

## THE SECRETE OF SECRETES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

(MS. Reg. 18 A. vij. B.M.)

4 t his is the book of the governaunce of kyngis and of  
 Pryncis, callid the Secrete of Secretes, whiche that  
 Aristotille made to kyng Alexandre forth, with the ordi-  
 naunce of the Chapitris in ordir: and a Prologe of a gret  
 8 doctoure recomendyng Aristotille.

	PAGE
1 The epistille that Alexandre sent to Aristotille. ...	4
2 The answer of the same epistille. ... ..	4
3 The prologe of him that translatic his book into latyne.	4
12 4 Of the largenes of a kyng. ... ..	7
5 Of largenes and avarice of a kyng. ... ..	8
6 Of vertues and vicis, and doctrine of Aristotille. ...	9
7 Of entendement, which is vndirstondyng. ... ..	9
16 8 Of the entenciounz that longith to a kyng. ... ..	10
9 Of yvelis that cometh of flesshely desires. ... ..	10
10 Of wisdom and ordinaunce of a kyng. ... ..	11
11 Of a kyngis goodnes and holynes. ... ..	11
20 12 Of the purveaunce of a kyng. ... ..	12
13 Of clothyng of a kyng. ... ..	12
14 Of the countenaunce of a kyng. ... ..	12
15 Of the rightwisnes of a kyng. ... ..	14
24 16 Of worldly desires of a kyng. ... ..	14
17 Of the chastite of a kyng. ... ..	14
18 Of the pleiyng of a kyng. ... ..	15
19 Of the discreciounz of a kyng. ... ..	15
28 20 Of the reuerence of a kyng. ... ..	16
21 How a kyng shalle make sugetis. ... ..	17
22 Of the mercy of a kyng. ... ..	17
23 Of the peynes and vengeaunce of god. ... ..	18

<sup>1</sup> These page- and chapter-numbers are not in the MS.

	PAGE
24 Of knowleche of the same peynes. ... ..	18
25 fforto kepe the feith. ... ..	18
26 Of studies and scolis. ... ..	19
27 Of kepyng of a kyng. ... .. [fol. 1 b]	20 4
28 Of the difference of Astronomye. ... ..	21
29 Of kepyng of helthe. ... ..	21
30 Of gouernaunce in seeknes. ... ..	22
31 In how many maners a man may kepe helthe. ...	22 8
32 Of dyuerse metis. ... ..	23
33 Of the stomak. ... ..	23
34 Signes to knowe the stomak. ... ..	23
35 A pistille of gret price. ... ..	23 12
36 The maner of trauallye. ... ..	24
37 Of abstinence. ... ..	25
38 Nought to drynke pure watir. ... ..	25
39 The maner forto slepe. ... ..	25 14
40 Of kepyng of Custome. ... ..	26
41 How a man owith to chaunge custome. ... ..	26
42 Of foure tymes of the yere. ... ..	27
43 Of prime temps, what it is. ... ..	27 20
44 Of somer tyme. ... ..	27
45 Of heruest tyme. ... ..	28
46 Of wyntir tyme. ... ..	29
47 Of naturalle hete. ... ..	29 24
48 Of thing that fattith the body. ... ..	29
49 Of thing that leneth the body. ... ..	30
50 Of the first parti of the body. ... ..	30
51 Of the secund parti of the body. ... ..	31 2
52 Of the thridde parti of the body. ... ..	31
53 Of the fourthe parti of the body. ... ..	31
54 Of the maner of fisshis. ... ..	32
55 Of nature of watris. <sup>1</sup> ... ..	33 3
56 Of nature of wyne. <sup>1</sup> ... ..	33
57 Of sowre Syrupe. ... ..	33
58 Of foure maner of rightwisnesse. ... .. [fol. 2 a]	33
59 Of a kyngis secretarie. ... ..	35 3
60 Of a kyngis messangeres. ... ..	36
61 Of gouernaunce of the peple. ... ..	36
62 Of ffisnomye of ffolke. ... ..	38

<sup>1</sup> Chap. 55 and 56 were missing in the MS. from which this copy is printed.

## The Prologe of a gret doctour recomending Aristotille.

Od almyghty kepe oure kyng and conferme his Rewme in the lawe of god, and make him regne in gladnes, in lovyng, and in worshipec of god. I that am seruitoure of the kyng, haue put in execucioun his comaundement, and travaylid forto gete the book of good thewes to him; whiche is callid the secrete of secretis of the making of Aristotille, prince of philesofris, sone of Machomete of macedonye, which was sent to his discipille as in gouernaunce Alexandre the emperoure, sone of kyng Philip of Grece, the whiche Alexaundre had two Crownes. This book made this forseyd Aristotille in his gret age, whan he myght not travayle ne done the nedis that he had in charge of Alexandre. ffor Alexandre had made him gouernoure and maystir aboue alle othir, for the excellent witt pat he had in clergie and sotille vndirstondyng, for eyr he was stodiying in good and gracious thewes, charitabile, spirituelle and contem- platyf; and also he was so wys & meke, and lovyd resoun and rightwisnes; and eyr reportid trouthe and lewte. Therefore oold Philesofres seyne by him, that they haue founden in Greke bokis that god hath sent his excellent Aungille and seyde to him, "y shalle do the to be namyd thorough alle the world more for Aungille than for man." And witith welle that Aristotille made in his lyvyng many wondres, of the whiche <sup>1</sup>some be right meruelous to telle; and in his diyng fille many meruelous thingis. Wherfore a certeyne Religioun helde an opynyon that Aristotille was mountid vp to hevene in lyknes to a dowue of fyre. And as long as Aristotille lyvid, Alexandre bi his counselle helde alle londis vndir foote and conquerid alle lordshipes of the world, and thorough alle londis went his fame and his renome. Alle nacions were putt vndir his imperialite and comaundement, and specially they of perce and of Arabie, and no lond durste withstond him in word nor dede. And Aristotille made many fayre Epistolis for the gret loue that he had to Alexandre, forto make him knowe alle secretis that bilongith any erthely man to knowe or vndirstond. And on of his Epistel is here vndir writene, which he sent to Alexandre. ffor whan Alexandre had put hem of Perce in subieccioun, and the grettist men of Romaynes had in his prisone, he sent an Epistille to Aristotille in these wordes folowyng.

Aristotle, son of Mahomet (Nichomachus).

The good qualities of Aristotle.

An angel sent to him from God.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 2 b.]

Alexander conquered the world by following his advice.

The reason for the following letter.

The Epistille that Alexandre sent to Aristotille the gret clerke. *Ca<sup>m</sup> primum.*

What is to be done with the wise men of Persia?

o Doctoure of gret rightwisnes and noble gouvernour, we signifie to thi gret wisdom that we haue founden in the 4 lond of Perce many men the which habound gretly in wisdom, resoun, and vnderstandyng, welle sotille and perceyvyng, and hope forto haue lordship aboue alle othir, and forto gete Rewmes. Wherefore we purpose to putt hem alle to deth. But 8 only thou certifie vs bi thi lettres, as thou semest most spedfulle vnto vs, for therbi wolle we worche, and noon othir wise.

The answer of the same Epistille ayen to Alexandre.

*Capitulum ij<sup>m</sup>*

12

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 3 a.] Govern them with kindness, and they will be meek subjects.

a nd thou mowe change the eyre of the lond, and the wattris, and the ordinance of Citees, than do as thou hast purposid, and ellis nought. But gouerne þat <sup>1</sup>pepille in goodnes, and enhance them in thi benygnyte. And if thou do thus, y 16 truste in god, alle they shulle be þi meeke subiectis, And obeye alle thi likyngis and comaundementis. And for the loue that they shalle haue to þe, thou shalt regne on them pesibly *with* gret victory. And whan Alexandre had red this epistille, he 20 did aftir the counselle of them of Perce, and found hem more lowly and obeyshaunt to him than any othir were.

The prologe of him that translaid this book into latyne.

*Ca<sup>m</sup> iij<sup>m</sup>.*

24

His search for secrets.

He finds a hermit in the Temple of the Sun:

who teaches him with good will.

Philip, interpretour and vnderstandere of alle langagis. y haue knowe no stede, ne place, ne temple where philesofres haue customyd to make or vnmake alle werkis and secretis, that y ne haue sought hem. Ne y haue herd told of no wise mane þat 28 had knowleche in scriptures of philesofris, that y ne haue visitid him vnto þe tyme y come to the knowleche of the [temple of the] sone that made Esculapideos: there y fond a man solitarie, fulle of gret abstinence and right wijs in filosofie, to whom y 32 lowid me diligently, And bisought him that he wold shewe me the scriptures of the knowleche of the sone, the which he yaf me *with* good wille. And wite ye welle y fond alle that, that y desirid, and alle that y went fore to the forseid place, and alle 36 that that y so moche desirid. I retornyd home *with* gret ioie,

and yeldid many graces and worshipis to my makere. And sithen at the request of the noble kyng Alexandre, in gret studie and moche laboure, y translaid this book, out of Greke 4 into the langage of Caldee, and aftir into the tonge of Arabike, the which book made the right wijs Aristotille, that answerid euyr to alle the questiones of kyng Alexandre, as ye shalle se more pleyulier sewyng bi ordre.

He translates the book from Greke into Syriac, and thence into Arabic.

8 r <sup>1</sup>Ight glorious sone and emperoure rightwis, god comfort the in the wey of trouthe and of vertues, and refrayne the from 17 fleshely and bestly desires, and conferme thi Rewme to his seruice and his worships. Wite welle, dere sone, that y haue

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 3 b.] Aristotle's preface.

12 recevyd thyn epistille reuerently and honourably as it to me bilongith, and y haue fully vnderstond the gret desire that thou hast that y were *personally with* the; and thou merveylist þat y may holde me so long fro the, and also thou vndirtakist me

16 gretly, and seist that me rekkith but litille of alle thi gret nede, and therfore y haue hastid me and ordeynyd me to make a book for the, the which shalle conteyne alle thi nedes, and it shalle fulfille myn absence and my defaut, and it shalle be rewle and

His reasons for not coming to Alexander.

20 doctrine ayens alle aduersitees. But, dere sone, thou owist not repræue me ne put me in blame, for thou wost welle that ther is no thing that myght lette me to come to thee, but only as thou knowist welle that y may not bistere my silf, y am so gretly in

24 age and febille of persone, not able to go ne to ride. And wite thou wel thou hast axid me, and so moch desirid to knowe of suche secretis, of whiche mannys thoughtis may not comprehendene susteyne, how myght than eny hert of dedly man vnderstond

28 that, þat longith not to be knowe. But euermore bi right y am holde to answeere to that that thou axist of me. And so be thou

Cautions respecting these secrets.

32 worldly that is nedfulle or spedfulle to thyn estate. ffor god

hath yevene suche grace to thee of vnderstandyng and subtilite of witt, and bi the doctryne that y haue oft tymes yove thee, that bi thy silf thou maist conceyve, <sup>2</sup>vnderstonde, and wite alle

Alexander's natural abilities.

36 thingis that thou desirist or axist. ffor the desire of the wille that thou hast shalle opene the the way to fynde thi purpos, *with* the myght of god. And wite thou welle that the cause wherfore y shewe my secretes figuratify & derkly, and bi derke en-

[<sup>2</sup> fol. 4 a.]

40 samplis: It is for y dowte me, that if this book come vnto the

God's anger  
with those  
who reveal  
His secrets  
to the un-  
worthy.

hondis of vntrewe men, and proude, whiche were not worthi nor able forto knowe the secretis of god almyghti, for they are not worthi therto. And wite thou wellet pat y putt me in gret dowte and indignacioun of god, forto shewe thee his secretis, as he of 4 his excellent goodnes hath shewid hem to me. And therefore and thou discouere hem vnto eny at eny tyme, wite wellet that sone aftir thou shalt haue y-nowe of yville fortunes, and pou shalt not eschewe the grete disesis that are hastily to come, fro 8 the whiche god kepe the euermore, amen. And loke in alle thing that thou haue in mynde this profitabile techyng that y haue ordeynyd to the, and am in purpos forto expowne, and bi the leue of god thi nobille hert enforme, and pat shall be to 12 the gret solace and myrroure of helthe. It bihovith, dere sone, pat eche kyng haue two thingis to susteyne him and his Rewme, but he may not haue hem but he be stedfast in gouernaunce, so that alle tho that ben vndir his regne ben of oon obeyshaunce, 16 and in on subieccioun of trewe ligeaunce vnto her liege kyng, for disobeyshaunce of subiectis is most enfeccioun and enfeblisshyng of euery lord. ffor if the subiectis regne, the lordis myght is litill or ellis nought, and y shalle shewe yow cause whi. The 20 subiectis ben mevid in corage forto obeye her lord, and pat is for two causis; the on cause is within, the othir cause without. The cause without <sup>1</sup> is whene the lord wisely dispendith his goodis and his ricchessis among his subiectis, And that he 24 yeue yeftis largely to euery man aftir that he is worthi: and this is a gret poynt of wisdom, forto enforce him silf to haue the hertis of his subiectis thorough good werkis. and this is the first degre and principalle foundacioun of his prosperite. And that 28 he mayntene rightwisnes and even iustice, as wellet to poore as to riche, and that his rightwisnes be medlid with pite and mercy. The cause within is, that his philesofris and grete wisemen of clergie be had in worshipe and high recomendacioun: 32 ffor god hath recomendid to hem a part of his high science. And y recomende to the this science and secrete of wisdom, forthwith the othir that thou shalt fynde in dyuerse partis of 34 this book, in the whiche thou shalt fynde high doctryne, for thou shalt fynde the cause fynalle of thi principalle purpos. ffor whan thou hast vndirstond the sothe of the significacions of the wordis, and be derknes of the examples, than shalt thou haue fully and perfity alle that thou desirist. Thus pray y god, 40

Two things  
needed to sus-  
tain a realm.

[fol. 4 b.]

The lord  
must share  
goods wisely  
among his  
subjects:

and he must  
hold clergy  
and phileo-  
phy in high  
repute.

rightwis and glorious kyng, that he enlumyne thi resoun and thyn vndirstondyng, so that thou may come and parceyve the secretis of this science, that thou may be therin myn heyr and 4 myn only successoure, and that graunt the god, that his ricchesse enlargisshith and habundauntly yefith vnto lijf of wys men; And yefith grace to do [to those] pat stodiens forto knowe that is straunge and hard in kynde, for without specialle grace of god 8 no thing may be doone vnto any good purpos.

May God  
make him  
knowe these  
secrets.

#### Of the largenes of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 4<sup>m</sup>

t Her are foure condicionis of kyngis. ther is a kyng that is large to him silf and large to his <sup>1</sup>sugetis. Ther is a 12 kyng that is skars to him silf and large to his sugetis. Ther is a kyng that is larg to him silf, and skars to his sugetis. And ther is a kyng that is both skars to him silf, and to his sugetis also. Men of ytalie seyne, that ther is no vice in that kyng 16 that is skars to him silf, and large to his sugetis. The Iew saith, that kyng is good that is skars to him silf and to his sugetis bothe. The parisien saith, that kyng that is large to him silf and to his sugetis bothe, he is not worthi to be in no 20 preysyng, but werst of alle othir. And if he be skars to him silf and to his sugetis bothe, his Rewme may not stonde longe in prosperite but sone come to distruccioun. Than it nedith wisely to enquere of vertues and of vicis, what is largesse and 24 what is skarsnes, and wherin stonidith the erreure of largesse, and what disese cometh of skarsnes. It is clere thing, that pe qualitees arne forto be reprovid, whan they aliene them from ther meene. And wite ye wellet that it is hard thing forto kepe 28 largesse, and light thing forto passe it. And it is a light thing a man to be skars or foole large. And if thou wille gete larges, biholde and considir thi power and thi riches, and also the tyme of nede and the deservyngis of thi men. And than owist thou 32 forto yeue mesurably vnto hem that haue nede therto, and best haue deseruyd it, and he that yevith othir wise passith the rewle of largesse. ffor he that yevith his good to suche as be not worthi, [it] is but lost, and he pat spendith his good out of 36 mesure shalle sone be poore, and this makith her enemyes to haue maystrie ouyr hem. Than he that yevith his good in tyme of nede to suche as haue nede therto, and principally to suche as haue deservid <sup>2</sup>it, suche a kyng is large to him silf and

Four kinds  
of kings.  
[fol. 5 a.]

Italian,  
Indian,  
and Persian  
views.

It is hard  
to keep the  
just mean of  
largesse.

Wise largesse.

[fol. 5 b.]



Foolish largesse.

to his sugetis bothe, and his rewme shalle stonde in gret prosperite, and his comaundementis shul be fulfillid. And he that dispendith the goodis of his Rewme out of ordir and discrecioun, and yevith suche as be not worthi, ne haue no nede *perto*, that 4 kyng distroyeth his peple and the comoun good of the Rewme, and is not worthi forto regne, for he is fool large. The name of skarste is vnconvenient to a kyng, and yville bicometh to his royalle maieste. Than if a kyng wolle regne worshipfully, it 8 bihouyth him neyßer to haue that on ne that othir of two vicis, skarste ne fool large. And this may not welle be doon without counselle. Therefore it nedith *with* gret diligence to haue an Inwijs man and a discrete to counselle, the which must 11 be chosene among many othir, and suche a man must be commyttid to suche a charge bi the kyng and his wys counselle, forto governe the riches of the Rewme as it owith best to be disposid, to the worshippe of god principally and worshippe of the 14 kyng, and thus shalle thi Rewme stonde in gret prosperite.

Advantage of having a wise treasurer.

**Of largenes and skarsnes, and many oþir vertues.** Cap<sup>m</sup> 5<sup>m</sup>

Don't spend more than you receive.

k Yng Alexandre, y telle the in certeyne that what kyng makith gretter dispences than the profites conteyne that 20 longen to the crowne, he enclyneth him to fool largesse and nought to skarsnes. That kyng *without* dowt shalle sone be destroyed. And if he enclyne him to worshipfulle largesse, he shall haue perpetuall ioye of his Regne. And wite welle, dere 24 sone, that y haue founde in techyngis and comaundementis of the gret doctour Hermogenes, that the grete souereyne clerte of vndirstondyng is plente of lawe, and konnyng is a signe of perfeccioun of a kyng, and þat previth whan 1 he withdrawith 28 forto take the goodis and possessiones of his sugetis, for that hath ben the cause of distruccioun of many Remes. ffor kyngis that haue made so outrage dispences, that the Rentis and profetis that longid to him myght not susteyne ne mayntene 32 ther outrage dispences, And forto mayntene it, they took the goodis and possessiones from her sugetis, for which cause the pepille cried to god, and god herde hem and sent on hem kyngis of vengeaunce. The pepille rebellid ayens hem and were destroyed of alle, and alle her name putt to nought. And ne were the grace of glorious god, that susteneth and helpith the Innocent peple, alle shuld go to distruccioun and into the

[fol. 6 a.] Covetous kings have destroyed many realms.

Their exactions cause rebellion.

d<sup>m</sup>ynacioun of Alienes for euyr. And þerfore kepe the fro Be temperate in all things. outrageous expenses and yeftis. And kepe euyr temperaunce in largete, and stodie not abowt derke prophecies, ne secretis 4 that passith thi witt, ne neuer repreue thi yeftis *with* ayen- Don't take back gifts. taking, for it longith not to the condicioun of a gentille kyng.

**Of vicis and vertues, and of þe doctrine of Aristotille.** Cap<sup>m</sup> 6<sup>m</sup>

8 t He substance of alle vertues of a kyngis regne is forto A summary of kingly virtues. yeue to good men, and to foryeue wrongis, and worshippe hem that owen to be worshipid, and to do reuerence to hem that are worthi, and to thynke on meke deth, and to kepe hem fro 12 ouermoche speche, and to lete passe wrongis into a tyme, and forto feyne him that he kan not bere the foly of foolis. Dere sone, y haue told the and shalle teche the many thingis whiche thou shalt witholde in thyn hert, and y haue stedfast trust, that 16 as long as thou gouernest the as it is rehersed, thou shalt euyr haue shynyng clernes and sufficient konnyng to thi governaunce alle the tyme of þi lyf. And y shalle teche the the science of phisik abreggid, 1 the which y had not purposid to haue spokene [fol. 6 b.] 20 of, but for that science *with* the techyng that cometh therof, may suffice the in alle werkis in this world and in that othir.

**Of entendement, that is vndirstondyng.** Cap<sup>m</sup> 7<sup>m</sup>

w Ite thou welle, right dere sone, that vndirstondyng is cheef Praise of understanding. of the governaunce of man and helthe of thi sowle, and 24 keper of vertues, and flemmer of vicis, for vndirstondyng shewith vs what we owen to flemme, and what we owen to chese and folowe. It is the keye of vertues and roote of alle louabille 28 goodnes and worshippe, and þe first instrument therof is desire forto haue good renowne. ffor he that desirith to haue good 32 renowne, shalle be ouir alle glorious and worshipfulle, and he that desirith it feynnyngly and ypocritly, that is to say without deservyng, he shalle in the ende be confoundid by yville renowne as he is worthi. A kyng owith principally forto gete and haue good renowne, more for the governyng of his Rewme than for him silf.

Desire to be of good renowne.

Of entencioun fynable of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 8<sup>m</sup>

Good fortune t and bad fame bring on envy.

He bigynnyng of wisdom and vndirstondyng is forto haue good renoune, bi the whiche remes and lordshipes are conquerid and getene. And if thou seke to conquere remes or lordshipes, and thou haue no good renoune, thou shalt fynde that the ende is and shalle be but envye. And envye is neuyr without lesyngis, the which is roote and mater of alle viciis. Envye engendrith yville spekyng, and of yville speche cometh hatrede: Hatrede engendrith vlyenye, vlyenye engendrith rankoure: Rankoure engendrith contrariete: Contrariete engendrith vnrightwisnes, vnrightwisnes engendrith batayle: Batayle yevith vp alle lawes and distroyeth citees, and is contrary to kynde and distroyeþ mannys body. And therefore, dere sone, bithynke the and <sup>1</sup>sett thi desire as thou maist haue good renoune, for of gret desire that thou shalt haue to haue good renoune, thou shalt drawe to the the trouthe of alle thing. And wite welle that trouthe is roote of alle thingis that owen to be bilouyd, and trouthe is matere of alle goodnes, for it is contrary to lesyngis, the which is roote and mater of all viciis. And vndirstonde that trouthe engendrith desire; desire engendrith Iustice. Iustice engendrith good feith. Good feith engendrith largesse; largesse engendrith famulyarite, that is homelynes. ffamulyarite engendrith frendshipe. frendshipe engendrith counselle and helpe, and bi these thingis rehersed was alle the world ordeynyd and the lawes made, and they are accordyng to reson and to kynde; than semeth it welle that desire to haue good renoune, is long lastyng lyf and worshipfulle.

Of yvelys that cometh of bestly desires. Ca<sup>m</sup> 9<sup>m</sup>

The evils arising from animal desires.

a Lexandre, dere sone, leve bestly desires and flesshely, for they ben corruptible. fflesshely desires bowith the hert of mane to delitis, which are corrupcioun to the sowle, and it is bestialle without discreccioun. And he that ioyneth him to bodily corrupcioun, he corruptith the vndirstondyng of man. And wite welle þat suche desires engendrith flesshely loue: And flesshely loue engendrith avarice: Auarice engendrith desiris of ricchesse: Desiris of ricchesse makith a man without shame: Man without shame is prouwd and without feith: Man without feith drawith to theft: Theft bryngith a man to endles shame,

and so cometh a man to kaytifnes and to fynalle distruccioun of his body.

Of the wysdome and ordinaunce of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 10<sup>m</sup>

Justice makes a king praised.

A tyrant wins for himself evil fame.

Justice makes a king praised.

A tyrant wins for himself evil fame.

4 i t is convenabile thing and rightfulle Iustice that good renoune of a kyng be in lovable konnyng and good manhode, and þat shalle make his name <sup>1</sup>sprede thorough alle parties of his rewme; and that he haue parlement and wys counselle oft tymes; and so shalle he be preysid and worshipid and dowtid of his sugetis whan they here him speke and done his thingis wisely. ffor in suche wise may fully be knowene the wysdome or ellis the folie of a kyng. Whan he governyth him wisely

12 ayens god, he is worthi to regne, and worthily to holde lordis estate. But he that settith his Rewme in servitude and yville customes, he ourr passith the wey of trouthe, he settith at nought good lyvyng and goddis lawe: And he shalle at the

16 ende be sett at nought of god and alle worldly good men.

Of a kyngis goodnes and holynes. Ca<sup>m</sup> 11<sup>m</sup>

I Prey the foryete not þe lernyng that wijs philesofres haue spoken of, and that they seyde that it is fityng that the royalle maieste be governyd aftir the rightis and the lawes, nought bi feynt semyng but in dede doyng, so that eche man se and knowe the goodnes of the kyng and that he dredith god, and that he wolle governe him aftir goddis plesaunce; than

24 shalle the kyng be worshipid and dred whan men seyne that he dredith god. And if he feyne him good man and holy, and is yville to his sugetis, he shalle be sett at nought of god, and be diffamyd of alle men, and his doughti deedis shulle cese, and

28 the worship of the crowne shalle fayle, for yville werke may not long be hidde. What may y sey þe more, there is no tresoure ne othir thing in this world that is comperable to good renoune. And on that othir side, dere sone, it longith that thou do

32 worshipe to clerkis and reuerence good men of Religioun, and avaunce wijs men that be of good lyvyng, and speke oft with hem, and axe <sup>2</sup>hem questiones and dowtes of diuerse thingis, and also answeere wisely to her axyngis, and lete alle thi Rewlis be goode. And worshipe euery man as he is worthi, nought

36 aftir estate; but aftir hir goodnes, and so wold god.

Of the purveyance of a kyng. Capitulum 12<sup>m</sup>

i t is nedfulle that the wijs kyng thinke oft of thingis that  
 arne to come, so that he may wisely purveye and make  
 contrary ordynaunce ayens hem, and pat he may the more  
 lightly bere and susteyne þe contrarye aduersitees and aduen-  
 tures; and also a kyng owith to be pitevous, and his yre and  
 malice wisely to cover and refreyne, so that without good and  
 discrete avisement he do nought that he thought to done in his  
 male talent; and so may he knowe with resoun erreure, and  
 with excellent discrecioun repelle it. ffor the most sovereyn  
 vertu of wisdom that a kyng may haue it is to governe him  
 wisely, and nought do without discrecioun; and whan he saith a  
 thing þat is good and profitable to be done, lete him do it  
 diligently wisely and gladly with discrecioun, and so shalle he  
 be eyr obeyd and dred in loue-drede of alle his lieges, and  
 that is an high signe þat he is bilouyd of god.

Prepare for  
the future.Be not hasty,  
but pitiful.Do all things  
with discre-  
tion.Of clothyng of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 13<sup>m</sup>

i t is right welle semyng vnto a royalle maieste of a kyng  
 þat he be royalle and excellent in his array, so that eyr he  
 shewe him in riche and precious clothyng, and þat his clothyng  
 be of the most straunge cloth þat may oughwhere be founde  
 and þat is a gret prerogatif and an high dignyte þat he sur-  
 mounte alle othir lordis, and royallis of his rewme in his royall  
 array; and therby his dignyte shalle be the more worshipid, and  
 his myzt the more enhauncid, and the gretter reuerence to him  
 shalle be yoven of alle men. And also it bicometh to a kyng  
 to be a fayre and a swete spekere with amyable and graciou  
 wordis, and specially in tyme of warres and batayles.

A king should  
be the best  
dressed man  
in the coun-  
try:[<sup>1</sup> fol. 8 b.]And very  
sweet-  
spoken.Of the countenance of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 14<sup>m</sup>

d ere some Alexandre, it is a precious and an honourabil  
 thing to a kyng forto kepe sylence and speke but litille but  
 if it be nede, for it were bettir that the eiris of the peple were  
 brennyng in desire to here the speche of her kyng than the  
 pepille wofulle and very in the listenyng of hir kyng, and the  
 hertis envenymyd of his presence and his sight. And also  
 kyng owith not to shewe him ouer oftene to his peple, ne ouer  
 oft haunte the company of his sugetis, and specially of choic

Better too  
little talk  
than too  
much.

and ruralle folke, for bi ouyr moche homelynes he shalle be the  
 lasse honourid. And perfore the Iewes had a fayre custome in  
 the obseruaunce of her kyng, for they ordeynyd that her kyng  
 4 shulde not shewe him openly to alle the peple but at on tyme of  
 þe yere, and than he shulde shewe him in the most royalle  
 apparayle, and þe barones and knyghtis of his Rewme shul ben  
 about him alle in bright armoure, and the kyng most royally  
 8 sett on a stede with his sepre in his hond, and the Crowne on  
 his hed, and on his body his cote Armure of his royalle armes,  
 and alle þe peple aftir and bifore him. Then speken they and  
 tretene with the kyng of alle þe nedis of the Rewme, and tellen  
 12 of diuerse adventures that haue fallen in that yere bifore. In  
 the whiche he and his counselle must ordeyne remedy and  
 ordeyne governaunce, and there the kyng yewith grete and riche  
 yefftis, and also foryevith men dyuerse trespacis that han de-  
 16 servid to be deed, and there they loke if it be nede forto  
 abregge grete chargis that the peple were wont to bere. And  
 forto make ordinaunce of suche thingis as ben nedfulle and  
 spedfulle for the comoun profit of the Rewme. And whan this  
 emparlyng is doone, than risith on of the wisist lordis and  
 reportith to the peple gret recomandacioun and preysyng of the  
 kyng, and of þe good governaunce, and done gret thankyng vnto  
 god þat hath sent so excellent a witt vnto the kyng of Iewes to  
 2 gouerne hem in suche wise, and also they preyen god that they  
 may be obeyshaunt to him that holdith hem in suche govern-  
 aunce. And whan that this worthi lord hath þus reportid and  
 spokene, then alle the peple enforcith hem forto enhaunce the  
 preysyng of þe kyng, recomending his goode werkis, and preyen  
 to god for him, and þus thorough alle þe lond in Citees of name  
 þe good werkis of hir kyng are publisshid and comendid, and  
 thus the children of her childrene ben taught and norisshid vnto  
 2 love, worshiþe, and reuerence and obeyshaunce of her kyng.  
 And at that time are punysshid and Iustified alle tho that  
 mysdone, so that alle tho þat stonde in any wille forto forfete,  
 they withdrawen hem and bicome good men; and also the kyng  
 doth grace and allegeaunce to marchauntis of the tribute that  
 they owe to the kyng, and maynteneth the marchaundise and  
 þe riches diligently to be kept and diffendid, and þat is þe  
 cause that the cuntre of Iewes is fulle of pepille, and of mar-  
 chaundise, and of alle riches, for of alle þe partis of þe world  
 Kings should  
only be seen  
once a year;

and then in  
their royal  
array.They should  
hold Parlia-  
ment:[<sup>1</sup> fol. 9 a.]and then a  
great lord  
should speke  
to the peple,  
praising the  
king:and the  
people will  
reverence  
him.He should  
forgive the  
merchants  
their tribute,

and thus  
attract them  
to his coun-  
try.

marchauntis approchen to them, for in hem men fynde grete wynnynngis. And in þat cuntre straungers riche and pore are sustenyd and holpene. Wherefore þe tribute of þat lond, and þe rentis of the kyng ben euermore growyng <sup>1</sup>and encreasyng.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 9 b.]Of the rightwisnes of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 15<sup>m</sup>Merchants  
can spread  
his fame.

a kyng owith not to do no vyleny ne hyndryng to Marchauntis, but forto done hem right gret worshiþe, for they go thourh alle þe world bi see and londe, and þey wol report as they fynde, good or yville. And the kyng owith eythir bi himsilf or bi his trewe depute to done even Iustice in yeldyng to every man that is his of right, and than shalle the worshiþe and the ioye of the kyng encrese, and [he shall be] the more dowtyd of his enemyes, and lyve and regne in prosperite and pees, and shall haue at his wille alle his desires.

A king should  
be just to all.Of worldly desires of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 16<sup>m</sup>Desire things  
that will last.

a lexandre, dere sone, desire nought worldly thingis that are passyng and corruptible, but thynke that thou must leve alle and go hens nakid. Caste than thi desiris vnto the thingis that euer shulle laste, that is, the lijf of the world perdurable where that eyr is myrthe and ioye without ende. leue þe noughti lyf of bestis that eyr lyve in filthis; trowe not lightly alle that that men wille telle the, ne be nought ouyr hasty in yevyng mercy vnto them that thou hast conquered, and eyr thynke afore of thingis that are possible to come. Sett not thi desire to gretly in excesse of metis and drynkis, for it wol norishe the in slepe and slouthe, and stere the vnto lecherie which is most destruccioun to mannys body.

Do not eat  
or drink too  
much.Of þe chastite of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 17<sup>m</sup>Evils of un-  
chaste life.

n obille emperoure, sett nought thyn hert in lecherie women, for þat is the lyf of swyne. Ioy and worshiþe shalt thou noon haue, while thou governyst the afir that lijf and afir the lijf of vnresonable bestis. Dere sone, lecherie destruccioun of body abreggyng of lijf and corrupcioun of vertues; Enemy to conscience, and makith a man oft feble <sup>2</sup>nyne. In whiche is oft tyme found cowardnes, and þat is the grettist poynt of reproof that may be vnto Chyvalrie.

[<sup>2</sup> fol. 10 a.]Of pleiying of a kyng. Capitulum 18<sup>m</sup><sup>1</sup>

i t is semely to a kyng sumtyme *with* his pryncis lordis and othir that ben honest gentiles, forto delite him in honest pleyes and myrthis, and forto haue many dyverse mynstralciies in his audience, and dauncyng and syngyng, for whan the kynde of man is reioysid in myrthe of kyndely nature, the talent of man takith therof gret strengthe and corage in alle manhode.

8 Than if thou delite the in suche myrthe, loke that it be doone in honeste and pryvy place, and whan thou art in þi most myrthe kepe the wel from ouermuche drynke, but lete othir haue drynke at wille, and than shalle þou here many pryvy thingis discoverid, than take to the tho that thou lovist best, that they may reporte to the an othir day of that men seyne and tellen in here dronkenshiþe; Onys or twyes ayere suffisith to haue suche maner myrthis. And eyrmore loke that thou holde alle thi lordis in gret worshiþe as they ben of estate, and diuerse tynys make them ete *with* the on afir an opir, and yeue hem rewardis of Iewellis or of riche clothyng after that they ben of estate and worthi; and loke þat ther be no man of thi counselle ne famulier *with* the, but if he be rewardid *with* yeftis of thi largesse, for ellis makist thou not ther hertis toward the in trusty loue, nor savist not thyn estat.

A king should  
enjoy him-  
self now and  
then:

privately:

and make his  
nobles drunk,  
so as to hear  
what they  
say.Do not make  
favourites  
among your  
lords:And see that  
no one is  
neglected.Of discrecioun of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 19<sup>m</sup>

24 d ere sone, haue eyr thi countenance in sadnesse and vse not to laughe ouermuche, for bi ouermuche laughyng men that be wise chesen a foole, or ellis a man without sadnesse. And a kyng owith to do more <sup>2</sup>worshiþe to men of his counselle than to othir. And if any violence be done in thi court or in thi presence, lete it not skape vnpanysshid that othir mowe be ware. And regarde owith to be take in punysshing, for sum mannys persone is more worthi than sum othir is, and sum tyme must be doon rigoure of lawe, and sum tyme it must be abreggid afir that the persone be of estate. Itt is writen in the book of Macabeus that a kyng owith to be louyd and preysid, that is like to the Egle, which hath lordshiþe aboue alle fowles, and noon to the owle, whiche that is suget and aferde of alle fowlis.

Be sober  
of cheer,[<sup>2</sup> fol. 10 b.]and have  
regard to  
persons in  
punishing  
crime.Macabeus  
says a king  
should be like  
an eagle, not  
an owl.

<sup>1</sup> Numbered 17 in MS., so that from this point the numeration of the chapters is not in accord with that of the MS., being one in advance.



And therefore if any man do violence in the presence of thi royalle maieste, thou must considir if it be don by pley to make othir forto laughe and be glad, or if it be don in dispite and reprefe of thi presence; for vnto the first longith correccioun, 4 and to that othir longith nought but deth.

Have no violence done in thy presence.

Of reuerence of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 20<sup>m</sup>

a lexandre, dere sone, the obeyshaunce of a kyng cometh thorough foure thingis: for goodnes of þe kyng, for gentilnes, and for worshiþe that he vsith, and for reuerence that he doth to hem that are worthi. Dere sone, vse these condicions, and thou shalt turne the coragis of thi sugetis at thyn owen desire; and loke that no wrongis ne Iniuris be doon to thi peple, that thou yeve hem no mater to speke ayens the, ne do neythir, for oft the voys of the peple doth harme, if it be in malicious wille, and wite thou welle that the wisdome of þe kyng is the ioy of his dignyte, and of his reuerence, and is enhaunsyng of his rewme. Than reuerence and souereyne wisdom is aftir þat love be in the hertis of his sugetis. It is

A king is revered for four reasons.

A king is like the rain. [1 fol. 11 a.]

If rain does harm, it does much good.

So with the wind.

God allows the planets to hold their course.

founden in bookis that a kyng is among his sugetis as is the reyne in 1erthe. And of alle creaturis lyvyng, for of reyne cometh first the wey that ledith marchauntis into alle londis, whiche marchaundise is helper to alle biggeris. And alle though in Reynes cometh some thondris and dissesoun wederis with lightenyng and othir tempestis, whereby man and beste is oft perrishid, and yet alle though suche accidentis ben yville, it makith men & women crye for fere, that wolde but litille thynke on god or on his myghti power, and so it makith folke forto thynk and considir that þe Rayne cometh of goddis grace and of his endles mercy; and suche ensampil thou mayst take of the wynd þat cometh also of the tresoure of goddis mercy, for bi the wynde men be mevid on the watir to alle londis to fecche and brynge thyngis that ben helpeliche to mannys kynde, and yet by the wyndis comen many perellis and lettyngis in watir and londe, and gret ricchesse is cast in the see, and by the wyndis are engendrid many corrupcions in the eyre, of whiche cometh many venemous pestilencis and othir diuerse diseses, and then folke pray god and requyren him that he take fro them tho diseses. Neuyrthelcs god suffrith the planetis forto make and holde her cours in the rewle and ordir as he ordeynyd hem, for

the wisdome of god peysith euenly, and ordeyneth alle thingis forto serve to his creaturis, and that did he of his high goodnes denygnyte and mercy. And this same ensampille may thou fynde in wyntir and in somer, in whiche the souereyne wisdome of god hath ordeynyd the coldes and the hetis for the engendryng and encresyng of alle naturalle thingis, and evyr many diseses comen to mankynde bi gret rigoure of colde and also of hete. And þus 1it farith, dere sone, sumtyme of a kyng whan he doth many greves and disesis to his sugetis, for than they beren it welle grevously ayens him and ayens hert; but whan the peple seene and knowene that bi the grace of god and good governaunce of þe kyng that they arne in pees and welle governyd, they foryetene the yvelis and disesis above seide, and thanken glorious god that he hath purveyde hem so wijs a kyng in governaunce.

So with winter and summer.

[1 fol. 11 b.]

The good from kings makes the evil forgotten.

16 How a kyng shalle make Sugetis. Capitulum 21<sup>m</sup>

i Prey the, dere sone, that thou oft enquere of þe necessite of thi sugetis, and bi thi power thou helpe hem at her nede. Also thou must chese a man þat is good and trewe, and that louyth god and rightwisnes, and kan the langage of thi sugetis, to whom thou commytte thi governaunce of thi sugetis, and that he governe hem pitously and in loue; and if thou do þus, thou shalt plese thi creatoure, and he shalle kepe thi Rewme, and the gladnes of the sugetis is kept þoruþ mercy of the kyng.

Help your subjects in their need.

Choose a good viceroy.

Of the mercy of a kyng. Ca<sup>m</sup> 22<sup>m</sup>

d Ere sone, y counselle the that thou gete gret purvyaunce of cornes and of alle othir vytaylis that the cuntre haue habundaunce therof, so that whan the tyme of derthe cometh thou maist with thi purveaunce and foresight helpe thi sugetis in her nede, and do crie and make knowe whan tyme is of thi vytaylis, and thi refresshyng thorough thi Rewme in alle citees and borowes, that it may be fette of thi folke at nede, and this shalle be gret preysing to thi name, that so kanst ordeyne for the sauacioun of thi peple; than shalle þi sugetis with gret corage done alle thi comaundementis with fre hert and good wille, than shalle thi deedis falle (falle)<sup>2</sup> to gret prosperite, and

Have great store of food ready to distribute in famine.

[2 fol. 12 a.]

<sup>2</sup> falle repeated in MS.

Then men  
will praise  
your fore-  
sight:

and praise  
you.

every man shalle merveyle of thi gret wisdom, and thus shalle thi wisdom be seen and knowe of alle men, and alle men shalle knowe and speke of thi foresight, and holde the gracious and worthi to ben a governour, and thus shalle þou stonde in love and preysing, and euery man loth to do the offence.

### Of peynes and vengeance of god. Capitulum 23<sup>m</sup>

Don't shed  
blood.

a Lexandre, dere sone, among alle othir thingis kepe the wel fro shedyng of mennys blood, for that longith only to god, for he knowith þe hertis of alle men, and wot what euery man is worthi to haue. Therefore take not vpon the goddis myght but if thou haddist his knowyng therwith. The doctour Hermogenes saith that he that slethe the creature that is like to god, alle the vertues of hevene cesse neuer of cryng to the maieste of god, sayyng, "lord, thi servaunt wolle be like to thee, takyng on him hasty and sodeyne vengeance," and wite this wel that who so sleth any man without cause resonabile, god wol avenge the blood, for god saith him silf vnto the vertues of hevene, "lete be, lete be, for in me is the vengeance, and y shalle quyte it." And wite þou welle that the vertues of hevene leue neuer of cryng of vengeance for mannys deth, vnto the tyme that god hath herde hem and done his iustificacioun in vengeance doyng.

The vertues  
of heaven  
cry to God for  
vengeance,

and He  
promises to  
avenge it,

to still their  
cry.

### Of knowleche of þe same peynes. Ca<sup>m</sup> 24<sup>m</sup>

d Ere sone, wite welle that y haue had knowleche of moche disese in my tyme, and therefore haue oft in memorie the dedis of thi forne fadris, and thynke how they haue lyvid, and so maist thou se and knowe bi many goode examplis how þou shalt done in thi governaunce in tyme comyng of tho<sup>1</sup> dedis that are passid; and loke thou haue no dispite, ne greue nought him that is lesse of myght than thou arte, for often it is sene that god encreasith sympille men, and makith hem riche, and so cometh the pore man to power to quite that is done to him afore tyme, good othir yville.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 12 b.]

Don't wrong  
simple men,

for they oft  
become great.

### fforto kepe þe feith. Ca<sup>m</sup> 25<sup>m</sup>

Keep your  
word in all  
cases.

a lso kepe wel thi feith and thi word euermore, and alle thi hestis that thou hast made and false neuer thi tonge, for

that bilongith to no man þat coueytith to haue worshipe; it is a poynt þat perteyneth only to folke that be feithles, Strumpetis and thefes; and alle that it vsith comen to yville ende, alle 4 though it seme þat it doth good for a tyme. And what good cometh therof þou maist vndirstonde in many weyes, for bi feith are citees and castellis holden, and gret worshipe vnto hem þat so trewe are founden in here feith; and tho that are false of her 8 feith bitraye her lord and hem silf bothe, and comen vnto a shamefulle deth, and that is her ende. Also bi feith and bi heste men kepe the comaundementis of god, and haue euer lastyng lijf for her rewarde; and tho that breken her feith, ther 12 is no man kan deme hem iustly, but only god aboue. And vndirstonde þat euery man hath two spiritis folowyng him, that on drawith him to yville and wikkidnes, and alle the yville he kan he drawith him to, and yet he is þe same that shalle recorde 16 and rehearse alle his defaultis at the day of dome in shame and shenshipe of him þat hap wrought hem thorough his entisement. This mater shuld make the aferd forto do any yville there as þou myghtist do good; kepe the also fro sweryng, for þou owist 20 neuyr to swere, but if necessite axe it, as that he be highly requyrid therto. ffor the destruccioun that was of þe Assiryenes, it was bicause her kyng made many othis in disseyt <sup>1</sup>of the citees that were next to him, and brake allyaunce of his hestis 24 þat he had made vnto hem, and god sygh the falsnes of þe kyng and his counselle, and wold suffir it no lenger, but made her sugetis put hem into thraldome: dere sone, do so, that thi goodnes, thi lewte and thi curtesie be knowen and kid alle 28 abowt, and þat shalle be kepyng of thi rentis and distruccioun of thyn enemies.

The land is  
kept by good  
faith.

Two spiritis  
accompany  
man:  
one evil, who  
records all his  
sins against  
the day of  
doom.

Don't swear,  
for fear you  
break your  
oath.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 18 a.]  
The Assy-  
rians did so,  
and were  
destroyed.

### Of studie and wijsdome. Capitulum 26<sup>m</sup>

d ere sone, loke that ther be studies and skolys in thi Citees; and comaunde alle men that þey sette her children vnto 32 lettrure, and make hem be studyauntis in the nobille sciencis; and it longith to the to helpe and socoure alle that haue nede and haue no frendshipe, and thou must yeve sum prerogatif 36 vnto studiauntz forto susteyne and helpe them in her stodyng. And avaunce hem that are konnyng, be they pore or riche; preyse hem that are worthi, and worshipe hem that are wor-

Have com-  
pulsory edu-  
cation.

Help stu-  
dents.

shipfulle; yeve thi yeftis often vnto them that are worthi, thus shalle þou stere hem and excite hem to preyse the, and to cronycle alle þi noble dedis, the whiche owen perpetually to be in recomending.

Of the kepyng of a kyng. Capitulum 27<sup>m</sup>

Never trust  
a woman:

a alexandre, dere sone, trust neuyr in women, in her werkis, in her service, ne in her company, ne dwelle thou nought with hem; and if þou must nede haue company of sum woman, loke that thou preve hir welle and longe, and in diuerse wise, or thou trust to moche in her, for a man þat is in the possessioun of a woman, he stonidith as do iewelis in the hondis of a marchaunt, whiche that hath power to selle or to yeve tho Iewellis to whom him lust; right so doth a man that puttith him in the hondis and power of a woman, he puttith his lyf and his deth in gret aventure: þou hast herd tolde that kyngis, dukis, and many othir worthi men haue ben dede thorough venyme. Now the most violent venyme that any man kan deuyse or thynke is the yvill wille of a woman, for ayens þat venyme is no leche that kan make tryacle, ne ordeyne medicyne or remedy, but only to fle the dampnacioun of hem. And also truste thou neuyr in oon sool ffisiciane, ne take neuer medicyne [from] on allone, but if gret nede make it, but lete many ffisiciens come togidre, and lete hem trete of that mater, and as they alle accorde, so is best to truste, for it is well perilous whan the lyf of a man stonidith in the wille of oo persone. And thynke also, dere sone, whan thou were in Inde how thou haddist ben disceyvid thorough thyn owen lust þat thou haddist to a maydene that was norisshyd with venyme, and had not y ben there and thorough the craft that y knewe of phisomye and of othir natures, thou haddist ben ded bi her; and therefore haue euyr about the good phisiciens and wise philesofris, that mowe telle the of suche accidentalle maters, and so maist thou kepe thyn helthe thorough good governaunce; and thynke on thyn owen prosperite, the whiche is yovene vnto the of the excellent power of goddis maieste, and be suche in governaunce that þou maist be glorified and magnyfiyd in the nombre of wijs men.

if you do  
she can sell  
you if she  
likes:

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 13 b.]

many kings  
have been  
poisoned:

a woman's  
hate is the  
worst poison.

Don't trust  
one doctor:  
have a lot.

Remember  
the girl who  
was sent from  
India.

I saved your  
life,

so always  
keep a doctor  
near you.

Of the difference of Astronomye. Ca<sup>m</sup> 28<sup>m</sup>

d Ere sone, y prey the and it may be done, that þou rise ne sitte, ete ne drynke, but if it be bi counselle of sum  
4 wijs mane that knowith the constellacions and þe course of the planetis; and vndirstond that glorious god hath made no thing without cause, but alle thyng with <sup>1</sup>passyng resoun of his excel-  
lent and vnknowe science. The noble Plato he stodied in the science of Astronomye, and fond and compassid foure qualitees and humoures contrarious, bi the which he had that noble science and gret knowyng in alle thingis visible that god made. And haue noon affecciou in folys þat seyne the science of Astronomy  
12 is nought to stodie ynne for hardnes therof, trewly they wote nought what they mene, for god made no thyng visible that it ne is able and possible to mannys witt forto vndirstonde. He that is a parfit studiaunt in that science, he may knowe and se  
16 pereylis and disesis that are to come of werres, pestilencis, famyne and othir accidentalle thingis the whiche he may vndirstond and ordeyne remedye: thus maist thou se and knowe þat it is good to konne þe arte and the cours of the planetis, and if thou kanst  
20 fynde no remedy, it is good that thou prey hertily to god that he ordeyne remedy, for as he wol so it shalle be, and no thing may withstonde him. for what disese the planetis shewe in her  
24 fastyng, bi sacrifice, bi almes dede doyng, and penaunce for her synnys, that god wille turne, revolve, and reuoque alle that men dowte. Nowe to oure first mater and purpose, it is to wite, that Astronomye is dividid in foure parties, þat is to wite, In  
28 the ordinaunce of the sterres; In disposicioun of þe signes and ther alyenyng and mevyng fro þe sonne; and this party is called Astronomye; that othir part is of qualitees, and also for to knowe the mevyng of þe firmament, and the degrees of þe risyng of þe  
32 signes that are vndir the firmament of þe mone, and this is the most worthi part of Astronomye, for þerin is the cheef knowyng of þat science. <sup>2</sup>and there are 100028 planetis that ben fixe and meve not, of the whiche we shulle speke aftirward more playnly.

Don't do any  
thing with-  
out your  
astrologer's  
advice.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 14 a.]

Plato was a  
great astrolo-  
ger.

Don't believe  
fools who say  
Astrology is a  
hard science.

By it you can  
predict wars,  
famine and  
pestilence,  
and prepare  
a remedy.

If you pray  
and fast God  
may order it  
otherwise.

Four parts of  
Astronomy.

[<sup>2</sup> fol. 14 b.]  
There are  
1028 fixed  
stars.

Of the kepyng of helthe. Ca<sup>m</sup> 29<sup>m</sup>

d Ere sone, helthe is the most precious thing that longith to man, for it passith alle ricchesse, and alle helthe is [no] more  
Health is the  
most precious  
thing.

but this governauce evenly conioyned bi attemperance of humoures; and evir glorious god ordeyneth þe world, and yevith many remedies to the attemperance, and shewid to his holy profetis the writyngis and sciencis of secretis, for in her writyng 4 is founde alle thing comendable, and no reпреfe ne foly as it is alday previd bi most wijs men; glorious god, worshipid he be in alle his werkis. Amen.

**Of governauce in seeknes. Ca<sup>m</sup> 30<sup>m</sup>**

d Ere sone, have in mynde that alle wijs men and naturalle philesofris seyne that man is made of foure elementis, and foure contrary humoures, the whiche haue euer nede to be susteynyd bi etyng and drynkyng, and ellis þe substauce shulde fayle, and if a man ete and drynke out of tyme or ouyr moche it makith him febille, and to falle into dyuerse seeknes and many othir inconvenientis, and if a man ete and drynke moderatly and temperatly he shalle fynde helthe to his lyf, strengthe to his body, and helthe of alle his lymes. The philesofres seyne that if a man trespase the god of nature in good lyvyng, be it in ouyr moche etyng or in ouyr moche drynkyng, in slepyng, wakyng, traveylyng or restyng, in letyng of blood or lyng, And he outrage in eny of these, he may not fayle of gret seeknes, wherof y shalle shewe my doctryne and remedie. These delicate men seyne that alle that men don is forto lyve, be it in etyng or drynkyng, in gaderyng of worldly riches, or in flesshely lykyng, it is nought done but forto <sup>1</sup>lyve and last long, and y sey but if he iustifie him *with* temperance as longith vnto lastyng of long lyf he shalle fayle or he be ware. And he that wille [not] do ayens his owen wille, and refrayne him from ouyr moche etyng and drynkyng, but caste mele vpon mele, he is not abille to haue long lijf, for Ipcoras kepte the observauce of dyetyng forto lyve long, and enforcid him nought to ete and drynke. And also it is a grete helthe a man to be purgid at certeyn tymes in resonabil manere.

**In how many maners a man may kepe helthe. Capitulum 31<sup>m</sup>**

i prey the, dere sone, that thou wille kepe in mynde this trewe and certeyn tretis, and knowe that helthe stondeth in two thingis; the first is, that he vse and kepe to ete and

Man is made of 4 humours.

If a man passes the mean of eating, &c., he may not fall of sickness.

[fol. 15 a.]

Hippocrates dieted himself, and lived long.

Eat accustomied food.

drynke suche as he hath ben norisshid in his youthe. The secound is, that he purge him of yville humoures and corrupcions that greve him. Purge evil humours.

**Of dyuerse metys. Ca<sup>m</sup> 32<sup>m</sup>**

4 w Han the body is hoot and fulle of vapoures than are grete metis goode and profitabile, and that that shalle be diffied of that body shalle be of gret quantite, for the grete hete and 8 vapoure of the body. And whan the body is smalle and drie, smale metis are goode and norisshaunt, and that that shalle be diffied of that body shalle be of litille quantite for the conditis that are straye; and this is to take hede of, that a man vse 12 metis and drynkis that longe to his complexioun, for and he be of hoot complexioun he shalle vse hoot metis temperatly, for and the hete euir growe and inflawme the body within bi surfete of ouyr stronge metis or drynkis, or bi any othir accident case, than 16 contrary metis and drynkis are most helpeliche to his helthe; that is to sayne, colde metis and colde drynkis till that he be ayen in his good estate. Gross food, when suitable; Eat according to complexion. [fol. 15 b.]

**Of the stomake. Cap<sup>m</sup> 33<sup>m</sup>**

20 w Han the stomak is hoot and good, than alle metis arne good for them that arne hote and grete, for suche a stomak is like vnto a fire that brenneth thorough gret habundaunce of woode; but whan the stomak is cold and febille, than is 24 bettir esy metis and drynkis tille that he be stronger and in more hete. Suit your food to the state of your stomach.

**Signes to knowe þe stomak. Ca<sup>m</sup> 34<sup>m</sup>**

s Ignis of an yville stomak is yville digestioun, and that makith the body hevy and sluggish, and the visage bolnyd, 28 and suche a man yeneth often, and hath sumtime disese in his eyen, and he rowtith moche in his slepe, and hath the mylte soure and bittir and fulle of stynkyng water, and so is engendrid 32 ventositees and swelling of the wombe, and þat makith noon appetite to ete; kepe the then, dere sone, from metis and drynkis that are contrary to the or thou maist not recover. Signs of disorder of the stomach.

**Of a pistille of gret price. Ca<sup>m</sup> 35<sup>m</sup>**

36 d Ere sone, what is the cause that mannys bodie is corrupte? it is for dyuerse complexiones and humoures contrary that



are in him, and therefore y purpose to make and write in this present Epistille thingis that shalle be necessary, the whiche y haue drawe out of þe secretis of medicynes, for sum tyme come to a kyng diseses that are not honest no lechis to knowe; but the grettir nede were / and vndirstonde welle this lore, and thou shalt neuir haue nede to phisiciane outake the case of batayle. Alexandre, dere sone, whan thou risist fro slepe, goo a litille and that shalle strengthe þi membris, and strecche hem evenly, than kembe þi hed, for that dryuyth away the vapoure that cometh into thyn hed in slepyng, and dryvith hem fro þe stomak. <sup>1</sup>In somer wasshe thyn hed with cold watir, and that shalle holde in the hete of þe hed and cause appetit of mete, than do on honest clothyng, for the hert of man reioycith gretly in precious clothyng and honeste: þan frete thi teeth *with* barke or *with* sum thing that is of drie and hoot complexioun and of bittir savoure, for þat makith the teeth clene, and distroyeth the yville savoure of the mouthe, and also it makith the voyce clere, and yevith appetite to mete; than frote welle thyn heed, for it openyth the shettyngis of þi brayne and comfortith the nekke, and makith the face clere, and amendith the blood, and lettith moche the horyng of the heere; than anoynt the *with* precious oynementis aftir that þe sesoun askith, for good odoure is gret plesyng to mannys lijf and norisshyng to the hert, and whan the spirit hath take refeccioun in good odoures, the blood renneth the more gladlier in euery parti of the body. Take than of a tre that is callid aloes, and of Rubarbe the weight of iiij d., and it wille take away the flewme of þi mouthe and of thi stomak, and yevith hete to the body, and dryvith away ventosite, and makith good taste, and also that thou be oft tyme *with* the noblees, and wijs men of þi Rewme, and haue emparlement *with* them of the nedis of thi Rewme, and mayntene alle goode customes.

#### Of the maner of travayle. Capitulum 36<sup>m</sup>

whan thyn heure of custome cometh that thi talent hath take the, haue a litille travayle or thou ete, in ridyng or goyng, or sum othir maner of laboure, and that helpith moche þe body, and dryvith away alle ventositees, and makith the body more light and stronge, and alayeth the hete of þe stomak, and <sup>2</sup>wastith the yville humoures of thi body, and makith the flewme

How to be independent of doctors.

When you rise, walk and stretch.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 16 a.]

Wash and comb your head.

Rub your teeth with spice.

Rub your head well.

Anoint yourself.

Chew aloes and rhubarb.

Take exercise before you eat.

[<sup>2</sup> fol. 16 b.]

of thi stomak forto descende; whan þi mete is come afore the, ete first of that thou desirist most, with bred that is welle bake, and if þou haue diuersite of metes, ete first of that that is most light to diffie and most digestable, for at the bottome of thi stomak is the most hete to make digestioun, for as moche as it is next the hete of the lyver, þe which diffieth the mete bi sethyng in the stomak.

Eat first what you like best.

#### Of Abstinence. Ca<sup>m</sup> 37<sup>m</sup>

whan thou etist be nought to hasty, but ete *with* leyser and good masticacioun, or thou take it downe alle though thou haue gret appetite, for and thou ete to some or ouyr hastily, the yville humoures multiplien in the stomak, and the stomak is ouyr chargid, þe body grevid, and þe hert hurte, and that mete dwellith vndefied in þe bottom of the stomak.

Eat slowly.

#### Nought to drynke pure watir. Ca<sup>m</sup> 38<sup>m</sup>

Iso, loke that thou drynke not pure watir whan thou hast eten thi mete, but if þou haue vsid it; for þe cold watir put upon thi mete coldith thi stomak and quenchild the hete of þi digestioun, and confoundith and grevith the body. and if þou muste drynke watir for þe grete hete of þi body or of þi stomak, take it *temperatly*, and not ouirmoche attones ne to ofte.

Don't drink water:

or, at most, a very little of it.

#### Of the maner of slepyng. Capitulum 39<sup>m</sup>

whan thou hast take thi refeccioun ley the to slepe on a soft bed on thi right side þe tyme of an heure, and than turne the and slepe on þat *opir* side as the thynketh good is, for the left side is cold, and hath nede to be chafid, and if þou fele any disese in thi wombe or in thi stomak, lete hete au hoot cloth, <sup>1</sup>and ley it on thi stomak, or ellis take a fayre yong mayde and lete hir slepe in thyn armes, and that is the best hete for it is naturelle. Traveylyng afore mete yevith hete to thi stomak, but aftir mete it doth harme, and slepe before mete is not good for it drieth þe humiditees, but aftir mete it yevith *norisshyng* to the body, for whan a man slepith, than the kyndely hete drawith into the stomak alle that the which was spredde into alle the membris, and goth to the bottome of þi stomak on the refeccioun, and makith good digestioun, for the vertu naturelle makith good reste. And some philesofres seyne

Sleep on the right side for an hour: then turn over.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 17 a.]

Reasons for eating late rather than early.

that the refeccioun at morowe is wese than is that at eve, for the etyng at morowe grevith the stomak, for the hete of the day spryngith, and therbi is the body more travaylid, and on þat othir side a man chafith him silf *with* dyuerse bisynesse, in goyng, in spekynge, and othir occupacions that longith to man þat cometh by the hete of þe day, and enfeblisshith the naturelle hete within and doth harme to the stomak, and makith it of lesse myght to diffie that in him is, but at eve is alle contrary, for the body is more restid and lesse grevid of naturelle hete, and the hete of alle opir membres are more at reste, than cometh þe coldenes of þe nyght, and alayeth the superfluitees of hete, and doth the stomak moche good, for than hath he nought but of nature.

#### Of keyng of Custome. Cap<sup>m</sup> 40<sup>m</sup>

Don't break through your habits.

t Hou owist forto knowe that he that hath in custome forto ete twies a day, and he vse to ete but ones, it grevith him for that he vsith not his custome, for þe stomak is out of his wone. ffor he þat usith him to ete at a certeyne houre, and he bigynne <sup>1</sup>to chaunge that houre, he shall parceyve in short tyme þat it doth him harme, for chaunging of custome chaungith nature.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 17 b.]

#### How a man owith to chaunge Custome. Cap<sup>m</sup> 41<sup>m</sup>

Or, if you must, do it little by little.

a nd necessite constrayne the to chaunge custome, thou muste done it wisely, that is to say, litille and litille, and thus *with* helpe of god shalle thi mutacioun be good; but be ware that thou ete no tyme, but þou wite that thi stomak be voyde, and hath made digestion of his first mete, and this shalle thou knowe bi thyn appetite; and if thou ete and haue noon appetite, þe hete of thi stomak shalle kele, and if þou haue good appetite it shalle hete of nature and make good digestioun, and beware that thou ete anoon as thyn appetite is come, and ellis it shalle resceyue yville humoures, the whiche shalle turne þi brayne, and disese thyn hed; for who þat abitith ouyr longe aftir that his appetite is comen, his stomak enfeblisshith, and his mete profitith nought to his body; and if it falle so, þat þou maist haue no mete whan þou hast appetit to eat, and thi stomak fille so by resceyvyng of yville humoures, than loke that þou caste or thou ete, and sone aftir thou maist take thi refeccioun in sauf manere.

Don't eat till your stomach is empty:

and don't wait long after it is.

#### Of foure tymes of the yere. Ca<sup>m</sup> 42<sup>m</sup>

- 1 Ere mayst thou see the foure tymes of the yere, and her foure qualitees, and her prosperite and difference, and con-  
 4 trarietees. The foure tymes of the yere are devidid thus. In  
 ver, In somer, In heruest, and in wyntir. Ver bigynneth whan  
 þe sonne entrith into the signe of þe Ram, and dewrith foure  
 skore dayes and xiiij, and xviiij howres, and the fourthe part of  
 8 an houre, that is, from the xiiij day of marche vnto the xiiij daye  
 of Iune. In veer the tyme is so hote, þe wyndis risen, <sup>1</sup>the snowe  
 meltith. Ryvers aforsen hem to renne and wexen hoothe, the  
 humyditie of the erthe mountith into the croppe of alle growyng  
 12 thingis, and makith trees and herbes to leve and flowre, þe medis  
 wexen grene, the sedis risen, and cornes wexen, and flouris taken  
 coloure; fowlis clothen them alle newe and bigynne to synge,  
 trees are fulle of leves and floures, and the erthe alle grene;  
 16 bestis engendre, and alle thingis take myght, the lond is in beute  
 clad *with* flouris of diuerse coloures, and alle growyng thingis are  
 than in her bewte.

The four seasons.

Spring lasts 93 days, 18<sup>1</sup> hours.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 18 a.]  
 The effect of Spring on Nature.

#### Of prime temps, what it is .I. ver. ca<sup>m</sup> 43<sup>m</sup>

- 20 p Rime temps, that is, veer, is hoot and moyste; in this time  
 sterith mannys blood and spredith into alle the membris  
 of þe body, and the body makith it intemperate complexioun.  
 In this tyme shulde chykenys be ete, and kydes and eggis, soure  
 24 letuse þat men calle carlokis, and getis mylke. In this tyme is  
 best to be lete blood, for onys than is bettir than thre tymes an  
 othir tyme; and it is good to travayle and to haue thi wombe  
 soluble, and than it is good to swete, to bathe, and to goo, and  
 28 to ete things that are laxatijf, for alle thing that amendith bi  
 digestioun or by blood letyng it shalle sone retorne and amend  
 in this prime temps .i. veer.

Its qualities.

Suitable food.

Be bled, and well purged.

#### Of somer tyme, what it is. Cap<sup>m</sup> 44<sup>m</sup>

- 32 s Omer bigynneth whan þe sonne entrith into the signe of the  
 Crabbe, and lastith iiiij<sup>m</sup> dayes and xij, and xviiij howres, and  
 the thridde part of an houre, that is, fro þe xiiij day of Iune vnto  
 the xiiij day of septembre; in þis tyme are the dayes longe and  
 36 þe nyghtis shorte. In alle cuntrees growe the hetis, and wyndis

Summer lasts 4 score and twelve (92) days, 18 hours, and 20 minutes.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 18 b.] aslake, þe see <sup>1</sup>softe, and the eyre clere and swete, cornes growen, and serpentis caste her venyme, the vertues of þe body are strengthid, and the world is fulle of goodnes. the tyme of somer is hoot and drie, and in this tyme sterith the Colre, and it bihovith a man in this tyme to kepe him fro alle tho thingis that are hoot and drie of complexioun, for they sterve colre, and kepe the fro ouyrmoche etyng and drynkyng, for therbi shalt pou quenche þi naturalle hete. In this tyme ete metis þat arne of cold and moist complexioun, as welle mylke *with* vinegre as potage made *with* barly mele and ripe frute of soure savoure as pome Granate, and drynke litille wyne, and haunte no company of women; in this tyme lete no blood, but if greet necessite cause it; make no travayle but litille, and vse no bathes.

The proper-  
ties and  
qualities of  
Summer.

Suitable food,  
&c.

#### Of hervest, what it is. Capitulum 45<sup>m</sup>

Autumn  
lasts 3 score  
and one (61)  
days.

The proper-  
ties of Au-  
tumn.

Its qualities,

[<sup>2</sup> fol. 19 a.]

suitable food  
and manner  
of life.

h Ervest entrith whan the sonne entrith into the first degre of þe signe of the balaunce, and durith .iiij<sup>xx2</sup> dayes and on, that is to say from the xiiij day of septembre vnto the xiiij day of Novembre. In þat tyme are the dayes and the nyghtis evene, and *after* þe nyght growith more, and the day lesse; the eyra wexith trobely, and þe wyndis entren into the Region of Septentrione, tymes chaungen and Ryvers discreesen, and wellis wexen litille, the erthe and the trees wexen drie, and the beute of þe erthe and of þe ground fadith, and birdes sechen hoot cuntrees. Wilde bestis drawen to Cavernes, and serpentis sechen the hoolis where they may assemble and kepe her lyvyng; for wyntir is like an oold bareyne woman fro whom youthe is depertid. This tyme of hervest is cold and drie, in whiche risith þe black colre, than it bihovith to ete hot metes <sup>3</sup>and drynkes, as chekenys, lambe, and oold wyne, and swete reysynges; and vse not moche goyng ne moche reste in liyng *with* women more than in somer, and kepe þe fro bathes, but it be for nede, and if pou wille do it, caste the to do it in the houre of none, for that is the hotist houre of þe day, and in suche houres þe superfluytees arisen and gaderen in mannys body. Also it is goode to purge þe wombe for an yvill that men calle Asmon and Asmaton, and for alle othir thingis þat engendrith blak colre and refreyne þe humoures.

<sup>2</sup> .iiij<sup>xx</sup> in MS.

#### Of wyntir tyme, and what it is. Ca. 46<sup>m</sup>

w Yntir bigynneth whan the sonne entrith into the first degre of þe signe that men callen Motoun, and dureth vj<sup>xx</sup> dayes, that is, from the xiiij day of novembre vnto the xiiij day of marche. In this tyme þe nyghtis are longe, and þe dayes shorte, the colde is gret, þe wynde is sharpe, leves fallen, and alle thingis lesen her grennes for þe more party. Alle bestis drawen to her resortes into diches and Caves of mounteynes for colde, þe eyre and the tyme is blake; and þe erthe as an oold woman broken *with* age and nere deed; wyntir is cold and moyste, and therfore it nedith to ete hote metis, as chekenys, hennes, motoun, and othir hoot metes, and fatte ffiges, notes, and reed wyne, and be ware that thou be not laxatijf, and lete no blood, but it were the gretter nede, and enfebille not þi stomak with excesse of mete ne of drynke. Ne companye thou nought moche *with* women, but it be attemperatly. And bathis are goode to be vsid in tyme of colde. þe hete naturalle gederith togidre in the body, and there good digestioun is bettir in wyntir, and in ver than in hervest or in somer, ffor in hervest and in somer the wombe is colde, and þat <sup>1</sup>tyme be the pores open, for hete of that tyme and nature spredith it through alle parties of the body, and therfore the stomak hath litille part of þe hete, and þat lettith the digestioun and the humoures gaderen.

Winter lasts  
6 score (120)  
days.

Its proper-  
ties.

Suitable diet  
and manner  
of life.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 19 b.]

#### Of naturalle hete. Capitulum 47<sup>m</sup>

a alexandre, dere sone, aboue alle thingis kepe thi naturalle hete, for as long as naturalle hete is attemperat in thi body, thou shalt haue good hele and vndirstondyng. And vndirstonde þat in two thingis and maners deyeth a man, that on maner is naturalle, as age þat ouircometh man and distroyeth þe body; that othir is bi accident maner, as bi seeknes take thorough mys-gouernaunce, or hurtyng of egge tole, and many othir happis of aventure.

The two  
causes why  
men die.

#### Of thingis that fattith the body. Ca<sup>m</sup> 48<sup>m</sup>

d Ere sone, there are thingis that makith the body fatte and moyste, that is, reste and replevisshyng of dyuerse metis, and swete drynkis, as wyn that is dowsett, mede, and mylke, and slepe *after* mete, soft liyng, and alle good odoures, bathes of

Things that  
fatten the  
body.

fresshe watir; and if thou bathe the, dwelle not longe therin, for it wille make þe more feble, and haue in thi bath thingis welle savouryng, and drynke no wyn but it be allayed *with* watir of a floure callid Alchymyng, and put of þat watir in thi wyne for it is hoot of natur. And in somer vse þe flouris of violett and malowe, and othir thingis of cold nature, and haue ones in þe moneth a vomete, and namely in somer tyme for castyng clensth the body, and purgith it of yville humoures þat are within the body; and though ther be litille humoures in the stomak yet it comforthith the naturalle hete, and whan thou hast welle caste, than fille him *with* humydite and good grennesse, and than þi stomak is in good disposicioun <sup>1</sup>for to make digestioun. And if thou governe the thus, þou shalt haue ioy in thyn hert and gladnes, good hele, resoun and good vndirstondyng, glorye and worship of thyn enemyes. Also sumtyme þou must deleyte the in pleyes, in biholdyng of fayre men and fayre women, and redyng delectable bookis, and in aray, and weryng of royalle clothyng after the tyme of the yere.

[<sup>1</sup> fol. 20 a.]

Reasonable pleasures for a king.

Of thingis that makith þe body lene. Cap<sup>m</sup> 49<sup>m</sup>

t Hese thingis are they that makith þe body lene. Excesse of mete and drynke, ouyr moche travayle, moche stonyng in the sonne, moche goyng, moche slepyng afore mete, moche wrath, moche fere, and bathyng in watris þat be of Sulphure nature. Etyng of salt metes, drynkyng of oold wyn, ouyr moche to vse chambir worke. Ipocras seith that who so bathe him *with* fulle wombe shalle haue seeknes in the bowelis, and also he that lythe *with* women wombe fulle. And also he þat etith oft tymes hoot fische, or that drynketh mylke and wyne medlid, is able for to be a lepre, þus saith ypocras.

Things that harm the body.

Of the first party of þe body. Capitulum . 50<sup>m</sup>

t he body is divided in foure partes, the first party is the hed. Whan superflytees assemblen into þe hed and yville humoures, thou shalt fayle and knowe bi þese signes, thyn eyen shalle be trobille, thi browes shalle wexe grete, thyn eyen betene, thi nose thrilles wexe strayte, þan and thou fele this in the, take wormode, and do it in swete wyne, and lete it boyle *with* the Rote þat is callid Pollygony, so that by boylyng the wyne

Troubles in the head:

their cure.

be half wastid, than put it in þi mouthe and holde it longe, and wasshe welle þi mouth ther*with*, and ete thi mete *with* þe grayne of whijt mustard made into powdir, and it shalle profite <sup>1</sup>the, [<sup>1</sup> fol. 20 b.] and if thou do not thus, thou shalt haue gret disese in thyn eyen and in thi brayne, and in many othir partis of thi body.

Of þe second parti of þe body. Ca<sup>m</sup> 51<sup>m</sup>

t He breste is the second parti of þe body, and if seeknes come therin thus shalle thou knowe, þi tunge shalle be pricchid, þi mouth shalle be bittir, and þe mouth of þi stomak shalle be soure, and thi membres shalle ake, than it bihovith that thou ete but litille, than take a vomete, and affir þi castyng, take sugir rosett *with* aloe, and mastyk and chewe alle harde, and than mayst thou ete a good soule *affir* as thyn appetit takith the. And affir mete take an electuarie that is callid dyonyson, and if thou do not thus þi membres wolle ake, disese cometh in thi Reynes, and so folowith the excesse and enpechyng of þi tonge, þe whiche wolle lette the to speke, and many othir seeknessis.

Troubles in the chest:

their cure.

Of the thridde party of þe body. Ca<sup>m</sup> 52.

t he thridde parti of þe body is þe wombe, many yville humoures cometh therin. And thus shalle thou knowe, thi wombe shalle swelle, and thou shalt ake of stiffenes þat cometh therin, þe knees wexe grete, and thou shalt go hevily and with disese. It bihovith the then to be purgid *with* sum light *medicynes*, as y haue seid aboue. And if þou do it not þou shalt haue akynge of thyn haunchis and of thi mylte, and in thi bak, and in thi ioyntis, and disese of þe flixe, and disese of thi lyvir, and yville digestioun.

Troubles of the belly:

their cure.

Of the fourthe party of þe body. Ca<sup>m</sup> 53<sup>m</sup>

t he fourthe parti of þe body be the Ballokis, where superflytees and yville humoures engendren; and thus thou shalt knowe, thyn appetit shalle wexe cold, and þou shalt wexe roynous on the ballokis, and on þe share. Take than mugwede, the herbe *with* the Rote, and put it in good whijte wyne, and of that wyne drynke a litille euery day at morowe, *with* a litille watir or hony, and ete not ouyr moche. And if þou do not thus, thou shalt haue disese in the bleddre, and thou shalt not

Troubles of the genitals:

[<sup>2</sup> fol. 21 a.] their cure.



mowe pisse, and also thi ballokis wolle ake, and in thi bowellis thou shalt be disesid, and also in thi lunges; and there may engendir the, the stone.

A king once sought for the best medicine.

I haue redde that ther was a kyng, and [he] made a gret assemble of alle the beste phisiciens in Inde, and in Grece, and com-  
aunded hem to make him such a medicyn so nobil and profitable that ther shulde nede noon othir helpe to mannys hele. The

The Greeks advise him to drink two mouthfuls of warm water.

Grekis seiden that who so euyr dranke euery morowe twies his mouth fulle of hoot watir þat it shulde make a man hoole, and þat him shulde nede noon othir medicyne. The phisiciens of

The Indians advise millet and water cress.

ynde seiden that who so ete the graynes of whijt mylle fastyng with watir cresses it profitith moche, or who so ete eche morowe

of alibi Amei 7 dragmes, and of swete grapis and Reysynes, he shalle haue no dowte of flewme, and he shalle haue the bettir vndirstondyng, and he shalle haue no quarteyne, and who so

etith notes or ffygis with leues of Rewe, that day him thar drede of no venyme. And euyr peyne the to kepe the naturalle hete

Keep natural heat,

of thi body, for the distruccioun of thi body cometh of two thingis and two causis, that on is naturelle and þat othir is ayens kynde. The naturalle distruccioun is for the contrariete of com-

for then you need only fear accidents.

plexioun of man, for whan age surmounteth, the body it must nedis noye. And that that is ayens kynde, it cometh of accident aduente as by swerd, spere, ston, or any case that cometh

[fol. 21 b.]

of seeknes, by yville governaunce, and excesse of metis and drynkes, for some metes are smale, and some metes are gretel

Foods which make good blood.

and some are mene. Smale metis engendren good and clere blood, as bred of good whete, Chekenys, Eggis, hennes. Gretel

metis ben goode for hoot men that travaylen, and namely aftir mete. The mene metis ben goode, for they engendren no swel-

lyng, no superfluytees, noon yville humoures as kedis, lambis, and geldid shepe, for they are hote and moyste, alle though they ben harde whan they ben rostid and hoot in the wombe.

#### Of kyndis of fisshis. Ca<sup>m</sup> 54<sup>m</sup>

Which fish may be eaten.

the fisshis that ben of thynne skyn, and norisshid in fresshe watir Rennyng is bettir and more holsome than any othir. Kepe the fro fische þat is hard skynned, for þat is werst, for it is nershyng of wynde, whiche is cause of moche disese.

#### Of nature of watris, Of nature of wyne, Of soure Syrupe.

Ca<sup>m</sup> 55, Ca<sup>m</sup> 56, Ca<sup>m</sup> 57.<sup>1</sup>

- a lexandre, dere sone, it is holsome to take sowre Syrepe  
4 fastyng for flewme and yville humors that habounde gretly, and that Syrepe is an excellent remedy ayens flewme. And y haue merveyle þat man may deye þat etith bred of good whete and fresshe, and drynketh clene wyne of grape attemperatly,  
8 and kepith him fro our moche etyng and drynkyng and travayle, and if seeknes come to suche a man, it is nedfulle to worche wisely and do to him as to a dronken man. Wasshe him with hoot watir, and aftir sett him on a Rennyng Ryver, so that he  
12 haue grene leues of wylowe about him, and anynte his stomak with an oynement that men calle Triasendale, and lete him haue savor of encence and othir good spicis among. And if a man wolde leve the drynkyng of wyne that hath<sup>2</sup> euyr be  
16 norisshyd therin, he may not leve it attones, but litille and litille, and make him drynke of verious and watir, and thus may he kepe his helthe and his complexioun.

Sour syrups are good.

Good bread and good wine should keep a man alive.

A cure for drunken men.

[fol. 22 a.]

Do not leave off drinking suddenly.

#### Of the forme and maner of rightwisnes. Ca<sup>m</sup> 58<sup>m</sup>

- 20 d Ere sone, rightwisnes may not ben ouyr preysid, for it is of þe propr nature of glorious god, and it is made to sustene all Rewmes for helpe of his servauntis, and rightwisnes  
24 owith to kepe the royalle blood, and the richesse of the possesioun of sugetis, and governe hem in alle her nedes; and what lord doth thus, he is in that case like vnto god. Rightwisnes is forme and vndirstondyng, whiche god made and sent to his creaturis. and bi rightwisnes was þe erthe bildid, and kyngis  
28 made to mayntene it, for it makith sugetis obeyshaunte, and prowde men meke, and savith the persones from harme, and therfore seyne men of ynde that Iustice of a good lord is bettir  
32 bettir than the reyne that fallith from hevене. Onys it was founde written in a stone of þe tunge of Caldee, that a kyng and  
36 rightwisnes are bretheryn, and that þe which on hath nede of an othir hath nede of þe same, and þat on may nought do without þat othir. ffor alle kyngis were made to mayntene Iustice and rightwisnes, for it is the helthe of sugetis. Dere sone, whan

The praise of righteousness.

The Indian opinion.

The stone of witness.

<sup>1</sup> The text is but a part of Cap. 57.

Hear all men's counsel before you give your doom.

[1 fol. 22 b.]

Don't scorn good advice from young men.

A story of a child born in India,

who became great;

while the king's son would not learn,

[2 fol. 23 a.]

because of the stars.

Therefore never despise a poor wise man.

Take counsel.

pou hast oughte to do be governyd bi counselle, for pou art but on sool man, ne telle nought alle pi thought of thyn owen cast to thi counselle, but here what eche man wolle say, and than maist pou deme in thyn owen witt þe best of hir witt, and of 4 þyn owen witt, and þus shalt <sup>1</sup>thou be holden wijs and worshipfulle for thi governaunce. Shewe not thi thought vnto tyme thou performe thi wille of the which thou hast take thi counselle. But considir welle which persone counselid the beste, and haue 8 him in cherte. And if he be a yong man þat yevith the good counselle haue him not in dispite for his youthe, ffor it happith many a tyme and often þat a man is borne in suche a constellacioun þat good counselle is yeue to him of god. As it bifelle in 11 a tyme in þe cuntre of ynde, ther was borne a child in an hous there as a wys man was herbrowid, whiche man fond by the planetis þat that child þat was borne in that constellacioun and signe shuld be wys, curteys, and of good counselle, and shulde 14 be louyd of kyngis and grete lordis, and yet he wolde not telle it to his fadir, for he was but a poore wever. So it fell that whan this child was of age, they wold haue sett him to a craft, but for betyng or fayre speche that they kouthe do he wolde 20 neuir lerne, and than they lete him do his owen wille, and than he yaf him alle to the science of Astronome, and aboue alle thingis on erthe vnto the governaunce of a kyng. And at laste he was the governour of a kyng and of alle his rewme. Alle the 22 contrary fille of a kyng of ynde þat had two childrene; whan þat on child was woxe the kyng sett him to lerne science in the grettist vnyuersite of alle ynde, and had the beste maystir of þat lond, and was taught most diligently, as it ought to a kyngis 24 sone. And yet the gret wille of þe fadir, and the gret bisynes of the doctoure myght not festene no witt vpon him, ne he wold not encline his hert to no science. Wherefore þe kyng in gret wrath lete assemble alle þe philesofris of <sup>2</sup>his lond to wite 26 wheron it was long, and they seide he was borne in suche a constellacioun that he had noon othir grace. And therefore, dere sone, dispise neuir a man of poore birthe, ne of litille havyng, ne bi his persone, and thou se in him science and good counselle, for god wolle yeve his grace as him likith, and shewe his myght as welle in poore as in riche. A wijs man of mede wrote to his son on this wise, "Dere sone, in euery nede take counselle to thee, for thou art but oo man as on othir is, on that othir

side y amonisshe thee, that thou ne make oo soole man thi leef <sup>Don't trust to one man in all things.</sup> **Maunte** forto yeve him thi power, for he myght *with* a cawtele distroye thee, and alle thi Rewme. Truste nevr in him þat 4 settith alle his bisynesse to make tresoure and gadir money, for he wolle serve the nought for love, but for gaderyng of gold, and suche men wolle slouthe thi worshiþe, and suche men mowe welle be liknyd to helle, for helle hath no grounde. And the 8 more a man growith in ricches, the hyer encesith his covetise in good. And wite it welle that suche officers about a lord or a kyng are but distroyers of his worshiþe in many casis, for it <sup>they may betray you.</sup> myght happe that for covetise he shuld bitraye the or consent 12 vnto thi deth. Therefore, dere sone, thou shalt loue that creature that is in office *with* the, and bisieth him to save thi worship, for <sup>Whom to trust.</sup> þat is the grettist tokene of loue." God made man, dere sone, creature resonable, and he made neuyr in beste *opir* than is 16 founden in man. ffor a man is hardy as a lyone, fferd as an hare, skars as an hound, harde and sharpe as Ravene or Crowe. Meek as a turtille, dispitous as lyoness, chaste as a dowve, Malicious and angry as a ffoxe, lowe as a lambe, light as a 20 Goot, and lijk to a Got in many condicionen, hevvy and slowe as a bere, precious and dere <sup>1</sup>as an Olyfaunt, ffool and rude as an <sup>[1 fol. 23 b.]</sup> asse. Rebelle as a litille kyng, obeyshaunt as a pecok, gret speker *without* profit. Profitable as a bee, vnbounden as a boore, 24 strong as a bole. Smytyng bihynde as a mule. Resonabile and chast as aungille, lecherous as swyne, ffole as an Owle. ffayrist of alle creaturis, and shortly to say that ther is no condicioun in best, ne in planet of heuene, ne in erthe that it ne is founden in 28 man, and therefore the philesofre callith man the litille world. <sup>He is the microcosm.</sup>

### Of þe secretary of a kyng. Cap<sup>m</sup> 59<sup>m</sup>

d Ere sone, it bihovith the to haue a secrete man to yefe <sup>The need for a secretary.</sup> attendaunce to thi privat writyngis, and to conceyve thyn <sup>32</sup> **mandement**, and he must be a fayre speker, and on that kan **comprende** thi wille in dewe ordir, and enditt fayre langage; for as a fayre Robe is worshipfulle to a kyng, so is fayre endityngis, **publisshyng** of his maieste of lettris vndir his seele. And <sup>36</sup> also he owith to be a man of good feith and trewe, and wijs to knowe thyn entendement, and take souereynly hede of þi worshiþe, and þat no man be so prive with him, forto se þe lettris of thi secretz, and loke þat alle officers be welle rewardid

His qualities.

The twenty-three animals whose nature is found in man.

He should be rewarded. for her bisynesse, eche man in his degre, and enhaunce hem so in avauncementis, to whom euery man hath hool hert to, and doth thee dewe and trewe service, for in trewe servauntis is alle the glorie and high worshiþe of thi lijf and thi distinceioun. 4

**Of a kyngis messengeris. Cap<sup>m</sup> 60<sup>m</sup>**

The properties of a messenger. [2 fol. 24 a.]  
 Who are not to be chosen.  
 Don't send a great man,  
 for fear of treason.

d Ere sone, messengeres shewen the wisdomē of hem that senden hem, and a messangere is the eye, the ere, and the tunge of the lord; than it bihovith a messangere to ben the most sufficient and cherfulle speker, wijs, honourable and lele, and that he loue þi<sup>1</sup> worship and thyn honoure, and hate alle thi dishonoure, vnto suche on discouer thi counselle, and in case thou may not fynde such on, enquere the on that wolle trewly bere thi lettris, and kan report an answer. And if thou fynde thi messangere be couetous forto take yeftis of them that they are sent to, truste not in hem, but refuse hem for eyr. And make neuir thi messangere of man that is dronkelew, for bi him shalle be seid and tolde alle that he knowith. And also make not thi messangere of no gret officer, ne lete noon suche go fro the, for that myght be distrucioun of the and thyne and of thi rewme also. And if thou myght perceyve that þi messengeres did to the any tresoun thorough takyng of gret mede, deme thou than as the thynkith they are worthi, for trewly y kan not.

**Of governaunce of the peple. Capitulum 61<sup>m</sup>**

Your people is your treasury and your garden.  
 Govern your subjects by  
 their ancient laws,  
 have good officers

d Ere sone, the peple and thi sugetis is the hous of thi memorie, and þi tresore by the whiche thi reme is conformyd, thi sugetis are thi gardyne, in the whiche are many trees, beryng diuerse frutes, on these trees are many braunchis, beryng frutis and sedis, and multiplien in many maners, and diffece and durabille tresoure of þi rewme. It nedith the than þat thi sugetis be welle governyd, and thou to haue in hert alle that is profitable vnto hem, and that no vylenye ne extorcion be done vnto hem, and that they be governyd aftir þe maners and oold customes of her cuntrees, and yofe hem such officers that entende not to ther distrucioun, but forto governe hem welle and iustly, and þat tho officers be of good condicions, wijs, lele, and pacient, and if he be contrary,

<sup>1</sup> thi repeated in MS.

the sugetis that first were goode shulle wexen rebelle to hem and the bothe, <sup>1</sup>supposyng that it be mayntenaunce. On that othir side loke that thi Iustices be wijs and Iuste men, for is thi worshiþe and ende of thi name, and perpetuelle fame to thi Rewme. And that thi Iuges haue trewe notories, so that thi Iuges be not corrupte with false covetise and yeftis as they ben oft tymes. And, dere sone, y amonysshe the that thou vse chyalrie in dedis of armes, bi good governaunce and good counselle and trewe. And avie not him þat puttith him into batayle, for envye or foly or covetise, ne presumpcioun. And haue no dispite of a good man of armys though he be poore, for often tymes it happith a poor man to doo as good a dede of armes or feete of werre as a lord. Norshe alle men with comfortable wordis and goodly, and bihote hem yeftis and worshiþe, and loke thou lakke no thyng that is nedefulle vnto armes. And whan thou sest thyn enemy Renne, Renne nought on him wodeynly vnavisid, and loke thou haue goode waytes and aspies in thyn oste. And eyrmore, and thou mowe, logge nere a mounteyne or an hille, for the valey wantith nothir watir ne woode, and haue eyrmore plente of vytayles, and aboue alle þingis haue plente of trompis and trumpetis, and othir dyuerse mynstrelsies, for þat makith gret vertu in mannys corage, and gretly discomfirth enemyes, and puttith hem to divisioun and drede, and be not alwey armed in on armes, but in dyverse. And loke thou be welle stuffid of good Archers and Arblasteres, and sett in good governaunce and ordinaunce, some to renne, and some to stonde and abide batayle. And whan thou entrist to fighte comferte thi meyne with fayre wordis, and that shalle yeve hem hert and hardynesse forto abide in batayle, and eyr kepe the wel from tresoun. And eyr be wel purveyde of good horse and wel rennyng, so that nede were that thorough tresoun or any othir adventure it nedid thee to fle, than thou maist bi thi swyft horse save thyn owen persone. And if þou see thyn enemyes fle, chase hem nought to hastily, but holde thi folke togidere on þe best maner thou kanst, for oft tyme in chasyng of enemyes a man is disseyvid and deed. And if þou assayle castelle or towne, loke that thou haue Engynes and Gonnes gret plente to breke the wallis and the yatis, and good crafty mynoures, and by any wey that thou mayst bireve hem her water, for that is the most confusioun in any holde. And if thou

[1 fol. 24 b.]

and Just Judges.

and Appeal Courts.

Be careful in battle.

Encourage your soldiers.

Choose good camping ground:

plenty of trumpets,

archers and arblastere.

[2 fol. 25 a.]

Have a good horse, in case of defeat.

In sieges cut off the water from the city,

or at least  
poison it;

and don't  
make war,  
if you can get  
your purpose  
otherwise.

maiste not reve hem her watir, loke that thou ordeyné forto envenyme it, and haue to the two or three of that othir side, forto telle the her castis and her counselle. And if thou mayst haue thi purpos othirwise than bi batayle, y rede thee take it, or 4 ellis do thi werste vnto thyn enemyes, and on alle wise worche by counselle.

### Of ffynomye of folke. Capitulum 62<sup>m</sup>

Physiognomy is most useful to you.

Physiognomus found it out.

[1 fol. 25 b.]

Hippocrates' disciples tried him:

but Hippocrates confirmed his judgment.

Washy-looking men are bad.

Signs of a man that loves you.

Avoid the maimed or crippled.

a monge alle othir thingis caste the to knowe the marvelous science of ffynomye, for therbi thou shalt knowe the natures and the condicions of alle folke. And this science fonde a gret clerke that light, ffynomyas, the which serchid the qualitees and the natures of alle folke. In the tyme of this 12 ffynomyas reynyd the nobille and excellent doctoure ypocras. And for this ffisonomyas bare such a name of wisdom the disciplis of ypocras portreweden the liknes of her maystir, and bare it vnto fisnomyas, and bade him "Iuge the nature of him 16 that that figure was lijk to"; and than he seide, "that man that is lijk to this figure, or þat þis figure <sup>1</sup>is lijk to, is lecherous, and baratous, and boystous"; than they that had brought this figure to him, they seidene, "O fole, this is the figure of wijs 20 ypocras, the best man and the wisist that lyvith." Than seide phisnomyas, "I knowe welle this is the figure of wijs ypocras, and y haue seid and Iugid the sothe theron, but of his wijsdome and resoun he refreyneth him silff from these vicis that nature 24 shewith in him." These disciples come home to her maystir, and tolde him of her doying; than seide ypocras, "y haue herde tolde moche of the wijsdome of phisnomyas, but it is previd in doying now, so that y shalle holde him euir a passyng wijs man; 28 for trewly he hath iugid þe trouthe." Therefore y haue writen to thee, dere sone, the rewlys abreggid of this science of ffynomye, in whiche þou shalt fynde greet loore. And thou se a man that is of febille coloure, fle his companye, for he is lecherous, and 32 enclnyed to many yvelis. And thou se a man that is glad laughyng, and whan he lokith on the is dredy and ashamyd, and his visage wexith reed and sightheth, and the teeres fallen in his eyene whan thou blamyst him, wite welle that he doutith 36 and lovith moche thi persone. And kepe the welle from him þat hath not alle his [membirs] fulfilled of byrthe, or is markid in the visage, and from alle tho that are of yville forme and

shappe. The beste forme is in mene men that haue the eyen and the heere blak, the visage rounde, coloure whijt, read, and browne medlid togidere, these haue hool hert and trewe, they 4 that haue the hed meene, not to litille ne to moche, and speken litille but if it be nede, and the voyce swete, suche complexioun is good, and suche men take nere the. And the heer be fulle and softe, that man is deboner . . . . .

8. . . . . <sup>1</sup>coloure, bitwix whijt and reed, [1 fol. 26 a.]  
with soft heere and playne, and eyen menely grete and rounde, þe heed wel made of good mesure, good nekke and sufficient longe, and hath not the leggis ne the knees ouyr flesshy, þe 12 shuldris a litille goyng downeward, the palmes, þe fyngris sufficient longe and nought ouyr grete, and laugheth litille, and skorneth no man, and hath laughyng visage and glad, this man is good in alle nature. Dere sone, it is not lefulle to Iuge of 16 oon signe in a man. But thou muste considir alle þe signes in him, and than take hede on the signes that most habounde in man, and deme þe beste and most naturalle party. Signs of a good man.

Take all the signs into consideration.

This is the tretys that Aristotille made to Kyng Alex-  
20 andre, callid *Secreta secretorum* of gouirnaunce of Kyngis in worshipe, wijsdome, and gret helthe, of whiche lougher men in degre mowe lerne gret and bihoueful doctryne.

<sup>1</sup> One leaf had gone from here before the MS. was bound.