologe of the Wyf of Bathe.*

- 99-101\* ..... "Vessels of honour and dishonour."  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 1, 20, 21 ; tr. 3109-12.

*The Wyf of Bathes Tale.*

- 252-68 ..... "Gentility tested by noble deeds."  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 6, 19-22 ; tr. 2148-55.  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 6 ; tr. 2169-75.
- 313-4 ..... Do. do.  
Ib. 6, 7-9 ; tr. 2171-5.
- 331-2 ..... "He that cannot do what he wishes is poor."  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 5, 20 ; tr. 2084-6.
- 347-8 ..... "Poverty brings to light a man's true friends."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 8, 19-25 ; tr. 1667-78.

*The Freres Tale.*

- 185 ..... "The instruments of God's Providence."  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 47-56 ; tr. 3894-907.

*The Sompnours Tale.*

- 260 ..... "Unity is strength."  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 11, 26-9 ; tr. 2694-8.

*The Clerkes Tale.*

- Part V., 26-28 ..... "Prosperity is transient ; fortune's changes to be borne with equanimity."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 44 ; tr. 897.  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 3, 45 ; tr. 983-4.
- Part VI., 217-20 ..... "God punishes only to make us better."  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 142-4 ; tr. 4032-5.
- 223 ..... "God's government is for our good."  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 5, 24-5 ; tr. 3791-3.  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 190-1 ; tr. 4102-3.

*The Marchaundes Tale.*

- 68-70 ..... "Fortune's gifts."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 16 ; tr. 854.  
Cons., ii. pr. 5, *passim* ; tr. 1170-322.

- 540.....“The familiar foe.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 5, 40; tr. 2114.
- 722.....“The instruments of Providence.”  
See above, Frere’s Tale, 185.  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 47-50; tr. 3894-7.
- 777-8.....“The doctrine of Epicurus.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 2, 46-7; tr. 1813-4.
- 818-20.....“The wiles of the monster, Fortune.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 6-9; tr. 739-43.

*The Squyeres Tale.*

- Part I., 250-3.....“Things whose causes are hidden make men wonder.”  
Cf. Cons., iv. m. 5, 9-22; tr. 3803-22.
- Part II., 262-3.....“All things seek their kind with joy.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 2, 34-5; tr. 1882-4.
- 265-70.....“The caged bird.”  
Ib. 17-26; tr. 1867-76.

*The Frankeleynes Tale.*

- 137-9.....“God the governor of all things.”  
Cf. Cons., i. m. 5, 25; tr. 526.  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 9, 1; tr. 2414-6.
- 151.....“Mankind a fair part of God’s work.”  
Cf. Cons., i. m. 5, 44; tr. 543-4.
- 158.....“All is for the best.”  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, *passim*, esp. 150;  
tr. 4042-5.
- 303.....“The God that gives to plants and trees their proper  
times and seasons.”  
Cf. Cons., i. m. 6; esp. 16, 17; tr. 623-4.

*The Secounde Nonnes Tale.*

- 114.....“The Firmament.”  
Cf. Cons., i. m. 5, 3; tr. 504.  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 8, 17; tr. 2226.  
Cf. Cons., iv. m. 1, 7, 8; tr. 3138-9.

*The Prologe of the Chanounes Yeman.*

- 405.....“Human impotency.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 9, 62-3; tr. 2359-61.

*The Tale of Melibeus.*

- P. 152\*.....“Avarice is insatiable.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. m. 2, 17-8; tr. 913-5.



- P. 163.....“Good the contrary of evil.”  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 2, 6; tr. 3174.
- P. 173.....“Fortune the nurse.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 10; tr. 845.

*The Monkes Tale.*

- 105-20.....“The labours of Hercules.”  
Cf. Cons., iv. m. 7, 13-28; tr. 4257-84.
- 149-52\*.....“The uncertainty of Fortune, against which self-  
knowledge is the only safeguard.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 70-2; tr. 1115-7.
- 251-5.....“Misfortune turns friends to foes.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 5, 37-8; tr. 2111-3.
- 357.....“The gall in Fortune’s honey.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 61-2; tr. 1102.
- 407-8.....“Fortune’s wheel and capriciousness.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 40-1; tr. 790.  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 28-9; tr. 871-3.
- 455-6\*.....“Fortune the cause of calamity.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 4; tr. 734-5.
- 473-500.....“Nero.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. m. 6; tr. 1458-79; esp.  
1-7; tr. 1458-67.  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 4, 1-2; tr. 2048-50.
- 733-4.....“Fortune’s inconstancy.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 37; tr. 782.
- 736-41.....“Cræsus rescued by rain.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 32-4; tr. 877-81.
- 770-3.....“A definition of tragedy.”  
Ib. 36-8; tr. 884-6.
- 774-6.....“Fortune covers her face.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 31-2; tr. 773-4.

*The Nonne Prest his Tale.*

- 180.....“Fortune the common mistress of us all.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 44; tr. 897.
- 414.....“God’s foreknowledge implies necessity.”  
Cf. Cons., v. pr. 3, 7; tr. 4445.
- 423-30.....“God’s foreknowledge and man’s freewill.”  
Cf. Cons., v. pr. 3, 4, and 6, *passim*,  
esp. pr. 3, 4-10; tr. 4440-9; pr. 3,  
26-30; tr. 4474-9; pr. 4, 25-6; tr.  
4693-4; pr. 4, 48-9; tr. 4724-5; pr.  
6, 99-122; tr. 5116-43; pr. 6, 129-32;  
tr. 5156-9.

*The Maunciples Tale.*

- 56-8....."Nature's law is irrefragable."  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 2, 3-4; tr. 1855-6.
- 59-70....."The caged bird."  
Ib. 17-26; tr. 1867-76.

*The Persones Tale.*

- P. 275\*....."The shadow is not the substance."  
Cf. Cons., v. pr. 4, 31-2; tr. 4701-2.
- P. 302....."The folly of trusting to Fortune's gifts."  
Cf. Cons., ii. m. 3, 15-6; tr. 1003-4.
- P. 302....."The danger of sensual pleasures."  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 7, 3-5; tr. 2178-81.

## THE ASSEMBLY OF FOULES.

- 380-1....."The harmonious concord of the elements."  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 11, 71-3; tr. 2760-3.
- 599-60....."Owls are blind by day, but see at night."  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 4, 91; tr. 3655-6.

## TROYLUS AND CRYSEYDE.

## Book I.

- St. 105, 730....."Lethargy."  
Cf. Cons., i. pr. 2, 11; tr. 140.
- Ib. 731....."*Ἄνος λύρας*."  
Cf. Cons., i. pr. 4, 2; tr. 247.
- St. 113....."Tityus and the vultures."  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 12, 38-9; tr. 3053-4.
- St. 120, 837....."Fortune my foe."  
Cf. Cons., i. pr. 4, 6; tr. 254.
- Ib. 838-40....."Fortune's wheel."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 56-7; tr. 816.  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 28-9; tr. 871-3.
- St. 121, 843-4....."All are liable to Fortune's changes."  
Ib. 44-5; tr. 847.
- Ib. 846-7....."Adversity, like prosperity, is transient."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 3, 39-41; tr. 975-8.
- St. 122, 848-9....."Fortune's changing wheel."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 57-8; tr. 817-8.
- Ib. 850-4....."Her very mutability gives promise of better things."  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 42-3; tr. 895-6.

## Book II.

- Proem; st. 6, 42.... "Each country has its own laws."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 7, 36-7; tr. 1541-3.
- St. 76, 526-8 ..... "God shapes our ends."  
 Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 115-7; tr. 3991-4.
- St. 110, 766-7 ..... "Wind dispels clouds."  
 Cf. Cons., i. m. 3, 7-8; tr. 157-8.

## Book III.

- Proem; st. 2..... "The power of Love."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. m. 8; esp. 13-5; tr. 1688-90.
- St. 47, 324\* ..... "God the Governor."  
 Cf. Cons., iii. m. 9, 1; tr. 2414-5.
- St. 82, 568-71..... "Providence controls the stars; fortune and fate are its ministers."  
 Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 48-57, esp. 50, 57; tr. 3894-906.
- St. 110, 764-6..... "The bitterness of worldly joys."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 61-2; tr. 1101-2.
- Ib. 767-70 ..... "The condition of human happiness."  
 Ib. 39-41; tr. 1066-81.  
 Ib. 64-6; tr. 1105-9.
- St. 111-112... ..... "Its brittleness."  
 Ib. 79-86; tr. 1127-40.
- St. 113, 786\* ..... "No happiness in this world."  
 Ib. 94; tr. 1152-3.
- St. 174, 1212..... "The bond of love."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. m. 8, 13-5; tr. 1688-9.
- St. 226, 1576-9..... "The pain of past happiness."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 4-6; tr. 1012-4.
- St. 243-6..... "The bond of love."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. m. 8; tr. 1679-99.
- St. 254..... "Fortune's cruel sport."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. m. 1; esp. 4-6; tr. 825-9.
- Ib..... "Her rolling wheel."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 28-9; tr. 871-3.

## Book IV.

- St. 52, 363-4..... "No man has a right in fortune's gifts; they are 'in commune.'"  
 Ib. 6; tr. 840-1.  
 Ib. 44; tr. 897.
- St. 65, 454-5..... "Present pain is the keener for past happiness."  
 Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 4-6; tr. 1012-4.

- St. 68, 475-6.....“Death the desired deliverer.”  
Cf. Cons., i. m. 1, 13-4; tr. 16-7.
- St. 116, 807-8.....“The wretchedness of mortal bliss.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 64-6; tr. 1105-9.
- St. 133, 930.....“Necessity and Freewill.”  
Cf. Cons., v. pr. 2, 26-8; tr. 4420-3.
- St. 150.....“Necessity and Freewill.”  
Cf. Cons., v. pr. 3, 1-53; tr. 4437-513.
- St. 223, 1559-60.....“How to command Fortune.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 71-2; tr. 1116-7.

## Book V.

- St. 40, 278.....“Phœbus’ rosy car.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. m. 3, 1; tr. 990.
- St. 109, 762.....“Felicity is sufficiency.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 2, 5-6; tr. 1756-8.
- St. 222, 1554-6\*.....“Fortune controlled by Providence.”  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 21-4; tr. 3854-8.
- St. 260, 1823-6.....“A soul’s journey to the seventh sphere (the highest point of heaven).”  
Cf. Cons., iv. m. 1, 16-8; tr. 3150-3.

## THE BOKE OF THE DUCHESS.

- 588.....“Tityus.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 12, 39; tr. 3053.
- 623.....“Fortune the ‘debonaire.’”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 8, 9; tr. 1649.
- 627.....“Fortune the monster.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 6; tr. 739.
- 634 and 642.....“Her capriciousness and her rolling wheel.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 28-9; tr. 871-2.
- 708.....“Tantalus.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 12, 36-7; tr. 3052.
- 778.....“The mind compared to a clean parchment.”  
Cf. Cons., v. m. 4, 6-9; tr. 4837-9.
- 1055-6.....“Alcibiades.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 8, 24; tr. 2237.

## THE HOUSE OF FAME.

## Book II.

- 28.....“The thunderbolt.”  
Cf. Cons., i. m. 4, 9-10; tr. 236-7.

- 221-48.....“The instinct of self-preservation in nature.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 11, *passim*, esp. 69-81; tr. 2756-74.

## Book III.

- 278-85.....“Nature’s variable stature.”  
Cf. Cons., i. pr. 1, 7-11; tr. 37-41.  
455-9.....“Fortune’s unfair distribution of rewards.”  
Cf. Cons., i. pr. 5, 34; tr. 598-9.  
830.....“The house of Dædalus.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 12, 77; tr. 2981.

## THE LEGENDE OF GOODE WOMEN.

*Philomene.*

- 343-5.....“The world’s prototype.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 9, 7-8; tr. 2422-4.

BALLADE DE VISAGE SAUNS PEYNTURE.<sup>1</sup>

- 1-4.....“Fortune’s tricks.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. m. 1, 3-4; tr. 823-6.  
10-12.....“Fortune teaches us to distinguish between friend  
and foe.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 8, 19-20; tr. 1667-8.  
13.....“Self-mastery a safeguard against Fortune.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 71-2; tr. 1116-7.  
17.....“Socrates.”  
Cf. Cons., i. pr. 3, 18 and 29; tr. 186  
and 206.  
25-48.....“Fortune’s reply to her accuser.”  
For the general idea, cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2.  
25-28.....“To command one’s self is to command Fortune.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 71-2; tr. 1116-7.  
29-30.....“Thanks are owing to Fortune for her loan of goods.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 13-4; tr. 850.  
31.....“Her changefulness gives hope of better things.”  
Ib. 41-2; tr. 895-6.  
33-4.....“She teaches to distinguish friend from foe.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 8, 20-5; tr. 1668-78.

<sup>1</sup> The title, as given by Morris and the old editions, is “Ballade de Vilage.” The mistake arose from confusing *f* with *l*. (See Skeat’s ‘Minor Poems of Chaucer,’ p. 374.)

- 38.....“The anchor [of hope] still holds.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 30-1; tr. 1050-1.
- 42-4.....“Shall the slave dictate to the mistress?”  
Cf. Cons., ii. p. 1, 49-50 and 55; tr.  
802-5 and 813-5.
- 45.....“Fortune’s common realm.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 44; tr. 897.
- 46.....“Fortune’s wheel.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 56-7; tr. 815-7, and  
pr. 2, 28-9; tr. 871-2.
- 50-2.....“Fortune’s friends.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 8, 19-22; tr. 1667  
78.
- 57-64.....“Fortune’s reply continued.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 10-27; tr. 845-69.
- 66-7.....“Providence.”  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 6, 30-2; tr. 3868-71.
- 68.....“Men addressed as beasts.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 3, 1; tr. 1888.
- 71.....“The end of Fortune.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 3, 45-6; tr. 984-5.

## BALLADE SENT TO KING RICHARD.

For the general idea of this poem, “Lack of steadfastness,” cf. Cons.,  
ii. m. 8. 1-4; tr. 1679-81; ib. 13-21; tr. 1688-704; ib. 28-30; tr.  
1707-8.

## GOOD COUNSEL OF CHAUCER.

- 2.....“Be content with little.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 5, 40-2; tr. 1231-3.
- 3.....“Avarice is ever odious.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 5, 9-10; tr. 1182-3.
- Ib.....“Ambition is dangerous.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 8, 8-9; tr. 2213-5.
- 7.....“Truth the great criterion.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. m. 11, 7-8; tr. 2840-2;  
ib. 11-4; tr. 2860-8.
- .....“Calmness commended.”<sup>1</sup>  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 4, 35; tr. 1060.

<sup>1</sup> Morris reads “peyne the not”; Skeat, “tempest the not”; and  
this last suits the passage in Boece, “tempest nat the thus.”



- 9.....“The whirling wheel.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 2, 23-9; tr. 871-2,  
&c.
- 15.....“Contentment commended.”  
Cf. Cons., ii. pr. 1, 47; tr. 800-1.
- 17.....“The heavenly home.”  
Cf. Cons., i. pr. 5, 9 and 11; tr. 561-2  
and 565-6.  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 12, 27; tr. 2911.  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 1, 32 and 35; tr. 3128  
and 3132.  
Cf. Cons., iv. m. 1, 25; tr. 3159 and  
3132.  
Cf. Cons., v. pr. 1, 9; tr. 4305.
- 18.....“Man addressed as a beast.”  
Cf. Cons., iii. pr. 3, 1; tr. 1888.  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 3, 66; tr. 3478.  
Cf. Cons., iv. m. 3, *passim*.  
Cf. Cons., iv. pr. 4, 3; tr. 3519.
- 19.....“The heavenly home.”  
See above on l. 17.
- 1b.....“Look up.”<sup>1</sup>  
Cf. Cons., v. m. 5, 10-3; tr. 4968-72.

#### A BALLADE (p. 296).

For the general idea, and the definition of gentility, cf. Cons., iii. pr. 6, 20-7; tr. 2150-63; and m. 6, 1-2 and 6-9; tr. 2164-6 and 2170-5.

#### AETAS PRIMA.

For the general idea, and the former age, cf. Cons., ii. m. 5.

---

<sup>1</sup> “Loke up on hye and thonke God of alle.”—Morris.  
“Know thy contree, lok up, thank God of al.”—Skeat.

---

#### ADDENDUM to p. 218.

Since chapter vi. passed through the press, Professor Skeat has announced his discovery that the originals of the notes and glosses in Chaucer's translation are to be found in the Cambridge MS., ii. 3, 21. (See ‘The Athenæum’ of Oct. 24, 1891.)

## INDEX.

---

- Abelard, 110, 201.  
 Acacius, 156, 158.  
 Accidents, the cause of plurality, 111.  
 Ado of Vienne, 3.  
*Adunatio*, 146, 155.  
 Ἀγαπή, 84.  
 Alain de Lille, 239.  
 Alberto della Piagentina, 232, 233.  
 Albinus, 31, 36.  
 'Alcibiades, Second,' 103, 104.  
 Alcuin, 2, 109, 169, 242.  
 Alfred, King, renaissance of letters under, 170—as a popular educator, 171, 172—his translation of the 'Cons.,' 170-178—his genius, 175—his method of translating, 174—his deviations from the Latin, 176-178—metrical trans. attributed to, 175 n.—his antipathy to Theodoric, 173—the Saxon chronicle and, 172.  
 Alphonso de la Torre, 239.  
*Alternus amor*, 89.  
 Amalsuntha, 51.  
 Amat, 236.  
 'Ameto' of Boccaccio, the, 239.  
 Andreas, 237.  
 'Anecdoton Holderi,' the, described, 11-13—its evidential value, 13, 14—Hodgkin and, 13—medieval tradition of the tracts compared with, 109—tracts II. and III. not mentioned by name in, 127.  
 'Anecdotorum Thesaurus.' See Pezsius.  
*Angelica virtus*, 68, 87.  
 Anglo-Norman literature, 198.  
 Anglo-Saxon literature, influence of Boethius on. See Alfred and Beowulf.  
 Anician gens, 27.  
*Anima naturæ*, 82.  
*Anima rerum*, 82.  
 Anonymous French translations of the 'Cons.' (xiii. cent.), 200-206—(xiv. cent.) 208-213—(by an Italian) 213.  
 'Anonymus Valesii,' the, date and author of, 30—on the trial of Boethius and Symmachus, 31, 32—on the mission of Pope John, 33—evidential value of, 34.  
 'Apokolakuntosis Claudii,' 74.  
 Arabic translation of Aristotle, 244, 245.  
 Archimedes, translated by Boethius, 26.  
 Argelati, 232, 234.  
 Arians, the, 111, 113, 120—proclamation of Zeno against, 33.  
 Aristotle, translated by Boethius, 26, 27—his influence on Boethius, 81, 85, 91, 100, 104, 105, 113, 118, 119, 124, 143, 145, 254—Boethius at variance with, 122, 155—ἐλη of, 84, 143—his theory of the universe, 85—his definition of chance, 91, of relation, 122—on genera and species, 247, 248, 250, 251—in the middle ages, 168, 169.  
 Arnold, G., 4.

- Athalaric, 46, 51.  
 Augustine, St, on God's existence, 86, 87—and sin, 92, 97 n.—and the resurrection, 99—and the doctrine of the Trinity, 110, 120—Boethius's dependence on, 118, 128, 129—treatise on the 'Categories' attributed to, 245.  
 Augustulus, 17.  
 Avarice condemned, 61.  
 Averrhoës, 244.  
 Avicenna, 244.
- Basilius the informer, 36, 48, 49.  
 Baur, G., 8.  
 Beda's 'Ecclesiastical History,' 172.  
 Being, essence of, 244.  
 'Beowulf,' subject of, 163—possible author of, 164 n.—philosophical element in, 164, suggested by the 'Cons.,' 167-169.  
 Bernard Silvester, 239.  
 Bernard, St, 130, 131.  
 Berti, P., 7.  
 Bétant, 235.  
 Biraghi and the diptych of Monza, 10, 140.  
 Bird, a symbol for the soul, 187 n.  
 Boccaccio, and Chaucer, 215, 216—the 'Ameto' of, 239.  
 'Boëce,' Chaucer's. See Chaucer.  
 'Boëce,' Provençal poem, 178-189—MS. of, 179—a fragment, 179, 189—metrical construction of, 189.  
 Boethius, A. M. S. I. *Life and Character.*—Birth and parentage, 23—ancestry, 27—his guardians, 24—his wife, 24, 60—not twice married, 24—first acquaintance with Theodoric, 25—patrician and senator, 27—consul, 27, 28—consulship of his sons, 28, 60—panegyrist, 29—master of the offices, 29—trial of, 29, 31, 35—his apology, 35-41—imprisonment and death, 31, 32, 55; and see 'Anonymus Valesii'—not a martyr, 2, 140—his learning and accomplishments, 25, 26—a musician, 26, 28—a mechanician, *ib.*—a mathematician, *ib.*, 137—a poet, 57 n., 106—a Christian controversialist, 27; and see 'Theological Tracts'—his personal character, 50, 53—his impatience, 49, 50, 53, 54, 110, 137—a defender of the oppressed, 35 n.—his ambition, 61—his qualities as a statesman, 28, 49, 52, 53.  
 II. *Philosophy.*—His philosophical system, 81-107—his theology, 81-84—his theory of the universe, 84-90—his conception of evil, 91—his psychology, 92-94—his ethic, 95—his views on sin, 100—a realist? 93, 249—the pioneer of the scholastic philosophy, 27—his position with regard to the scholastic problem, 241-257—influenced by Aristotle, Plato, Augustine, etc., see under these names—at variance with Aristotle, 155.  
 III. *Religion.*—Question of his Christianity, 1-14—an outward adherent to Christianity, 6, 104—points of contact with Christianity, 81, 102-104—points of divergence from Christianity, 54, 81-92, 95-104.  
 IV. *Works, style, influence, etc.*—His literary motive, 26—his translations of Pythagoras, Ptolemy, Nicomachus, Euclid, Archimedes, 26—of Aristotle, *ib.*, 27—of Porphyry, 94; and see 'Isagoge'—Original work; see 'Consolation of Philosophy'—his theological writings; see 'Theological Tracts'—his style, 74, 76-80, 120, 121, 152—a medium for Greek philosophy in the middle ages, 2, 244, 245—his influence on medieval literature, 232-234, 239; and see Alfred, Chaucer, Notker, etc.—the favourite author of the middle ages, 160.  
 Boethius, A. M., father of the above, 23, 24.  
 Boethius, African bishop, 5.  
 'Boethius und seine Stellung zum Christenthume.' See Hildebrand.  
 Bosizio, 10.  
 'Breviarium Chronicon.' See Ado.  
 Brunet, G., 203 n.  
 Brunetto Latino, 232, 233,

- Bruno of Corvey, 3, 109.  
 Buchon, 208, 209.
- Cælestine, 141.  
 Cally, P., 98.  
 Cambridge University Library, MS. in, 140.  
 Carlsruhe, library at, 11.  
 Casaubon, on Boethius's style, 78.  
 Cassiodorus, 'Institutiones' of, 11—  
 not the writer of 'Anecd. Hold.', 14—  
 'Variæ Epistolæ' of, 41—on the accusers of Boethius, 42-44, 51, 52—his character, 42, 51—his style, 41, 50, 77—in early middle ages, 169.  
 Catholic Faith. I. On the Trinity, 110, 111, 131—formulated by Augustine, 120, 128, 129.  
 II. On the nature and person of Christ, 147, 150, 151.  
 'Celui qui bien bat les buissons,' 208-212—not by Charles d'Orléans, 208-210—Toulouse MS. of, 210.  
 'Cena Trimalchionis,' 75.  
 Cethegus, 12, 13.  
 Chalcedon, Council of, 153, 158.  
 Chance, Aristotle's definition of, 91—a fulfilment of the divine order, 90.  
 Charles d'Orléans, 208-210.  
 Charles the Bald, 255.  
 Charles the Great, 196, 242.  
 Charles V., 210.  
 Charles VI., 210.  
 Charles VII., 209.  
 Chancer, Caxton's praise of, 214—  
 his first acquaintance with the works of Boethius, 215—his translation of the 'Cons.,' 215, 217-229—its approximate date, 215, 217—not an early work, 217, 226—its interest for us, 217—no Latin scholar, 226—his method of translation, 217—his mistranslations, 222-225—his glosses, 218-221, compared with Notker's, 218—his experiments in metre, 228, 229—his trial of new words, 221, 222—his prose and verse compared, 227, 228—and Boccaccio, 215, 216—and Notker, 218—and French translators, 202-206—his 'Troylus and Cryseyde,' 215-217, 228—his 'Former Age,' 228.  
 Christ, nature and person of. See Catholic Faith, II.  
 Christianity, question of Boethius's, see Boethius, III.—traces of in the 'Cons.' real, 81, 87, 102-104, apparent, 101-103.  
*Xώρα* of Plato, 84.  
 Cicero, 61, 84—in the early middle ages, 169.  
 Clement the Irishman, 243.  
 Clovis the Frank, 28.  
 Coburger, 238.  
 Codex Augiensis, 11.  
 Coempton, 35 n.—Chaucer on, 219.  
*Communicatio idiomatum*, 150.  
*Comte*, 182.  
 Conception, false, 252.  
 'Consolation of Philosophy,' the, I. Analysis of, 57-72—style of, 73, 74, 76-80—probable motive of, 105-107—artificial character of, 56, 106—not a confession of faith, 56—a completed work, 7, 8, 73—comparative length of the books in, 73—absence of Christian characteristics in, 53, 54—its apparent indifference to Christianity, 104, 105—Bruno of Corvey on, 3—Gervaise on, 6—John of Salisbury on, 4—Glarceanus on, 6—Hildebrand on, 9—Gibbon on, 161—reasons for its popularity in the middle ages, 86, 161, 162—traces of, in 'Beowulf,' 167-169.  
 II. Translations and imitations of, by Alfred, 170-178—by Notker, 190-197—by Simun de Fraïse, 198-200—by Jehan de Meun, 201-206—by Pierre de Paris, 206, 207—by Jehan de Cis, 212, 213—by Frere Renaut de Louhans, 213, 214—by anonymous Provençal poet, 178-189; and see 'Boëce'—by anonymous French writers, 200-206, 208-212, 213—by Chaucer, 214-229—by John the Chaplain, 229-231—by Alberto della Piagentina, 232, 233—by Fra Giovanni da Foligno, 234—by Messer Grazia da Siena, 234—by Maxi-

- mus Planudes, 235—by Fra Antonio Ginebreda, 236, 237—by Peter of Kastl, 237, 238.
- Constantinople, see of, at variance with Rome, 156, 157.
- 'Corinthians, Epistle to the,' 99.
- Count of the sacred largesses, office of, 42, 46.
- Cousin, V., 241, 246.
- Creation, Christian theory of, 100.
- Cyprian, 31—Boethius on, 36—Cassiodorus on, 42-44—the probable truth about, 45.
- Dæmonum sollertia*, 68, 87.
- Dante, 239, 257—quoted, 60, 200.
- 'Decline and Fall.' See Gibbon.
- 'De Consolatione Philosophiæ.' See 'Consolation of Philosophy.'
- Decoratus, 50.
- 'De Fide,' tract attributed to Boethius, 10, 138-141—possible author of, 140.
- 'De Hebdomalibus.' See 'Quomodo substantiæ bonæ sint.'
- De la Rue, on S. de Fraïnsne, 200.
- Delisle, L., on J. de Meun's translation, 202—on 'Celui qui bien bat les buissons,' 208-210.
- Deltuf, 15.
- 'De Nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiæ,' 75.
- 'De Persona,' Boethius's tract, analysis of, 142-152—its motive, 142—style, 152—its date, 154.
- 'De Trinitate,' Boethius's tract, analysis of, 110-117—evidence for, 2, 109, 124-126—objections to, 117-124—its motive, 119—its style, 121.
- Dietrich of Bern, 22 n.
- 'Doctrina de Sapientia,' tract attributed to Severinus of Cologne, 141.
- Dualism, 84, 100.
- Du Roure, 5, 15.
- Ealred, 201.
- Earle, J., quoted, 164 n.
- 'Ecclesiastes,' 102.
- Εἰμαρμένη, 88.
- Eleatics, 246.
- Empedocles, 84, 89 n.
- Εν, 87.
- Ennodius, 15, 50, 77.
- Epic, Northern French, 189.
- Epicurus, 39 n.
- Ἐπου θεῶν, 40, 218 n., 225.
- Eric of Auxerre, 254.
- Erigena, 255-257.
- Eternity, 71, 89, 124-126.
- Euclid, translated by Boethius, 26.
- Eutyches. See Eutychianism.
- Eutychianism, 142, 147-156.
- Evil, Boethius's conception of, 64, 91, 92—Plato's conception of, 91.
- Ex nihilo nihil*, 85, 91.
- Fabricius, quoted, 141 n.
- Fame, the narrow limits of, 61, 62.
- Fate, Neoplatonic doctrine of, 87, 88—Stoic doctrine of, 88—and Providence, 67-69, 88-90.
- Faustus, pretorian prefect, 36 n.
- Festus, guardian of Boethius, 24.
- 'Filostrato,' the, 215.
- Foreknowledge and freewill, 70, 71, 81, 82, 96, 97—illustration of, 71, 96.
- Form, 112.
- 'Former Age,' Chaucer's, 228.
- Fortune, 59-62—God's instrument for man's education, 90.
- Fra Antonio Ginebreda, translator of the 'Cons.,' 236, 237.
- Fra Giovanni da Foligno, translator of the 'Cons.,' 234.
- Francheville, 7.
- Freewill and predestination, 70, 71, 81, 82, 96, 97—illustration of, 71, 96.
- Frere Renaut de Louhans, translator of the 'Cons.,' 213, 214.
- Frisi and the diptych of Monza, 140.
- Furnivall, 214.
- Gaudentius the informer, 36.
- Gelasius, Pope, 153.
- Genera, nature of, 246—Plato on, 247, 253—Aristotle on, 247, 248, 250, 251, 253, 254—Porphyry on, 248—Boethius on, 248-254.
- Gerbert of Rheims, 245.
- German translations of the 'Cons.,' 237, 238.
- Gervaise, on the 'Cons.,' 6.
- Gibbon, 15, 161—on the parentage of Odovacar, 16—on Theodoric's court, 23—on the characters of Basilus and Opilio, 52.



- Gilbert de la Porrée, 130, 131, 139.  
 Gilles de Rome, 201.  
 Giraldus Cambrensis, 199.  
 Giraud de Barri, 201.  
 Glareanus, on the 'Cons.,' 6.  
 Γνωθι σεαυτον, 94.  
 God, the *summum bonum*, 63, 64, 134, 137—orders all things for good, 70—the Father of all, 83—the Creator, 89, 136, 138—the predicates applied to, 114-116, 129-131—Boethius's conception of, 81, 83, 84, 86, 87—Plato's conception of, 83, 84—Proclus's conception of, 87—His existence, proof of, 86.  
 Godefroi de Saint-Victor, 254.  
 Good, the predicate, applied to substances, 133-137.  
 Good, the highest. See *Summum bonum*. Primary and secondary, 135, 136.  
 Good, the, always powerful, 65.  
 'Gorgias,' 65 n., 91 n., 98.  
 Gori, on the diptych of Monza, 140.  
 Gower, 239.  
 Greek, translation of the 'Cons.' into, 235—and Latin compared, 144.  
 Gregory, translated by Alfred, 172.  
 Grote, 241, 247 n.  
 Grotius, 4.  
 Guillaume de Machault, 239.  
 Gundobad, king of the Burgundians, 28.  
 Gunzo the grammarian, 245.  
 Hand, on Boethius's Christianity, 4.  
 Happiness, the misery of former, 60—self-mastery leads to true, *ib.*  
 Hauréau, 'Hist. de la Phil. Scolastique,' 241, 250.  
 Hearne, 229 n.  
 Heavenly bodies, 114, 125.  
 'Hebdomades,' 132 n.  
 Hehle, 'Conciliengeschichte,' 157 n.  
 Helves, reputed wife of Boethius, 24.  
 Henri de Valois, 30.  
 Heraclitus, and the theory of Universals, 246.  
 Hermes Trismegistus, 103.  
 Hildebrand, 'Boethius u. seine Stellung zum Christenthume, 1, 9, 81, 98, 101 n., 103, 108, 117, 123—on the 'Hebdomades,' 132 n.  
 Hincmar of Rheims, 109.  
 'Histoire Litt. de la France,' 198, 200.  
 Hodgkin, 'Italy and her Invaders,' 13, 15, 16 n., 17 n., 18 n., 33 n., 35 n.—on the trial of Boethius, 46, 49, 51—'Cassiodorus,' 16, 44 n.  
 Hofmann, C., quoted, 187 n.  
 Holder, A., 11.  
 Horace, quoted, 26.  
 'Hortus Deliciarum,' 187 n.  
 Hrabanus Maurus, 196, 254.  
 Hündgen, 178, 182.  
 Idea, the Platonic, 83, 92, 247.  
 Indiction, 44 n.  
 Intelligence, the peculiar characteristic of God, 93—primary and secondary, 69.  
 'Isagoge' of Porphyry, the, 57 n., 94, 121, 244, 247, 249, 251.  
 Isonzo, battle of the, 21.  
 Italian translations of the 'Cons.,' 232-234.  
 'Italy and her Invaders.' See Hodgkin.  
 Jehan de Cis, translator of the 'Cons.,' 212, 213.  
 Jehan de Meun, his translations, 201—his translation of the 'Cons.,' 201-206—anonymous imitator of, 212.  
 Jerome, St, 99.  
 Johannes Antiochanus, chronicler, 21.  
 Johannes Scotus. See Erigena.  
 John, Deacon. See John, Pope.  
 John de Gerson, 239.  
 John of Salisbury on the 'Cons.,' 4.  
 John, Pope, his mission to Constantinople, 33—his death, 34—tracts addressed to, 127, 128, 131.  
 John, St, 84.  
 John the chaplain, translator of the 'Cons.,' 229-231.  
 John Walton. See John the chaplain.  
 Jourdain, C., on the tracts, 5.  
 Justin, emperor, his proclamation



- against the Arians, 33, 159—and  
 Pope John, 34.  
 Juvenal, quoted, 94, 98 n.
- Lactantius, 169.  
 Ladder in 'Boëce,' 184, 187, 188.  
 Langlois, E., 208—on the transla-  
 tion by P. de Paris, 206, 207.  
 Laurentius, Pope, 157.  
 Le Clerc, 5.  
 Leo, 141.  
 Letter, episcopal, 142.  
 'Liber contra Eutychen.' See  
 'De Persona.'  
 Livy, quoted, 155.  
 Lowell, J. R., quoted, 80.  
 Lucretius, quoted, 155.  
 Lucullan villa, the, 17.
- Mallio Torquator, 180.  
 Man, akin to God, 93.  
 Mani, 84.  
 Mansion, Colard, 203.  
 Martianus Capella, 75.  
 Mathematics, the field of, 111, 123.  
 Matthew, St., quoted 95 n., 101, 104.  
 Maurice, 241, 249.  
 Maximian, bishop of Ravenna, 30.  
 Maximus Planudes, translator of  
 the 'Cons.,' 235.  
 Medieval literature, Boethius's in-  
 fluence on, see Boethius—  
 springs of, 163, 197, 198.  
 Menippus of Gadara, 74.  
 Messer Grazia da Siena, translator  
 of the 'Cons.,' 234.  
 Meyer, P., 182, 212, 213—on  
 Anglo-Norman literature, 198—  
 on J. de Meun's translation,  
 202.  
 Migne, 55.  
 Milman, 15.  
 Mirandol, J. de, 5, 104 n.  
 Monophysitism. See Eutychiean-  
 ism.  
 Monza, diptych at, 139, 140.  
 Morley, H., on 'Boëce,' 217.  
 Morris, R., on 'Boëce,' 203, 206.  
*Multimodus*, 155.  
 Murmellius, 4.
- Natural law, 83.  
 Nature, definition of, 142, 143—  
 applied to God, 145, 146—of  
 Christ. See Catholic Faith, II.
- Neoplatonism in the 'Cons.,' 82,  
 87, 97.  
 Nero, the Menippæan satire in the  
 reign of, 75—Alfred on, 176.  
 Nestorianism, 142, 146-151, 153-155.  
 Nestorius. See Nestorianism.  
 Nicomachus, translated by Boe-  
 thius, 26.  
 Nitzsch, 'Das System des Boe-  
 thius,' 1, 4, 81, 83, 86, 108, 121,  
 122, 128, 153, 155.  
 Nominalism, 93—of Aristotle, 250,  
 254.  
 Notker Labeo, 191.  
 Notker Piperis gramma, 191.  
 Notker Teutonicus, life and works,  
 190-192—his translation of the  
 'Cons.,' 192-196, compared with  
 Alfred's, 194, 195, MS. used by  
 him for, 218; and see Chaucer  
 —his testimony to the 'De  
 Trin.,' 109—his system of phon-  
 etics, 196, 197.  
 Notker the Great. See N. Teut-  
 onicus.  
*Noûs*, 88.  
 Number, two kinds of, 112, 113.
- Obbarius, quoted, 4, 77, 78.  
 Ocla, son of Odovacar, 22.  
 Odovacar, parentage of, 16—and  
 St Severinus, 16—master of  
 Italy, 17, 18—and the papal  
 election, 157—death of, 21.  
 Old High German. See Notker  
 Teutonicus.  
 Opilio the informer, 36—Cassio-  
 dorus on, 44, 47, 48.  
 Orestes, 17.  
 Ormin, 197.  
 Orosius, translated by Alfred,  
 172.
- II on philosophy's robe, the, 57,  
 187.  
 Paganism, laws against, 6.  
 Paris, P., 212.  
 Parmenides, 246—quoted by Boe-  
 thius, 103 n.  
 Paulus Diaconus, 2.  
 Pavia, 17, 158.  
 Peiper, R., 9, 55, 232, 236, 237 n.  
 Pelagianism, 72, 95, 100.  
 Perpetuity, 71, 89, 124-126.  
 Person, definition of, 144, 145—

- etymology of, *ib.*—of Christ, see Catholic Faith, II.
- Peter of Kastl, 237, 238.
- Petronius, 75.
- Pezius, 'Anecd. Thes.,' 141 n., 237 n.
- 'Phædo,' 98.
- 'Phædrus,' 97.
- Φιλία, 84, 89.
- Philippe-le-Bel, 200, 201.
- Philosophy, Boethius's system of, see Boethius, II.—personified in the 'Cons.,' 57, in 'Boëce,' 185, 186—Scholastic, 241—its aim, 243, 244, 246, 247—its value, 246, 257—Boethius and, see Boethius, II.
- Physic, of the Stoics, 82.
- Physics, the field of, 111, 123.
- Pierre de Paris, 206, 207.
- Piper, 190.
- Plagiarism, Boethius accused of, 79.
- Plato on the government of states, 27—on eternity and perpetuity, 71, 89—and the question of free-will, 81—dualism of, 84—his conception of evil, 91—realism of, 246—his theory of ideas, 83, 92, 247—in the middle ages, 245—his influence on Boethius, 81, 83, 84, 89, 91-94, 96-100, 103-105, 118.
- Plotinus, 81, 100.
- Polytheism, Christian hatred of, 82.
- Πορίσματα, 137.
- Porphyrus, 'Isagoge' of, 57 n., 94, 121, 244, 247, 249, 251.
- Pretextatus, 49.
- Prantl, 241.
- Prayer, efficacy of, 84.
- Predicates, of Aristotle, the, 113—applied to God, 114-116, 129, 130.
- Prescience, 96.
- Providence, 72.
- Priscian, 77.
- Proclus, on God, 87—on fate and providence, 88—on the soul, 97—his influence on Boethius, 81, 82, 169.
- Procopius, on the death of Boethius, 35.
- Προνοία, 88.
- Providence, 87-89, 91—and fate, 67, 69, 88—the agents of, 68, 89.
- Psalter, the, quoted, 104.
- Pseudo-Dionysius, 100.
- Psychology of Boethius, 92-95—of Proclus, 97.
- Ptolemy, translated by Boethius, 26.
- Puccinotti, 10.
- Punishment after death, 67.
- "Purgatoria clementia," 67, 98, 101.
- Pythagoras, translated by Boethius, 26—quoted by Boethius, 40.
- Quadrivium, 243.
- Quidam me quoque excellentior,* 103.
- 'Quomodo substantiæ bonæ sint,' Boethius's tract, 109—analysis of, 131-137—its origin and motive, 132, 137—points of resemblance to the 'Cons.,' 138.
- 'Quomodo Trinitas.' See 'De Trinitate.'
- Realism of Boethius, 93, 249—of Plato, 246, 253—of Erigena, 254-256.
- Redeemer, the notion of a, foreign to Boethius, 92.
- Referendary, 31 n.
- Relation, 115, 116—Aristotle's definition of, 122.
- Remigius of Auxerre, 256.
- Reminiscence, 94 n.
- Rémusat, quoted, 250.
- Renatus Vallinus, 139.
- Resurrection, 99, 100.
- Reward and punishment, 66, 72, 98.
- Rhediger, library at, 238 n.—Thomas of, *ib.*
- Rheims, Council of, 130.
- Richter, 7.
- 'Roman de la Rose,' 239.
- Roman empire, fall of the, 15.
- Rome, see of, at variance with Constantinople, 156, 157.
- Rusticana, wife of Boethius, 24, 41, 60.
- 'Satura Menippæa,' the, 74-76—Boethius and, 75, 76.
- Scaliger on Boethius's style, 78.
- Scholastic, definition of, 242.

- Scholastic Philosophy. See Philosophy, scholastic.
- Schoolmen. See Philosophy, scholastic.
- Schools founded by Charles the Great, the, 242.
- Schündelen, on the 'Cons.,' 7.
- Sciences, the speculative, 111, 123.
- Secundum philosophos*, 122, 123, 125.
- Seneca and the 'Satura Menippeæ,' 74—his influence on Boethius, 79, 101.
- Sermon on the mount, 102.
- Severinus, bishop of Cologne, 140, 141—saint, of Noricum, 16, 140.
- Seville, book printed at, 236.
- Simcox, G. A., 162 n.
- Simplicity, the divine, 67-69.
- Simun de Fraisne, translator of the 'Cons.,' 198-200.
- Sin, a disease of the soul, 92, 95—its own punishment, 96—original, 96, 100.
- Sitzmann, on Boethius's debt to Seneca, 79.
- Soul, the, 92, 94, 95, 97-99—cosmic, 88—immortality of, 99.
- Spanish translation of the 'Cons.,' 236, 237.
- Species, 246—Plato on, 247—Aristotle on, *ib.*—Porphyry on, 248—Boethius on, 248-254.
- Stoicism, 81, 88, 98, 100.
- Stoics, physic of the, 82.
- Substance, divine, the, 111-113, 129, 130.
- Substantials, 134-137.
- Summum bonum*, the, 62, 63, 65, 85, 86, 90, 94, 134-138—identical with God, 86.
- Sundby, Thor, on Brunetto Latino, 233.
- Sunigalda, wife of Odovacar, 22.
- Suttner, on the 'Cons.,' 7, 98.
- Symmachus the patrician, 'Anecd. Hold.' on, 11, 12—'Anon. Val.' on, 32—Procopius on, 35—and Boethius, 24, 41, 60, 132 n.—the 'De Trin.' addressed to, 110, 126.
- Symmachus, Pope, 154, 157.
- Symmachus, son of Boethius, 28, 60.
- Synesius, 100.
- Tavistock, book printed at, 229.
- Teiric, 180, 181.
- Ten Brink, 'Chaucer-Studien,' 226.
- Teuffel, 'Gesch. der Röm. Lit.,' quoted, 75 n.
- ☉ on Philosophy's robe, the, 57, 187.
- Θάνατος ὁ δεύτερος, 102.
- Theodoric Strabo, 19.
- Theodoric the Amal, birth and parentage of, 18—early life of, 19—invades Italy, 20—defeats and murders Odovacar, 21—his government of Italy, 22, 23—upholds the tradition of Theodosius, 6—at Verona, 22—at Rome, 23—suspects treason among the senators, 29—causes Symmachus and Boethius to be put to death, 29—his treatment of Pope John, 33—threatens to persecute the Church, *ib.*—and Church disputes, 157—the 'Anon. Val.' on, 30-32—Alfred's antipathy to, 173.
- Theological tracts of Boethius, the, 2-5, 8-10—evidence of the 'Anecd. Hold.' in favour of, 12—testimony to, of Alcuin, 109, of Hincmar of Rheims, *ib.*, of Bruno of Corvey, *ib.*, of Notker, *ib.*, of Haimo, *ib.*, of Abelard, 110—order of, in the MSS., 109—characterised, 56, 108, 128—analysis of, 110-152.
- Theology, the field of, 111, 123.
- Third tract, Boethius's. See 'Quomodo substantiæ.'
- Thomas Aquinas, 257.
- 'Timæus,' 83, 84, 245.
- 'Timothy, Epistle to,' quoted, 104.
- Tiraboschi, 'Storia della Let. It.,' 10, 232, 233.
- Todd, 229.
- Toulouse, MS. at, 210.
- Trinity, doctrine of the, 110, 116, 129—controversial treatises on, 119—Boethius's tract on, see 'De Trin.'—cannot be substantially predicated of God, 131.
- Trivium, 243.
- 'Troilus and Cryseyde,' 215-217, 228.
- Ulca, passage of the, 20.

- \*Υλη of Aristotle, the, 84.  
*Universalia extra et ante rem*,  
 247.  
 Universe, Boethius on the, 85—  
 Aristotle on the, *ib.*  
 Usener, H., 12, 13—on the 'De  
 Persona,' 10.  
 'Utrum Pater,' Boethius's tract,  
 127-131—analysis of, 129-131—  
 Gilbert de la Porrée and, 130,  
 131—motive of, 128—addressed  
 to Deacon John, 127, 128—vari-  
 ations in the MSS. titles of,  
 127.  
 Valentinian, 15.  
*Validiora remedia*, 7, 61.  
 Varro, Terentius, 74.  
 Vegetius, translated by J. de  
 Meun, 201.  
 Vérart, A., 203.  
 Victorinus, 249.  
 "Vile and precious vessels," 64.  
 Villon, quoted, 162.  
 Vincent of Beauvais, on the theo-  
 logical tracts, 3.  
 'Vita Nuova,' Dante's, 239.  
 Vitæ Boethii, 181, 182.  
 Voigt, 232.  
 'Voir dit,' G. de Machault's, 239.  
 Warton, 'Hist. of Eng. Poetry,'  
 229, 231 n.  
 Weber, C. F., 234.  
 Wicked, impotency of the, 65—  
 punishment of the, 65, 66—non-  
 existence of the, 66.  
 Wilbald of Cowey, 256.  
 Wisdom, Book of, quoted, 102, 104.  
 Wordsworth, quoted, 53.  
 Wright, T., 'Biogr. Brit. Lit.,'  
 198.  
 Wyrd, 165-167.  
 York, library at, 169.  
 Zeno, Emperor, 17, 18—and Theo-  
 doric, 19, 20.









University of Toronto      Robarts  
\*\*\*\*\*

13    Oct    04

B            Stewart, Hugh Fraser  
659            Boethius  
Z7S7

93

