

THE  
HISTORIE  
OF THE VVORLD.

Commonly called,  
THE NATVRALL HISTORIE OF  
C.PLINIVS SECVNDVS.

*Translated into English by PHILEMON HOLLAND  
Doctor in Physicke.*

The first Tome.

[elaborate woodcut device]

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*Printed by Adam Islip.*  
1601.

*☞ A soliloquy to the Goddess ☜*

**T**He Earth followeth next: unto which alone of all parts of the world, for her singular benefites wee have given the reverent and worshipfull name of Mother. For like as the Heaven is the (mother) of God, even so is she of men. She it is that taketh us when we are comming into the world, nourisheth us when we are new born: and once being come abroad, ever sustaineth & beareth us up: and at the last when we are rejected and forlorne of all the world besides, she embraceth us: then most of all other times, like a kind mother, she covereth us all over in her bosome: by no merit more sacred than by it, wherwith she maketh us holy and sacred; even bearing our tumbes, monuments, and titles, continuing our name, and extending our memorie, thereby to make recompence and weigh against the shortnesse our age: whose last power wee in our anger wish to be heavie unto our enemy, and yet she is heavie to none, as if we were ignorant that she alone is never angry with any man. Waters ascend up, and turn into clouds, they congeale and harden into haile, swell they doe into waves and billowes, and downe they hasten headlong into brookes and land floods. The aire is thickened with clouds, and rageth with winds and stormes. But she is bountifull, mild, tender over us and indulgent, readie at all times to attend and wait upon the good of mortall men. See what she breeds being forced! nay, what shee yeeldeth of her owne accord! what odoriferous smels, and pleasant favours! what holefome juices and liquors, what soft things to content our feeling, what lovely colours doth shee give to please our eie, how faithfully and justly doth she repay with usurie that which was lent and credited out to her! Finally, what store of all things doth shee feed and nourish for our sake!...Shee it is that bringeth forth medicinable hearbes, and evermore is in travaile to be delivered of some thing or other, good for man. Over and besides, it may bee thought and beleaved, that for very pittie of us she ordained and appointed some poisons, that when wee were wearie of this life, cursed famine...should not consume and waite us with languishing and pining consumption, and so procure our death; that high and steepe rocks should not dash and crush our bodies in peeces; nor the overthwart and preposterous punishment by the halter, wreath our necks, and

stop that vitall breath, which we seeke to let out and be rid of: last of all, that we might not worke our owne death in the deepe sea, and being drowned, feed fishes, and be buried in their bellies, ne yet the edge and point of the sword cut and pierce our bodie, and so put us to dolorous paine. So that there is no doubt, but in a pittifull regard and compassion of us, she hath engendered that poyson, by one gentle draught whereof, going most easly downe, wee might foregoe our life, and die without any hurt and skin broken out of our bodie, yea, and diminish no one drop of bloud: without greivous paine, I say, and like onely to them who be athirst: that being in that manner dead, neither foule of the aire, nor wild beast prey upon or touch our bodies, but that he should be reserved for the earth, who perished by himselfe and for himselfe: and, to confesse and say the troth, the earth hath bred the remedie of all miseries, howsoever we have made it a venome and poison to our life. For after the like sort we employ yron and steele, which wee cannot possibly bee without. And yet we should not doe well and justly to complaine, in case she had brought it forth for to doe hurt and mischeefe. Now surely to this onely part of Nature and the world, wee are unthankfull, as though shee served not mans turne for all dainties; not for contumelie and reproch to bee misused. Cast shee is into the sea, or els to let in peeres and frithes, eaten away with water. With yron tooles, with wood, fire, stone, burdens or corn tormented shee is every houre: and all this much more to content our pleasures and wanton delights than to serve us with naturall food and necessarie nourishment. And yet, these misusages which shee abideth above, and in her outward skin, may seeme in some sort tollerable. But wee, not satisfied therewith, peirce deeper and enter into her very bowels, wee search into the vaines of gold and silver, wee mine and dig for copper and lead mettals. And for to seeke out gemmes and some little stones, we sinke pits deep within the ground. Thus wee plucke the very heartstrings out of her, and all to weare on our finger one gemme or pretious stone, to fulfill our pleasure and desire. How many hands are worne with digging and delving, that one joint of our finger might shine againe. Surely, if there were any devils or infernal spirits beneath, ere this time verily these mines (for to feed covetousnes and roiot) would have brought them up above ground. Marvaile we then, if she hath brought forth some things hurtfull and noisome? But savage beasts (I well thinke) ward and save her, they keep sacrilegious hands from doing her injurie. Nay ywis it is nothing so. Dig wee not amongst dragons and serpents: and together with veines of gold, handle we not the roots of poisoned and venmous hearbes? Howbeit, this goddesse wee find the better appaied and lesse

discontented for all this misusage, for that the end and issue of all this wealth, tendeth to wickednesse, to murder and warres, and her whome wee drench with our bloud, wee cover also with unburied bones. Which neverthelesse, as if shee did reprove and reproch us for this rage and furie of ours, shee her selfe covereth in the end, and hideth close even the wicked parts of mortall men. Among other imputations of an unthankfull mind, I may well count this also, That wee bee ignorant of her nature. *Tome I, pp. 29-30; II, Ch. LXIII., Of Earth and the nature thereof.*

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And once again, in modern orthography:

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some poisons, that when wee were wearie of this life, cursed famine. . . should not consume and wast us with languishing and pining consumption, and so procure our death; that high and steepe rocks should not dash and crush our bodies in peeces; nor the overthwart and preposterous punishment by the halter, wreath our necks, and stop that vitall breath, which we seeke to let out and be rid of: last of all, that we might not worke our owne death in the deepe sea, and being drowned, feed fishes, and be buried in their bellies, ne yet the edge and point of the sword cut and pierce our bodie, and so put us to dolorous paine. So that there is no doubt, but in a pittifull regard and compassion of us, she hath engendered that poyson, by one gentle draught whereof, going most easily downe, wee might foregoe our life, and die without any hurt and skin broken out of our bodie, yea, and diminish no one drop of blood: without greivous paine, I say, and like onely to them who be athirst: that being in that manner dead, neither foule of the aire, nor wild beast prey upon or touch our bodies, but that he should be reserved for the earth, who perished by himselfe and for himselfe: and, to confesse and say the troth, the earth hath bred the remedie of all miseries, howsoever we have made it a venome and poison to our life. For after the like sort we employ yron and steele, which wee cannot possibly bee without. And yet we should not doe well and justly to complaine, in case she had brought it forth for to doe hurt and mischeefe. Now surely to this onely part of Nature and the world, wee are unthankfull, as though shee served not mans turne for all dainties; not for contumelie and reproch to bee misused. Cast shee is into the sea, or els to let in peeres and frithes, eaten away with water. With yron tooles, with wood, fire, stone, burdens or corn tormented she is every houre: and all this much more to content our pleasures and wanton delights than to serve us with naturall food and necessarie nourishment. And yet, these misusages which shee abideth above, and in her outward skin, may seeme in some sort tollerable. But wee, not satisfied therewith, peirce deeper and enter into her very bowels, wee search into the vaines of gold and silver, wee mine and dig for copper and lead mettals. And for to seeke out gemmes and some little stones, we sinke pits deep within the ground. Thus wee plucke the very heart-strings out of her, and all to weare on our finger one gemme or pretious stone, to fulfill our pleasure and desire. How many hands are worne with digging and delving, that one joint of our finger might shine againe. Surely, if there were any devils or infernal spirits beneath, ere this time verily these mines (for to feed covetousnes and riot) would have brought them up above ground. Marvaile we then, if she hath brought forth some things hurtfull and noisome? But savage beasts (I well thinke) ward and save her, they keep sacrilegious hands from doing her injurie. Nay ywis it is nothing so. Dig wee not amongst dragons and serpents? and together with veines of gold, handle we not the roots of poisoned and venmous hearbes? Howbeit, this goddesse wee find the better appaied and lesse discontented for all this misusage, for that the end and issue of all this wealth, tendeth to wickednesse, to murder and warres, and her whome wee drench with our blood, wee cover

also with unburied bones. Which neverthelesse, as if shee did reprove and reproch us for this rage and furie of ours, shee her selfe covereth in the end, and hideth close even the wicked parts of mortall men. Among other imputations of an unthankfull mind, I may well count this also, That wee bee ignorant of her nature.

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¶ *Of the motion of Heaven* ¶

**T**Hat the World thus framed, in a continuall and uncessant circuit, with unspeakeable swiftnesse turneth round about in the space of foure and twentie houres, the rising and setting ordinarily of the sun hath left cleere and doubtlesse. Now, whether it being in height infinite, and therefore the found of so huge a frame, whiles it is whirled about, and never resteth in that revolution, cannot be heard with our eares, I cannot so easly resolve and pronounce: no more I assure you, than I may avouch the ringing of the starres that are driven about therewith, and roll withall their owne spheres: or determine, that as the heaven mooveth, it doth represent indeed a pleasant and incredible sweet harmonie both day and night: although to us within, it seemeth to passe in silence. That there be imprinted therein the pourtraicts of living creatures, and of all things besides without number, as also that the bodie thereof is not all over smooth and flicke (as we see in birds eggs) which excellent authors have tearmed *Tenerum*, is shewed by good arguments: for that by the fall of naturall feeds from thence of all things, and those for the most part blended and mixed one with another, there are engendered in the world and the sea especially, an infinite number of strange and monstrous shapes. Over and besides, our eyesight testifieth the same; whiles in one place there appeareth the resemblance of a waine or chariot, in another of a beare, the figure of a beare, the figure of a bull in this part, of a [*delta*] lettter in that, and principally the middle circle over our head, more white than the rest, toward the North pole. (*Tome I, p. 2; II, Ch. III.*)

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🌹 *Of the Moones nature* 🌹

**B**Vt the planet of the Moone, being the last of all, most familiar with the earth, and devised by Nature for the remedie of darknesse, outgoeth the admiration of all the rest. She with her winding and turning in many and sundrie shapes, hath troubled much the wits of the beholders, fretting and fuming, that of this star, being the nearest of all, they should be most ignorant; growing as it doth, or els waining, evermore. One while bended pointwise into tips of horns; another while divided just in the halfe, and anon againe in compasse round: spotted sometime and darke, and soone after on a suddain exceeding bright: one while big and full, and another while all at once nothing to be seene. Sometime shining all night long, and otherwhiles late it is ere she riseth: she also helpeth the sunnes light some part of the day: eclipsed, and yet in that eclipse to be seene. The same at the moneths end lieth hidden, at which time (it is supposed) shee laboureth and travaileth not. At one time yee shall see her below, and anon aloft: and that not after one manner, but while reaching up close to the highest heaven, and anotherwhile readie to touch the mountains: sometimes mounted on high into the North, & sometime cast downe below into the South. Which severall constitutions and motions in her, the first man that observed, was *Endymeon*: and thereupon the voice went, That he was enamoured upon the Moone... (*Tome I, pp. 6-7; II, Ch. IX., Of the Moones nature*)

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🌹 *Venus* 🌹

...Beneath the Sunne a goodly faire starre there is, called *Venus*, which goeth her compasse, wandering this way and that, by turnes: and by the very names that it hath, testifieth her emulation of Sunne and Moone. For all the while that shee preventeth the morning, and riseth Orientall before, she taketh the name of

*Lucifer* (or Day-ſtarre,) as a ſecond ſun haſtening the day. Contrariwiſe, when ſhee ſhineth from the Weſt Occidentall, drawing out the day light at length, and ſupplying the place of the Moone, ſhe is named *Veſper*. This nature of hers, *Pythagoras* of Samos firſt found out, about the 42 Olympias: which fell out to bee the 142 yeere after the foundation of Rome. Now this planet, in greatneſſe, goeth beyond all the other five: and ſo cleere and ſhining withall, that the beames of this one ſtarre caſt ſhaddowes upon the earth. And hereupon commeth ſo great diverſitie and ambiguitie of the names thereof: whiles ſome haue called it *Iuno*, others *Iſis*, and other ſome the Mother of the gods. By the naturall efficacie of this ſtarre, all things are engendered on earth. For whether ſhe riſe Eaſt or Weſt, ſhe ſprinkleth all the earth with dew of generation, and not onely filleth the ſame with feed, cauſing it to conceive, but ſtirreth up alſo the nature of all living creatures to engender... (*Tome I, p. 6; II, Ch. VIII., Of the nature of Planets, and their circuit.*)

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❧ *The nature of Honie* ❧

**T**His pleaſant and ſweet liquor which we call honie, is engendered naturally in the aire, and eſpecially by the influence and riſing of ſome ſtarres: but principally during the fervent heat of the canicular daies, even when the Dog ſtarre is in his full power and force: never before the appearing of the ſtarre *Vergiliæ*, but alwaies before day. For ſo about the daybreake betimes in the morning, the leaves of trees are found bedewed with honnie: and looke whoſoever they are, that have occaſion to be abroad in the aire about the dawning of the morrow, they may evidently perceive their clothes wet with a clammy humour of honie, yea, and their haire glewed therewith together, if they goe bare headed. Bee it what it will, either a certain ſweat of the ſkie, or ſome unctuous gellie proceeding from the ſtarres, or rather a liquor purged from the aire when it purifieth it ſelfe; would God wee had it ſo pure, ſo cleare, and ſo naturall, and in the owne kind refined, as when it deſcendeth firſt, whether it be from ſkie, from ſtarre, or from the aire. For even now ſuch as it is, paſſing (as it were) through ſo many hands: namely, falling from a region ſo high and remote from

us, and in the way as it commeth catching much filth; and namely, infected with the grosse vapour of the earth which it meeteth in the fall: moreover, sucked and drunke (as it is) by the Bees from the leaves of trees and grasse, and so gathered and laid up in their little bellies or bladders, (for at their mouth they spread and cast it up againe;) corrupted also and sophisticated with other humors drawne out of flowers; finally, so long soking with the hives, and suffering so many alterations: yet for all the sorrow, a great resemblance it carrieth still with it of a most pleasant, sweet, and celestiall liquor. (*Tome I, p. 315; XI, Ch. XII.*)

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🌀 *The power of the Dog starre* 🌀

**W**Ho knoweth not, that when the Dog starre ariseth, the heat of the Sunne is fierie and burning; the effects of which starre are felt exceeding much upon the earth. The seas at his rising do rage and take on, the wines in cellars are troubled, pooles also and standing waters doe stirre and move. A wild beast there is in Ægypt, called *Orix*, which the Ægyptians say, doth stand full against the Dog starre when it riseth, looking wittly upon it, and testifieth after a sort by sneesing, a kind of worship. As for dogs, no man doubteth verily, but all the time of the canicular daies they are most readie to run mad. (*Tome I, pp. 19-20; II, Ch. XL.*)

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🌀 *The Atlas Mountaine* 🌀

...As many miles from it is the towne Sala, standing upon (*p. 91*) a river of the same name, neere now unto the wilderness, much infested and annoied with whole herds of Elephants, but much more with the nation of the Autololes,

through which lieth the way to Atlas the most fabulous mountaine of all Affricke. For writers have given out, that this hill arising out of the very midst of the sea sands, mounteth up to the skie, all rough, illfavoured, and overgrowne on that side that lieth to the shore of the Ocean, into which it gave the name: and yet the same is shadowie, full of woods, and watered with veines of spouting Springs that way which looketh to Affricke, with fruitfull trees of all sorts, springing of the owne accord, and bearing one under another, in such sort, that at no time a man can want his pleasure and delight to his full contentment. Moreover, that none of the inhabitants there are seene all day long: all is still and silent, like the fearefull horror in desert wilderness: and as men come neerer and neerer unto it, a secret devotion ariseth in their harts: and besides this feare and horror, they are lifted up above the clouds, and even close to the circle of the Moone. Over and besides, that the same hill shineth oftentimes with many flashes of fires, and is haunted with the wanton lascivious Ægipanes and Satyres, whereof it is full, that it resoundeth with noise of haut-boies, pipes, and fifes, and ringeth againe with the sound of tabers, timbrels, and cymbals. These bee the reports of great and famous writers, to say nothing of the labours and works both of *Hercules* and *Perses* there: and to conclude, that the way unto it is exceeding great, and not certainly knowne. (*Tome I; pp. 90-1; The Fifth Booke; The description of Affricke, Ch. 1*)

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