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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK
A VERY PLEASAUNT & FRUITFUL DIOLOGE
CALLED THE EPICURE ***

[Transcriber's note:

The printed text marks the first few leaves of each 16-page signature: A.i., A.ii... Other page breaks are marked in this e-text with a single line | .

In the original text, the dialogue was printed as one continuous block. This e-text has placed each speaker on a new line.

A few apparent typographic errors were corrected and are marked like this. Some additional problems are marked in the same way but were left unchanged. All other spelling, capitalization and punctuation are as in the original.]

A VE-
ry pleasaunt &
fruitful Dio-
loge called the
Epicure,
made by that fa-
mous clerke Eras-
mus of Roterodame,
newly translated.

1545.

S. Paule to the Ephesians

You that haue professed Christ,

*suffre not your selues to be deceyued
vvith false doctrine, nor vaine
and noughtie talkyng, but herken
vnto all Godly thynges, and
especialy too the doctryne
of the Gospell.*

A.ii.

*THE HABOVN-
daunt mercie and grace of our
heauenly father Iesu Christ,
maye alwaies strengthen
and defende oure noble
& vertuous Prynce Ed-
ward too the mainte-
naunce of the liue-
ly woord of
God.*



HERE as manye histories
of olde & auncient
antiquitie, and also al
godly & Christiã writers
most playnely consê-
t together, and agree in
this, that dignitie, riches,
kinred, worldly pompe,
and renoume, doo neither
make men better, ne yet
happiar, contrarie too the
blynde & fonde

iudgement of the most
part of menne: but by the power and strength of the
mynde, that is, learnyng, wysedome, and vertue, all
menne are hyghly enriched, ornated, & most purely
beutified, for these bee thynges bothe notable,
eternall, and verye familiar betwene the heauenly
father & vs. It is therefore euidente (most excellent
Prince) that the fittest ornamêtes for your graces
tender age, bee, eruditiõ and vertue. Wherunto you
are bothe so earnestly addicte and therin so
wõderfully doo preuaile, that I nede not too exhorte
& exstimulate your grace vnto the study thereof. For
that God him self hath wrought, and fourmed your
mynde so apt and desirous too attayne and diligê-
tly too seeke for al godly doctrine, that euê now you doo
shewe in all youre saynges and dooinges suche a
wonderfull pleasautes much lyke vnto a certayne
swete musike or harmonie, that any honest hart
exceedinglye woulde reioyce in the sight therof.

Verely, your grace thinketh plainly all time lost, that
is not bestowed vpon learnyng, which is a verie rare
thyng in anye childe, and rarest of all in a Prince.

A.iii.

Thus youre noblenes, rather desireth vertue and
learning the most surest and excellent treasures,
which farre surmounte all worldly ryches, then anye
vanities or trifles. Nowe youre grace prepareth for
the holsome and pleasaunt foode of the mynde. Now
you seke for that whiche you shal fynd most surest
helper and faythfulst councillour in all your affaires.
Now your magnificê-
t mynde studieth that, whiche all
Englyshe menne with meke and humile heartes
shuld desire GOD to endue your grace with all. Now
with diligent labour you searche for a thyng, as one
most myndeful of this sayng: Happy is that realme
that hath a lerned Prince. Nowe you trauaile for
that, whiche conquereth, and kepeth doune all
greuous tourmentes & outragious affections of the
mynde, too the furderance of good liuyng, and

maintenaunce of vertue, I meane holsome erudition
 and learnyng. Many Heathen Princes forsoth, are
 highly magnified with most ample prayes, which
 gaue them selues too the study of Philosophie, or
 knowledge of tongues, for their owne commoditie,
 and especially for the weale of their subiectes. Who
 is nowe more celebrated and worthelier extolled
 then Mithridates? that noble kyng of Pont and
 Bithinia, which, (as Aulus Gellius writeth)
 vnderstoode so perfittly the languages of .xxii.
 sondrye countries that were vnder his dominiõ, that
 he neuer used any interpretour too answer his
 subiectes, but spake their lâguages so finelye, as
 thoughte he had been of the same coutrie. Ageyn,
 that honorable manne Quintus Ennius saied: that he
 had .iii. heartes, because he coulde speake Greke,
 Italian, and Latin. Yea, and breuely, the most famaous
 writers, as well the Heathen, as the Christien, with
 an vniuersall consent, playnly affirme: Whan thei
 had weied the nature and condiciõ of the purest
 thinges vnder heauen, thei sawe nothyng faire, or of
 any pryce, or that ought too be accõpted ours, but
 onely vertue and learning. Euen now too
 acknowledge that same, it is yeouê you from aboue,
 for your grace delecteth in nothyng more then too
 bee occupied in the holye Byble: wherin, you
 beginne too sauer & smelle furth the treasure of
 wisdomes, knowledge and fulnes of the deuyne
 power, that is a studie most conuenient for euery
 Christien Prince, that kynd of studye cannot haue
 sufficient laude and commendation. Whose Princely
 heart forsoth, is raueshed on suche a godlie and
 vertuous studie, it can neuer haue condigne and
 worthie praises, but deserueth alwaies too bee had
 in great price, estimation, and honour. Who dooeth
 not know? that Prince which is yeouen vnto the
 scriptures of God and with a stoute stomake and
 valiãt heart, both searcheth furth and also defendeth
 y^e true doctrine of the Gospell, too bee inrolled in
 the assemble of Christ. Who dooeth not see? that
 Prince too bee moost surelye armed, which carieth
 in his heart the swerd of y^e spirit, which is the
 blessed woord of God. Who is ignoraunt? that euer
 lastyng lyfe consisteth in the knoweledge of God.
 What Prince woulde not studie to maintaine that,
 which is written for the health, and saluation of all
 menne weiyuge with himselfe that a Prince can not
 deserue, neither by conquest, ciuel policie, nor yet
 by anye other meane vnder heauen, thys name high
 or honorable, so wourthely as by the setting forward
 of Goddes woorde. What young Prince humily
 defendyng doune intoo him selfe and callyng to
 memory his bounden dutie woulde not with a glad
 hearte and a chearfull mynde, gredelye desyre too
 knowe, enlarge, and amplifie the glory and maiestie
 of hys derely beloued father? Your grace (forsoth)
 hath professed God too bee your father: Blessed are
 you then if you obey vnto hys word, and walke in his
 waies. Blessed are you, yf you supporte suche as
 preache the Gospell. Blessed are you, yf your mind
 bee full furnished with the testament of Christ, and
 shew your selfe too bee the most cruel too and
 enemy agaynst ypocrisie, supersticion, and all
 papistical phantasies, wherw^t the true religion of
 God hath been dusked and defaced these many
 yeres Blessed are you, if you reade it daye & nighte,
 that your grace maye knowe what GOD dooeth
 forbyd you, and euer submit your selfe therunto with
 seruiceable lowlines chiefly desiring to florysh and
 decke your mynd with godly knowledge. And most
 blessed are you, if you apply your self vnto al good
 workes, & plant surely in your heart the scriptures
 of Christ, If you thus doo, nether the power of any
 papistical realme, nor yet of hel can preuaile at any

time against your grace. Nowe therefore, with humile
hearte, faithfully receiue the swete promises of the
Gospel. If you kepe the woordes of the Lorde and
cleaue fast vnto them: there is promised you the
kingdome of heauen: You are promised a weale
publick most riche and welthy You are promised too
bee deliuered from the deceptes of all youre priuie
enemyes. You are promised also, too conquere great
and mightie nations. Agayne, let your grace bee
most fully perswaded in this, that ther was neuer
Kyng nor Prince, that prospered whiche tooke parte
against Goddes woord, and that the greatest
abhomination that can bee, either for Kyng, Prince,
or any other manne, is too forsake the true woord of
God. O with howe rebukefull woordes &
greuous iudgement thei be condemned, which
dispice & set lytle by the holy Byble & most blessed
Testamēt of God, wherin there is contained all the
wil & pleasure of our heauēly father toward vs most
miserable & ignoraunt wretches Who would not
quake, too beholde the terrible feares &
threatenynges of God ageinst al suche? Who would
not lament & gladly helpe their obstinate
blyndenes? Who woulde not weepe? to heare and
reade in how many places, they be openly accursed
by the scriptures of Christ. God him self playnely
affirmeth, that he wyll sodēly consume them with
the breath of his anger. Yea, besides that whoso
euer declyneth from the word of God is accursed in
all his doynge, whether he be Kyng, or Prynce,
riche, or poore, or of what estate soeuer he bee. This
fearfull sayng (most excellent Prynce) shulde moue
all men to take hede vnto their duties and to praie
that gods word maie take place emōgist vs. O that al
men would fantasie the scriptures of God, and saye
w^t the vertuous man Iob. Wee will not bee ageynst
the woordes of the holy one. Truth it is, God taketh
diligent care too haue vs al know his woord. Woulde
God therefore, that all wee were now willing to haue
the syncere worde of God & all holsom doctrine too
go forward. O that all we would consent together in
the Gospell, brotherly admonishyng, and secretelye
prouokyng one an other too true religion & vertue. O
that no man would sow emongist the people
pernitious doctryne, but with all lowly diligēce and
Godlye monition euer prouoke, tempt, and sterc
them, tyll their heartes were remoued frō their olde
dautyng dreames and supersticiō, which haue been
long grafted in them thorow popyshe doctrine. By
this meane wee shuld euer haue concorde emongist
vs, whiche in all thynges is necessary, but most
nedefull and expedient in Gods holi woord. Now
truely the godlyest thyng that can bee deuysed, for
any christian realme, is to haue emongist them one
maner and fourme of doctryne, & too trace trueli the
steppes of God and neuer to seeke any other
bywayes. Who hath not redde in y^e scriptures? but
that realme is endued with godly ornamentes &
riches, where all men prospere, go for ward and
florishe in gods woord, delectyng day and night in
the swete cōsolations of the holy testament. By this
way we shuld especially set forth the glory of God,
and of our sauour Iesu Christ, if we would
reuerently shew one an other that whiche God hath
taught vs. Yea & in this doying all men shulde well
perceauē that we were the true disciples of Christ,
being knitte and coupled fast together in mynde and
iudgement, preachyng God with one mouth and also
with one assent euer promotyng his glorious
testament. O the good happe and grace of that king
or prynce emongist whose subiectes there is such an
hole consent and iudgement in the woord of God, for
y^t most assuredly byndeth & adiuigneth y^e hartes of
al subiectes too their kyng. The strength of the

Gospell is euen suche in this puinte, that there was neuer man, which did humily receaue it, that would murmur ageynst his Prince. It teacheth how wyllyngly all men shulde obey their kyng. It sheweth verry lyuely and most apertly vnto euery man his ful dutie. It euer prouoketh vs from all wicked, cursed, and most obstinate disobedience. It euer instructeth men too shewe them selues most lowly, humile, and obesaunt toward their Prynce. Whosoeuer hath tasted fully therof, will declare hym selfe in al thynges, too bee a faithful subiect. Furthermore, it is clearer then the light (most vertuous prince) that it woulde make muche for the weale of this noble realme, yf all mē with heart and mynde, would nowe as well expulse the pernicious and deuelyshe doctryne af that Romishe bishop, as his name is blotted î bookes. There is none so ignoraunt, but he knoweth that, thorough hym we were brought into a wõderful blindnes, thorough hym we did sauer of nothyng, but of stynkyng Ydolatry, through hym we were deceiued with false Ypocrisie. Now let euery blind stiffe hearted, and obstinate creature compare his abhomination with the gospell, and if he be not shameles, he will abashe to smell of his papistrie, and to walow still in ignoraunce, vn lest he bee priuely confederate and in heart consent with the detestable felowship of al wicked papistes. Now would God all suche men would reduce ageyn their heartes vnto y^e gospell of Christ, would god they would bee prouoked by some meane to desire knowledge. O that god woulde yeoue them a couragious mynde too reade the gospel, there they shal some fynde all the venoume of the romishe sort most playnely detected. Forsoth wee see dayly, y^t lacke of knowledge of the gospel maketh some busserdes runne hedlong on all rockes, daungers, & extreme perilles: yea, and beside that, olde popysh doctryne whiche lyeth folded vp & locked faste in their heartes, doeth so sore blynd thê that they haue neither fauour ne affectiõ too printe in their myndes, the expressed coũcels, admonitions, and preceptes of the holy scripture, but too slepe stil in their owne conceites, dreames, & fonde phansies. Wherfore let your dignitie note well this, that all those whiche bee not wyllyng y^t gods woord should bee knowen, and that blyndenes should be clean expulsed from all men, whiche be baptised in y^e blessed bludde of Christ, bewray themselues playne papistes: for in very deede that most deceatful wolfe and graund maister papist with his totiens quotiens, and a pena et culpa blesseth all suche as will bee blynde stil, maintaine his pôpe, drinke of his cuppe of fornication, trust in his pardounes, liue in popery, ypocrisie, and dãnable ydolatrie, shut vp the kingdome of heauen, & neuer regarde the gospel. Cõtrarie too this, christ bi his holy Prophete calleth al those blessed y^t seke for his testimonies, al those his elect & chosê childrê, which turne frõ synne, ypocrisie, & ydolatrie, all those goddes y^t heare his word, yea, & breuely, al those which set it forward honorable mē. & in this puinte your grace shoulde euer beare in mynde, that noble and vertuous kyng Hezekiah, whiche shewed hymselfe very honorable in settîg forward ye woord of God, and therby gotte hym glory and fame immortall, so that nowe he is most highly prayed amongstst all men. Ageyn his subiectes dyd obey his commaundement feynedly with Ypocrisie, but in their heartes they abhorred gods woord. O the miserie that dyd afterwarde sodeinly ensue vpon them, O the wonderfull wrath of God that was poured vpon them, O their great and obstinate blindnes whiche caused them most greuously too be scourged: Their plage was no lesse then too bee vtterly spoyled of their enemies, Their

plage was no lesse then to eate one an other: Yea, their plage was no lesse then to eate their owne sonnes and doughthers. This calamitie and sorow (most noble prynce) happened them because they dyd not regarde the lawes of God, but tourned too their olde abhominable Ydolatrie, and lightelye esteemed gods holy woord. Wherfore euen now

- B.i. whosoever is an enemie to the holy Bible, that is, neither studyng it himselfe, nor willyng that other men shulde knowe it, he can in no wyse be a right christian man: although he fast, pray, doo almes, & all the good workes vnder heauen. And he that hath suche a mynde, is y^e most cursed and cruel enemie too god, a playne sower of sedition, and a deuelishe disquieter of all godly men. For truly those that reade the gospel of Christ, and labour diligētly therin: doo fynde wonderfull rest & quietnes, from all woofull miserie, perturbatiō, and vanities of this world. And surely none but ypocrites or els deuilles would go about too stoppe or allure men from suche a treasure and godly study. And it were conuenient, that all they whiche wyll remayne styll negligent, styffe, & blind: shuld set before their faces the feare of paynes infernall, and if thei haue any grace at all, their spirites ought to be moued: too note the great plages that haue happened the slouthful in gods woord, & those that haue been stubburne ageynst the setting out of it. There bee a thousand recordes and examples in the holy Bible agaynst such as be farre wyde from knowledge, and lye now walteryng styl in ignoraunce and will not looke vpon the bible. It woulde seme, they hope for a thyng, but their hope is in vaine: For saint Paule plainely writeth the hope of suche ypocrites shall coomⁿ too nought. And too conclude (most honorable Prince) seeyng wee haue suche knowledge opened vnto vs, as neuer had englishe mē, and are clearly deliuered from the snares and deceiptes of al false and wicked doctrine, if we shuld not now thākefully receaue the gospell, and shewe our selues naturally enclyned to set it forwarde, yea, and pray daye and night vnto God, for the preseruatiō and health of the kynges highnes, your graces deare, and most entierly beloued father, we were neither true subiectes nor ryght christen men. Forsoth, through the absolute wisdom, and the most godly and politike prudencie of his grace, the swete sounde of gods woorde is gone thorough out all this realme, the holye Bible and blessed testament of oure sauour Christ are coomⁿne to lighte, and thousandes haue faithfully receiued those pleasaunt, ioyfull, and most comfortable promises of God. Surely this thyng before all other, is acceptable too god. This thyng especially swageth y^e ire of god. This thyng in all holi scriptures god most chiefly requireth of his elect & faithfull seruantes, euen too haue his lytell flocke knowe his blessed woorde, whiche woulde bee muche better knowē & more thankefullly receaued, yf al agees and degrees of men with one mynd, wyll, & voice, would nowe drawe after one lyne, leauyng their owne priuate affections, and shewe them selues euer vigilant, prompt, & ready helpers & workers with God, (accordyng to the councell of saint Paule) & especially priestes, scolemaisters & parêtes, which accordyng too y^e Prophete Dauid are blessed, if they gladly requite y^e lawe of God. They shuld therfore reade y^e bible & purdge theyr mindes of al papistry: for their negligence, in dooyng their duties & slugishnes toward y^e blessed woord of god, dooeth too muche appere. Through them forsoth the gospel of Christ shuld bee most strongely warded and defended, for almost all the Prophetes, and a great parte of the scripture beside teache them their
- B.ii.

B.iii.

duties, and shew playnely what maner of men they shulde bee: Yea, and how greuouly the holy Prophetes crie out vpon false and ignoraunt priestes, the thyng is very euident. But through the helpe of God all those that be ignoraunt, or els learned (as they take them selues) wyll leaue of, and repent them of their wicked and obstinate blyndnes, and bowe them selues with all oportunitie too draw mens heartes too the holy testament of God: consideryng, y^t in the terrible day of iudgement, euery mã shall yeoue accompte of his Beliwicke, where neither ignoraũce shall excuse vs, ne yet any worldly pōpe may defêd vs. Most happye thê shall they bee, whiche haue walked iustely in the sight of the Lorde, and that haue syncerely preached his testament and lyuely woord withoute flattery or iuggelyng: Yea, and in y^t fearful day, all they (as writeth S. Augustine) shal fynde mercie at the handes of god, whiche haue entised and allured other vnto goodnes and vertue. Weiyng this with my self, (most excellent, and vnto all kynd of vertues most prōpt & prestāt Prince) I thought it good too translate this Dialoge, called the Epicure, for your grace: whiche semed too me, too bee very familiar, & one of y^e godliest Dialoges y^t any mã hath writtê in y^e latin tong. Now therfore I most humili praie, y^t this my rude & simple trāslation may bee acceptable vnto your grace, trustyng also y^t your most approued gentilnes, wil take it in good part. There as I doo not folow y^e latyn, woord for woord, for I omytte y^t of a certaine set purpose.

Your humile seruaunt, Philyppe
Gerrard, groume of your
graces Chambre.

The inter- {HEDONIVS
locutours {SPVDEVS



HAT meaneth hit
Spudeus, too applye hys
booke so earnestlye I praye
you what is the matter
you murmour so with
yourselfe?
SPVDEVS. The truth is
(O Hedoni) I seke too haue
knowledge of a thing, but
as yet I cannot fynde y^t
whych maketh for my
purpose.

HEDO What booke haue you there in your bosome?

SPVDE. Ciceros dialoge of the endes of goodnes.

HEDO. It had bene farre more better for you, too haue sought for the begynnynges of godly thynges, then the endes.

SPVDE. Yea, but Marcus Tullius nameth y^t the ende of godlines which is an exquisite, a far passing, and a very absolute goodnes in euerye puinte, wherein there is contained all kynde of vertu: vnto the knowledge ther of whosoouer can attaine, shuld desire none other thîg, but hold himselfe hauyng onely that, as one most fully content and satisfied.

HED. That is a worke of very great learning and eloquence. But doo you thynke, y^t you haue preuailed in any thîg there, whereby you haue the rather come too the knowledge of the truth?

SPE. I haue had such fruite and cōmoditie by it, that now verelye hereafter I shall doubt more of the

effect and endes of good thinges, then I did before.
HEDO. It is for husbād menne too stande in doubt
how farre the limittes and merebākes extend.
SPE. And I cannot but muse styll, yea, and wonder
very muche, why ther hath been so great
controuersie in iudgementes vpon so weightie a
matter (as this is) emongist so well learned menne:
especially suche as bee most famous and auncient
writers.

HEDO. This was euen the cause, where the verite of
a thyng is playne and manifest, cōtrarily, y^e errour
through ignoraunce againe in the same, is soone
great & by diuers meanes encreaseth, for y^t thei
knewe not the foundation and first beginnyng of the
whole matter, they doo iudge at all auentures and
are very fondly disceaued, but whose sentence
thynke you too bee truest?

SPE. Whan I heare MARCVS Tullius reprove the thyng,
I then fātasie none of all their iudgementes, and
whan I heare hym agayne defende the cause: it
maketh me more doubtfull thê euer I was and am in
suche a studie, that I can say nothyng. But as I
suppose y^e Stoickes haue erred the lest, and nexte
vnto thê I commend the Peripateticke.

HEDo. Yet I lyke none of their opinions so well as I
doo the Epicures.

SPV. And emōgist all the sectes: the Epicures
iudgement is most reprovèd and condemned with
the whole consent and arbitremēt of all menne.

HED. Let vs laye a side all disdayne and spite of
names, and admitte the Epicure too bee suche one,
as euery man maketh of hym. Let vs ponder and
weighe the thyng as it is in very deed. He setteth the
high and principall felicitie of man in pleasure, and
thiketh that lyfe most pure and godly, whiche may
haue greate delectatiō and pleasure, and lytle
pensiuenes.

SPV. It is euen so.

HED. What more vertuouser thyng, I praye you, is
possible too bee spokê then this saiyng.

Spu. Yea, but all menne wonder and crye out on it,
and saye: it is the voyce of a brute beast, and not of
manne.

Hedo. I knowe thei doo so, but thei erre in y^e
vocables of these thinges, and are very ignoraunt of
the true and natiue significations of the woordes, for
if wee speake of perfecte thynges, no kinde of
menne bee more righter Epicures, then Christen men
liuing reuerētly towards God and mǎ, and in the
right seruice and worshiping of Christ.

SPV But I thinke the Epicures bee more nerer and
agree rather with the Cynickes, then with the
Christien sorte: forsoth y^e Christiens make them
selues leane with fastyng, bewayle and lament their
offences, and eyther they bee nowe poore, or elles
theyr charitie and liberalitie on the nedye maketh
them poore, thei suffer paciently to bee oppressed
of mēne that haue great power and take many
wronges at their handes, and many men also laughe
them too skorne. Nowe, if pleasure brynge felicitie
wyth it, or helpe in anye wyse vnto the furderaunce
of vertue: we see playnly that this kynde of lyfe is
fardest from al pleasures.

Hedonius. But doo you not admitte Plautus too bee of
authoritie?

Speudeus. Yea, yf he speake vprightely.

Hedonius. Heare nowe them, and beare awaye wyth
you the saynge of an vnthriftie seruaunt, whyche is
more wyttier then all the paradoxes of the Stoickes.

SPE. I tarie to heare what ye wil say.

HEDO. Ther is nothyng more miserable then a mynd
vnquiet & agreued with it selfe.

SPE. I like this sayng well, but what doo you gather
of it?

HEDO. If nothing bee more miserable thê an vnquiet mynde, it foloweth also, that there is nothing happiar, then a mynde voyde of all feare, grudge, and vnquietnes.

SPEV. Surely you gather the thing together with good reasô but that notwithstandinge, in what countrie shall you fynde any such mynde, that knoweth not it selfe gyltie and culpable in some kynde of euell,

HEDO. I call that euyll, whiche dissolueth the pure loue and amitie betwixt God and manne.

SPV. And I suppose there bee verye fewe, but that thei bee offêders in this thyng.

HEDO. And in good soth I take it, that al those y^t bee purdged, are clere: whych wiped out their fautes with lee of teares, and saltpeter of sorowfull repentaunce, or els with the fire of charitie, their offêces nowe bee not only smalle grefe and vnquietnes too them, but also chaunce oftê for some more godlier purpose, as causing thê too lyue afterward more accordyngly vnto Gods commaûdemêtes.

SPV. In deede I knowe saltpeter and lee, but yet I neuer hearde before, that faultes haue been purdged with fire.

H. Surely, if you go to the minte you shall see gould fyned wyth fyre, notwithstâdyng that ther is also, a certaine kynde of linê that brenneth not if it bee cast in y^e fyre, but loketh more whiter then any water coulde haue made it, & therefore it is called Linum asbestinum, a kynde of lynen, whyche canne neither bee quenched with water nor brent with fyre.

Spu. Nowe in good faith you bring a paradox more wôderful then all the maruailous and profound thynges of the Stoickes: lyue thei pleasasauntly whom Chryst calleth blessed for that they mourne & lament?

Hedonius. Thei seme too the worlde too mourne, but verely they lyue in greate pleasure, and as the commune saynge is, thei lyue all together in pleasure, in somuche that SARDANAPALVS, Philoxenus, or Apitius compared vnto them: or anye other spoken of, for the greate desyre and study of pleasures, did leade but a sorowefull and a miserable lyfe.

Spe. These thinges that you declare bee so straunge and newe, that I can scarcelye yeoue any credite vnto them.

Hedo. Proue and assaye them ones, and you shall fynde all my saynges so true as the Gospell, and immediatly I shal bryng the thyng too suche a conclusion (as I suppose) that it shall appeare too differ very lytle from the truth

C.i

SPV. make hast then vnto your purpose.

HED. It shalbe doone if you wyll graunt me certayne thynges or I begynne.

Spu. If in case you demaunde suche as bee resonable.

Hedo. I wyl take myne aduauntage, if you confesse the thyng that maketh for mine intent.

Spu. go too.

Hedo. I thynke ye wyll fyrste graunt me, that ther is great diuersitie betwxt the solle and the bodye

Spu. Euen as much as there is betwene heauen and yearth, or a thyng earthly and brute, & y^t whiche dieth neuer, but alwayes cõtaineth in it the godly nature.

Hedo. And also, that false deceiueable & couêrfetted holy thynges, are not too bee taken for those, which in very dede be godly.

Spude. No more then the shaddowes are too bee esteemed for the bodies, or the illusions and wonders of wytchcraftes or the fantasies of dreames, are too bee taken as true thynges.

HE. Hitherto you answer aptly too my purpose, and I thynke you wyl graunt me this thyng also, that true and godly pleasure can reſte and take place no where but only on ſuch a mynd that is ſobree and honeſt.

SPV. What elles? for no man reioyseth too beholde the Sunne, if his eyes bee bleared or elles delecteth in wyne, if the agew haue infected hys taſt.

C.ii. HED. And the Epicure hymſelfe, or elles I am diſceiued, would not clippe & embrace that pleaſure, whiche would bring with it farre greater payne and ſuche as would bee of long continuance.

SPV I thynke he woulde not, if he had any wytte at all.

HED. Nor you wyll not denye this, that God is the chiefe and eſpeciall goodnes, then whõ there is nothyng fayrer, there is nothyng ameabler, ther is nothing more delicious and ſwetter.

SPVDE. No man wyll deny thys except he bee very harde hearted and of an vngentler nature then the Ciclopes.

HED. Nowe you haue graunted vnto me, that none lyue in more pleaſure, then thei whyche lyue vertuouſlye, and agayne, none in more ſorowe and calamytie then thoſe that lyue vngratiouſly.

Spu. Then I haue graüted more thê I thought I had. He. But what thing you haue ones cõfeſſed too bee true (as Plato ſayth) you ſhould not deny it afterward.

SPV. Go furth with your matter.

HEDO The litle whelpe y^t is ſet ſtore and greate price by, is fed moſt daintely, lieth ſoft, plaieth and maketh paſtime continually, doo you thinke that it lyueth pleaſaütly?

SPV. It dooeth truely.

HEDO. Woulde you wyſhe to haue ſuche a lyfe?

SPV. God forbyd that, excepte I woulde rather bee a dogge then a man,

HEDO. Then you confeſſe that all the chief pleaſures ariſe and ſpring frõ the mynd, as though it were from a welspryng.

C.iii. SPV. That is euident ynough.

HE. Forſoth the ſtrength and efficacy of the minde is ſo great, that often it taketh away the felyng of al externe and outward pain & maketh that pleaſaunt, which by it ſelfe is very peynful.

SPV. We ſe that dayly in louers, hauyng great delight to ſytte vp long & too daunce attendaunce at their louers doores all the colde wynter nyghtes.

HEDo. Now weigh this alſo, if the naturall loue of man, haue ſuche great vehemency in it, which is a cõmune thyng vnto vs, both with bulles and dogges, howe much more ſhould all heauenly loue excell in

vs, which cõmeth of y^e ſpirit of Chriſt, whoſe ſtrêgthe is of ſuche power, that it would make death a thîg moſt terrible, too bee but a pleaſure vnto vs.

Spu. What other men thîke inwardly I know not, but certes thei wât many pleaſures which cleaue faſt vnto true and perfect vertue.

He. What pleaſures?

Spu. Thei waxe not rich, thei optein no promotiõ, thei bâket not, thei daũce not, thei ſing not, thei ſmell not of ſwete oyntmêtes, thei laugh not, thei play not.

He. We ſhould haue made no mention in thys place of ryches and prefermente, for they bryng wyth them no pleaſaunt lyfe, but rather a ſadde and a pêsuiue. Let vs intreate of other thynges, ſuche as they chiefly ſeeke for, whoſe deſyre is to liue deliciously, ſee ye not daily drõkerdes, fooles, and mad menne grinne and leape?

C.iii. SPV. I ſee it

HED. Do you thynke that thei liue moſt pleaſaütly?

SPV God ſend myne enemies ſuch myrth & pleaſure.

HE. Why so?

Sp. For ther lacketh emongist thê sobrietie of mind.

HE. Then you had leuer sit fastyng at your booke,
then too make pastime after any suche sorte.

SP. Of thê both: truly I had rather chose to delue.

H. For this is plaine that betwixt the mad mã & the
drûkerd ther is no diuersitie, but y^t slepe wil helpe
the one his madnes, & with much a doo y^e cure of
Physicians helpeth the other, but the foole natural
differeth nothing frõ a brute beast except by shape
and portrature of body, yet thei be lesse miserable
whom nature hathe made verye brutes, then those
that walowe them selues in foule and beastly lustes.
SP. I confesse that.

Hedo. But now tell me, whether you thynke thê
sobre and wyse, which for playn vanities and
shadowes of plesure, booth dispice the true and
godlye pleasures of the mynde and chose for them
selues suche thynges as bee but vexacion & sorowe.
SPV. I take it, thei bee not.

Hedo. In deede thei bee not drûke with wyne, but
with loue with anger, with auarice, with ambicion,
and other foule and filthie desires, whiche kynde of
drunkenes is farre worse, thê that is gotten with
drinking of wine. Yet Sirus y^t leude cõspaniõ of whom
mention is made in y^e commedie, spake witty
thynges after he had slepte hym self soobre, and
called too memorie his greate and moost beastlye
drunkenes: but the minde that is infected with
vicious & noughty desire, hath mucche a doo too call
it selfe whom agein? How many yeares doeth loue,
anger, spite, sensualitie, excesse, and ambition,
trouble and prouoke the mynde? How many doo wee
see, whiche euen from their youth, too their latter
dais neuer awake nor repêt them of the drunkennes,
of ambitiõ, nigardnes, wanton lust, & riatte?

Spu. I haue knowen ouermany of y^t sorte.

Hedo. You haue graûted that false and fayned good
thinges, are not too bee esteemed for the pure and
godly.

Sp. And I affirme that still.

Hedo. Nor that there is no true and perfect pleasure,
except it bee taken of honest and godly thynges.

Spud. I confesse that.

He. Then (I pray you) bee not those good that the
commune sorte seeke for, they care not howe?

Spu. I thinke they be not.

Hedo. Surely if thei were good, they would not
chance but onely too good men: and would make
all those vertuous that they happen vntoo. What
maner of pleasure make you that, doo you thinke it
too bee godly, which is not of true & honest thynges,
but of deceitfull: and coometh out of y^e shadowes of
good thynges?

Sp. Nay in noo wyse.

He. For pleasure maketh vs to liue merely.

Spu. Yea, nothyng so mucche.

He. Therefore no man truly liueth pleasauntly, but
he that lyueth godly: that is, whiche vseth and
delecteth onli in good thynges: for vertue of it selfe,
maketh a man to habound in all thynges that bee
good, perfete, & prayse worthy: yea, it onely
prouoketh God the fountaine of all goodnes, too loue
and fauour man.

SP. I almost consent with you.

HED. But now marke howe far they bee from all
pleasure, whiche seeme openly emongist all men too
folowe nothyng, but the inordinate delectation in in
thynges carnall. First their mynde is vile, and
corrupted with the sauour and taste of noughtie
desires, in so mucche y^t if any pleasaunt thing
chance them, forthwith it waxeth bitter, and is
nought set by, in like maner as where y^e welle hed is

corrupted and stynketh, there y^e water must nedes be vnsauery. Agein ther is no honest pleasure, but that whiche wee receaue with a sobre and a quiet mynde. For wee see, nothyng reioyseth the angry man more, thê too bee reuenged on his offenders, but that pleasure is turned into pain after his rage bee past, and anger subdued.

Spu. I say not the contrary.

He. Finally, suche leude pleasures bee taken of fallible thinges, therefore it foloweth that they be but delusiōs and shadowes. What woulde you say furthermore, if you saw a m̃a so deceaued with sorcerie & also other detestable witchecraftes, eat, drynke, leap, laugh, yea, and clappe handes for ioye, when ther wer no such thyng there in very dede, as he beleueth he seeth.

Spu. I wolde say he were both mad and miserable.

Hedo. I my self haue been often in place, where the lyke thyng hath been doone. There was a priest whiche knewe perfectly by longe experience and practise, the arte to make thynges seme that they were not, otherwise called, *deceptio visus*.

Sp. He did not lerne that arte of the holy scripture?

Hedo. Yea, rather of most popeholy charmes and witchecraftes: that is too saye, of thinges, cursed, dampnable, and wourthy too bee abhorred. Certayne ladies & gentlewomen of the courte, spake vnto hym oftentimes: sayyng, they woulde coomⁿ one day too his house and see what good chere he kept: reprouyng, greatly vile and homly fare, and moderate expenses in all thynges. He graunted they shulde bee welcome, and very instauntly desired them. And they came fastyng because they would haue better appetites. Whã they wer set to dyner (as it was thought) ther wãted noo kynde of delitious meat: they filled thê selues haboũdantly: after y^e feast was doone, they gaue moost hearty thanckes, for their galaunte cheare, and departed, euey one of them vnto their owne lodgynges: but anone their stomackes beganne too waxe an hungred, they maruayled what this shuld meane, so soone to be an hungred and a thirste, after so sumptuous a feast: at the last the matter was openly knowen and laught at.

Spu. Not without a cause, it had been mucche better for thê too haue satisfied their stomackes at their owne chãbers with a messe of potage, thê too be fed so delitiousli with vain illusiōs.

H. And as I th̃k y^e cōmune sort of men ar mucche more too bee laught at, whiche in steede of Godlye thynges, chose vaine and transitory shadowes, and reioyce excedyngly in suche folishe phansies that turne not afterwarde in too a laughter, but into euerlasting lamentation and sorow.

Spudeus The more nerelier I note your sayynges, the better I like thê.

Hedo. Go too, let vs graunt for a tyme these thynges too bee called pleasaunt, that in very dede ar not.

Would yow saye that meeth were swete: whiche had more Aloes myngled with it, then honye?

Spud. I woulde not so say and if there were but the third part of an ounce of Aloes mixt with it.

Hedo. Or els, would you wishe to bee scabbed because you haue some pleasure too scratch?

D.i Spud. Noo, if I wer in my right mynd.

HED. Then weigh with your self how great peyne is intermyngled wyth these false and wrongly named pleasures, y^t vnshamefast loue filthie desire, much eatyng and drinking bring vs vnto: I doo omitte now that, which is principall grudge of cōscience, enemitie betwixt God and m̃a, and expectation of euerlastyng punishêment. What kynd of pleasure, I pray you is ther in these thinges, that dooeth not bryng with it a greate heape of outward euilles?

SPV. What bee thei?

HEDO. We ought to let passe and forbear in this place avarice, ambition, wrath, pryde enuy, whiche of their selues bee heuy and sorowful euylles and let vs conferre and compare all those thynges together, y^t haue the name of some chief and special pleasure: wher as the agew the hedache, the swelling of the belly, dulnes of witte, infamy, hurt of memory, vomtyng, decaye of stomacke, tremblyng of the body succede of ouer muche drynking: thynke you, that the Epicure would haue estemed any suche lyke pleasure as thys, cōuenient and wourthy desire?

SPV. He woulde saye it wer vtterly too bee refused.

HEDONI. Wheras young men also with hauntynge of whores (as it is dayly seene) catche the newe leprosie, nowe otherwyse named Jobs agew, and some cal it the scabbes of Naples, throughe which desease they feele often y^e most extreme and cruell paines of deathe euen in this lyfe, and cary about a bodye resemblyng very much some dead coarse or carryn, do you thynke that thei apply them selues vnto godlye pleasure.

D.ii

SPVD. Noo, for after thei haue been often familiar with their prety ones, then they must goo streighte too the barbour, that chaunceth continuallye vnto all whoremongers.

HED. Now fayne that ther wer a lyke measure of pain and plesure, would ye then require too haue the toothache so longe as the pleasure of quaffing & whordome endured?

SPV. Verely I had rather wāt them booth, for ther is no commoditie nor vantage to bye pleasure with payn but only to chaūg one thing for another, but the best choise is nowe not too affectionate anye such leudnes, for MAR. Tullius calleth that an inward greife & sorow.

He. But now y^e prouocation & entisemēt of vnleful plesure, besides that it is much lesse then the pain which it bringeth with it, it is also a thing of a very short time: but if the leprosy bee ones caught, it tourmēteth mê al their life daies very pitifully & oftentimes cōstraineth them to wyshe for death before thei cā dye.

SP. Such disciples as those then, the Epicure would not knowe.

D.iii.

HED. For the most part pouertie, a very miserable and painfull burden, foloweth lechery, of immoderate lust cōmeth the palsie, tremblyng of y^e senewes, beardnes of eyes, and blyndnes, the leprosie and not these only, is it not a pper pece of worke (I pray you) to chaūg this short pleasure neyther honest nor yet godly, for so manye euylles far more greuouse and of muche longer continuance.

SP. Although there shoulde no pain com of it, I esteme hym to bee a very fond occupier, which would chaūge precious stones for glasse.

HE. You meane that would lose the godly pleasures of the mynde, for the coloured pleasures of y^e body.

SP. That is my meanyng.

HE. But nowe let vs come to a more perfecter supputation, neither the agewe nor yet pouerty foloweth alwaies carnal pleasure, nor the new leprosy or els the palsy wait not on at al times the great & excessiue vse of lecherye, but grudge of cōsiēce euermore is a folower & sure companiō of al vnleful pleasure, then the which as it is plainly agreed betwixt vs, nothyng is more miserable.

SPV. Yea, rather it grudgeth their cōscience sometyme before hande, & in the self pleasure it pricketh their mynde, yet ther bee some y^t you woulde say, want this motion and feelyng.

HE. Thei bee nowe therfore in worse estate & cōditiō. Who would not rather feele payne, then too

D.iiii.

haue hys body lacke any perfecte sence, truly from some ether intemperatnes of euell desires, euen like as it were a certayne kynde of drunkenes, or els wont and cōmune haunt of vice which ar so hardened in them, y^t they take a way y^e felyng & cōsideration of euyl in their youth, so that whã agee commeth vpō them beside other infinitie hurtes and perturbations agaynst whose comyng thei should haue layd vp the deedes of their former lyfe, as a special iuwel and treasure: then thei stande greatly in fear of death, a thyng emongist all other most ineuitable, & that no man canne shonne: yea, and the more they haue heretofore been dysmayed and lacked their sences, the greater now is their vnquietnes and grudge of conscience, then truly the mynde is sodenly awaked whether it wol or noo, and verely wher as olde agee is alwayes sad and heuy of it selfe for as muche as it is in subiECTION and bondage vnto many incommodities of nature, but then it is farre more wretchede and also fylthye, if the mynde vnquiet with it selfe shal trouble it also: feastes, ryotous banketyng, syngyng, and daunsyng, with manye suche other wanton toyes & pastimes which he was communely yeouē vnto & thought very plesaūt when he was young, bee nowe paynfull vnto hym beyng olde and crooked, ne agee hath nothyng too comforte and fortifi it selfe withall, but onely too remembre that it hath passed ouer the course of yeaes in vertue and godly liuyng and conceaue a special trust too obtaine herafter a better kynde of life. These be the two stauēs wherevpon age is stayed, & if in their steed you wyll lay on hym these two burdens: that is, memorie how synfully he hath ledde his life, and desperation of the felicitie that is too coome, I praye you what liuyng thyng can bee feyned too suffre sorer punishment and greater miserie?

spu. Verely I can see nothyng although some man woulde saye an olde horse.

hedo. Then to cōclude it is too late to waxe wise And that sayyng appereth now too bee very true. Carefull mornynges doo oftentymes folowe mery euentides, and all vayne and outragious mirth euer turneth into sorowfull sighes: yea, & they shulde haue considered both that there is noo pleasure aboue y^e ioyfulnes of the heart, and that chearefull mynde maketh agee too florishe, an heuy spirit consumeth the boones, & also that all the dayes of the poore are euell: that is, sorowfull and wretched. And agayne a quiet mynde is lyke a contynuall feaste.

SPVDEVS. Therefore they bee wyse, that thryue in tyme, and gather too gether necessities for that agee coomⁿ.

HEDONI. The holy scripture intreateth not soo wordly as too measure the felicitie and highe consolation of manne, by the goodes of fortune, onely he is very poore, that is destitute and voyde of al grace & vertue, and standeth in boundage and debette, bothe of bodye & solle vnto that tyranne oure moost foo & mortall enemye the deuill.

SPV. Surely he is one that is veri rigorous and impatient in demaundyng of his dutie.

HE. Moreouer that man is ryche, whiche fyndeth mercye and foryeouenes at the handes of god. What shuld he feare, that hath suche a protectour?

Whether men? where as playnely theyr hole power may lesse do agaēst God, then the bytyng of a gnat, hurteth the Elephant. Whether death? truly that is a right passage for good men vnto all sufficient ioy and perfection accordyng too the iust reward of true religion and vertue. Whether hell? For as in that the holy prophete speaketh boldely vnto God. Although I shulde walke in the middest of the shadow of death, I wil not feare any euils because y^e art with me.

Wherefore shulde he stande in feare of deuils, whiche beareth in his heart hym, that maketh the deuils too tremble and quake. For in diuers places the holye scripture praiseth and declareth opely the mynde of a vertuous man, too bee the right temple of God.

And this to bee so true y^t that it is not too bee spoken agaynst, ne in any wise shuld bee denied. SPV. Forsooth I can not see, by what reason these saynges of yours can be confuted al though they seme too varye muche from the vulgar and cōmune opinion of men.

HEDO. Why doo they soo?

SPV. After your reasonyng euery honest poore man, shulde liue a more pleasaunt life, then any other, how much soeuer he did haboūd in riches, honour, and dignitie: and breuely though he had all kynde of pleasures.

HE. Adde this too it (if it please you) too bee a kyng, yea, or an emperour if you take away a quiet mynd with it selfe, I dare boldely say, that the poore man sklenderlye and homely appareled, made weake with fastyng, watchyng, great toile and labour, and that hath scarcely a groat in all the worlde, so that his mynde bee godly, he lyueth more deliciously then that man whiche hathe fyue hūdreth times greater pleasures & delicates, then euer had Sardanapalus.

SP. Why is it thê, that we see communely those that bee poore looke farre more heuely then riche men.

HED. Because some of them bee wise poore, eyther some desease, nedines, watchyng, labour, nakednesse, doo soo weaken the state of their bodyes, that by reason therof, the chearefulnes of their myndes neuer sheweth it selfe, neyther in these thinges, nor yet in their deathe. The mynde, forsooth though it bee inclosed within this mortal bodye, yet for that it is of a stronger nature, it sōwhat trāsfourmeth and fascioneth the bodie after it selfe, especially if the vehement instigation of the spirit approche the violent inclination of nature: this is the cause we see oftentimes suche men as bee vertuous die more cherefully, then those that make pastyme contynually, & bee yeouê vnto all kynd of pleasures.

SP. In very dede, I haue meruayled often at that thyng.

HE. Forsoothe it is not a thyng too bee marueyled at, though that there shulde bee vnspeakeable ioy and comforte where God is present, whiche is the heed of all mirth and gladnes, nowe this is no straunge thyng, althoughe the mynde of a godly man doo reioyce contynually in this mortall bodye: where as if the same mynde or spirit discended into the lowest place of hell shuld lose no parte of felicitie, for whersoever is a pure mynd, there is god, wher God is: there is paradise, ther is heauen, ther is felicitie, wher felicitie is: ther is the true ioy and synsere gladnes.

SP. But yet they shuld liue more pleasauntly, if certein incommodities were taken from them, and had suche pastymes as eyther they dispise orels can not get nor attaine vnto.

E.i. HE. (I praye you) doo you meane, suche incommodities as by the commune course of nature folow the cōdition or state of mā: as hunger, thirst, desease, werynes, age, death, lyghtnyng yearthquake, fluddes & battail?

SPV. I meane other, and these also.

HEDO. Then we intreate styll of mortal thynges and not of immortal, & yet in these euils the state of vertuous men, may bee better borne withal, then of suche as seeke for the pleasures of the body they care not howe.

SPV. Why so:

HEDO. Especcially because their myndes bee

accustomed and hardened with most sure and moderate gouernaunce of reason against al outrageous affections of the mind and they take more patiently those thynges that cannot bee shonned then the other sort doo Furthermore, for as muche as thei perceiue, all such thynges ar sent of god, either for the punishment of their faultes, or els too excitate and sturre them vp vnto vertue, then thei as meeke and obediente chyldren receiue them from the hãd of their mercifull father, not only desireously, but also chearefully and geue thankes also, namely for so merciful punyshment and inestimable gaines.

SPV. But many doo occatiõ griefes vnto thê selues.
HEDO. But mo seeke remedye at the Phisicions, either to preserue their bodies in helth or elles if they bee sycke, too recouer health, but willyngly too cause their owne sorowes, that is, pouertie, sickenes, persecution, slaunder, excepte the loue of God compel vs therto, it is no vertue but folishnes: but as often as thei bee punyshed for Christ and iustice sake, who dar bee so bold as too cal them beggers & wretches? whã the Lord himself very famyliarly calleth them blessed, and commaûdeth vs to reioyse for their state and condition.

E.ii.

SPV. Neuerthelesse, these thynges haue a certayne payne and griefe.

HEDO. Thei haue, but on the onesyde, what for fear of hel, and the other for hoope of euerlastyng ioye, the payne is sone past and forgottê Now tell me if you knewe that you myghte neuer bee sycke, or elles that you shoulde feele no payne of your body in your life tyme, if you woulde but ones suffer your vtter skinne too bee prycked with a pynnes puinct, would you not gladly and with all your very heart suffer then so lytle a payne as that is?

SPV. Verye gladlye, yea, rather if I knewe perfectlye that my teeth would neuer ake, I would willyngly suffer too bee prycked depe with a nedle, and too haue both mine eares bored through with a bodkin.

HEDO. Surely what payne soeuer happeneth in this lyfe, it is lesse and shorter, compared with the eternall paines, then is the soden pricke of a needle, incomparisõ of the lyfe of man though it bee neuer so long, for there is no conuenience or proportion of the thyng that hath ende, and that whych is infinite.

E.iii.

SPV. You speake very truly.

HEDO. Now if a man coulde fully perswade you, that you should neuer feele payne in al your life, if you did but ones deuide the flame of ye fyre, with your hande, whyche thyng vndoughtely Pithagoras forbade, woulde you not gladlye doo it?

SPV. Yea, on that condicion I had liefer doo it an hundred times, if I knew precisely the promiser would kepe touch.

HE. It is playne God cannot deceaue. But now that feelyng of paine in the fyre is longer vnto the whole lyfe of man, then is the lyfe of mã, in respect of the heauenlye ioye, althoughe it were thrise so long as y^e yeares of Nestor, for that casting of the hand in the fyre thoughte it bee neuer so shorte, yet it is some parte of hys lyfe, but the whole lyfe of man is noo portion of tyme in respect of the eternal lyfe.

SPV. I haue nothyng too saye against you.

HEDO. Doo you then thyncke that anye affliction or tourment can disquiet those that prepare them selues wyth a chearful hearte and a stedfast hoope vnto the kyngedome of God, wher as the course of this lyfe is nowe so shorte?

SPVDE. I thinke not, if thei haue a sure perswasion and a constant hope too attayne it.

E.iiii.

HEDO. I coome now vnto those pleasures, whiche you obiected agaynst me, they do wythdrawe them selues from daunsynge, bankettyng, from

pleasaunte seeghtes, they dispyce all these thynges, as thus: for to haue the vse of thinges farre more ioyfulle, and haue as great pleasure as these bee, but after another sorte: the eye hath not seene, the eare hath not heard, nor the heart of man cannot thyncke what consolations GOD hathe ordeined for them that loue hym. Sayncte Paule knewe what maner of thynges shoulde bee the songes, queeres, daunsynges, and bankettes of vertuous myndes, yea, in this lyfe.

SPVDEVS but there bee some leafull pleasures, whyche they vtterlye refuse.

HEDONIVS. That maye bee, for the immoderate vse of leafull and godly games or pastymes, is vnleaful: and if you wyll excepte this one thing onely, in al other thei excelle whiche seeme too leade a paynfull lyfe, and whome we take too bee ouerwhelmed with all kynd of miseries. Now I prai you what more roialler sight can ther be, then y^e cõtêplatiõ of this world? and such men as y^e be in fauour of god kepung his holy cõmaûdemêtes & loue his most blessed testamêt, receiue far geater pleasure in the syght therof, then thother sorte doo, for while thei behold wyth ouercurious eyes, y^e wõderful worke, their mynde is troubled because they can not compasse for what purpose he doeth such thinges, then thei improue the moost righte and wise gouernour of all and murmour at his doinges as though they were goddes of reprehension: and often finde faute with that lady nature, and saye that she is vnnaturall, whiche taunt forsooth with as mucche spite as can bee shewed with woordes, greueth nature: but truely it reboundeth on hym, that made nature, if there bee any at all. But the vertuous man with godly & simple eyes beholdeth with an excedyng reioyce of heart the workes of his Lorde and father highly praysyng thê all, and neither reprehêdeth nor findeth faut with any of thê, but for euey thyng yeoueth moste hearty thankes, when he considereth that al were made for the loue of man.

And so in al thynges, he praieth vnto the infinite power, deuine wisdom, & goodnes of the maker, wherof he perceiueth moste euident tokens in thynges that bee here created. Now fain that there were suche a palace in verie deede as Apuleus faineth, or els one that were more royall and gorgeouse, and that you shoulde take twoo thither with you too beholde it, the one a straunger, whiche gooeth for this intent onely too see the thyng, and the other the seruaût or soonne of hym that firste causeth this buyldyng, whether will haue more delectie in it? the straunger, too whom suche maner of house dooeth nothyng appartain, or the soonne whiche beholdeth with greate ioye and pleasure, the witte, riches, and magnificence of his deerely beloued father, especially when he dooeth consider all this worke was made for his sake.

Sp. Your question is too plain: for they most cõmunely that bee of euill condicions, knowe that heauen and all thinges contained therin, were made for mannes sake.

HEDO. Almoste al knowe that, but some dooe not remembre it, shewyng thêselues vnthâkeful for the great and exhuberât benefittes of god, & al though thei remember it, yet that mã taketh greater delight in the sight of it whiche hath more loue vnto the maker therof, in like maner as, he more chearfully wyll behold the element whiche aspireth towarde the eternall life.

SPV. Your sayynges are mucche like too bee true.

HED. Nowe the pleasures of feastes dooeth not consist in the delicates of the mouth, nor in the good sauces of cookes, but in health of body and appetite of stomacke. You may not thynke that any delicious

person suppeth more pleasauntly hauyng before
hym partriches, turtelles, leuerettes, bekerys,
sturgeon, and lamprays: then a vertuous man
hauyng nothîg too eat, but onely bread potage, or
wortes: and nothyng too drynke, but water, single
bere, or wyne well alayde, be cause he taketh these
thinges as prepared of God vnto all lyuyng
creatures, and that they bee now yeouê vnto him of
his gentyll and mercifull father, praier maketh euery
thyng too sauour well. The petition in y^e begynnyng
of dyner sanctifieth all thynges and in a while after
there is recited some holy lesson of the woorde of
God: whiche more refresheth the minde, then meate
the body, and grace after all this. Finally he riseth
from the table, not ful: but recreated, not laden, but
refreshed: yea, refreshed both in spirit and bodie,
thynke you that any chief deuiser of these muche
vse dākets, & deintye delicacies fareth nowe more
deliciously?

SPudeus. But in Venus there is greate delectacions if
we beleue Arestotell.

Hed. And in this behalfe the vertuous manne far
excelleth as well as in good fare, wiegh you now the
matter as it is, the better a manne loueth his wife,
the more he delecteth in the good felowship and
familiaritie that is betwene them after the course of
nature. Furthermore, no menne louê their wiues
more vehemētly then thei that loue them euê soo, as
Christ loued the churche. For thei that loue thê for
the desire of bodely pleasure, loue thê not. More
ouer, the seldomer any man dooeth accompany with
his wife, the greater pleasure, it is to hym
afterwarde, and that thyng the wātō poete knew full
well whiche writeth, rare and seldome vse stereth vp
pleasures. Albeit, the lest parte of pleasure is in the
familiarie company betwene them. There is forsothe
far greater in the continuall leadyng of their liues
too gether, whiche emongest none can be so
pleasaunt as those that loue syncerely and faithfully
together in godly and christian loue, and loue a like
one the other. In the other sort, oftê whêthe
pleasure of y^e body decaieth & waxeth old loue
waxeth coold & is sone forgottō, but emōgest right
christê mê, the more y^e the lust of y^e flesh
decreaseth & vanisheth away, y^e more thê al godly
loue encreaseth Are you not yet perswaded that none
lyue more pleasauntly thê they whiche liue
continually in vertue and true religiō of god?

SP. Would god all men were as well perswaded in
that thyng.

He. And if they bee Epicures y^t lyue pleasauntli:
none bee righter Epicures then they that liue
vertuously, and if we wyll that euery thyng haue it
right name none deserueth more y^e cognome of an
Epicure, then that Prince of all godly wisdom too
whō most reuerētly we ought alwaies too praye: for
in the greeke tonge an Epicure signifieth an helper.
Nowe whan the lawe of nature was first corrupted
with sinne, whê the law of Moses did rather prouoke
euil desires then remedy them. Whā the tyraunte
Sathanas reygned in this worlde freely and wythout
punishment, then thys prynce onely, dyd sodenlye
helpe mankynde redy to perishe: wherfore thei erre
shamefully which scoff and bable that CHRIST was
one that was sadd and of a malancole nature, &
that he hath prouoked vs vnto an vnpleasaunt kynde
of lyfe, for onely he did shewe a kind of liuing most
godly and fullest of al true pleasure, if we might
haue the stone of Tantalus taken away from vs.

F.i.

SPVD. What darke sayyng is this?

EDO. It is a mery tale too laugh at, but this bourd
induceth verry graue and sadde thynges.

SPV. I tary too heare this mery conceite, that you
name too bee so sage a matter.

H. Thei whiche gaue their studie and diligence to colour and set furth the preceptes of Philosophie wyth subtil fables, declare y^t there was one Tantalus broughte vnto the table of the goddes, whych was euer furnished wyth all good fare, and most nete and sumptuous that myght bee, whan thys straunger shoulde take hys leave, Iupiter thought it was for his great liberalitie and highe renoume, that his guest shuld not depart wythout some rewarde, he wylled him therfore too aske what he woulde, and he shoulde haue it: Tantalus (forsooth) lyke a verye leude and foolyshe person, for that he sette all the felicitie and pleasure of man in the delectation of the bely, and glotonye, desired but only too sytte at suche a table all the dayes of hys life, Iupiter graunted him his desire, and shortly his vow was there stablished and ratified. Tantalus nowe sytteth at the table furnyshed wyth all kindes of delicates, such drinke as the goddes druncke of was set on the table, and there wanted no rooses nor odours that could yeoue any swete smel before the Goddes, Ganymedes the buttler or one lyke vnto hym, standeth euer redye, the Muses stande rounde aboute syngyng pleasauntly, mery Silenus daunseth, ne ther wanted noo fooles too laugh at, and breuely, there was euerye thyng that coulde deleyght any sence of mā but emongist all these, Tantalus sytteth all sadde, syghyng, and vnquiet with hym selfe, neither laughing nor yet touching such thynges as were set before hym

F.ii.

SPVDE. What was the cause?

HED. Over his head as he sate there hāged by an heere a great stone euer lyke too fall.

SPV. I woulde then haue conueied my selfe from suche a table.

HEDO But his vowe had bound hym too the contrarye, for Iupiter is not so easye too intreate as oure GOD, which dooeth vnloose the pernicious vowes of menne, that bee made contrary vnto his holy woord, if thei bee penitent and sorye therfore, or elles it myght bee thus, the same stoone that woulde not suffer hym too eate, would neither suffer hym to ryse, for if he had but ones moued he shuld haue been quashed al in peeses with the fall thereof.

F.iii.

SPVDE. You haue shewed a very mery fable

HEDON. But nowe heare that thing, which you wil not laugh at: the commune people seeke too haue a pleasaunt life in outwarde thynges, where as noothyng can yeoue that, but onely a constant and a quiet mind: for surely a far heuier stone hangeth ouer these y^t grudge with them selues, then hanged ouer Tantalus: it only hangeth not ouer them, but greueth and oppresseth the mynde, ne the mind is not troubled wyth any vayn hoope, but looketh euery houre to bee caste in too the paynes of hell, I praye you what can bee so pleasaunt emongist all thinges that bee yeouen vnto man, that coulde reioyse the mynde, whyche were oppressed wyth suche a stoone?

SPVDE. Truely there is nothyng but madnes, or elles incredulitie.

HEDO. Yf younge menne woulde weygh these thynges, that bee quyckly prouoked and entised with pleasure as it were wyth the cuppe of Circes, whiche in steade of theyr greatest pleasures receiue poysoned myxte with honye. Howe circumspecte

F.iiii

would they bee too doo anye thyng vnaduisedly y^t shoulde grudge their mindes afterward? What thinge is it that thei would not doo too haue suche a godly treasure in store against their latter daies? that is a minde knowyng it selfe cleane & honest and a name that hath not been defiled at any time. But what thyng now is more miserable then is agee? Whan it beholdeth, and loketh backward on thinges

y^t be past seeth plainly with great grudg of
conscience howe fayre thynges he hathe despiced
and sette lyght by, (that is, howe farre he hath
discented and gone astray from the promyses made
vnto God in baptime) & agayn, how foule & noughty
thîges he hath clipped and embraced, and whã hee
looketh forward, hee seeth then the daye of
iudgemente drawe neere, and shortely after the
eternall punyshement of hell.

SPVDE. I esteme them most happie whych haue
neuer defyled theyr youthe, but euer haue increased
in vertu, til thei haue coomne vnto the last pincte of
age.

HEDO. Next them thei ar too bee commended that
haue wythdrawne them selues from the folie of
youth in tyme.

SPVDE. But what councel wil you yeoue agee that is
in suche great myserie.

HEDO. No man shoulde dispayre so long as life
endureth, I wyl exhorte him to flee for helpe vnto the
infinite mercye & gentilnes of God.

SP. But the longer y^t he hath liued the heape of his
synnes hath euer waxen greate and greater, so that
nowe it passeth the number of the sandes in the sea,
H. But the mercies of our lord far excede those
sãdes, for although the sande can not bee numbred
of manne, yet hit hath an ende, but the mercie of
God neither knoweth ende, ne measure.

SP. Yea but he hath no space that shall dye by and
by,

HEDONI. The lesse tyme he hath the more feruêtly
he should cal vnto god for grace, that thyng is long
inough before God, whiche is of suche power as too
ascende from the yearth vnto heauê, for a short
prayer forsoth streght entreth heauê, if it bee made
with a vehemêt spirit. It is written, y^t y^e womã
synner spoken of in the gossell did penaunce al her
life dayes: but with how fewe wordes again did the
thief obtain Paradise in the houre of death? If he will
crye with hearte and mynde, God haue mercie on me
after thy great mercie:

God wil take awaye from hym Tantalus stone
and yeoue in his hea-
ryng ioye and cõfort
and his bones hu-
miled through
cõtrition, wil
reioyse
that
he
hath his synnes
foryeouen
hym.

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