

The Early Church Fathers Writings

Volume 61

THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS WRITINGS

Volume 61

Augustine: Letters 132 to 270 and Psalms 1 to 44

c. AD 392 – 430

S E R M O N I N D E X

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Volume 61: Augustine: Letters 132 to 270 and Psalms 1 to 44

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS VOLUME

How this book is arranged

This is the sixty-first volume of a series that gathers the writings of the early Church in order of date, from the generation after the apostles down to the eighth century. This volume holds Augustine, Letters 132 to 270 and Psalms 1 to 44, from the period about AD 392 – 430.

Within each work the text is divided into chapters and numbered sections, so that any passage can be found again and cited. The small bold figures in the text are the section numbers.

The translations

The text is in English only. Wherever a modern English version has been prepared for SermonIndex it is used here; otherwise the book prints an older public-domain translation. In both cases the wording is the translator's own: older translations have not been altered beyond dividing them into sections. The sources for every work are listed at the back of the book, together with the licence under which each text is released. All the works in this volume are printed in older public-domain translations.

In this volume

Augustine was born at Thagaste in North Africa in AD 354. He taught rhetoric at Carthage, Rome and Milan, and after years as a Manichaean he was baptised at Milan by Ambrose in AD 387. He returned to Africa, was ordained a presbyter at Hippo about AD 391, and was bishop of Hippo from about AD 395 until his death in AD 430, while the Vandals were besieging the city. He wrote the Confessions, The City of God and On the Trinity, and a great body of sermons, letters and treatises against the Manichaeans, the Donatists and the Pelagians.

These are the letters of Augustine's later years. They include his letter to Jerome on the origin of the soul, his letters to Boniface, and the letters of his last years. The first forty-four Expositions on the Psalms follow them.

Dates and authorship

Dates are approximate and are debated by scholars. Each work begins with a short introduction that states what is known about its author and its date, and what is uncertain.

PART ONE

Letters 132 to 270

*The later letters, from the years of the Pelagian controversy to
the last year of his life.*

Letters 132–270

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

AD 354–430

These are the letters of Augustine that were translated for the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, numbered as in the Benedictine edition. They run from the years before his baptism to the last year of his life. Some of the numbered letters are not in this translation. This volume holds Letters 132 to 270.

LETTER 132. TO VOLUSIANUS, AD 412

¹(A.D. 412.) to Volusianus, my Noble Lord and Most Justly Distinguished Son, Bishop Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. ²In my desire for your welfare, both in this world and in Christ, I am perhaps not even surpassed by the prayers of your pious mother. Wherefore, in reciprocating your salutation with the respect due to your worth, I beg to exhort you, as earnestly as I can, not to grudge to devote attention to the study of the Writings which are truly and unquestionably holy. For they are genuine and solid truth, not winning their way to the mind by artificial eloquence, nor giving forth with flattering voice a vain and uncertain sound. They deeply interest the man who is hungering not for words but for things; and they cause great alarm at first in him whom they are to render safe from fear. I exhort you especially to read the writings of the apostles, for from them you will receive a stimulus to acquaint yourself with the prophets, whose testimonies the apostles use. If in your reading or meditation on what you have read any question arises to the solution of which I may appear necessary, write to me, that I may write in reply. For, with the Lord helping me, I may perhaps be more able to serve you in this way than by personally conversing with you on such subjects, partly because, through the difference in our occupations, it does not happen that you have leisure at the same times as I might have it, but especially because of the irrepressible intrusion of those who are for the most part not adapted to such discussions, and take more pleasure in a war of words than in the clear light of knowledge; whereas, whatever is written stands always at

the service of the reader when he has leisure, and there can be nothing burdensome in the society of that which is taken up or laid aside at your own pleasure.

LETTER 133. TO MARCELLINUS, AD 412

3 (A.D. 412.) to Marcellinus,¹ my Noble Lord, Justly Distinguished, my Son Very Much Beloved Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. 4 I. I have learned that the Circumcelliones and clergy of the Donatist faction belonging to the district of Hippo, whom the guardians of public order had brought to trial for their deeds, have been examined by your Excellency, and that the most of them have confessed their share in the violent death which the presbyter Restitutus suffered at their hands, and in the beating of Innocentius, another Catholic presbyter, as well as in digging out the eye and cutting off the finger of the said Innocentius. This news has plunged me into the deepest anxiety, lest perchance your Excellency should judge them worthy, according to the laws, of punishment not less severe than suffering in their own persons the same injuries as they have inflicted on others. Wherefore I write this letter to implore you by your faith in Christ, and by the mercy of Christ the Lord Himself, by no means to do this or permit it to be done. For although we might silently pass over the execution of criminals who may be regarded as brought up for trial not upon an accusation of ours, but by an indictment presented by those to whose vigilance the preservation of the public peace is entrusted, we do not wish to have the sufferings of the servants of God avenged by the infliction of precisely similar injuries in the way of retaliation. Not, of course, that we object to the removal from these wicked men of the liberty to perpetrate further crimes;

5 but our desire is rather that justice be satisfied without the taking of their lives or the maiming of their bodies in any part, and that, by such coercive measures as may be in accordance with the laws, they be turned from their insane frenzy to the quietness of men in their sound judgment, or compelled to give up mischievous violence and betake themselves to some useful labour. This is indeed called a penal sentence; but who does not see that when a restraint is put upon the boldness of savage violence, and the remedies fitted to produce repentance are not withdrawn, this discipline should be called a benefit rather than vindictive punishment? 2. Fulfil, Christian judge, the duty of an affectionate father; let your indignation against their : crimes be tempered by considerations of humanity; be not

provoked by the atrocity of their sinful deeds to gratify the passion of revenge, but rather be moved by the wounds which these deeds have inflicted on their own souls to exercise a desire to heal them. Do not lose now that fatherly care which you maintained when prosecuting the examination, in doing which you extracted the confession of such horrid crimes,

6 not by stretching them on the rack, not by furrowing their flesh with iron claws,¹ not by scorching them with flames, but by beating them with rods, a mode of correction used by schoolmasters? and by parents themselves in chastising children, and often also by bishops in the sentences awarded by them. Do not, therefore, now punish with extreme severity the crimes which you searched out with lenity. The necessity for harshness is greater in the investigation than in the infliction of punishment; for even the gentlest men use diligence and stringency in searching out a hidden crime, that they may find to whom they may show mercy. Wherefore it is generally necessary to use more rigour in making inquisition, so that when the crime has been brought to light, there may be scope for displaying clemency. For all good works love to be set in the light, not in order to obtain glory from men, but, as the Lord saith, "that they seeing your good works may glorify your Father who is in heaven." ³ And, for the same reason, the apostle was not satisfied with merely exhorting us to practise moderation, but also commands us to make it known: "Let your moderation," he says, "be known unto all men;"⁴ and in another place, "Showing all meekness unto all men." ⁵ Hence, also, that most signal forbearance of the holy David, when he mercifully spared his enemy when delivered into his hand,⁶ would not have been so conspicuous had not his power to act otherwise been manifest.

⁷ Therefore let not the power of executing vengeance inspire you with harshness, seeing that the necessity of examining the criminals did not make you lay aside your clemency. Do not call for the executioner now when the crime has been found out, after having forborne from calling in the tormentor when you were finding it out. ³ In fine, you have been sent hither for the benefit of the Church. I solemnly declare that what I recommend is expedient in the interests of the Catholic Church, or, that I may not seem to pass beyond the boundaries of my own charge, I protest that it is for the good of the Church belonging to the diocese of Hippo. If you do not hearken to me asking this favour as a friend, hearken to me offering this counsel as a bishop; although, indeed, it would not be presumption for me to

say -- since I am addressing a Christian, and especially in such a case as this -- that it becomes you to hearken to me as a bishop commanding with authority, my noble and justly distinguished lord and much -- loved son. I am aware that the principal charge of law cases connected with the affairs of the Church has been devolved on your Excellency, but as I believe that this particular case belongs to the very illustrious and honourable proconsul, I have written a letter 7 to him also, which I beg you not to refuse to give to him, or, if necessary, recommend to his attention;

8 and I entreat you both not to resent our intercession, or counsel, or anxiety, as officious. And let not the sufferings of Catholic servants of God, which ought to be useful in the spiritual upbuilding of the weak, be sullied by the retaliation of injuries on those who did them wrong, but rather, tempering the rigour of justice, let it be your care as sons of the Church to commend both your own faith and your Mother's clemency. May almighty God enrich your Excellency with all good things, my noble and justly distinguished lord and dearly beloved son !

LETTER 135.

9 (A.D. to Bishop Augustin, my Lord Truly Holy, and Father Justly Revered, Volusianus Sends Greeting. I. O man who art a pattern of goodness and uprightness, you ask me to apply to you for instruction in regard to some of the obscure passages which occur in my reading. I accept at your command the favour of this kindness, and willingly offer myself to be taught by you, acknowledging the authority of the ancient proverb, "We are never too old to learn." With good reason the author of this proverb has not restricted by any limits or end our pursuit of wisdom; for truth,⁸ secluded in its original principles, is never so disclosed to those who approach it as to be wholly revealed to their knowledge. It seems to me, therefore, my lord truly holy, and father justly revered, worth while to communicate to you the substance of a conversation which recently took place among us. I was present at a gathering of friends, and a great many opinions were brought forward there, such as the disposition and studies of each suggested. Our discourse was chiefly, however, on the department of rhetoric which treats of proper arrangement.⁹ I speak to one familiar with the subject, for you were not long ago a teacher of these things. Upon this followed a discussion

¹⁰ regarding "invention" in rhetoric, its nature, what boldness it requires, how great the labour, involved in methodical arrangement, what is the

charm of metaphors, and the beauty of illustrations, and the power of applying epithets suitable to the character and nature of the subject in hand. Others extolled with partiality the poet's art. This part also of eloquence is not left unnoticed or unhonoured by you. We may appropriately apply to you that line of the poet: "The ivy is intertwined with the laurels which reward your victory."¹ We spoke, accordingly, of the embellishments which skilful arrangement adds to a poem, of the beauty of metaphors, and of the sublimity of well-chosen comparisons; then we spoke of smooth and flowing versification, and, if I may use the expression, the harmonious variation of the pauses in the lines? The conversation turned next to a subject with which you are very familiar, namely, that philosophy which you were wont yourself to cherish after the manner of Aristotle and Isocrates. We asked what had been achieved by the philosopher of the Lyceum, by the varied and incessant doubtings of the Academy, by the debater of the Porch, by the discoveries of natural philosophers, by the self-indulgence of the Epicureans; and what had been the result of their boundless zeal in disputation with each other, and how truth was more than ever unknown by them after they assumed that its knowledge was attainable. 2. While our conversation continues on these topics, one of the large company says:

¹¹ "Who among us is so thoroughly acquainted with the wisdom taught by Christianity as to be able to resolve the doubts by which I am entangled, and to give firmness to my hesitating acceptance of its teaching by arguments in which truth or probability may claim my belief? We are all dumb with amazement. Then, of his own accord, he breaks forth in these words: "I wonder whether the Lord and Ruler of the world did indeed fill the womb of a virgin; -- did His mother endure the protracted fatigues of ten months, and, being yet a virgin, in due season bring forth her child, and continue even after that with her virginity intact? To this he adds other statements: "Within the small body of a crying infant He is concealed whom the universe scarcely can contain; He bears the years of childhood, He grows up, He is established in the rigour of manhood; this Governor is so long an exile from His own dwelling-place, and the care of the whole world is transferred to one body of insignificant dimensions. Moreover, He falls asleep, takes food to support Him, is subject to all the sensations of mortal men. Nor did the proofs of so great majesty shine forth with adequate fulness of evidence; for the casting out of devils, the curing of the sick, and the restoration of the

dead to life are, if you consider others who have wrought these wonders, but small works for God to do.

¹² We prevent him from continuing such questions, and the meeting having broken up, we referred the matter to the valuable decision of experience beyond our own, lest, by too rashly intruding into hidden things, the error, innocent thus far, should become blameworthy. You have heard, O man worthy of all honour, the confession of our ignorance; you perceive what is requested at your hands. Your reputation is interested in our obtaining an answer to these questions. Ignorance may, without harm to religion, be tolerated in other priests; but when we come to Bishop Augustin, whatever we find unknown to him is no part of the Christian system. May the Supreme God protect your venerable Grace, my lord truly holy and justly revered !

LETTER 136. AD 412

¹³ (A.D. 412.) to Augustin, my Lord Most Venerable, and Father Singularly Worthy of All Possible Service from Me, I, Marcellinus Send Greeting. 1. The noble Volusianus read to me the letter of your Holiness, and, at my urgent solicitation, he read to many more the sentences which had won my admiration, for, like everything else coming from your pen, they were worthy of admiration. Breathing as it did a humble spirit, and rich in the grace of divine eloquence, it succeeded easily in pleasing the reader.. What especially pleased me was your strenuous effort to establish and hold up the steps of one who is somewhat hesitating, by counselling him to form a good resolution. For I have every day some discussion with the same man, so far as my abilities, or rather my lack of talent, may enable me. Moved by the earnest entreaties of his pious another, I am at pains to visit him frequently, and he is so good as to return my visits from time to time. But on receiving this letter from your venerable Eminence, though he is kept back from firm faith in the true God by the influence of a class of persons who abound in this city, he was so moved, that, as he himself tells me, he was prevented only by the fear of undue prolixity in his letter from unfolding to you every possible difficulty in regard to the Christian faith. Some things, however, he has very earnestly asked you to explain, expressing himself in a polished and accurate style, and

¹⁴ with the perspicuity and brilliancy of Roman eloquence, such as you will yourself deem worthy of approbation. The question which he has sub-

mitted to you is indeed worn threadbare in controversy, and the craftiness which, from the same quarter, assails with reproaches the Lord's incarnation is well known. But as I am confident that whatever you write in reply will be of use to a very large number, I would approach you with the request, that even in this question you would condescend to give a thoroughly guarded answer to their false statement that in His works the Lord performed nothing beyond what other men have been able to do. They are accustomed to bring forward their Apollonius and Apuleius, and other men who professed magical arts, whose miracles they maintained to have been greater than the Lord's. 2. The noble Volusianus aforesaid declared also in the presence of a number, that there were many other things which might not unreasonably be added to the question which he has sent, were it not that, as I have already stated, brevity had been specially studied by him in his letter. Although, however, he forbore from writing them, he did not pass them over in silence.

¹⁵ For he is wont to say that, even if a reasonable account of the Lord's incarnation were now given to him, it would still be very difficult to give a satisfactory reason why this God, who is affirmed to be the God also of the Old Testament, is pleased with new sacrifices after having rejected the ancient sacrifices. For he alleges that nothing could be corrected but that which is proved to have been previously not rightly done; or that what has once been done rightly ought not to be altered in the very least. That which has been rightly done, he said, cannot be changed without wrong, especially because the variation might bring upon the Deity the reproach of inconstancy. Another objection which he stated was, that the Christian doctrine and preaching were in no way consistent with the duties and rights of citizens; because, to quote an instance frequently alleged, among its precepts we find, "Recompense to no man evil for evil,"¹ and, "Whosoever shall smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man take away thy coat, let him have I thy cloak also; and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain;"² -- all which he affirms to be contrary to the duties and rights of citizens. For who would submit to have anything taken from him by an enemy, or forbear from retaliating the evils of war upon an invader who ravaged a Roman province?

¹⁶ The other precepts, as your Eminence understands, are open to similar objections. Volusianus thinks that all these difficulties may be added to the

question formerly stated, especially because it is manifest (though he is silent on this point) that very great calamities have befallen the commonwealth under the government of emperors observing, for the most part, the Christian religion.³ 3. Wherefore, as your Grace condescends along with me to acknowledge, it is important that all these difficulties be met by a full, thorough, and luminous reply (since the welcome answer of your Holiness will doubtless be put into many hands); especially because, while this discussion was going on, a distinguished lord and proprietor in the region of Hippo was present, who ironically said some flattering things concerning your Holiness, and affirmed that he had been by no means satisfied when he inquired into these matters himself. I, therefore, not unmindful of your promise, but insisting on its fulfilment, beseech you to write, on the questions submitted, treatises which will be of incredible service to the Church, especially at the present time.

LETTER 137. AD 412

¹⁷ (A.D. 412.) to my Most Excellent Son, the Noble and Justly Distinguished Lord Volusianus, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. Chap. I. -- I. I have read your letter, containing an abstract of a notable conversation given with praiseworthy conciseness. I feel bound to reply to it, and to forbear from alleging any excuse for delay; for it happens opportunely that I have a short time of leisure from occupation with the affairs of other persons. I have also put off in the meantime dictating to my amanuensis certain things to which I had purposed to devote this leisure, for I think it would be a grievous injustice to delay answering questions which I had myself exhorted the questioner to pro. pound. For which of us who are administering, as we are able, the grace of Christ would wish to see you instructed in Christian doctrine only so far as might suffice to secure to yourself salvation not salvation in this present life, which, as the word of God is careful to remind us, is but a vapor appearing for a little while and then vanishing away, but that salvation in order to the obtaining and eternal possession of which we are Christians ? It seems to us too little that you should receive only so much instructions suffices to your own. deliverance. For your gifted mind, and your singularly able and lucid power of speaking, ought to be of

¹⁸ service to all others around you, against whom, whether slowness or perversity be the cause, it is necessary to defend in a competent way the dispensation of such abounding grace, which small minds in their arrogance

despise, boasting that they can do very great things, while in fact they can do nothing to cure or even to curb their own vices. 2. You ask: "Whether the Lord and Ruler of the world did indeed fill the womb of a virgin? did His mother endure the protracted fatigues of ten months, and, being yet a virgin, in due season bring forth her child, and continue even after that with her virginity intact? Was He whom the universe is supposed to be scarcely able to contain concealed within the small body of a crying infant? did He bear the years of childhood, and grow up and become established in the rigour of manhood? Was this Governor so long an exile from His own dwelling-place, and was the care of the whole world transferred to a body of such insignificant dimensions? Did He sleep, did He take food as nourishment, and was He subject to all the sensations of mortal men? You go on to say that "the proofs of His great majesty do not shine forth with any adequate fulness of evidence;

¹⁹ for the casting out of devils, the curing of the sick, and the restoration of the dead are, if we consider others who have performed these wonders, but small works for God to do." ¹ This question, you say, was introduced in a certain meeting of friends by one of the company,, but that the rest of you prevented him from bringing forward any further questions, and, breaking up the meeting, deferred the consideration of the matter till you should have the benefit of experience beyond your own, lest, by too rashly intruding into hidden things, the error, innocent thus far, should become blame-worthy. 3. Thereupon you appeal to me, and request me to observe what is desired from me after this confession of your ignorance. You add, that my reputation is concerned in your obtaining an answer to these questions, because, though ignorance is tolerated without injury to religion in other priests, when an inquiry is addressed to me, who am a bishop, whatever is not known to me must be no part of the Christian system. I begin, therefore, by requesting you to lay aside the opinion which you have too easily. formed concerning me, and dismiss those sentiments, though they are gratifying evidences of your goodwill, and believe my testimony rather than any other's regarding myself, if you reciprocate my affection.

²⁰ For such is the depth of the Christian Scriptures, that even if I were attempting to study them and nothing else from early boyhood to decrepit old age, with the utmost leisure, the most unwearied zeal, and talents greater than I have, I would be still daily making progress in discovering their treas-

ures; not that there is so great difficulty in coming through them to know the things necessary to salvation, but when any one has accepted these truths with the faith that is indispensable as the foundation of a life of piety and uprightness, so many things which are veiled under manifold shadows of mystery remain to be inquired into by those who are advancing in the study, and so great is the depth of wisdom not only in the words in which these have been expressed, but also in the things themselves, that the experience of the oldest, the ablest, and the most zealous students of Scripture illustrates what Scripture itself has said: "When a man hath done, then he beginneth."2 CHAP. II. -- 4. But why say more as to this? must rather address myself to the question which you propose. In the first place, I wish you to understand that the Christian doctrine does not hold that the Godhead was so blended with the human nature in which He was born of the virgin that He either relinquished or lost the administration of the universe, or transferred it to that body as a small and limited material substance.

21 Such an opinion is held only by men who are incapable of conceiving of anything but material substances -- whether more dense, like water and earth, or more subtle, like air and light; but all alike distinguished by this condition, that none of them can be in its entirety everywhere, because, by reason of its many parts, it cannot but have one part here, another there, and however great or small the body may be, it must occupy some place, and so fill it that in its entirety it is in no one part of the space occupied. And hence it is the distinctive property of material bodies that they can be condensed and rarefied, contracted and dilated, crushed into small fragments and enlarged to great masses. The nature of the soul is very far different from that of the body; and how much more different must be the nature of God, who is the Creator of both soul and body ! God is not said to fill the world in the same way as water, air, and even light occupy space, so that with a greater or smaller part of Himself He occupies a greater or smaller part of the world. He is able to be everywhere present in the entirety of His being: He cannot be confined in any place: He can come without leaving the place where He was: He can depart without forsaking the place to which He had come.

22 5. The mind of man wonders at this, and because it cannot comprehend it, refuses, perhaps, to believe it. Let it, however, not go on to wonder incredulously at the attributes of the Deity without first wondering in like manner at the mysteries within itself; let it, if possible, raise itself for a little

above the body, and above those things which it is accustomed to perceive by the bodily organs, and let it contemplate what that is which uses the body as its instrument. Perhaps it cannot do this, for it requires, as one has said, great power of mind to call the mind aside from the senses, and to lead thought away from its wonted track? Let the mind, then, examine the bodily senses in this somewhat unusual manner, and with the utmost attention. There are five distinct bodily senses, which cannot exist either without the body or without the soul; because perception by the senses is possible, on the one hand, only while a man lives, and the body receives life from the soul; and on the other hand, only by the instrumentality of the body vessels and organs, through which we exercise sight, hearing, and the three other senses. Let the reasoning soul concentrate attention upon this subject, and: consider the senses of the body not by these senses themselves, but by its own intelligence and, reason. A man cannot, of course, perceive by these senses unless he lives;

²³ but up to the time when soul and body are separated by death, he lives in the body. How, then, does his soul, which lives nowhere else than in his body, perceive things which are beyond the surface of that body? Are not the stars in heaven very remote from his body? and yet does he not see the sun yonder? and is not seeing an exercise of the bodily senses -- may, is it not the noblest of them all? What, then? Does he live in heaven as well as in his body, because he perceives by one of his senses what is in heaven, and perception by sense cannot be in a place where there is no life of the person perceiving? Or does he perceive even where he is not living -- because while he lives only in his own body, his perceptive sense is active also in those places which, outside of his body and remote from it, contain the objects with which he is in contact by sight? Do you see how great a mystery there is even in a sense so open to our observation as that which we call sight? Consider hearing also, and say whether the soul diffuses itself in some way abroad beyond the body. For how do we say, "Some one knocks at the door," unless we exercise the sense of hearing at the place where the knock is sounding? In this case also, therefore, we live beyond the limits of our bodies.

²⁴ Or can we perceive by sense in a place in which we are not living? But we know that sense cannot be in exercise where life is not. 6. The other three senses are exercised through immediate contact with their own organs. Perhaps this may be reasonably disputed in regard to the sense of smell; but

there is no controversy ins to the senses of taste and touch, that we perceive nowhere else than by contact with our bodily organism the things which we taste and touch. Let these three senses, therefore, be set aside from present consideration The senses of sight and hearing present to us a wondered question, requiring us to explain either how the soul I can perceive by these senses in a place where it does not live, or how it can live in a place where it is not. For it is not anywhere but in its own body, and yet it perceives by these senses in places beyond that body. For in whatever place the soul sees anything, in that place it is exercising the faculty of perception, because seeing is an act of perception; and in whatever place the soul hears anything, in that place it is exercising the faculty of perception, because hearing is an act of perception.

²⁵ Wherefore the soul is either living in that place where it sees or hears, and consequently is itself in that place, or it exercises perception in a place where it is not living, or it is living in a place and yet at the same moment is not there. All these things are astonishing; not one of them can be stated without seeming absurdity; and we are speaking only of senses which are mortal. What, then, is the soul itself which is beyond the bodily senses, that is to say, which resides in the understanding I whereby it considers these mysteries ? For it is not by means of the senses that it forms a judgment concerning the senses themselves. And do we suppose that something incredible is told us regarding the omnipotence of God, when it is affirmed that the Word of God, by whom all things were made, did so assume a body from the Virgin, and manifest Himself with mortal senses, as neither to destroy His own immortality, nor to change His eternity, nor to diminish His power, nor to relinquish the government of the world, nor to withdraw from the bosom of the Father, that is, from the secret place where He is with Him and in Him ? 7. Understand the nature of the Word of God, by whom all things were made, to be such that you cannot think of any part of the Word as passing, and, from being future, becoming past.

²⁶ He remains as He is, and He is everywhere in His entirety. He comes when He is manifested, and departs when He is concealed. But whether concealed or manifested, He is present with us as light is present to the eyes both of the seeing and of the blind; but it is felt to be present by the man who sees, and absent by him who is blind. In like manner, the sound of the voice ²⁷ is near alike to the hearing and to the deaf, but it makes its presence known to the former and is hidden from the latter. But what is more wonderful than

what happens in connection with the sound of our voices and our words, a thing, for-sooth, which passes away in a month? For when we speak, there is no place for even the next syllable till after the preceding one has ceased to sound; nevertheless, if one hearer be present, he hears the whole of what we say, and if two hearers be present, both hear the same, and to each of them it is the whole; and if a multitude listen in silence, they do not break up the sounds like loaves of bread, to be distributed among them individually, but all that is uttered is imparted to all and to each in its entirety. Consider this, and say if it is not more incredible that the abiding word of God should not accomplish in the universe what the passing word of man accomplishes in the ears of listeners, namely, that as the word of man is present in its entirety to each and all of the hearers, so the Word of God should be present in the entirety of His being at the same moment everywhere. 8. There is, therefore, no reason to fear in regard to the small body of the Lord in His infancy, lest in it the Godhead should seem to have been straitened.

28 For it is not in vast size but in power that God is great: He has in His providence given to ants and to bees senses superior to those given to asses and camels; He forms the huge proportions of the fig-tree from one of the minutest seeds, although many smaller plants spring from much larger seeds; He also has furnished the small pupil of the eye with the power which, by one glance, sweeps over almost the half of heaven in a moment; He diffuses the whole fivefold system of the nerves over the body from one centre and point in the brain; He dispenses vital motion throughout the whole body from the heart, a member comparatively small; and by these and other similar things, He, who in small things is great, mysteriously produces that which is great from things which are exceedingly little. Such is the greatness of His power that He is conscious of no difficulty in that which is difficult. It was this same power which originated, not from without, but from within, the conception of a child in the Virgin's womb: this same power associated with Himself a human soul, and through it also a human body in short, the whole human nature to be elevated by its union with Him -- without His being thereby lowered in any degree; justly assuming from it the name of humanity, while amply giving to it the name of Godhead.

29 The body of the infant Jesus was brought forth from the womb of His mother, still a virgin, by the same power which afterwards introduced His body when He was a man through the closed door into the upper chamber?

Here, if the reason of the event is sought out, it will no longer be a miracle; if an example of a precisely similar event is demanded. it will no longer be unique.³ Let us grant that God can do something which we must admit to be beyond our comprehension. In such wonders the whole explanation of the work is the power of Him by whom it is wrought. Chap. III. -- 9. The fact that He took rest in sleep, and was nourished by food, and experienced all the feelings of humanity, is the evidence to men of the reality of that human nature which He assumed but did not destroy. Behold, this was the fact; and yet some heretics, by a perverted admiration and praise of His have refused altogether to acknowledge the reality of His human nature, in which is the guarantee of all that grace by which He saves those who believe in Him, containing deep treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and imparting faith to the minds which He raises to the eternal contemplation of unchangeable truth. What if the Almighty had created the human nature of Christ not by causing Him to be born of a mother, but by some other way, and had presented Him suddenly to the eyes of mankind ?

³⁰ What if the Lord had not passed through the stages of progress from infancy to manhood, and had taken neither food nor sleep? Would not this have confirmed the erroneous impression above referred to, and have made it impossible to believe at all that He had taken to Himself true human nature; and, while leaving what was marvellous, would eliminate the element of mercy from His actions? But now He has so appeared as the Mediator between God and men, that, uniting the two natures in one person, He both exalted what was ordinary by what was extraordinary, and tempered what was extraordinary by what was ordinary in Himself. 10. But where in all the varied movements of creation is there any work of God which is not wonderful, were it not that through familiarity these wonders have become small in our esteem ? Nay, how many common things are trodden under foot, which, if examined carefully, awaken our astonishment ! Take, for example, the properties of seeds: who can either comprehend or declare the variety of species, the vitality, vigour, and secret power by which they from within small compass evolve great things ? Now the human body and soul which He took to Himself was created without seed by Him who in the natural world created originally seeds from no pre-existent seeds. In the body which thus became His, he who, without any liability to change in Himself, has woven according to His counsel the vicissitudes of all past centuries, became subject

o the succession of seasons and the ordinary .rages of the life of man. For His body, as it began to exist at a point of time, became developed with the lapse of time.

³² But the Word of God, who was in the beginning, and to whom, he ages of time owe their existence, did not how to time as bringing round the event of His incarnation apart from His consent, but chose he point of time at which He freely took our nature to Himself. The human nature was brought into union with the divine; God did not withdraw from Himself.¹ 11. Some resist upon being furnished with an explanation of the manner in which the Godhead was so united with a human soul and body as to constitute the one person of Christ, when it was necessary that this should be done once in the world's history, with as much boldness as if they were themselves able to furnish an explanation of the manner in which the soul is so united to: he body as to constitute the one person of man, an event which is occurring every day. For just as the soul is united to the body in one person so as to constitute man, in the same way God united to man in one person so as to constitute Christ. In the former personality there is a combination of soul and body; in the latter here is a combination of the Godhead and man. I let my reader, however, guard against borrowing his idea of the combination from the properties of material bodies, by which two fluids when combined are so mixed that neither preserves its original character;

³³ although even among material bodies there are exceptions, such as light, which sustains no change when combined with the atmosphere. In the person of man, therefore, there is a combination of soul and body; in the i person of Christ there is a combination of the I Godhead with man; for when the Word of God was united to a soul having a body, He took into union with Himself both the soul and the body. The former event takes place daily in the beginning of life in individuals of the human race; the latter took place once for the salvation.of men. And yet of the two events, the combination of two immaterial substances ought to be more easily behaved than a combination in which the one is immaterial and the other material. For if the soul is not mistaken in regard to its own nature, it understands itself to be immaterial. Much more certainly does this attribute belong to the Word of God; and consequently the combination of the Word with the human soul is a combination which ought to be much more credible than that of soul and body. The latter is realized by us in ourselves; the former we are

commanded to believe to have been realized in Christ. But if both of them were alike foreign to our experience, and we were enjoined to believe that both had taken place, which of the two would we more readily believe to have occurred?

³⁴ Would we not admit that two immaterial substances could be more easily combined than one immaterial and one material; unless, perhaps, it be unsuitable to use the word combination in connection with these things, because of the difference between their nature and that of material substances, both in themselves and as known to us ? 12. Wherefore the Word of God, who is also the Son of God, co-eternal with the Father, the Power and the Wisdom of God? mightily pervading and harmoniously ordering all things, from the highest limit of the intelligent to the lowest limit of the material creation? revealed and concealed, nowhere confined, nowhere divided, nowhere distended, but without dimensions, everywhere present in His entirety, -- this Word of God, I say, took to Himself, in a manner entirely different from that in which He is present to other creatures, the soul and body of a man, and made, by the union of Himself therewith, the one person Jesus Christ, Mediator between God and men,⁴ He His Deity equal with the Father, in His flesh, i.e. in His human nature, inferior to the Father, -- unchangeably immortal in respect of the divine nature, in which He is equal with

³⁵ the Father, and yet changeable and mortal in respect of the infirmity which was His through participation with our nature. In this Christ there came to men, at the time which He knew to be most fitting, and which He had fixed before the world began, the instruction and the help necessary to the obtaining of eternal salvation. Instruction came by Him, because those truths which had been, for men's advantage, spoken before that time on earth not only by the holy prophets, all whose words were true, but also by philosophers and even poets and authors in every department of literature (for beyond question they mixed much truth with what was false), might by the actual presentation of His authority in human nature be confirmed as true for the sake of those who could not perceive and distinguish them in the light of essential Truth, which Truth was, even before He assumed human nature, present to all who were capable of receiving truth.

³⁶ Moreover, by the fact of His incarnation, He taught this above all other things for our benefit, -- that whereas men longing after the Divine Being

supposed, from pride rather than piety, that they must approach Him not directly, but through heavenly powers which they regarded as gods, and through various forbidden rites which were holy but profane, -- in which worship devils succeed, through the bond which pride forms between mankind and them in taking the place of holy angels, -- now men might understand that the God whom they were regarding as far removed, and whom they approached not directly but through mediating powers, is actually so very near to the pious longings of men after Him, that He has condescended to take a human soul and body into such union with Himself that this complete man is joined to Him in the same way as the body is joined to the soul in man, excepting that whereas both body and soul have a common progressive development, He does not participate in this growth, because it implies mutability, a property which God cannot assume. Again, in this Christ the held necessary to salvation was brought to men, for without the grace of that faith which is from Him, no one can either subdue vicious desires, or be cleansed by pardon from the guilt of any power of sinful desire which he may not have wholly vanquished.

³⁷ As to the effects produced by His instruction, is there now even an imbecile, however weak, or a silly woman, however low, that does not believe in the immortality of the soul and the reality of a life after death? Yet these are truths which, when Pherecydes 1 the Assyrian for the first time maintained them in discussion among the Greeks of old, moved Pythagoras of Samos so deeply by their novelty, as to make him turn from the exercises of the athlete to the studies of the philosopher. But now what Virgil said we all behold: "The balsam of Assyria grows everywhere."² And as to the help given through the grace of Christ, in Him truly are the words of the same poet fulfilled: "With Thee as our leader, the obliteration of all the traces of our sin which remain shall deliver the earth from perpetual alarm." 3 Chap. IV. -- 13. "But," they say, "the proofs of so great majesty did not shine forth with adequate fulness of evidence; for the casting out of devils, the healing of the sick, and the restoration of the dead to life are but small works for God to do, if the others who have wrought similar wonders be borne in mind." 4 We ourselves admit that the prophets wrought some miracles like those performed by Christ. For among these miracles what is more wonderful than the raising of the dead?

³⁸ Yet both Elijah and Elisha did this.^s As to the miracles of magicians, and the question whether they also raised the dead, let those pronounce an opinion who strive, not as accusers, but as panegyrists, to prove Apuleius guilty of those charges of practising magical arts from which he himself takes abundant pains to defend his reputation. We read that the magicians of Egypt, the most skilled in these arts, were vanquished by Moses, the servant of God, when they were working wonderfully by impious enchantments, and he, by simply calling upon God in prayer, overthrew all their machinations? But this Moses himself and all the other true prophets prophesied concerning the Lord Christ, and gave to Him great glory; they predicted that He would come not as One merely equal or superior to them in the same power of working miracles, but as One who was truly God the Lord of all, and who became man for the benefit of men. He was pleased to do also some miracles, such as they had done, to prevent the incongruity of His not doing in person such things as He had done by them. Nevertheless, He was to do also some things peculiar to Him, self, namely, to be born of a virgin, to rise from the dead, to ascend to heaven. I know not what greater things he can look for who thinks these too little for God to do. 14.

³⁹ For I think that such signs of divine power are demanded by these objectors as were not suitable for Him to do when wearing the nature of men. The Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and by Him all things were made.⁸ Now, 479 ⁴⁰ when the Word became flesh, was it necessary for Him to create another world, that we might believe Him to be the person by whom the world was made ? But within this world it would have been impossible to make another greater than itself, or equal to it. If, however, He were to make a world inferior to that which now exists, this, too, would be considered too small a work to prove His deity. Wherefore, since it was not necessary that He should make a new world, He made new things in the world. For that a man should be born of a virgin, and raised from the dead to eternal life, and exalted above the heavens, is perchance a work involving a greater exertion of power than the creating of a world. Here, probably, objectors may answer that they do not believe that these things took place. What, then, can be done for men who despise smaller evidences as inadequate, and reject greater evidences as incredible ? That life has been restored to the dead is believed, because it has been accomplished by others, and I is too small a work to prove him who

performs it to be God: that a true body was created in a virgin, and being raised from death to eternal life, was taken up to heaven, is not believed, because no one else has done this, and it is what God alone could do.

⁴¹ On this principle every man is to accept with equanimity whatever he thinks easy for himself not indeed to do, but to conceive, and is to reject as false and fictitious whatever goes beyond that limit. I beseech you, do' not be like these men. 15. These topics are elsewhere more amply discussed, and in fundamental questions of doctrine every intricate point has been opened up by thorough investigation and debate; but faith gives the understanding access to these things, unbelief closes the door. What man might not be moved to faith in the doctrine of Christ by such a remarkable chain of events from the beginning, and by the manner in which the epochs of the world are linked together, so that our faith in regard to present things is assisted by what happened in the past, and the record of earlier and ancient things is attested by later and more recent events? One is chosen from among the Chaldeans, a man endowed with most eminent piety and faith, that to him may be given divine promises, appointed to be fulfilled in the last times of the world, after the lapse of so many centuries; and it is foretold that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' This man, worshipping the one true God, the Creator of the universe, begets in his old age a son, when sterility and advanced years had made his wife give up all expectation of becoming a mother.

⁴² The descendants of this son become a very numerous tribe, being increased in Egypt, to which place they had been removed from the East, by Divine Providence multiplying as time went on both the promises given and the works wrought on their behalf. From Egypt they come forth a mighty nation, being brought out with terrible signs and wonders; and the wicked nations of the promised land being driven out from before them, they are brought into it and settled there, and exalted to the position of a kingdom. Thereafter, frequently provoking by prevailing sin and idolatrous impieties the true God, who had bestowed on them so many benefits, and experiencing alternately the chastisements of calamity and the consolations of restored prosperity, the history of the nation is brought down to the incarnation and the manifestation of Christ. Predictions that this Christ, being the Word of God, the Son of God, and God Himself, was to become incarnate, to die, to rise again, to ascend into heaven, to have multitudes of all nations

through the power of His name surrendering themselves to Him, and that by Him pardon of sins and eternal salvation would be given to all who believe in Him,- these predictions, I say, have been published by all tim promises given to that nation, by all the prophecies, the institution of the priesthood, the sacrifices, the temple, and, in short, by all their sacred mysteries. 16. Accordingly Christ comes: in His birth, life, words, deeds, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, all which the prophets had foretold is fulfilled?

⁴³ He sends the Holy Spirit; fills with this Spirit the believers when they are assembled in one house, and expecting with prayer and ardent desire this promised gift. Being thus filled with the Holy Spirit, they speak immediately in the tongues of all nations, they boldly confute errors, they preach the truth that is most profitable for mankind, they exhort men to repent of their past blameworthy lives, and promise pardon by the free grace of God. Signs and miracles suitable for confirmation follow their preaching of piety and of the true religion. The cruel enmity of unbelief is stirred up against them; they bear predicted trials, they hope for promised blessings, and teach that which they had been commanded to make known. Few in number at first, they become scattered like seed throughout the world; they convert nations with won drous facility; they grow in number in the midst of enemies; they become increased by persecutions; and, under the severity of hardships, instead of being straitened, they extend their influence to the utmost boundaries of the earth. From being very ignorant, despised, and few, They become enlightened, distinguished, and nu-

⁴⁴ merous, men of illustrious talents and of polished eloquence; they also bring under the yoke of Christ, and attract to the work of preaching the way of holiness and salvation, the marvellous attainments of men remarkable for genius, eloquence, and erudition. Amid alternations of adversity and prosperity, they watchfully practise patience and self-control; and when the world's day is drawing near its close, and the approaching consummation is heralded by the calamities which exhaust its energies, they, seeing in this the fulfilment of prophecy, only expect with increased. confidence the everlasting blessedness of the heavenly city. Moreover, amidst all these changes, the unbelief of the heathen nations continues to rage against the Church of Christ; she gains the victory by patient endurance, and by the maintenance of unshaken faith in the face of the cruelties of her adversaries. The sacrifice of Him in whom the truth, long veiled under mystic promises, is revealed,

having been offered, those sacrifices by which it was prefigured are finally abolished by the utter destruction of the Jewish temple. The Jewish nation, itself rejected because of unbelief, being now rooted out from its own land, is dispersed to every region of the world, in order that it may carry everywhere the Holy Scriptures, and that in this way our adversaries themselves may bring before mankind the testimony furnished by the prophecies concerning Christ and His Church, thus precluding the possibility of the supposition that these predictions were forged by us to suit the time;

⁴⁵ in which prophecies, also, the unbelief of these very Jews is foretold. The temples, images, and impious worship of the heathen divinities are overthrown gradually and in succession, according to the prophetic intimations. Heresies bud forth against the name of Christ, though veiling themselves under His name, as had been foretold, by which the doctrine of the holy religion is tested and developed. All these things are now seen to be accomplished, in exact fulfilment of the predictions which we read in Scripture; and from these important and numerous instances of fulfilled prophecy, the fulfilment of the predictions which remain is confidently expected. Where, then, is the mind, having aspirations after eternity, and moved by the shortness of this present life, which can resist the clearness and perfection of these evidences of the divine origin of our faith ? Chap. V. -- 17. What discourses or writings of philosophers, what laws of any commonwealth in any land or age, are worthy for a moment to be compared with the two commandments on which Christ saith that all the law and the prophets hang: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?" All philosophy is here, -- physics, ethics, logic: the first, because in God the Creator are all the causes of all existences in nature;

⁴⁶ the second, because a good and honest life is not produced in any other way than by loving, in the manner in which they should be loved, the proper objects of our love, namely, God and our neighbour; and the third, because God alone is the Truth and the Light of the rational soul. Here also is security for the welfare and renown of a commonwealth; for no state is perfectly established and preserved otherwise than on the foundation and by the bond of faith and of firm concord, when the highest and truest common good, namely, God, is loved by all, and men love each other in Him without dissimulation, because they love one another for His sake from whom they can-

not disguise the real character of their love. 18. Consider, moreover, the style in which Sacred Scripture is composed, -- how accessible it is to all men, though its deeper mysteries are penetrable to very few. The plain truths which it contains it declares in the artless language of familiar friendship to the hearts both of the unlearned and of the learned; but even the truths which it veils in symbols it does not set forth in stiff and stately sentences, which a mind somewhat sluggish and uneducated might shrink from approaching, as a poor man shrinks from the presence of the rich;

⁴⁷ but, by the condescension of its style, it invites all not only to be fed with the truth which is plain, but also to be exercised by the truth which is concealed, having both in its simple and in its obscure portions the same truth. Lest what is easily understood should beget satiety in the reader, the same truth being in another place more obscurely expressed becomes again desired, and, being desired, is somehow invested with a new attractiveness, and thus is received with pleasure into the heart. By these means wayward minds are corrected, weak minds are nourished, and strong minds are filled with pleasure, in such a way as is profitable to all. This doctrine has no enemy but the man who, being in error, is ignorant of its incomparable usefulness, or, being spiritually diseased, is averse to its healing power. 19. You see what a long letter I have written. If, therefore, anything perplexes you, and you regard it of sufficient importance to be discussed between us, let not yourself be straitened by keeping within the bounds of ordinary letters; for you know as well as any one what long letters the ancients wrote when they were treating of any subject which they were not able briefly to explain. And even if the custom of authors in other departments of literature had been differ-

⁴⁸ent, the authority of Christian writers, whose example has a worthier claim upon our imitation, might be set before us. Observe, therefore, the length of the apostolic epistles, and of the commentaries written on these divine oracles, and do not hesitate either to ask many questions if you have many difficulties, or to handle more fully the questions which you propound, in order that, in so far as it can be achieved with such abilities as we possess, there may remain no cloud of doubt to obscure the light of truth. 20. For I am aware that your Excellency has to encounter the most determined opposition from certain persons, who think, or would have others think, that Christian doctrine is incompatible with the welfare of the commonwealth, because they wish to see the commonwealth established not by the steadfast

practice of virtue, but by granting impunity to vice. But with God the crimes in which many are banded together do not pass unavenged, as is often the case with a king, or any other magistrate who is only a man. Moreover, His mercy and grace, published to men by Christ, who is Himself man, and imparted to man by the same Christ, who is also God and the Son of God, never fail those who live by faith in Him and piously worship Him, in adversity patiently and bravely bearing the trials of this life, in prosperity using with self-control and with compassion for others the good things of this life;

⁴⁹ destined to receive, for faithfulness in both conditions, an eternal recompense in that divine and heavenly city in which there shall be no longer calamity to be painfully endured, nor inordinate desire to be with laborious care controlled, where our only work shall be to preserve, without any difficulty and with perfect liberty, our love to God and to our neighbour. May the infinitely compassionate omnipotence of God preserve you in safety and increase your happiness, my noble and distinguished Lord, and my most excellent son. With profound respect, as is due to your worth, I salute your pious and most truly venerable mother, whose prayers on your behalf may God hear ! My pious brother and fellow bishop, Possidius, warmly salutes your Grace.

LETTER 138. TO MARCELLINUS, AD 412

⁵⁰ (A.D. 412.) to Marcellinus, my Noble and Justly Famous Lord, my Son Most Beloved and Longed for, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.
⁵¹ CHAP. I -- 1. In writing to the illustrious and most eloquent Volusianus, whom we both sincerely love, I thought it right to confine myself to answering the questions which he thought proper himself to state; but as to the questions which you have submitted to me in your letter for discussion and solution, as suggested or proposed either by Volusianus himself or by others, it is fitting that such reply to these as I may be able to give should be addressed to you. I shall attempt this, not in the manner in which it would require to be done in a formal treatise, but in the manner which is suitable to the conversational familiarity of a letter, in order that, if you, who know their state of mind by daily discussions, think it expedient, this letter also may be read to your friends. But if this communication be not adapted to them, because of their not being prepared by the piety of faith to give ear to it, let what you consider adapted to them be in the first place prepared between ourselves, and afterwards let what may have been thus prepared be

communicated to them. For there are many things from which their minds may in the meantime shrink and recoil, which they may perhaps by and by be persuaded to accept as true, either by the use of more copious and skilful arguments, or by an appeal to authority which, in their opinion, may not without impropriety be resisted. 2.

⁵² In your letter you state that some are perplexed by the question, "Why this God, who is proved to be the God also of the Old Testament, is pleased with new sacrifices after having rejected the ancient ones. For they allege that nothing can be corrected but that which is proved to have been previously not rightly done, or that what has once been done rightly ought not to be altered in the very least: that which has been rightly done, they say, cannot be changed without wrong." I quote these words from your letter. Were I disposed to give a copious reply to this objection, time would fail me long before I had exhausted the instances in which the processes of nature itself and the works of men undergo changes according to the circumstances of, the time, while, at the same time, there is nothing mutable in the plan or principle by which these changes are regulated. Of these I may mention a few, that, stimulated by them, your wakeful observation may run, as it were, from them to many more of the same kind. Does not summer follow winter, the temperature gradually increasing in warmth? Do not night and day in turn succeed each other? How often do our own lives experience changes! Boyhood departing, never to return, gives place to youth; manhood, destined itself to continue only for a season, takes in turn the place of youth; and old age, closing the term of manhood, is itself closed by death?

⁵³ All these things are changed, but the plan of Divine Providence
⁵⁴ which appoints these successive changes is not changed. I suppose, also, that the principles of agriculture are not changed when the farmer appoints a different work to be done in summer from that which he had ordered in winter. He who rises in the morning, after resting by night, is not supposed to have changed the plan of his life. The schoolmaster gives to the adult different tasks from those which he was accustomed to prescribe to the scholar in his boyhood his teaching, consistent throughout, changes the instruction when the lesson is changed, without itself being changed. 3. The eminent physician of our own times, Vindicianus, being consulted by an invalid, prescribed for his disease what seemed to him a suitable remedy at that time; health was restored by its use. Some years afterwards, finding himself

troubled again with the same disorder, the patient supposed that the same remedy should be applied; but its application made his illness worse. In astonishment, he again returns to the physician, and tells him what had happened; whereupon he, being a man of very quick penetration, answered: "The reason of your having been harmed by this application is, that I did not order it; upon which all who heard the remark and did not know the man supposed that he was trusting not in the art of medicine, but in some forbidden supernatural power.

55 When he was afterwards questioned by some who were amazed at his words, he explained what they had not understood, namely, that he would not have prescribed the same remedy to the patient at the age which he had now attained. While, therefore, the principle J and methods of art remain unchanged, the change which, in accordance with them, may be made necessary by the difference of times is: very great. 4. To say then, that what has once been done rightly must in no respect whatever be changed, is to affirm what is not true. For if the circumstances of time which occasioned anything be changed, true reason in almost all cases demands that what had been in the former circumstances rightly done, be now so altered that, although they say that it is not rightly done if it be changed, truth, on the contrary, protests that it is not rightly done unless it be changed; because, at both times, it will be rightly done if the difference be regulated according to the difference in the times.

56 For just as in the cases of different persons it may happen that, at the same moment, one man may do with impunity what another man may not, because of a difference not in the thing done but in the person who does it, so in the case of one and the same person at different times, that which was duty formerly is not duty now, not because the person is different from his former self, but because the time at which he does it is different. 5. The wide range opened up by this question may be seen by any one who is competent and careful to observe the contrast between the beautiful and the suitable, examples of which are i scattered, we may say, throughout the universe. For the beautiful, to which the ugly and deformed is opposed, is estimated and praised according to what it is in itself. But the suitable, to which the incongruous is opposed, depends on something else to which it is bound, and is estimated not according to what it is in itself, but according to that with which it is connected: the contrast, also, between becoming and unbecom-

ing is either the same, or at least regarded as the same. Now apply what we have said to the subject in hand. The divine institution of sacrifice was suitable in the former dispensation, but is not suitable now.

⁵⁷ For the change suitable to the present age has been enjoined by God, who knows infinitely better than man what is fitting for every age, and who is, whether He give or add, abolish or curtail, increase or diminish, the unchangeable Governor as He is the unchangeable Creator of mutable things, ordering all events in His providence until the beauty of the completed course of time, the component parts of which are the dispensations adapted to each successive age, shall be finished, like the grand melody of some ineffably wise master of song, and those pass into the eternal immediate contemplation of God who here, though it is a time of faith, not of sight, are acceptably worshipping Him. 6. They are mistaken, moreover, who think that God appoints these ordinances for His own advantage or pleasure; and no wonder that, being thus mistaken, they are perplexed, as if it was from a changing mood that He ordered one thing to be offered to Him in a former age, and something else now. But this is not the case. God enjoins nothing for His own advantage, but for the benefit of those to whom the injunction is given. Therefore He is truly Lord, for He does not need His servants, but His servants stand in need of Him. In those same Old Testament Scriptures, and in the age in which sacrifices were still being offered that are now abrogated, it is said:

⁵⁸ "I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou dost not need my good things." therefore God did not stand in need of those sacrifices, nor does He ever need anything; but there are certain acts, symbolical of these divine gifts, whereby the soul receives either present grace or eternal glory, in the celebration and practice of which, pious exercises, serviceable not to God but to ourselves, are performed. ⁵⁹ 7. It would, however, take too long to discuss with adequate fulness the differences between the symbolical actions of former and present times, which, because of their pertaining to divine things, are called sacraments.' For as the man is not fickle who does one thing in the morning and another in the evening, one thing this month and another in the next, one thing this year and another next year, so there is no variableness with God, though in the former period of the world's history He enjoined one kind of offerings, and in the latter period another, therein ordering the symbolical actions pertaining to the blessed doctrine of

true religion in harmony with the changes of successive epochs. without any change in Himself. For in order to let those whom these things perplex understand that time change was already in the divine counsel, and that, when the new ordinances were appointed, it was not because the old had suddenly lost the divine approbation through inconstancy in His will, but that this had been already fixed and determined by the wisdom of that God to whom, in reference to much greater changes, these words are spoken in Scripture :
Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, it is necessary to convince them that this exchange of the sacraments of the Old Testament for those of the New had been predicted by the voices of the prophets.

⁶⁰ For thus they will see, if they can see anything, that what is new in time is not new in relation to Him who has appointed the tithes, and who possesses, without succession of time, all those things which He assigns according to their variety to the several ages. For in the psalm from which I have quoted above the words: "I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou dost not need my good things," in proof that God does not need our sacrifices, it is added shortly after by the Psalmist in Christ's name: "I will not gather their assemblies of blood;" that is, for the offering of animals from their flocks, for which the Jewish assemblies were wont to be gathered together; and in another place he says: "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goat from thy folds;"⁴ and another prophet says: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. s There are, besides these, many other testimonies on this subject in which it was foretold that God would do as He has done; but it would take too long to mention them. 8.

⁶¹ If it is now established that that which was for one age rightly ordained may be in another age rightly changed,--the alteration indicating a change in the work, not in the plan, of Him who makes the change, the plan being framed by His reasoning faculty, to which, unconditioned by succession in time, those things are simultaneously present which cannot be actually done at the same time because the ages succeed each other,--one might perhaps at this point expect to hear from me the causes of the change in question. You know how long it would take to discuss these fully. The matter may be stated

summarily, but sufficiently for a man of shrewd judgment, in these words: It was fitting that Christ's future coming should be foretold by some sacraments, and that after His coming other sacraments should proclaim this; just as ⁶² i the difference in the facts has compelled us to change the words .used by us in speaking of the advent as future or past: to be foretold is one thing, to be proclaimed is another, and to be about to come is one thing, to have come is another. CHAP. II. -- 9. Let us now observed in the second place, what follows in your letter.⁶ You have added that they said that the Christian doctrine and preaching were in no way consistent with the duties and rights of citizens, because among its precepts we find: "Recompense to no man evil for evil," ^r and, "Whosoever shall smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; and whosoever will compel thee to go a mile with him, go with him twain," ^{s-} all which are affirmed to be contrary to the duties and rights of citizens; for who would submit to have anything taken from him by an enemy, or forbear from retaliating the evils of war upon an invader who ravaged a Roman province? To these and similar statements of persons speaking slightly, or perhaps I should rather say speaking as inquirers regarding the truth, I might have given a more elaborate answer, were it not that the persons with whom the discussion is carried on are men of liberal education. In addressing such, why should we prolong the debate, and not rather begin by inquiring for ourselves how it was possible that the Republic of Rome was governed and aggrandized from insignificance and poverty to greatness and opulence by men who, when they had suffered wrong, would rather pardon than punish the offender; ⁹

⁶³ or how Cicero, addressing Caesar, the greatest statesman of his time, said, in praising his character, that he was wont to forget nothing but the wrongs which were done to him ?' For in this Cicero spoke either praise or flattery: if he spoke praise, it was because he knew Caesar to be such as he affirmed; if he spoke flattery, he showed that the chief magistrate of a commonwealth ought to do such things as he falsely commended in Caesar. But what is "not rendering' evil for evil," but refraining from the passion of revenge-in other words, choosing, when one has suffered wrong, to pardon rather than to punish the offender, and to forget nothing but the wrongs done to us ? ¹⁰. When these things are read in their own authors, they are received with loud applause; they are regarded as the record and recommenda-

tion of virtues in the practice of which the Republic deserved to hold sway over so many nations, because its citizens preferred to pardon rather than punish those who wronged them. But when the precept, "Render to no man evil for evil," is read as given by divine authority, and when, from the pulpits in our churches, this wholesome counsel is published in the midst of our congregations, or, as we might say, in places of instruction open to all, of both sexes and of all ages and ranks, our religion is accused as an enemy to the Republic !

⁶⁴ Yet, were our religion listened to as it deserves, it would establish, consecrate, strengthen, and enlarge the commonwealth in a way beyond all that Romulus, Numa, Brutus, and all the other men of renown in Roman history achieved. For what' is a republic but a commonwealth? Therefore its interests are common to all; they are the interests of the State. Now what is a State but a multitude of men bound together by some bond of concord ? In one of their own authors we read: "What was a scattered and unsettled multitude had by concord become in a short time a State. But what exhortations to concord have they ever appointed to be read in their temples ? So far from this, they were unhappily compelled to devise how they might worship without giving offence to any of their gods, who were all at such variance among themselves, that, had their worshippers imitated their quarrelling, the State must have fallen to pieces for want of the bond of concord, as it soon afterwards began to do through civil wars, when the morals of the people were changed and corrupted. 11. But who, even though he be a stranger to our religion, is so deaf as not to know how many precepts enjoining concord, not invented by the discussions of men, but written with the authority of God, are continually read in the churches of Christ? For this is the tendency even of those precepts which they are much more willing to debate than to follow:

⁶⁵ "That to him who smites us on one cheek we should offer the other to be smitten; to him who would take away our coat we should give our cloak also; and that with him who' compels us to go one mile we should go twain. For these things are done only that a wicked man may be overcome by kindness, or rather that the evil which is in the wicked man may be overcome by good, and that the man may be delivered from the evil—not from any evil that is external and foreign to himself, but from that which is within and is his own, under which he suffers loss more severe and fatal than could be in-

fllicted by the cruelty of any enemy from without. He, therefore, who is overcoming evil by good, submits patiently to the loss of temporal advantages, that he may show how those things, through excessive love of which the other is made wicked, deserve to be despised when compared with faith and righteousness; in order that so the injurious person may learn from him whom he wronged what is the true nature of the things for the sake of which he committed the wrong, and may be won back with sorrow for his sin to that concord, than which nothing is more serviceable to the State, being overcome not by the strength of one passionately resenting, but by the good-nature of one patiently bearing wrong.

⁶⁶ For then it is rightly done when it seems that it will benefit him for whose sake it is done, by producing in him amendment of his ways and concord with others. At all events, it is to be done with this intention, even though the result may be different from what was expected, and the man, with a view to whose correction and conciliation this healing and salutary medicine, so to speak, was employed, refuses to be corrected and reconciled. 12. Moreover, if we pay attention to the words of the precept, and consider ourselves under bondage to the literal interpretation, the right cheek is not to be presented by us if the left has been smitten. "Whosoever," it is said, "shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also; " but the left cheek is more liable to be smitten, because it is easier for the right hand of the assailant to smite it than the other. But the words are commonly understood as if our Lord had said: If any one has acted injuriously to thee in respect of the higher possessions which thou hast, offer to him also the inferior possessions, lest, being more concerned about revenge than about forbearance, thou shouldst despise eternal things in comparison with temporal things, whereas temporal things

⁶⁷ ought to be despised in comparison with eternal things, as the left is in comparison with the right. This has been always the aim of the holy martyrs; for final vengeance is righteously! demanded only when there remains no room for amendment, namely, in the last great judgment. But meanwhile we must be on our guard, lest, through desire for revenge, we lose patience itself, -- a virtue which is of more value than all which an enemy can, in spite of our resistance, take away from us. For another evangelist, in recording the same precept, makes no mention of the right cheek, but names merely the one and the other; ' so that, while the duty may be somewhat more distinctly

learned from Matthew's gospel, he simply commends the same exercise of patience. Wherefore a righteous and pious man ought to be prepared to endure with patience injury from those whom he desires to make good, so that the number of good men may be increased, instead of himself being added, by retaliation of injury, to the number of wicked men. 13.

⁶⁸In fine, that these precepts pertain rather to the inward disposition of the heart than to the actions which are done in the sight of men, requiring us, in the inmost heart, to cherish patience along with benevolence, but in the outward action to do that which seems most likely to benefit those whose good we ought to seek, is manifest from the fact that our Lord Jesus Himself, our perfect example of patience, when He was smitten on the face, answered: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if not, why smitest thou me?"¹ If we look only to the words, He did not in this obey His own precept, for He did not present the other side of his face to him who had smitten Him but, on the contrary, prevented him who had done the wrong from adding thereto; and yet He had come prepared not only to be smitten on the face, but even to be slain upon the cross for those at whose hands He suffered crucifixion, and for whom, when hanging on the cross, He prayed, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!"² In like manner, the Apostle Paul seems to have failed to obey the precept of his Lord and Master, when he, being smitten on the face as He had been, said to the chief priest: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall, for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the!"

⁶⁹law?" And when it was said by them that stood near, "Revilest thou God's high priest?" he took pains sarcastically to indicate what his words meant, that those of them who were discerning might understand that now the whited wall, i.e. the hypocrisy of the Jewish priesthood, was appointed to be thrown down by the coming of Christ; for He said: "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest, for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people;"³ although it is perfectly certain that he who had grown up in that nation and had been in that place trained in the law, could not but know that his judge was the chief priest, and could not, by professing ignorance on this point, impose upon those to whom he was so well known. 14. These precepts concerning patience ought to be always retained in the habitual discipline of the heart, and the benevolence which prevents the recompensing of evil for evil must be always fully cherished in the disposition.

At the same time, many things must be done in correcting with a certain benevolent severity, even against their own wishes, men whose welfare rather than their wishes it is our duty to consult and the Christian Scriptures have most unambiguously commended this virtue in a magistrate.' For in the correction of a so, even with some sternness, there is assuredly no diminution of a father's love;

⁷⁰ yet, in the correction, that is done which is received with reluctance and pain by one whom it seems necessary to heal by pain. And on this principle, if the commonwealth observe the precepts of the Christian religion, even its wars themselves will not be carried on without the benevolent design that, after the resisting nations have been conquered, provision may be more easily made for enjoying in peace the mutual bond of piety and justice. For the person from whom is taken away the freedom which he abuses in doing i wrong is vanquished with benefit to himself; since nothing is more truly a misfortune than that good fortune of offenders, by which pernicious impunity is maintained, and the evil disposition, like an enemy within the man, is strengthened. But the perverse and froward . hearts of men think human affairs are prosperous when men are concerned about magnificent mansions, and indifferent to the ruin of souls; when mighty theatres are built up, and the foundations of virtue are undermined; when the madness of extravagance is highly esteemed, and works of mercy are scorned; when, out of , the wealth and affluence of rich men, luxurious provision is made for actors, and the poor are . grudged the necessities of life; when that God !who, by the public declarations of His doctrine, protests against public vice, is blasphemous by impious communities, which demand gods of such character that even those theatrical representations which bring disgrace to both body

⁷¹ and soul are fitly performed in honour of them. If God permit these things to prevail, He is in that permission showing more grievous displeasure: if He leave these crimes unpunished, such impunity is a more terrible judgment. When, on the other hand, He overthrows the props of vice, and reduces to poverty those lusts which were nursed by plenty, He afflicts in mercy. And in mercy, also, if such a thing were possible, even wars might be waged by the good, in order that, by bringing under the yoke the unbridled lusts of men, those vices might be abolished which ought, under a just government, to be either extirpated or suppressed. 15. For if the Christian religion condemned wars of every kind, the command given in the gospel to

soldiers asking counsel as to salvation would rather be to cast away their arms, and withdraw themselves wholly from military service; whereas the word spoken to such was, "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages," 'the command to be content with their wages! manifestly implying no prohibition to continue in the service. Wherefore, let those who say that the doctrine of Christ is incompatible with the State's well-being, give us an army composed of soldiers such as the doctrine of Christ requires them to be; let them give us such subjects, such husbands and wives, such parents! and children, such masters and servants, such!

⁷² kings, such judges--in fine, even such taxpayers and tax-gatherers, as the Christian religion has taught that men should be, and then let them dare to say that it is adverse to the State's well-being; yea, rather, let them no longer hesitate to confess that this doctrine, if it were obeyed, would be the salvation of the commonwealth. CHAP. III -- 16. But what am I to answer to the assertion made that many calamities have befallen the Roman Empire through some Christian emperors? This sweeping accusation is a calumny. For if they would more clearly quote some indisputable facts in support of it from the history of past emperors, I also could mention similar, perhaps even greater calamities in the reigns of other emperors who were not Christians; so that men may understand that these were either faults in the men, not in their religion, or were due not to the emperors themselves, but to others without whom emperors can do nothing. As to the date of the commencement of the downfall of the Roman Republic, there is ample evidence; their own literature speaks plainly as to this. Long before the name of Christ had shone abroad on the earth, this was said of Rome: "O venal city, and doomed to perish speedily, if only it could find a purchaser!"² In his book on the Catilinarian conspiracy, which was before the coming of Christ, the same most illustrious Roman historian declares plainly the time when the army of the Roman people began to be wanton and drunken;

⁷³ to set a high value on statues, paintings, and embossed vases; to take these by violence both from individuals and from the State; to rob temples and pollute everything, sacred and profane. When, therefore, the avarice and grasping violence of the corrupt and abandoned manners of the time spared neither men nor those whom they esteemed as gods, the famous honour and safety of the commonwealth began to decline. What progress the worst vices

made from that time forward, and with how great mischief to the interests of mankind the wickedness of the Empire went on, it would take too long to rehearse. Let them hear their own satirist speaking playfully yet truly thus: -- Once poor, and therefore chaste, in former times Our matrons were no luxury found room In low-roofed houses and bare walls of loam; Their hands with labour burdened while 'tis light, A frugal sleep supplied the quiet night; While, pinched with want, their hunger held them strait, When Hannibal was hovering at the gate; But wanton now, and lolling at our ease, We suffer all the inveterate ills of peace And wasteful riot, whose destructive charms Revenge the vanquished world of our victorious arms. No crime, no lustful postures are unknown, Since poverty, our guardian-god, is gone. s

⁷⁴ Why, then, do you expect me to multiply examples of the evils which were brought in by wickedness uplifted by prosperity, seeing that among themselves, those who observed events with somewhat' closer attention discerned that Rome had more reason to regret the departure of its poverty than of its opulence; because in its poverty the integrity of its virtue was secured, but through its opulence, dire corruption, more terrible than any invader, had taken violent possession not of the walls of the city, but of the mind of the State ? 17. Thanks be unto the Lord our God, who has sent unto us unprecedented help in resisting these evils. For whither might not men have been carried away by that flood of the appalling wickedness of the human race, whom would it have spared, and in what depths would it not have engulfed its victims, had not the cross of Christ, resting on such a solid rock of authority (so to speak), been planted too high add too strong for the flood to sweep it away ? so that by laying hold of its strength we may become steadfast, and not be carried off our feet and overwhelmed in the mighty whirlpool of the

⁷⁵ evil counsels and evil impulses of this world. For when the empire was sinking in the vile abyss of utterly depraved manners, and of the effete ancient religion, it was signally important that heavenly authority should come to the rescue, persuading men to the practice of voluntary poverty, continence, benevolence, justice, and concord among themselves, as well as true piety towards God, and all the other bright and sterling virtues of life, -- not only with a view to the I spending of this present life in the most honourable way, nor only with a view to secure the most t perfect bond of concord m the earthly common wealth, but also in order to the obtaining of

eternal salvation, and a place in the divine and! celestial republic of a people which shall endure for ever--a republic to the citizenship of which faith, hope, and charity admit us; so that, while absent from it on our pilgrimage here, we may patiently tolerate, if we cannot correct, those who desire, by leaving vices unpunished, to give stability to that republic which the early Romans founded and enlarged by their virtues, when, though they had not the true piety towards the true God which could bring them, by a religion of saving power, to the commonwealth which is eternal, they did nevertheless observe a certain integrity of its' own kind, which might suffice for founding, enlarging, and preserving an earthly commonwealth.

⁷⁶For in the most opulent and illustrious' Empire of Rome, God has shown how great is the influence of even civil virtues without true religion, in order that it might be understood that, when this is added to such virtues, men are made citizens of another commonwealth, of which the king is Truth, the law is Love, and the duration is Eternity. CHAP. IV. -- 18. Who can help feeling that there is something simply ridiculous in their attempt to compare with Christ, or rather to put in a higher place, Apollonius and Apuleius, and others who were most skilful in magical arts? Yet this is to be tolerated with less impatience, because they bring into comparison with Him these men rather than their own gods; for Apollonius was, as we must admit, a much worthier character than that author and perpetrator of innumerable gross acts of immorality whom they call Jupiter. "These legends about our gods," they reply, "are fables. Why, then, do they go on praising that luxurious, licentious, and manifestly profane prosperity of the Republic, which invented these infamous crimes of the gods, and not only left them to reach the ears of men as fables, but also exhibited them to the eyes of men in the theatres; in which, more numerous than their deities were the crimes which the gods themselves were well pleased to see openly perpetrated in their honour, whereas they should have punished their worshippers for even tolerating such spectacles?

⁷⁷"But," they reply, "those are not the gods themselves whose worship is celebrated according to the lying invention of such fables. Who, then, are they who are propitiated by the practising in worship of such abominations? Because, forsooth, Christianity has exposed the perversity and chicanery of those devils, by whose power also magical arts deceive the minds of men, and because it has made this patent to the world, and, having brought out the

distinction between the holy angels and these malignant adversaries, has warned men to be on their guard against them, showing them also how this may be done, -- it is called an enemy to the Republic, as if, even though temporal prosperity could be secured by their aid, and, amount of adversity would not be preferable to the prosperity obtained through such means. And yet it pleased God to prevent men from being perplexed in this matter; for in the age of the comparative darkness of the Old Testament, in which is the covering of the New Testament, He distinguished the first nation which worshiped the true God and despised false gods by such remarkable prosperity in this world, that any one may perceive from their case that prosperity is not at the disposal of devils, but only of Him whom angels serve and devils fear. 19.

⁷⁸ Apuleius (of whom I choose rather to speak, because, as our own countryman, he is better known to us Africans), though born in a place of some note, and a man of superior education and great eloquence, never succeeded, with all his magical arts, in reaching, I do not say the supreme power, but even any subordinate office as a magistrate in the Empire. Does it seem probable that he, as a philosopher, voluntarily despised these things, who, being the priest of a province, was so ambitious of greatness that he gave spectacles of gladiatorial combats, provided the dresses worn by those who fought with wild beasts in the circus, and, in order to get a statue of himself erected in the town of Coea, the birthplace of his wife, appealed to law against the opposition made by some of the citizens to the proposal, and then, to prevent this from being forgotten by posterity, published the speech delivered by him on that occasion? I So far, therefore, as concerns worldly prosperity, I that magician did his utmost in order to success; whence it is manifest that he failed not because he was not wishful, but because he was not able to do more. At the same time we admit that he defended himself with brilliant eloquence against some who imputed to him the crime of practising magical arts which makes me wonder

⁷⁹ at his panegyrists, who, in affirming that by these arts he wrought some miracles, attempt to bring evidence contradicting his own defence of himself from the charge. Let them, however, examine whether, indeed, they are bringing true testimony, and he was guilty of pleading what he knew to be false. Those who pursue magical arts only with a view to worldly prosperity or from an accursed curiosity, and those also who, though innocent of

such arts, nevertheless praise them with a dangerous admiration, I would exhort to give heed, if they be wise, and to observe how, without any such arts, the position of a shepherd was exchanged for the dignity of the kingly office by David, of whom Scripture has faithfully recorded both the sinful and the meritorious actions, in order that we might know both how to avoid offending God, and how, when He has been offended, His wrath may be appeased. 20. As to those miracles, however, which are performed in order to excite the wonder of men, they do greatly err who compare heathen magicians with the holy prophets, who completely eclipse them by the fame of their great miracles. How much more do they err if they compare them with Christ, of whom the prophets, so incomparably superior to magicians of every name, foretold that He would come both in the human nature, which he took in being born of the Virgin, and in the divine nature, in which He is never separated from the Father !

⁸⁰ I see that I have written a very long letter, and yet have not said all concerning Christ which might meet the case either of those who from sluggishness of intellect are unable to comprehend divine things, or of those who, though endowed with acuteness, are kept back from discerning truth through their love of contradiction and the prepossession of their minds in favour of long-cherished error. Howbeit, take note of anything which influences them against our doctrine, and write to me again, so that, if the Lord help us, we may, by letters or by treatises, furnish an answer to all their objections. May you, by the grace and mercy of the Lord, be happy in Him; my noble and justly distinguished lord, my son dearly beloved and longed for

LETTER 139. TO MARCELLINUS, AD 412

⁸¹ (A.D. 412.) to Marcellinus, my Lord Justly Distinguished my Son Very Much Beloved and Longed for Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. ⁸² I. The Acts¹ which your Excellency promised to send I am eagerly expecting, and I am longing to have them read as soon as possible in the church at Hippo, and also, if it can be done, in all the churches established within the diocese, that all may hear and become thoroughly familiar with the men who have confessed their crimes, not because the fear of God subdued them to repentance, but because the rigour of their judges broke through the hardness of their most cruel hearts, -- some of them confessing to the murder of one presbyter [Restitutus], and the blinding and maiming of another [Innocentius]; others not daring to deny that they might have known

of these outrages, although they say that they disapproved of them, and persisting in the impiety of schism in fellowship with such a multitude of atrocious villains, while deserting the peace of the Catholic Church on the pretext of unwillingness to be polluted by other men's crimes; others declaring that they will not forsake the schismatics, even though the certainty of Catholic truth and the perversity of the Donatists have been demonstrated to them. The work, which it has pleased God to entrust to your diligence, is of great importance. My heart's desire is, that many similar Donatist cases may be tried and decided by you as these have been, and that in this way the crimes and the insane obstinacy of these men may be often brought to light; and that the Acts recording :

⁸³ these proceedings may be published, and brought to the knowledge of all men. As to the statement in your Excellency's letter, that you are uncertain whether you ought to command the said Acts to be published in Theoprepia,² my reply is, Let this be done, if a large multitude of hearers can be gathered there; if this be not the case, some other place of more general resort must be provided; it must not, however, be omitted on any account. 2. As to the punishment of these men, I beseech you to make it something less severe than sentence of death, although they have, by their own confession, been guilty of such grievous crimes. I ask this out of a regard both for our own consciences and for the testimony thereby given to Catholic clemency. For this is the special advantage secured to us by their confession, that the Catholic Church has found an opportunity of maintaining and exhibiting forbearance towards her most violent enemies; since in a case where such cruelty was practised, any punishment short of death will be seen by all men to proceed from great leniency. And although such treatment appears to some of our communion, whose minds are agitated by these atrocities, to be less than the crimes deserve, and to have somewhat the aspect of weakness and dereliction of duty, nevertheless, when the feelings, which are wont to be immoderately ex-

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⁸⁴ cited while such events are recent, have subsided after a time, the kindness shown to the guilty will shine with most conspicuous brightness, and men will take much more pleasure in reading these Acts and showing them to others, my lord justly distinguished, and son very much beloved and longed for. My holy brother and co-bishop Boniface is on the spot, and I have forwarded by the deacon Peregrinus, who travelled along with him, a

letter of instructions; accept these as representing me. And whatever may seem in your joint opinion to be for the Church's interest, let it be done with the help of the Lord, who is able in the midst of so great evils graciously to succour you. One of their bishops, Macrobius, is at present going round in all directions, followed by bands of wretched men and women, and has opened for himself the [Donatist] churches which fear, however slight, had moved their owners to close for a time. By the presence, however, of one whom I have commended and again heartily commend to your love, namely, Spondeus, the deputy of the illustrious Celer, their presumption was indeed somewhat checked; but now, since his departure to Carthage, Macrobius has opened the Donatist churches ever within his property, and is gathering congregations for worship in them. In his company,' moreover, is Donatus, a deacon, rebaptized by them even when he was a tenant of lands belonging to the Church, who was implicated as a ringleader in the outrage Ion Innocentius].

⁸⁵ When this man is his associate, who can tell what kind of followers may be in his retinue? If the sentence on these men is to be pronounced by the Proconsul,' or by both of you together, and if he perchance insist upon inflicting capital punishment, although he is a Christian and, so far as we have had opportunity of observing, not disposed to such severity -- if, I say, his determination make it necessary, order those letters of mine, which I deemed it my duty to address to you severally on this subject,² to be brought before you while the trial is still going on; for I am accustomed to hear that it is in the power of the judge to mitigate the sentence, and inflict a milder penalty than the law prescribes. If, however, notwithstanding these letters from me, he refuse to grant this request, let him at least allow that the men be remanded for a time; and we will endeavour to obtain this concession from the clemency of the Emperors, so that the sufferings of the martyrs, which ought to shed bright glory on the Church, may not be tarnished by the blood of their enemies; for I know that in the case of the clergy in the valley of Anaunia,³ who were slain by the Pagans, and are now honoured as martyrs, the Emperor granted readily a petition that the murderers, who had been discovered and imprisoned, might not be visited with a capital punishment. ³.

⁸⁶ As to the books concerning the baptism of infants, of which I had sent the original manuscript to your Excellency, I have forgotten for what reason

I received them again from you; unless, perhaps, it was that, 'after examining them, I found them faulty, and wished to make some corrections, which, by reason of extraordinary hindrances, I have not yet been able to overtake. I must also confess that the letter intended to be addressed to you and added to these books, and which I had begun to dictate when I was with you, is still unfinished, little having been added to it since that time. If, however, I could set before you a statement of the toil which it is absolutely necessary for me to devote, both by day and by night, to other duties, you would deeply sympathize with me, and would be astonished at the amount of business not admitting of delay which distracts my mind and hinders me from accomplishing those things to which you urge me in entreaties and admonitions, addressed to one most willing to oblige you, and inexpressibly grieved that it is beyond his power;

⁸⁷ for when I obtain a little leisure from the urgent necessary business of those men, who so press me into their service ⁴ that I am neither able to escape them nor at liberty to neglect them, there are always subjects to which I must, in dictating to my amanuenses, give the first place, because they are so connected with the present hour as not to admit of being postponed. Of such things one instance was the abridgement of the proceedings at our Conference,^s a work involving much labour, but necessary, because I saw that no one would attempt the perusal of such a mass of writing; another was a letter to the Donatist laity ⁶ concerning the said Conference, a document which I have just completed, after labouring at it for several nights; another was the composition of two long letters? one addressed to yourself, my beloved friend, the other to the illustrious Volusianus, which I suppose you both have received; another is a book, with which I am occupied at present, addressed to our friend Honoratus,⁸ in regard to five questions proposed by him in a letter to me, and you see that to him I was unquestionably in duty bound to send a prompt

⁸⁸ reply. For love deals with her sons as a nurse does with children, devoting her attention to them not in the order of the love felt for each, but according to the urgency of each case; she gives a preference to the weaker, because she desires to impart to them such strength as is possessed by the stronger, whom she passes by meanwhile not because of her slighting them, but because her mind is at rest in regard to them. Emergencies of this kind, compelling me to employ my amanuenses in writing on subjects which pre-

vent me from using their pens in: work much more congenial to tile ardent desires l of my heart, can never fail to occur, because I have difficulty in obtaining even a very little leisure, amidst the accumulation of business into which, in spite of my own inclinations, I am dragged by other men's wishes or necessities; and what I am to do, I really do not know. 4. You have heard the burdens, for my deliverance from which I wish you to join your prayers with mine; but at the same time I do not wish you to desist from admonishing me, as you do, with such importunity and frequency; your words are not without some effect.

⁸⁹ I commend at the same time to your Excellency a church planted in Numidia, on behalf of which, in its present necessities, my holy brother and co-bishop Delphinus has been sent by my brethren and co-bishops who share the toils and the dangers of their work in that region. I no more on this matter, because you will hear all from his own lips when he comes to you. All other necessary particulars you will find in the letters of instruction, which are sent by me to the presbyter either now or by the deacon Peregrinus, so that I need not again repeat them. May your heart be ever strong in Christ, my lord justly distinguished, and son very much beloved and longed for ! I commend to your Excellency our son Ruffinus, the Provost. of Cirta.

LETTER 143. TO MARCELLINUS, AD 412

⁹⁰ (A.D. 412.) to Marcellinus, my Noble Lord, Justly Distinguished, my Son Very Much Beloved, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. ⁹¹ I. Desiring to reply to the letter which I received from you through our holy brother, my co-bishop Boniface, I have sought for it, but have not found it. I have recalled to mind, however, that you asked me in that letter how the magicians of Pharaoh could, after all the water of Egypt had been turned into blood, find any with which to imitate the miracle. There are two ways in which the question is commonly answered: either that it was possible for water to have been brought from the sea, or, which is more credible, that these plagues were not inflicted on the district in which the children of Israel were; for the clear, express statements to this effect in some parts of that scriptural narrative entitle us to assume this in places where the statement is omitted. 2. In your other letter, brought to me by the presbyter Urbanus, a question is proposed, taken from a passage not in the Divine Scriptures, but in one of my own books, namely, that which I wrote on Free Will. On questions of this kind, however, I do not bestow much labour; because. even if the statement

objected to does not admit of unanswerable vindication, it is mine only; it is not an utterance of that Author whose words it is impiety to reject, even when, through our misapprehension of their meaning, the interpretation which we put on them deserves to be rejected.

⁹² I freely confess, accordingly, that I endeavour to be one of those who write because they have made some progress, and who, by-means of writing, make further progress. If, therefore, through inadvertence or want of knowledge, anything has been stated by me which may with good reason be condemned, not only by others who are able to discover this, but also by myself (for if I am making progress, I ought, at least after it has been pointed out, to see it), such a mistake is not to be regarded with surprise or grief, but rather forgiven, and made the occasion of congratulating me, not, of course, on having erred, but on having renounced an error. For there is an extravagant perversity in the self-love of the man who desires other men to be in error, that the fact of his having erred may not be discovered. How much better and more profitable is it that in the points in which he has erred others should not err, so that he may be delivered from his error by their advice, or, if he refuse this, may at least have no followers in his error. For, if God permit me, as I desire, to gather together and point out, in a work devoted to this express purpose, all the things which most justly displease me in my books, men will then see how far I am from being a partial judge in my own case. 3.

⁹³ As for you, however, who love me warmly, if, in opposing those by whom, whether through malice or ignorance or superior intelligence, I am censured, you maintain the position that I have nowhere in my writings made a mistake, you labour in a hopeless enterprise- you have undertaken a bad cause, in which, even if myself were judge, you must be easily worsted; for it is no pleasure to me that my dearest friends should think me to be such as I am not, since assuredly they love not me, but instead of me ⁹⁴ another under my name, if they love not what I am, but what I am not; for in so far as they know me, or believe what is true concerning me, I am loved by them; but in so far as they ascribe to me what they do not know to be in me, they love another person, such as they suppose me to be. Cicero, the prince of Roman orators, says of some one, "He never uttered a word which he would wish to recall. This commendation, though it seems to be the highest possible, is nevertheless more likely to be true of a consummate fool than of a

man perfectly wise; for it is true of idiots,' that the more absurd and foolish they are, and the more their opinions diverge from those universally held, the more likely are they to utter no word which they will wish to recall; for to regret an evil, or foolish, or ill-timed word is characteristic of a wise man. If, however, the words quoted are taken in a good sense, as intended to make us believe that some one was such that, by reason of his speaking all things wisely, he never uttered any word which he would wish to recall,- this we are, in accordance with sound piety, to believe rather concerning men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, than concerning the man whom Cicero commends.

⁹⁵ For my part, so far am I from this excellence, that if I have uttered no word which I would wish to recall, it must be because I resemble more the idiot than the wise man. The man whose writings are most worthy of the highest authority is he who has uttered no word, I do not say which it would: be his desire, but which it would be his duty to recall. Let him that has not attained to this! occupy the second rank through his humility, I since he cannot take the first rank through his wisdom. Since he has been unable, with all his care, to exclude every expression whose use may be justly regretted, let him acknowledge his regret for anything which, as he may now have discovered, ought not to have been said. 4. ⁹⁶ Since, therefore, the words spoken by me which I would if I could recall, are not, as my very dear friends suppose, few or none, but perhaps even more than my enemies imagine, I am not gratified by such commendation as Cicero's sentence, "He never uttered a word which he would wish to recall," but I am deeply distressed by the saying of Horace, "The word once uttered cannot be recalled."² This is the reason why I keep beside me, longer than you wish or patiently bear, the books which I have written on difficult and important questions on the book of Genesis and the doctrine of the Trinity, hoping that, if it be impossible to avoid having some things which may deservedly be found fault with, the number of these may at least be smaller than it might have been, if, through impatient haste, the works had been published without due deliberation; for you, as your letters indicate (our holy brother and co-bishop Florentius having written me to this effect), are urgent for the publication of these works now, in order that they may be defended in my own lifetime by myself, when, perhaps, they may begin to be assailed in some particulars, either through the cavilling of enemies or the misapprehensions of friends.

You say this doubtless because you think there is nothing in them which might with justice be censured, otherwise you would not exhort me to publish the books, but rather to revise them more carefully.

⁹⁷ But I fix my eye rather on those who are true judges, sternly impartial, between whom and myself I wish, in the first place, to make sure of my ground, so that the only faults coming to be censured by them may be those which it was impossible for me to observe, though using the most diligent scrutiny. 5. Notwithstanding what I have just said, I am prepared to defend the sentence in the third book of my treatise on Free Will, in which, discoursing on the rational substance, I have expressed my opinion in these words: "The soul, appointed to occupy a body inferior in nature to itself after the entrance of sin, governs its own body, not absolutely according to its free will, but only in so far as the laws of the universe permit. I bespeak the particular attention of those who think that I have here fixed and defined, as ascertained concerning the human soul, either that it comes by propagation from the parents, or that it has, through sins committed in a higher celestial life, incurred the penalty of being shut up in a corruptible body. Let them, I say, observe that the words in question have been so carefully weighed by me, that while they hold fast what I regard as certain, namely, that after the sin of the first man, all other men.

⁹⁸ have been born and continue to be born in that sinful flesh, for the healing of which "the likeness of sinful flesh "s came in the person of the Lord, they are also so chosen as not to pronounce upon' any one of those four opinions which I have in the sequel expounded and distinguished--not attempting to establish any one of them as preferable to the others, but disposing in the meantime of the matter under discussion, and reserving the consideration of these opinions, so that whichever of them may be true, praise should unhesitatingly be given to God. 6. For whether all souls are derived by propagation from the first, or are in the case of each individual specially created, or being created apart from the body are sent into it, or introduce themselves into it of their own accord, without doubt ⁹⁹this creature endowed with reason, namely, the human soul- appointed to occupy an inferior, that is, an earthly body- after the entrance of sin, does not govern its own body absolutely according to its free will.' For I did not say, "after his sin," or "after he sinned," but after the entrance of sin, that whatever might afterwards, if possible, be determined by reason as to the question whether the sin

was his own or the sin of the first parent of mankind, it might be perceived that in saying that "the soul, appointed, after the entrance of sin, to occupy an inferior body, does not govern its body absolutely according to its own free will," I stated what is true; for "the flesh lusteth against the spirit," and in this we groan, being burdened," 3 and "the corruptible body weighs down the soul," 4_ in short, who can enumerate all the evils arising from the infirmity of the flesh, which shall assuredly cease when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption," so that "that which is mortal shall be swallowed up of life" ?s In that future condition, therefore, the soul shall govern its spiritual body with absolute freedom of will; but in the meantime its freedom is not absolute, but conditioned by the laws of the universe, according to which -it is fixed, that bodies having experienced birth experience death, and having grown to maturity decline in old age.

100 For the soul of the first man did, before the entrance of sin, govern his body with perfect freedom of will, although that body was not yet spiritual, but animal; but after the entrance of sin, that is, after sin had been committed in that flesh from which sinful flesh was thenceforward to be propagated, the reasonable soul is so appointed to occupy an inferior body, that it does not govern its body with absolute freedom of will. That infant children, even before they have committed any sin of their own, are partakers of sinful flesh, is, in my opinion, proved by their requiring to have it healed in them also, by the application in their baptism of the remedy provided in Him who came in the likeness of sinful flesh. But even those who do not acquiesce in this view have no just ground for taking offence at the sentence quoted from my book; for it is certain, if I am not mistaken. that even if the infirmity be the consequence not of sin, but of nature, it was at all events only after the entrance of sin that bodies having this infirmity began to be produced; for Adam was not created thus, and he did not beget any offspring before he sinned. 7. Let my critics, therefore, seek other passages to censure, not only in my other more hastily published works, but also in these books of mine on Free Will.

101 For I by no means deny that they may in this search discover opportunities of conferring a benefit on me; for if the books, having passed into so many hands, cannot now be corrected, I myself may, being still alive. Those words, however, so carefully selected by me to avoid committing myself to any one of the four opinions or theories regarding the soul's origin, are liable

to censure only from those who think that my hesitation as to any definite view in a matter so obscure is blameworthy; against whom I do not defend myself by saying that I think it right to pronounce no opinion whatever on the subject, seeing that I have no doubt either that the soul is immortal -- not in the same sense in which God is immortal, who alone hath immortality,⁶ but in a certain way peculiar to itself--or that the soul is a creature and not 'a part of the substance of the Creator, or as to any other thing which I regard as most certain ' concerning its nature. But seeing that the obscurity of this most mysterious subject, the origin of the soul, compels me to do as I have done, let them rather stretch out a friendly hand to me, confessing my ignorance, and desiring to know whatever is the truth on the subject; and let them, if they can, teach or demonstrate to me what they may either have learned by the exercise of sound reason, or have believed on indisputably plain testimony of the divine oracles.

¹⁰² For if reason be found contradicting the authority of Divine Scriptures, it only deceives by a semblance of truth, however acute it be, for its deductions cannot in that case be true. On the other hand, if, against the most manifest and reliable testimony of reason, anything be set up claiming to have the authority of the Holy Scriptures, he who does this does it through a misapprehension of what he has read, and is setting up against the truth not the real meaning of Scripture, which he has failed to discover, but an opinion of his own; he alleges not what he has found in the Scriptures, but what he has found in himself as their interpreter. 8. Let me give an example, to which I solicit your earnest attention. In a passage near the end of Ecclesiastes, where the author is speaking of man's dissolution through death separating the soul from the body, it is written, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." ⁷ A statement having the authority on which this one is based is true beyond all dispute, and is not intended to deceive any one; yet if any one wishes to put upon it such an interpretation as may help him in attempting to support the theory of the propagation of souls, according to

¹⁰³ which all other souls are derived from that one which God gave to the first man, what is there said concerning the body under the name of "dust" (for obviously nothing else than body and soul are to be understood by "dust" and "spirit" in this passage) seems to favour his view; for he may affirm that the soul is said to return to God because of its being derived from the

original stock of that soul which God gave to the first man, in the same way as the body is said to return to the dust because of its being derived from the original stock of that body which was made of dust in the first man and therefore may argue that, from what we know perfectly as to the body, we ought to believe what is hidden from our observation as to the soul; for there is no difference of opinion as to the original stock of the body, but there is as to the original stock of the soul. In the text thus brought forward as a proof, statements are made concerning both, as if the manner of the return of each to its original was precisely similar in both,- the body, on the one hand, returning to the earth as it was, for thence was it taken when the first man was formed;

¹⁰⁴ the soul, on the other hand, returning to God, for He gave it when He breathed into the nostrils of the man whom He had formed the breath of life, and he became a living soul,' so that thenceforward the propagation of each part should go on from the corresponding part in the parent. 9. If, however, the true account of the soul's origin be, that God gives to each individual man a soul, not propagated from that first soul, but created in some other way, the statement that the "spirit returns to God who gave it," is equally consistent with this view. The two other opinions regarding the soul's origin are, then, the only ones which seem to be excluded by this text. For in the first place, as to the opinion that every man's soul is made separately within him at the time of his creation, it is supposed that, if this were the case, the soul should have been spoken of as returning, not to God who gave it, but to God who made it; for the word "gave" seems to imply that that which could be given had already a separate existence. The words "returneth to God" are further insisted upon by some, who say, How could it return to a place where it had never been before? Accordingly they maintain that, if the soul is to be believed to have never been with God before, the words should have been "it goes," or "goes on," or "goes away," rather than it "returns" to God.

¹⁰⁵ In like manner, as to the opinion that each soul glides of its own accord into its body, it is not easy to explain how this theory is reconcilable with the statement that God gave it. The words of this scriptural passage are consequently somewhat adverse to these two opinions, namely, the one which supposes each soul to be created in its own body, and the one which supposes each soul to introduce itself into its own body spontaneously. But

there is no difficulty in showing that the words are consistent with either of the other two opinions, namely, that all souls are derived by propagation from the one first created, or that, having been created and kept in readiness with God, they are given to each body as required. 10. Nevertheless, even if the theory that each soul is created in its own body may not be wholly excluded by this text, -- for if its advocates affirm that God is here said to have given the spirit (or the soul) in the same way as He is said to have given us eyes, ears, hands, or other such members, which were not made elsewhere by Him, and kept in store that He might give them, i.e. add and join them to our bodies, but are made by Him in that body to which He is said to have given them,- I do not see what could be said in reply, unless, perchance, the opinion could be refuted, either by other passages of Scripture, or by valid reasoning.

106 In like manner, those who think that each soul flows of its own accord into its body take the words "God gave it" in the sense in which it is said, "He gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts."a Only one word, therefore, remains apparently irreconcilable with the theory that each soul is made in its own body, namely, the word "returneth," in the expression "returneth to God; for in what sense can the soul return to Him with whom it has not formerly been? By this one word alone are the supporters of this one of the four opinions embarrassed. And yet I do not think that this opinion ought to be held as refuted by this one word, for it may be possible to show that in the ordinary style of scriptural language it may be quite correct to use the word "return," as signifying the spirit created by God returns to Him not because of its having been with Him before its union with the body, but because of its having received being from His creative power. 11.

107 I have written these things in order to show that whoever is disposed to maintain and vindicate any one of these four theories of the soul's origin, must bring forward, either from the Scriptures received into ecclesiastical authority, passages which do not admit of any other interpretation,- as the statement that God made *ō*man,- or reasonings founded on premises so obviously true that to call them in question would be madness, such as the statement that 108 none but the living are capable of knowledge or of error; for a statement like this does not require the authority of Scripture to prove its truth, as if the common sense of mankind did not of itself announce its

truth with such transparent cogency of reason, that whoever contradicts it must be held to be hopelessly mad. If any one .is able to produce such arguments in discussing _the very obscure question of the soul's origin, let him help me in my ignorance; but if he cannot do this, let him forbear from blaming my hesitation on the question. 12. As to the virginity of the Holy Mary, if what I have written on this subject does not suffice to prove that it was possible, we must refuse to believe every record of anything miraculous having taken place in the body of any. If, .however, the objection to believing this miracle is, that it happened only once, ask the friend who is still perplexed by this, whether instances may not be quoted from secular literature of events which were, like this one, unique, and which, nevertheless, are believed, not merely as fables are believed by the simple, but with that faith with which the history of facts is received --ask him, I beseech you, this question. For if he says that nothing of this kind is to be found in these writings, he ought to have such instances pointed out to him; if he admits this, the question is decided by his admission.

LETTER 144. AD 412

(A.D. 412.) to my Honourable and Justly Esteemed Lords, the, Inhabitants of Cirta, of All Ranks, Brethren Dearly Beloved and Longed for, Bishop Augustin Sends Greeting. 1. If that which greatly distressed me in your town has now been removed; if the obduracy of hearts which resisted most evident and, as we might call it, notorious truth, has by the force of truth been overcome; if the sweetness of peace is relished, and the love which tends to unity is the occasion no longer of pain to eyes diseased, but of light and vigour to eyes restored to health,--this is God's work, not ours; on no account would I ascribe these results to human efforts, even had such a remarkable conversion of your whole community taken place when I was with you, and in connection with my own preaching and exhortations. The operation and the success are His who, by His servants, calls men's attention outwardly by the signs of things, and Himself teaches men inwardly by the things themselves. The fact, however, that whatever praiseworthy change has been wrought among you is to be ascribed not to us, but to Him who alone doeth wonderful works? is no reason for our being more reluctant to be persuaded to visit you. For we ought to hasten much more readily to see the works of God than our own works, for we ourselves also, if we be of service in any work, owe this not to men but to Him; wherefore the apostle says, "Neither is he that

planteth anything, neither he that watereth: but God that giveth the increase." 2 2.

You allude in your letter to a fact which I also remember from classic literature, that by discoursing on the benefits of temperance, Xenocrates suddenly converted Polemo from a dissipated to a sober life, though this man was not only habitually intemperate, but was actually intoxicated at the time. Now although this was, as you have wisely and truthfully apprehended, a case not of conversion to God, but of emancipation from the thralldom of self-indulgence, I would not ascribe even the amount of improvement wrought in him to the work of man, but to the work of God. For even in the body, the lowest part of our nature, all excellent things, such as beauty, vigour, health, and so on, are the work of God, to whom nature owes its creation and perfection; how much more certain, therefore, must it be that no other can impart excellent properties to the soul! For what imagination of human folly could be more full of pride and ingratitude than the notion that, although God alone can give comeliness to the body, it belongs to man to give purity to the soul?

It is written in the book of Christian Wisdom, "I perceived that no one can have self-restraint unless God give it to him, and that this is a part of true wisdom to know whose gift it is." 3 If, therefore, Polemo, when he exchanged a life of dissipation for a life of sobriety, had so understood whence the gift came, that, renouncing the superstitions of the heathen, he had rendered worship to the Divine Giver, he would then have become not only temperate, but truly wise and savingly religious, which would have secured to him not merely the practice of virtue in this life, but also the possession of immortality in the life to come. How much less, then, should I presume to take to myself the honour of your conversion, or of that of your people which you have now reported to me, which, when I was neither speaking to you nor even present with you, was accomplished unquestionably by divine power in all in whom it has really taken place. This, therefore, know above all things, meditate on this with devout humility. To God, my brethren, to God give thanks. Fear Him, that ye may not go backward: love Him, that ye may go forward.⁴

3. If, however, love of men still keeps some secretly alienated from the flock of Christ, while fear of other men constrains them to a feigned reconciliation, I charge all such to consider that before God the conscience of

man has no covering, and that they can neither impose on Him as a Witness, nor escape from Him as a Judge. But if, by reason of anxiety as to their own salvation, anything as to the question of the unity of Christ's flock perplex them, let them make this demand upon themselves,- and it seems to me a most just demand, --that in regard to the Catholic Church, i.e. the Church spread abroad over the whole world, they believe rather the words of Divine Scripture than the calumnies of human tongues. Moreover, with respect to the schism which has arisen among men (who assuredly, whatsoever they may be, do not frustrate the promises of God to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,"¹ -- promises believed when brought to their ears as a prophecy, but denied, forsooth, when set before their eyes as an accomplished fact), let them meanwhile ponder this one very brief, but, if I mistake not, unanswerable argument: the question out of which the dispute arose either has or has not been tried before ecclesiastical tribunals beyond the sea;

if it has not been tried before these, then no guilt in this matter is chargeable on the whole flock of Christ in the nations beyond the sea, in communion with which we rejoice, and therefore their separation from these guiltless communities is an act of impious schism; if, on the other hand, the question has been tried before the tribunal of these churches, who does not understand and feel, nay, who does not see, that those whose communion is now separated from these churches were the party defeated in the trial? Let them therefore choose to whom they should prefer to give credence, whether to the ecclesiastical judges who decided the question, or to the complaints of the vanquished litigants. Observe wisely how impossible it is for them reasonably to answer this brief and most intelligible dilemma; nevertheless, it were easier to turn Polemo from a life of intemperance, than to drive them out of the madness of inveterate error. Pardon me, my noble and worthy lords, brethren most dearly beloved and longed for, for writing you a letter more prolix than agreeable, but fitted, as I think, to benefit rather than to flatter you. As to my coming to you, may God fulfil the desire which we both equally cherish! For I cannot express in words, but I am sure you will gladly believe, with what fervour of love I burn to see you.

LETTER 145. TO ANASTASIUS, AD 412

115 (A.D. 412 or 413.) TO ANASTASIUS, MY HOLY AND BELOVED LORD AND BROTHER, AUGUSTIN SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD. 116 I. A

most satisfactory opportunity of saluting your genuine worth is furnished by our brethren Lupicinus and Concordialis, honourable servants of God, from whom, even without my writing, you might learn all that is going on among us here. But knowing, as I do, how much you love us in Christ, because of your knowing how warmly your love is reciprocated by us in Him, I was sure that it might have disappointed you if you had seen them, and could not but know that they had come directly from us, and were most intimately united in friendship with us, and yet had received with them no letter from me. Besides this, I am owing you a reply, for I am not aware of having written to you since I received your last letter; so great are the cares by which I am encumbered and distracted, that know not whether I have written or not before now. 2. We desire eagerly to know how you are, and whether the Lord has given you some rest, so far as in this world He can bestow it; for "if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it;"² and so it is almost always our experience, that when, in the midst of our anxieties, we turn our thoughts to some of our brethren placed in a condition of comparative rest, we are in no small measure revived, as if in them we ourselves enjoyed a more peaceful and tranquil life.

¹¹⁷ At the same time, when vexatious cares are multiplied in this uncertain life, they compel us to long for the everlasting rest. For this world is more dangerous to us in pleasant than in painful hours, and is to be guarded against more when it allures us to love it than when it warns and constrains us to despise it. For although "all that is in the world" is "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,"³ nevertheless, even in the case of men who prefer to these the things which are spiritual, unseen, and eternal, the sweetness of earthly things insinuates itself into our affections, and accompanies our steps on the path of duty with its seductive allurements. For the violence with which present things acquire sway over our weakness is exactly proportioned to the superior value by which future things command our love. And oh that those who have learned to observe and bewail this may succeed in overcoming and escaping from this power of terrestrial things! Such victory and

¹¹⁸ emancipation cannot, without God's grace, be achieved by the human will, which is by no means to be called free so long as it is subject to prevailing and enslaving lusts; "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." And the Son of God has Himself said, "If the Son shall

make you free, ye shall be free indeed."² 3. The law, therefore, by teaching and commanding what cannot be fulfilled without grace, demonstrates to man his weakness, in order that the weakness thus proved may resort to the Saviour, by whose healing the will may be able to do what in its feebleness it found impossible. So, then, the law brings us to faith, faith obtains the Spirit in fuller measure, the Spirit sheds love abroad in us, and love fulfils the law. For this reason the law is called a "schoolmaster,"³ under whose threatenings and severity "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered."⁴ But how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? Wherefore unto them that believe and call on Him the quickening Spirit is given, lest the letter without the Spirit should kill them.⁶ But by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts? so that the words of the same apostle, "Love is the fulfilling of the law,"^s are realized.

¹¹⁹ So the law is good to the man who uses it lawfully;⁹ and he uses it lawfully who, understanding wherefore it was given, betakes himself, under the pressure of its threatenings, to grace, which sets him free. Whoever unthankfully despises this grace, by which the ungodly are justified, and trusts in his own strength, as if he thereby could fulfil the law, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish his own righteousness, is not submitting himself to the righteousness of God; ¹⁰ and thus the law becomes to him not a help to pardon, but the bond fastening his guilt to him. Not that the law is evil, but because sin worketh death in such persons by that which is good.¹¹ For by occasion of the commandment he sins more grievously who, by the commandment, knows how evil are the sins which he commits. 4. In vain, however, does any one think himself to have gained the victory over sin, if, through nothing but fear of punishment, he refrains from sin; because, although the outward action to which an evil desire prompts him is not performed, the evil desire itself within the man is an enemy unsubdued. And who is found innocent in God's sight who is willing to do the sin which is forbidden if you only remove the punishment which is feared? And consequently, even in the volition itself, he is guilty of sin who wishes to do what is unlawful, but refrains from doing it because it cannot be done with impunity;

¹²⁰ for, so far as he is concerned, he would prefer that there were no righteousness forbidding and punishing sins. And assuredly, if he would prefer

that there should be no righteousness, who can doubt that he would if he could abolish it altogether? How, then, can that man be called righteous who is such an enemy to righteousness that, if he had the power, he would abolish its authority, that he might not be subject to its threatenings or its penalties? He, then, is an enemy to righteousness who refrains from sin only through fear of punishment; but he will become the friend of righteousness if through love of it he sin not, for then he will be really afraid to sin. For the man who only fears the flames of hell is afraid not of sinning, but of being burned; but the man who hates sin as much as he hates hell is afraid to sin. This is the "fear of the Lord," which "is pure, enduring for ever."² For the fear of punishment has torment, and is not in love; and love, when it is perfect, casts it out. ¹³ 5. Moreover, every one hates sin just in proportion as he loves righteousness; which he will be enabled to do not through the law putting him in fear by the letter of its prohibitions, but by the Spirit healing him by grace.

¹²¹ Then that is done which the apostle enjoins in the admonition, "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."⁴ For what is the force of the conjunctions "as" and "even so," if it be not this: "As no fear compelled you to sin, but the desire for it, and the pleasure taken in sin, even so let not the fear of punishment drive you to a life of righteousness; but let the pleasure found in righteousness and the love you bear to it draw you to practise it"? And even this is, as it seems to me, a righteousness, so to speak, somewhat mature, but not perfect. For he would not have prefaced the admonition with the words, "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh," had there not been something else that ought to have been said if they had been by that time able to bear it. For surely more devoted service is due to righteousness

¹²² than men are wont to yield to sin. For pain of body restrains men, if not from the desire of sin, at least from the commission of sinful actions; and we should not easily find any one who would openly commit a sin procuring to him an impure and unlawful gratification, if it was certain that the penalty of torture would immediately follow the crime. But righteousness ought to be so loved that not even bodily sufferings should hinder us from doing its works, but that, even when we are in the hands of cruel enemies,

our good works should so shine before men that those who are capable of taking pleasure therein may glorify our Father who is in heaven.¹ 6. Hence it comes that that most devoted lover of righteousness exclaims, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."² Observe how he does not say simply, "Who shall separate us from Christ?"

¹²³ but, indicating that by which we cling to Christ, he says, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? We cling to Christ, then, by love, not by fear of punishment. Again, after having enumerated those things which seem to be sufficiently fierce, but have not sufficient force to effect a separation, he has, in the conclusion, called that the love of God which he had previously spoken of as the love of Christ. And what is this "love of Christ" but love of righteousness? for it is said of Him that He "is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." ³ As, therefore he is superlatively wicked who is not deterred even by the penalty of bodily sufferings from the vile works of sordid pleasure, so is he superlatively righteous who is not restrained even by the fear of bodily sufferings from the holy works of most glorious love. 7. This love of God, which must be maintained by unremitting, devout meditation, "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us," ⁴ so that he who glories in it must glory in the Lord.

¹²⁴ Forasmuch, therefore, as we feel ourselves to be poor and destitute of that love by which the law is most truly fulfilled, we ought not to expect and demand its riches from our own indigence, but to ask, seek, and knock in prayer, that He with whom is "the fountain of life" "may satisfy us abundantly with the fatness of His house, and make us drink of the river of His pleasures," ⁵ so that, watered and revived by its full flood, we may not only escape from being swallowed up by sorrow, but may even "glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience;

and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; "-- not that we can do this of ourselves, but "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us." 6 8. It has been a pleasure to me to say, at least by a letter, these things which I could not say when you were present. I write them, not in reference to yourself, for you do not affect high things, but are contented with that which is lowly? but in reference to some who arrogate too much to the human will, imagining that, the law being given, the will is of its own strength sufficient to fulfil that law, though not assisted by any grace imparted by the Holy Spirit, in addition to instruction in the law;

¹²⁵ and by their reasonings they persuade the wretched and impoverished weakness of man to believe that it is not our duty to pray that we may not enter into temptation. Not that they dare openly to say this; but this is, whether they acknowledge it or not, an inevitable consequence of their doctrine. For wherefore is it said to us, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;"⁹ and wherefore was it that, when He was teaching us to pray, He prescribed, in accordance with this injunction, the use of the petition "lead us not into temptation," 'ō if this be wholly in the power of the will of man, and does not require the help of divine grace in order to its accomplishment? Why should I say more? Salute the brethren, who are with you, and pray for us, that we may be saved with that salvation of which it is said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but: they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."" Pray, therefore, for us that we may be righteous,- an attainment wholly beyond a man's reach, unless he know righteousness and be willing to practise it, but one which is immediately realized when he is perfectly willing; but this full consent of his will can

¹²⁶ never be in him unless he is healed and assisted by the grace of the Spirit.

LETTER 146. TO PELAGIUS, AD 413

(A.D. 413.) to Pelagius, my Lord Greatly Beloved, and Brother Greatly Longed for, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. I thank you very much for your consideration in making me glad by a letter from you, and informing me of your welfare. May the Lord recompense you with those blessings by the possession of which you may be good for ever, and may live eternally with Him who is eternal, my lord greatly beloved, and brother greatly longed for. Although I do not acknowledge that anything in me deserves tile

eulogies which the letter of your Benevolence contains concerning me, nevertheless I cannot but be grateful for the goodwill therein manifested towards one so insignificant, while suggesting at the same time that you should rather pray for me that I may be made by the Lord such as you suppose me already to be. (In another hand) May you enjoy safety and the Lord's favour, and be mindful of us ! '

LETTER 148. AD 413

¹²⁷ (A.D. 413.) a Letter of Instructions (Commonitorium) to the Holy Brother Fortunatianus.² ¹²⁸ CHAP. I. -- I. I write this to remind you of the ' request which I made when I was with you, that you would do me the kindness of visiting our brother, whom we mentioned in conversation, in order to ask him to forgive me, if he has construed as a harsh and unfriendly attack upon himself any statement made by me in a recent letter (which I do not regret having written), affirming that the eyes of this body cannot see God, and never shall see Him. I added immediately the reason why I made this statement. namely, to prevent men from believing that God Himself is corporeal and visible, as occupying a place determined by size and by distance from us (for the eye of this body can see nothing except under these conditions), and to prevent men from understanding the expression "face to face" ³ as if God were limited within the members of a body. Therefore I do not regret having made this statement, as a protest against our forming such unworthy and profane ideas concerning God as to think that He is not everywhere in His totality, but susceptible of division, and distributed through localities in space; for such are the only objects cognizable through these eyes of ours. 2.

¹²⁹ But if, while holding no such opinion as this concerning God, but believing Him to be a Spirit, unchangeable, incorporeal, present in His whole Being everywhere, any one thinks that the change on this body of ours (when from being a natural body it shall become a spiritual body) will be so great that in such a body it will be possible for us to see a spiritual substance not susceptible of division according to local distance or dimension, or even confined within the limits of bodily members, but everywhere present in its totality, I wish him to instruct me in 'i this matter, if what he has discovered is true; but if in this opinion he is mistaken, it is far less objectionable to ascribe to the body something that does not belong to it, than to take away from God that which belongs to Him. And even if that opinion be correct,

it will not contradict my words in that letter; for I said that the eyes of this body shall not see God, meaning that the eyes of this body of ours can see nothing but bodies which are separated from them by some interval of space, for if there be no interval, even bodies themselves cannot through the eyes be seen by us. 3.

¹³⁰ Moreover, if our bodies shall be changed into something so different from what they now are as to have eyes by means of which a substance shall be seen which is not diffused through space or confined within limits, having one part in one place, another in another, a smaller in a less space, a greater in a larger, but in its totality spiritually present everywhere,- these bodies shall be something very different from what they are at present, and shall no longer be themselves, and shall be not only freed from mortality, and corruption, and weight, but somehow or other shall be changed into the quality of the mind itself, if they shall be able to see in a manner which shall be then granted to the mind, but which is meanwhile' not granted even to the mind itself. For if, when a man's habits are changed, we say he is not the man he was, -- if, when our age is changed, we say that the body is not what it was, how much more may we say that the body shall not be the same when it shall have undergone so great a change as not only to have immortal life, but also to have power to see Him who is invisible ? Wherefore, if they shall thus see God, it is not with the eyes of this body that He shall be seen, because in this also it shall not be the same body, since it has been 499

¹³¹ changed to so great an extent in capacity and power; and this opinion is, therefore, not contrary to the words of my letter. If, however; the body shall be changed only to this extent, that whereas now it is mortal, then it shall be immortal, and whereas now it weighs down the soul, then, devoid of weight, it shall be most ready for every motion, but unchanged in the faculty of seeing objects which are discerned by their dimensions and distances, it will still be utterly impossible for it to see a substance that is incorporeal and is in its totality present everywhere. Whether, therefore, the former or the latter supposition be correct, in both cases it remains true that the eyes of this body shall not see God; or if they are to see Him, they shall not be the eyes of this body, since after so great a change they shall be the eyes of a body very different from this. 4. But if this brother is able to propound anything better on this subject, I am ready to learn either from himself or from his instructor. If I were saying this ironically, I would also say that I am prepared

to learn concerning God that He has a body having members, and is divisible in different localities in space; which I do not say, because I am not speaking ironically, and I am perfectly certain that God is not in any respect of such a nature;

¹³² and I wrote that letter to prevent men from believing Him to be such. In that letter, being carried away by my zeal to warn against error, and writing more freely because I did not name the person whose views I assailed, I was too vehement and not sufficiently guarded, and did not consider as I ought to have done the respect which was due by one brother and bishop to the office of another: this I do not defend, but blame; this I condemn rather than excuse, and beg that it may be forgiven. I entreat him to remember our old friendship, and forget my recent offence. Let him do that which he is displeased with me for not having done; let him exhibit in granting pardon the gentleness which I have failed to show in writing that letter. I thus ask, through your kindly mediation, what I had resolved to ask of him in person if I had had an opportunity. I indeed made an effort to obtain an interview with him (a venerable man, worthy of being honoured by us all, writing to request it in my name), but he declined to come, suspecting, I suppose, that, as very often happens among men, some plot was prepared against him. Of my absolute innocence of such guile, I beg you to do your utmost to assure him, which by seeing him personally you can more easily do. State to him with what deep and genuine grief I conversed with you about my having hurt his feelings.

¹³³ Let him know how far I am from slighting him, how much in him I fear God, and am mindful of our Head in whose body we are brethren. My reason for thinking it better not to go to the place in which he resides was, that we might not make ourselves a laughing-stock to those without the pale of the Church, thereby bringing grief to our friends and shame to ourselves. All this may be satisfactorily arranged through the good offices of your Holiness and Charity; nay, rather, the satisfactory issue is in the hands of Him who, by the faith which is His gift, dwells in your heart, whom I am confident that our brother does not refuse to honour in you, since he knows Christ experimentally as dwelling in himself. 5. I, at all events, do not know what I could do better in this case than ask pardon from the brother who has complained that he was wounded by the harshness of my letter. He will, I hope, do what he knows to be enjoined on him by Him who, speaking through the

apostle, says: "Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as God in Christ has forgiven you;"¹ "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

¹³⁴ and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us." ² Walking in this love, let us inquire with oneness of heart, and, if possible, with yet greater diligence than hitherto, into the nature of the spiritual body which we shall have after our resurrection. "And if in anything we be diversely minded, God shall reveal even this unto us," ³ if we abide in Him. Now he who dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, for "God is love," ⁴ --whether as the fountain of love in its ineffable essence, or as the fountain whence He freely gives it to us by His Spirit. If, then, it can be shown that love can at any time become visible to our bodily eyes, then we grant that possibly God shall be so too; but if love never can become visible, much less can He who is Himself its Fountain or whatever other figurative name more excellent or more appropriate can be employed in speaking of One so great. CHAP. II.- 6. Some men of great gifts, and very learned in the Holy Scriptures, who have, when an opportunity presented itself, done much by their writings to benefit the Church and promote the instruction of believers, have said that the invisible God is seen in an invisible manner, that is, by that nature which in us also is invisible, namely, a pure mind or heart. The holy Ambrose, when speaking of Christ as the Word, says: "Jesus is seen not by the bodily, but by the spiritual eyes;

¹³⁵ and shortly after he adds: "The Jews saw Him not, for their foolish heart was blinded," s showing in this way how Christ is seen. Also, when he was speaking of the ¹³⁶ Holy Spirit, he introduced the words of the Lord, saying: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him;" ' and adds: "With good reason, therefore, did He show Himself in the body, since in the substance of His Godhead He is not seen. We have seen the Spirit, but in a bodily form: let us see the Father also; but since we cannot see Him, let us hear Him. A little after he says: "Let us hear the Father, then, for the Father is invisible; but the Son also is invisible as regards His Godhead, for ' no man hath seen God at any time; ' ² and since the Son is God, He is certainly not seen in that in which He is God." ³ 7. The holy Jerome also says: "The eye of man cannot see God as He is in His own nature; and this is true not of man only; neither angels, nor thrones, nor powers, nor principalities, nor any

name which is named can see God, for no creature can see its Creator. By these words this very learned man sufficiently shows what his opinion was on this subject in regard not only to the present life, but also to that which is to come.

¹³⁷ For however much the eyes of our body may be changed for the better, they shall only be made equal to the eyes of the angels. Here, however, Jerome has affirmed that the nature of the Creator is invisible even to the angels, and to every creature without exception in heaven. If, however, a question arise on this point, and a doubt is expressed whether we shall not be superior to the angels, the mind of the Lord Himself is plain from the words which He uses in speaking of those who shall rise again to the kingdom: "They shall be equal unto the angels." ⁴ Whence the same holy Jerome thus expresses himself in another passage: "Man, therefore, cannot see the face of God but the angels of the least in the Church do always behold the face of God.s And now we see as in a mirror darkly, in a riddle, but then face to face; ⁶ when from being men we shall advance to the rank of angels, and shall be able to say with the apostle, 'We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord; ' ⁷ although no creature can see the face of God, according to the essential properties of His nature, and He is, in these cases, seen by the mind, since He is believed to be invisible." ⁸ ⁸.

¹³⁸ In these words of this man of God there are many things deserving our consideration: first, that in accordance with the very clear declaration of the Lord, he also is of opinion that we shall then see the face of God when we shall have advanced to the rank of angels, that ,is, shall be made equal to the angels, which doubtless shall be at the resurrection of the dead. Next, he has sufficiently explained by the testimony of the apostle, that the face is to be understood not of the outward but of the inward man, when it is said we shall "see face to face; for the apostle was speaking of the face of the heart when he used the words quoted in this connection by Jerome: "We, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." ⁹ If any one doubt this, let him examine the passage again, and notice of what the apostle was speaking, namely, of the veil, which remains on the heart of every one in reading the Old Testament, until he pass over to Christ, that the veil may be removed. For he there says: "We also, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord," m which

face had not been unveiled in the Jews, of whom he says, "the veil is upon their heart," --in order to show that the face unveiled in us when the veil is taken away is the face of the heart.

¹³⁹ In fine, lest any one, looking on these things with too little care and therefore failing to discern their meaning, should believe that God now is or shall hereafter be visible either to angels or to men, when they shall have been made equal to the angels, he has most plainly expressed his opinion by affirming that "no creature can see the face of God according to the essential properties of His nature," and that "He is, in these cases, seen by the mind, since He is believed to be invisible. From these statements he sufficiently showed that when God has been seen by men through the eyes of the body as if He had a body, He has not been seen as to the essential properties of his nature, in which He is seen by the mind, since He is believed to be invisible-invisible, that is to say, to the bodily perception even of celestial beings, as Jerome had said above, of angels, and powers, and principalities. How much more, then, is He invisible to terrestrial beings ! 9. Wherefore, in another place, Jerome says in i still plainer terms, it is true not only of the divinity of the Father but equally of that of the Son and of that of the Holy Spirit, forming one nature in the Trinity, that it cannot be seen by the eyes of the flesh, but by the eyes of the mind, of which the Saviour Himself says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." 10

¹⁴⁰ What could be more clear than this statement ? For if he had merely said that it is impossible for the divinity of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit, to be seen by the eyes of the flesh, and had not added the words, "but only by the eyes of the mind," it might perhaps have been said, that when the body shall have become spiritual it can no longer be called "flesh; but by adding the words, "but only by the eyes of the mind," he has excluded the vision of God from every sort of body. Lest, however, any one should suppose that he was speaking only of the present state of being, observe that he has subjoined also a testimony of the Lord, quoted with the design of defining the eyes of the mind of which he had spoken; in which testimony a promise is given not of present, but of future vision: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." 10. The very blessed Athanasius, also, Bishop of Alexandria, when contending against the Arians, who affirm that the Father alone is invisible, but suppose the Son and the Holy Spirit to be visible, asserted the equal invisibility of all the Persons of the Trinity,

proving it by testimonies from Holy Scripture, and arguing with all his wonted care in controversy, labouring earnestly to convince his opponents that God has never been seen, except through His assuming the form of a creature;

¹⁴¹ and that in His essential Deity God is invisible, that is, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are invisible, except in so far as the Divine Persons can be known by the mind and the spirit. Gregory, also, a holy Eastern bishop, very plainly says that God, by nature invisible, had, on those occasions on which He was seen by the fathers (as by Moses, with whom He talked face to face), made it possible for Himself to be seen by assuming the form of something material and discernible.' Our Ambrose says the same: "That the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, when visible, are seen under forms assumed by choice, not prescribed by the nature of Deity;": thus clearing the truth of the saying, "No man hath seen God at any time," ^s which is the word of the Lord Christ Himself, and of that other saying, "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see," ⁴ which is the word of the apostle, yea, rather, of Christ by His apostle; as well as¹ vindicating the consistency of those passages of Scripture in which God is related to have been seen, because He is both invisible in the essential nature of His Deity, and able to become visible when He pleases, by assuming such created form as shall seem good to Him. CHAP. III. II.

¹⁴² Moreover, if invisibility is a property of the divine nature, as incorruptibility is, that nature shall assuredly not undergo such a change in the future world as to cease to be invisible and become visible; because it shall never be possible for it to cease to be incorruptible and become corruptible, for it is in both attributes alike immutable. The apostle assuredly declared the excellence of the divine nature when he placed these two together, saying, "Now, unto the King of ages, invisible, incorruptible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. ^s Wherefore I dare not make such a distinction as to say incorruptible, indeed, for ever and ever, but invisible- not for ever and ever, but only in this world. At the same time, since the testimonies which we are next to quote cannot be false,-" Blessed are the pure heart, for they shall see God,"⁶ and, "We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him ^ofor we shall see Him as He is "⁷ --we cannot deny that the sons of God shall see God; but they shall see Him as invisible things are seen, in the manner in which He who appeared in the flesh, visible to men,

promised that He would manifest Himself to men, when, speaking in the presence of the disciples and seen by their eyes, He said: "I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

¹⁴³ In what other manner are invisible things seen than by the eyes of the mind, concerning which, as the instruments of our vision of God, I have shortly before quoted the opinion of Jerome ? 12. Hence, also, the statement of the Bishop of Milan, whom I have quoted before, who says that even in the resurrection it is not easy for any but those who have a pure heart to see God, and therefore it is written, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "How many," he says, "had He already enumerated as blessed, and yet to them He had not promised the power of seeing God; and he adds this inference, "If, therefore, the pure in heart shall see God, it is obvious that others shall not see Him; and to prevent our understanding him to refer to those others of whom the Lord had said, "Blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek," he immediately subjoined, "For those that are unworthy shall not see God," intending it to be understood that the unworthy are those who, although they shall rise again, shall not be able to see God, since they shall rise to condemnation, because they refused to purify their hearts through that true faith which "worketh by love."s For this reason he goes on to say,

¹⁴⁴ "Whosoever has been unwilling to see God cannot see Him. Then, since it occurred to him that, in a sense, even all wicked men have a desire to see God, he immediately explains that he used the words, "Whosoever has been unwilling to see God," because the fact that the wicked do not desire to purify the heart, by which alone God can be seen, shows that they do not desire to see God, and follows up this statement with the words: "God is not seen in space, but in the pure heart; nor is He sought out by the eyes of the body; nor is He defined in form by our faculty of sight; nor grasped by the touch; His voice does not fall on the ear; nor are His goings perceived by the senses."1 By these words the blessed Ambrose desired to teach the preparation which men ought to make if they wish to see God, viz. to purify the heart by the faith which worketh by love, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, from whom we have received the earnest by which we are taught to desire that vision.2 CHAP. IV. -- 13. For as to the members of God which the Scripture frequently mentions, lest any one should suppose that we resemble God as to the form and figure of the body, the same] Scripture speaks of God as having also wings,] which we certainly have not.

¹⁴⁵ As then, when we hear of the "wings" of God, we understand the divine protection, so by the "hands" of God we ought to understand His working, -- by His "feet," His presence, -- by His "eyes," His power of seeing and knowing all things, -- by His face, that whereby He reveals Himself to our knowledge; and I believe that any other such expression used in Scripture is to be spiritually understood. In this opinion I am not singular, nor am I the first who has stated it, It is the opinion of all who by any spiritual interpretation of such language in Scripture resist those who are called Anthropomorphites. Not to occupy too much time by quoting largely from the writings of these men, I introduce here one extract from the pious Jerome, in order that our brother may know that, if anything moves him to maintain an opposite opinion, he is bound to carry on the debate with those who preceded me not less than with myself. 14. In the exposition which that most learned student of Scripture has given of the psalm in which occur the words, "Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? or He that formed the eye, doth He not behold?" 3 he says, among other things: "This passage furnishes a strong argument against those who are Anthropomorphites, and say that God has members such as we have.

¹⁴⁶ For example, God is said by them to have eyes, because 'the eyes of the Lord behold all things:' in the same, literal manner they take the statements that the hand of the Lord doeth all things, and that Adam 'heard the sound of the feet of the Lord walking in the garden,' and thus they ascribe the 'infirmities of men to the majesty of God. But I affirm that God is all eye, all hand, all foot: all eye, because He sees all things; all hand, because He worketh all things; all foot, because He is everywhere present. See, therefore, what the Psalmist saith: 'He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth He not behold?' He doth not say: 'He that planted the ear, has He not an ear? and He that formed the eye, has He not an eye?' But what does he say? 'He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth He not behold?' The Psalmist has ascribed to God the powers of seeing and hearing, but has not assigned members to Him." 4 15.

¹⁴⁷ I have thought it my duty to quote all these passages from the writings of both Latin and Greek authors who, being in the Catholic Church before our time, have written commentaries on the divine oracles, in order that our

brother, if he hold any different opinion from theirs, may know that it becomes him, laying aside all bitterness of controversy, and preserving or reviving fully the gentleness of brotherly love, to investigate with diligent and calm consideration either what he must learn from others, or what others must learn from him. For the reasonings of any men whatsoever, even though they be Catholics, and of high reputation, are not to be treated by us in the same way as the canonical Scriptures are treated. We are at liberty, without doing any violence to the respect which these men deserve, to condemn and reject anything in their writings, if perchance we shall find that they have entertained opinions differing from that which others or we ourselves have, by the divine help, discovered to be the truth. I deal thus with the writings of others, and I wish my intelligent readers to deal thus with mine.

¹⁴⁸ In fine, I do by the help of the Lord most stedfastly believe, and, in so far as He enables me, I understand what is taught in all the statements which I have now quoted from the works of the holy and learned Ambrose, Jerome, Athanasius, Gregory, and in any other similar statements in other writers which I have read, but have for the sake of brevity forborne from quoting, namely, that God is not a body, that He has not the members of the human frame, that He is not divisible through space, and that He is unchangeably invisible, and appeared not in His essential nature and substance, ¹⁴⁹ but in such visible form as He pleased to those to whom he appeared on the occasions on which Scripture records that He was seen by holy persons with the eyes of the body. CHAP. V. -- 16. As to the spiritual body which we shall have in the resurrection, how great a change for the better it is to undergo, -- whether it shall become pure spirit, so that the whole man shall then be a spirit, or shall (as I rather think, but do not yet confidently maintain) become a spiritual body in such a way as to be called spiritual because of a certain ineffable facility in its movements, but at the same time to retain its material substance, which cannot live and feel by itself, but only through the spirit which uses it (for in our present state, in like manner, although the body is spoken of as animated [animal], the nature of the animating principle is different from that of the body), and whether, if the properties of the body then immortal and incorruptible shall remain unchanged, it shall then in some degree aid the spirit to see visible, i.e.

150 material things, as at present we are unable to see anything of that kind except through the eyes of the body, or our spirit shall then be able, even in its higher state, to know material things without the instrumentality of the body (for God Himself does not know these things through bodily senses), on these and on many other things which may perplex us in the discussion of this subject, I confess that I have not yet read anywhere anything which I would esteem sufficiently established to deserve to be either learned or taught by men. 17. And for this reason, if our brother will J bear patiently any degree whatever of hesitation I on my part, let us in the meantime, because of] that which is written, "We shall see Him as, He is," prepare, so far as with the help of God, Himself we are enabled, hearts purified for that vision. Let us at the same time inquire more calmly and carefully concerning the spiritual body, for it may be that God, if He know this to be useful to us, may condescend to show us some definite and clear view on the subject, in accordance with His written word.

151 For if a more careful investigation shall result in the discovery that the change on the body shall be so great that it shall be able to see things that are invisible, such power imparted to the body will not, I think, deprive the mind of the power of seeing, and thus give the outward man a vision of God which is denied to the inward man; as if, in contradiction of the plain words of Scripture, "that God may be all and in all," God were only beside the man --without him, and not in the man, in his inner being; or as if He, who is everywhere present in his entirety, unlimited in space, is so within man that He can be seen outside only by the outward man, but cannot be seen inside by the inward man. If such opinions are palpably absurd, - for, on the contrary, the saints shall be full of God; they shall not, remaining empty within, be surrounded outside by Him; nor shall they, through being blind within, fail to see Him of whom they are full, and, having eyes only for that which is outside of themselves, behold Him by whom they shall be surrounded, --if, I say, these things are absurd, it remains for us to rest meanwhile certainly assured as to the vision of God by the inward man. But if, by some wondrous change, the body shall be endowed with this power, another new faculty shall be added; the faculty formerly possessed shall not be taken away. 18.

152 It is better, then, that we affirm that concerning which we have no doubt, --that God shall be seen by the inward man, which alone is able, in our present state, to see that love in commendation of which the apostle says,

"God is love ;" 2 the inward man, which alone is able to see "peace and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."³ For no fleshly eye now sees love, peace, and holiness, and such things; yet all of them are seen, so far as they can be seen, by the eye of the mind, and the purer it is the more clearly it sees; so that we may, without hesitation, believe that we shall see God, whether we succeed or fail in our investigations as to the nature of our future body--although, at the same time, we hold it to be certain that the body shall rise again, immortal and incorruptible, because on this we have the plainest and strongest testimony of Holy Scripture: If, however, our brother affirm now that he has arrived at certain knowledge as to that spiritual body, in regard to which I am only inquiring, he will have just cause to be displeased with me if I shall refuse to listen calmly to his instructions, provided only that he also listen calmly to my questions. Now, however, I entreat you, for Christ's sake, to obtain his forgiveness for me for that harshness in my letter, by which, as I have learned, he was, not without cause, offended;

153 and may you, by God's help, cheer my spirit by your answer.

LETTER 150. AD 413

154 (A.D. 413.) to Proba⁴ and Juliana, Ladies Most Worthy of Honour, Daughters Justly Famous and Most Distinguished, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. You have filled our heart with a joy singularly pleasant, because of the love we bear to you, and 155 singularly acceptable, because of the promptitude with which the tidings came to us. For while the consecration of the daughter of your house to a life of virginity is being published by most busy fame in all places where you are known, and that is everywhere, you have outstripped its flight by more sure and reliable information in a letter from yourselves, and have made us rejoice' in certain knowledge before we had time to be questioning the truth of any report concerning an event so blessed and remarkable. Who can declare in words, or expound with adequate praises, how incomparably greater is the glory and advantage gained by your family in giving to Christ women consecrated to His service, than in giving to the world men called to the honours of the consulship? For if it be a great and noble thing to leave the mark of an honoured name upon the revolving ages of this world, how much greater and nobler is it to rise above it by unsullied chastity both of heart and of body! Let this maiden, therefore, illustrious in her pedigree, yet more illustrious in her piety, find greater joy in obtaining, through espousals to her divine Lord, a pre-eminent glory in

heaven, than she could have had in becoming, through espousal to a human consort, the mother of a line of illustrious men.

¹⁵⁶ This daughter of the house of Anicius has acted the more magnanimous part, in choosing rather to bring a blessing on that noble family by forbearing from marriage, than to increase the number of its descendants, preferring to be already, in the purity of her body, I like unto the angels, rather than to increase by the fruit of her body the number of mortals. For this is a richer and more fruitful condition of blessedness, not to have a pregnant womb' but to develop the soul's lofty capacities; not to have the breasts flowing with milk, but to have the heart pure as snow; to travail not with the earthly in the pangs of labour, but with the heavenly in persevering prayer. May it be yours, my daughters, most worthy of the honour due to your rank, to enjoy in her that which was lacking to yourselves; may she be steadfast to the end, abiding in the conjugal union that has no end. May many hand-maidens follow the example of their mistress; may those who are of humble rank imitate this high-born lady, and may those who possess eminence in this uncertain world aspire to that worthier eminence which humility has given to her. Let the virgins who covet the glory of the Anician family be ambitious rather to emulate its piety; for the former lies beyond their reach, however eagerly they may desire it, but the latter shall be at once in their possession if they seek it with full desire.

¹⁵⁷ May the right hand of the Most High protect you, giving you safety and greater happiness, ladies most worthy of honour, and most excellent daughters! In the love of the Lord, and with all becoming respect, we salute the children of your Holiness, and above all the one who is above the rest in holiness. We have received with very great pleasure the gift sent as a souvenir of her taking the veil.'

LETTER 151. TO CAECILIANUS, AD 413

¹⁵⁸ (A.D. 413 or 414.) to Caecilianus,² my Lord Justly Renowned, and Son Most Worthy of the Honour Due by Me to His Rank, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. ¹⁵⁹ I. The remonstrance which you have addressed to me in your letter is gratifying to me in proportion to the love which it manifests. If, therefore, I attempt to clear myself from blame in regard to my silence, the thing which I must attempt is to show that you had no just cause for being displeased with me. But since nothing gives me greater pleasure than that you condescended to take offence at my silence, which I had supposed to be a

matter of no moment in the midst of your many cares, I will be pleading against myself if I endeavour thus to clear myself from blame. For if you were wrong in being displeased at me for not writing to you, this must be because of your having such a poor opinion of me that you are absolutely indifferent whether I speak or remain silent. Nay, the displeasure which arises from your being distressed by my silence is not displeasure. I therefore feel not so much grief at my withhold-rag, as joy at your desiring a communication from me. For it is an honour, not a vexation, to me, that I should have a place in the remembrance of an old friend, and a man who is (though you may not say it, yet it is our duty to acknowledge it) of such eminent worth and greatness, holding a position in a foreign country, and burdened with public responsibilities.

¹⁶⁰ Pardon me, then, for expressing my gratitude that you did not regard me as a person whose silence it was beneath you to resent. For now I am persuaded, through that benevolence which distinguishes you more even than your high rank, that in the midst of your numerous and important occupations, not of a private nature, but public, involving the interests of all, a letter from me may be esteemed by you not burdensome, but welcome. 2. For when I had received the letter of the holy father Innocentius, venerable for his eminent merits, which was sent to me by the brethren, and which was, by manifest tokens, shown to have been forwarded to me from your Excellency, I formed the opinion that the reason why no letter from you accompanied it was that, being engrossed with more important affairs, you were unwilling to be embarrassed by the trouble of correspondence. For it seemed certainly not unreasonable to expect, that when you con-descended to send me the writings of a holy man, I should receive along with them some writings of your own. I had therefore made up my mind not to trouble you with a letter from me unless it was necessary for the purpose of commending to you some one to whom I could not refuse the service of my intercession, a favour which it is our custom to grant to all, -- a custom which, though involving much trouble, is not to be altogether condemned. I accordingly did this recommending to your kindness a friend of mine, from whom I have now received a letter, expressing his thanks, to which I add my own, for your service. 3. If, however, I had formed any unfavourable impression concerning you, especially in regard to the matter of which, though it was not expressly named, a subtle odour, so to speak, pervaded your whole

letter, far would it have been from me to write to you any such note in order to ask any favour for myself or another. In that case I would either have been silent, waiting for a time when I would have an opportunity of seeing you personally;

¹⁶² or if I considered it my duty to write on the subject, I would have given it the first place in my letter, and would have treated it in such a way as to make it almost impossible for you to show displeasure. For when, notwithstanding remonstrances which, under an anxiety shared by you with us, we addressed to him, - beseeching him vehemently, but in vain, to forbear from piercing our hearts with so great sorrow, and mortally wounding his own conscience by such grievous sin, -- he ' perpetrated his impious, savage, and perfidious crime, I left Carthage immediately and secretly, for this reason, lest the numerous and influential persons who in terror sought refuge from his sword within the church should, imagining that my presence could be of use to them, detain me by their passionate weeping and groaning, so that I would be compelled, in order to secure the preservation of their bodies, to supplicate a favour from one whom it was impossible for me to rebuke in order to the welfare of his soul, with the severity which his crime deserved. As for their personal safety, I knew that the walls of the church sufficed for their protection. But for myself [if I remained to intercede with him on their behalf], it could only be in circumstances painfully embarrassing, for he would not have tolerated my acting towards him as I was bound to do, and I would have been compelled, moreover, to act in a way which would have been unbecoming in me.

¹⁶³ At the same time, I was truly sorry for the misfortune of my venerable co-bishop, the ruler of such an important church, who was expected to regard it as his duty, even after this man had been guilty of such infamous treachery, to treat him with submissive deference, in order that the lives of others might be spared. I confess the reason of my departure: it was that I would have been unable to meet with the necessary fortitude so great a calamity. 4. The same considerations which made me then depart would have been the cause of my remaining silent to you, if I believed you to have used your influence with him to avenge such wicked injuries. This is believed in regard to you only by those who do not know how, and how frequently, and in what terms, you expressed J your mind to us, when we were with anxious solicitude doing our utmost to secure that, because i he was so intim-

ate with you, and you were so !constantly visiting him, and so often conversing 'alone with him, he should all the more carefully guard your good name, and save you from being supposed to have used no endeavour to prevent him from inflicting that mode of death on persons said to be your enemies.

¹⁶⁴ This, indeed, is not believed of you by me, nor by my brethren who heard you in conversation, and who saw, both in your words and in every gesture, the evidences of your heart's good-will to those who were put to death. But, I beseech you, forgive those by whom it is believed; for they are men, and in the minds of men there are such lurking places and such depths that, although all suspicious persons deserved to be blamed, they think themselves that they even deserve praise for their prudence. There existed reasons for the conduct imputed to you: we knew that you had suffered very grievous injury from one of those whom he had suddenly ordered to be arrested. His brother, also, in whose person especially he persecuted the Church, was said to have answered you in terms implying as it were some harsh accusation. Both were thought to be looked upon by you with suspicion. When they, after being summoned, had gone away, you still remained in the place, and were engaged, it was

¹⁶⁵ said, in conversation of a more private kind than usual with him [Marinas], and then they were suddenly ordered to be detained. Men talked much of your friendship with him as not recent, but of long standing. The closeness of your intimacy, and the frequency of your private conversations with him, confirmed this report. His power was at that time great. The ease with which false accusations could be made against any one was notorious. It was not a difficult thing to find some person who would upon the promise of his own safety make any statements which he might order to be made. All things at that time made it easy for any man to be brought to death without any examination on the part of him who ordered the execution, if even one witness brought forward what seemed to be an odious and, at the same time, credible accusation. 5. Meanwhile, as it was rumored that the power of the Church might deliver them, we were mocked with false promises, so that not only with the consent, but, as it seemed, at the urgent desire of Marinus, a bishop was sent to the Imperial Court to intercede for them, the promise having been brought to the ear of the bishops that, until some pleading should be heard there on behalf of the prisoners, no examination of their

case would be proceeded with. At last, on the day before they were put to death, your Excellency came to us;

¹⁶⁶ you gave us encouragement such as you had never before given, that he might grant their lives as a favour to you before your departure [for Rome], because you had solemnly and prudently said to him that all his condescension in admitting you so constantly to familiar and private conversation would bring to you disgrace rather than distinction, and would have the effect, after the death of these men had been a subject of conversation and! consultation between you, of making every one i say that there could be no doubt what was to be the issue of these conferences. When you informed us that you had said these things to him,. you stretched out your hand as you spoke i towards the place at which the sacraments of believers are celebrated, and while we listened in amazement, you confirmed the statement that you had used these words with an oath so solemn, that not only then, but even now after the dreadful and unexpected death of the prisoners, it seems to me, recalling to memory your whole demeanour, that it would be an aggravated insult if I were to believe any evil concerning you. You said, moreover, that he was so moved by these words of yours, that he purposed to give the lives of these men to you as a present, in token of friendship, before you set out on your journey. 6.

¹⁶⁷ Wherefore, I solemnly assure your Grace, that when on the following day (the day on which the infamous crime thus conceived was consummated) tidings were unexpectedly brought to us that they had been led forth from prison to stand before him as their judge, although we were in some alarm, nevertheless, after reflecting on what you had said to us on the preceding day, and on the fact that the day following was the anniversary of the blessed Cyprian, I supposed that he had even purposely selected a day on which he might not only grant your request, but also might aspire, by giving sudden joy to the whole Church of Christ, to emulate the virtue of so great a martyr, proving himself truly greater in using clemency in sparing life than in possessing power to inflict death. Such were my thoughts, when lo! a messenger burst into our presence, from whom, before we could ask him how their trial was being conducted, we learned that they had been beheaded.

¹⁶⁸ For care had been taken to arrange, as the scene of execution, a place immediately adjoining, not appointed for the punishment of criminals, but used for the recreation of the citizens, on which spot he had ordered some to

be executed a few days previously, with the design (as is with good reason believed) of avoiding the odium of applying it to this purpose for the first time in the case of these men, whom he hoped to be able to snatch secretly from the Church interposing on their behalf, by thus not only ordering their immediate execution, but also ordering it to take place on the nearest available spot. He therefore made it sufficiently manifest that he did not fear to cause cruel pain to that Mother whose intervention he feared, namely, to the holy Church, among whose faithful children, baptized in her bosom, we knew that he himself was reckoned. Therefore, after the issue of so great a plot, in which so much care had been used in negotiating with us that we were made, even by you also, though unwittingly, almost free from solicitude, and almost sure of their safety on the preceding day, who, judging of the circumstances in the way in which ordinary men would judge of them, could avoid regarding it as beyond question that by you also words were given to us and life taken from them ? Pardon, then, as I have said, those who believe these things against you, although we do not believe them, O excellent man. 7.

¹⁶⁹ Far be it, however, from my heart and from my practice, however defective in many things, to intercede with you for any one, or ask a favour from you for any one, if I believed you to be responsible for this monstrous wrong, this villanous cruelty. But I frankly confess to you, that if you continue, even after that event, to be on the same footing of intimate friendship with him as you were formerly, you must excuse my claiming freedom to be grieved; for by this you would ¹⁷⁰ compel us to believe much which we would rather disbelieve. It is, however, fitting that, as I do not believe you guilty of the other things laid by some to your charge, I should not believe this either. This friend of yours has, in the unexpected triumph of sudden accession to power, done violence not less to your reputation than to these men's lives. Nor is it my design in this statement to kindle hatred in your mind; in so doing I would belie my own feelings and profession. But I exhort you to a more faithful exercise of love towards him. For the man who so deals with the wicked as to make them repent of their evil doings, is one who knows how to be angry with them, and yet consult for their good; for as bad companions hinder men's welfare by compliance, so good friends help them by opposition to their evil ways. The same weapon with which, in the proud abuse of power, he took away the lives of others, inflicted a much deeper and more serious wound on his own soul i and if he do not remedy this by re-

penitance, using wisely the long-suffering of God, he will be compelled to find it out and feel it when this life is ended. Often, moreover, God in His wisdom permits the life of good men in this world to be taken from them by the wicked, that He may prevent men from believing that to suffer such things is in their case a calamity.

¹⁷¹ For what harm can result from the death of the body to men who are destined to die some time ? Or what do those who fear death accomplish by their care but a short postponement of the time at which they die ? All the evil to which mortal men are liable comes not from death but from life; and if in dying they have the soul sustained by Christian grace, death is to them not the night of darkness in which a good life ends, but the dawn in which a better life begins.¹ 8. The life and conversation of the elder of the two brothers appeared indeed more conformed to this world than to Christ, although he also had after his marriage corrected to a great extent the faults of his early irreligious years. It may, nevertheless, have been not otherwise than in mercy that our merciful God appointed him to be the companion of his brother in death. But as to that younger brother, he lived religiously, and was eminent as a Christian both in heart and in practice. The report that he would approve himself such when commissioned to serve the Church² came before him to Africa, and this good report followed him still when he had come. In his conduct, what innocence! in his friendship, what constancy! in his study of Christian truth, what zeal! in his religion, what sincerity ! in his domestic life, what purity ! in his official duties, what integrity !

¹⁷² What patience he showed to enemies, what affability to friends, what humility to the pious, what charity to all men! How great his promptitude in granting, and his bashfulness in asking a favour ! How genuine his satisfaction in the good deeds, and his sorrow over the faults of men! What spotless honour, noble grace, and scrupulous piety shone in him! In rendering assistance, how compassionate he was ! in forgiving injuries, how generous ! in prayer, how confiding ! When well informed on any subject, with what modesty he was wont to communicate useful knowledge ! when conscious of ignorance, with what diligence did he endeavour by investigation to overcome the disadvantage ! How singular was his contempt for the things of time! how ardent his hope and his desires in regard to the blessings that are eternal! He would have relinquished all secular business and girded himself with the insignia of the Christian warfare, had he not been prevented by his hav-

ing entered into the married state; for he had not begun to desire better things before the time when, being already involved in these bonds, it would have been, notwithstanding their inferiority, an unlawful thing for him to rend them asunder. 9. One day when they were confined in prison together, his brother said to him: "If I suffer these things as the just punishment of my sins, what ill desert has brought you to the same fate, for we know that your life was most strictly and earnestly Christian ? He replied:

¹⁷³ "Supposing even that your testimony as to my life were true, do you think that God is bestowing a small fa-your upon me in appointing that my sins be punished in these sufferings, even though they should end in death, instead of being reserved to meet me in the judgment which is to come? These words might perhaps lead some to suppose that he was conscious of some secret immoralities. I shall therefore mention what it pleased the Lord God to appoint that I should hear from his lips, and know assuredly, to my own great consolation. Being anxious about this very thing, as human nature is liable to fall into such wickedness, I asked him, when I was alone with him after he was confined in prison, if there was no sin for which he ought to seek reconciliation with God ³ by some more severe and special penance. With characteristic modesty he blushed at the mere mention of my suspicion, groundless though it was, but thanked me most warmly for the warning, and with a grave, modest smile he seized with both hands my right hand, and said: "I swear by the sacraments which are dispensed to me by this hand, that I have neither before

¹⁷⁴ nor since my marriage been guilty of immoral self-indulgence.", 10. What evil, then, was brought to him by death ? Nay, rather, was it not the occasion of the greatest possible good to him, because, in the possession of these gifts, he departed from this life to Christ, in whom alone they are really possessed? I would not mention these things in addressing you if I believed that you would be offended by my praising him. But assuredly, as I do not believe this, neither do I believe that his being put to death was even according to your desire or wish, much less that it was done at your request. You, therefore, with a sincerity proportioned to your innocence in this matter, entertain, doubtless, along with us, the opinion that the man who put him to death inflicted more cruel wrong on his own soul than on the sufferer's body, when, in despite of us, in despite of his own promises, in despite of so many supplications and warnings from you, and finally, in despite of the

Church of Christ (and in her of Christ Himself), he consummated his base machinations by putting this man to death. Is the high position of the one worthy to be compared with the lot of the other, prisoner though he was, when the man of power was maddened by anger, while the sufferer in his prison was filled with joy?

175 There is nothing in all the dungeons of this world, nay, not even in hell itself, to surpass the dreadful doom of darkness to which a villian is consigned by remorse of conscience. Even to yourself, what evil did he do ? He did not destroy your innocence, although he grievously injured your reputation; which, nevertheless, remains uninjured, both in the estimation of those who know you better than we do, and in our estimation, in whose presence the anxiety which, like us, you felt for the prevention of such a monstrous crime, was expressed with so much visible agitation that we could almost see with our eyes the invisible workings of your heart. Whatever harm, therefore, he has done, he has: done to himself alone; he has pierced through his own soul, his own life, his own conscience ; in fine, he has by that blind deed of cruelty destroyed even his own good name, a thing which the very worst of men are usually fain to preserve. For to all good men he is odious in proportion to his efforts to obtain, or his satisfaction in receiving, the approbation of the wicked. II. Could anything prove more clearly that he was not under the necessity which he pretended- alleging that he did this evil action as a good man who had no alternative- than the fact that the proceeding was disapproved of by the person whose orders he dared to plead as his excuse ?

176 The pious deacon by whose hand we send this was himself associated with the bishop whom we had sent to intercede for them; let him, therefore, relate to your Excellency how it i seemed good to the Emperor not even to give a formal pardon, lest by this the stigma of a crime should be in some degree attached to them, but a mere notice commanding them to be immediately set at liberty from all further annoyance. By a purely gratuitous act of cruelty, and under no pressure of necessity (although, perchance, there may have been other causes which we suspect, but which it is unnecessary to state in writing), he did outrageously vex the Church, -- the Church to whose sheltering bosom his brother once, in fear of death, had fled, to be requited for protecting his life by finding him active in counselling the perpetration of this crime, -- the Church in which he himself had once, when under the

displeasure of an offended patron, sought an asylum which could not be denied to him. If you love this man, show your detestation of his crime; if you do not wish him to come into everlasting punishment, shrink with horror from his society. You are bound to take measures of this kind, both for your own good name and for his life; for he who loves in this man what God hates, is, in truth, hating not only this man but also his own soul. 12.

¹⁷⁷ These things being so, I know your benevolence too well to believe that you were the author of this crime, or an accomplice in its commission, or that with malicious cruelty you deceived us: far be such conduct from your life and conversation ! At the same time, I would not wish your friendship to be of such a character as tends to make him, to his own destruction, glory in his crime, and to confirm the suspicions naturally cherished by men concerning you; but rather let it be such as to move him to penitence, and to penitence corresponding in quality and in measure to the remedy demanded for the healing of such dreadful wounds. For the more you are an enemy to his crimes, the more really will you be a friend to the man himself. It will be interesting to us to learn, by your Excellency's reply to this letter, where you were on the day on which the crime was committed, how you received the tidings, and what you did thereafter, and what you said to him and heard from him when you next saw him; for I have not been able to hear anything of you in connection with this affair since my sudden departure on the succeeding day. 13. As to the remark in your letter that you are now compelled to believe that I refuse to visit Carthage for fear lest you should be seen there by me, you rather compel me by these words to state explicitly the reasons of my absence.

¹⁷⁸ One reason is, that the labour which ¹⁷⁹ I am obliged to undergo in that city, and which I could not describe without adding as much again to the length of this letter, is more than I am able now to bear, since, in addition to my infirmities peculiar to myself, which are known to all my more intimate friends, I am burdened with an infirmity common to the human family, namely, the weakness of old age. The other reason is, that, in so far as leisure is granted me from the work imperatively demanded by the Church, which my office specially binds me to serve, I have resolved to devote the time entirely, if the Lord will, to the labour of studies pertaining to ecclesiastical learning; in doing which I think that I may, if it please the mercy of God, be of some service even to future generations. 14. There is, indeed, one

thing in you, since you wish to hear the truth, which causes me very great distress: it is that, although qualified by age, as well as by life and character, to do otherwise, you still prefer to be a catechumen; as if it were not possible for believers, by making progress in Christian faith and well-doing, to become so much the more faithful and useful in the administration of public business. For surely the promotion of the welfare of men is the one great end of all your great cares and labours. And, indeed, if this were not to be the issue of your public services, it would be better for you even to sleep both day and night than to sacrifice your rest in order to do work which can contribute nothing to the advantage of your fellow-men. Nor do I entertain the slightest doubt that your Excellency . . . (*Caetera desunt*.)

LETTER 158. AD 414

¹⁸⁰ (A.D. 414.) to my Lord Augustin, my Brother Partner in the Sacerdotal Office, Most Sincerely Loved, with Profound Respect, and to the Brethren Who Are with Him, Evodius¹ and the Brethren Who Are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord. ¹⁸¹ I. I urgently beg you to send the reply due to my last letter. Indeed, I would have preferred first to learn what I then asked, and afterwards to put the questions which I now submit to you. Give me your attention while I relate an event in which you will kindly take an interest, and which has made me impatient to lose no time in acquiring, if possible in this life, the knowledge which I desired. I had a certain youth as a clerk, a son of presbyter Armenus of Melonita, whom, by my humble instrumentality, God rescued when he was becoming already immersed in secular affairs, for he was employed as a shorthand writer by the proconsul's solicitor.² He was then, indeed, as boys usually are, prompt and somewhat restless, but as he grew older (for his death occurred in his twenty-second year) a gravity of deportment and circumspect probity of life so adorned him that it is a pleasure to dwell upon his memory. He was, moreover, a clever stenographer, ³ and indefatigable in writing; he had begun also to be earnest in reading, so that he even urged me to do more than my indolence would have chosen, in order to spend hours of the night in reading, for he read aloud to me for a time every night after all was still;

¹⁸² and in reading, he would not pass over any sentence unless he understood it, and would go over it a third or even a fourth time, and not leave it until what he wished to know was made clear. I had begun to regard him not as a mere boy and clerk, but as a comparatively intimate and pleasant friend,

for his conversation gave me much delight. 2. He desired also to "depart and to be with Christ,"⁴ a desire which has been fulfilled. For he was ill for sixteen days in his father's house, and by strength of memory he continually repeated portions of Scripture throughout almost the whole time of his illness. But when he was very near to the end of his life, he sang so as to be heard by all, "My soul longeth for and hastens unto the courts of the Lord,"⁶ after which he sang again, "Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and beautiful is Thy cup, overpowering my senses with delight!"⁷ In these things he was wholly occupied; in the consolation yielded by them he found satisfaction. At the last, when dissolution was just coming upon him, he began to make the sign of the cross on his forehead, and in finishing this his hand was moving down to his mouth, which also he wished to mark with the same sign, but the inward man (which had been truly renewed day by day) ^s had, ere this was done, forsaken the tabernacle of clay.

¹⁸³ To myself there has been given so great an ecstasy of joy, that I think that after leaving his own body he has entered into my spirit, and is there imparting to me a certain fulness of light from his presence, for I am conscious of a joy beyond all measure through his deliverance and safety -- indeed it is ineffable. For I felt no small anxiety on his ¹⁸⁴ account, being afraid of the dangers peculiar to his years. For I was at pains to inquire of himself whether perchance he had been defiled by intercourse with woman; he solemnly assured us that he was free from this stain, by which declaration our joy was still more increased. So he died. We honored his memory by suitable obsequies, such as were due to one so excellent, for we continued during three days to praise the Lord with hymns at his grave, and on the third day we offered the sacraments of redemption.¹

¹⁸⁵ 3. Behold, however, two days thereafter, a certain respectable widow from Figentes, an handmaid from God, who said that she had been twelve years in widowhood saw the following vision in a dream. She saw a certain deacon, who had died four years ago, preparing a palace, I with the assistance of servants and handmaids of God (virgins and widows). It was being so much adorned that the place was refulgent with splendor, and appeared to be wholly made of silver. On her inquiring eagerly for whom this palace was being prepared, the, deacon aforesaid answered, "For the young man, the son of the t presbyter, who was cut off yesterday. There appeared in the same palace an old man robed in white, who gave orders to two others, also dressed in

white, to go, and having raised the body from the grave, to carry it up with them to heaven. And she added, that so soon as the body had been taken up from the grave and carried to heaven, there sprang from the same sepulchre branches of the rose, called from its folded blossoms the virgin rose. 4. I have narrated the event: listen now, if you please, to my question, and teach me what I ask, for the departure of that young man's soul forces such questions from me. While we are in the body, we have an inward faculty of perception which is alert in proportion to the activity of our attention, and' is more wakeful and eager the more earnestly attentive we become:

¹⁸⁶and it see?as to us probable that even in its highest activity it is retarded by the encumbrance of the body, for who can fully describe all that the mind suffers through the body ! In the midst of the perturbation and annoyance which come from the suggestions, temptations, necessities, and varied afflictions of which the body is the cause, the mind does not surrender its strength, it resists and conquers. Sometimes J it is defeated; nevertheless, mindful of what is its own nature, it becomes, under the stimulating influence of such labours, more active and more wary, and breaks through the meshes of wickedness, and so makes its way to better! things. Your Holiness will kindly understand what I mean to say. Therefore, while we are in this life, we are hindered by such deficiencies, and are nevertheless, as it is written, "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."2 When we go forth from this body, and escape from every burden, and from sin, with its incessant activity, what are we ? 5. In the first place, I ask whether there may not be some kind of body (formed, perchance, of one of the four elements, either air or ether) which does not depart from the incorporeal principle, that is, the substance properly called the soul, when it forsakes this earthly body. For as the soul is in its nature incorporeal, if it be absolutely disembodied by death there is now one soul of all that have left this world.

¹⁸⁷ And in that case where would the rich man, who was clothed in purple, and Lazarus, who was full of sores, now be ? How, moreover, could they be distinguished according to their respective deserts, so that the one should have suffering and the other have joy, if there were only a single soul made by the combination of all disembodied souls, unless, of course, these things are to be understood in a figurative sense ? Be that as it may, there is no question that souls which are held in definite places (as that rich man was in the flame, and that poor man was in Abraham's bosom) are held in bod-

ies. If there are distinct places, there are bodies, and in these bodies the souls reside; and even although the punishments and rewards are experienced in the conscience, the soul which experiences them is nevertheless in a body. Whatever is the nature of that one soul made up of many souls, it must be possible for it in its unbroken unity to be both grieved and made glad at the same moment, if it is to approve itself to be really a substance consisting of many souls gathered into one.

¹⁸⁸ If, however, this soul is called one only in the same way as the incorporeal mind is called one, although it has in it memory, and will, and intellect, and if it be alleged that all these are separate incorporeal causes or powers and have their several distinctive offices and work without one impeding another in any way, I think this might be in some measure answered by saying that it must be also possible for some of the souls to be under punishment and some of the souls to enjoy rewards simultaneously in this one substance consisting of many souls gathered into One. 6. Or if this be not so [that is, if there be no such body remaining still in union with the incorporeal principle after it quits this earthly body], what is there to hinder each soul from having, when separated from the solid body which it here inhabits, another body, so that the soul always animates a body of some kind ? or in what body

¹⁸⁹ does it pass to any region, if such there be, to which necessity compels it to go? For the angels themselves, if they were not numbered by bodies of some kind which they have, could not be called many, as they are by the Truth Himself when He said in the gospel, "I could pray the Father, and He will presently give me twelve legions of angels.", Again it is certain that Samuel was seen in the body when he was raised at the request of Saul; ' and as to Moses, whose body was buried, it is plain from the gospel narrative that he came in the body to the Lord on the mountain to which He and His disciples had retired. In the Apocrypha, and in the Mysteries of Moses, a writing which is wholly devoid of authority, it is indeed said that, at the time when he ascended the mount to die, through the power which his body possessed, there was one body which was committed to the earth, and another which was joined to the angel who accompanied him; but I do not feel myself called upon to give to a sentence in apocryphal writings a preference over the definite statements quoted above. We must therefore give attention to

this, and search out, by the help either of the authority of revelation or of the light of reason, the matter about which we are inquiring.

¹⁹⁰ But it is alleged that the future resurrection of the body is a proof that the soul was after death absolutely without a body. This is not, however, an unanswerable objection, for the angels, who are like our souls invisible, have at times desired to appear in bodily forms and be seen, and (whatever might be the form of body worthy to be assumed by these spirits) they have appeared, for example, to Abraham⁴ and to Tobias.⁵ Therefore it is quite possible that the resurrection of the body may, as we assuredly believe, take place, and yet that the soul may be reunited to it without its being found to have been at any moment wholly devoid of some kind of body. Now the body which the soul here occupies consists of the four elements, of which one, namely heat, seems to depart from this body at the same moment as the soul. For there remains after death that which is made of earth, moisture also is not wanting to the body, nor is the element of cold matter gone; heat alone has fled, which perhaps the soul takes along with it if it migrates from place to place. This is all that I say meanwhile concerning the body. 7.

¹⁹¹ It seems to me also, that if the soul while occupying the living body is capable, as I have said, of strenuous mental application, how much more unencumbered, active, vigorous, earnest, resolute, and persevering will it be, how much enlarged in capacity and improved in character, if it has while in this body learned to relish virtue ! For after laying aside this body, or rather, after having this cloud swept away, the soul will have come to be free from all disturbing influences, enjoying tranquillity and exempt from temptation, seeing whatever it has longed for, and embracing what it has loved. Then, also, it will be capable of remembering and recognising friends, both those who went before it from this world, and those whom it left here below. Perhaps this may be true. I know not, but I desire to learn. But it would greatly distress me to think that the soul after death passes into a state of torpor, being as it were buried, just as it is during sleep while it is in the body, living only in hope, but having nothing and knowing nothing, especially if in its sleep it be not even stirred by any dreams. This notion causes me very great horror, and seems to indicate that the life of the soul is extinguished at death. 8. This also I would ask: Supposing that the soul be discovered to have such a body as we speak of, does that body lack any of the senses ?

¹⁹² Of course, if there cannot be imposed upon it any necessity for smelling, tasting, or touching, as I suppose will be the case, these senses will be wanting; but I hesitate as to the senses of sight and hearing. For are not devils said to hear (not, indeed, in all the persons whom they harass, for in regard to these there is a question), even when they appear in bodies of their own? And as to the faculty of sight, how can they pass from one place to another if they have a body but are void of the power of seeing, so as to guide its motions? Do you think that this is not the case with human souls when they go forth from the body,--that they have still a body of some kind, and are not deprived of some at least of the senses proper to this body? Else how can we explain the fact that very many dead persons have been observed by day, or by persons awake and walking abroad during the I night, to pass into houses just as they were wont to do in their lifetime? This I have heard not once, but often; and I have also heard it said that in places in which dead bodies are interred, and especially in churches, there are commotions and prayers which are heard for the most part at a certain time of the night. This I remember hearing from more than one:

¹⁹³ for a certain holy presbyter was an eye-witness of such an apparition, having observed a multitude of such phantoms issuing from the baptistery in bodies full of light, after which he heard their prayers in the midst of the church itself. All such things are either true, and therefore helpful to the inquiry which we are now making, or are mere fables, in which case the fact of their invention ¹⁹⁴ is wonderful; nevertheless I would desire to get some information from the fact that they come and visit men, and are seen otherwise than in dreams. 9. These dreams suggest another question. I do not at this moment concern myself about the mere creations of fancy, which are formed by the emotions of the uneducated. I speak of visitations in sleep, such as the apparition to Joseph: in a dream, in the manner experienced in most cases of the kind. In the same manner, therefore, our own friends also who have departed this life before us sometimes come and appear to us in dreams, and speak to us. For I myself remember that Profuturus, and Privatus, and Servilius, holy men who within my recollection were removed by death from our monastery, spoke to me, and that the events of which they spoke came to pass according to their words. Or if it be some other higher spirit that assumes their form and visits our minds, I leave this to the all-seeing eye of Him before whom everything from the highest to the low-

est is uncovered.' If, therefore, the Lord be pleased to speak through reason to your Holiness on all these questions, I beg you to be so kind as make me partaker of the knowledge which you have received. There is another thing which I have resolved not to omit mentioning, for perhaps it bears upon the matter now under investigation: 10.

¹⁹⁵ This same youth, in connection with whom these questions are brought forward, departed this life after having received what may be called a summons² at the time when he was dying. For one who had been a companion of his as a student, and reader, and shorthand writer to my dictation, who had died eight months before, was seen by a person in a dream coming towards him. When he was asked by the person who then distinctly saw him why he had come, he said, "I have come to take this friend away; and so it proved. For in the house itself, also, there appeared to a certain old man, who was almost awake, a man bearing in his hand a laurel branch on which something was written. Nay, more, when this one was seen, it is further reported that after the death of the young man, his father the presbyter had begun to reside along with the aged Theasius in the monastery, in order to find consolation there, but lo ! on the third day after his death, the young man is seen entering the monastery, and is asked by one of the brethren in a dream of some kind whether he knew himself to be dead. He replied that he knew he was. The other asked whether he had been welcomed by God. This also he answered with great expressions of joy. And when questioned as to the reason why he had come, he answered, "I have been sent to summon my father.

¹⁹⁶ The person to whom these things were shown awakes, and relates what had passed. It comes to the ear of Bishop Theasius. He, being alarmed, sharply admonished the person who told him, lest the matter should come, as it might easily do, to the ear of the presbyter himself, and he should be disturbed by such tidings. But why prolong the narration ? Within about four days from this visitation he was saying (for he had suffered from a moderate feverishness) that he was now out of danger, and that the physician had given up attending him, having assured him that there was no cause whatever for anxiety; but that very day this presbyter expired after he had lain down on his couch. Nor should I forbear mentioning, that on the same day on which the youth died, he asked his father three times to forgive him anything in which he might have offended, and every time that he kissed his

father he said to him, "Let us give thanks to God, father," and insisted upon his father saying the words along with him, as if he were exhorting one who was to be his companion in going forth from this world. And in fact only seven days elapsed between the two deaths. What shall we say of things so wonderful? Who shall be a thoroughly reliable teacher as to these mysterious dispensations? To you in the hour of perplexity my agitated heart unburdens itself.

¹⁹⁷ The divine appointment of the death of the young man and of his father is beyond all doubt, for two sparrows shall not fall to the ground without the will of our heavenly Father. 3 11. That the soul cannot exist in absolute separation from a body of some kind is proved in my opinion by the fact that to exist without body belongs to God alone. But I think that the laying aside of so great a burden as the body, in the act of passing from this world, proves that the soul will then be very much more wakeful than it is meanwhile; for then the soul appears, as I think, far more noble when no longer encumbered by so great a hindrance, both in action and in knowledge, and that entire spiritual rest proves it to be free from all causes of disturbance and error, but does not make it languid, and as it were slow, torpid, and embarrassed, inasmuch as it is enough for the soul to enjoy in its fulness the liberty to which it has attained in being freed from the world and the body; for, as you have wisely said, the intellect is satisfied with food, and applies the lips of the spirit to the fountain of life in that condition in which it is happy and blest in the undisputed lordship of its own faculties. For before I quitted the monastery I saw brother Servilius in

¹⁹⁸ a dream after his decease, and he said that we were labouring to attain by the exercise of reason to an understanding of truth, whereas he and those who were in the same state as he were always resting in the pure joy of contemplation. 12. I also beg you to explain to me in how many ways the word wisdom is used; as God is wisdom, and a wise mind is wisdom (in which way it is said to be as light); as we read also of the wisdom of Bezaleel, who made the tabernacle or the ointment, and the wisdom of Solomon, or any other wisdom, if there be such, and wherein they differ from each other; and whether the one eternal Wisdom which is with the Father is to be understood as spoken of in these different degrees, as they are called diverse gifts of the Holy Spirit, who divideth to every one severally according as He will. Or, with the exception of that Wisdom alone which was not created, were these

created, and have they a distinct existence of their own ? or are they effects, and have they received their name from the definition of their work P I am asking a great many questions. May the Lord grant you grace to discover the truth sought, and wisdom sufficient to commit it to writing, and to communicate it without delay to me. I have written in much ignorance, and in a homely style; but since you think it worth while to know that about which I am inquiring, I beseech you in the name of Christ the Lord to correct me where I am mistaken, and teach me what you know that I am desirous to learn.

LETTER 159. TO EVODIUS, AD 415

¹⁹⁹ (A.D. 415.) to Evodius, my Lord Most Blessed, my Venerable and Beloved Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, and to the Brethren Who Are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren Who Are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord. ²⁰⁰ I. Our brother Barbarus, the bearer of this letter, is a servant of God, who has now for a long time been settled at Hippo, and has been an eager and diligent hearer of the word of God. He requested from us this letter to your Holiness, whereby we commend him to you in the Lord, and convey to you through him the salutations which it is our duty to offer. To reply to those letters of your Holiness, in which you have interwoven questions of great difficulty, would be a most laborious task, even for men who are at leisure, and who are endowed with much greater ability in discussing and acuteness in apprehending any subject than we possess. One, indeed, of the two letters in which you ask many great questions has gone amissing, I know not how, and though long sought for cannot be found; the other, which has been found, contains a very pleasing account of a servant of God, a good and chaste young man, stating how he departed from this life, and by what testimonies, communicated through visions of the brethren, his merits were, as you state, made known to you. Taking occasion from this young man's case, you propose and discuss an extremely obscure question concerning the soul, --whether it is associated when it goes forth from this body with some other kind of body, by means of which it can be carried to or confined in places having material boundaries?

²⁰¹ The investigation of this question, if indeed it admits of satisfactory investigation by beings such as we are, demands the most diligent care and labour, and therefore a mind absolutely at leisure from such occupations as engross my time. My opinion, however, if you are willing to hear it, summed

up in a sentence, is, that I by no means believe that the soul in departing from the body is accompanied by another body of any kind. 2. As to the question how these visions and predictions of future events are produced, let him attempt to explain them who understands by what power we are to account for the great wonders which are wrought in the mind of every man when his thoughts are busy. For we see, and we plainly perceive, that within the mind innumerable images of many objects discernible by the eye or by our other senses are produced, --whether they are produced in regular order or in confusion matters not to us at present: all that we say is, that since such images are beyond all dispute produced, the man who is found able to state by what power and in what way these phenomena of daily and perpetual experience are to be accounted for is the only man who may warrantably venture to conjecture or propound any explanation of these visions, which are of exceedingly rare occurrence.

²⁰² For my part, as I discover more plainly my inability to account for the ordinary facts of our experience, when awake or asleep, throughout the whole course of our lives, the more do I shrink from venturing to explain what is extraordinary. For while I have been dictating this epistle to you, I have been contemplating your person in my mind, - you being, of course, absent all the while, and knowing nothing of my thoughts, -- and I have been imagining from my knowledge of what is in you how you will be affected by my words; and I have been unable to apprehend, either by observation or by inquiry, how this process was accomplished in my mind. Of one thing, however, I am certain, that although the mental image was very like something material, it was not produced either by masses of matter or by qualities ²⁰³ of matter. Accept this in the meantime from one writing under pressure of other duties, and in haste. In the twelfth of the books which I have written on Genesis this question is discussed with great care, and that dissertation is enriched with a forest of examples from actual experience or from trustworthy report. How far I have been competent to handle the question, and what I have accomplished in it, you will judge when you have read that work; if indeed the Lord shall be pleased in His kindness to permit me now to publish those books systematically corrected to the best of my ability, and thus to meet the expectation of many brethren, instead of deferring their hope by continuing further the discussion of a subject which has already engaged me for a long time. 3. I will narrate briefly, however, one fact which I commend

to your meditation. You know our brother Gennadius, a physician, known to almost every one, and very dear to us, who now lives at Carthage, and was in other years eminent as a medical practitioner at Rome. You know him as a man of religious character and of very great benevolence, actively compassionate and promptly liberal in his care of the poor. Nevertheless, even he, when still a young man, and most zealous in these charitable acts, had sometimes, as he himself told me, doubts as to whether there was any life after death.

²⁰⁴ Forasmuch, therefore, as God would in no wise forsake a man so merciful in his disposition and conduct, there appeared to him in sleep a youth of remarkable appearance and commanding presence, who said to him: "Follow me. Following him, he came to a city where he began to hear on the right hand sounds of a melody so exquisitely sweet as to surpass anything he had ever heard. When he inquired what it was, his guide said: "It is the hymn of the blessed and the holy. What he reported himself to have seen on the left hand escapes my remembrance. He awoke; the dream vanished, and he thought of it as only a dream. 4. On a second night, however, the same youth appeared to Gennadius, and asked whether he recognised him, to which he replied that he knew him well, without the slightest uncertainty. Thereupon he asked Gennadius where he had become acquainted with him. There also his memory failed him not as to the proper reply: he narrated the whole vision, and the hymns of the saints which, under his guidance, he had been taken to hear, with all the readiness natural to recollection of some very recent experience. On this the youth inquired whether it was in sleep or when awake that he had seen what he had just narrated. Gennadius answered: "In sleep. The youth then said: "You remember it well;

²⁰⁵ it is true that you saw these things in sleep, but I would have you know that even now you are seeing in sleep. Hearing this, Gennadius was persuaded of its truth, and in his reply declared that he believed it. Then his teacher went on to say: "Where is your body now? He answered: "In my bed. "Do you know," said the youth, "that the eyes in this body of yours are now bound and closed, and at rest, and e that with these eyes you are seeing nothing? He answered: "I know it. "What, then, said the youth, "are the eyes with which you see me? He, unable to discover what to answer to this, was silent. While he hesitated, the youth unfolded to him what he was endeavoring to teach him by these questions, and forthwith said: "' As while you are asleep and ly-

ing on your bed these eyes of your body are now unemployed and doing nothing, and yet you have eyes with which you behold me, and enjoy this vision, so, after your death, while your bodily eyes shall be wholly inactive, there shall be in you a life by which you shall still live, and a faculty of perception by which you shall still perceive. Beware, therefore, after this of harbouring doubts as to whether the life of man shall continue after death. This believer says that by this means all doubts as to this matter were removed from him.

²⁰⁶ By whom was he taught this but by the merciful, providential care of God ? 5. Some one may say that by this narrative I have not solved but complicated the question. Nevertheless, while it is free to every one to believe or disbelieve these statements, every man has his own consciousness at hand as a teacher by whose help he may apply himself to this most profound question. Every day man wakes, and sleeps, and thinks; let any man, therefore, answer whence proceed these things which, while not material bodies, do nevertheless resemble the forms, properties, and motions of material bodies: let him, I say, answer this if he can. But if he cannot do this, why is he in such haste to pronounce a definite opinion on things which occur very rarely, or are beyond the range of his experience, when he is unable to explain matters of daily and perpetual observation? For my part, although I am wholly unable to explain in words how those semblances of material bodies, without any real body, are produced, I may say that I wish that, with the same certainty with which I know that these things are not produced by the body, I could know by what means those things are perceived which are occasionally seen by the spirit, and are supposed to be seen by the bodily senses;

²⁰⁷ or by what distinctive marks we may know the visions of men who have been misguided by delusion, or, most commonly, by impiety, since the examples of such visions closely resembling the visions of pious and holy men are so numerous, that if I wished to quote ²⁰⁸ them, time, rather than abundance of examples, would fail me. May you, through the mercy of the Lord grow in grace, most blessed lord and venerable and beloved brother !

LETTER 163. AD 414

(A.D. 414.) to Bishop Augustin, Bishop Evodius Sends Greeting. Some time ago I sent two questions to your Holiness; the first, which was sent, I think, by Jobinus, a servant in the nunnery,¹ related to God and reason, and the second was in regard to the opinion that the body of the Saviour is capable of

seeing the substance of the Deity. I now propound a third question: Does the rational soul which our Saviour assumed along with His body fall under any one of the theories' commonly advanced in discussions on the origin of souls (ff any theory indeed can be with certainty established on the subject),- or does His soul, though rational, belong not to any of the species under which the souls of living creatures are classified, but to another? I ask also a fourth question: Who are those spirits in reference to whom the Apostle Peter testifies concerning the Lord in these words: "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison ?" giving us to understand that they were in hell, and that Christ descending into hell, preached the gospel to them all, and by grace delivered them all from darkness and punishment, so that from the time of the resurrection of the Lord judgment is expected, hell having then been completely emptied. What your Holiness believes in this matter I earnestly desire to know.

LETTER 164. AD 414

209 (A.D. 414.) to my Lord Evodius Most Blessed, my Brother and Partner in the Episcopal Office, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. 210 I. The question which you have proposed to me from the epistle of the Apostle Peter is one which, as I think you are aware, is wont to perplex me most seriously, namely, how the words which you have quoted are to be understood on the supposition that they were spoken concerning hell ? I therefore refer this question back to yourself, that if either you yourself be able, or can find any other person who is able to do so, you may remove and terminate my perplexities on the subject. If the Lord grant to me ability to understand the words before you do, and it be in my power to impart what I receive from Him to you, I will not withhold it from a friend so truly loved. In the meantime, I will communicate to you the things in the passage which occasion difficulty to me, that, keeping in view these remarks on the words of the apostle, you may either exercise your own thoughts on them, or consult any one whom you find competent to pronounce an opinion. 2. After having said that "Christ was put to death in the flesh, and quickened in the spirit," the apostle immediately went on to say: "in which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were unbelieving, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a pre-

paring, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water; thereafter he added the words:

²¹¹ "which baptism also now by a like figure has saved you." ³ This, therefore, is felt by me to be difficult. If the Lord when He died preached in hell to spirits in prison, why were those who continued unbelieving while the ark was a preparing the only ones counted worthy of this favour, namely, the Lord's descending into hell? For in the ages between the time of Noah and the passion of Christ, there died many thousands of so many nations whom He might have found in hell. I do not, of course, speak here of those who in that period of time had believed in God, as, e.g. the prophets and patriarchs of Abraham's line, or, going father back, Noah himself and his house, who had been saved by water (excepting perhaps the one son, who afterwards was rejected), and, in addition to these, all others outside of the posterity of Jacob who were believers in God, such as Job, the citizens of Nineveh, and any others, whether mentioned in Scripture or existing unknown to us in the vast human family at any time. I speak only of those many thousands of men who, ignorant of God and devoted to the worship of devils or of idols, had passed out of this life from the time of Noah to the passion of Christ. How was it that Christ, finding these in hell, did not preach to them, but preached only to those who were unbelieving in the days of Noah when the ark was a preparing?

²¹² Or if he preached to all, why has Peter mentioned only these, and passed over the innumerable multitude of others? CHAP. II. 3. -- It is established beyond question that the Lord, after He had been put to death in the flesh, "descended into hell; for it is impossible to gainsay either that utterance of prophecy, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in ²¹³ hell," '--an utterance which Peter himself expounds in the Acts of the Apostles, lest any one should venture to put upon it another interpretation, -- or the words of the same apostle, in which he affirms that the Lord "loosed the pains of hell, in which it was not possible for Him to be holden."² Who, therefore, except an infidel, will deny that Christ was in hell? As to the difficulty which is found in reconciling the statement that the pains of hell were loosed by Him, with the fact that He had never begun to be in these pains as in bonds, and did not so loose them as if He had broken off chains by which He had been bound, this is easily removed when we understand that they were loosed in the same way as the snares of huntsmen may be loosed to prevent their hold-

ing, not because they have taken hold. It may also be understood as teaching us to believe Him to have loosed those pains which could not possibly hold Him, but which were holding those to whom He had resolved to grant deliverance. 4. But who these were it is presumptuous for us to define. For if we say that all who were found there were then delivered without exception, who will not rejoice if we can prove this ?

²¹⁴ Especially will men rejoice for the sake of some who are intimately known to us by their literary labours, whose eloquence and talent we admire, --not only the poets and orators who in many parts of their writings have held up to contempt and ridicule these same false gods of the nations, and have even occasionally confessed the one true God, although along with the rest they observed superstitious rites, but also those who have uttered the same, not in poetry or rhetoric, but as philosophers: and for the sake of many more of whom we have no literary remains, but in regard to whom we have learned from the writings of these others that their lives were to a certain extent praiseworthy, so that (with the exception of their service of God, in which they erred, worshipping the vanities which had been set up as objects of public worship, and serving the creature rather than the Creator) they may be justly held up as models in all the other virtues of frugality, self-denial, chastity, sobriety, braving of death in their country's defence, and faith kept inviolate not only to fellow-citizens, but also to enemies. All these things, indeed, when they are practised with a view not to the great end of right and true piety, but to the empty pride of human praise and glory, become in a sense worthless and unprofitable;

²¹⁵ nevertheless, as indications of a certain disposition of mind, they please us so much that we would desire those in whom they exist, either by special preference or along with' the others, to be freed from the pains of hell, were not the verdict of human feeling different from that of the justice of the Creator. 5. These things being so, if the Saviour delivered all from that place, and, to quote the terms of the question in your letter, "emptied hell, so that now from that time forward the last judgment was to be expected," the following things occasion not unreasonable perplexity on this subject, and are wont to present themselves to me in the meantime when I think on it. First, by what authoritative statements can this opinion be confirmed ? For the words of Scripture, that "the pains of hell were loosed" by the death of Christ, do not establish this, seeing that this statement may be understood as

referring to Himself, and meaning that he so far loosed (that is, made ineffectual) the pains of hell that He Himself was not held by them, especially since it is added that it was "impossible for Him to be holden of them.

²¹⁶ Or if any one [objecting to this interpretation] ask the reason why He chose to descend into hell, where those pains were which could not possibly hold Him who was, as Scripture says, "free among the dead," ³ in whom the prince and captain of death found nothing which deserved punishment, the words that "the pains of hell were loosed" may be understood as referring not to the case of all, but only of some whom He judged worthy of that deliverance; so that neither is He supposed to have descended thither in vain, without the purpose of bringing benefit to any of those who were there held in prison, nor is it a necessary inference that what divine mercy and justice granted to some must be supposed to have been granted to all. CHAP. III. 6. As to the first man, the father of mankind, it is agreed by almost the entire Church that the Lord loosed him from that prison;

²¹⁷ a tenet which must be believed to have been accepted not without reason,- from whatever source it was handed down to the Church, although the authority of the canonical Scriptures cannot be brought forward as speaking expressly in its support,⁴ though this seems to be the opinion which is more than any other borne out by these words in the book of Wisdom. Some add to this [tradition] that the same favour was bestowed on the holy men of antiquity, on Abel, Seth, Noah and his house, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the other patriarchs and prophets, they also being loosed from those pains at the time when the Lord descended into hell. 7. But, for my part, I cannot see how Abra- ²¹⁸ ham, into whose bosom also the pious beggar in the parable was received, can be understood to have been in these pains; those who are able can perhaps explain this. But I suppose every one must see it to be absurd to imagine that only two, namely, Abraham and Lazarus, were in that bosom of wondrous repose before the Lord descended into hell, and that with reference to these two alone it was said to the rich man, "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would pass from thence." Moreover, if there were more than two there, who will dare to say that the patriarchs and prophets were not there, to whose righteousness and piety so signal testimony is borne in the word of God? What benefit was conferred in that case on them by Him who loosed the pains of hell, in

which they were not held, I do not yet understand, especially as I have not been able to find anywhere in Scripture the name of hell used in a good sense. And if this use of the term is nowhere found in the divine Scriptures, assuredly the bosom of Abraham, that is, the abode of a certain secluded rest, is not' to be believed to be a part of hell.

²¹⁹ Nay, from these words themselves of the great Master in which He says that Abraham said, "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed," it is, as I think, sufficiently evident that the bosom of that glorious felicity was not any integral part of hell. For what is that great gulf but a chasm completely separating those places between which it not only is, but is fixed? Wherefore, if sacred Scripture had said, without naming hell and its pains, that Christ when He died went to that bosom of Abraham, I wonder ff any one would have dared to say that He "descended into hell." 8. But seeing that plain scriptural testimonies make mention of hell and its pains, no reason; can be alleged for believing that He who is the i Saviour went thither, except that He might save from its pains; but whether He did save all whom He found held in them, or some whom He judged worthy of that favour, I still ask: that He was, however, in hell, and that He conferred this benefit on persons subjected to these pains, I do not doubt. Wherefore, I have not yet found what benefit He, when He descended into hell, conferred upon those righteous ones who were in Abraham's bosom, from whom I see that, so far as regarded the beatific presence of His Godhead, He never withdrew Himself;

²²⁰ since even on that very day on which He died, He promised that the thief should be with Him in paradise at the time when He was about to descend to loose the pains of hell. Most certainly, therefore, He was, before that time, both in paradise and the bosom of Abraham in His beatific wisdom, and in hell in His condemning power; for since the Godhead is confined by no limits, where is He not present ? At the same time, however, so far as regarded the created nature, in assuming which at a certain point of time, He, while continuing to be God, became man -- that is to say, so far as regarded His soul, He was in hell: this is plainly declared in these words of Scripture, which were both sent before in prophecy and filly expounded by apostolical interpretation: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." 2 9. I know that some think that at the death of Christ a resurrection such as is promised to us at the end of the world was granted to the righteous, founding this on the statement in Scripture that, in the earthquake by which at the moment of

His death the rocks were rent and the graves were opened, many bodies of the saints arose and were seen with Him in the Holy City after He rose.

²²¹ Certainly, if these did not fall asleep again, their bodies being a second time laid in the grave, it would be necessary to see in what sense Christ can be understood to "be "the first begotten from the dead," ³ if so many preceded Him in the resurrection. And if it be said, in answer to this, that the statement is made by anticipation, so that the graves indeed are to be supposed to have been opened by that earthquake at the time when Christ was hanging on the cross, but that the bodies of the saints did not rise then, but only after Christ had risen before them, -- although on this hypothesis of anticipation in the narrative, the addition of these words would not hinder us from still believing, on the one hand, that Christ was without doubt "the first begotten from the dead," and on the other, that to these saints permission was given, when He went before them, to rise to an eternal state of incorruption and immortality, there still remains a difficulty, namely, how in that case Peter could have spoken as he did, saying what was without doubt perfectly true, when he affirmed that in the prophecy quoted above the words, that "His flesh should not see corruption," referred not to David but to Christ, and added concerning David, "He is buried, and his sepulchre is with us to this day," ⁴ in a statement which would have had no force as an argument unless the body of David was still undisturbed in the sepulchre;

²²² for of course the sepulchre might still have been there even had the saint's body been raised up immediately after his death, and had thus not seen corruption. But it seems hard that David should not be ²²³ included in this resurrection of the saints, if eternal life was given to them, since it is so frequently, so clearly, and with such honourable mention of his name, declared that Christ was to be of David's seed. Moreover, these words in the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning the ancient believers, "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect," will be endangered, if these believers have been already established in that incorruptible resurrection-state which is promised to us when we are to be made perfect at the end of the world. CHAP. IV. -- 10. You perceive, therefore, how intricate is the question why Peter chose to mention, as persons to whom, when shut up in prison, the gospel was preached, those only who were unbelieving in the days of Noah when the ark was a preparing -- and also the difficulties which prevent me from pronouncing any definite

opinion on the subject. An additional reason for my hesitation is, that after the apostle had said, "Which baptism now by a like figure saves you (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is on the right hand of God, having swallowed up death that we might be made heirs of eternal life; and having gone into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to Him," he added:

224 "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God; after which he continues: "For the time: past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: wherein Z they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. After these! words he subjoins: "For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit."2 11. Who can be otherwise than perplexed by words so profound as these? He saith, "The gospel was preached to the dead; and if by the "dead" we understand persons who have' departed from the body, I suppose he must mean those described above as "unbelieving in the days of Noah," or certainly all those whom Christ found in hell. What, then, is meant by the words, "That they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit "?

225 For how can they be judged in the flesh, which if they be in hell they no longer have, and which if they have been loosed from the pains of hell they have not yet resumed? For even if" hell was," as you put in your question, "emptied," it is not to be believed that all who were then there have risen again in the flesh, or those who, arising, again appeared with the Lord resumed the flesh for this purpose, that they might be in it judged according to men; but how this could be taken as true in the case of those who were unbelieving in the days of Noah I do not see, for Scripture does not affirm that they were made to live in the flesh, nor can it be believed that the end for which they were loosed from the pains of hell was that they who were delivered from these might resume their flesh in order to suffer punishment.

'What, then, is meant by the words, "That they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit? Can it mean that to those whom Christ found in hell this was granted, that by the gospel they were quickened in the spirit, although at the future resurrection they must be judged in the flesh, that they may pass, through some punishment in the flesh, into the kingdom of God ?

²²⁶ If this be what is meant, why were only the unbelievers of the time of Noah (and not also all others whom Christ found in hell when He went thither) quickened in spirit by the preaching of the gospel, to be afterwards judged in the flesh with a punishment of limited duration ? But if we take this as applying to all, the question still remains why Peter mentioned none but those who were unbelieving in the days of Noah. 12. I find, moreover, a difficulty in the reason alleged by those who attempt to give an explanation of this matter. They say that all those who were found in hell when Christ descended thither had never heard the gospel, and that that place of punishment or imprisonment was emptied of all these, because the gospel was not published to the whole world in their lifetime, and they had sufficient excuse for not believing that which had never been proclaimed to them; but that thenceforth, men despising the gospel when it was in all nations fully published and spread abroad would be inexcusable, and therefore after the prison was then emptied there still remains a just judgment, in which those who are contumacious and unbelieving shall be punished even with eternal fire. Those who hold this opinion do not consider that the same excuse is available for all those who have, even after Christ's resurrection, departed this life before the gospel came to them.

²²⁷ For even after the Lord came back from hell, it was not the case that no one was from that time forward permitted ²²⁸ to go to hell without having heard the gospel, seeing that multitudes throughout the world died before the proclamation of its tidings came to them, all of whom are entitled to plead the excuse which is alleged to have been taken away from those of whom it is said, that because they had not before heard the gospel, the Lord when He descended into hell proclaimed it to them. 23. This objection may perhaps be met by saying that those also who since the Lord's resurrection have died or are now dying without the gospel having been proclaimed to them, may have heard it or may now hear it where they are, in hell, so that there they may believe what ought to be believed concerning the truth of

Christ, and may also have that pardon and salvation which those to whom Christ preached obtained; for the fact that Christ ascended again from hell is no reason why the report concerning Him should have perished from recollection there, for from this earth also He has gone ascending into heaven, and yet by the publication of His gospel those who believe in Him shall be saved;

²²⁹ moreover, He was exalted, and received a name that is above every name, for this end, I that in His name every knee should bow, not only of things in heaven and on earth, but also of things under the earth.¹ But if we accept this opinion, according to which we are warranted in supposing that men who did not believe while they were in life can in hell believe in Christ, who can bear the contradictions both of reason and faith which must follow? In the first place, if this were true, we should seem to have no reason for mourning over those who have departed from the body without that grace, and there would be no ground for being solicitous and using urgent exhortation that men would accept the grace of God before they die, lest they should be punished with eternal death. If, again, it be alleged that in hell those only believe to no purpose and in vain who refused to accept here on earth the gospel preached to them, but that believing will profit those who never despised a gospel which they never had it in their power to hear another still more absurd consequence is involved, namely, that forasmuch as all men shall certainly die, and ought to come to hell wholly free from the guilt of having despised the gospel; since otherwise it can be of no use to them to believe it when they come there, the gospel ought not to be preached on earth, a sentiment not less foolish than profane.

²³⁰ CHAP. V. -- 14. Wherefore let us most firmly hold that which faith, resting on authority established beyond all question, maintains: "that Christ died according to the Scriptures," and that "He was buried," and that "He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," and all other things which have been written concerning Him in records fully demonstrated to be true. Among these doctrines we include the doctrine that He was in hell, and, having loosed the pains of hell, in which it was impossible for Him to be holden, from which also He is with good ground believed to have loosed and delivered whom He would, He took again to Himself that body which He had left on the cross, and which had been laid in the tomb. These things, I say, let us firmly hold; but as to the question propounded by you from the

words of the Apostle Peter, since you now perceive the difficulties which I find in it, and since other difficulties may possibly be found if the subject be more carefully studied, let us continue to investigate it, whether by applying our own thoughts to the subject, or by asking the opinion of any one whom it may be becoming and possible to consult. 15.

²³¹ Consider, however, I pray you, whether all that the Apostle Peter says concerning spirits shut up in prison, who were unbelieving in the days of Noah, may not after all have been written without any reference to hell, but rather to those times the typical character of which he has transferred to the present time. For that transaction had been typical of future events, so that those who do not believe the gospel in our age, when the Church is being built up in all nations, may be understood to be like those who did not believe in that age while the ark was a preparing; also, that those who have believed and are saved by baptism may be compared to those who at that time, being in the ark, were saved by water; wherefore he says, "So baptism by a like figure saves you. Let us therefore interpret the rest of the statements concerning them that believed not so as to harmonise with the analogy of the figure, and refuse to entertain the thought that the gospel was once preached, or is even to this hour being preached in hell in order to make men believe and be delivered from its pains, as if a Church had been established there as well as on earth. 16.

²³² Those who have inferred from the words, "He preached to the spirits in prison," that Peter held the opinion which perplexes you, seem to me to have been drawn to this interpretation by imagining that the term "spirits" could not be applied to designate souls which were at that time still in the bodies of men, and which, being shut up in the darkness of ignorance, were, so to speak, "in prison," -- a prison such as that from which the Psalmist sought deliverance in the prayer, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy name;"² which is in another ²³³place called the "shadow of death,"¹ from which deliverance was granted, not certainly in hell, but in this world, to those of whom it is written, "They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."² But to the men of Noah's time the gospel was preached in vain, because they believed not when God's long suffering waited for them during the many years in which the ark was being built (for the building of the ark was itself in a certain sense a preaching of mercy); even as .now men similar to them are unbelieving,

who, to use the same figure, are shut up in the darkness of ignorance as in a prison, beholding in vain the Church which is being built up throughout the world, while judgment is impending, as the flood was by which at that time all the unbelieving perished; for the Lord says: "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man;

²³⁴ they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all."³ But because that transaction was also a type of a future event, that flood was a type both of baptism to believers and of destruction to unbelievers, as in that figure in which, not by a transaction but by words, two things are predicted concerning Christ, when He is represented in Scripture as a stone which was destined to be both to unbelievers a stone of stumbling, and to believers a foundation-stone.⁴ Occasionally, however, also in the same figure, whether it be in the form of a typical event or of a parable, two things are used to represent one, as believers were represented both by the timbers of which the ark was built and by the eight souls saved in the ark, and as in the gospel similitude of the sheepfold Christ is both the shepherd and the door.⁵ Chap. VI.-- 17. And let it not be regarded as an objection to the interpretation now given, that the Apostle Peter says that Christ Himself preached to men shut up in prison who were unbelieving in the days of Noah, as if we must consider this interpretation inconsistent with the fact that at that time Christ had not come. For although he had not.

²³⁵ yet come in the flesh, as He came when afterwards He "showed Himself upon earth, and conversed with men,"⁶ nevertheless he certainly came often to this earth, from the beginning of the human race, whether to rebuke the wicked, as Cain, and before that, Adam and his wife, when they sinned, or to comfort the good, or to admonish both, so that some should to their salvation believe, others should to their condemnation refuse to believe, -- coming then not in the flesh but in the spirit, speaking by suitable manifestations of Himself to such persons and in such manner as seemed good to Him. As to this expression, "He came in the spirit," surely He, as the Son of God, is a Spirit in the essence of His Deity, for that is not corporeal; but what is at any time done by the Son without the Holy Spirit, or without the Father, seeing that all the works of the Trinity are inseparable? 18. The words of Scripture which are under consideration seem to me of themselves to make this sufficiently plain to those who carefully attend to them: "For

Christ hath died once for our sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit: in which also He came and preached unto the spirits in prison, who sometime were unbelieving, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.

²³⁶ The order of the words is now, I suppose, carefully noted by you: "Christ being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which spirit He came and preached also to those spirits who had once in the days of Noah refused to believe His word; since before He came in the flesh to die for us, which He did once, He often came in the spirit, to whom He would, by visions instructing them as He would, coming to them assuredly in the same spirit in which He was quickened when He was put to death in the flesh in His passion. Now what does His being quickened in the spirit mean if not this, that the same flesh in which alone He had experienced death rose from the dead by the quickening spirit? Chap. VII. 19. For who will dare to say that Jesus was put to death in His soul, i.e. in the spirit which belonged to Him as man, since the only death which the soul can experience is sin, from which He was absolutely free when for us He was put to death in the flesh?

²³⁷ For if the souls of all men are derived from that one which the breath of God gave to the first man, by whom "sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men,"⁷ either the soul of Christ is not derived from the same source as other souls, because He had absolutely no sin, either original or personal, on account of which death could be supposed to be merited by Him, since He paid on our behalf that which was not on His own account due by Him, in whom the prince of this world, who had the power of death, found nothing⁸ -- and there is nothing unreasonable in the supposition that ²³⁸ He who created a soul for the first man should create a soul for Himself; or if the soul of Christ be derived from Adam's soul He in assuming it to Himself, cleansed it so that when He came into this world He was born of the Virgin perfectly free from sin either actual or transmitted. If, however, the souls of men are not derived from that one soul, and it is only by the flesh that original sin is transmitted from Adam, the Son of God created a soul for Himself, as He creates souls for all other men, but He united it not to sinful flesh, but to the "likeness of sinful flesh."¹ For He took, indeed, from the Virgin the true substance of flesh; not, however, "sinful flesh," for it was neither begotten nor conceived through carnal concupiscence, but mor-

tal, and capable of change in the successive stages of life, as being like unto sinful flesh in all points, sin excepted. 20.

²³⁹ Therefore, whatever be the true theory concerning the origin of souls, -- and on this I feel it would be rash for me to pronounce, meanwhile, any opinion beyond utterly rejecting the theory which affirms that each soul is thrust into the body which it inhabits as into a prison, where it expiates some former actions of its own of which I know nothing, it is certain, regarding the soul of Christ, not only that it is, according to the nature of all souls, immortal, but also that it was neither put to death by sin nor punished by condemnation, the only two ways in which death can be understood as experienced by the soul; and therefore it could not be said of Christ that with reference to the soul He was "quickened in the spirit. For He was quickened in that in which He had been put to death; this, therefore, is spoken with reference to His flesh, for His flesh received life again when the soul returned to it, as it also had died when the soul departed. He was therefore said to be "put to death in the flesh," because He experienced death only in the flesh, but "quickened in the spirit," because by the operation of that Spirit in which He was wont to come and preach to whom He would, that same flesh in which He came to men was quickened and rose from the grave. 21.

²⁴⁰ Wherefore, passing now to the words which we find farther on concerning unbelievers, "Who shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead," there is no necessity for our understanding the "dead" here to be those who have departed from the body. For it may be that the apostle intended by the word "dead" to denote unbelievers, as being spiritually dead, like those of whom it was said, "Let the dead bury their dead,"² and by the word "living" to denote those who believe in Him, having not heard in vain the call, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light;"³ of whom also the Lord said: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall Have."⁴ On the same principle of interpretation, also, there is nothing compelling us to understand the immediately succeeding words of Peter -- "For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit" as describing what has been done in hell. "For for this cause has the gospel been preached" in this life "to the dead," that is, to the unbelieving wicked, "that" when they believed "they might be

judged according to men in the flesh," -- that is, by means of various afflictions and by the death of the body itself;

²⁴¹for which reason the same apostle says in another place: "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God,"⁶ -- "but live according to God in the spirit," since in that same spirit they had been dead while they were held prisoners in the death of unbelief and wickedness. 22. If this exposition of the words of Peter offend any one, or, without offending, at least fail to satisfy any one, let him attempt to interpret them on the supposition that they refer to hell: and if he succeed in solving my difficulties which I have mentioned above, so as to remove the perplexity which they occasion, let him communicate his interpretation to me; and if this were done, the words might possibly have been intended to be understood in both ways, but the view which I have propounded is not thereby shown to be false. I wrote and sent by the deacon Asellus a letter, which I suppose you have received, giving such answers as I could to the questions which you sent before, excepting the one concerning the vision of God by the bodily senses, on which a larger treatise must be attempted.

²⁴²In your last note, to which this is a reply, you propounded two questions concerning certain words of the Apostle Peter, and concerning the soul of the Lord, both of which I have discussed, -- the former more fully, the latter briefly.⁷ I beg you not to Fudge the trouble of sending me another copy of the letter containing the question whether it is possible for the substance of the Deity to be seen in a bodily form as limited to place; for it has, I know not how, gone amissing here, and though long sought for, has not been found.

LETTER 165. AD 410

²⁴³(A.D. 410.1) to my Truly Pious Lords Marcellinus² and Anapsychia, Sons Worthy of Being Esteemed with All the Love Due to Their Position, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ. ²⁴⁴CHAP. I. -- I. At last I have received your joint letter from Africa, and I do not regret the importunity with which, though you were silent, I persevered in sending letters to you, that I might obtain a reply, and learn, not through report from others, but from your own most welcome statement, that you are in health. I have not forgotten the brief query, or rather the very important theological question, which you propounded in regard to the origin of the soul, -- does it descend from heaven, as the philosopher Pythagoras and all the Platonists and Origen think? or is

it part of the essence of the Deity, as the Stoics, Manichaeus, and the Priscillianists of Spain imagine? or are souls kept in a divine treasure house wherein they were stored of old as some ecclesiastics, foolishly misled, believe? or are they daily created by God and sent into bodies, according to what is written in the gospel, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work"?⁴ or are souls really produced, as Tertullian, Apollinaris, and the majority of the Western divines conjecture, by propagation, so that as the body is the offspring of body, the soul is the offspring of soul, and exists on conditions similar to those regulating the existence of the inferior animals."⁵ I know that I have published my opinion on this question in my brief writings against Ruffinus, in reply to a treatise addressed by him to Anastasius, of holy memory, bishop of the Roman:

²⁴⁵ Church, in which, while attempting to impose upon the simplicity of his readers by a slippery and artful, yet withal foolish confession, he exposed to contempt his own faith, or, rather, his own perfidy. These books are, I think, in the possession of your holy kinsman Oceanus, for they were published long ago to meet the calumnies contained in numerous writings of Ruffinus. Be this as it may, you have in Africa that holy man and learned bishop Augustin, who will be able to teach you on this subject *viva race*, as the saying is, and expound to you his opinion, or, I should rather say, my own opinion stated in his words. CHAP. II. -- 2. I have long wished to begin the I volume of Ezekiel, and fulfil a promise frequently made to studious readers; but at the time when I had just begun to dictate the proposed exposition, my mind was so much agitated by the devastation of the western provinces of the empire, and especially by the sack of Rome itself by the barbarians, that, to use a common proverbial phrase, I scarcely knew my own name; and for a long while I was silent, knowing that it was a time for tears.

²⁴⁶ Moreover when I had, in the course of this year, prepared three books of the Commentary, a sudden furious invasion of the barbarous tribes mentioned by your Virgil as "the widely roaming Barcaei,"⁶ and by sacred Scripture in the words concerning Ishmael, "He shall dwell in the presence of his brethren," swept over the whole of Egypt, Palestine, Phenice, and Syria, carrying all before them with the vehemence of a mighty torrent, so that it was only with the greatest difficulty that we were enabled, by the mercy of Christ, to escape their hands. But if, as a famous orator has said, "Laws are silent amid the clash of arms,"⁸ how much more may this be said of scriptural

studies, which demand a multitude of books and silence, together with uninterrupted diligence of amanuenses, and especially the enjoyment of tranquillity and leisure by those who dictate! I have accordingly sent two books to my holy daughter Fabiola, of which, if you wish copies, you may borrow them from her. Through lack of time I have been unable to transcribe others; when you have read these, and have seen the portico, as it were, you may easily conjecture what the house itself is designed to be.

²⁴⁷ But I trust in the mercy of God, who has helped me in the very difficult commencement of the foresaid work, that He will help me also in the predictions concerning the wars of Gog and Magog, which occupy the last division but one of the prophecy,⁹ and in the concluding portion itself, describing the building, the details, and the proportions of that most holy and mysterious temple.¹⁰ CHAP. III. -- 3. Our holy brother Oceanus, to whom you desire to be mentioned, is a man of such gifts and character, and so profoundly learned in the law of the Lord, that he may probably give you instruction without any request of mine, and can impart to you on all scriptural questions the opinion which, according to the measure of our joint abilities, we have formed. May Christ, our almighty God, keep you, my truly pious lords, in safety and prosperity to a good old age!

LETTER 166. AD 415

²⁴⁸ (A.D. 415.) a Treatise on the Origin of the Human Soul, Addressed to Jerome.¹ ²⁴⁹ CHAP. I.-- I. Unto our God, who hath called us unto His kingdom and glory,² I have prayed, and pray now, that what I write to you, holy brother Jerome, asking your opinion in regard to things of which I am ignorant, may by His good pleasure be profitable to us both. For although in addressing you I consult one much older than myself, nevertheless I also am becoming old; but I cannot think that it is at anytime of life too late to learn what we need to know, because, although it is more fitting that old men should be teachers than learners, it is nevertheless more fitting for them to learn than to continue ignorant of that which they should teach to others. I assure you that, amid the many disadvantages which I have to submit to in studying very difficult questions, there is none which grieves me more than the circumstance of separation from your Charity by a distance so great that I can scarcely send a letter to you, and scarcely receive one from you, even at intervals, not of days nor of months, but of several years; whereas my desire would be, if it were possible, to have you daily beside me, as one with

whom I could converse on any theme. Nevertheless, although I have not been able to do all that I wished, I am not the less bound to do all that I can.
2.

²⁵⁰ Behold, a religious young man has come to me, by name Orosius, who is in the bond of Catholic peace a brother, in point of age a son, and in honour a fellow presbyter, -- a man, of quick understanding, ready speech, and burning zeal, desiring to be in the Lord's house a vessel rendering useful service in refuting those false and pernicious doctrines, through which the souls of men in Spain have suffered much more grievous wounds than have been inflicted on their bodies by the sword of barbarians. For from the remote western coast of Spain he has come with eager haste to us, having been prompted to do this by the report that from me he could learn whatever he wished on the subjects on which he desired information. Nor has his coming been altogether in vain. In the first place, he has learned not to believe all that report affirmed of me: in the next place, I have taught him all that I could, and, as for the things in which I could not teach him, I have told him from whom he may learn them, and have exhorted him to go on to you. As he received this counsel or rather injunction of mine with pleasure, and with intention to comply with it, I asked him to visit us on his way home to his own country when he comes from you.

²⁵¹ On receiving his promise to this effect, I believed that the Lord had granted me an opportunity of writing to you regarding certain things which I wish through you to learn. For I was seeking some one whom I might send to you, and it was not easy to fall in with one qualified both by trustworthiness in performing and by alacrity in undertaking the work, as well as by experience in travelling. Therefore, when I became acquainted with this young man, I could not doubt that he was exactly such a person as I was asking from the Lord. CHAP. II. -- 3. Allow me, therefore, to bring , before you a subject which I beseech you not to ;refuse to open up and discuss with me. Many are perplexed by questions concerning the soul, . and I confess that I myself am of this number. I shall in this letter, in the first place, state explicitly the things regarding the soul which I most assuredly believe, and shall, in the next , place, bring forward the things regarding which I am still desirous of explanation. The soul of man is in a sense proper to itself immortal. It is not absolutely immortal, as God is, of whom it is written that He "alone

hath I immortality for Holy Scripture makes mention of deaths to which the soul was able as in the saying, "Let the dead bury their dead;"⁴ but.

²⁵² because when alienated from the life of God it so dies as not wholly to cease from living in its own nature, it is found to be from a certain cause mortal, yet so as to be not without reason called at the same time immortal. The soul is not a part of God. For if it were, it would be absolutely immutable and incorruptible, in which case it could neither go downward to be worse, nor go onward to be better; nor could it either begin to have anything in itself which it had not before, or cease to have any- ²⁵³ thing which it had within the sphere of its own experience. But how different the actual facts of the case are is a point requiring no evidence from without, it is acknowledged by every one who consults his own consciousness. In vain, moreover, is it pleaded by those who affirm that the soul is a part of God, that the corruption and baseness which we see in the worst of men, and the weakness and blemishes which we see in all men, come to it not from the soul itself, but from the body; for what matters it whence the infirmity originates in that which, if it were indeed immutable, could not, from any quarter whatever, be made infirm? For that which is truly immutable and incorruptible is not liable to mutation or corruption by any influence whatever from without, else the invulnerability which the fable ascribed to the flesh of Achilles would be nothing peculiar to him, but the property of every man, so long as no accident befell him. That which is liable to be changed in any manner, by any cause, or in any part whatever, is therefore not by nature immutable; but it were impiety to think of God as otherwise than truly and supremely immutable: therefore the soul is not a part of God. 4. That the soul is immaterial is a fact of which I avow myself to be fully persuaded, although men of slow understanding are hard to be convinced that it is so.

²⁵⁴ To secure myself, however, from either unnecessarily causing to others or unreasonably bringing upon myself a controversy about an expression, let me say that, since the thing itself is beyond question, it is needless to contend about mere terms. If matter be used as a term denoting everything which in any form has a separate existence, whether it be called an essence, or a substance, or by another name, the soul is material. Again, if you choose to apply the epithet immaterial only to that nature which is supremely immutable and is everywhere present in its entirety, the soul is material, for it is not at all endowed with such qualities. But if matter be used to designate

nothing but that which, whether at rest or in motion, has some length, breadth, and height, so that with a greater part of itself it occupies a greater part of space, and with a smaller part a smaller space, and is in every part of it less than the whole, then the soul is not material. For it pervades the whole body which it animates, not by a local distribution of parts, but by a certain vital influence, being at the same moment present in its entirety in all parts of the body, and not less in smaller parts and greater in larger parts, but here with more energy and there with less energy, it is in its entirety present both in the whole body and in every part of it.

²⁵⁵ For even that which the mind perceives in only a part of the body is nevertheless not otherwise perceived than by the whole mind; for when any part of the living flesh is touched by a fine pointed instrument, although the place affected is not only not the whole body, but scarcely discernible in its surface, the contact does not escape the entire mind, and yet the contact is felt not over the whole body, but only at the one point where it takes place. How comes it, then, that what takes place in only a part of the body is immediately known to the whole mind, unless the whole mind is present at that part, and at the same time not deserting all the other parts of the body in order to be present in its entirety at this one? For all the other parts of the body in which no such contact takes place are still living by the soul being present with them. And if a similar contact takes place in the other parts, and the contact occur in both parts simultaneously, it would in both cases alike be known at the same moment, to the whole mind.

²⁵⁶ Now this presence of the mind in all parts of the body at the same moment, so that in every part of the body the whole mind is at the same moment present, would be impossible if it were distributed over these parts in the same way as we see matter distributed in space, occupying less space with a smaller portion of itself, and greater space with a greater portion. If, therefore, mind is to be called material, it is not material in the same sense as earth, water, air, and ether are material. For all things composed of these elements are larger in larger places, or smaller in smaller places, and none of them is in its entirety present at any part of itself, but the dimensions of the material substances are according to the dimensions of the space occupied. Whence it is perceived that the soul, whether it be termed material or immaterial, has a certain nature of its own, created from a substance superior to the elements of this world, -- a substance which cannot be truly conceived of

by any representation of the material images perceived by the bodily senses, but which is apprehended by the understanding and discovered to our consciousness by its living energy.

²⁵⁷ These things I am stating, not with the view of teaching you what you already know, but in order that I may declare explicitly what I hold as indisputably certain concerning the soul, lest any one should think, when I come to state the questions to which I desire answers, that I hold none of the doctrines which we have learned from science or from revelation concerning the soul. 5. I am, moreover, fully persuaded that the soul has fallen into sin, not through the fault of God, nor through any necessity either in the divine nature or in its own, but by its own free will; and that it can be delivered from the body of this death neither by the strength of its own will, as if that were in itself sufficient to achieve ²⁵⁸ this, nor by the death of the body itself, but only by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ ;, and that there is not one soul in the human family to whose salvation the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, is not absolutely necessary. Every soul, moreover, which may at any age whatsoever depart from this life without the grace of the Mediator and the sacrament of this grace, departs to future punishment, and shall receive again its own body at the last judgment as a partner in punishment. But if the soul after its natural generation, which was derived from Adam, be regenerated in Christ, it belongs to His fellowship,² and shall not only have rest after the death of the body, but also receive again its own body as a partner in glory. These are truths concerning the soul which I hold most firmly. Chap. III. -- 6. Permit me now, therefore, to bring before you the question which I desire to have solved, and do not reject me; so may He not reject you who condescended to be rejected for our sakes! I ask where can the soul, even of an infant snatched away by death, have contracted the guilt which, unless the grace of Christ has come to the rescue by that sacrament of baptism which is administered even to infants, involves it in condemnation?

²⁵⁹ I know you are not one of those who have begun of late to utter certain new and absurd opinions, alleging that there is no guilt derived from Adam which is removed by baptism in the case of infants. If I knew that you held this view, or, rather, if I did not know that you reject it, I would certainly neither address this question to you, nor think that it ought to be put to you at all. Since, however, we hold on this subject the opinion consonant

with the immoveable Catholic faith, which you have yourself expressed when, refuting the absurd sayings of Jovinian, you have quoted this sentence from the book of Job: "In thy sight, no one is clean, not even the infant, whose time of life on earth is a single day,"³ adding, "for we are held guilty in the similitude of Adam's transgression,"⁴ an opinion which your book on Jonah's prophecy declares in a notable and lucid manner, where you affirm that the little children of Nineveh were justly compelled to fast along with the people, because merely of their original sin? it is not unsuitable that I should address to you the question where has the soul contracted the guilt from which, even at that age, it must be delivered by the sacrament of Christian grace? 7.

²⁶⁰ Some years ago, when I wrote certain books concerning Free Will, which have gone forth into the hands of many, and are now in the possession of very many readers, after referring to these four opinions as to the manner of the soul's incarnation, -- (1) that all other souls are derived from the one which was given to the first man; (2) that for each individual a new soul is made; (3) that souls already in existence somewhere are sent by divine act into the bodies; or (4) glide into them of their own accord, I thought that it was necessary to treat them in such a way that, whichever of them might be true, the decision should not hinder the object which I had in view when contending with all my might against those who attempt to lay upon God the blame of a nature endowed with its own principle of evil, namely, the Manichaeans;⁶ for at that time I had not heard of the Priscillianists, who utter blasphemies not very dissimilar to these.

²⁶¹ As to the fifth opinion, namely, that the soul is a part of God, -- an opinion which, in order to omit none, you have mentioned along with the rest in your letter to Marcellinus (a man of pious memory and very dear to us in the grace of Christ), who had consulted you on this question I did not add it to the others for two reasons, first, because, in examining this opinion, we discuss not the incarnation of the soul, but its nature; secondly, because this is the view held by those against whom I was arguing, and the main design of my argument was to prove that the blameless and inviolable nature of the Creator has nothing to do with the faults and blemishes of the creature, while they, on their part, maintained that the substance of the good God itself is, in so far as it is led captive, corrupted and oppressed and brought under a necessity of sinning by the substance of evil, to which they ascribe a

proper dominion and principalities. Leaving, therefore, out of the question this heretical error, I desire to know which of the other four opinions we ought to choose. For whichever of them may justly claim our preference, far be it from us to assail this article of :faith, about which we have no uncertainty, that l every soul, even the soul of an infant, requires to be delivered from the binding guilt of sin, and that there is no deliverance except through Jesus i Christ and Him crucified.

²⁶² CHAP. IV -- 8. To avoid prolixity, therefore, let me refer to the opinion which you, I believe, entertain, viz. that God even now makes each soul for each individual at the time of birth. To meet the objection to this view which might be taken from the fact that God finished the whole work of creation on the sixth day and rested on the seventh day, you quote the testimony of the ²⁶³ words in the gospel, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."¹ This you have written in your letter to Marcellinus, in which letter, moreover, you have most kindly condescended to mention my name, saying that he had me here in Africa, who could more easily explain to him the opinion held by you.² But had I been able to do this, he would not have applied for instruction to you, who were so remote from him, though perhaps he did not write from Africa to you. For I know not when he wrote it; I only know that he knew well my hesitation to embrace any definite view on this subject, for which reason he preferred to write to you without consulting me. Yet, even if he had consulted me, I would rather have encouraged him to write to you, and would have expressed my gratitude for the benefit which might have been conferred on us all, had you not preferred to send a brief note, instead of a full reply, doing this, I suppose, to save yourself from unnecessary expenditure of effort in a place where I, whom you supposed to be thoroughly acquainted with the subject of his inquiries, was at hand. Behold, I am willing that the opinion which you hold should be also mine; but I assure you that as yet I have not embraced it. 9. You have sent to me scholars, to whom you wish me to impart what I have not yet learned myself. Teach me, therefore, what I am to teach them;

²⁶⁴ for many urge me vehemently to be a teacher on this subject, and to them I confess that of this, as well as of many other things, I am ignorant, and perhaps, though they maintain a respectful demeanour in my presence, they say among themselves: "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?"³ a rebuke which the Lord gave to one who belonged to the

class of men who delighted in being called Rabbi; which was also the reason of his coming by night to the true Teacher, because perchance he, who had been accustomed to teach, blushed to take the learner's place. But, for my own part, it gives me much more pleasure to hear instruction from another, than to be myself listened to as a teacher. For I remember what He said to those whom, above all men, He had chosen: "But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ."⁴ Nor was it any other teacher who taught Moses by Jethro,⁵ Cornelius by Peter the earlier apostle,⁶ and Peter himself by Paul the later apostle;⁷ for by whomsoever truth is spoken, it is spoken by the gift of Him who is the Truth. What if the reason of our still being ignorant of these things, and of our having failed to discover them, even after praying, reading, thinking, and reasoning, be this:

²⁶⁵ that full proof may be made not only of the love with which we give instruction to the ignorant, but also of the humility with which we receive instruction from the learned? 10. Teach me, therefore, I beseech you, what I may teach to others; teach me what I ought to hold as my own opinion; and tell me this: if souls are from day to day made for each individual separately at birth, where, in the case of infant children, is sin committed by these souls, so that they require the remission of sin in the sacrament of Christ, because of sinning in Adam from whom the sinful flesh has been derived? or if they do not sin, how is it compatible with the justice of the Creator, that, because of their being united to mortal members derived from another, they are so brought under the bond of the sin of that other, that unless they be rescued by the Church, perdition overtakes them, although it is not in their own power to secure that they be rescued by the grace of baptism?

²⁶⁶ Where, therefore, is the justice of the condemnation of so many thousands of souls, which in the deaths of infant children leave this world without the benefit of the Christian sacrament, if being newly created they have, not through any preceding sin of their own, but by the will of the Creator, become severally united to the individual bodies to animate which they were created and bestowed by Him, who certainly knew that every one of them was destined, not through any fault of its own, to leave the body without receiving the baptism of Christ? Seeing, therefore, that we may riot say concerning God either that He compels them to become sinners, or that He punishes innocent souls and seeing that, on the other hand, it is not lawful for us to deny that nothing else than perdition is the doom of the souls,

even of little children, which have departed from the body without the sacrament of Christ, tell me, I implore you, where anything can be found to support the opinion that souls are not all derived from that one soul of the first man, but are each created separately for each individual, as Adam's soul was made for him. CHAP. V. -- 11. As for some other objections which are advanced against this opinion, I think that I could easily dispose of them.

²⁶⁷ For example, some think that they urge a conclusive argument against this opinion when they ask, how God finished all His works on the sixth day and rested on the seventh day,⁸ if He is still creating new souls. If we meet them with the quotation from the gospel (given by you in ²⁶⁸ the letter to Marcellinus already mentioned), "My Father worketh hitherto," they answer that He "worketh" in maintaining those natures which He has created, not in creating new natures; otherwise, this statement would contradict the words of Scripture in Genesis, where it is most plainly declared that God finished all His works. Moreover, the words of Scripture, that He rested, are unquestionably to be understood of His resting from creating new creatures not from governing those which He had created for at that time He made things which previously did not exist, and from making these He rested because He had finished all the creatures which before they existed He saw necessary to be created, so that thenceforward He did not create and make things which previously did not exist, but made and fashioned out of things already existing whatever He did make. Thus the statements, "He rested from His works," and, "He worketh hitherto," are both true, for the gospel could not contradict Genesis. 12.

²⁶⁹ When, however, these things are brought forward by persons who advance them as conclusive against the opinion that God now creates new souls as He created the soul of the first man, and who hold either that He forms them from that one soul which existed before He rested from creation, or that He now sends them forth into bodies from some reservoir or storehouse of souls which He then created, it is easy to turn aside their argument by answering, that even in the six days God formed many things out of those natures which He had already created, as, for example, the birds and fishes were formed from the waters, and the trees, the grass, and the animals from the earth, and yet it is undeniable that He was then making things which did not exist before. For there existed previously no bird, no fish, no tree, no animal, and it is clearly understood that He rested from creating those

things which previously were not, and were then created, that is to say, He ceased in this sense, that, after that, nothing was made by Him which did not already exist.

²⁷⁰ But if, rejecting the opinions of all who believe either that God sends forth into men souls existing already in some incomprehensible reservoir, or that He makes souls emanate like drops of dew from Himself as particles of His own substance, or that He brings them forth from that one soul of the first man, or that He binds them in the fetters of the bodily members because of sins committed in a prior state of existence, if, I say, rejecting these, we affirm that for each individual He creates separately a new soul when he is born, we do not herein affirm that He makes anything which He had not already made. For He had already made man after His own image on the sixth day; and this work of His is unquestionably to be understood with reference to the rational soul of man. The same work He still does, not in creating what did not exist, but in multiplying what already existed. Wherefore it is true, on the one hand, that He rested from creating things which previously did not exist, and equally true, on the other hand, that He continues still to work, not only in governing what He has made, but also in making (not anything which did not previously exist, but) a larger number of those creatures which He had already made.

²⁷¹ Wherefore, either by such an explanation, or by any other which may seem better, we escape from the objection advanced by those who would make the fact that God rested from His works a conclusive argument against our believing that new souls are still being daily created, not from the first soul, but in the same manner as it was made. 13. Again, as for another objection, stated in the question, "Wherefore does He create souls for those whom He knows to be destined to an early death? we may reply, that by the death of the children the sins of the parents are either reprov'd or chastised. We may, moreover, with all propriety, leave these things to the disposal of the Lord of all, for we know that He appoints to the succession of events in time, and therefore to the births and deaths of living creatures as included in these, a course which is consummate in beauty and perfect in the arrangement of all its parts; whereas we are not capable of perceiving those things by the perception of which, if it were attainable, we should be soothed with an ineffable, tranquil joy. For not in vain has the prophet, taught by divine inspiration, declared concerning God, "He bringeth forth in measured harmonies the

course of time."1 For which reason music, the science or capacity of i correct harmony, has been given also by the kindness of God to mortals having reasonable souls, with a view to keep them in mind of this great truth.

272 For if a man, when composing a song which is to suit a particular melody, knows how to distribute the length of time allowed to each word so as to make the song flow and pass on in most beautiful adaptation to the ever changeling notes of the melody, how much more shall God, whose wisdom is to be esteemed as infinitely transcending human arts, make infallible provision that not one of the spaces of time allotted to natures that are born and die -- spaces which are like the words and syllables of the successive epochs of the course of time -- shall have, in what we may call the sublime psalm of the vicissitudes of this world, a duration either more brief or more protracted than the fore- 273 known and predetermined harmony requires! For when I may speak thus with reference even to the leaves of every tree, and the number of the hairs upon our heads, how much more may I say it regarding the birth and death of men, seeing that every man's life on earth continues for a time, which is neither longer nor shorter than God knows to be in harmony with the plan according to which He rules the universe. 14. As to the assertion that everything which has begun to exist in time is incapable of immortality, because all things which are born die, and all things which have grown decay through age, and the opinion which they affirm to follow necessarily from this, viz. that the soul of man must owe its immortality to its having been created before time began, this does not disturb my faith; for, passing over other examples, which conclusively dispose of this assertion, I need only refer to the body of Christ, which now "death no more; death shall have no more dominion over it."1 15.

274 Moreover, as to your remark in your book against Ruffinus, that some bring forward as against this opinion that souls are created for each individual separately at birth the objection that it seems worthy of God that He should give souls to the offspring of adulterers, and who accordingly attempt to build on this a theory that souls may possibly be incarcerated, as it were, in such bodies, to suffer for the deeds of a life spent in some prior state of being, 2 -- this objection does not disturb me, as many things by which it may be answered occur to me when I consider it. The answer which you yourself have given, saying, that in the case of stolen wheat, there is no fault in the grain, but only in him who stole it, and that the earth is not under oblige-

tion to refuse to cherish the seed because the sower may have cast it in with a hand defiled by dishonesty, is a most felicitous illustration. But even before I had read it, I felt that to me the objection drawn from the offspring of adulterers caused no serious difficulty when I took a general view of the fact that God brings many good things to light, even out of our evils and our sins. Now, the creation of any living creature compels ever), one who considers it with piety and wisdom to give to the Creator praise which words cannot express;

²⁷⁵ and if this praise is called forth by the creation of any living creature whatsoever, how much more is it called forth by the creation of a man! If, therefore, the cause of any act of creative power be sought for, no shorter or better reply can be given than that every creature of God is good. And [so far from such an act being unworthy of God] what is more worthy of Him than that He, being good, should make those good things which, no one else than God alone can make? CHAP. VI. -- 16. These things, and others which I can advance, I am accustomed to state, as well as I can, against those who attempt to overthrow by such objections the opinion that souls are made for each individual, as the first man's soul was made for him. But when we come to the penal sufferings of infants, I am embarrassed, believe me, by great difficulties, and am wholly at a loss to find an answer by which they are solved; and I speak here not only of those punishments in the life to come, which are involved in that perdition to which they must be drawn down if they depart from the body without the sacrament of Christian grace, but also of the sufferings which are to our sorrow endured by them before our eyes in this present life, and which are so various, that time rather than examples would fail me if I were to attempt to enumerate them.

²⁷⁶ They are liable to wasting disease, to racking pain, to the agonies of thirst and hunger, to feebleness of limbs, to privation of bodily senses, and to vexing assaults of unclean spirits. Surely it is incumbent on us to show how it is compatible with justice that infants suffer all these things without any evil of their own as the procuring cause. For it would be impious to say, either that these things take place without God's knowledge, or that He cannot resist those who cause them, or that He unrighteously does these things, or permits them to be done. We are warranted in saying that irrational animals are given by God to serve creatures possessing a higher nature, even though they be wicked, as we see most plainly in the gospel that the swine of the

Gadarenes were given to the legion of devils at their request; but could we ever be warranted in saying this of men? Certainly not. Man is, indeed, an animal, but an animal endowed with reason, though mortal. In his members dwells a reasonable soul, which in these severe afflictions is enduring a penalty. Now God is good, God is just, God is omnipotent -- none but a mad-man would doubt that he is so; let the great sufferings, therefore, which infant children experience be accounted for by some reason compatible with justice.

²⁷⁷ When older people suffer such trials, we are accustomed, certainly, to say, either that their worth is being proved, as in Job's case, or that their wickedness is being punished, as in Herod's; and from some examples, which it has pleased God to make perfectly clear, men are enabled to conjecture the nature of others which are more obscure; but this is in regard to persons of mature age. Tell me, therefore, what we must answer in regard to infant children; is it true that, although they ⁵²⁹ ²⁷⁸ suffer so great punishments, there are no sins in them deserving to be punished? for, of course, there is not in them at that age any righteousness requiring to be put to the proof. 17. What shall I say, moreover, as to the [difficulty which besets the theory of the creation of each soul separately at the birth of the individual in connection with the] diversity of talent in different souls, and especially the absolute privation of reason in some? This is, indeed, not apparent in the first stages of infancy, but being developed continuously from the beginning of life, it becomes manifest in children, of whom some are so slow and defective in memory that they cannot learn even the letters of the alphabet, and some (commonly called idiots) so imbecile that they differ very little, from the beasts of the field. Perhaps I am told, in answer to this, that the bodies are the cause of these imperfections. But surely the opinion which we wish to see vindicated from objection does not require us to affirm that the soul chose for itself the body which so impairs it, and, being deceived in the choice, committed a blunder;

²⁷⁹ or that the soul, when it was compelled, as a necessary consequence of being born, to enter into some body, was hindered from finding another by crowds of souls occupying the other bodies before it came, so that, like a man who takes whatever seat may remain vacant for him in a theatre, the soul was guided in taking possession of the imperfect body not by its choice, but by its circumstances. We, of course, cannot say and ought not to believe

such things. Tell us, therefore, what we ought to believe and to say in order to vindicate from this difficulty the theory that for each individual body a new soul is specially created. CHAP. VII. -- 18. In my books on Free Will, already referred to, I have said something, not I in regard to the variety of capacities in different souls, but, at least, in regard to the pains which I infant children suffer in this life. The nature of the opinion which I there expressed, and the reason why it is insufficient for the purposes of our present inquiry, I will now submit to you, and will put into this letter a copy of the passage in the third book to which I refer.

²⁸⁰ It is as follows: -- "In connection with the bodily sufferings experienced by the little children who, by reason of their tender age, have no sins -- if the souls which animate them did not exist before they were born into the human family -- a more grievous and, as it were, compassionate complaint is very commonly made in the remark, 'What evil have they done that they should suffer these things?' as if there could be a meritorious innocence in any one before the time at which it is possible for him to do anything wrong I Moreover, if God accomplishes, in any measure, the correction of the parents when they are chastised by the sufferings or by the death of the children that are dear to them, is there any reason why these things should not take place, seeing that, after they are passed, they will be, to those who experienced them, as if they had never been, while the persons on whose account they were inflicted will either become better, being moved by the rod of temporal afflictions to choose a better mode of life, or be left without excuse under the punishment awarded at the coming judgment, if, notwithstanding the sorrows of this life, they have refused to turn their desires towards eternal life? Moreover, who knows what may be given to the little children by means of whose sufferings the parents have their obdurate hearts subdued, or their faith exercised, or their compassion proved?

²⁸¹ Who knows what good recompense God may, in the secret of his judgments, reserve for these little ones? For although they have done no righteous action, nevertheless, being free from any transgression of their own, they have suffered these trials. It is certainly not without reason that the Church exalts to the honourable rank of martyrs those children who were slain when Herod sought our Lord Jesus Christ to put Him to death."1 19. These things I wrote at that time when I was endeavouring to defend the opinion which is now under discussion. For, as I mentioned shortly before, I

was labouring to prove that whichever of these four opinions regarding the soul's incarnation may be found true, the substance of the Creator is absolutely free from blame, and is completely removed from all share in our sins. And, therefore, whichever of these opinions might come to be established or demolished by the truth, this had no bearing off the object aimed at in the work which I was then attempting, seeing that whichever opinion might win the victory over all the rest, after they had been examined in a more thorough discussion, this would take place without causing me any disquietude, because my object then was to prove that, even admitting all these opinions, the doctrine maintained by me remained unshaken. But now my object is, by the force of sound reasoning, to select, if possible, one opinion out of the four;

282 and, therefore, when I carefully consider the words now quoted from that book, I do not see that the arguments there used in defending the opinion which we are now discussing are valid and conclusive. 20. For what may be called the chief prop of my defence is in the sentence, "Moreover, who knows what may be given to the little children, by means of whose sufferings the parents have 283 their obdurate hearts subdued, or their faith exercised, or their compassion proved? Who knows what good recompense God may, in the secret of His judgments, reserve for these little ones? I see that this is not an unwarranted conjecture in the case of infants who, in any way, suffer (though they know it not) for the sake of Christ and in the cause of true religion, and of infants who have already been made partakers of the sacrament of Christ; because, apart from union to the one Mediator, they cannot be delivered from condemnation, and so put in a position in which it is even possible that a recompense could be made to them for the evils which, in diverse afflictions, they have endured in this world. But since the question cannot be fully solved, unless the answer include also the case of those who, without having received the sacrament of Christian fellowship, die in infancy after enduring the most painful sufferings, what recompense can be conceived of in their case, seeing that, besides all that they suffer in this life, perdition awaits them in the life to come? As to the baptism of infants, I have, in the same book, given an answer, not, indeed, fully, but so far as seemed necessary for the work which then occupied me, proving that it profits children, even though they do not know what it is, and have, as yet, no faith of their own;

²⁸⁴ but on the subject of the perdition of those infants who depart from this life without baptism, I did not think it necessary to say anything then, because the question under discussion was different from that with which we are now engaged. 21. If, however, we pass over and make no account of those sufferings which are of brief continuance, and which, when endured, are not to be repeated, we certainly cannot, in like manner, make no account of the fact that "by one man death came, and by one man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."¹ For, according to this apostolical, divine, and perspicuous declaration, it is sufficiently plain that no one goes to death otherwise than through Adam, and that no one goes to life eternal otherwise; than through Christ. For this is the force of all in the two parts of the sentence; as all men, by their first, that is, their natural birth, belong to Adam, even so all men, whoever they be, who come to Christ come to the second, that is, the spiritual birth. For this reason, therefore, the word all is used in both clauses, because as all who die do not die otherwise than in Adam, so all who shall be made alive shall not be made alive otherwise than in Christ.

²⁸⁵ Wherefore whosoever tells us that any man can be made alive in the resurrection of the dead otherwise than in Christ, he is to be detested as a pestilent enemy to the common faith. Likewise, whosoever says that those children who depart out of this life without partaking of that sacrament shall be made alive in Christ, certainly contradicts the apostolic declaration, and condemns the universal Church, in which it is the practice to lose i no time and run in haste to administer baptism to infant children, because it is believed, as an i indubitable truth, that otherwise they cannot be made alive in Christ. Now he that is not made alive in Christ must necessarily remain under the condemnation, of which the apostle says, that "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation."² That infants are born under the guilt of this offence is believed by the whole Church. It is also a doctrine which you have most faithfully set forth, both in your treatise against Jovinian and your exposition of Jonah, as I mentioned above, and, if I am not mistaken, in other parts of your works which I have not read or have at present forgotten. I therefore ask, what is the ground of this condemnation of unbaptized infants?

²⁸⁶ For if new souls are made for men, individually, at their birth, I do not see, on the one hand, that they could have any sin while yet in infancy,

nor do I believe, on the other hand, that God condemns any soul which He sees to have no sin. CHAP. VIII. -- 22. Are we perchance to say, in answer to this, that in the infant the body alone is the cause of sin; but that for each body a new soul is made, and that if this soul live according to the precepts of God, by the help of the grace of Christ, the reward of being made incorruptible may be secured for the body itself, when subdued and kept under the yoke; and that inasmuch as the soul of an infant cannot yet do this, unless it receive the sacrament of Christ, that which could not yet be obtained for the body by the holiness of the soul is obtained for it by the grace of this sacrament; but if the soul of an infant depart without the sacrament, it shall itself dwell in life eternal, from which it could not be separated, as it had no sin, while, however, the body which it occupied shall not rise again in Christ, because the sacrament had not been received before its death? 23. This opinion I have never heard or read anywhere.

²⁸⁷ I have, however, certainly heard and believed the statement which led me to speak thus, namely, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life," -- the resurrection, namely, of which it is said that "by one man came the resurrection of the dead," and in which "all shall be made alive in Christ," -- "and they ²⁸⁸ that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."¹ Now, what is to be understood regarding infants which, before they could do good or evil, have quitted the body without baptism? Nothing is said here concerning them. But if the bodies of these infants shall not rise again, because they, have never done either good or evil, the bodies of the infants that have died after receiving the grace of baptism shall also: have no resurrection, because they also were not: in this life able to do good or evil. If, however,. these are to rise among the saints, i.e. among: those who have done good, among whom shall the others rise again but among those who have done evil -- unless we are to believe that some human souls shall not receive, either in the resurrection of life, or in the resurrection of damnation, the bodies which they lost in death? This opinion, however, is condemned, even before it is formally refuted, by its absolute novelty; and besides this, who could bear to think that those who run with their infant children to have them baptized, are prompted to do so by a regard for their bodies, not for their souls?

²⁸⁹ The blessed Cyprian, indeed, said, in order to correct those who thought that an infant should not be baptized before the eighth day, that it was not the body but the soul which behoved to be saved from perdition -- in which statement he was not inventing any new doctrine, but preserving the firmly established faith of the Church; and he, along with some of his colleagues in the episcopal office, held that a child may be properly baptized immediately after its birth.²⁴ Let every man, however, believe anything which commends itself to his own judgment, even though it run counter to some opinion of Cyprian, who may not have seen in the matter! what should have been seen. But let no man believe anything which runs counter to the perfectly unambiguous apostolical declaration, that by the offence of one all are brought into condemnation, and that from this condemnation nothing sets men free but the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone life is given to all who are made alive. And let no man believe anything which runs counter to the firmly grounded practice of the Church, in which, if the sole reason for hastening the administration of baptism were to save the children, the dead as well as the living would be brought to be baptized. 25. These things being so, it is necessary still to investigate and to make known the reason!

²⁹⁰ why, if souls are created new for every individual at his birth, those who die in infancy without the sacrament of Christ are doomed to perdition; for that they are doomed to this if they so depart from the body is testified both by Holy Scripture and by the holy Church. Wherefore, as to that opinion of yours concerning the creation of new souls, if it does not contradict this firmly grounded article of faith, let it be mine also; but if it does, let it be no longer yours. 26. Let it not be said to me that we ought to receive as supporting this opinion the words of Scripture in Zechariah, "He formeth the spirit of man within him,"³ and in the book of Psalms, "He formeth their hearts severally."⁴ We must seek for the strongest and most indisputable proof, that we may not be compelled to believe that God is a judge who condemns any soul which has no fault. For to create signifies either as much or, probably, more than to form [fingere]; nevertheless it is written, "Create in me a clean heart, O God,"⁵ and yet it cannot be supposed that a soul here expresses a desire to be made before it has begun to exist. Therefore, as it is a soul already existing which is created by being renewed in righteousness, so it is a soul already existing which is formed by the moulding power of doctrine.

²⁹¹Nor is),our opinion, which I would willingly make my own, supported by that sentence in Ecclesiastes, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it."6 Nay, it rather favours those who think that all souls are derived from one; for they say that, as the dust returns to the earth as it was, and yet the body of which this is said returns not to the man from whom it was derived, but to the earth from which the first man was made, the spirit in like manner, though derived from the spirit of the first man, does not return to him but to the Lord, by whom it was given to our first parent. Since, however, the testimony of this passage in their favour is not so decisive as to make it appear altogether opposed to the opinion which shall gladly see vindicated, I thought proper to submit these remarks on it to your judgment, to prevent you from endeavouring to deliver me from my perplexities by quoting passages such as these. For although no man's wishes can make that true which is not true, nevertheless, were this possible, I would wish that this opinion should be true, as I do wish that, if it is true, it should be most clearly and unanswerably vindicated by you. CHAP. IX. -- 27.

²⁹²The same difficulty attends those also who hold that souls already existing elsewhere, and prepared from the beginning of the works of God, are sent by Him into bodies. For to these persons also the same question may ²⁹³be put: If these souls, being without any fault, go obediently to the bodies to which they are sent, why are they subjected to punishment in the case of infants, if they come without being baptized to the end of this life ? The same difficulty unquestionably attaches to both opinions. Those who affirm that each soul is, according to the deserts of its actions in an earlier state of being, united to the body allotted to it in this life, imagine that they escape more easily from this difficulty. For they think that to "die in Adam" means to suffer punishment in that flesh which is derived from Adam, from which condition of guilt the grace of Christ, they say, delivers the young as well as the old. So far, indeed, they teach what is right, and true, and excellent, when they say that the grace of Christ delivers the young as well as the old from the guilt of sins. But that souls sin in another earlier life, and that for their sins in that state of being they are cast down into bodies as prisons, I do not believe: I reject and protest against such an opinion.

²⁹⁴I do this, in the first place, because they affirm that this is accomplished by means of some incomprehensible revolutions, so that after I know

not how many cycles the soul must return again to the same burden of corruptible flesh and to the endurance of punishment, -- than which opinion I do not know that anything more horrible could be conceived. In the next place, who is the righteous man gone from the earth about whom we should not (if what they say is true) feel afraid lest, sinning in Abraham's bosom, he should be cast down into the flames which tormented the rich man in the parable?1 For why may the soul not sin after leaving the body, if it can sin before entering it? Finally, to have sinned in Adam (in regard to which the apostle says that in him all have sinned) is one thing, but it is a wholly different thing to have sinned, I know not where, outside of Adam, and then because of this to be thrust into Adam -- that is, into the body, which is derived from Adam, as into a prison-house. As to the other opinion mentioned above, that all souls are derived from one, I will not begin to discuss it unless I am under necessity to do so; and my desire is, that if the opinion which we are now discussing is true, it may be so vindicated by you that there shall be no longer any necessity for examining the other. 28.

295 Although, however, I desire and ask, and with fervent prayers wish and hope, that by you the Lord may remove my ignorance on this subject, if, after all, I am found unworthy to obtain this, I will beg the grace of patience from the Lord our God, in whom we have such faith, that even if there be some things which He does not open to us when we knock, we know it would be wrong to murmur in the least against Him. remember what He said to the apostles themselves: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."2 Among these things, so far at least as I am concerned, let me still reckon this, and let me guard against being angry that I am deemed unworthy to possess this knowledge, lest by such anger I be all the more clearly proved to be unworthy. I am equally ignorant of many other things, yea, of more than I could name or even number; and of this I would be more patiently ignorant, were it not that I fear lest some one of these opinions, involving the contradiction of truth which we most assuredly believe, should insinuate itself into the minds of the unwary.

296 Meanwhile, though I do not yet know which of these opinions is to be preferred, this one thing I profess as my deliberate conviction, that the opinion which is true does not conflict with that most firm and well grounded article in the faith of the Church of Christ, that infant children, even when

they are newly born, can be delivered from perdition in no other way than through the grace of Christ's name, which He has given in His sacraments.

LETTER 167. AD 415

²⁹⁷(A.D. 415.) from Augustin to Jerome on James II. 10. Chap. I. -- I. My brother Jerome, esteemed worthy to be honoured in Christ by me, when I wrote to you propounding this question concerning the human soul, -- if a new soul be now created for each individual at birth, whence do souls contract the bond of guilt which we assuredly believe to be removed by the sacrament of the grace of Christ, when administered even to new-born children? -- as the letter on that subject grew to the size of a considerable volume, I was unwilling to impose the burden of any other question at that time; but there is a subject which has a much stronger claim on my attention, as it presses more seriously on my mind. I therefore ask you, and in God's name beseech you, to do something which will, I believe, be of great service to many, namely, to explain to me (or to direct me to any work in which you or any other commentator has already expounded) the sense in which we are to understand these words in the Epistle of James, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."³ This subject is of such importance that I very greatly

²⁹⁸regret that I did not write to you in regard to it long ago. 2. For whereas in the question which I thought it necessary to submit to you concerning the soul, our inquiries were engaged with the investigation of a life wholly past and sunk out of sight in oblivion, in this question we study this present life, and how it must be spent if we would attain to eternal life. As an apt illustration of this remark let me quote an entertaining anecdote. A man had fallen into a well where the quantity of water was sufficient to break his fall and save him from death, but not deep enough to cover his mouth and deprive him of speech. Another man approached, and on seeing him cries out in surprise: "How did you fall in here? He answers: "I beseech you to plan how you can get me out of this, rather than ask how I fell in. So, since we admit and hold as an article of the Catholic faith, that the soul of even a little infant requires to be delivered out of the guilt of sin, as out of a pit, by the grace of Christ, it is sufficient for the soul of such a one that we know the way in which it is saved, even though we should never know the way in which it came into that wretched condition.

299 But I thought it our duty to inquire into this subject, lest we should incautiously hold any one of those opinions concerning the manner of the soul's becoming united with the body which might contradict the doctrine that the souls of little children require to be delivered, by denying that they are subject to the bond of guilt. This, then, being very firmly held by us, that the soul of every infant needs to be freed from the guilt of sin, and can be freed in no other way except by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, if we can ascertain the cause and origin of the evil itself, we are better prepared and equipped for resisting adversaries whose empty talk I call not reasoning but quibbling; if, however, we cannot ascertain the cause, the fact that the origin of, this misery is hid from us is no reason for our being slothful in the work which compassion demands from us. In our conflict, however, with those who appear to themselves to know what they do not know, we have an additional strength and safety in not being ignorant of our ignorance on this subject. For there are some things which it is evil not to know; there are other things which cannot be known, or are not necessary to be known, or have no bearing on the life which we seek to obtain;

300 but the question which I now submit to you from the writings of the Apostle James is intimately connected with the course of conduct in which we live, and in which, with a view to life eternal, we endeavour to please God. 3. How, then, I beseech you, are we to understand the words: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all"? Does this affirm that the person who shall have committed theft, nay, who even shall have said to the rich man, "Sit thou here" and to the poor man, "Stand thou there," is guilty of homicide, and adultery, and sacrilege? And if he is not so, how can it be said that a person who has offended in one point has become guilty of all? Or are the things which the apostle said concerning the rich man and the poor man not to be reckoned among those things in one of which if any man offend he becomes guilty of all? But we must remember whence I that sentence is taken, and what goes before it, and in what connection it occurs. "My brethren," he says, "have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons. For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

301 and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or

sit here under my footstool; are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him? But ye have despised the poor,"¹ -- inasmuch as you have said to the poor man, "Stand thou there," when you would have said to a man with a gold ring, "Sit thou here in a good place. And then there follows a passage explaining and enlarging upon that same conclusion: "Do not rich men oppress you by their power, and draw you before the judgment-seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. See how the apostle calls those transgressors of the law who say to the rich man, "Sit here," and to the poor, "Stand there. See how, lest they should think it a trifling sin to transgress the law in this one thing, he goes on to add:

³⁰² "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty Of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou do not kill, yet, if thou commit adultery, thou art become a transgressor of the law," according to that which he had said: "Ye are convinced of the law as transgressors. Since these things are so, it seems to follow, unless it can be shown that we are to understand it in some other way, ³⁰³ that he who says to the rich man, "Sit here," and to the poor, "Stand there," not treating the one with the same respect as the other, is to be judged guilty as an idolater, and a blasphemer, and an adulterer, and a murderer -- in short, -- not to enumerate all, which would be tedious, -- as guilty of all crimes, since, offending in one, he is guilty), of all. CHAP. II. -- 4. But has he who has one virtue all virtues? and has he no virtues who lacks one? If this be true, the sentence of the apostle is thereby confirmed. But what I desire is to have the sentence explained, not confirmed, since of itself it stands more sure in our esteem than all the authority of philosophers could make it. And even if what has just been said concerning virtues and vices were true, it would not follow that therefore all sins are equal. For as to the inseparable co-existence of the virtues, this is a doctrine in regard to which, if I remember rightly, what, indeed, I have almost forgotten (though perhaps I am mistaken), all philosophers who affirm that virtues are essential to the right conduct of life are agreed. The doctrine of the equality of sins,

however, the Stoics alone dared to maintain in opposition to the unanimous sentiments of mankind:

³⁰⁴an absurd tenet, which in writing against Jovinianus (a Stoic in this opinion, but an Epicurean in following after and defending pleasure) you have most clearly refuted from the Holy Scriptures.¹ In that most delightful and noble dissertation you have made it abundantly plain that it has not been the doctrine of our authors, or rather of the Truth Himself, who has spoken through them, that all sins are equal. I shall now do my utmost in endeavouring, with the help of God, to show how it can be that, although the doctrine of philosophers concerning virtues is true, we are nevertheless not compelled to admit the Stoics' doctrine that all sins are equal. If I succeed, I will look for your approbation, and in whatever respect I come short, I beg you to supply my deficiencies. 5. Those who maintain that he who has one virtue has all, and that he who lacks one lacks] all, reason correctly from the fact that prudence cannot be cowardly, nor unjust, nor intemperate; for if it were any of these it would no longer be prudence. Moreover, if it be prudence only when it is brave, and just, and temperate, assuredly wherever it exists it must have the other virtues along with it. In like manner, also, courage cannot be imprudent, or intemperate, or unjust; temperance must of necessity be prudent, brave, and just; and justice does not exist unless it be prudent, brave, and temperate. Thus, wherever any one of these virtues truly exists, the others likewise exist;

³⁰⁵and where some are absent, that which may appear in some measure to resemble virtue is not really present. 6. There are, as you know, some vices opposed to virtues by a palpable contrast, as imprudence is the opposite of prudence. But there are some vices opposed to virtues simply because they are vices which, nevertheless, by a deceitful appearance resemble virtues; as, for example, in the relation, not of imprudence, but of craftiness to the said virtue of prudence. I speak here of that craftiness ² which is wont to be understood and spoken of in connection with the evilly disposed, not in the sense in which the word is usually employed in our Scriptures, where it is often used in a good sense, as, "Be crafty as serpents,"³ and again, to give craftiness to the simple."⁴ It is true that among heathen writers one of the most accomplished of Latin authors, speaking of Catiline, has said: "Nor was there lacking on his part craftiness to guard against danger,"⁵ using "craftiness" (*astutia*) in a good sense; but the use of the word in this sense is among

them very rare, among us very common. So also in regard to the virtues classed under temperance. Extravagance is most manifestly opposite to the virtue of frugality; but that which the common people are wont to call niggardliness is indeed a vice, yet one which, not in its nature, but by a very deceitful similarity of appearance, usurps the name of frugality.

³⁰⁶ In the same manner injustice is by , a palpable contrast opposed to justice; but the desire of avenging oneself is wont often to be a counterfeit of justice, but it is a vice. There is an obvious contrariety between courage and cowardice; but hardihood, though differing from courage in nature, deceives us by its resemblance to that virtue. Firmness is a part of virtue; fickleness is a vice far removed from and undoubtedly opposed to it; but obstinacy lays claim to the name of firmness, yet is wholly different, because firmness is a virtue, and obstinacy is a vice. 7. To avoid the necessity of again going over the same ground, let us take one case as an example, from which all others may be understood. Catiline, as those who have written concerning him had means of knowing, was capable of enduring cold, thirst, hunger, and patient in fastings, cold, and watchings beyond what any one could believe, and thus he appeared, both to himself and to his followers, a man endowed , with great courage.⁶ But this courage was not prudent, for he chose the evil instead of the

³⁰⁷ good; was not temperate, for his life was disgraced by the lowest dissipation; was not just, for he conspired against his country; and therefore it was not courage, but hardihood usurping the name of courage to deceive fools; for if it had been courage, it would not have been a vice but a virtue, and if it had been a virtue, it would never have been abandoned by the other virtues, its inseparable companions. 8. On this account, when it is asked also concerning vices, whether where one exists all in like manner exist, or where one does not exist none exist, it would be a difficult matter to show this, because two vices are wont to be opposed to one virtue, one that is evidently opposed, and another that bears an apparent likeness. Hence the hardihood of Catiline is the more easily seen not to have been courage, since it had not along with it other virtues; but it may be difficult to convince men that his hardihood was cowardice, since he was in the habit of enduring and patiently submitting to the severest hardships to a degree almost incredible. But perhaps, on examining the matter more closely, this hardihood itself is

seen to be cowardice, because he shrunk from the toil of those liberal studies by which true courage is acquired.

³⁰⁸ Nevertheless, as there are rash men who are not guilty of cowardice, and there are cowardly men who are not guilty of rashness, and since in both there is vice, for the truly brave man neither ventures rashly nor fears without reason, we are forced to admit that vices are more numerous than virtues. 9. Accordingly, it happens sometimes that one vice is supplanted by another, as the love of money by the love of praise. Occasionally, one vice quits the field that more may take its place, as in the case of the drunkard, who, after becoming temperate in the use of drink, may come under the power of niggardliness and ambition. It is possible, therefore, that vices may give place to vices, not to virtues, as their successors, and thus they are more numerous. When one virtue, however, has entered, there will infallibly be (since it brings all the other virtues along with it) a retreat of all vices whatsoever that were in the man; for all vices were not in him, but at one time so many, at another a greater or smaller number might occupy their place. CHAP. III. -- 10. We must inquire more carefully whether these things are so; for the statement that "he who has one virtue has all, and that all virtues are awaiting to him who lacks one," is not given by inspiration, but is the view held by many men, ingenious, indeed, and studious, but still men.

³⁰⁹ But I must avow that, in the case -- I shall not say of one of those from whose name the word virtue is said to be derived,¹ but even of a woman who is faithful to her husband, and who is so from a regard to the commandments and promises of God, and, first of all, is faithful to Him, I do not know how I could say of her that she is unchaste, or that chastity is no virtue or a trifling one. I should feel the same in regard to a husband who is faithful to his wife; and yet there are many such, none of whom I could affirm to be without any sins, and doubtless the sin which is in them, whatever it be, proceeds from some Vice. Whence it follows that though conjugal fidelity in religious men and women is undoubtedly a virtue, for it is neither a nonentity nor a vice, yet it does not bring along with it all virtues, for if all virtues were there, there would be no vice, and if there were no vice, there would be no sin; but where is the man who is altogether without sin?

³¹⁰ Where, therefore, is the man who is without any vice, that is, fuel or root, as it were, of sin, when he who reclined on the breast of the Lord says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in

us"?² It is not necessary for us to urge this at greater length in writing to you, but I make the statement for the sake of others who perhaps shall read this. For you, indeed, in that same splendid work against Jovinianus, have carefully proved this from the Holy Scriptures; in which work also you have quoted the words, "in many things we all offend,"³ from this very epistle in which occur the words whose meaning we are now investigating. For though it is an apostle of Christ who is speaking, he does not say, "ye offend," but, "we offend; and although in the passage under consideration he says, "Who-soever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," ⁴ in the words just quoted he affirms that we offend not in one i thing but in many, and not that some offend but that we all offend. 11.

³¹¹ Far be it, however, from any believer to think that so many thousands of the servants of Christ, who, lest they should deceive themselves, and the truth should not be in them, sincerely confess themselves to have sin, are altogether without virtues. For wisdom is a great virtue, and wisdom herself has said to man, "Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom."⁵ Far be it from us, then, to say that so many and so great believing and pious men have not the fear of the Lord, which the Greeks call <greek>eusebeia</greek>, or more literally and fully, <greek>qeosebeia</greek>. And what is the fear of the Lord but His worship? and whence is He truly worshipped except from love? Love, then, out of a pure heart, and a ³¹² good conscience, and faith unfeigned, is the great and true virtue, because it is "the end of the commandment."¹ Deservedly is love said to be "strong as death,"² because, like death, it is vanquished by none; or because the measure of love in this life is even unto death, as the Lord says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;"³ or, rather, because, as death forcibly separates the soul from the senses of the body, so love separates it from fleshly lusts. Knowledge, when it is of the right kind, is the handmaid to love, for without love "knowledge puffeth up,"⁴ but where love, by edifying, has filled the heart, there knowledge will find nothing empty i which it can puff up. Moreover, Job has shown, what is that useful knowledge by defining it where, after saying, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom" he adds "and to depart from evil, I that is understanding."⁵ Why do we not then say that the man who has this virtue has all virtues, since "love is the fulfilling of the law?"⁶ Is it not true that, the more love exists in a man the more he is endowed with virtue, and the less love he has the less virtue is in him, for love is

itself virtue; and the less virtue there is in a man so much the more vice will there be in him ∴ Therefore, where love is full and perfect, no vice will remain. 12.

³¹³ The Stoics, therefore, appear to me to be mistaken in refusing to admit that a man who is advancing in wisdom has any wisdom at all, and in affirming that he alone has it who has become altogether perfect in wisdom. They do not, ! indeed, deny that he has made progress, but they say that he is in no degree entitled to be called wise, unless, by emerging, so to speak, from the depths, he suddenly springs forth into the free air of wisdom. For, as it matters not when a man is drowning whether the depth of water above him be many stadia or only the breadth of a hand or finger, so they say in regard to the progress of those who are advancing towards wisdom, that they are like men rising from the bottom of a whirlpool towards the air, but that unless they by their progress, so escape as to emerge wholly from folly as from an overwhelming flood, they have not virtue and are not wise; but that, when they have so escaped, they immediately have wisdom in perfection, and not a vestige of folly whence any sin could be originated remains. 12. This simile, in which folly is compared to water and wisdom to air, so that the mind emerging, as it were, from the stifling influence of folly breathes suddenly the free air of wisdom, does not appear to me to harmonize sufficiently with the authoritative statement of our Scriptures;

³¹⁴ a better simile, so far, at least, as illustration of spiritual things can be borrowed from material things, is that which compares vice or folly to darkness, and virtue or wisdom to light. The way to wisdom is therefore not like that of a man rising from the water into the air, in which, in the moment of rising above the surface of the water, he suddenly breathes freely, but, like that of a man proceeding from darkness into light, on whom more light gradually shines as he advances. So long, therefore, as this is not fully accomplished, we speak of the man as of one going from the dark recesses of a vast cavern towards its entrance, who is more and more influenced by the proximity of the light as he comes nearer to the entrance of the cavern; so that whatever light he has proceeds from the light to which he is advancing, and whatever darkness still remains in him proceeds from the darkness out of which he is emerging. Therefore it is true that in the sight of God "shall no man living be justified,"⁷ and yet that "the just shall live by his faith."⁸ On the one hand, "the saints are clothed with righteousness,"⁹ one more, another

er less; on the other hand, no one lives here wholly without sin -- one sins more, another less, and the best is the man who sins least. CHAP. IV. -- 14.

³¹⁵ But why have I, as if forgetting to whom I address myself, assumed the tone of a teacher in stating the question regarding which I wish to be instructed by you ? Nevertheless, as I had resolved to submit to your examination my opinion regarding the equality of sins (a subject involving a question closely bearing on the matter on which I was writing), let me now at last bring my statement to a conclusion. Even though it were true that he who has one virtue has all virtues, and that he who lacks one virtue has none, this would not involve the consequence that all sins are equal; for although it is true that where there is no virtue there is nothing right, it by no means follows that among bad actions one cannot be worse than another, or that divergence from that which is right does not admit of degrees. I think, however, that it is more agreeable to truth and consistent with the Holy Scriptures to say, that what is true of the members of the body is true i of the different dispositions of the soul (which, though not seen occupying different places, are by their distinctive workings perceived as plainly as the members of the body), namely, that as in the same body one member is more fully

³¹⁶ shone upon by the light, another is less shone upon, and a third is altogether without light, and remains in the dark under some impervious covering, something similar takes place in regard to the various dispositions of the soul. If this be so, then according to the manner in which every man is shone upon by the light of holy love, he may be said to have one virtue and to lack another virtue, or to have one virtue in larger and another in smaller measure. For in reference to that love which is the fear of God, we may correctly say both that it is greater in one man than in another, and tim there is some of it in one man, and none of it in another; we may also correctly say as to an individual that he has greater chastity than patience, and that he has either virtue in a higher degree than he had yesterday, if he is making progress, or tim he still lacks self-control, but possesses, at the same time, a large measure of compassion. 15. To sum up generally and briefly the view which, so far as relates to holy living, I entertain concerning virtue, -- virtue is tile love with which that which ought to be loved is loved. This is in some greater, in others less, and there are men in whom it does not exist at all; but in the absolute fulness which admits of no increase, it exists in no man while living on this earth;

³¹⁷ so long, however, as it admits of being increased there can be no doubt that, in so far as it is less than it ought to be, the shortcoming proceeds from vice. Because of this vice there is "not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not;"¹ because of this vice, "in God's sight shall no man living be justified."² On account of this vice, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."³ On account of this also, whatever progress we may have made, we must say, "Forgive us our debts,"⁴ although all debts in word, deed, and thought were washed away in baptism. He, then, who sees aright, sees whence, and when, and where he must hope for that perfection to which nothing can be added. Moreover, if there had been no commandments, there would have been no means whereby a man might certainly examine himself and see from what things he ought to turn aside, whither he should aspire, and in what things he should find occasion for thanksgiving or for prayer. Great, therefore, is the benefit of commandments, if to free will so much liberty be granted that the grace of God may be more abundantly honoured. CHAP. V. -- 16. If these things be so, how shall a man who shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, be guilty of all?

³¹⁸ May it not be, that since the fulfilling of the law is that love wherewith we love God and our neighbour, on which commandments of love "hang all the law and the prophets,"⁵ he is justly held to be guilty of all who violates that on which all hang? Now, no one sins without violating this love; "for this, thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."⁶ No one, however, loves his neighbour who does not out of his love to God do all in his power to bring his neighbour also, whom he loves as himself, to love God, whom if he does not love, he neither loves himself nor his neighbour. Hence it is true that if a man shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he becomes guilty of all, because he does what is contrary to the love on which hangs the whole law. A man, therefore, becomes guilty of all by doing what is contrary to that on which all hang. 17. Why, then, may not all sins be said to be equal?

³¹⁹ May not the reason be, that the transgression of the law of love is greater in him who commits a more grievous sin, and is less in him who

commits a less grievous sin? And in the mere fact of his committing any sin whatever, he becomes guilty of all; but in committing a more grievous sin, or in sinning in more respects than one, he becomes more guilty; committing a less grievous sin, or sinning in fewer respects, he becomes less guilty, -- his guilt being thus so much the greater the more he has sinned, the less the less he has sinned. Nevertheless, even though it be only in one point that he offend, he is guilty of all, because he violates that love on which all hang. If these things be true, an explanation is by this means found, clearing up that saying of the man of apostolic grace, "In many things we offend all."⁷ For we all offend, but one more grievously, another more slightly, according as each may have committed a more grievous or a less grievous sin ; every one being great in the practice of sin in proportion as he is deficient in loving God and his neighbour, and, on the other hand, decreasing in the practice of sin in proportion as he increases in the love of God and of his neighbour. The more, therefore, that a man is deficient in love, the more is he full of sin.

³²⁰ And perfection in love is reached when nothing of sinful infirmity remains in us. 18. Nor, indeed, in my opinion, are we to esteem it a trifling sin "to have the faith of our ³²¹ Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons," if we take the difference between sitting and standing, of which mention is made in the context, to refer to ecclesiastical honours; for who can bear to see a rich man chosen to a place of honour in the Church, while a poor man, of superior qualifications and of greater holiness. is despised? If, however, the apostle speaks there of our daily assemblies, who does not offend in the matter? At the same time, only those really offend here who cherish in their hearts the opinion that a man's worth is to be estimated according to his wealth; for this seems to be the meaning of the expression, "Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?" 19. The law of liberty, therefore, the law of love, is that of which he says: "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.¹ And then (after the difficult sentence, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," concerning which I have with sufficient fulness stated my opinion), making mention of the same law of liberty, he says: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

³²² And as he knew by experience what he had said a little before, "in many things we offend all," he suggests a sovereign remedy, to be applied, as it l were day by day, to those less serious but real] wounds which the soul suffers day by day, for he says: "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy."² For with the same purpose the Lord says: "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you."³ After which the apostle says: "But mercy rejoiceth over judgment: it's not said that mercy prevails over judgment, for it is not an adversary of judgment, but it "rejoiceth" over judgment, because a greater number are gathered in by mercy; but they are those who have shown mercy, for, "Blessed are the merciful, for God shall have mercy on them."⁴ 20. It is, therefore, by all means just that they be forgiven, because they have forgiven others, and that what they need be given to them, because they have given to others. For God uses mercy when He judgeth, and uses judgment when He showeth mercy. Hence the Psalmist says: "I will sing of mercy and of judgment unto Thee, O Lord."⁵ For if any man, thinking himself too righteous to require mercy, presumes, as if he had no reason for anxiety, to wait for judgment without mercy, he provokes that most righteous indignation through fear of which the Psalmist said:

³²³ "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant."⁶ For this reason the Lord says to a disobedient people: "Wherefore will ye contend with me in judgment? 7 For when the righteous King shall sit upon His throne, who shall boast that he has a pure heart, or who shall boast that he is clean from sin? What hope is there then unless mercy shall "rejoice over" judgment? But this it will do only in the case of those who have showed mercy, saying with sincerity, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," and who have given without murmuring, for "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver."⁸ To conclude, St. James is led to speak thus concerning works of mercy in this passage, in order that he may console those whom the statements immediately foregoing might have greatly alarmed, his purpose being to admonish us]low those daily sins from which our life is never free here below may also be expiated by daily remedies; lest any man, becoming guilty of all when he offends in even one point, be brought, by offending in many points (since "in many things we all offend"), to appear before the bar of the Supreme Judge under the enormous amount of guilt which has accumulated by degrees, and find at that tribunal no mercy, because he showed no mercy to others, instead of rather meriting the forgiveness of his own sins, and the enjoyment of the

gifts promised in Scripture, by his extending forgiveness and bounty to others. 21.

³²⁴ I have written at great length, which may perhaps have been tedious to you, as you, although approving of the statements now made, do not expect to be addressed as if you were but learning truths which you have been accustomed to teach to others. If, however, there be anything in these statements -- not in the style of language in which they are expounded, for I am not much concerned as to mere phrases, but in the substance of the statements -- which your erudite judgment condemns, I beseech you to point this out to me in your reply, and do not hesitate to correct my error. For I pity the man who, in view of the unwearied labour and sacred character of your studies, does not on account of them both render to you the honour which you deserve, and give thanks unto our Lord God by whose grace you are what you are. Wherefore, since I ought to be more willing to learn from any teacher the things of which to my disadvantage I am ignorant, than prompt to teach any others what I know, with how much greater reason do I claim the payment of 539

³²⁵ this debt of love from you, by whose learning ecclesiastical literature in the latin tongue has been, in the Lord's name, and by His help, advanced to an extent which had been previously unattainable. Especially, however, I ask attention to the sentence: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and offend in one point, is guilty of all." If you know any better way, my beloved brother, in which it can be explained, I beseech you by the Lord to favour us by communicating to us your exposition.

LETTER 169. AD 415

³²⁵ (A.D. 415.) Bishop Augustin to Bishop Evodius. ³²⁶ CHAP, I. -- I. If acquaintance with the treatises which specially occupy me, and from which I am unwilling to be turned aside to anything else, is so highly valued by your Holiness, let some one be sent to copy them for you. For I have now finished several of those which had been commenced by me this year before Easter, near the beginning of Lent. For, to the three books on the City of God, in opposition to its enemies, the worshippers of demons, I have added two others, and in these five books I think enough has been said to answer those who maintain that the [heathen] gods must be worshipped in order to secure prosperity in this present life, and who are hostile to the Christian name from an idea that that prosperity is hindered by us. In the sequel I must, as I

promised in the first book, answer those who think that the worship of their gods is the only way to obtain that life after death with a view to obtain which we are Christians. I have dictated also, in volumes of considerable size, expositions of three Psalms, the 68th, the 72d, and the 78th. Commentaries on the other Psalms -- not yet dictated, nor even entered on -- are eagerly expected and demanded from me. From these studies I am unwilling to be called away and hindered by any questions thrusting themselves upon me from another quarter;

¹yea, so unwilling, that I do not wish to turn at present even to the books on the Trinity, which I have long had on hand and have not yet completed, because they require a great amount of labour, and I believe that they are of a nature to be understood only by few; on which account they claim my attention less urgently than writings which may, I hope, be useful to very many. 2. For the words, "He that is ignorant shall be ignored" were not used by the apostle in reference to this subject, as your letter affirms; as if this punishment were to be inflicted on the man who is not able to discern by the exercise of his intellect the ineffable unity of the Trinity, in the same way as the unity of memory, understanding, and will in the soul of man is discerned. The apostle said these words with a wholly different design. Consult the passage and you will see that he was speaking of those things which might be for the edification of the many in faith and holiness, not of those which might with difficulty be comprehended by the few, and by them only in the small degree in which the comprehension of so great a subject is attainable in this life. The positions laid down by him were, that prophesying was to be preferred to speaking with tongues; that these gifts should not be exercised in a disorderly manner, as if the spirit of prophecy compelled them to speak even against their will;

²that women should keep silence in the Church; and that all things should be done decently and in order. While treating of these things he says: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him know the things which I write to you, for they are the commands of the Lord. If any man be ignorant, he shall be ignored; intending by these words to restrain and call to order persons who were specially ready to cause disorder in the Church, because they imagined themselves to excel in spiritual gifts, although they were disturbing everything by their presumptuous conduct. "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him know," he says,

"the things which I write to you, for they are the commands of the Lord. If any man thinks himself to be, and in reality is not, a prophet, for he who is a prophet undoubtedly knows and does not need admonition and exhortation, because "he judgeth all things, and is himself judged of no manY s Those persons, therefore, caused confusion and trouble in the Church who thought themselves to be in the Church what they were not. He teaches these to know the commandments of the Lord, for he is not a "God of confusion, but of peace. But "if any one is ignorant, he shall be ignored," that is to say, he shall be rejected;

3 for God is not ignorant -- so far as mere knowledge is concerned -- in regard to the persons to whom He shall one day say, "I know you not," s but their rejection is signified by this expression. 3. Moreover, since the Lord says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,"6 and that sight is promised to us as the highest reward at the last, we have no reason to fear lest, if we axe now unable to see clearly those things which we believe concerning the nature of God, 4 this defective apprehension should bring us under the sentence, "He that is ignorant shall be ignored. For when "in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believed. This foolishness of preaching and "foolishness of God which is wiser than man"1 draws many to salvation, in such a way that not only those who are as yet incapable of perceiving with clear intelligence the nature of God which in faith they hold, but even those who have not yet so learned the nature of their own soul as to distinguish between its incorporeal essence and the body as a whole with the same certainty with which they perceive that they live, understand, and will, are not on this account shut out from that salvation which that foolishness of preaching bestows on believers. 4. For if Christ died for those only who with clear intelligence can discern these things, our labour in the Church is almost spent in vain. But if, as is the fact, crowds of common people, possessing no great strength of intellect, run to the Physician m the exercise of faith, with the result of being healed by Christ and Him crucified, that "where sin has abounded, grace may much more abound," it comes in wondrous ways to pass, through the depths of the riches of the. wisdom and knowledge of God and His unsearchable judgments, that, on the one hand, some who do discern between the material and:

5 the spiritual in their own nature, while pluming themselves on this attainment, and despising that foolishness of preaching by which those who believe are saved, wander far from the only path which leads to eternal life; and, on the other hand, because not one perishes for whom Christ died? many glorying in the cross of Christ, and not withdrawing from that same path, attain, notwithstanding their ignorance of those things which some with most profound subtlety investigate, unto that eternity, truth, and love, -- that is, unto that enduring, clear, and full felicity, in which to those who abide, and see, and love, all things are plain. Chap. II. -- 5. Therefore let us with steadfast piety believe in one God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; let us at the same time believe that the Son is not [the person] who is the Father, and the Father is not [the person] who is the Son, and neither the Father nor the Son is [the person] who is the Spirit of both the Father and the Son. Let it not be supposed that in this Trinity there is any separation in respect of time or place, but that these Three are equal and co-eternal, and absolutely of one nature: and that the creatures have been made, not some by the Father, and some by the Son, and some by the Holy Spirit, but that each and all that have been or are now being created subsist in the Trinity as their Creator;

6 and that no one is saved by the Father without the Son and the Holy Spirit, or by the Son without the Father and the Holy Spirit, or by the Holy Spirit without the Father and the Son, but by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the only one, true, and truly immortal (that is, absolutely unchangeable) God. At the same time, we believe that many things are stated in Scripture separately concerning each of the Three, in order to teach us that, though they are an inseparable Trinity, yet they are a Trinity. For, just as when their names are pronounced in human language they cannot be named simultaneously, although their existence in inseparable union is at every moment simultaneous, even so in some places of Scripture also, they are by certain created things presented to us distinctively and in mutual relation to each other: for example, [at the baptism of Christ] the Father is heard in the voice which said, "Thou art my Son; the Son is seen in the human nature which, in being born of the Virgin, He assumed; the Holy Spirit is seen in the bodily form of a dove,⁴ -- these things presenting the Three to our apprehension separately, indeed, but in no wise separated. 6. To present

this in a form which the intellect may apprehend, we borrow an illustration from the Memory, the Understanding, and the Will.

7 For although we can speak of each of these faculties severally in its own order, and at a separate time, we neither exercise nor even mention any one of them without the other two. It must not, however, be supposed, from our using this comparison between these three faculties and the Trinity, that the things compared agree in every particular, for where, in any process of reasoning, can we find an illustration in which the correspondence between the things compared is so exact that it admits of application in every point to that which it is intended to illustrate? In the first place, therefore, the similarity is found to be imperfect in this respect, i that whereas memory, understanding, and will are not the soul, but only exist in the soul, the i Trinity does not exist in God, but is God. In the Trinity, therefore, there is manifested a singleness [simplicitas] commanding our astonishment, because in this Trinity it is not one thing to exist, and another thing to understand, or do anything else which is attributed to the nature of God; but in the soul it is one thing that it exists, and another thing that it understands, for even when it is not using the understand-

ing it still exists. In the second place, who would dare to say that the Father does not understand by Himself but by the Son, as memory does not understand by itself but by the understanding, or, to speak more correctly, the soul in which these faculties are understands by no other faculty than by the understanding, as it remembers only by memory, and exercises volition only by the will? The point, therefore, to which the illustration is intended to apply is this, -- that, whatever be the manner in which we understand, in regard to these three faculties in the soul, that when the several names by which they are severally represented are uttered, the utterance of each separate name is nevertheless accomplished only in the combined operation of all the three, since it is by an act of memory and of understanding and of will that it is spoken, -- it is in the same manner that we understand, in regard to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that no created thing which may at any time be employed to present only one of the Three to our minds is produced otherwise than by the simultaneous, because essentially inseparable, operation of the Trinity; and that, consequently, neither the voice of the Father, nor the body and soul of the Son, nor the dove of the Holy Spirit, was produced in any other way than by the combined operation of the Trinity. 7.

9 Moreover, that sound of a voice was certainly not made indissolubly one with the person of the Father, for so soon as it was uttered it ceased to be. Neither was that form of a dove made indissolubly one with the person of Holy Spirit, for it also, like the bright cloud which covered the Saviour and His three disciples on the mount, or rather like the tongues of flame which once represented the same Holy Spirit, ceased to exist as soon as it had served its purpose as a symbol. But it was otherwise with the body and soul in which the Son of God was manifested: seeing that the deliverance of men was the object for which all these things were done, the human nature in which He appeared was, in a way marvellous and unique, assumed into real union with the person of the Word of God, that is, of the only Son of God,-- the Word remaining unchangeably in His own nature, wherein it is not conceivable that there should be composite elements in union with which any mere semblance of a human soul could subsist. We read, indeed, that "the Spirit of wisdom is manifold;"² but it is as properly termed simple. Manifold it is, indeed, because there are many things which it possesses; but simple, because it is not a different thing from what it possesses, as the Son is said to have life in Himself, and yet He is Himself that life. The human nature came to the Word;

¹⁰ the Word did not come, with susceptibility of change, into the human nature;³ and therefore, in His union to the human nature which He has assumed, He is still properly called the Son of God; for which reason the same person is the Son of God immutable and co-eternal with the Father, and the Son of God who was laid in the grave, -- the former being true of Him only as the Word, the latter true of Him only as a man. 8. Wherefore it behoves us, in reading any statements made concerning the Son of God, to observe in reference to which of these two natures they are spoken. For by His assumption of the soul and body of a man, no increase was made in the number of Persons: the Trinity remained as before. For just as in every man, with the exception of that one whom alone He assumed into personal union, the soul and body constitute one person, so in Christ the Word and His human soul and body constitute one person. And as the name philosopher, for example, is given to a man certainly with reference only to his soul, and yet it is nothing absurd, but only a most suitable and ordinary use of language, for us to say the philosopher was killed, the philosopher died, the philosopher was

buried, although all these events befell him in his body, not in that part of him in which he was a philosopher;

¹¹ in like manner the name of God, or Son of God, or Lord of Glory, or any other such name, is given to Christ as the Word, and it is, nevertheless, correct to say that God was crucified, seeing that there is no question that He suffered this death in his human nature, not in that in which He is the Lord of Glory.⁴ 9. As for the sound of the voice, however, and the bodily form of a dove, and the cloven tongues which sat upon each of them, these, like the terrible wonders wrought at Sinai,^s and like the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night,⁶ were produced only as symbols, and vanished when this purpose had been served. The thing which we must especially guard against in connection with them is, lest any one should believe that the nature of God -- whether of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit -- is susceptible of change or transformation. And we must not be disturbed by the fact that the sign sometimes receives the name of the thing signified, as when the Holy Spirit is said to have descended in a bodily form as a dove and abode upon Him; for in like manner the smitten rock is called Christ,^z because it was a symbol of Christ.

¹² CHAP. III. -- 10. I wonder, however, that, although you believe it possible for the sound of the voice which said, "Thou art my Son," to have been produced through a divine act, without the intermediate agency of a soul, by something the nature of which was corporeal, you nevertheless do not believe that a bodily form and movements exactly resembling those of any real living creature whatsoever could be produced in the same way, namely, through a divine act, without the intermediate agency of a spirit imparting life. ⁱ For if inanimate matter obeys God without the instrumentality of an animating spirit, so as to emit sounds such as are wont to be emitted by animated bodies, in order to bring to the human ear words articulately spoken, why should it not obey Him, so as to present to the human eye the figure and motions of a bird, by the same power of the Creator without the instrumentalist of any animating spirit? The objects of both sight and hearing in the sound which strikes the ear and the appearance which meets the eye, the articulations of the voice and the outlines of the members, every audible and visible motion -- are both alike produced from matter contiguous to us;

¹³ is it, then, granted to the sense of hearing, and not to the sense of sight, to tell us regarding the body which is perceived by this bodily sense,

both that it is a true body, and that it is nothing beyond what the bodily sense perceives it to be? For in every living creature the soul is, of course, not perceived by any bodily sense. We do not, therefore, need to inquire how the bodily form of the dove appeared to the eye, just as we do not need to inquire how the voice of a bodily form capable of speech was made to fall upon the ear. For if it was possible to dispense with the intermediate agency of a soul in the case in which a voice, not something like a voice, is said to have been produced, how much more easily was it possible in the case in which it is said that the Spirit descended "like a dove," a phrase which signifies that a mere bodily form was exhibited to the eye, and does not affirm that a real living creature was seen! In like manner, it is said that on the day of Pentecost, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind, and there appeared to them cloven tongues like as of fire,"¹ in which something like wind and like fire, i.e.

¹⁴ resembling these common and familiar natural phenomena, is said to have been perceived, but it does not seem to be indicated that these common and familiar natural phenomena were actually produced. 11. If, however, more subtle reasoning or more thorough investigation of the matter result in demonstrating that that which is naturally destitute of motion both in time and in space [i.e. matter] cannot be moved otherwise than through the intermediate agency of that which is capable of motion only in time, not in space [i.e. spirit], it will follow from this that all those things must have been done by the instrumentality of a living creature, as things are done by angels, on which subject a more elaborate discussion would be tedious, and is not necessary. To this it must be added, that there are visions which appear to the spirit as plainly as to the senses of the body, not only in sleep or delirium, but also to persons of sound mind in n their waking hours, -- visions which are due not to the deceitfulness of devils mocking men, but to some spiritual revelation accomplished by means of immaterial forms resembling bodies, and which cannot by any means be distinguished from real objects, unless they are by divine assistance more fully revealed and discriminated by the mind's intelligence, which is done sometimes (but with difficulty) at the time, but for the most part after they have disappeared.

¹⁵ This being the case in regard to these visions which, whether their nature be really material, or material only in appearance but really spiritual, seem to manifest themselves to our spirit as if they were perceived by the

bodily senses, we ought not, when these things are recorded in sacred Scripture, to conclude hastily to which of these two classes they are to be referred, or whether, if they belong to the former, they are produced by the intermediate agency of a spirit; while, at the same time, as to the invisible and immutable nature of the Creator, that is, of the supreme and ineffable Trinity, we either simply, without any doubt, believe, or, in addition to this, with some degree of intellectual apprehension, understand that it is wholly removed and separated both from the senses of fleshly mortals, and from all susceptibility of being changed either for the worse or for the better, or to anything whatever of a variable nature. CHAP. IV. -- 12. These things I send you in reference to two of your questions, -- the one concerning the Trinity, and the other concerning the dove in which the Holy Spirit, not in His own nature, but in a symbolical form, was manifested, as also the Son of God, not in His eternal Sonship (of which the Father said: "Before the morning star I have begotten Thee "but in that human nature which He assumed from the Virgin's womb, was crucified .by the Jews:

¹⁶ observe that to you who are at leisure I have been able, notwithstanding immense pressure of business, to write so much. I have not, however, deemed it necessary to discuss everything which you have brought forward in your ¹⁷ letter; but on these two questions which you wished me to solve, I think I have written as much as is exacted by Christian charity, though I may not have satisfied your vehement desire. 13. Besides the two books added to the first three in the City of God, and the exposition of three psalms, as above mentioned,¹ I have also written a treatise to the holy presbyter Jerome concerning the origin of the soul? asking him, in regard to the opinion which, in writing to Marcellinus of pious memory, he avowed as his own, that a new soul is made for each individual at birth, how this can be maintained without overthrowing that most surely established article of the Church's faith, according to which we firmly believe that all die in Adam,³ and are brought down under condemnation unless they be delivered by the grace of Christ, which, by means of His sacrament, works even in infants. I have, moreover, written to the same person to inquire his opinion as to the sense in which the words of James, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," are to be understood.⁴ In this letter I have also stated my own opinion: in the other, concerning the origin of

the soul, I have only asked what was his opinion, submitting the matter to his judgment, and at the same I time discussing it to some extent.

¹⁸ I wrote these I to Jerome because I did not wish to lose an opportunity of correspondence afforded by a certain very pious and studious young presbyter, Orosius, who, prompted only by burning zeal in regard to the Holy Scriptures, came to us from I the remotest part of Spain, namely, from the shore of the ocean, and whom I persuaded to go on from us to Jerome. In answer to certain questions of the same Orosius, as to things which troubled him in reference to the heresy of the Priscillianists, and some opinions of Origen which the Church has not accepted, I have written a treatise of moderate size with as much brevity and clearness as was in my power. I have also written a considerable book against the heresy of Pelagius,⁵ being constrained to do this by some brethren whom he had persuaded to adopt his fatal error, denying the grace of Christ. If you wish to have all these, send some one to copy them all for you. Allow me, however, to be free from distraction in studying and dictating to my clerks those things which, being urgently required by many, claim in my opinion precedence over your questions, which are of interest to very few.

LETTER 172. AD 416

¹⁹ (A.D. 416.) to Augustin, my Truly Pious Lord and Father, Worthy of my Utmost Affection and Veneration, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ. ²⁰ I. That honourable man, my brother, and your Excellency's son, the presbyter Orosius, I have, both on his own account and in obedience to your request, made welcome. But a most trying time has come upon us,⁶ in which I have found it better for me to hold my peace than to speak, so that our studies have ceased, lest what Appius calls "the eloquence of dogs" should be provoked into exercise.⁷ For this reason I have not been able at the present time to give to those two books dedicated to my name—books of profound erudition, and brilliant with every charm of splendid eloquence -- the answer which I would otherwise have given; not that I think anything said in them demands correction, but because I am mindful of the words of the blessed apostle in regard to the variety of men's judgments, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."⁸ Certainly, whatever can be said on the topics there discussed, and whatever can be drawn by commanding genius from the fountain of sacred Scripture regarding them, has been in these letters stated in your positions, and illustrated by your arguments. But I beg your Rever-

ence to allow me for a little to praise your genius. For in any discussion between us, the object aimed at by both of us is advancement in learning. But our rivals, and especially heretics, if they see different opinions maintained by us, will assail us with the calumny that our differences are due to mutual jealousy.

²¹ For my part, however, I am resolved to love you, to look up to you, to reverence and admire you, and to defend your opinions as my own. I have also in a dialogue, which I recently published, made allusion to your Blessedness in suitable terms. Be it ours, therefore, rather to rid the Church of that most pernicious heresy which always feigns repentance, in order that it may have liberty to teach in our churches, and may not be expelled and extinguished, as it would be if it disclosed its real character in the light of day. 5. Your pious and venerable daughters, Eustochium and Paula, continue to walk worthy of their own birth and of your counsels, and they send special salutations to your Blessedness: in which they are joined by the whole brotherhood of those who with us labour to serve the Lord our Saviour. As for the holy presbyter Firmus, we sent him last year to go on business of Eustochium and Paula, first to Ravenna, and afterwards to Africa and Sicily, and we suppose that he is now detained somewhere in Africa. I beseech you to present my respectful salutations to the saints who are associated with you. I have also sent to your care a letter from me to the holy presbyter Firmus; if it reaches you, I beg you to take the trouble of forwarding it to him. May Christ the Lord keep you in safety, and mindful of me, my truly pious lord and most blessed father. (As a postscript.) We suffer in this province from a grievous scarcity of clerks acquainted with the Latin language; this is the reason why we are not able to comply with your instructions, especially in regard to that version of the Septuagint which is furnished with distinctive asterisks and obelisks ; for we have lost, through some one's dishonesty, the most of the results of our earlier labour.

LETTER 173. TO DONATUS, AD 416

²³ (A.D. 416.) to Donatus, a Presbyter of the Donatist Party, Augustin, a Bishop of the Catholic Church, Sends Greeting. ²⁴ I. If you could see the sorrow of my heart and my concern for your salvation, you would perhaps take pity on your own soul, doing that which is pleasing to God, by giving heed to the word which is not ours but His; and would no longer give to His Scripture only a place in your memory, while shutting it out from your heart.

You are angry because you are being drawn to salvation, although you have drawn so many of our fellow Christians to destruction. For what did we order beyond this, that you should be arrested, brought before the authorities, and guarded, in order to prevent you from perishing? As to your having sustained bodily injury, you have yourself to blame for this, as you would not use the horse which was immediately brought to you, and then dashed yourself violently to the ground; for, as you well know, your companion, who was brought along with you, arrived uninjured, not having done any harm to himself as you did. 2. You think, however, that even what we have done to you should not have been done, because, in your opinion, no man should be compelled to that which is good. Mark, therefore, the words of the apostle:

25 "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work," and yet, in order to make the office of a bishop be accepted by many men, they are seized against their will subjected to importunate persuasion, shut up and detained in custody, and made to suffer so many things which they dislike, until a willingness to undertake the good work is found in them. How much more, then, is it fitting that you should be drawn forcibly away from a pernicious error, in which you are enemies to your own souls, and brought to acquaint yourselves with the truth, or to choose it when known, not only in order to your holding in a safe and advantageous way the honour belonging to your office, but also in order to preserve you from perishing miserably! You say that God has given us free will, and that therefore no man should be compelled even to good. Why, then, are those whom I have above referred to compelled to that which is good? Take heed, therefore, to something which you do not wish to consider. The aim towards which a good will compassionately devotes its efforts is to secure that a bad will be rightly directed. For who does not know that a man is not condemned on any other ground than because his bad will deserved it, and that no man is saved who has not a good will?

26 Nevertheless, it does not follow from this that those who are loved should be cruelly left to yield themselves with impunity to their bad will; but in so far as power is given, they ought to be both prevented from evil and compelled to good. 3. For if a bad will ought to be always left to its own freedom, why were the disobedient and murmuring Israelites restrained from evil by such severe chastisements, and compelled to come into the land of promise? If a bad will ought always to be left to its own freedom, why was

Paul not left to the free use of that most perverted will with which he persecuted the Church? Why was he thrown to the ground that he might be blinded, and struck blind that he might be changed, and changed that he might be sent as an apostle, and sent that he might suffer for the truth's sake such wrongs as he had inflicted on others when he was in error? If a bad will ought always to be left to its own freedom, why is a father instructed in Holy Scripture not only to correct an obstinate son by words of rebuke, but also to beat his sides, in order that, being compelled and subdued, he may be guided to good conduct?³ For which reason Solomon

²⁷ also says: "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell."¹ If a bad will ought always to be left to its own freedom, why are negligent pastors reprov'd? and why is it said to them, "Ye have not brought back the wandering sheep, ye have not sought the perishing"?² You also are sheep belonging to Christ, you bear the Lord's mark in the sacrament which you have received, but you are wandering and perishing. Let us not, therefore, incur your displeasure because we bring back the wandering: and seek the perishing; for it is better for us! to obey the will of the Lord, who charges us to compel you to return to His fold, than to yield consent to the will of the wandering sheep, so as to leave you to perish. Say not, therefore, what I hear that you are constantly saying, "I wish thus to wander; I wish thus to perish; for it is better that we should so far as is in our power absolutely refuse to allow you to wander and perish. 4. When you threw yourself the other day into a well, in order to bring death upon yourself, you did so no doubt with your free will. But how cruel the servants of God would have been if they had left you to the fruits of this bad will, and had not delivered you from that death ! Who would not have justly blamed them? Who would not have justly denounced them as inhuman?

²⁸ And yet you, with your own free will, threw yourself into the water that you might be drowned. They took you against your will out of the water, that you might not be drowned. You acted according to your own will, but with a view to your destruction; they dealt with you against your will, but in order to your preservation. If, therefore, mere bodily safety behoves to be so guarded that it is the duty of those who love their neighbour to preserve him even against his own will from harm, how much more is this! duty binding in regard to that spiritual health i in the loss of which the consequence to be dreaded is eternal death! At the same time let me remark,

that in that death which you wished to bring upon yourself you would have died not for time only but for eternity, because even though force had been used to compel you -- not to accept salvation, not to enter into the peace of the Church, the unity of Christ's body, the holy indivisible charity, but -- to suffer some evil things, it would not have been lawful for you to take away your own life. 5.

²⁹ Consider the divine Scriptures, and examine them to the utmost of your ability, and see whether this was ever done by any one of the just and faithful, though subjected to the most grievous evils by persons who were endeavouring to drive them, not to eternal life, to which you are being compelled by us, but to eternal death. I have heard that you say that the Apostle Paul intimated the lawfulness of suicide, when he said, "Though I give my body to be burned," a supposing that because he was there enumerating all the good things which are of no avail without charity, such as the tongues of men and of angels, and all mysteries, and all knowledge, and all prophecy, and the distribution of one's goods to the poor, he intended to include among these good things the act of bringing death upon one. self. But observe carefully and learn in what sense Scripture says that any man may give his body to be burned. Certainly not that any man may throw himself into the fire when he is harassed by a pursuing enemy, but that, when he is compelled to choose between doing wrong and suffering wrong, he should refuse to do wrong rather than to suffer wrong, and so give his body into the power of the executioner, as those three men did who were being compelled to worship the golden image, while he who was compelling them threatened them with the burning fiery furnace if they did not obey. They refused to worship the image:

³⁰ they did not cast themselves into the fire, and yet of them it is written that they "yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God."⁴ This is the sense in which the apostle said, "If I give my body to be burned." ⁶ Mark also what follows: -- "If I have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. To that charity you are called; by that charity you are prevented from perishing: and yet you think, forsooth, that to throw yourself headlong to destruction, by your own act, will profit you in some measure, although, even if you suffered death at the hands of another, while you remain an enemy to charity it would profit you nothing. Nay, more, being in a state of exclusion from the Church, and severed from the body of

unity and the bond of charity, you would be punished with eternal misery even though you were burned alive for Christ's name; for this is the apostle's declaration, "Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Bring your mind back, therefore, to rational reflection and sober thought; consider carefully whether it is to error and to impiety that you are being called, and, if you still think so, submit patiently to any hardship for the truth's sake.

³¹ If, however, the fact rather be that you are living in error and in impiety, mad that in the Church to which you are called truth and piety are found, because there is Christian unity and the love (*charitas*) of the Holy Spirit, why ³² do you labour any longer to be an enemy to yourself? 7. For this end the mercy of the Lord appointed that both we and your bishops met at Carthage in a conference which had repeated meetings, and was largely attended, and reasoned together in the most orderly manner in regard to the grounds of our separation from each other. The proceedings of that conference were written down; our signatures are attached to the record: read it, or allow others to read it to you, and then choose which party you prefer. I have heard that you have said that you could to some extent discuss the statements in that record with us if we would omit these words of your bishops: "No case forecloses the investigation of another case, and no person compromises the position of another person. You wish us to leave out these words, in which, although they knew it not, the truth itself spoke by them. You will say, indeed, that here they made a mistake, and fell through want of consideration into a false opinion. But we affirm that here they said what was true, and we prove this very easily by a reference to yourself.

³³ For if in regard to these bishops of your own, chosen by the whole party of Donatus on the understanding that they should act as representatives, and that all the rest should regard whatever they did as acceptable and satisfactory, you nevertheless refuse to allow them to compromise your position by what you think to have been a rash and mistaken utterance on their part, in this refusal you confirm the truth of their saying: "No case forecloses the investigation of another case, and no person compromises the position of another person. And at the same time you ought to acknowledge, that if you refuse to allow the conjoint authority of so many of your bishops represented in these seven to compromise Donatus, presbyter in Mutugenna, it is incomparably less reasonable that one person, Caecilianus, even had some evil been

found in him, should compromise the position of the whole unity of Christ, the Church, which is not shut up within the one village of Mutugenna, but spread abroad throughout the entire world. 8. But, behold, we do what you have desired; we treat with you as if your bishops had not said: "No case forecloses the investigation of another case, and no person compromises the position of another person.

³⁴ Discover, if you can, what they ought, rather than this, to have said in reply, when there was alleged against them the case and the person of Primi-anus,¹ who, notwithstanding his joining the rest of the bishops in passing sentence of condemnation on those who had passed sentence of condemnation upon him, nevertheless received back into their former honours those whom he had condemned and denounced, and chose to acknowledge and accept rather than despise and repudiate the baptism administered by these men while they were "dead" (for of them it was said in the notable decree [of the Council of Bagai], that "the shores were full of dead men"), and by so doing swept away the argument which you are accustomed to rest on a perverse interpretation of the words: "Qui baptizatur a mortuo quid ei prodest lavacrum ejus?"² If, therefore, your bishops had not said: "No case forecloses the investigation of another case, and no person compromises the position of another person," they would have been compelled to plead guilty in the case of Primianus; but, in saying this, they declared the Catholic Church to be, as we mentioned, not guilty in the case of Caecilianus. 9. However, read all the rest and examine it well. Mark whether they have succeeded in proving any charge of evil brought against Caecilianus himself, through whose person they attempted to compromise the position of the Church.

³⁵ Mark whether they have not rather brought forward much that was in his favour, and confirmed the evidence that his case was a good one, by a number of extracts which, to the prejudice of their own case, they produced and read. Read these or let them be read to you. Consider the whole matter, ponder it carefully, and choose which you should follow: whether you should, in the peace of Christ, in the unity of the Catholic Church, in the love of the brethren, be partaker of our joy, or, in the cause of wicked discord, the Donatist faction and impious schism, continue to suffer the annoyance caused to you by the measures which out of love to you we are compelled to take. 10. I hear that you have remarked and often quote the fact recorded in the gospels, that the seventy disciples went back from the Lord,

and that they had been left to their own choice in this wicked and impious desertion, and that to the twelve who alone remained the Lord said, "Will ye also go away?"³ But you have neglected to remark, that at that time the Church was only beginning to burst into life from the recently planted seed, and that there was not yet fulfilled in her the prophecy: "All kings shall fall down before Him; yea, all nations shall serve

³⁶ Him;"¹ and it is in proportion to the more enlarged accomplishment of this prophecy that the Church wields greater power, so that she may not only invite, but even compel men to embrace what is good. This our Lord intended then to illustrate, for although He had great power, He chose rather to manifest His humility. This also He taught, with sufficient plainness, in the parable of the Feast, in which the master of the house, after He had sent a message to the invited guests, and they had refused to come, said to his servants: "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.", Mark, now, how it was said in regard to those who came first, "bring them in; it was not said, "compel them to come in," -- by which was signified the incipient condition of the Church, when it was only growing towards the position in which it would have strength to compel men to come in.

³⁷ Accordingly, because it was right that when the Church had been strengthened, both in power and in extent, men should be compelled to come in to the feast of everlasting salvation, it was afterwards added in the parable, "The servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servants, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in. Wherefore, if you were walking peaceably, absent from this feast of everlasting salvation and of the holy unity of the Church, we should find you, as it were, in the "highways; but since, by multiplied injuries and cruelties, which you perpetrate on our people, you are, as it were, full of thorns and roughness, we find you as it were in the "hedges," and we compel you to come in. The sheep which is compelled is driven whither it would not wish to go, but after it has entered, it feeds of its own accord in the pastures to which it was brought. Wherefore

restrain your, perverse and rebellious spirit, that in the true Church of Christ you may find the feast of salvation.

LETTER 180. TO OCEANUS, AD 416

³⁸(A.D. 416.) to Oceanus, His Deservedly Beloved Lord and Brother, Honoured Among the Members of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting. ³⁹I. I received two letters from you at the same time, in one of which you mention a third, and state that you had sent it before the others. This letter I do not remember having received, or, rather, I think I may say the testimony of my memory is, that I did not receive it; but in regard to those which I have received, I return you many thanks for your kindness to me. To these I would have returned an immediate answer, had I not been hurried away by a constant succession of other matters urgently demanding attention. Having now found a moment's leisure from these, I have chosen rather to send some reply, however imperfect, than continue towards a friend so true and kind a protracted silence, and become more annoying to you by saying nothing than by saying too much. 2. I already knew the opinion of the holy Jerome as to the origin of souls, and had read the words which in your letter you have quoted from his book. The difficulty which perplexes some in regard to this question, "How God can justly bestow souls on the offspring of persons guilty of adultery?" does not embarrass me, seeing that not even their own sins, much less the sins of their parents, can prove prejudicial to persons -- of virtuous lives, converted to God, and living in faith and piety.

⁴⁰The really difficult question is, if it be true that a new soul created out of nothing is imparted to each child at its birth, how can it be that the innumerable souls of those little ones, in regard to whom God knew with certainty that before attaining the age of reason, and before being able to know or understand what is right or wrong, they were to leave the body without being baptized, are justly given over to eternal death by Him with whom "there is no unrighteousness?"³ It is unnecessary to say more on this subject, since you know what I intend, or rather what I do not at present intend to say. I think what I have said is enough for a wise man. If, however, you have either read, or heard from the lips of Jerome, or received from the Lord when meditating on this difficult question, anything by which it can be solved, impart it to me, I beseech you, that I may acknowledge myself under yet greater obligation to you. 3. As to the question whether lying is in any case justifiable and expedient, it has appeared to you that it ought to be

solved by the example of our Lord's saying, concerning the day and hour of the end of the world, "Neither doth the Son know it." ⁴ When I read this, I was charmed with it as an effort of your ingenuity;

⁴¹ but I am by no means of opinion that a figurative mode of expression can be rightly termed a falsehood. For it is no falsehood to call a day joyous because it renders men joyous, or a lupine harsh because by its bitter flavour it imparts harshness ⁴² to the countenance of him who tastes it, or to say that God knows something when He makes man know it (an instance quoted by yourself in these words of God to Abraham, "Now I know that thou fearest God").¹ These are by no means false statements, as you yourself readily see. Accordingly, when the blessed Hilary explained this obscure statement of the Lord, by means of this obscure kind of figurative language, saying that we ought to understand Christ to affirm in these words that He knew not that day with no other meaning than that He, by concealing it, caused others not to know it, he did not by this explanation of the statement apologize for it as an excusable falsehood, but he showed that it was not a falsehood, as is proved by comparing it not only with these common figures of speech, but also with the metaphor, a mode of expression very familiar to all in daily conversation. For who will charge the man who says that harvest fields wave and children bloom with speaking falsely, because he sees not in these things the waves and the flowers to which these words are literally applied? ⁴

⁴³ Moreover, a man of your talent and learning easily perceives how different from these metaphorical expressions is the statement of the apostle, "When I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"² Here there is no obscurity of figurative language; these are literal words of a plain statement. Surely, in addressing persons "of whom he travailed in birth till Christ should be formed in them,"³ and to whom, in solemnly calling God to confirm his words, he said: "The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not,"⁴ the great teacher of the Gentiles affirmed in the words above quoted either what was true or what was false; if he said what was false, which God forbid, you see the consequences which would follow; and Paul's own assertion of his veracity, together with the example of wondrous humility in the Apostle Peter,

may warn you to recoil from such thoughts.⁵ 5. But why say more? This question the venerable Father Jerome and I have discussed fully in letters⁶ which we exchanged, and in his latest work, published under the name of Critobulus, against Pelagius,⁷ he has maintained the same opinion concerning that transaction and the words of the apostle which, in accordance with the views of the blessed Cyprian,⁸ I myself have held.

⁴⁴ In regard to the question as to the origin of souls, I think there is reasonable ground for inquiry, not as to the giving of souls to the offspring of adulterous parents, but as to the condemnation (which God forbid) of those who are innocent. If you have learned anything from a man of such character and eminence as Jerome which might form a satisfactory answer to those in perplexity on this subject, I pray you not to refuse to communicate it to me. In your correspondence, you have approved Yourself so learned and so affable that it is a privilege to hold intercourse with you by letter. I ask you not to delay to send a certain book by the same man of God, which the presbyter Orosius brought and gave to you to copy, in which the resurrection of the body is treated of by him in a manner said to merit distinguished praise. We have not asked it earlier, because we knew that you had both to copy and to revise it; but for both of these we think we have now given you ample time. Live to God, and be mindful of us. [For translation of Letter CLXXXV. to Count Boniface, containing an exhaustive history of the Donatist schism, see *Anti-Donatist Writings*.]

LETTER 188. AD 416

⁴⁵ (A.D. 416.) to the Lady Juliana, Worthy to Be Honoured in Christ with the Service Due to Her Rank, Our Daughter Deservedly Distinguished, Alypius and Augustin Send Greeting in the Lord. Chap. I. -- I. Lady, worthy to be honoured in Christ with the service due to your rank, and daughter deservedly distinguished, it was very pleasant and agreeable to us that your letter reached us when together at Hippo, so that we might send this joint reply to you, to express our joy in hearing of your welfare, and with sincere reciprocation of your love to let you know of our welfare, in which we are sure that you take an affectionate interest. We are well aware that you are not ignorant how great Christian affection we consider due to you, and how much, both before God and among men, we are interested in you. For though we knew you, at first by letter, afterwards by personal intercourse, to be pious and Catholic, that is, true members ⁵⁴⁹

46 of the body of Christ, nevertheless, our humble ministry also was of use to you, for when you had received the word of God from us, "you received it," as says the apostle, "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God. Through the grace and mercy of the Saviour, so great was the fruit arising from this ministry of ours in your family, that when preparations for her marriage were already completed, the holy Demetrias preferred the spiritual embrace of that Husband who is fairer than the sons of men, and in espousing themselves to whom virgins retain their virginity, and gain more abundant spiritual fruitfulness. We should not, however, yet have known how this exhortation of ours had been received by the faithful and noble maiden, as we departed shortly before she took on her the vow of chastity, had we not learned from the joyful announcement and reliable testimony of your letter, that this great gift of God, planted and watered indeed by means of His servants, but owing its increase to Himself, had been granted to us as labourers in His vineyard. 2. Since these things are so, no one may charge us with presuming, if, on the ground of this closer spiritual relation, we manifest our solicitude for your welfare by warning you to avoid opinions opposed to the grace of God.

47 For though the apostle commands us in preaching the word to be "instant in season and out of season," yet we do not reckon you among the number of those to whom a word or a letter from us exhorting you carefully to avoid what is inconsistent with sound doctrine would seem "out of season. Hence it was that you received our admonition in so kindly a manner, that, in the letter to which we are now replying, you say, "I thank you heartily for the pious advice which your Reverence gave me, not to lend an ear to those men who, by their mischievous writings, often corrupt our holy faith." 3. In this letter you go on to say, "But your Reverence knows that I and my household are entirely separated from persons of this description; and all our family follow so strictly the Catholic faith as never at any time to have wandered from it, or fallen into any heresy, -- I speak not of the heresy of sects who have erred in a measure hardly admiring of expiation, but of those whose errors seem to be trivial. This statement renders it more and more necessary for us, in writing to you, not to pass over in silence the conduct of those who are attempting to corrupt even those who are sound in the faith.

48 We consider your house to be no insignificant Church of Christ, nor indeed is the error of those men trivial who think that we have of ourselves

whatever righteousness, temperance, piety, chastity is in us, on the ground that God has so formed us, that beyond the revelation which He has given He imparts to us no further aid for performing by our own choice those things which by study we have ascertained to be our duty; declaring nature and knowledge to be the grace of God, and the only aid for living righteously and justly. For the possession, indeed, of a will inclined to what is good, whence proceed the life of uprightness and that love which so far excels all other gifts that God Himself is said to be love, and by which alone is fulfilled in us as far as we fulfil them, the divine law and council, -- for the possession, I say, of such a will, they hold that we are not indebted to the aid of God, but affirm that we ourselves of our own will are sufficient for these things. Let it not appear to you a trifling error that men should wish to profess themselves Christians, and yet be unwilling to hear the apostle of Christ, who, having said, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts," lest any one should think that he had this love through his own free will, immediately subjoined, "by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us.

⁴⁹ Understand, then, how greatly and how fatally that man errs who does not acknowledge that this is the "great gift of the Saviour," who, when He ascended on high, "led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. CHAP. II. -- 4. How, then, could we so far conceal our true feelings as not to warn you, in whom we feel so deep an interest, to beware of such doctrines, after we had read a certain book addressed to the holy Demetrias? Whether this book has reached you, and who is its author, we are desirous to hear in your answer to this. In this book, were it lawful for such a one to read it, a virgin of Christ would read that her holiness and all her spiritual riches are to spring from no other source than herself, and thus, before she attains to the perfection of blessedness, she would learn, -- which may God forbid! -- to be ungrateful to God. For the words addressed to her in the said book are these: -- "You have here, then, those things on account of which you are deservedly, nay more, more especially to be preferred before others; for your earthly rank and wealth are understood to be derived from your relatives, not from yourself, but your spiritual riches no one can have conferred on you but yourself; for these, then, you are justly to be praised, for these you are de-

⁵⁰ servedly to be preferred to others, for they can exist only from yourself, and in yourself." 5. You see, doubtless, how dangerous is the doctrine in these words, against which you must be on your guard. For the affirmation, in-

deed, that these spiritual riches can exist only in yourself, is very well and truly said: that evidently is food; but the affirmation that they cannot exist except from you is unmixed poison. Far be it from any virgin of Christ willingly to listen to statements like these. Every virgin of Christ understands the innate poverty of the human heart, and therefore declines to have it adorned otherwise than by the gifts of her Spouse. Let her rather listen to the apostle when he says: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. And therefore in regard to these spiritual riches let her listen, not to him who says: "No one can confer them on you except yourself, and they cannot exist except from you and in you; but to him who says: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 6.

⁵¹ In regard to that sacred virginal chastity, also, which does not belong to her from herself, but is the gift of God, bestowed, however, on her who is believing and willing, let her hear the same truthful and pious teacher, who when he treats of this subject says: "I would that all men were even as I myself: but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. Let her hear also Him who is the only Spouse, not only of herself, but of the whole Church, thus speaking of this chastity and purity: "All cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given; that she may understand that for her possession of this so great and excellent gift, she ought rather to render thanks to our God and Lord, than to listen to the words of any one who says that she possessed it from herself, -- words which we may not designate as those of a flatterer seeking to please, lest we seem to judge rashly concerning the hidden thoughts of men, but which are assuredly those of a misguided eulogist. For "every good gift and every perfect gift," as the Apostle James says, "is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights; from this source, therefore, cometh this holy virginity, in which you who approve of it, and rejoice in it, have been excelled by your daughter, who, coming after you in birth, has gone before you in conduct;

⁵² descended from you in lineage, has risen above you in honour; following you in age, has gone beyond you in holiness; in whom also that begins to be yours which could not be in your own person. For she did not contract an earthly marriage, that she might be, not for herself only, but also for you,

spiritually enriched, in a higher degree than yourself, since you, even with this addition, are inferior to her, because you contracted the marriage of which she is the offspring. These things are gifts of God, and are yours, indeed, but are not from yourselves; for you have this treasure in earthly bodies, which are still frail as the vessels of the potter, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of you. And be not surprised because we say that these things are yours, and not from you, for we speak of "daily bread" as ours, but yet add, "give it to us," test it should be thought that it was from ourselves. 7. Wherefore obey the precept of Scripture, "Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks; for you pray in order that you may have constantly and increasingly these gifts, you render thanks because you have them not of yourself. For who separates you from that mass of death and perdition derived from Adam? Is it not He "who came to seek and to save that which was lost? Was, then, a man, indeed, on hearing the apostle's question, "Who maketh thee to differ?

⁵³ to reply, "My own good will, my faith, my righteousness," and to disregard what immediately follows: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? We are unwilling, then, yea, utterly unwilling, that a consecrated virgin, when she hears or reads these words: "Your spiritual riches no one can have conferred on you; for these you are justly to be praised, for these you are deservedly to be preferred to others, for they can exist only from yourself, and in yourself," should thus boast of her riches as if she had not received them. Let her say, indeed, "In me are Thy vows, O God, I will render praises unto Thee; but since they are in her, not from her, let her remember also to say, "Lord, by Thy will Thou hast furnished strength to my beauty," because, though it be from her, inasmuch as it is the acting of her own will, without which we cannot do what is good, yet we are not to say, as he said, that it is "only from her. For our own will, unless it be aided by the grace

⁵⁴ of God, cannot alone be even in name good will, for, says the apostle, "it is God who worketh in us, both to will, and to do according to good will," -- not, as these persons think, merely by revealing knowledge, that we may know what we ought to do, but also by inspiring Christian love, that we may also by choice perform the things which by study we have learned. 8. For doubtless the value of the gift of continence was known to him who said, "I perceived that no man can be continent unless God bestowed the gift. He

not only knew then how great a benefit it was, and how eagerly it ought to be coveted, but also that, unless God gave it, it could not exist; for wisdom had taught him this for he says, "This also was a point of wisdom, to know whose gift it was; and the knowledge did not suffice him, but he says, "I went to the Lord and made my supplication to Him. God then aids us in this matter, not only by making us know what is to be done, but also by making us do through love what we already know through learning. No one, therefore, can possess, not only knowledge, but also continence, unless God give it to him. Whence it was that when he had knowledge he prayed that he might have continence, that it might be in him, because he knew that it was not from him;

⁵⁵ or if on account of the freedom of his will it was in a certain sense from himself, yet it was not from himself alone, because no one can be continent unless God bestow on him the gift. But he whose opinions I am censuring, in speaking of spiritual riches, among which is doubtless that bright and beautiful gift of continence, does not say that they may exist in you, and from yourself, but says that they can exist only from you, and in you, in such a way that, as a virgin of Christ has these things nowhere else than in herself, so it can be believed possible for her to have them from no other source than from herself, and in this way (which may a merciful God avert from her heart! she shall so boast as if she had not received them! CHAP. III. -- 9.

⁵⁶ We indeed hold such an opinion concerning the training of this holy virgin, and the Christian humility in which she was nourished and brought up, as to be assured that when she read these words, if she did read, them, she would break out into lamentations, and humbly smite her breast, and perhaps burst into tears, and pray in faith to the Lord to whose service she was dedicated and by whom she was sanctified, pleading with Him that these were not her own words, but another's, and asking that her faith might not be such as to believe that she had anything whereof to glory in herself and not in the Lord. For her glory is in herself, not in the words of another, as the apostle says: "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have glory (rejoicing) in himself alone, and not in another. But God forbid that her glory should be in herself, and not in Him to whom the Psalmist says, "Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. For her glory is then profitably in herself, when God, who is in her, is Himself her glory, from whom she has every good, by which she is good, and shall have all things by

which she shall be made better, in as far as she may become better in this life, and by which she shall be made perfect when rendered so by divine grace, not by human praise.

⁵⁷ "For her soul shall be praised in the Lord," "who satisfieth her desire with good things," because He Himself has inspired this desire, that His virgin should not boast of any good, as if she had not received it. 10. Inform us, then, in reply to this letter, whether we have judged truly in supposing these to be your daughter's sentiments. For we know well that you and all your family are, and have been, worshippers of the indivisible Trinity. But human error insinuates itself in other forms than in erroneous opinions concerning the indivisible Trinity. There are other subjects also, in regard to which men fall into very dangerous errors. As, for example, that of which we have spoken in this letter at greater length, perhaps, than might have sufficed to a person of your stedfast and pure wisdom. And yet we know not to whom, except to God, and therefore to the Trinity, wrong is done by the man who denies that the good that comes from God is from God; which evil may God avert from you, as we believe He does! May God altogether forbid that the book out of which we have thought it our duty to extract some words, that they might be more easily understood, should produce any such impression, we do not say on your mind, or on that of the holy virgin your daughter, but on the mind of the least deserving of your male or female servants. 11.

⁵⁸ But if you study more carefully even those words in which the writer appears to speak in favour of grace or the aid of God, you will find them so ambiguous that they may have reference either to nature or to knowledge, or to forgiveness of sins. For even in regard to that which they are forced to acknowledge, that we ought to pray that we may not enter into temptation, they may consider that the words mean that we are so far helped to it that, by our praying and knocking, the knowledge of the truth ⁵⁹ is so revealed to us that we may learn what it is our duty to do, not so far as that our will receives strength, whereby we may do that which we learn to be our duty; and as to their saying that it is by the grace or help of God that the Lord Christ has been set before us as an example of holy living, they interpret this so as to teach the same doctrine, affirming, namely, that we learn by His example how we ought to live, but denying that we are so aided as to do through love what we know by learning. 12. Find in this book, if you can, anything in which, excepting nature and the freedom of the will (which pertains to the

same nature), and the remission of sin and the revealing of doctrine, any such aid of God is acknowledged as that which he acknowledges who said: "When I perceived that no man can be continent unless God bestow the gift, and that this also is a point of wisdom to know whose gift it is, I went to the Lord, and made my supplication to Him. For he did not desire to receive, in answer to his prayer, the nature in which he was made; nor was he solicitous to obtain the natural freedom of the will with which he was made; nor did he crave the remission of sins, seeing that he prayed rather for continence, that he might not sin;

⁶⁰ nor did he desire to know what he ought to do, seeing that he already confessed that he knew whose gift this continence was; but he wished to receive from the Spirit of wisdom such strength of will, such ardour of love, as should suffice for fully practising the great virtue of continence. If, therefore, you succeed in finding any such statement in that book, we will heartily thank you if, in your answer, you deign to inform us of it. 13. It is impossible for us to tell how greatly we desire to find in the writings of these men, whose works are read by very many for their pungency and eloquence, the open confession of that grace which the apostle vehemently commends, who says that "God has given to every man the measure of faith," "without which it is impossible to please God," "by which the just live," "which worketh by love," before which and without which no works of any man are in any respect to be reckoned good, since "whatsoever is not of faith is sin. He affirms that God distributes to every man, and that we receive divine assistance to live piously and justly, not only by the revelation of that knowledge which without charity "puffeth up," but by our being inspired with that "love which is the fulfilling of the law," and which so edifies our heart that knowledge does not puff it up. But hitherto I have failed to find any such statements in the writings of these men. 14.

⁶¹ But especially we should wish that these sentiments should be found in that book from which we have quoted the words in which the author, praising a virgin of Christ as if no one except herself could confer on her spiritual riches, and as if these could not exist except from herself, does not wish her to glory in the Lord, but to glory as if she had not received them. In this book, though it contain neither his name nor your own honoured name, he nevertheless mentions that a request had been made to him by the mother of the virgin to write to her. In a certain epistle of his, however, to which he

openly attaches his name, and does not conceal the name of the sacred virgin, the same Pelagius says that he had written to her, and endeavours to prove, by appealing to the said work, that he most openly confessed the grace of God, which he is alleged to have passed over in silence, or denied. But we beg you to condescend to inform us, in your reply, whether that be the very book in which he has inserted these words about spiritual riches, and whether it has reached your Holiness.

LETTER 189. TO BONIFACE, AD 418

⁶²(A.D. 418.) to Boniface,¹⁰ my Noble Lord and Justly Distinguished and Honourable Son, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. I. I had already written a reply to your Charity, but while I was waiting for an opportunity of forwarding the letter, my beloved son Faustus arrived here on his way to your Excellency. After he had received the letter which I had intended to be carried by him to your Benevolence, he stated to me that you were very desirous that I should write you something which might build ⁶³you up unto the eternal salvation of which you have hope in Christ Jesus our Lord. And, although I was busily occupied at the time, he insisted, with an earnestness corresponding to the love which, as you know, he bears to you, that I should do this without delay. To meet his convenience, therefore, as he was in haste to depart, I thought it better to write, though necessarily without much time for reflection, rather than put off the gratification of your pious desire, my noble lord and justly distinguished and honourable son. 2. All is contained in these brief sentences: "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength: and love thy neighbour as thyself; for these are the words in which the Lord, when on earth, gave an epitome of religion, saying in the gospel, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Daily advance, then, in this love, both by praying and by well-doing, that through the help of Him, who enjoined it on you, and whose gift it is, it may be nourished and increased, until, being perfected, it render you perfect. "For this is the love which," as the apostle says, "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. This is "the fulfilling of the law; this is the same love by which faith works, of which he says again, "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith, which worketh by love." 3.

⁶⁴In this love, then, all our holy fathers, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles pleased God. In this all true martyrs contended against the devil

even to the shedding of blood, and because in them it neither waxed cold nor failed, they became conquerors. In this all true believers daily make progress, seeking to acquire not an earthly kingdom, but the kingdom of heaven; not a temporal, but an eternal inheritance; not gold and silver, but the incorruptible riches of the angels; not the good things of this life, which are enjoyed with trembling, and which no one can take with him when he dies, but the vision of God, whose grace and power of imparting felicity transcend all beauty of form in bodies not only on earth but also in heaven, transcend all spiritual loveliness in men, however just and holy, transcend all the glory of the angels and powers of the world above, transcend not only all that language can express, but all that thought can imagine concerning Him. And let us not despair of the fulfilment of such a great promise because it is exceeding great, but rather believe that we shall receive it because He who has promised it is exceeding great, as the blessed Apostle John says: "Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." 4.

⁶⁵ Do not think that it is impossible for any one to please God while engaged in active military service. Among such persons was the holy David, to whom God gave so great a testimony; among them also were many righteous men of that time; among them was also that centurion who said to the Lord: "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed: for I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it; and concerning whom the Lord said: "Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. Among them was that Cornelius to whom an angel said: "Cornelius, thine alms are accepted, and thy prayers are heard," when he directed him to send to the blessed Apostle Peter, and to hear from him what he ought to do, to which apostle he sent a devout soldier, requesting him to come to him. Among them were also the soldiers who, when they had come to be baptized by John, -- the sacred forerunner of the Lord, and the friend of the Bridegroom, of whom the Lord says:

⁶⁶ "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist," -- and had inquired of him what they should do, received the answer, "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be

content with your wages. Certainly he did not prohibit them to serve as soldiers when he commanded them to be content with their pay for the service. 5. They occupy indeed a higher place before God who, abandoning all these secular employments, serve Him with the strictest chastity; but "every one," as the apostle says, "hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. Some, then, in praying for you, fight against your invisible enemies; you, in fighting for them, contend against the barbarians, their visible enemies. Would that one faith existed in all, for then there would be less weary struggling, and the devil with his angels would be more easily conquered; but since it is necessary in this life that the citizens of the kingdom of heaven should be subjected to temptations among erring and impious men, that they

⁶⁷ may be exercised, and "tried as gold in the furnace," we ought not before the appointed time to desire to live with those alone who are holy and righteous, so that, by patience, we may deserve to receive this blessedness in its proper time. 6. Think, then, of this first of all, when you are arming for the battle, that even your bodily strength is a gift of God; for, considering this, you will not employ the gift of God against God. For, when faith is pledged, it is to be kept even with the enemy against whom the war is waged, how much more with the friend for whom the battle is fought! Peace should be the object of your desire; war should be waged only as a necessity, and waged only that God may by it deliver men from the necessity and preserve them in peace. For peace is not sought in order to the kindling of war, but war is waged in order that peace may be obtained. Therefore, even in waging war, cherish the spirit of a peacemaker, that, by conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantages of peace; for our Lord says: "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God. If, however, peace among men be so sweet as procuring temporal safety, how much sweeter is that peace with God which procures for men the eternal felicity of the angels! Let necessity, therefore, and not your will, slay the enemy who fights against you.

⁶⁸ As violence is used towards him who rebels and resists, so mercy is due to the vanquished or the captive, especially in the case in which future troubling of the peace is not to be feared. 7. Let the manner of your life be adorned by chastity, sobriety, and moderation; for it is exceedingly disgraceful that lust should subdue him whom man finds invincible, and that wine

should overpower him whom the sword assails in vain. As to worldly riches, if you do not possess them, let them not be sought after on earth by doing evil; and if you possess them, let them by good works be laid up in heaven. The manly and Christian spirit ought neither to be elated by the accession, nor crushed by the loss of this world's treasures. Let us rather think of what the Lord says: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also; and certainly, when we hear the exhortation to lift up our hearts, it is our duty to give unfeignedly the response which you know that we are accustomed to give. 8. In these things, indeed, I know that you are very careful, and the good report which I hear of you fills me with great delight, and moves me to congratulate you on account of it in the Lord. This letter, therefore, may serve rather as a mirror in which you may see what you are, than as a directory from which to learn what you ought to be:

⁶⁹nevertheless, whatever you may discover, either from this letter or from the Holy Scriptures, to be still wanting to you in regard to a holy life, persevere in urgently seeking it both by effort and by prayer; and for the things which you have, give thanks to God as the Fountain of goodness, whence you have received them; in every good action let the glory be given to God, and humility be exercised by you, for, as it is written, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights. But however much you may advance in the love of God and of your neighbour, and in true piety, do not imagine, as long as you are in this life, that you are without sin, for concerning this we read in Holy Scripture: "Is not the life of man upon earth a life of temptation? Wherefore, since always, as long as you are in this body, it is necessary for you to say in prayer, as the Lord taught us: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," remember quickly to forgive, if any one shall do you wrong and shall ask pardon from you, that you may be able to pray sincerely, and may prevail in seeking pardon for your own sins. These things, my beloved friend, I have written to you in haste, as the anxiety of the bearer to depart urged me not to detain him;

⁷⁰but I thank God that I have in some measure complied with your pious wish. May the mercy of God ever protect you, my noble lord and justly distinguished son.

LETTER 191. AD 418

⁷¹(A.D. 418.) to my Venerable Lord and Pious Brother and Co-Presbyter Sixtus,⁸ Worthy of Being Received in the Love of Christ, Augustin Sends Greet-

ing in the Lord. 1. Since the arrival of the letter which, in my absence, your Grace forwarded by our holy brother the presbyter Firmus, and which I read on my return to Hippo, but not until after the bearer had departed, the present is my first opportunity ⁷²of sending to you any reply, and it is with great pleasure that I entrust it to our very dearly beloved son, the acolyte Albinus. Your letter, addressed to Alypius and myself jointly, came at a time when we were not together, and this is the reason why you will now receive a letter from each of us, instead of one from both, in reply. For the bearer of this letter has just gone, meanwhile, from me to visit my venerable brother and co-bishop Alypius, who will write a reply for himself to your Holiness, and he has carried with him your letter, which I had already perused. As to the great joy with which that letter filled my heart, why should a man attempt to say what it is impossible to express? Indeed, I do not think that you yourself have any adequate idea of the amount of good done by your sending that letter to us; but take our word for it, for as you bear witness to your feelings, so do we bear witness to ours, declaring how profoundly we have been moved by the perfectly transparent soundness of the views declared in that letter.

⁷³For if, when you sent a very short letter on the same subject to the most blessed aged Aurelius, by the acolyte Leo, we transcribed it with joyful alacrity, and read it with enthusiastic interest to all who were within our reach, as an exposition of your sentiments, both in regard to that most fatal dogma [of Pelagius], and in regard to the grace of God freely given by Him to small and great, to which that dogma is diametrically opposed; how great, think you, is the joy with which we have read this more extended statement in your writing, how great the zeal with which we take care that it be read by all to whom we have been able already or may yet be able to make it known! For what could be read or heard with greater satisfaction than so clear a defence of the grace of God against its enemies, from the mouth of one who was before this proudly claimed by these enemies as a mighty supporter of their cause? Or is there anything for which we ought to give more abundant thanksgivings to God, than that His grace is so ably defended by those to whom it is given, against those to whom it is not given, or by whom, when given, it is not accepted, because in the secret and just judgment of God the disposition to accept it is not given to them? 2.

⁷⁴ Wherefore, my venerable lord, and holy brother worthy of being received in the love of Christ, although you render a most excellent service when you thus write on this subject to brethren before whom the adversaries are wont to boast themselves of your being their friend, nevertheless, there remains upon you the yet greater duty of seeing not only that those be punished with wholesome severity who dare to prate more openly their declaration of that error, most dangerously hostile to the Christian name, but also that with pastoral vigilance, on behalf of the weaker and simpler sheep of the Lord, most strenuous precautions be used against those who more covertly, indeed, and timidly, but perseveringly, and in whispers, as it were, teach this error, "creeping into houses," as the apostle says, and doing with practised impiety all those other things which are mentioned immediately afterwards in that passage. Nor ought those to be overlooked who under the restraint of fear hide their sentiments under the most profound silence, yet have not ceased to cherish the same perverse opinions as before. For some of their party might be known to you before that pestilence was denounced by the most explicit condemnation of the apostolic see, whom you perceive to have now become suddenly silent;

⁷⁵ nor can it be ascertained whether they have been really cured of it, otherwise than through their not only forbearing from the utterance of these false dogmas, but also defending the truths which are opposed to their former errors with the same zeal as they used to show on the other side. These are, however, to be more gently dealt with; for what need is there for causing further terror to those whom their silence itself proves to be sufficiently terrified already? At the same time, though they should not be frightened, they should be taught; and in my opinion they may more easily, while their fear of severity assists the teacher of the truth, be so taught that by the Lord's help, after they have learned to understand and love His grace, they may speak out as antagonists of the error which meanwhile they dare not confess.

LETTER 192. AD 418

⁷⁶ (A.D. 418.) to my Venerable Lord and Highly Esteemed and Holy Brother, Caelestine,³ Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. I. I was at a considerable distance from home when the letter of your Holiness addressed to me at Hippo arrived by the hands of the clerk Projectus. When I had returned home, and, having read your letter, felt myself to be owing you a reply, I was

still waiting for some means of communicating with you, when, lo! a most desirable opportunity presented itself in the departure of our very dear brother the acolyte Albinus, who leaves us immediately. Rejoicing, therefore, in your health, which is most earnestly desired by me, I return to your Holiness the salutation which I was owing. But I always owe ⁷⁷ you love, the only debt which, even when it has been paid, holds him who has paid it a debtor still. For it is given when it is paid, but it is owing even after it has been given, for there is no time at which it ceases to be due. Nor when it is given is it lost, but it is rather multiplied by giving it; for in possessing it, not in parting with it, it is given. And since it cannot be given unless it is possessed, so neither can it be possessed unless it is given; nay, at the very time when it is given by a man it increases in that man, and, according to the number of persons to whom it is given, the amount of it which is gained becomes greater. Moreover, how can that be denied to friends which is due even to enemies? To enemies, however, this debt is paid with caution, whereas to friends it is repaid with confidence. Nevertheless, it uses every effort to secure that it receives back what it gives, even in the case of those to whom it renders good for evil. For we wish to have as a friend the man whom, as an enemy, we truly love, for we do not sincerely love him unless we wish him to be good, which he cannot be until he be delivered from the sin of cherished enmities. 2. Love, therefore, is not paid away in the same manner as money;

⁷⁸ for, whereas money is diminished, love is increased by paying it away. They differ also in this, -- that we give evidence of greater goodwill to the man to whom we may have given money if we do not seek to have it returned; but no one can be a true donor of love unless he lovingly insist on its repayment. For money, when it is received, accrues to him to whom it is given, but forsakes him by whom it is given; love, on the contrary, even when it is not repaid, nevertheless increases with the man who insists on its repayment by the person whom he loves; and not only so, but the person by whom it is returned to him does not begin to possess it till he pays it back again. Wherefore, my lord and brother, I willingly give to you, and joyfully receive from you, the love which we owe to each other. The love which I receive I still claim, and the love which I give I still owe. For we ought to obey with docility the precept of the One Master, whose disciples we both profess to be, when He says to us by His apostle: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another."

LETTER 195. AD 418

(A.D. 418.) to His Holy Lord and Most Blessed Father,² Augustin, Jerome Sends Greeting. At all times I have esteemed your Blessedness with becoming reverence and honour, and have loved the Lord and Saviour dwelling in you. But now we add, if possible, something to that which has already reached a climax, and we heap up what was already full, so that we do not suffer a single hour to pass without the mention of your name, because you have, with the ardour of unshaken faith, stood your ground against opposing storms, and preferred, so far as this was in your power, to be delivered from Sodom, though you should come forth alone, rather than linger behind with those who are doomed to perish. Your wisdom apprehends what I mean to say. Go on and prosper! You are renowned throughout the whole world; Catholics revere and look up to you as the restorer of the ancient faith, and -- which is a token of yet more illustrious glory -- all heretics abhor you. They persecute me also with equal hatred, seeking by imprecation to take away the life which they cannot reach with the sword. May the mercy of Christ the Lord preserve you in safety and mindful of me, my venerable lord and most blessed father."³

LETTER 201. AD 419

⁸⁰ (A.D. 419.) the Emperors Honorius Augustus and Theodosius Augustus to Bishop Aurelius Send Greeting. 1. It had been indeed long ago decreed that Pelagius and Celestius, the authors of an execrable heresy, should, as pestilent corruptors of the Catholic truth, be expelled from the city of Rome, lest they should, by their baneful influence, pervert the minds of the ignorant. In this our clemency followed up the judgment of your Holiness, according to which it is beyond all question that they were unanimously condemned after an impartial examination of their opinions. Their obstinate persistence in the offence having, however, made it necessary to issue the decree a second time, we have enacted further by a recent edict, that if any one, knowing that they are concealing themselves in any part of the provinces, shall delay either to drive them out or to inform on them, he, as an accomplice, shall be liable to the punishment prescribed. 2. To secure, however, the combined efforts of the Christian zeal of all men for the destruction of this preposterous heresy, it will be proper, most dearly beloved father, that the authority of

⁸¹ your Holiness be applied to the correction of certain bishops, who either support the evil reasonings of these men by their silent consent, or abstain from assailing them with open opposition. Let your Reverence, then, by suitable writings, cause all bishops to be admonished (as soon as they shall know, by the order of your Holiness, that this order is laid upon them) that whoever shall, through impious obstinacy, neglect to vindicate the purity of their doctrine by subscribing the condemnation of the persons before mentioned, shall, after being punished by the loss of their episcopal office, be cut off by excommunication and banished for life from their sees. For as, by a sincere confession of the truth, we ourselves, in obedience to the Council of Nice, worship God as the Creator of all things, and as the Fountain of our imperial sovereignty, your Holiness will not suffer the members of this odious sect, inventing, to the injury of religion, notions new and strange, to hide in writings privately circulated an error condemned by public authority. For, most beloved and loving father, the guilt of heresy is in no degree less grievous in those who either by dissimulation lend the error their secret support, or by abstaining from denouncing it extend to it a fatal approbation. (In another hand.) May the Divinity preserve you in safety for many years! Given at Ravenna, on the 9th day of June, in the Consulship of Monaxius and Plinta. A letter, in the same terms, was also sent to the holy Bishop Augustin.

LETTER 202. AD 419

⁸² (A.D. 419. to the Bishops Alypius and Augustin, my Lords Truly Holy, and D deservedly Loved and Reverenced, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ. Chap. I. -- 1. The holy presbyter Innocentius, who is the bearer of this letter, did not last year take with him a letter from me to your Eminences, as he had no expectation of returning to Africa. We thank God, however, that it so happened, as it afforded you an opportunity of overcoming [evil with good in requiting] our silence by your letter. Every opportunity of writing to you, revered fathers, is most acceptable to me. I call God to witness that, if it were possible, I would take the wings of a dove and fly to be folded in your embrace. Loving you, indeed, as I have always done, from a deep sense of your worth, but now especially because your co-operation and your leadership have succeeded in strangling the heresy of Celestius, a heresy which has so poisoned the hearts of many, that, though they felt they were vanquished and condemned, yet they did not lay aside their venomous sentiments, and,

as the only thing that remained in their power, hated us by whom they imagined that they had lost the liberty of teaching heretical doctrines. CHAP. II. -- 2.

⁸³ As to your inquiry whether I have written in opposition to the books of Annianus, this pretended deacon² of Celedae, who is amply provided for in order that he may furnish frivolous accounts of the blasphemies of others, know that I received these books, sent in loose sheets by our holy brother, the presbyter Eusebius, not long ago. Since then I have suffered so much through the attacks of disease, and through the falling asleep of your distinguished and holy daughter Eustochium, that I almost thought of passing over these writings with silent contempt. For he flounders from beginning to end in the same mud, and, with the exception of some jingling phrases which are not original, says nothing he had not said before. Nevertheless, I have gained much in the fact, that in attempting to answer my letter he has declared his opinions with less reserve, and has published to all men his blasphemies; for every error which he disowned in the wretched synod of Diospolis he in this treatise openly avows. It is indeed no great thing to answer his superlatively silly puerilities, but if the Lord spare me, and I have a sufficient staff of amanuenses, I will in a few brief lucubrations answer him, not to refute a defunct heresy, but to silence his ignorance and blasphemy by arguments: and this your Holiness could do better than I, as you would relieve me from the necessity of praising my own works in writing to the heretic.

⁸⁴ Our holy daughters Albina and Melania, and our son Pinianus, salute you cordially. I give to our holy presbyter Innocentius this short letter to convey to you from the holy place Bethlehem. Your niece Paula piteously entreats you to remember her, and salutes you warmly. May the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve you safe and mindful of me, my lords truly holy, and fathers deservedly loved and revered.

LETTER 203. AD 420

⁸⁵ (A.D. 420.) to my Noble Lord and Most Excellent and Loving Son, Largus, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. I received the letter of your Excellency, in which you ask me to write to you. This assuredly you would not have done unless you had esteemed acceptable and pleasant that which you suppose me capable of writing to you. ⁸⁶ other words, I assume that, having desired the vanities of this life when you had not tried them, now, after the

trial has been made, you despise them, because in them the pleasure is deceitful, the labour fruitless, the anxiety perpetual, the elevation dangerous. Men seek them at first through imprudence, and give them up at last with disappointment and remorse. This is true of all the things which, in the cares of this mortal life, are coveted with more eagerness than wisdom by the uneasy solicitude of the men of the world. But it is wholly otherwise with the hope of the pious: very different is the fruit of their labours, very different the reward of their dangers. Fear and grief, and labour and danger are unavoidable, so long as we live in this world; but the great question is, for what cause, with what expectation, with what aim a man endures these things. When, indeed, I contemplate the lovers of this world, I know not at what time wisdom can most opportunely attempt their moral improvement; for when they have apparent prosperity, they reject disdainfully her salutary admonitions, and regard them as old wives fables; when, again, they are in adversity, they think rather of escaping merely from present suffering than of obtaining the real remedy by which they may be made whole, and may arrive at that place where they shall be altogether exempt from suffering. Occasionally, however, some open their ears and hearts to the truth, -- rarely in prosperity, more frequently in adversity.

⁸⁷ These are indeed the few, for such it is predicted that they shall be. Among these I desire you to be, because I love you truly, my noble lord and most excellent and loving son. Let this counsel be my answer to your letter, because though I am unwilling that you should henceforth suffer such things as you have endured, yet I would grieve still more if you were found to have suffered these things without any change for the better in your life.

LETTER 208. AD 423

⁸⁸ (A.D. 423.) to the Lady Felicia, His Daughter in the Faith, and Worthy of Honour Among the Members of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. ⁸⁹ 1. I do not doubt, when I consider both your faith and the weakness or wickedness of others, that your mind has been disturbed, for even a holy apostle, full of compassionate love, confesses a similiar experience, saying, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? Wherefore, as I myself share your pain, and am solicitous for your welfare in Christ, I have thought it my duty to address this letter, partly consolatory, partly hortatory, to your Holiness, because in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which all His members are one, you are very closely related to us, being loved

as an honourable member in that body, and partaking with us of life in His Holy Spirit. 2. I exhort you, therefore, not to be too much troubled by those offences which for this very reason were foretold as destined to come, that when they came we might remember that they had been foretold, and not be greatly disconcerted by them. For the Lord Himself in His gospel foretold them, saying, "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh! These are the men of whom the apostle said, "They seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's. There are, therefore, some who hold the honourable office of shepherds in order that they may provide for the flock of Christ;

⁹⁰ others occupy that position that they may enjoy the temporal honours and secular advantages connected with the office. It must needs happen that these two kinds of pastors, some dying, others succeeding them, should continue in the Catholic Church even to the end of time, and the judgment of the Lord. If, then, in the times of the apostles there were men such that Paul, grieved by their conduct, enumerates among his trials, "perils among false brethren," and yet he did not haughtily cast them out, but patiently bore with them, how much more must such arise in our times, since the Lord most plainly says concerning this age which is drawing to a close, "that because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold. The word which follows, however, ought to console and exhort us, for He adds, "He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved." 3. Moreover, as there are good shepherds and bad shepherds, so also in flocks there are good and bad. The good are represented by the name of sheep, but the bad are called goats: they feed, nevertheless, side by side in the same pastures, until the Chief Shepherd, who is called the One Shepherd, shall come and separate them one from another according to His promise, "as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. On us He has laid the duty of gathering the flock; to Himself He has reserved the work of final separation, because it pertains properly to Him who cannot err.

⁹¹ For those presumptuous servants, who have lightly ventured to separate before the time which the Lord has reserved in His own hand, have, instead of ⁵⁵⁹ ⁹² separating others, only been separated themselves from Catholic unity; for how could those have a clean flock who have by schism become unclean ? 4. In order, therefore, that we may remain in the unity of the

faith, and not, stumbling at the offences occasioned by the chaff, desert the threshing-floor of the Lord, but rather remain as wheat till the final winnowing,¹ and by the love which imparts stability to us bear with the beaten straw our great Shepherd in the gospel admonishes us concerning the good shepherds, that we should not, on account of their good works. place our hope in them, but glorify our heavenly Father for making them such; and concerning the bad shepherds (whom He designed to point out under the name of Scribes and Pharisees), He reminds us that they teach that which is good though they do that which is evil.¹ 5. Concerning the good shepherds He thus speaks: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." 2 Concerning the bad shepherds He admonishes the sheep in these words: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do.

⁹³ not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."³ When these are listened to, the sheep of Christ, even through evil teachers, hear His voice, and do not forsake the unity of His flock, because the good which they hear them teach belongs not to the shepherds but to HIM, and therefore the sheep are safely fed, since even under bad shepherds they are nourished in the Lord's pastures. They do not, however, imitate the actions of the bad shepherds, because such actions belong not to the world but to the shepherds themselves. In regard, however, to those whom they see to be good shepherds, they not only hear the good things which they teach, but also imitate the good actions which they perform. Of this number was the apostle, who said: "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."⁴ He was a light kindled by the Eternal Light, the LOrd Jesus Christ Himself, and was placed on a candlestick because He gloried in His cross, concerning which he said: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁵ Moreover, since he sought not his own things, but the things which are Jesus Christ's, whilst he exhorts to the imitation of his own life those whom he had "begotten through the gospel,"⁶ he yet severely reproved those who, by the names of apostles, introduced schisms, and he chides those who said, "I am of Paul; was Paul crucified for you ?

⁹⁴ or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" 7 6. Hence we understand both that the good shepherds are those who seek not their own, but the things of Jesus Christ, and that the good sheep, though imitating the works of the good shepherds by whose ministry they have been gathered together, do not place their hope in them, but rather in the Lord, by Whose blood they are redeemed; so that when they may happen to be placed under bad shepherds, preaching Christ's doctrine and doing their own evil works, they will do what they teach, but will not do what they do, and will not, on account of these sons of wickedness, forsake the pastures of the one true Church. For there are both good and bad in the Catholic Church, which, unlike the Donatist sect, is extended and spread abroad, not in Africa only, but through all nations; as the apostle expresses it, "bringing forth fruit, and increasing in the whole world." 8 But those who are separated from the Church, as long as they are opposed to it cannot be good; although an apparently praiseworthy conversation seems to prove some of them to be good, their separation from the Church itself renders them bad, according to the saying of the Lord: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." 9 7.

⁹⁵ Therefore, my daughter, worthy of all welcome and honour among the members of Christ, I exhort you to hold faithfully that which the Lord has committed to you, and love with all your heart Him and His Church who suffered you not, by joining yourself with the lost, to lose the recompense of your virginity, or perish with them. For if you should depart out of this world separated from the unity of the body of Christ, it will avail you nothing to have preserved inviolate your virginity. But God, who is rich in mercy, has done in regard to you that which is written in the gospel: when the invited guests excused themselves to the master of the feast, he said to the servants, "Go ye, therefore, into the highways and hedges, and as many as ye shall find compel them to come in." 10 Although, however, you owe sincerest affection to those good servants of His through whose instrumentality you were compelled to come in, yet it is your duty,

⁹⁶ nevertheless, to place your hope on Him who prepared the banquet, by whom also you have been persuaded to come to eternal and blessed life. Committing to Him your heart, your vow, and your sacred virginity, and your faith, hope, and charity, you will not be moved by offences, which shall abound even to the end; but, by the unshaken strength of piety, shall be safe

and shall triumph in the Lord, continuing in the unity of His body even to the end. Let me know, by your answer, with what sentiments you regard my anxiety for you, to which I have to the best of my ability given expression in this letter. May the grace and mercy of God ever protect you !

LETTER 209. TO CAELESTINE, AD 423

⁹⁶(A.D. 423.) to Caelestine,¹ my Lord Most Blessed, and Holy Father Venerated with All Due Affection, Augustin Sends Greeting in The Lord. ⁹⁷1. First of all I congratulate you that our Lord God has, as we have heard, established you in the illustrious chair which you occupy without any division among His people. In the next place, I lay before your Holiness the state of affairs with us, that not only by your prayers, but with your council and aid you may help us. For I write to you at this time under deep affliction, because, while wishing to benefit certain members of Christ in our neighbourhood, I brought on them a great calamity by my want of prudence and caution. 2. Bordering on the district of Hippo, there is a small town,² named Fussala: formerly there was no bishop there, but, along with the contiguous district, it was included in the parish of Hippo. That part of the country had few Catholics; the error of the Donatists held under its miserable influence all the other congregations located in the midst of a large population, so that in the town of Fussala itself there was not one Catholic. In the mercy of God, all these places were brought to attach themselves to the unity of the Church; with how much toil, and how many dangers it would take long to tell, -- how the presbyters originally appointed by us to gather these people into the fold were robbed, beaten, maimed, deprived of their eyesight, and even put to death; whose sufferings, however, were not useless and unfruitful, seeing that by them the re-establishment of unity was achieved.

⁹⁸But as Fussala is forty miles distant from Hippo, and I saw that in governing its people, and gathering together the remnant, however small, of persons of both sexes, who, not threatening others, but fleeing for their own safety, were scattered here and there, my work would be extended farther than it ought, and that I could not give the attention which I clearly perceived to be necessary, I arranged that a bishop should be ordained and appointed there. 3. With a view to the carrying out of this, I sought for a person who might be suitable to the locality and people, and at the same time acquainted with the Punic language; and I had in my mind a presbyter fitted for the office. Having applied by letter to the holy senior bishop who was

then Primate of Numidia, I obtained his consent to come from a great distance to ordain this presbyter. After his coming, when all our minds were intent on an affair of so great consequence, at the last moment, the person whom I believed to be ready to be ordained disappointed us by absolutely refusing to accept the office.

⁹⁹ Then I myself, who, as the event showed, ought rather to have postponed than precipitated a matter so perilous, being unwilling that the very venerable and holy old man, who had come with so much fatigue to us, should return home without accomplishing the business for which he had journeyed so far, offered to the people, without their seeking him, a young man, Antonius, who was then with me. He had been from childhood brought up in a monastery by us, but, beyond officiating as a reader, he had no experience of the labours pertaining to the various degrees of rank in the clerical office. The unhappy people, not knowing what was to follow, submissively trusting me, accepted him on my suggestion. What need I say more? The deed was done; he entered on his office as their bishop. 4. What shall I do? I am unwilling to accuse before your venerable Dignity one whom I brought into the fold, and nourished with care; and I am unwilling to forsake those in seeking whose ingathering to the Church I have travailed, amid fears and anxieties; and how to do justice to both I cannot discover. The matter has come to such a painful crisis, that those who, in compliance with my wishes, had, in the belief that they were consulting their own interests, chosen him for their bishop, are now bringing charges against him before me.

¹⁰⁰ When the most serious of these, namely, charges of gross immorality, which were brought forward not by those whose bishop he was, but by certain other individuals, were found to be utterly unsupported by evidence, and he seemed to us fully acquitted of the crimes laid most ungenerously to his charge, he was on this account regarded, both by ourselves and by others, with such sympathy that ¹⁰¹ the things complained of by the people of Fus-sala and the surrounding district,-- such as intolerable tyranny and spoliation, and extortion, and oppression of various kinds,-- by no means seemed so grievous that for one, or for all of them taken together, we should deem it necessary to deprive him of the office of bishop; it seemed to us enough to insist that he should restore what might be proved to have been taken away unjustly. 5. In fine, we so mixed clemency with severity in our sentence, that

while reserving to him his office of bishop, we did not leave altogether unpunished offences which behoved neither to be repeated again by himself, nor held forth to the imitation of others. We therefore, in correcting him, reserved to the young man the rank of his office unimpaired, but at the same time, as a punishment, we took away his power, appointing that he should not any longer rule over those with whom he had dealt in such a manner that with just resentment they could not submit to his authority, and might perhaps manifest their impatient indignation by breaking forth into some deeds of violence fraught with danger both to themselves and to him. That this was the state of feeling evidently appeared when the bishops dealt with them concerning Antonius, although at present that conspicuous man Color, of whose powerful interference against him he complained, possesses no power, either in Africa or elsewhere. 6. But why should I detain you with further particulars?

¹⁰² I beseech you to assist us in this laborious matter, blessed lord and holy father, venerated for your piety, and revered with due affection; and command all the documents which have been forwarded to be read aloud to you. Observe in what manner Antonius discharged his duties as bishop; how, when debarred from communion until full restitution should be made to the men of Fussala, he submitted to our sentence, and has now set apart a sum out of which to pay what may after inquiry be deemed just for compensation, in order that the privilege of communion might be restored to him; with what crafty reasoning he prevailed on our aged primate, a most venerable man, to believe all his statements, and to recommend him as altogether blameless to the venerable Pope Boniface. But why should I rehearse all the rest, seeing that the venerable old man, aforesaid must have reported the entire matter to your Holiness? 7. In the numerous minutes of procedure in which our judgment regarding him is recorded, I should have feared that we might appear to you to have passed a sentence less severe than we ought to have done, did I not know that you are so prone to mercy that you will deem it your duty to spare not us only, because we spared him, but also the man himself. But what we did, whether in kindness or laxity, he attempts to turn to account, and use as a legal objection to our sentence. He boldly protests:

¹⁰³ "Either I ought to sit in my own episcopal chair, or ought not to be a bishop at all," as if he were now sitting in any seat but his own. For, on this very account, those places were set apart and assigned to him in which he had

previously been bishop, that he might not be said to be unlawfully translated to another see, contrary to the statutes of the Fathers;¹ or is it to be maintained that one ought to be so rigid an advocate, either for severity or for lenity, as to insist, either that no punishment be inflicted on those who seem not to deserve deposition from the office of bishop, or that the sentence of deposition be pronounced on all who seem to deserve any punishment ? 8. There are cases on record, in which the Apostolic See, either pronouncing judgment or confirming the judgment of others, sanctioned decisions by which persons, for certain offences, were neither deposed from their episcopal office nor left altogether unpunished. I shall not bring forward those which occurred at a period very remote from our own time; I shall mention recent instances. Let Priscus, a bishop of the province of Caesarea, protest boldly: "Either the office of primate should be open to me, as to other bishops, or I ought not to remain a bishop. Let Victor, another bishop of the same province, with whom, when involved in the same sentence as Priscus, no bishop beyond his own diocese holds communion, let him, I say, protest with similar confidence:

¹⁰⁴ "Either I ought to have communion everywhere, or I ought not to have it in my own district. Let Laurentius, a third bishop of the same province, speak, and in the precise words of this man he may exclaim: "Either I ought to sit in the chair to which I have been ordained, or I ought not to be a bishop. But who can find fault with these judgments, except one who does not consider that, neither on the one hand ought all offences to be left unpunished, nor on the other ought all to be punished in one way. 9. Since, then, the most blessed Pope Boniface, speaking of Bishop Antonius, has in his epistle, with the vigilant caution becoming a pastor, inserted in his judgment the additional clause, "if he has faithfully narrated the facts of the case to us," receive now the facts of the case, which in his statement to you he passed over in silence, and also the transactions which took place after the letter of that man of blessed memory had been read in Africa, and in the mercy of Christ extend your aid to men implor-

¹⁰⁵ ing it more earnestly than he does from whose turbulence they desire to be freed. For either from himself, or at least from very frequent rumors, threats are held out that the courts of justiciary, and the public authorities, and the violence of the military, are to carry into force the decision of the Apostolic See; the effect of which is that these unhappy men, being now

Catholic Christians, dread greater evils from a Catholic bishop than those which, when they were heretics, they dreaded from the laws of Catholic emperors. Do not permit these things to be done, I implore you, by the blood of Christ, by the memory of the Apostle Peter, who has warned those placed over Christian people against violently "lording it over their brethren."¹ I commend to the gracious love of your Holiness the Catholics of Fussala, my children in Christ, and also Bishop Antonius, my son in Christ, for I love both, and I commend both to you. I do not blame the people of Fussala for bringing to your ears their just complaint against me for imposing on them a man whom I had not proved, and who was in age at least not yet established, by whom they have been so afflicted; nor do I wish any wrong done to Antonius, whose evil covetousness I oppose with a determination proportioned to my sincere affection for him. Let your compassion be extended to both, -- to them, so that they may not suffer evil; to him, so that he may not do evil:

¹⁰⁶ to them, so that they may not hate the Catholic Church, if they find no aid in defence against a Catholic bishop extended to them by Catholic bishops, and especially by the Apostolic See itself; to him, on the other hand, so that he may not involve himself in such grievous wickedness as to alienate from Christ those whom against their will he endeavours to make his own. 10. As for myself, I must acknowledge to your Holiness, that in the danger which threatens both, I am so racked with anxiety and grief that I think of retiring from the responsibilities of the episcopal office, and abandoning myself to demonstrations of sorrow corresponding to the greatness of my error, if I shall see (through the conduct of him in favour of whose election to the bishopric I imprudently gave my vote) the Church of God laid waste, and (which may God forbid) even perish, involving in its destruction the man by whom it was laid waste. Recollecting what the apostle says: "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."² I will judge myself, that He may spare me who is hereafter to judge the quick and the dead.

¹⁰⁷ If, however, you succeed in restoring the members of Christ in that district from their deadly fear and grief, and in comforting my old age by the administration of justice tempered with mercy, He who brings deliverance to us through you in this tribulation, and who has established you in the seat which you occupy, shall recompense unto you good for good, both in this life and in that which is to come.

LETTER 210. AD 423

¹⁰⁸(A.D. 423.) to the Most Beloved and Most Holy Mother Felicitas,³ and Brother Rusticus, and to the Sisters Who Are with Them, Augustin and Those Who Are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord. ¹⁰⁹1. Good is the Lord, and to every place extends His mercy, which comforts us by your love to us in Him. How much He loves those It who believe and hope in Him, and who both love Him and love one another, and what blessings He keeps in store for them hereafter, He proves most remarkably in this, that on the unbelieving, the abandoned, and the perverse, whom He threatens with eternal fire, if they persevere in their evil disposition to the end, He does in this life bestow so many benefits, making "His sun to rise on the evil and on the good," "on the just and on the unjust,"⁴ words in which, for the sake of brevity, some instances are mentioned that many more may be suggested to reflection; for who can reckon up how many gracious benefits the wicked receive in this life from Him whom they despise? Amongst these, this is one of great value, that by the experience of the occasional afflictions, which like good physician He mingles the pleasures of this life, He admonishes them, if only they will give heed, to flee from the wrath to come, and while they are in the way, that is, in this life, to agree with the word of God, which they have made an adversary to themselves by their wicked lives. What, then, is not bestowed in mercy on men by the Lord God, since even affliction sent by Him is a blessing ?

¹¹⁰For prosperity is a gift of God when He comforts, adversity a gift of God when He warns; and ff He bestows these things, as I have said, even on the wicked, what does He prepare for those who bear with one another? Into this number you rejoice that through His grace you have been gathered, "forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."⁵ For there shall not be awanting occasion for ¹¹¹your bearing one with another till God shall have so purified you, that, death being "swallowed up in victory,"¹ "God shall be all in all."² 2. We ought never, indeed, to take pleasure in quarrels; but however averse we may be to them, they occasionally either arise from love, or put it to the test. For how difficult is it to find any one willing to be reproved; and where is the wise man of whom it is said, "Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee"?³ But are we on that account not to reprove and find fault with a brother, to prevent him from going down through false security to death ? For it is a common and

frequent experience, that when a brother is found fault with he is mortified at the time, and resists and contradicts his friend, but afterwards reconsiders the matter in silence alone with God, where he is not afraid of giving offence to men by submitting to correction, but is afraid of offending God by refusing to be reformed, and thenceforward refrains from doing that for which he has been justly reprov'd; and in proportion as he hates his sin, he loves the brother whom he feels to have been the enemy of his sin. But if he belong to the number of those of whom it is said, "Reprove not a scorner lest he hate thee," ³ the quarrel does not arise from love on the part of the reprov'd, but it exercises and tests the love of the reprover;

¹¹² for he does not return hatred for hatred, but the love which constrains him to find fault endures unmoved, even when he who is found fault with requites it with hatred. But if the reprover renders evil for evil to the man who takes offence at being reprov'd, he was not worthy to reprove another, but evidently deserves to be himself reprov'd. Act upon these principles, so that either quarrels may not arise, or, if they do arise, may quickly terminate in peace. Be more earnest to dwell in concord than to vanquish each other in controversy. For as vinegar corrodes a vessel if it remain long in it, so anger corrodes the heart if it is cherished till the morrow. These things, therefore, observe, and the God of peace shall be with you. Pray also unitedly for us, that we may cheerfully practise the good advices which we give to you.

LETTER 211. AD 423

¹¹³ (A.D. 423.) in This Letter Augustin Rebukes the Nuns of the Monastery in Which His Sister Had Been Prioress, for Certain Turbulent Manifestations of Dissatisfaction with Her Successor, and Lays Down General Rules for Their Guidance.⁴ ¹¹⁴ 1. As severity is ready to punish the faults which it may discover, so charity is reluctant to discover the faults which it must punish. This was the reason of my not acceding to your request for a visit from me, at a time when, if I had come, I must have come not to rejoice in your harmony, but to add more vehemence to your strife. For how could I have treated your behaviour with indifference, or have allowed it to pass unpunished, if so great a tumult had arisen among you in my presence, as that which, when I was absent, assailed my ears with the din of your voices, although my eyes did not witness your disorder ? For perhaps your rising against authority would have been even more violent in my presence, since I must have refused the concessions which you demanded,-- concessions in-

volving, to your own disadvantage, some most dangerous precedents, subversive of sound discipline; and I must thus have found you such as I did not desire, and must have myself been found by you such as you did not desire. 2. The apostle, writing to the Corinthians, says: "Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy." 5 I also say the same to you; to spare you I have not come to you.

115 I have also spared myself, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow, and have chosen not to see you face to face, but to pour out my heart to God on your behalf, and to plead the cause of your great danger not in words before you, but in tears before God; entreating Him that He may not turn into grief the joy wherewith I am wont to rejoice in you, and that amid the great offences with which this world everywhere abounds, I may be comforted at times by thinking of your number, your pure affection, your holy conversation, and the abundant grace of God which is given to you, so that you not only have renounced matrimony, but have chosen to dwell with one accord in fellowship under the same roof, that you may have one soul and one heart in God. 3. When I reflect on these good things, these gifts of God in you, my heart, amid the many storms by which it is agitated through evils elsewhere, is wont to find perfect rest. "Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of Him that calleth you." 6 "A little leaven" --7

116 I am unwilling to complete the sentence, for I rather desire, entreat, and exhort that the leaven itself be transformed into something better, lest it change the whole lump for the worse, as it has already almost done. If, therefore, you have begun to put forth again the buddings of a sound discernment as to your duty, pray that you enter not into temptation, nor fall again into strifes, emulations, animosities, divisions, evil speaking, seditions, whisperings. For we have not laboured as we have done in planting and watering the garden of the Lord among you, that we may reap these thorns from you. If, however, your weakness be still disturbed by turbulence, pray that you may be delivered from this temptation. As for the troublers of your peace, if such there be still among you, they shall, unless they amend their conduct, bear their judgment, whoever they be. 4. Consider how evil a thing it is, that at the very time when we rejoice in the return of the Donatists to our unity, we have to lament internal discord within our monastery. Be sted-

fast in observing your good vows, and you will not desire to change for another the prioress whose care of the monastery has been for so many years unwearied, under whom also you have both increased in numbers and advanced in age, and who has given you the place in her heart which a mother gives to her own children.

¹¹⁷ All of you when you came to the monastery found her there, either discharging satisfactorily the duties of assistant to the late holy prioress, my sister, or, after her own accession to that office, giving you a welcome to the sisterhood. Under her you spent your noviciate, under her you took the veil, under her your number has been multiplied, and yet you are riotously demanding that she should be replaced by another, whereas, if the proposal to put another in her place had come from us, it would have been seemly for you to have mourned over such a proposal. For she is one whom you know well; to her you came at first, and under her you have for so many years advanced in age and in numbers. No official previously unknown to you has been appointed, excepting the prior; if it be on his account that you seek a change, and if through aversion to him you thus rebel against your mother, why do you not rather petition for his removal? If, however, you recoil from this suggestion, for I know how you reverence and love him in Christ, why do you not all the more for his sake reverence and love her?

¹¹⁸ For the first measures of the recently appointed prior in presiding over you are so hindered by your disorderly behaviour, that he is himself disposed to leave you, rather than be subjected on your account to the dishonour and odium which must arise from the report going abroad, that you would not have sought another prioress unless you had been un- to have him as your prior. May God therefore calm and compose your minds: let not the work of the devil prevail in you, but may the peace of Christ gain the victory in your hearts; and do not rush headlong to death, either through vexation of spirit, because what you desire is refused, or through shame, because of having desired what you ought not to have desired, but rather by repentance resume the conscientious discharge of duty; and imitate not the repentance of Judas the traitor, but the tears of Peter the shepherd. 5. The rules which we lay down to be observed by you as persons settled in a monastery are these: -- First of all, in order to fulfil the end for which you have been gathered into one community, dwell in the house with oneness of spirit, and let your hearts and minds be one in God.

¹¹⁹ Also call not anything the property of any one, but let all things be common property, and let distribution of food and raiment be made to each of you by the prioress, -- not equally to all, because you are not all equally strong, but to every one according to her need. For you read in the Acts of the Apostles: "They had all things common: and distribution was made to every man according as he had need."¹ Let those who had any worldly goods when they entered the monastery cheerfully desire that these become common property. Let those who had no worldly goods not ask within the monastery for luxuries which they could not have while they were outside of its walls; nevertheless, let the comforts which the infirmity of any of them may require be given to such, though their poverty before coming in to the monastery may have been such that they could not have procured for themselves the bare necessities of life; and let them in such case be careful not to reckon it the chief happiness of their present lot that they have found within the monastery food and raiment, such as was elsewhere beyond their reach. 6. Let them, moreover, not hold their heads high because they are associated on terms of equality with persons whom they durst not have approached in the outer world;

¹²⁰ but let them rather lift their hearts on high, and not seek after earthly possessions, lest, if the rich be made lowly but the poor puffed up with vanity in our monasteries, these institutions become useful only to the rich, and hurtful to the poor. On the other hand, however, let not those who seemed to hold some position in the world regard with contempt their sisters, who in coming into this sacred fellowship have left a condition of poverty; let them be careful to glory rather in ¹²¹ the fellowship of their poor sisters, than in the rank of their wealthy parents. And let them not lift themselves up above the rest because of their having, perchance, contributed something from their own resources to the maintenance of the community, lest they find in their riches more occasion for pride, because they divide them with others in a monastery, than they might have found if they had spent them in their own enjoyment in the world. For every other kind of sin finds scope in evil works, so that by it they are done, but pride lurks even in good works, so that by it they are undone; and what avails it to lavish money on the poor, and become poor oneself, if the unhappy soul is rendered more proud by despising riches than it had been by possessing them? Live, then, all of you, in unanimity and concord, and in each other give honour to that God whose

temples you have been made. 7. Be regular (instate) in prayers at the appointed hours and times. In the oratory let no one do anything else than the duty for which the place was made, and from which it has received its name; so that if any of you, having leisure, wish to pray at other hours than those appointed, they may not be hindered by others using the place for any other purpose. In the psalms and hymns used in your prayers to God, let that be pondered in the heart which is uttered by the voice;

¹²² chant nothing but what you find prescribed to be chanted; whatever is not so prescribed is not to be chanted. 8. Keep the flesh under by fastings and by abstinence from meat and drink, so far as health allows. When any one is not able to fast, let her not, unless she be ill, take any nourishment except at the customary hour of repast. From the lime of your coming to table until you rise from it, listen without noise and wrangling to whatever may be in course read to you; let not your mouths alone be exercised in receiving food, let your ears be also occupied in receiving the word of God. 9. If those who are weak in consequence of their early training are treated somewhat differently in regard to food, this ought not to be vexatious or seem unjust to others whom a different training has made more robust. And let them not esteem these weaker ones more favoured than themselves, because they receive a fare somewhat less frugal than their own, but rather congratulate themselves on enjoying a vigour of constitution which the others do not possess.

¹²³ And if to those who have entered the monastery after a more delicate upbringing at home, there be given any food, clothing, couch, or covering which to others who are stronger, and in that respect more favourably circumstanced, is not given, the sisters to whom these indulgences are not given ought to consider how great a descent the others have made from their style of living in the world to that which they now have, although they may not have been able to come altogether down to the severe simplicity of others who have a more hardy constitution. And when those who were originally more wealthy see others receiving -- not as mark of higher honour, but out of consideration for infirmity -- more largely than they do themselves, they ought not to be disturbed by fear of any such detestable perversion of monastic discipline as this, that the poor are to be trained to luxury in a monastery in which the wealthy are, so far as they can bear it, trained to hardships. For, of course, as those who are ill must take less food, otherwise they would increase their disease, so after illness, those who are convalescent

must, in order to their more rapid recovery, be so nursed -- even though they may have come from the lowest poverty to the monastery -- as if their recent illness had conferred on them the same claim for special treatment as their former style of tiring confers upon those who, before entering the i monastery, were rich.

¹²⁴ So soon, however, as they regain their wonted health, let them return to their own happier mode of living, which, as involving fewer wants, is more suitable for those who are servants of God; and let not inclination detain them when they are strong in that amount of ease to which necessity had raised them when they were weak. Let those regard themselves as truly richer who are endowed with greater strength to bear hardships. For it is better to have fewer wants than to have larger resources. 10. Let your apparel be in no wise conspicuous; and aspire to please others by your behaviour rather than by your attire. Let your head-dresses not be so thin as to let the nets below them be seen. Let your hair be worn wholly covered, and let it neither be carelessly dishevelled nor too scrupulously arranged when you go beyond the monastery. When you go anywhere, walk together; when you come to the place to which you were going, stand together. In walking, in standing, in deportment, and in all your movements let nothing be done which might attract the improper desires of any one, but rather let all be in keeping with your sacred character. Though a passing glance be directed towards any man, let your eyes look fixedly at none; for when you are walking you are not forbidden to see men, but you must neither let your desires go out to them, nor wish to be the objects of desire on their part.

¹²⁵ For it is not only by touch that a woman awakens in any man or cherishes towards him such desire, this may be done by inward feelings and by looks. And say not that you have chaste minds though you may have wanton eyes, for a wanton eye is the ¹²⁶ index of a wanton heart. And when wanton hearts exchange signals with each other in looks, though the tongue is silent, and are, by the force of sensual passion, pleased by the reciprocation of inflamed desire, their purity of character is gone, though their bodies are not defiled by any act of uncleanness. Nor let her who fixes her eyes upon one of the other sex, and takes pleasure in his eye being fixed on her, imagine that the act is not observed by others; she is seen assuredly by those by whom she supposes herself not to be remarked. But even though she should elude notice, and be seen by no human eye, what shall she do with that Witness above

us from whom nothing can be concealed? Is He to be regarded as not seeing because His eye rests on all things with a long-suffering proportioned to His wisdom? Let every holy woman guard herself from desiring sinfully to please man by cherishing a fear of displeasing God; let her check the desire of sinfully looking upon man by remembering that God's eye is looking upon all things.

¹²⁷ For in this very matter we are exhorted to cherish fear of God by the words of Scripture:-- " He that looks with a fixed eye is an abomination to the Lord." ¹ When, therefore, you are together in the church, or in any other place where men also are present, guard your chastity by watching over one another, and God, who dwelleth in you, will thus guard you by means of yourselves. ¹¹. And if you perceive in any one of your number this frowardness of eye, warn her at once, so that the evil which has begun may not go on, but be checked immediately. But if, after this admonition, you see her repeat the offence, or do the same thing on any other subsequent day, whoever may have had the opportunity of seeing this must now report her as one who has been wounded and requires to be healed, but not without pointing her out to another, and perhaps a third sister, so that she may be convicted by the testimony of two or three witnesses,² and may be reprimanded with necessary severity. And do not think that in thus informing upon one another you are guilty of malevolence. For the truth rather is, that you are not guiltless if by keeping silence you allow sisters to perish, whom you may correct by giving information of their faults.

¹²⁸ For if your sister had a wound on her person which she wished to conceal through fear of the surgeon's lance, would it not be cruel if you kept silence about it, and true compassion if you made it known? How much more, then, are you bound to make known her sin, that she may not suffer more fatally from a neglected spiritual wound. But before she is pointed out to others as witnesses by whom she may be convicted if she deny the charge, the offender ought to be brought before the prioress, if after admonition she has refused to be corrected, so that by her being in this way more privately rebuked, the fault which she has committed may not become known to all the others. If, however, she then deny the charge, then others must be employed to observe her conduct after the denial, so that now before the whole sisterhood she may not be accused by one witness, but convicted by two or three. When convicted of the fault, it is her duty to submit to the corrective discip-

line which may be appointed by the prioress or the prior. If she refuse to submit to this, and does not go away from you of her own accord, let her be expelled from your society. For this is not done cruelly but mercifully, to protect very many from perishing through infection of the plague with which one has been stricken.

¹²⁹ Moreover, what I have now said in regard to abstaining from wanton looks should be carefully observed, with due love for the persons and hatred of the sin, in observing, forbidding, reporting, proving, and punishing of all other faults. But if any one among you has gone on into so great sin as to receive secretly from any man letters or gifts of any description, let her be pardoned and prayed for if she confess this of her own accord. If, however, she is found out and is convicted of such conduct, let her be more severely punished, according to the sentence of the prioress, or of the prior, or even of the bishop. 12. Keep your clothes in one place, under the care of one or two, or as many as may be required to shake them so as to keep them from being injured by moths; and as your food is supplied from one storeroom, let your clothes be provided from one wardrobe. And whatever may be brought out to you as wearing apparel suitable for the season, regard it, if possible, as a matter of no importance whether each of you receives the very same article of clothing which she had formerly laid aside, or one receive what another formerly wore, provided only that what is necessary be denied to no one.

¹³⁰ But if contentions and murmurings are occasioned among you by this, and some one of you complains that she has received some article of dress inferior to that which she formerly wore, and thinks it beneath her to be so clothed as her other sister was, by this prove your own selves, and judge how far deficient you must be in the inner holy dress of the heart, when you quarrel with each other about the clothing of the body. Nevertheless, if your infirmity is indulged by the concession that you are to receive again the identical article which you had laid aside, let whatever you put past be nevertheless, kept in one place, and in charge of the ordinary keep- ¹³¹ers of the wardrobe; it being, of course, understood that no one is to work in making any article of clothing or for the couch, or any girdle, veil, or head-dress, for her own private comfort, but that all your works be done for the common good of all, with greater zeal and more cheerful perseverance than if you were each working for your individual interest. For the love concerning which it is written, "Charity seeketh not her own,"¹ is to be understood as

that which prefers the common good to personal advantage, not personal advantage to the common good. Therefore the more fully that you give to the common good a preference above your personal and private interests, the more fully will you be sensible of progress in securing that, in regard to all those things which supply wants destined soon to pass away, the charity which abides may hold a conspicuous and influential place. An obvious corollary from these rules is, that when persons of either sex bring to their own daughters in the monastery, or to inmates belonging to them by any other relationship, presents of clothing or of other articles which are to be regarded as necessary, such gifts are not to be received privately, but must be under the control of the prioress, that, being added to the common stock, they may be placed at the service of any inmate to whom they may be necessary.

¹³² If any one conceal any gift bestowed on her, let sentence be passed on her as guilty of theft. 13. Let your clothes be washed, whether by yourselves or by washerwomen, at such intervals as are approved by the prioress, lest the indulgence of undue solicitude about spotless raiment produce inward stains upon your souls. Let the washing of the body and the use of baths be not constant, but at the usual interval assigned to it, i.e. once in a month. In the case, however, of illness rendering necessary the washing of the person, let it not be unduly delayed; let it be done on the physician's recommendation without complaint; and even though the patient be reluctant, she must do at the order of the prioress what health demands. If, however, a patient desires the bath, and it happen to be not for her good, her desire must not be yielded to, for sometimes it is supposed to be beneficial because it gives pleasure, although in reality it may be doing harm. Finally, if a handmaid of God suffers from any hidden pain of body, let her statement as to her suffering be believed without hesitation; but if there be any uncertainty whether that which she finds agreeable be really of use in curing her pain, let the physician be consulted. To the baths, or to any place whither it may be necessary to go, let no fewer than three go at any time.

¹³³ Moreover, the sister requiring to go anywhere is not to go with those whom she may choose herself, but with those whom the prioress may order. The care of the sick, and of those who require attention as convalescents, and of those who, without any feverish symptoms, are labouring under debility, ought to be committed to some one of your number, who shall procure for

them from the storeroom what she shall see to be necessary for each. Moreover, let those who have charge, whether in the storeroom, or in the wardrobe, or in the library, render service to their sisters without murmuring. Let manuscripts be applied for at a fixed hour every day, and let none who ask them at other hours receive them. But at whatever time clothes and shoes may be required by one in need of these, let not those in charge of this department delay supplying the want. 14. Quarrels should be unknown among you, or at least, if they arise, they should as quickly as possible be ended, lest anger grow into hatred, and convert "a mote into a beam," 2 and make the soul chargeable with murder. For the saying of Scripture: "He that hateth his brother is a murderer," 3 does not concern men only, but women also are bound by this law through its being enjoined on the other sex, which was prior in the order of creation.

¹³⁴ Let her, whoever she be, that shall have injured another by taunt or abusive language, or false accusation, remember to remedy the wrong by apology as promptly as possible, and let her who was injured grant forgiveness without further disputation. If the injury has been mutual, the duty of both parties will be mutual forgiveness, because of your prayers, which, as they are more frequent, ought to be all the more sacred in your esteem. But the sister who is prompt in asking another whom she confesses that she has wronged to grant her forgiveness is, though she may be more frequently betrayed by a hasty temper, better than another who, though less irascible, is with more difficulty persuaded to ask forgiveness. Let not her who refuses to forgive her sister expect to receive answers to prayer: as for any sister who never will ask forgiveness, or does not do it from the heart, it is no advantage to such an one to be in a monastery, even though, perchance, she may not be expelled. Wherefore abstain from hard words; but if they have escaped your lips, be not slow to bring words of healing from the same lips by which the wounds were inflicted. When, however, the necessity of discipline compels you to use hard words in restraining the younger inmates, even though you feel that in these you have gone too far, it is not imperative on you to ask their forgiveness, lest

¹³⁵ while undue humility is observed by you towards those who ought to be subject to you, the authority necessary for governing them be impaired ; but pardon must nevertheless be sought from the Lord of all, who knows with what goodwill you love even those whom you reprove it may be with

undue severity. The love which you bear to each other must be not carnal, but spiritual: for those things which are practised by immodest women in shameful frolic and sporting with one another ought not even to be done by those of your sex who are married, or are intending to marry, and much more ought not to be done by widows or chaste virgins dedicated to be hand-maids of Christ by a holy vow. 15. Obey the prioress as a mother, giving her all due honour, that God may not be offended by your forgetting what you owe to her: still more is it incumbent on you to obey the presbyter who has charge of you all. To the prioress most specially belongs the responsibility of seeing that all these rules be observed, and that if any rule has been neglected, the offence be not passed over, but carefully corrected and punished; it being, of course, open to her to refer to the presbyter any matter that goes beyond her province or power. But let her count herself happy not in exercising the power which rules, but in practising the love which serves.

¹³⁶ In honour in the sight of men let her be raised above you, but in fear in the sight of God let her be as it were beneath your feet. Let her show herself before all a "pattern of good works."¹ Let her "warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all."² Let her cheerfully observe and cautiously impose rules. And, though both are necessary, let her be more anxious to be loved than to be feared by you; always reflecting that for you she must give account to God. For this reason yield obedience to her out of compassion not for yourselves only but also for her, because, as she occupies a higher position among you, her danger is proportionately greater than your own. 16. The Lord grant that you may yield loving submission to all these rules, as persons enamoured of spiritual beauty, and diffusing a sweet savour of Christ by means of a good conversation, not as bondwomen under the law, but as established in freedom under grace. That you may, however, examine yourselves by this Ires.rise as by a mirror, and may not through forgetfulness neglect anything, let it be read over by you once a week; and in so far as you find yourselves practising the things written here, give thanks for this to God, the Giver of all good;

¹³⁷ in so far, however, as any of you finds herself to be in some particular defective, let her lament the past and be on her guard in the time to come, praying both that her debt may be forgiven, and that she may not be led into temptation.

LETTER 212. AD 423

¹³⁷ (A.D. 423.) ¹³⁸ TO QUINTILIANUS, MY LORD MOST BLESSED AND BROTHER AND FELLOW BISHOP DESERVEDLY VENERABLE, AUGUSTIN SENDS GREETING. Venerable father, I commend to you in the love of Christ these honourable servants of God and precious members of Christ, Galla, a widow (who has taken on herself sacred vows), and her daughter Simplicia, a consecrated virgin, who is subject to her mother by reason of her age, but above her by reason of her holiness. We have nourished them as far as we have been able with the word of God; and by this epistle, as if it were with my own hand, I commit them to you, to be comforted and aided in every way which their interest or necessity requires. This duty your Holiness would doubtless have undertaken without any recommendation from me; for if it is our duty on account of the Jerusalem above, of which we are all citizens, and in which they desire to have a place of distinguished holiness, to cherish towards them not only the affection due to fellow-citizens, but even brotherly love, how much stronger is their claim on you, who reside in the same country in this earth in which these ladies, for the love of Christ, renounced the distinctions of this world I also ask you to condescend to receive with the same love with which I have offered it my official salutation, and to remember me in your prayers. These ladies carry with them relics of the most blessed and glorious martyr Stephen: your Holiness knows how to give due honour to these, as we have done.³

LETTER 213. AD 426

¹³⁹ (September 26Th, A.D. 426.) Record, Prepared by St. Augustin, of the Proceedings on the Occasion of His Designating Eraclius to Succeed Him in the Episcopal Chair, and to Relieve Him Meanwhile in His Old Age of a Part of His Responsibilities. In the Church of Peace in the district of Hippo Regius, on the 26th day of September in the year of the twelfth consulship of the most renowned Theodosius, and of the second consulship of Valentinian Augustus: 4 569 -- Bishop Augustin having taken his seat along with bedfellow bishops Religianus and Martinianus, there being present Saturninus, Leporius, Barnabas, Fortunatianus, Rusticus, Lazarus, and Eraclius, -- presbyters, -- while the clergy and a large congregation of laymen stood by, -- Bishop Augustin said: -- ¹⁴⁰ "The business which I brought before you yesterday, my beloved, as one in connection with which I wished you to attend, as see you

have done in greater numbers than usual, must be at once disposed of. For while your minds are anxiously preoccupied with it, you would scarcely listen to me if I were to speak of any other subject. We all are mortal, and the day which shall be the last of life on earth is to every man at all times uncertain; but in infancy there is hope of entering on boyhood, and so our hope goes on, looking forward from boyhood to youth, from youth to manhood, and from manhood to old age: whether these hopes may be realized or not is uncertain, but there is in each case something which may be hoped for. But old age has no other period of this life to look forward to with expectation: how long old age may in any case be prolonged is uncertain, but it is certain that no other age destined to take its place lies beyond. I came to this town -- for such was the will of God -- when I was in the prime of life. I was young then, but now I am old.

¹⁴¹I know that churches are wont to be disturbed after the decease of their bishops by ambitious or contentious parties, and I feel it to be my duty to take measures to prevent this community from suffering, in connection with my decease, that which I have often observed and lamented elsewhere. You are aware, my beloved, that I recently visited the Church of Milevi; for certain brethren, and especially the servants of God there, requested me to come, because some disturbance was apprehended after the death of my brother and fellow bishop Severus, of blessed memory. I went accordingly, and the Lord was in mercy pleased so to help us that they harmoniously accepted as bishop the person designated by their former bishop his lifetime; for when this designation had become known to them, they willingly acquiesced in the choice which he had made. An omission, however, had occurred by which some were dissatisfied; for brother Severus, believing that it might be sufficient for him to mention to the clergy the name of his successor, did not speak of the matter to the people, which gave rise to dissatisfaction in the minds of some. But why should I say more? By the good pleasure of God, the dissatisfaction was removed, joy took its place in the minds of all, and he was ordained as bishop whom Severus had proposed. To obviate all such occasion of complaint in this case, I now intimate to all here my desire, which I believe to be also the will of God:

¹⁴²I wish to have for my successor the presbyter Eraclius." ¹⁴³The people shouted, "To God be thanks! To Christ be praise" (this was repeated twenty-three times). "O Christ, hear us; may Augustin live long!" (repeated sixteen

times). "We will have thee as our father, thee as our bishop" (repeated eight times). 2. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said: -- "It is unnecessary for me to say anything in praise of Eraclius; I esteem his wisdom and spare his modesty; it is enough that you know him: and I declare that I desire in regard to him what I know you also to desire, and if I had not known it before, I would have had proof of it today. This, therefore, I desire; this I ask from the Lord our God in prayers, the warmth of which is not abated by the chill of age; this I exhort, admonish, and entreat you also to pray for along with me, --that God may confirm that, which He has wrought in us by blending and fusing together the minds of all in the peace of Christ. May He who has sent him to me preserve him! preserve him safe, preserve him blameless, that as he gives me joy while I live, he may fill my place when I die. "The notaries of the church are, as you observe, recording what I say, and recording what you say; both my address and your acclamations are not allowed to fall to the ground. To speak more plainly, we are making up an ecclesiastical record of this day's proceedings; for I wish them to be in this way confirmed so far as pertains to men."

¹⁴⁴ The people shouted thirty-six times, "To God be thanks! To Christ be praise!" O Christ, hear us; may Augustin live long!" was said thirteen times. "Thee, our father! thee, our bishop!" was said eight times. "He is worthy and just," was said twenty times. "Well deserving, well worthy!" was said five times. "He is worthy and just!" was said six times. 3. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said: -- "It is my wish, as I was just now saying, that my desire and your desire be confirmed, so far as pertains to men, by being placed on an ecclesiastical record; but so far as pertains to the will of the Almighty, let us all pray, as I said before, that God would confirm that which He has wrought in us." The people shouted, saying sixteen times, "We give thanks for your decision:" then twelve times, "Agreed! Agreed!" and then sixtimes, "Thee,our father! Eraclius, ourbishop!"

¹⁴⁵ 4. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said : -- "I approve of that of which you also express your approval;I but I do not wish that to be done in regard to him which was done in my own case. What was done many of you know; in fact, all of you, excepting only those who at that time were not born, or had not attained to the years of understanding. When my father and bishop, the aged Valerius, of blessed memory, was still living, I was ordained bishop and occupied the episcopal see along with him which I did not

know to have been forbidden by the Council of Nice; and he was equally ignorant of the prohibition. I do not wish to have my son here exposed to the same censure as was incurred in my own case." The people shouted, saying thirteen times, "To Gad be thanks! To Christ be praise!"

¹⁴⁶ 5. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said: -- "He shall be as he now is, a presbyter, meanwhile; but afterwards, at such time as may please God, your bishop. But now I will assuredly begin to do, as the compassion of Christ may enable me, what I have not hitherto done. You know what for several years I would have done, had you permitted me. It was agreed between you and me that no one should intrude on me for five days of each week, that I might discharge the duty in the study of Scripture which my brethren and fathers the co-bishops were pleased to assign to me in the two councils of Numidia and Carthage. The agreement was duly recorded, you gave your consent, you signified it by acclamations. The record of your consent and of your acclamations, was read aloud to you. For a short time the agreement was observed by you; afterwards, it was violated without consideration, and I am not permitted to have leisure for the work which I wish to do: forenoon and afternoon alike, I am involved in the affairs of other people demanding my attention. I now beseech you, and solemnly engage you, for Christ's sake, to suffer me to devolve the burden of this part of my labours on this young man, I mean on Eraclius, the presbyter, whom today I designate in the name of Christ as my successor in the office of bishop."

¹⁴⁷ The people shouted, saying twenty-six times, "We give thanks for your decision." 6. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said: -- "I give thanks before the Lord our God for your love and your goodwill; yes, I give thanks to God for these. Wherefore, henceforth, my brethren, let everything which was wont to be brought by you to me be brought to him. In any case in which he may think my advice necessary, I will not refuse it; far be it from me to withdraw this: nevertheless, let everything be brought to him which used to be brought to me. Let Eraclius himself, if in any case, perchance, he be at a loss as to what should be done, either consult me, or claim an assistant in me, whom he has known as a father. By this arrangement you will, on the one hand, suffer no disadvantage, and I will at length, for the brief space during which God may prolong my life, devote the remainder of my days, be they few or many, not to idleness nor to the indulgence of a love of ease, but, so far as Eraclius kindly gives me leave, to the study of the sacred Scriptures:

this also will be of service to him, and through him to you likewise. Let no one therefore grudge me this leisure, for I claim it only in order to do important work. "I see that I have now transacted with you all the business necessary in the matter for which I called you together. The last thing I have to ask is, that as many of you as are able be pleased to subscribe your names to this record. At this point I require a response from you. Let me have it: show)our assent by some acclamations."

¹⁴⁸ The people shouted, saying twenty-five times, "Agreed! agreed!" then twenty-eight times, "It is worthy, it is just!" then fourteen times, "Agreed! agreed!" then twenty-five times, "He has long been worthy, he has long been deserving!" then thirteen times, "We give thanks for your decision!" then eighteen times, "O Christ, hear us; preserve Eraclius!" 7. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said: -- "It is well that we are able to transact around His sacrifice those things which belong to God; and in this hour appointed for our supplications, I especially exhort you, beloved, to suspend all your occupations and business, and pour out before the Lord your petitions for this church, and for me, and for the presbyter Eraclius."

LETTER 218. TO PALATINUS, AD 426

¹⁴⁸(A.D. 426.) to Palatinus, my Well-Beloved Lord and Son, Most Tenderly Longed for, Augustin Sends Greeting. ¹⁴⁹1. Your life of eminent fortitude and fruitfulness towards the Lord our God has brought to us great joy. For "you have made choice of instruction from your youth upwards, that you may still find wisdom even to grey hairs;"¹ for "wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age;"² which may the Lord, who knoweth how to give good gifts unto His children, give to you asking, seeking, knocking.³ Although you have many counsellors and many counsels to direct you in the path which leads to eternal glory, and although, above all, you have the grace of Christ, which has so effectually spoken in saving power in your heart, nevertheless we also, as in duty bound by the love which we owe to you, offer to you, in hereby reciprocating your salutation, some words of counsel, designed not to awaken you as one hindered by sloth or sleep, but to stimulate and quicken you in the race which you are already running. 2. You require wisdom, my son, for stedfastness in this race, as it was under the influence of wisdom that you entered on it at first. Let this then be "a part of your wisdom, to know whose gift it is." ⁴ "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass:

¹⁵⁰ and He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." ⁵ "He will make straight thy path, and guide thy steps in peace." ⁶ As you despised your prospects of greatness in this world, lest you should glory in the abundance of riches which you had begun to covet after the manner of the children of this world, so now, in taking up the yoke of the Lord and His burden, let not your confidence be in your own strength; so shall "His yoke be easy, and His burden light." ⁷ For in the book of Psalms those are alike censured "who trust in their strength," and "who boast themselves in the multitude of their riches. ^s Therefore, as formerly you did not seek glory in riches, but most wisely despised that which you had begun to desire, so now be on your guard against insidious temptation to trust in your strength;

¹⁵¹ for you are but man, and "cursed is every one that trusteth in man." ⁹ But by all means trust in God with your whole heart, and He will Himself be your strength, wherein you may trust with piety and thankfulness, and to Him you may say with humility and boldness, "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength; ¹⁰ because even the love of God, which, when it is perfect, "casteth out fear,"" is shed abroad in our hearts, not by our strength, that is, by any human power, but, as the apostle says, "by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." ¹² ^{3.} "Watch, therefore, and pray that you enter not into temptation." ¹³ Such prayer is indeed in itself an admonition to you that you need the help of the Lord, and that you ought not to rest upon yourself your hope of living well. For now you pray, not that you may obtain the riches and honours of this present world, or any unsubstantial human possession, but that you may not enter into temptation, a thing which would not be asked in prayer if a man could accomplish it for himself by his own will. Wherefore we would not pray that we may not enter into temptation if our own will sufficed for our protection and yet if the will to avoid temptation were wanting to us, we could not so pray.

¹⁵² It may, therefore, be present with us to will, ¹⁴ when we have through his own gift been made wise, but we must pray that we may be able to perform that which we have so willed. In the fact that you have begun to exercise this true wisdom, you have reason to give thanks. "For what have you which you have not received? But if you have received it, beware that you boast not as if you had not received it," ¹⁵ that is, as if you could have had it of yourself. Knowing, however, whence you have received it, ask Him by

whose gift it was begun to grant that it may be perfected. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of His good pleasure;"¹⁶ for "the will is prepared by God,"¹⁷ and "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delighteth in his way."¹⁸ Holy meditation on these things will preserve you, so that your wisdom shall be piety, that is, that by God's gift you shall be good, and not ungrateful for the grace of Christ. 4. Your parents, unfeignedly rejoicing with you in the better hope which in the Lord you have begun to cherish, are longing earnestly for your presence. But whether you be absent from us or present with us in the body, we desire to have you with us in the one Spirit by whom love

¹⁵³ is shed abroad in our hearts, so that, in whatever place our bodies may sojourn, our spirits may be in no degree sundered from each other. We have most thankfully received the cloaks of goat's-hair cloth¹ which you sent to us, in which gift you have yourself anticipated me in admonition as to the duty of being often engaged in prayer, and of practising humility in our supplications.

LETTER 219. TO PROCULUS AND CYLINUS, AD 436

¹⁵³ (A.D. 436.) to Proculus and Cylinus, Brethren Most Beloved and Honourable, and Partners in the Sacerdotal Office, Augustin, Florentius and Secundinus Send Greeting in the Lord. ¹⁵⁴ 1. When our son Leporius, whom for his obstinacy in error you had justly and fitly rebuked, came to us after he had been expelled by you, we received him as one afflicted for his good, whom we should, if possible, deliver from error and restore to spiritual health. For, as you obeyed in regard to him the apostolic precept, "Warn the unruly," so it was our part to obey the precept immediately annexed, "Comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak." 2 His error was indeed not unimportant, seeing that he neither approved what is right nor perceived what is true in some things relating to the only-begotten Son of God, of whom it is written that, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," but that when the fulness of time had come, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;"³ for he denied that God became man, regarding it as a doctrine from which it must follow necessarily that the divine substance in which He is equal to the Father suffered some unworthy change or corruption, and not seeing that he was thus intro-

ducing into the Trinity a fourth person, which is utterly contrary to the sound doctrine of the Creed and of Catholic truth.

¹⁵⁵ Since, however, dearly beloved and honourable brethren, he had as a fallible man" been overtaken" in this error, we did our utmost, the Lord helping us, to instruct him "in the spirit of meekness," especially remembering that when the "chosen vessel" gave this command to which we refer, he added, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted," -- test some, perchance, should so rejoice in the measure of spiritual progress as to imagine that they could no longer be tempted like other men, -- and joined with it the salutary and peace-promoting sentence, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."⁴ 2. This restoration of Leporius we could perhaps in nowise have accomplished, had you not previously censured and punished those things in him which required correction. So then the same Lord, our Divine Physician, using His own instruments and servants, has by you wounded him when he was proud, and by us healed him when he was penitent, according to his own saying, "I wound, and I heal. s The same Divine Ruler and Overseer of His own house has by you thrown down what was defective in the building, and has by us replaced with a well-ordered structure what he had removed. The same Divine Husbandman has in His careful diligence by you rooted up what was barren and noxious in His field, and by us planted what is useful and fruitful.

¹⁵⁶ Let us not, therefore, ascribe glory to ourselves, but to the mercy of Him in whose hand both we and all our words are. And as we humbly praise the work which you have done as His ministers in the case of our son aforesaid, so do you rejoice with holy joy in the work performed by us. Receive, then, with the love of fathers and of brethren, him whom we have with merciful severity corrected. For although one part of the work was done by you and another part by us, both parts, being indispensable to our brother's salvation, were done by the same love. The same God was therefore working in both, for "God is love."⁶ 3. Wherefore, as he has been welcomed into fellowship by us on the ground of his repentance, let him be welcomed by you on the ground of his letter? to which letter we have thought it right to adhibit our signatures attesting its genuineness. We have not the least doubt that you, in the exercise of Christian love, will not only hear with pleasure of his amendment, but also make it known to those to whom his error was a stum-

bling-block. For those who came with him to us have also been corrected and restored along with him, as is declared by their signatures, which have been adhibited to the letter in our presence.

¹⁵⁷ It remains only that you, being made joyful by the salvation of a brother, condescend to make us joyful in our turn by sending a reply to our communication. Farewell in the Lord, most beloved and honourable brethren; such is our desire on your behalf: remember us. 573

LETTER 220. AD 427

¹⁵⁸ (A.D. 427.) to my Lord Boniface,¹ my Son Commended to the Guardianship and Guidance of Divine Mercy, for Present and Eternal Salvation Augustin Sends Greeting. ¹⁵⁹1. Never could I have found a more trustworthy man, nor one who could have more ready access to your ear when bearing a letter from me, than this servant and minister of Christ, the deacon Paulus, a man very dear to both of us, whom the Lord has now brought to me in order that I may have the opportunity of addressing you, not in reference to your power and the honour which you hold in this evil world, nor in reference to the preservation of your corruptible and mortal body, -- because this also is destined to pass away, and how soon no one can tell, -- but in reference to that salvation which has been promised to us by Christ, who was here on earth despised and crucified in order that He might teach us rather to despise than to desire the good things of this world, and to set our affections and our hope on that world which He has revealed by His resurrection. For He has risen from the dead, and now "dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him."² 2. I know that you have no lack of friends, who love you so far as life in this world is concerned, and who in regard to it give you counsels, sometimes useful, sometimes the reverse; for they are men, and therefore, though they use their wisdom to the best of their ability in regard to what is present, they know not what may happen on the morrow.

¹⁶⁰ But it is not easy for any one to give you counsel in reference to God, to prevent the perdition of your soul, not because you lack friends who would do this, but because it is difficult for them to find an opportunity of speaking with you on these subjects. For I myself have often longed for this, and never found place or time in which I might deal with you as I ought to deal with a man whom I ardently love in Christ. You know besides in what state you found me at Hippo, when you did me the honor to come to visit me, -- how I was scarcely able to speak, being prostrated by bodily weakness. Now, then,

my son, hear me when I have this opportunity of addressing you at least by a letter, -- a rare opportunity, for it was not in my power to send such communication to you in the midst of your dangers, both because I apprehended danger to the bearer, and because I was afraid lest my letter should reach persons into whose hands I was unwilling that it should fall. Wherefore I beg you to forgive me if you think that I have been more afraid than I should have been; however this may be, I have stated what I feared. 3. Hear me, therefore; nay, rather hear the Lord our God snaking by me, His feeble servant.

¹⁶¹ Call to remembrance what manner of man you were while your former wife, of hallowed memory, still lived, and how under the stroke of her death, while that event was yet recent, the vanity of this world made you recoil from it, and how you earnestly desired to enter the service of God. We know and we can testify what you said as to your state of mind and your desires when you conversed with us at Tubunae. My brother Alypius and I were alone with you. [I beseech you, then, to call to remembrance that conversation], for I do not think that the worldly cares with which you are now engrossed can have such power over you as to have effaced this wholly from your memory. You were then desirous to abandon all the public business in which you were engaged, and to withdraw into sacred retirement, and live like the servants of God who have embraced a monastic life. And what was it that prevented you from acting according to these desires?

¹⁶² Was it not that you were influenced by considering, on our representation of the matter, how much service the work which then occupied you might render to the churches of Christ if you pursued it with this single aim, that they, protected from all disturbance by barbarian hordes, might live "a quiet and peaceable life," as the apostle says, "in all godliness and honesty;"³ resolving at the same time for your own part to seek no more from this world than would suffice for the support of yourself and those dependent on you, wearing as your girdle the cincture of a perfectly chaste self-restraint, and having underneath the accoutrements of the soldier the surer and stronger defence of spiritual armour. 4. At the very time when we were full of joy that you had formed this resolution, you embarked on a voyage and you married a second wife. Your embarkation was an act of the obedience due, as the apostle has taught us, to the "higher powers;"⁴ but you would not have married again had you not, abandoning the continence to which you had

devoted yourself, been overcome by concupiscence. When I learned this, I was, I must confess it, dumb with amazement; but, in my sorrow, I was in some degree comforted by hearing that you refused to marry her unless she became a Catholic before the marriage, and yet the heresy of those who refuse to believe in the true Son of God has so prevailed in your house, that by these heretics your daughter was baptized.

¹⁶³ Now, if the report be true (would ⁵⁷⁴ ¹⁶⁴ to God that it were false ! that even some who were dedicated to God as His handmaids have been by these heretics re-baptized, with what floods of tears ought this great calamity to be bewailed by us ! Men are saying, moreover, perhaps it is an unfounded slander, -- that one wife does not satisfy your passions, and that you have been defiled by consorting with some other women as concubines. 5. What shall I say regarding these evils -- so patent to all, and so great in magnitude as well as number -- of which you have been, directly or indirectly, the cause since the time of your being married ? You are a Christian, you have a conscience, you fear God; consider, then, for yourself some things which I prefer to leave unsaid, and you will find for how great evils you ought to do penance; and I believe that it is to afford you an opportunity of doing this in the way in which it ought to be done, that the Lord is now sparing you and delivering you from all dangers.

¹⁶⁵ But if you will listen to the counsel of Scripture, I pray you, "make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, and put not off from day to day."¹ You allege, indeed, that you have good reason for what you have done, and that I cannot be a judge of the sufficiency of that reason, because I cannot hear both sides of the question; ² but, whatever be your reason, the nature of which it is not necessary at present either to investigate or to discuss, can you, in the presence of God, affirm that you would ever have come into the embarrassments of your present position had you not loved the good things of this world, which, being a servant of God, such as we knew you to be formerly, it was your duty to have utterly despised and esteemed as of no value, -- accepting, indeed, what was offered to you, that you might devote it to pious uses, but not so coveting that which was denied to you, or was entrusted to your care, as to be brought on its account into the difficulties of your present position, in which, while good is loved, evil things are perpetrated, -- few, indeed, by you, but many because of you, and while things are dreaded which, if hurt-

ful, are so only for a short time, things are done which are really hurtful for eternity? 6.

¹⁶⁶ To mention one of these things, -- who can help seeing that many persons follow you for the purpose of defending your power or safety, who, although they may be all faithful to you, and no treachery is to be apprehended from any of them, are desirous of obtaining through you certain advantages which they also covet, not with a godly desire, but from worldly motives? And in this way you, whose duty it is to curb and check your own passions, are forced to satisfy those of others. To accomplish this, many things which are displeasing to God must be done; and yet, after all, these passions are i not thus satisfied, for they are more easily mortified finally in those who love God, than satisfied even for a time in those who love the world. Therefore the Divine Scripture says: "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof:

¹⁶⁷ but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever, as God abideth for ever."3 Associated, therefore, as you are with such multitudes of armed men, whose passions must be humoured, and whose cruelty is dreaded, how can the desires of these men who love the world ever be, I do not say satiated, but even partially gratified by you, in your anxiety to prevent still greater widespread evils, unless you do that which God forbids, and in so doing become obnoxious to threatened judgment? So complete has been the havoc wrought in order to indulge their passions, that it would be difficult now to find anything for the plunderer to carry away. 7. But what shall I say of the devastation of Africa at this hour by hordes of African barbarians, to whom no resistance is offered, while you are engrossed with such embarrassments in your own circumstances, and are taking no measures for averting this calamity? Who would ever have believed, who would have feared, after Boniface had become a Count of the Empire and of Africa, and had been placed in command in Africa with so large an army and so great authority, that the same man who formerly, as Tribune, kept all these barbarous tribes in peace, by storming their strongholds, and menacing them with his small band of brave confederates, should now have suffered the barbarians to be so bold, to

encroach so far, to destroy and plunder so much, and to turn into deserts such vast regions once densely peopled?

¹⁶⁸ Where were any found that did not predict that, as soon as you obtained the authority of Count, the African hordes would be not only checked, but made tributaries to the Roman Empire? And now, how completely the event has disappointed men's hopes you yourself perceive; in fact, I need say nothing more on this subject, because your own reflection must suggest much more than I can put in words. 8. Perhaps you defend yourself by replying that the blame here ought rather to rest on persons who have injured you, and, instead of justly ¹⁶⁹requiting the services rendered by you in your office, have returned evil for good. These matters I am not able to examine and judge. I beseech you rather to contemplate and inquire into the matter, in which you know that you have to do not with men at all, but with God; living in Christ as a believer, you are bound to fear lest you offend Him. For my attention is more engaged by higher causes, believing that men ought to ascribe Africa's great calamities to their own sins. Nevertheless, I would not wish you to belong to the number of those wicked and unjust men whom God uses as instruments in inflicting temporal punishments on whom He pleases; for He who justly employs their malice to inflict temporal judgments on others, reserves eternal punishments for the unjust themselves if they be not reformed. Be it yours to fix your thoughts on God, and to look to Christ, who has conferred on you so great blessings and endured for you so great sufferings. Those who desire to belong to His kingdom, and to live for ever happily with Him and under Him, love even their enemies do good to them that hate them, and pray for those from whom they suffer persecution; and if, at any time, in the way of discipline they use irksome severity, yet they never lay aside the sincerest love.

¹⁷⁰ If these benefits, though earthly and transitory, are conferred on you by the Roman Empire, -- for that empire itself is earthly, not heavenly, and cannot bestow what it has not in its power, -- if, I say, benefits are conferred on you, return not evil for good; and if evil be inflicted on you, return not evil for evil. Which of these two has happened in your case I am unwilling to discuss, I am unable to judge. I speak to a Christian return not either evil for good, nor evil for evil. 9. You say to me, perhaps: In circumstances so difficult, what do you wish me to do? If you ask counsel of me in a worldly point of view how your safety in this transitory life may be secured, and the power

and wealth belonging to you at present may be preserved or even increased, I know not what to answer you, for any counsel regarding things so uncertain as these must partake of the uncertainty inherent in them. But i if you consult me regarding your relation to God and the salvation of your soul, and if you fear the word of truth which says: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"² I have a plain answer to give. I am prepared with advice to which you may well give heed. But what need is there for my saying anything else than what I have already said.

¹⁷¹ "Love not the world, neither the things, that are in the world. If any man love the world, he love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." ³ Here is counsel ! Seize it and act on it. Show that you are a brave man. Vanquish the desires with which the world is loved. Do penance for the evils of your past life, when, vanquished by your passions, you were drawn away by sinful desires. If you receive this counsel, and hold it fast, and act on it, you will both attain to those blessings which are certain, and occupy yourself in the midst of these uncertain things without forfeiting the salvation of your soul. 10. But perhaps you again ask of me how you can do these things, entangled as you are with so great worldly difficulties. Pray earnestly, and say to God, in the words of the Psalm: "Bring Thou me out of my distresses," ⁴ for these distresses terminate when the passions in which they originate are vanquished.

¹⁷² He who has heard your prayer and ours on your behalf, that you might be delivered from the numerous and great dangers of visible wars in which the body is exposed to the danger of losing the life which sooner or later must end, but in which the soul perishes not unless it be held captive by evil passions, -- He, I say, will hear your prayer that you may, in an invisible and spiritual conflict, overcome your inward and invisible enemies, that is to say, your passions themselves, and may so use the world, as not abusing it, so that with its good things you may do good, not become bad through possessing them. Because these things are in themselves good, and are not given to men except by Him who has power over all things in heaven and earth. Lest these gifts of His should be reckoned bad, they are given also to the good; at the same time, lest they should be reckoned great, or the supreme good, they are

given also to the bad. Further, these things are taken away from the good for their trial, and from the bad for their punishment. 11.

¹⁷³ For who is so ignorant, who so foolish, as not to see that the health of this mortal body, and the strength of its corruptible members, and victory over men who are our enemies, and temporal honours and power, and all other mere earthly advantages are given both to the good and to the bad, and are taken away both from the good and from the bad alike ? But the salvation of the soul, along with immortality of the body, and the power of righteousness, and victory over hostile passions, and glory, and honour, and everlasting peace, are not given except to the good. Therefore love these things, covet ¹⁷⁴ these things, and seek them by every means in your power. With a view to acquire and retain these things, give alms, pour forth prayers, practise fasting as far as you can without injury to your body. But do not love these earthly goods, how much soever they may abound to you. So use them as to do many good things by them, but not one evil thing for their sake. For all such things will perish; but good works, yea, even those good works which are performed by means of the perishable good things of this world, shall never perish. 12. If you had not now a wife, I would say to you what we said at Tubunae, that you should live in the holy state of continence, and would add that you should now do what we prevented you from doing at that time, namely, withdraw yourself so far as might be possible without: prejudice to the public welfare from the labours of military service, and take to yourself the leisure which you then desired for that life in the society of the saints in which the soldiers of Christ fight in silence, not to kill men, but to "wrestle against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness,"¹ that is, the devil and his angels. For the saints gain their victories over enemies whom they cannot see, and yet they gain the victory over these unseen enemies by gaining the victory over things which are the objects of sense.

¹⁷⁵ I am, however, prevented from exhorting you to that mode of life by your having a wife, since without her consent it is not lawful for you to live under a vow of continence; because, although you did wrong in marrying again after the declaration which you made at Tubunae, she, being not aware of this became your wife innocently and without restrictions. Would that you could persuade her to agree to a vow of continence, that you might without hindrance render to God what you know to be due to Him! If, however, you cannot make this agreement with her, guard carefully by all means

conjugal chastity, and pray to God, who will deliver you out of difficulties, that you may at some future time be able to do what is meanwhile impossible. This, however, does not affect your obligation to love God and not to love the world, to hold the faith steadfastly even in the cares of war, if you must still be engaged in them, and to seek peace; to make the good things of this world serviceable in good works, and not to do what is evil in labouring to obtain these earthly good things, -- in all these duties your wife is not, or, if she is, ought not to be, a hindrance to you. These things I have written, my dearly beloved son, at the bidding of the love with which I love you with regard not to this world, but to God;

¹⁷⁶and because, mindful of the words of Scripture, "Reprove a wise man, and he will love thee; reprove a fool, and he will hate thee more,"² I was bound to think of you as certainly not a fool but a wise man.

LETTER 227. AD 428

¹⁷⁷(A.D. 428 or 429.) TO THE AGED ALYPIUS, AUGUSTIN SENDS GREETING. ¹⁷⁸Brother Paulus has arrived here safely: he reports that the pains devoted to the business which engaged him have been rewarded with success ; the Lord will grant that with these his trouble in that matter may terminate. He salutes you warmly, and tells us tidings concerning Gabinianus which give us joy, namely, that having by God's mercy obtained a prosperous issue in his case, he is now not only in name a Christian, but in sincerity a very excellent convert to the faith, and was baptized recently at Easter, having both in his heart and on his lips the grace which he received. How much I long for him I can never express; but you know that I love him. The president of the medical faculty? Dioscorus, has also professed the Christian faith, having obtained grace at the same time. Hear the manner of his conversion, for his stubborn neck and his bold tongue could not be subdued without some miracle. His daughter, the only comfort of his life, was sick, and her sickness became so serious that her life was, according even to her father's own admission, despaired of.

¹⁷⁹It is reported, and the truth of the report is beyond question, for even before brother Paul's return the fact was mentioned to me by Count Peregrius, a most respectable and truly Christian man, who was baptized at the same time with Dioscorus and Gabinianus, -- it is reported, I say, that the old man, feeling himself at last constrained to implore the compassion of Christ, bound himself by a vow that he would become a Christian if he saw

her restored to health. She recovered, but he perfidiously drew back from fulfilling his vow. Nevertheless the hand of the Lord was still stretched forth, for suddenly he is smitten with blindness, and immediately the cause of this calamity was impressed upon his mind. He confessed his fault aloud, and vowed again that if his sight were given back he would perform i what he had vowed. He recovered his sight, fulfilled his vow, and still the hand of God was stretched forth. He had not committed the Creed to memory, or perhaps had refused to commit it, and had excused himself on the plea of inability. God had seen this. Immediately

¹⁸⁰ after all the ceremonies of his reception he is seized with paralysis, affecting many, indeed almost all his members, and even his tongue. Then, being warned by a dream, he confesses in writing that it had been told to him that this had happened because be had not repeated the Creed. After that confession the use of all his members was restored to him, except the tongue alone; nevertheless he, being still under this affliction, made manifest by writing that he had, notwithstanding, learned the Creed, and still retained it in his memory; and so that frivolous loquacity which, as you know, blemished his natural kindliness, and made him, when he mocked Christians, exceedingly profane, was altogether destroyed in him, What shall I say, but, "Let us sing a hymn to the Lord, and highly exalt Him for ever ! Amen."

LETTER 228. AD 428

¹⁸⁰ (A.D. 428 or 429.) TO HIS HOLY BROTHER AND CO-BISHOP HONORATUS,¹ AUGUSTIN SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD. ¹⁸¹ 1. I thought that by sending to your Grace a copy of the letter which I wrote to our brother and co-bishop Quodvultdeus,² I had earned exemption from the burden which you have imposed upon me, by asking my advice as to what you ought to do in the midst of the dangers which have befallen us in these times. For although I wrote briefly, I think that I did not pass over anything that was necessary either to be said by me or heard by my questioner in correspondence on the subject: for I said that, on the one hand, those who desire to remove, if they can, to fortified places are not to be forbidden to do so; and, on the other hand, we ought not to break the ties by which the love of Christ has bound us as ministers not to forsake the churches which it is our duty to serve. The words which I used in the letter referred to were: "Therefore, however small may be the congregation of God's people among whom we are, if our ministry is so necessary to them that it is a clear duty not to

withdraw it from them, it remains for us to say to the Lord, 'Be Thou to us a God of defence, and a strong fortress.'"3 2.

¹⁸² But this counsel does not commend itself to you, because, as you say in your letter, it does not become us to endeavour to act in opposition to the preceptor example of the Lord, admonishing us that we should flee from one city to another. We remember, indeed, the words of the Lord, "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another;"⁴ but who can believe that the Lord wished this to be done in cases in which the flocks which He purchased with His own blood are by the desertion of their pastors left without that necessary ministry which is indispensable to their life? Did Christ do this Himself, when, carried by His parents, He fled into Egypt in His infancy? No; for He had not then gathered churches which we could affirm to have been deserted by Him. Or, when the Apostle Paul was "let down in a basket through a window," to prevent his enemies from seizing him, and so escaped their hands, was the church in Damascus deprived of the necessary labours of Christ's servants? Was not all the service that was requisite supplied after his departure by other brethren settled in that city? For the apostle had done this at their request, in order that he might preserve for the Church's good his life, which the persecutor on that occasion specially sought to destroy. Let those, therefore, who are servants of Christ, His ministers in word and sacrament, do what he has commanded or permitted.

¹⁸³ When any of them is specially sought for by persecutors, let him by all means flee from one city to another, provided that the Church is not hereby deserted, but that others who are not specially sought after remain to supply spiritual food to their fellow-servants, whom they know to be unable otherwise to maintain spiritual life. When, however, the danger of all, bishops, clergy, and laity, is alike, let not those who depend upon the aid of others be deserted by those on whom they depend. In that case, either let all remove together to fortified places, or let those who must remain be not deserted by those through whom in things pertaining to the Church their necessities must be provided for; and so let them share life in common, or share in common that which the Father of their family appoints them to suffer. 3. But if it shall happen that all suffer, whether some suffer less, and others more, or all suffer equally, it is easy to see who among them are suffering for the sake of others: they are obviously those who, although they might have freed themselves from such evils by flight, have chosen to remain rather

than abandon others to whom they are necessary. By such conduct especially is proved the love commended by the Apostle John in the words: "Christ laid down His life for us:

¹⁸⁴and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." 6 For those who betake themselves to flight, or are prevented from doing so only by circumstances thwarting their design, if they be seized and made to suffer, endure this suffering only for themselves; not for their broth- 578 ¹⁸⁵ren; but those who are involved in suffering because of their resolving not to abandon others, whose Christian welfare depended on them, are unquestionably "laying down their lives for the! brethren." 4. For this reason, the saying which we have heard attributed to a certain bishop, namely: "If the Lord has commanded us to flee, in those persecutions in which we may reap the fruit of martyrdom, how much more ought we to escape by flight, if we can, from barren sufferings inflicted by the hostile incursions of barbarians ! is a saying true and worthy of acceptation, but applicable only to those who are not confined by the obligations of ecclesiastical office. For the man who, having it in his power to escape from the violence of the enemy, chooses not to flee from it, lest in so doing he should abandon the ministry of Christ, without which men can neither become Christians nor live as such, assuredly finds a greater reward of his love, than the man who, fleeing not for his brethren's sake but for his own, is seized by persecutors, and, refusing to deny Christ, suffers martyrdom. 5. What, then, shall we say to the position which you thus state in your former epistle: -- "I do not see what good we can do to ourselves or to the people by continuing to remain in the churches, except to see before our eyes men slain, women outraged, churches burned, ourselves expiring amid torments applied in order to extort from us what we do not possess"?

¹⁸⁶God is powerful to hear the prayers of His children and to avert those things which they fear; and we ought not, on account of evils that are uncertain, to make up our minds absolutely to the desertion of that ministry, without which the people must certainly suffer ruin, not in the affairs of this life, but of that other life which ought to be cared for with incomparably greater diligence and solicitude. For if those evils which are apprehended, as possibly visiting the places in which we are, were certain, all those for whose sake it was our duty to remain would take flight before us, and would thus exempt us from the necessity of remaining; for no one says that ministers

are under obligation to remain in any place where none remain to whom their ministry is necessary. In this way some holy bishops fled from Spain when their congregations had, before their flight, been annihilated, the members having either fled, or died by the sword, or perished in the siege of their towns, or gone into captivity: but many more of the bishops of that country remained in the midst of these abounding dangers, because those for whose sakes they remained were still remaining there. And if some have abandoned their flocks, this is what we say ought not to be done, for they were not taught to do so by divine authority, but were, through human infirmity, either deceived by an error or overcome by fear. 6.

¹⁸⁷ [We maintain, as one alternative, that they were deceived by an error,] for why do they think that indiscriminate compliance must be given to the precept in which they read of fleeing from one city to another, and not shrink with abhorrence from the character of the "hireling," who "seeth the wolf coming, and fleeth, because he careth not for the sheep"?¹ Why do they not honour equally both of these true sayings of the Lord, the one in which flight is permitted or enjoined, the other in which it is rebuked and censured, by taking pains so to understand them as to find that they are, as is indeed the case, not opposed to each other? And how is their reconciliation to be found, unless that which I have above proved be borne in mind, that under pressure of persecution we who are ministers of Christ ought to flee from the places in which we are only in one or other of two cases, namely, either that there is no congregation to which we may minister, or that there is a congregation, but that the ministry necessary for it can be supplied by others who have not the same reason for flight as makes it imperative on us?

¹⁸⁸ Of which we have one example, as already mentioned, in the Apostle Paul escaping by being let down from the wall in a basket, when he was personally sought by the persecutor, there being others on the spot who had not the same necessity for flight, whose remaining would prevent the Church from being destitute of the service of ministers. Another example we have in the holy Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, who fled when the Emperor Constantius wished to seize him specially, the Catholic people who remained in Alexandria not being abandoned by the other servants of God. But when the people remain and the servants of God flee, and their service is withdrawn, what is this but the guilty flight of the "hireling" who careth not for the sheep? For the wolf will come, -- not man, but the devil, who has very

often perverted to apostasy believers to whom the daily ministry of the Lord's body was wanting; and so, not "through thy knowledge," but through thine ignorance, "shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died."2 7. As for those, however, who flee not because they are deceived by an error, but, because they have been overcome by fear, why do they not rather, by the compassion and help of the Lord bestowed on them, bravely fight against their fear, lest evils incomparably heavier and much more to be dreaded befall them? This victory over fear is won wherever the flame of the love of God, without the smoke of worldliness, burns 579

189 in the heart. For love says, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?"1 But love is from God. Let us, therefore, beseech Him who requires it of us to bestow it on us, and under its influence let us fear more lest the sheep of Christ should be slaughtered by the sword of spiritual wickedness reaching the heart, than lest they should fall under the sword that can only harm that body in which men are destined at any rate, at some time, and in some way or other, to die. Let us fear more lest the purity of faith should perish through the taint of corruption in the inner man, than lest our women should be subjected by violence to outrage; for if chastity is preserved in the spirit, it is not destroyed by such violence, since it is not destroyed even in the body when there is no base consent of the sufferer to the sin, but only a submission without the consent of the will to that which another does. Let us fear more lest the spark of life in "living stones" be quenched through our absence, than lest the stones and timbers of our earthly buildings be burned in our presence. Let us fear more lest the members of Christ's body should die for want of spiritual food, than lest the members of our own bodies, being overpowered by the violence of enemies, should be racked with torture.

190 Not because these are things which we ought not to avoid when this is in our power, but because we ought to prefer to suffer them when they cannot be avoided without impiety, unless, perchance, any one be found to maintain that that servant is not guilty of impiety who withdraws the service necessary to piety at the very time when it is peculiarly necessary. 8. Do we forget how, when these dangers have reached their extremity, and there is no possibility of escaping from them by flight, an extraordinary crowd of persons, of both sexes and of all ages, is wont to assemble in the church, -- some urgently asking baptism, others reconciliation, others even the doing of

penance, and all calling for consolation and strengthening through the administration of sacraments? If the ministers of God be not at their posts at such a time, how great perdition overtakes those who depart from this life either not regenerated or not loosed from their sins !2 How deep also is the sorrow of their believing kindred, who shall not have these lost ones with them in the blissful rest of eternal life ! In fine, how loud are the cries of all, and the indignant imprecations of not a few, because of the want of ordinances and the absence of those who should have dispensed them! See what the fear of temporal calamities may effect, and of how great a multitude of eternal calamities it may be the procuring cause.

¹⁹¹ But if the ministers be at their posts, through the strength which God bestows upon them, all are aided,-- some are baptized, others reconciled to the Church. None are defrauded of the communion of the Lord's body; all are consoled, edified, and exhorted to ask of God, who is able to do so, to avert all things which are feared, -- prepared for both alternatives, so that "if the cup may not pass" from them, His will may be done who cannot will anything that is evil. 9. Assuredly you now see (what, according to your letter, you did not see before) how great advantage the Christian people may obtain if, in the presence of calamity, the presence of the servants of Christ be not withdrawn from them. You see, also, how much harm is done by their absence, when "they seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's,"⁴ and are destitute of that charity of which it is said, "it seeketh not her own,"⁵ and fail to imitate him who said, "I seek not mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved,"⁶ and who, moreover, would not have fled from the insidious attacks of the imperial persecutor, had he not wished to save himself for the sake of others to whom he was necessary; on which account he says, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."⁷ 10.

¹⁹² Here, perhaps, some one may say that the servants of God ought to save their lives by flight when such evils are impending, in order that they may reserve themselves for the benefit of the Church in more peaceful times. This is rightly done by some, when others are not wanting by whom the service of the Church may be supplied, and the work is not deserted by all, as we have stated above that Athanasius did; for the whole Catholic world knows how necessary it was to the Church that he should do so, and how useful was

the prolonged life of the man who by his word and loving service defended her against the Arian heretics. But this ought by no means to be done when the danger is common to all; and the thing to be dreaded above all is, lest any one should be supposed to do this not from a desire to secure the welfare of others, but from fear of losing his own life, and should therefore do more harm by the example of deserting the post of duty than all the good that he could do by the preservation of his life for future service. Finally, observe how the holy David acquiesced in the urgent petition of his people, that he should

¹⁹³ not expose himself to the dangers of battle, and, as it is said in the narrative, "quench the light of Israel,"¹ but was not himself the first to propose it; for had he been so, he would have made many imitate the cowardice which they might have attributed to him, supposing that he had been prompted to this not through regard to the advantage of others, but under the agitation of fear as to his own life. 11. Another question which we must not regard as unworthy of notice is suggested here. For if the interests of the Church are not to be lost sight of, and if these make it necessary that when any great calamity is impending some ministers should flee, in order that they may survive to minister to those whom they may find remaining after the calamity is passed, -- the question arises, what is to be done when it appears that, unless some flee, all must perish together? what if the fury of the destroyer were so restricted as to attack none but the ministers of the Church? What shall we reply? Is the Church to be deprived of the service of her ministers because of fleeing from their work through fear lest she should be more unhappily deprived of their service because of their dying in the midst of their work?

¹⁹⁴ Of course, if the laity are exempted from the persecution, it is in their power to shelter and conceal their bishops and clergy in some way, as He shall help them under whose dominion all things are, and who, by His wondrous power, can preserve even one who does not flee from danger. But the reason for our inquiring what is the path of our duty in such circumstances is, that we may not be chargeable with tempting the Lord by expecting divine miraculous interposition on every occasion. There is, indeed, a difference in the severity of the tempest of calamity when the danger is common to both laity and clergy, as the perils of stormy weather are common to both merchants and sailors on board of the same ship. But far be it from us to es-

teem this ship of ours so lightly as to admit that it would be right for the crew, and especially for the pilot, to abandon her in the hour of peril, although they might have it in their power to escape by leaping into a small boat, or even swimming ashore. For in the case of those in regard to whom we fear lest through our deserting our work they should perish, the evil which we fear is not temporal death, which is sure to come at one time or other, but eternal death, which may come or may not come, according as we neglect or adopt measures whereby it may be averted.

¹⁹⁵ Moreover, when the lives of both laity and clergy are exposed to common danger, what reason have we for thinking that in every place which the enemy may invade all the clergy are likely to be put to death, and not that all the laity shall also die, in which event the clergy, and those to whom they are necessary, would pass from this life at the same time ? Or why may we not hope that, as some of the laity are likely to survive, some of the clergy may also be spared, by whom the necessary ordinances may be dispensed to them ? 12. Oh that in such circumstances the question debated among the servants of God were which of their number should remain, that the Church might not be left destitute by all fleeing from danger, and which of their number should flee, that the Church might not left destitute by all perishing in the danger. Such a contest will arise among the brethren who are all alike glowing with love and satisfying the claims of love. And if it were in any case impossible otherwise to terminate the debate, it appears to me that the persons who are to remain and who are to flee should be chosen by lot.

¹⁹⁶ For those who say that they, in preference to others, ought to flee, will appear to be chargeable either with cowardice, as persons unwilling to face impending danger, or with arrogance, as esteeming their own lives more necessary to be preserved for the good of the Church than those of other men. Again, perhaps, those who are better will be the first to choose to lay down their lives for the brethren; and so preservation by flight will be given to men whose life is less valuable because their skill in counselling and ruling the Church is less; yet these, if they be pious and wise, will resist the desires of men in regard to whom they see, on the one hand, that it is more important for the Church that they should live, and on the other hand, that they would rather lose their lives than flee from danger. In this case, as it is written, "the lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty; for, in difficulties of this kind, God judges better than men, whether it please

Him to call the better among His servants to the reward of suffering, and to spare the weak, or to make the weak stronger to endure trials, and then to withdraw them from this life, as persons whose lives could not be so serviceable to the Church as the lives of the others who are stronger than they.

¹⁹⁷ If such an appeal to the lot be made, it will be, I admit, an unusual proceeding, but if it is done in any case, who will dare to find fault with it? Who but the ignorant or the prejudiced will hesitate to praise with the approbation which it deserves? If, however, the use of the lot is not adopted because there is no precedent for such an appeal, let it by all means be secured that the Church ¹⁹⁸ be not, through the flight of any one, left destitute of that ministry which is more especially necessary and due to her in the midst of such great dangers. Let no one hold himself in such esteem because of apparent superiority in any grace as to say that he is more worthy of life than others, and therefore more entitled to seek safety in flight. For whoever thinks this is too self-satisfied, and whoever utters this must make all dissatisfied with him. 13. There are some who think that bishops and clergy may, by not fleeing but remaining in such dangers, cause the people to be misled, because, when they see those who are set over them remaining, this makes them not flee from danger. It is easy for them, however, to obviate this objection, and the reproach of misleading others, by addressing their congregations, and saying: "Let not the fact that we are not fleeing from this place be the occasion of misleading you, for we remain here not for our own sakes but for yours, that we may continue to minister to you whatever we know to be necessary to your salvation, which is in Christ; therefore, if you choose to flee, you thereby set us also at liberty from the obligations by which we are bound to remain. This, I think, ought to be said, when it seems to be truly advantageous to remove to places of greater security. If, after such words have been spoken in their hearing, either all or some shall say:

¹⁹⁹ "We are at His disposal from whose anger none can escape whithersoever they may go, and whose mercy may be found wherever their lot is cast by those who, whether hindered by known insuperable difficulties, or unwilling to toil after unknown refuges, in which perils may be only changed not finished, prefer not to go away elsewhere," -- most assuredly those who thus resolve to remain ought not to be left destitute of the service of Christian ministers. If, on the other hand after hearing their bishops and clergy speak as above, the people prefer to leave the place, to remain behind them is

not now the duty of those who were only remaining for their sakes, because none are left there on whose account it would still be their duty to remain. 14. Whoever, therefore, flees from danger in circumstances in which the Church is not deprived, through his flight, of necessary service, is doing that which the Lord has commanded or permitted. But the minister who flees when the consequence of his flight is the withdrawal from Christ's flock of that nourishment by which its spiritual life is sustained, is an "hireling who seeth the wolf coming, and fleeth because he careth not for the sheep. With love, which I know to be sincere, I have now written what I believe to be true on this question, because you asked my opinion, my dearly beloved brother; but I have not enjoined you to follow my advice, if you can find any better than mine.

²⁰⁰ Be that as it may, we cannot find anything better for us to do in these dangers than continually beseech the Lord our God to have compassion on us. And as to the matter about which I have written, namely, that ministers should not desert the churches of God, some wise and holy men have by the gift of God been enabled both to will and to do this thing, and have not in the least degree faltered in the determined prosecution of their purpose, even though exposed to the attacks of slanderers.

LETTER 229. TO DARIUS, AD 429

²⁰¹ (A.D. 429.) to Darius,¹ His Deservedly Illustrious and Very Powerful Lord and Dear Son Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. 1. Your character and rank I have learned from my holy brothers and co-bishops, Urbanus and Novatus. The former of these became acquainted with you near Carthage, in the town of Hilari, and more recently in the town of Sicca; the latter at Sitifis. Through them it has come to pass that I cannot regard you as unknown to me. For though my bodily weakness and the chill of age do not permit me to converse with you personally, it cannot on this account be said that I have not seen you; for the conversation of Urbanus, when he kindly visited me, and the letters of Novatus, so described to me the features, not of your face but of your mind, that I have seen you, and have seen you with all the more pleasure, because I have seen not the outward appearance but the inner man. These features of your character are joyfully seen both by us, and through the mercy of God by yourself also, as in a mirror in the holy Gospel, in which it is written in words uttered by Him who is truth: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."² 2. Those warriors are

indeed great and worthy of singular honour, not only for their consummate bravery, but also (which is a higher praise) for their eminent fidelity, by whose labours and dangers, along with the blessing of divine protection and aid, enemies previously unsubdued are conquered, and peace obtained for the State, and the provinces reduced to subjection. But it is a higher glory still to stay war itself with a word, than to slay men with the sword, and to

²⁰² procure or maintain peace by peace, not by war. For those who fight, if they are good men, doubtless seek for peace; nevertheless it is through blood. Your mission, however, is to prevent the shedding of blood. Yours, therefore, is the privilege of averting that calamity which others are under the necessity of producing. Therefore, my deservedly illustrious and very powerful lord and very dear son in Christ, rejoice in this singularly great and real blessing vouchsafed to you, and enjoy it in God, to whom you owe that you are what you are, and that you undertook the accomplishment of such a work. May God "strengthen that which He hath wrought for us through you."¹ Accept this our salutation, and deign to reply. From the letter of my brother Novatus, I see that he has taken pains that your learned Excellency should become acquainted with me also through my works. If, then, you have read what he has given you, I also shall have become known to your inward perception. As far as I can judge, they will not greatly displease you if you have read them in a loving rather than a critical spirit. It is not much to ask, but it will be a great favour, if for this letter and my works you send us one letter in reply. I salute with due affection the pledge of peace,² which through the favour of our Lord and God you have happily received.

LETTER 231. TO DARIUS, AD 429

²⁰³ (A.D. 429.) to Darius, His Son, and a Member of Christ, Augustin, a Servant of Christ and of the Members of Christ, Sends Greeting in the Lord.

²⁰⁴ 1. You requested an answer from me as a proof that I had gladly received your letter. Behold, then, I write again; and yet I cannot express the pleasure I felt, either by this answer or by any other, whether I write briefly or at the utmost length, for neither by few words nor by many is it possible for me to express to you what words can never express. I, indeed, am not eloquent, though ready in speech; but I could by no means allow any man, however eloquent, even though he could see as well into my mind as I do myself, to do that which is beyond my own power, viz. to describe in a letter, however able and however long, the effect which your epistle had on my mind. It re-

mains, then, for me so to express to you what you wished to know, that you may understand as being in my words that which they do not express. What, then, shall I say? That I was delighted with your letter, exceedingly delighted ; -- the repetition of this word is not a mere repetition, but, as it were, a perpetual affirmation; because it was impossible to be always saying it, therefore it has been at least once repeated, for in this way perhaps my feelings may be expressed. 2. If some one inquire here what after all delighted me so exceedingly in your letter, -- "Was it its eloquence? I will answer, No;

²⁰⁵ and he, perhaps, will reply, "Was it, then, the praises bestowed on yourself? but again I will reply, No; and I shall reply thus not because these things are not in that letter, for the eloquence in it is so great that it is very clearly evident that you are naturally endowed with the highest talents, and that you have been most carefully educated; and your letter is undeniably full of my praises. Some one then may say, "Do not these things delight you? Yes, truly, for "my heart is not," as the poet says, "of horn,"⁴ so that I should either not observe these things or observe them without delight. These things do delight; but what have these things to do with that with which I said I was highly delighted? Your eloquence delights me since it is at once genial in sentiment and dignified in expression; and though assuredly I am not delighted with all sorts of praise from all sorts of persons, but only with such praises as you have thought me worthy of, and only coming from those who are such as you are -- that is, from persons who, for Christ's sake, love His servants, I cannot deny that I am delighted with the praises bestowed upon me in your letter. 3.

²⁰⁶ Thoughtful and experienced men will be at no loss as to the opinion which they should form of Themistocles (if I remember the name rightly), who, having refused at a banquet to play on the lyre, a thing which the distinguished and learned men of Greece were accustomed to do, and having been on that account regarded as uneducated, was asked, when he expressed his contempt for that sort of amusement, "What, then, does it delight you to hear? and is reported to have answered: "My own praises. Thoughtful and experienced men will readily see with what design and in what sense these words must have been used by him, or must be understood by them, if they are to believe that he uttered them; for he was in the affairs of this world a most remarkable man, as may be illustrated by the answer which he gave

when he was further pressed with the question: "What, then, do you know?" "I know," he replied,

²⁰⁷ "how to make a small republic great. As to the thirst for praise spoken of by Ennius in the words: "All men greatly desire to be praised," I am of opinion that it is partly to be approved of, partly guarded against. For as, on the one hand, we should vehemently desire the truth, which is undoubtedly to be eagerly sought after as alone worthy of praise, even though it be not praised: so, on the other hand, we must carefully shun the vanity which readily insinuates itself along with praise from men: and this vanity is present in the mind when either the things which are worthy of praise are not reckoned worth having unless the man be praised for them by his fellow-men, or things on account of possessing which any man wishes to be much praised are deserving either of small praise, or it may be of severe censure. Hence Horace, a more careful observer than Ennius, says: "Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm if thrice read over shall its power disarm."¹ 4. Thus the poet thought that the malady arising from the love of human praise, which was thoroughly attacked with his satire, was to be charmed away by words of healing power. The great Teacher has accordingly taught us by His apostle, that we ought not to do good with a view to be praised by men, that is, we ought not to make the praises of men the motive for our well-doing;

²⁰⁸ and yet, for the sake of men themselves, He teaches us to seek their approbation. For when good men are praised, the praise does not benefit those on whom it is bestowed, but those who bestowed it. For to the good, so far as they are themselves concerned, it is enough that they are good; but those are to be congratulated whose interest it is to imitate the good when the good are praised by them, since they thus show that the persons whom they sincerely praise are persons whose conduct they appreciate. The apostle says in a certain place, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ;"² and the same apostle says in another place, "I please all men in all things," and adds the reason, "Not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."³ Behold what he sought in the praise of men, as it is declared in these words: "Finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these

things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."⁴ All the other things which I have named above, he summed up under the name of Virtue, saying, "If there be any virtue;

²⁰⁹but the definition which he subjoined, "Whatsoever things are of good report," he followed up by another suitable word, "If there be any praise. What the apostle says, then, in the first of these passages, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ," is to be understood as if he said, If the good things which I do were done by me with human praise as my motive, if I were puffed up with the love of praise, I should not be the servant of Christ. The apostle, then, wished to please all men, and rejoiced in pleasing them, not that he might himself be inflated with their praises, but that he being praised might build them up in Christ. Why, then, should it not delight me to be praised by you, since you are too good a man to speak insincerely, and you bestow your praise on things which you love, and which it is profitable and wholesome to love, even though they be not in me ? This, moreover, does not benefit you alone, but also me. For if they are not in me, it is good for me that I am put to the blush, and am made to burn with desire to possess them. And in regard to anything in your praise which I recognise as in my possession, I rejoice that I possess it, and that such things are loved by you, and that I am loved for their sake.

²¹⁰And in regard to those things which I do not recognise as belonging to me, I not only desire to obtain them, that I may possess them for myself, but also that those who love me sincerely may not always be mistaken in praising me for them. 5. Behold how many things I have said, and still I have not yet spoken of that in your letter which delighted me more than your eloquence, and far more than the praises you bestowed on me. What do you think, O excellent man, that this can be ? It is that I have acquired the friendship of so distinguished a man as you are, and that without having even seen you; if, indeed, I ought to speak of one as unseen whose soul I have seen in his own letters, though I have not seen his body. In which letters I rest my opinion concerning you on my own knowledge, and not, as formerly, on the testimony of my brethren. For what your character was I had already heard, but how you stood affected to me I knew not until now.

²¹¹From this, your friendship to me, I doubt not that even the praises bestowed on me, which give me pleasure for a reason about which I have

already said enough, will much more abundantly benefit the Church of Christ, since the fact that you possess, and study, and love, and commend my labours in defence of the gospel against the remnant of impious idolaters, secures for me a wider influence in these writings in proportion to the high position which you occupy; for, illustrious your-²¹² self, you insensibly shed a lustre upon them. You, being celebrated, give celebrity to them, and wherever you shall see that the circulation of them might do good, you will not suffer them to remain altogether unknown. If you ask me how I know this, my reply is, that such is the impression concerning you produced on me by reading your letters. Herein you will now see how great delight your letter could impart to me, for if your opinion of me be favourable, you are aware how great delight is given to me by gain to the cause of Christ. Moreover, when you tell me concerning yourself that, although, as you say, you belong to a family which not for one or two generations, but even to remote ancestors, has been known as able to accept the doctrine of Christ, you have nevertheless been aided by my writings against the Gentile rites so to understand these as you never had done before, can I esteem it a small matter how great benefit our writings, commended and circulated by you, may confer upon others, and to how many and how illustrious persons your testimony may bring them, and how easily and profitably through these persons they may reach others? Or, reflecting on this, can the joy diffused in my heart be small or moderate in degree ? 6.

²¹³ Since, then, I cannot in words express how great delight I have received from your letter, I have spoken of the reason why it delight me, and may that which I am unable adequately to utter on this subject I leave to you to conjecture. Accept, then, my son -- accept, O excellent man, Christian not by outward profession merely, but by Christian love -- accept, I say, the books containing my "Confessions," which you desired to have. In these behold me, that you may not praise me beyond what I am; in these believe what is said of me, not by others, but by myself; in these contemplate me, and see what I have been in myself, by myself; and if anything in me please you, join me, because of it, in praising Him to whom, and not to myself, I desire praise to be given. For "He hath made us, and not we ourselves;"¹ indeed, we had destroyed ourselves, but He who made us has made us anew. When, however, you find me in these books, pray for me that I may not fail, but be perfected. Pray, my son; pray. I feel what I say; I know what I ask. Let

it not seem to you a thing unbecoming, and, as it were, beyond your merits. You will defraud me of a great help if you do not do so. Let not only you yourself, but all also who by your testimony shall come to love me, pray for me.

²¹⁴ Tell them that I have entreated this, and if you think highly of us, consider that we command what we have asked; in any case, whether as granting a request or obeying a command, pray for us. Read the Divine Scriptures, and you will find that the apostles themselves, the leaden of Christ,s flock, requested this from their sons, or enjoined it on their hearers. I certainly, since you ask it of me, will do this for you as far as I can. He sees this who is the Hearer of prayer, and who saw that I prayed for you before you asked me; but let this proof of love be reciprocated by you. We are placed over you; you are the flock of God. Consider and see that our dangers are greater than yours, and pray for us, for this becomes both us and you, that we may give a good account of you to the Chief Shepherd and Head over us all, and may escape both from the trials of this world and its allurements, which are still more dangerous, except when the peace of this world has the effect for which the apostle has directed us to pray, "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."² For if godliness and honesty be wanting, what is a quiet and peaceful exemption from the evils of the world but an occasion either of inviting men to enter, or assisting men to follow, a course of self-indulgence and perdition?

²¹⁵ Do you, then, ask for us what we ask for you, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Let us ask this for each other wherever you are and wherever we are, for He whose we are is everywhere present. 7. I have sent you also other books which you did not ask, that I might not rigidly restrict myself to what you asked: -- my works on Faith in Things Unseen, on Patience, on Contenance, on Providence, and a large work on Faith, Hope, and Charity. If, while you are in Africa, you shall read all these, either send your opinion of them to me, or let it be sent to some place whence it may be sent us by my lord and brother Aurelius, though wherever you shall be we hope to have letters from you; and do you expect letters from us as long as we are able. I most gratefully received the things you sent to me, in which you deigned to aid me both in regard to my bodily health,³ since you desire me to be free from the hindrance of sickness in devoting my time to God, and in regard to my library, that I may have the

means to procure new books and repair the old. May God recompense you, both in the present life and in that to come, with those favours which He has prepared for such as He has willed you to be.

²¹⁶ I request you now to salute again for me, as before, the pledge of peace entrusted to you, very dear to both of us. ²¹⁷ FOURTH DIVISION. [Hitherto the order followed in the arrangement of the letters has been the chronological. It being impossible to ascertain definitely the date of composition of thirty-nine of the letters, these have been placed by the Benedictine editors in the fourth division, and in it they are arranged under two principal divisions, the first embracing some controversial letters, and the second a number of those which were occasioned either by Augustin's interest in the welfare of individuals, or by the claims of official duty.]

LETTER 232.

²¹⁷ To the People of Madaura, my Lords Worthy of Praise, and Brethren Most Beloved, Augustin Sends Greeting, in Reply to the Letter Received by the Hands of Brother Florentinus. ²¹⁸ 1. If, perchance, such a letter as I have received was sent to me by those among you who are Catholic Christians, the only thing at which I am surprised is, that it was sent in the name of the municipality, and not in their own name. If, however, it has pleased all or almost all of your men of rank to send a letter to me, I am surprised at the title "Father" and the "salutation in the Lord" addressed to me by you, of whom I know certainly, and with much regret, that you regard with superstitious veneration those idols against which your temples are more easily shut than your hearts; or, I should rather say, those idols which are not more truly shut up in your temples than in your hearts.¹ Can it be that you are at last, after wise reflection, seriously thinking of that salvation which is in the Lord, in whose name you have chosen to salute me ? For if it be not so, I ask you, my lords worthy of all praise, and brethren most beloved, in what have I injured, in what have I offended your benevolence, that you should think it fight to treat me with ridicule rather than with respect in the salutation prefixed to your letter ? 2.

²¹⁹ For when I read the words, "To Father Augustin, eternal salvation in the Lord," I was suddenly elated with such fulness of hope, that I believed you either already converted to the Lord Himself, and to that eternal salvation of which He is the author, or desirous, through our, ministry, to be so converted. But when I read the rest of the letter my heart was chilled. I inquired,

however, from the bearer of the letter, whether you were already Christians or were desirous to be so. After I learned from his answer that you were in no way changed, I was deeply grieved that you thought it right not only to reject the name of Christ, to whom you already see the whole world submitting, but even to insult His name in my person; for I could not think of any other Lord than Christ the Lord in whom a bishop could be addressed by you as a father, and if there had been any doubt as to the meaning to be attached to your words, it would have been removed by the closing sentence of your letter, where you say plainly, "We desire that, for many years, your lordship may always, in the midst of your clergy, be glad in God and His Christ. After reading and pondering all these things, what could I (or, indeed, could any man) think but that these words were written either as the genuine expression of the mind of the writers, or with an intention to deceive ?

²²⁰ If you write these things as the genuine expression of your mind, who has barred your way to the truth? Who has strewn it with thorns? What enemy has placed masses of rock across your path ? In fine, if you are desiring to come in, who has shut the door of our places of worship against you, so that you are unwilling to enjoy the same salvation with us in the same Lord in whose name you salute us? But if you write these things deceitfully and mockingly, do you, then, in the very act of imposing on me the care of your affairs, presume to insult, with the language of feigned adulation, the name of Him through whom alone I can do anything, instead of honouring Him with the veneration which is due to Him ? 3. Be assured, dearest brethren, that it is with inexpressible trembling of heart on your account that I write this letter to you, for I know how much greater in the judgment of God must be your guilt and your doom if I shall have said these things to you in vain. In regard to everything in the history of the human race which our forefathers observed and handed down to us, and not less in regard to everything connected with the seeking and holding of true religion which we now see and put on record for those who come after us, the Divine Scriptures have not been silent;

²²¹ so far from this, all things come to pass exactly according to the predictions of Scripture. You cannot deny that you see the Jewish people torn from the abodes of their ancestry, dispersed and scattered over almost every country: now, the origin of that people, their gradual increase, their losing of the kingdom, ²²² their dispersion through all the world, have happened

exactly as foretold. You cannot deny that you see that the word of the Lord, and the law coming forth from that people through Christ, who was miraculously born among their nation, has taken and retained possession of the faith of all nations: now we read of all these announced beforehand as we see them. You cannot deny that you see what we call heresies and schisms, that is, many cut off from the root of the Christian society, which by means of the Apostolic Sees, and the successions of bishops, is spread abroad in an indisputably world-wide diffusion, claiming the name of Christians, and as withering branches boasting of the mere appearance of being derived from the true vine: all this has been foreseen, predicted, and described in Scripture. You cannot deny that you see some temples of the idols fallen into ruin through neglect, others thrown down by violence, others closed, and some applied to other purposes; you see the idols themselves either broken to pieces, or burnt, or shut up, or destroyed, and the same powers of this world, who in defence of idols persecuted Christians, now vanquished and subdued by Christians, who did not fight for the truth but died for it, and directing their attacks and their laws against the very idols in defence of which they put Christians to death, and the highest dignitary of the noblest empire laying aside his crown and kneeling as a suppliant at the tomb of the fisherman Peter. 4.

223 The Divine Scriptures, which have now come into the hands of all, testified long before: that all these things would come to pass. We rejoice that all these things have happened, with a faith which is strong in proportion to the discovery thereby made of the greatness of the authority with which they are declared in the sacred Scriptures. Seeing, then, that all these things have come to pass as foretold, are we, I ask, to suppose that the judgment of God, which we read of in the same Scriptures as appointed to separate finally between the believing and the unbelieving, is the only event in regard to which the prophecy is to fail? Yea, certainly, as all these events have come, it shall also come. Nor shall there be a man of our time who shall be able in that day to plead anything in defence of his unbelief. For the name of Christ is on the lips of every man:

224 it is invoked by the just man in doing justice, by the perjurer in the act of deceiving, by the king to confirm his rule, by the soldier to nerve himself for battle, by the husband to establish his authority, by the wife to confess her submission, by the father to enforce his command, by the son to declare

his obedience, by the master in supporting his right to govern, by the slave in performing his duty, by the humble in quickening piety, by the proud in stimulating ambition, by the rich man when he gives, and by the poor when he receives an alms, by the drunkard at his wine-cup, by the beggar at the gate, by the good man in keeping his word, by the wicked man in violating his promises: all frequently use the name of Christ, the Christian with genuine reverence, the Pagan with reigned respect; and they shall undoubtedly give to that same Being whom they invoke an account both of the spirit and of the language in which they repeat His name. 5. There is One invisible, from whom, as the Creator and First Cause, all things seen by us derive their being: He is supreme, eternal, unchangeable, and comprehensible by none save Himself alone. There is One by whom the supreme Majesty utters and reveals Himself, namely, the Word, not inferior to Him by whom it is begotten and uttered, by which Word He who begets it is manifested.

²²⁵ There is One who is holiness, the sanctifier of all that becomes holy, who is the inseparable and undivided mutual communion between this unchangeable Word by whom that First Cause is revealed, and that First Cause who reveals Himself by the Word which is His equal. But who is able with perfectly calm and pure mind to contemplate this whole Essence (whom I have endeavoured to describe without giving His name, instead of giving His name without describing Him), and to draw blessedness from that contemplation, and by sinking, as it were, in the rapture of such meditation, to become oblivious of self, and to press on to that the sight of which is beyond our sphere of perception; in other words, to be clothed with immortality, and obtain that eternal salvation which you were pleased to desire on my behalf in your greeting? Who, I say, is able to do this but the man who, confessing his sins, shall have levelled with the dust all the vain risings of pride, and prostrated himself in meekness and humility to receive God as his Teacher? 6.

²²⁶ Since, therefore, it is necessary that we be first brought down from vain self-sufficiency to lowliness of spirit, that rising thence we may attain to real exaltation, it was not possible that this spirit could be produced in us by any method at once more glorious and more gentle (subduing our haughtiness by persuasion instead of violence) than that the Word by whom the Father reveals Himself to angels, who is His Power and Wisdom, who could not be discerned by the human heart so long as it was blinded by love

for the things which are seen, should condescend . to assume out nature, and so to exercise and manifest His personality when incarnate as to make men more afraid of being elated by the pride of man, than of being brought low after the example of God. Therefore the Christ who is preached throughout the whole world is not 587

227 Christ adorned with an earthly crown, nor Christ rich in earthly treasures, nor Christ illustrious for earthly prosperity, but Christ crucified. This was ridiculed, at first, by whole nations of proud men, and is still ridiculed by a remnant among the nations, but it was the object of faith at first to a few and now to whole nations, because when Christ crucified was preached at that time, notwithstanding the ridicule of the nations, to the few who believed, the lame received power to walk, the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the dead were restored to life. Thus, at length, the pride of this world was convinced that, even among the things of this world, there is nothing more powerful than the humility of God,¹ so that beneath the shield of a divine example that humility, which it is most profitable for men to practise, might find defence against the contemptuous assaults of pride. 7. O men of Madaura, my brethren, nay, my fathers,² I beseech you to awake at last: this opportunity of writing to you God has given to me. So far as I could, I rendered my service and help in the business of brother Florentinus, by whom, as God willed it, you wrote to me; but the business was of such a nature, that even without my assistance it might have been easily transacted, for almost all the men of his family, who reside at Hippo, know Florentinus, and deeply regret his bereavement.

228 But the letter was sent by you to me, that, having occasion to reply, it might not seem presumptuous on my part, when the opportunity was afforded me by yourselves, to say something concerning Christ to the worshippers of idols. But I beseech you, if you have not taken His name in vain in that epistle, suffer not these things which I write to you to be in vain; but if in using His name you wished to mock me, fear Him whom the world formerly in its pride scorned as a condemned criminal, and whom the same world now, subjected to His sway, awaits as its Judge. For the desire of my heart for you, expressed as far as in my power by this letter, shall witness against you at the judgment-seat of Him who shall establish for ever those who believe in Him and confound the unbelieving. May the one true God

deliver you wholly from the vanity of this world, and turn you to Himself, my lords worthy of all praise and brethren most beloved.

LETTER 237.

²²⁹ This letter was addressed to Ceretius, a bishop, who had sent to Augustin certain apocryphal writings, on which the Spanish heretical sect called Priscillianists rounded some of their doctrines. Ceretius had especially directed his attention to a hymn which they alleged to have been composed by the Lord Jesus Christ, and given by Him to His disciples on that night on which He was betrayed, when they sang an "hymn" before going out to the Mount of Olives. The length of the letter precludes its insertion here, but we believe it will interest many to read the few lines of this otherwise long-forgotten hymn, which Augustin has here preserved. They are as follows :-- "Salvare volo et salvari volo; Solvere volo et solvi volo; Ornate volo et ornari volo; Generari volo; Cantare volo, saltate cuncti: Plangere volo, tundite vos omnes: Lucerna sum tibi, ille qui me vides; Janua sum tibi, quicumque me pulsas; Qui rides quod ago, tace opera mea; Verbo illusi cuncta et non sum illus in totum."

²³⁰ The reader who ponders these extracts, and remembers the occasion on which the hymn is alleged to have been composed, will agree with us that Augustin employs a very unnecessary fulness of argument in devoting several paragraphs to demolish the claims advanced on its behalf as a revelation more profound and sacred than anything contained in the canonical Scriptures. Augustin also brings against the Priscillianists the charge of justifying perjury when it might be of service in concealing their real opinions, and quotes a line in which, as he had heard from some who once belonged to that sect, the lawfulness of such deceitful conduct was taught :-- "Jura, perjura, secretum prodere noli."

LETTER 245. TO POSSIDIUS

²³⁰ To Possidius,⁴ my Most Beloved Lord and Venerable Brother and Partner in the Sacerdotal Office, and to the Brethren Who Are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren Who Are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord. ²³¹ 1. It requires more consideration to decide what to do with those who refuse to obey you, than to discover how to show them that things which they do are unlawful. Meanwhile, however, the letter of your Holiness has come upon me when I am exceedingly pressed with business, and the very hasty depar-

ture of the bearer has made it necessary for me to write you in reply, but has not given me time to answer as I ought to have done in regard to the matters on which you have consulted me. Let me say, 588 ²³² however, in regard to ornaments of gold and costly dress, that I would not have you come to a precipitate decision in the way of forbidding their use, except in the case of those who, neither being married nor intending to marry, are bound to consider only how they may please God. But those who belong to the world have also to consider how they may in these things please their wives if they be husbands, their husbands if they be wives;¹ with this limitation, that it is not becoming even in married women to uncover their hair, since the apostle commands women to keep their heads covered.² As to the use of pigments by women in colouring the face, in order to have a ruddier or a fairer complexion, this is a dishonest artifice, by which I am sure that even their own husbands do not wish to be deceived; and it is only for their own husbands that women ought to be permitted to adorn themselves, according to the toleration, not the injunction, of Scripture. For the true adorning, especially of Christian men and women, consists not only in the absence of all deceitful painting of the complexion, but in the possession not of magnificent golden ornaments or rich apparel, but of a blameless life. 2.

²³³ As for the accursed superstition of wearing amulets (among which the earrings worn by men at the top of the ear on one side are to be reckoned), it is practised with the view not of pleasing men, but of doing homage to devils. But who can expect to find in Scripture express prohibition of every form of wicked superstition, seeing that the apostle says generally, "I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils,"³ and again, "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" ⁴ unless, perchance, the fact that he named Belial, while he forbade in general terms fellowship with devils, leaves it open for Christians to sacrifice to Neptune, because we nowhere read an express prohibition of the worship of Neptune ! Meanwhile, let those unhappy people be admonished that, if they persist in disobedience to salutary precepts, they must at least forbear from defending their impieties, and thereby involving themselves in greater guilt. But why should we argue at all with them if they are afraid to take off their earrings, and are not afraid to receive the body of Christ while wearing the badge of the devil ? As to ordaining a man who was baptized in the Donatist sect, I cannot take the responsibility of recom-

mending you to do this; it is one thing for you to do it if you are left without alternative, it is another thing for me to advise that you should do it.

LETTER 246. TO LAMPADIUS

²³⁴ To Lampadius, Augustin Sends Greeting, ²³⁵ 1. On the subject of Fate and Fortune, by which, as I perceived when I was with you, and as I now know in a more gratifying and more reliable way by your own letter, your mind is seriously disturbed, I ought to write you a considerable volume; the Lord will enable me to explain it in the manner which He knows to be best fitted to preserve your faith. For it is no small evil that when men embrace perverse opinions they are not only drawn by the allurements of pleasure to commit sin, but are also turned aside to vindicate their sin rather than seek to have it healed by acknowledging that they have done wrong. 2. Let me, therefore, briefly remind you of one thing bearing on the question which you certainly know, that all laws and all means of discipline, commendations, censures, exhortations, threatenings, rewards, punishments, and all other things by which mankind are managed and ruled, are utterly subverted and overthrown, and found to be absolutely devoid of justice, unless the will is the cause of the sins which a man commits. How much more legitimate and right, therefore, is it for us to reject the absurdities of astrologers [mathematici], than to submit to the alternative necessity of condemning and rejecting the laws proceeding from divine authority, or even the means needful for governing our own families.

²³⁶ In this the astrologers themselves ignore their own doctrine as to Fate and Fortune, for when any one of them, after selling to moneyed simpletons his silly prognostications of Fate, calls back his thoughts from the ivory tablets to the management and care of his own house, he reproves his wife, not with words only, but with blows, if he finds her, I do not say jesting rather forwardly, but even looking too much out of the window. Nevertheless, if she were to expostulate in such a case, saying: "Why beat me? beat Venus, rather, if you can, since it is under that planet's influence that I am compelled to do what you complain of,"-- he would certainly apply his energies not to invent some of the absurd jargon by which he cajoles the public, but to inflict some of the just correction by which he maintains his authority at home. 3. When, therefore, any one, upon being reproved, affirms that Fate is the cause of the action, and insists that therefore he is not to be blamed, because he says that under the compulsion of Fate he did the action which is

censured, let him come back to apply this to his own case, let him observe this principle in managing his own affairs: let him not chastise a dishonest servant; let him not complain of a disrespectful son; let him not utter threats against

²³⁷ a mischievous neighbour. For in doing which of these things would he act justly, if all from whom he suffers such wrong are impelled to Commit it by Fate, not by any fault of their own? If, however, from the fight inherent in himself, and the duty incumbent on him as the head of a family towards all whom for the time he has under his control, he exhorts them to do good, deters them from doing evil, commands them to obey his will, honours those who yield implicit obedience, inflicts punishment on those who set him at naught, gives thanks to those who do him good, and hates those who are ungrateful, -- shall I wait to prove the absurdity of the astrologers calculations of Fate, when I find him proclaiming, not by words but by deeds, things so conclusive against his pretensions that he seems to destroy almost with his own hands every hair on the heads of the astrologers? If your eager desire is not satisfied with these few sentences, and demands a book which will take longer time to read on this subject, you must wait patiently until I get some respite from other duties; and you must pray to God that He may be pleased to allow both leisure and capacity to write, so as to set your mind at rest on this matter. I will, however, do this with more willing readiness, if your Charity does not grudge to remind me of it by frequent letters, and to show me in your reply what you think of this letter.

LETTER 250.

²³⁸ To His Beloved Lord and Venerable Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, Auxilius,¹ Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. ²³⁹ 1. Our son Classicianus, a man of rank, has addressed to me a letter complaining bitterly that he has suffered excommunication wrongfully at the hand of your Holiness. His account of the matter is, that he came to the church with a small escort suitable to his official authority, and begged of you that you would not, to the detriment of their own spiritual welfare, extend the privilege of the sanctuary to men who, after violating an oath which they had taken on the Gospel, were seeking in the house of faith itself assistance and protection in their crime of breaking faith; that thereafter the men themselves, reflecting on the sin which they had committed, went forth from the church, not under violent compulsion, but of their own accord; and that because of this trans-

action your Holiness was so displeased with him, that with the usual forms of ecclesiastical procedure you smote him and all his household with a sentence of excommunication.

²⁴⁰ On reading this letter from him, being very much troubled, the thoughts of my heart being agitated like the waves of a stormy sea, I felt it impossible to forbear from writing to you, to beg that if you have thoroughly examined your judgment I in this matter, and have proved it by irrefragable reasoning or Scripture testimonies, you will have the kindness to teach me also the grounds on which it is just that a son should be anathematized for the sin of his father, or a wife for the sin of her husband, or a servant for the sin of his master, or how it is just that even the child as yet unborn should lie under an anathema, and be debarred, even though death were imminent, from the deliverance provided in the layer of regeneration, if he happen to be born in a family at the time when the whole household is under the ban of excommunication. For this is not one of those judgments merely affecting the body, in which, as we read in Scripture, some despisers of God were slain with all their households, though these had not been sharers in their impiety. In those cases, indeed, as a warning to the survivors, death was inflicted on booties which, as mortal, were destined at some time to die;

²⁴¹ but a spiritual judgment, founded on what is written, "That which ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,"² -- is binding on souls, concerning which it is said, "As the soul of the father is mine, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die."³ 2. It may be that you have heard that other priests of great reputation have in some cases included the household of a transgressor in the anathema pronounced on him; but these could, perchance, if they were required, give a good reason for so doing. For my own part, although I have been most grievously troubled by the cruel excesses with which some men have vexed the Church, I have never ventured to do as you have done, for this reason, that if any one were to challenge me to justify such an act, I could give no satisfactory reply. But if, perchance, the Lord has revealed to you that it may be justly done, I by no means despise your youth and your inexperience, as having been but recently elevated to high office in the Church. Behold, though far advanced in life, I am ready to learn from one who is but young;

²⁴²and notwithstanding the number of years for which I have been a bishop, I am ready to learn from one who has not yet been a twelvemonth in the same office, if he undertakes to teach me how we can justify our conduct, either before men or before God, if we inflict a spiritual punishment on innocent souls because of another person's crime, in which they are not involved in the same way as they are involved in the original sin of Adam, ²⁴³in whom "all have sinned. For although the son of Classicianus derived through his father, from our first parent, guilt which behoved to be washed away by the sacred waters of baptism, who hesitates for a moment to say that he is in no way responsible for any sin which his father may have committed, since he was born, without his participation? What shall I say of his wife? What of so many souls in the entire household? -- of which if even one, in consequence of the severity which included the whole household in the excommunication, should perish through departing from the body without baptism, the loss thus occasioned would be an incomparably greater calamity than the bodily death of an innumerable multitude, even though they were innocent men, dragged from the courts of the sanctuary and murdered. If, therefore, you are able to give a good reason for this, I trust that you will in your reply communicate it to me, that I also may be able to do the same; but if you cannot, what right have you to do, under the promptings of inconsiderate excitement, an act for which, if you were asked to give a satisfactory reason, you could find none? 3. What I have said hitherto applies to the case even on the supposition that our son Classicianus has done something which might appear to demand most righteously at your hands the punishment of excommunication.

²⁴⁴But if the letter which he sent to me contained the truth, there was no reason why even he himself (even though his household had been exempted from the stroke) should have been so punished. As to this, however, I do not interfere with your Holiness; I only beseech you to pardon him when he asks forgiveness, if he acknowledges his fault; and if, on the other hand, you, upon reflection, acknowledge that he did nothing wrong, since in fact the right rather lay on his side who earnestly demanded that in the house of faith, faith should be sacredly kept, and that it should not be broken in the place where the sinfulness of such breach of faith is taught from] day to day, do, in this event, what a man of, piety ought to do,-- that is to say, if to you as a man anything has happened such as was confessed by one who was truly a

man of God in the words of the psalm, "Mine eye was discomposed by anger,"¹ fail not to cry to the Lord, as] he did, "Have pity on me, O Lord, for I am weak,"² so that He may stretch forth His right hand to you, rebuking the storm of your passion, and making your mind calm that you may see and may perform what is just;

²⁴⁵ for, as it is written, "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."³ And think not that, because we are bishops, it is impossible for unjust passionate resentment to gain secretly upon us; let us rather remember that, because we are men, your life in the midst of temptation's snares is, beset with the greatest possible dangers. Cancel, therefore, the ecclesiastical sentence which, perhaps under the influence of unusual excitement, you have passed; and let the mutual love which, even from the time when you were a catechumen, has united him and you, be restored again; let strife be banished and peace invited to return, lest this man who is your friend be lost to you, and the devil who is your enemy rejoice over you both. Mighty is the mercy of our God; it may be that His compassion shall hear even my prayer, imploring of Him that my sorrow on your account may not be increased, but that rather what I have begun to suffer may be removed; and may your youth, not despising my old age, be encouraged and made full of joy by His grace! Farewell!

²⁴⁶ [Annexed to this letter is a fragment of a letter written at the same time to Classicianus; it is as follows: -- To restrain those who for the offence of one soul bind a transgressor's entire household, that is, a large number of souls, under one sentence of excommunication, and especially to prevent any one from departing this life unbaptized in consequence of such an anathema, -- also to decide the question whether persons ought not to be driven forth even from a church, who seek a refuge there in order that they may break the faith pledged to sureties, I desire with the Lord's help to use the necessary measures in our Council, and, if it be necessary, to write to the Apostolic See; that, by a unanimous authoritative decision of all, we may have the course which ought to be followed in these cases determined and established. One thing I say deliberately as an unquestionable truth, that if any believer has been wrongfully excommunicated, the sentence will do harm rather to him who pronounces it than to him who suffers this wrong. For it is by the Holy Spirit dwelling in holy persons that any one is loosed or

bound, and He inflicts unmerited punishment upon no one; for by Him the love which worketh not evil is shed abroad Ln our hearts.^{4]}

LETTER 254. TO BENENATUS

²⁴⁷ To Benenatus, my Most Blessed Lord, my Esteemed and Amiable Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, and to the Brethren Who Are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren Who Are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

²⁴⁸ The maiden¹ about whom your Holiness wrote to me is at present disposed to think, that if she were of full age she would refuse every proposal of marriage. She is, however, so young, that even if she were disposed to marriage, she ought not yet to be either given or betrothed to any one. Besides this, my lord Benenatus, brother revered and beloved, it must be remembered that God takes her under guardianship in His Church with the design of protecting her against wicked men; placing her, therefore, under my care not so as that she can be given by me to whomsoever I might choose, but so as that she cannot be taken away against my will by any person who would be an unsuitable partner. The proposal which you have been pleased mention is one which, if she were disposed and prepared to marry, would not displease me; but whether she will marry any one,-- although for my own part, I would much prefer that she carried out what she now talks of,-- I do not in the meantime know, for she is at an age in which her declaration that she wishes to be a nun is to be received rather as the flippant utterance of one talking heedlessly, than as the deliberate promise of one making a solemn vow. Moreover, she has an aunt by the mother's side married to our honourable brother Felix, with whom I have.

²⁴⁹ conferred in regard to this matter,--for I neither could, nor indeed should have avoided consulting him,--and he has not been reluctant to entertain the proposal, but has, on the contrary, expressed his satisfaction; but he expressed not unreasonably his regret that nothing had been written to him on the subject, although his relationship entitled him to be apprised of it. For, perhaps, the mother of the maiden will also come forward, though in the meantime she does not make herself known, and to a mother's wishes in regard to the giving away of a daughter, nature gives in my opinion the precedence above all others, unless the maiden herself be already old enough to have legitimately a stronger claim to choose for herself what she pleases. I wish your Honour also to understand, that if the final and entire authority in the matter of her marriage were committed to me, and she herself, being

of age and willing to marry, were to entrust herself to me under God as my Judge to give her to whomsoever I thought best, -- I declare, and I declare the truth, in saying that the proposal which you mention pleases me meanwhile, but because of God being my Judge I cannot pledge myself to reject on her behalf a better offer if it were made; but whether any such proposal shall at any future time be made is wholly uncertain.

²⁵⁰ Your Holiness perceives, therefore, how many important considerations concur to make it impossible for her to be, in the meantime, definitely promised to any One.

LETTER 263.

²⁵¹ To the Eminently Religious Lady and Holy Daughter Sapida, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord. 1. The gift prepared by the just and pious industry of your own hands, and kindly presented by you to me, I have accepted, lest I should increase the grief of one who needs, as I perceive, much rather to be comforted by me; especially because you expressed yourself as esteeming it no small consolation to you if I would wear this tunic, which you had made for that holy servant of God your brother, since he, having departed from the land of the dying, is raised above the need of the things which perish in the using. I have, therefore, complied with your desire, and whatever be the kind and degree of consolation which you may feel this to yield, I have not refused it to your affection for your brother.ō The tunic which you sent I have accordingly ac-

²⁵² cepted, and have already begun to wear it before writing this to you. Be therefore of good cheer; but apply yourself, I beseech you, to far better and far greater consolations, in order that the cloud which, through human weakness, gathers darkness closely round your heart, may be dissipated by the words of divine authority; and, at all times, so live that you may live with your brother, since he has so died that he lives still. 2. It is indeed a cause for tears that your brother, who loved you, and who honoured you especially for your pious life, and your profession as a consecrated virgin, is no more before your eyes, as hitherto, going in and out in the assiduous discharge of his ecclesiastical duties as a deacon. of the church of Carthage, and that you shall no more hear from his lips the honourable testimony which, with kindly, pious, and becoming affection, he was wont to render to the holiness of a sister so dear to him. When these things are pondered, and are regretfully desired¹ with all the vehemence of long-cherished affection, the heart is

pierced, and, like blood from; the pierced heart, tears flow apace. But let your heart rise heavenward, and your eyes will cease to weep.² The things over the loss of which you mourn have indeed passed away, for they were in their nature temporary, but their loss does not involve the annihilation of that love with which Timotheus loved [his sister] Sapida, and loves her still:

²⁵³ it abides in its own treasury, and is hidden with Christ in God. Does the miser lose his gold when he stores it in a secret place? Does he not then become, so far as lies in his power, more confidently assured that the gold is in his possession when he keeps it in some safer hiding-place, where it is hidden even from his eyes? Earthly covetousness believes that it has found a safer guardianship for its loved treasures when it no longer sees them; and shall heavenly love sorrow as if it had lost for ever that which it has only sent before it to the garner of the upper world? O Sapida, give yourself wholly to your high calling, and set your affections on things above, where, at the right hand of God, Christ sitteth, who condescended for us to die, that we, though we were dead, might live, and to secure that no man should fear death as if it were destined to destroy him, and that no one of those for whom the Life died should after death be mourned for as if he had lost life. Take to yourself these and other similar divine consolations, before which human sorrow may blush and flee away. 3. There is nothing in the sorrow of mortals over their dearly beloved dead which merits displeasure; but the sorrow of believers ought not to be prolonged.

²⁵⁴ If, therefore, you have been grieved till now, let this grief suffice, and sorrow not as do the heathen, "who have no hope."⁴ For when the Apostle Paul said this, he did not prohibit sorrow altogether, but only such sorrow as the heathen manifest who have no hope. For even Martha and Mary, pious sisters, and believers, wept for their brother Lazarus, of whom they knew that he would rise again, though they knew not that he was at that time to be restored to life; and the Lord Himself wept for that same Lazarus, whom He was going to bring back from death;⁵ wherein doubtless He by His example permitted, though He did not by any precept enjoin, the shedding of tears over the graves even of those regarding whom we believe that they shall rise again to the true life. Nor is it without good reason that Scripture saith in the book of Ecclesiasticus: "Let tears fall down over the dead, and begin to lament as if thou hadst suffered great harm thyself; but adds, a little further on, this counsel, "and then comfort thyself for thy heaviness. For of heavi-

ness cometh death, and the heaviness of the heart breaketh strength."6 4. Your brother, my daughter, is alive as to the soul, is asleep as to the body: "Shall not he who sleeps also rise again from sleep?"7 God, who has already received his spirit, shall again give back to him his body, which He did not take away to annihilate, but only took aside to restore.

²⁵⁵ There is therefore no reason for protracted sorrow, since there is a much stronger reason for everlasting joy. For even the mortal part of your brother, which has been buried in the earth, shall not be for ever lost to you; --that part in which he was visibly present with you, through which also he addressed you and conversed with you, by which he spoke with a voice not less thoroughly known to your ear than was his countenance when presented to your eyes, so that, wherever the sound of his voice was heard, even though he was not seen, he used to be at once recognised by you. These things are indeed withdrawn so as to be no longer perceived by the senses of the living, that the absence of the dead may make surviving friends mourn for them. But seeing that even the bodies of the dead shall not perish (as not even a hair of the head shall perish),⁸ but shall, after being laid aside for a time, be received again never more to be laid aside, but fixed finally in the higher condition of existence into which they shall have

²⁵⁶ been changed, certainly there is more cause for I thankfulness in the sure hope for an immeasurable eternity, than for sorrow in the transient experience of a very short span of time. This hope the heathen do not possess, because they know not the Scriptures nor the power of God,¹ who is able to restore what was lost, to quicken what was dead, to renew what has been subjected to corruption, to re-unite things which have been severed from each other, and to preserve thenceforward for evermore what was originally corruptible and shortlived. These things He has promised, who has, by the fulfilment of other promises, given our faith good ground to believe that these also shall be fulfilled. Let your faith often discourse now to you on these things, because your hope shall not be disappointed, though your love may be now for a season interrupted in its exercise; ponder these things; in them find more solid and abundant consolation. For if the fact that I now wear (because he could not) the garment which you had woven for your brother yields some comfort to you, how much more full and satisfactory the comfort which you should find in considering that he for whom this was pre-

pared, and who then did not require an imperishable garment, shall be clothed with incorruption and immortality!

LETTER 269. TO NOBILIUS

To Nobilius, my Most Blessed and Venerable Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, Augustin Sends Greeting. So important is the solemnity at which your brotherly affection invites me to be present, that my heart's desire would carry my poor body to you, were it not that infirmity renders this impossible. I might have come if it had not been winter; I might have braved the winter if I had been young: for in the latter case the warmth of youth would have borne uncomplainingly the cold of the season; in the former case the warmth of summer would have met with gentleness the chill languor of old age. For the present, my lord most blessed, my holy and venerable partner in the priestly office, I cannot undertake in winter so long a journey, carrying with me as I must the frigid feebleness of very many years. I reciprocate the salutation due to your worth, on behalf of my own welfare I ask an interest in your prayers, and I myself beseech the Lord God to grant that the prosperity of peace may follow the dedication of so great an edifice to His sacred service.²

P A R T T W O

Expositions on the Psalms

The first forty-four of Augustine's Expositions on the Psalms.

Expositions on the Psalms: Psalms 1–44

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

AD 354–430

Augustine preached and dictated these expositions over some thirty years at Hippo. He follows the Greek numbering of the Psalms, which is one behind the Hebrew numbering for most of the Psalter, and he reads each psalm as the voice of Christ and of his body the Church. This volume holds Psalms 1 to 44.

PSALM 1

1. "Blessed is the man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly" (ver. 1). This is to be understood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Man. "Blessed is the man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly," as "the man of earth did," who consented to his wife deceived by the serpent, to the transgressing the commandment of God. "Nor stood in the way of sinners." For He came indeed in the way of sinners, by being born as sinners are; but He "stood" not therein, for that the enticements of the world held Him not. "And hath not sat in the seat of pestilence." He willed not an earthly kingdom, with pride, which is well taken for "the seat of pestilence;" for that there is hardly any one who is free from the love of rule, and craves not human glory. For a "pestilence" is disease widely spread, and involving all or nearly all. Yet "the seat of pestilence" may be more appropriately understood of hurtful doctrine; "whose word spreadeth as a canker." The order too of the words must be considered: "went away, stood, sat." For he "went away," when he drew back from God. He "stood," when he took pleasure in sin. He "sat," when, confirmed in his pride, he could not go back, unless set free by Him, who neither "hath gone away in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of pestilence."

2. "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law will he meditate by day and by night (ver. 2). The law is not made for a righteous man," says the Apostle. But it is one thing to be in the law, another under the law.

Whoso is in the law, acteth according to the law; whoso is under the law, is acted upon according to the law: the one therefore is free, the other a slave. Again, the law, which is written and imposed upon the servant, is one thing; the law, which is mentally discerned by him who needeth not its "letter," is another thing. "He will meditate by day and by night," is to be understood either as without ceasing; or "by day" in joy, "by night" in tribulations. For it is said, "Abraham saw my day, and was glad:" and of tribulation it is said, "my reins also have instructed me, even unto the night."

3. "And he shall be like a tree planted hardby the running streams of waters" (ver. 3); that is either Very "Wisdom," which vouchsafed to assume man's nature for our salvation; that as man He might be "the tree planted hard by the running streams of waters; for in this sense can that too be taken which is said in another Psalm, "the river of God is full of water. Or by the Holy Ghost, of whom it is said, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost; and again, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink; and again, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that asketh water of thee, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water, of which whoso drinketh shall never thirst, but it shall be made in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Or, "by the running streams of waters" may be by the sins of the people, because first the waters are called "peoples" in the Apocalypse; and again, by "running stream" is not unreasonably understood "fall," which hath relation to sin. That "tree" then, that is, our Lord, from the running streams of water, that is, from the sinful people's drawing them by the way into the roots of His discipline, will "bring forth fruit," that is, will establish Churches; "in His season," that is, after He hath been glorified by His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven.

For then, by the sending of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, and by the confirming of their faith in Him, and their mission to the world, He made the Churches to "bring forth fruit. "His leaf also shall not fall," that is, His Word shall not be in vain. For, "all flesh is grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower falleth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And whatsoever He doeth shall prosper" that is, whatsoever that tree shall bear; which all must be taken of fruit and leaves, that is, deeds and words. 4. "The ungodly are not so," they are not so, "but are like the dust which the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth" (ver. 4). "The earth" is here to be taken as that stedfastness in God, with a view to

which it is said, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, yea, I have a goodly heritage." With a view to this it is said, "Wait on the Lord and keep His ways, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the earth." With a view to this it is said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." A comparison too is derived hence, for as this visible earth supports and contains the outer man, so that earth invisible the inner man. "From the face of" which "earth the wind casteth forth the ungodly," that is, pride, in that it puffeth him up. On his guard against which he, who was inebriated by the richness of the house of the Lord, and drunken of the torrent stream of its pleasures, saith, "Let not the foot of pride come against me." From this earth pride cast forth him who said, "I will place my seat in the north, and I will be like the Most High." From the face of the earth it cast forth him also who, after that he had consented and tasted of the forbidden tree that he might be as God, hid himself from the Face of God. That his earth has reference to the inner man, and that man is cast forth thence by pride, may be particularly seen in that which is written, "Why is earth and ashes proud? Because, in his life, he cast forth his bowels." For, whence he hath been cast forth, he is not unreasonably said to have cast forth himself.

5. "Therefore the ungodly rise not in the judgment" (ver. 5): "therefore," namely, because "as dust they are cast forth from the face of the earth." And well did he say that this should be taken away from them, which in their pride they court, namely, that they may judge; so that this same idea is more clearly expressed in the following sentence, "nor sinners in the counsel of the righteous." For it is usual for what goes before, to be thus repeated more clearly. So that by "sinners" should be understood the "ungodly;" what is before "in the judgment," should be here "in the counsel of the righteous." Or if indeed the ungodly are one thing, and sinners another, so that although every ungodly man is a sinner, yet every sinner is not ungodly; "The ungodly rise not in the judgment," that is, they shall rise indeed, but not that they should be judged, for they are already appointed to most certain punishment. But "sinners" do not rise "in counsel of the just" that is that they may, judge, but peradventure that they may be judged; so as of these it were said, "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall then suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

6. "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous" (ver. 6). As it is said, medicine knows health, but knows not disease, and yet disease is recognised by the art of medicine. In like manner can it be said that "the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous," but the way of the ungodly He knoweth not. Not that the Lord is ignorant of anything, and yet He says to sinners, "I never knew you." "But the way of the ungodly shall perish;" is the same as if it were said, the way of the ungodly the Lord knoweth not. But it is expressed more plainly that this should be not to be known of the Lord, namely, to "perish;" and this to be known of the Lord, namely, to "abide;" so as that to be should appertain to the knowledge of God, but to His not knowing not to be. For the Lord saith, "I Am that I Am," and, "I Am hath sent me."

PSALM 2

1. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people meditate vain things?" (ver. 1). "The kings of the earth have stood up, and the rulers taken counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Christ" (ver. 2). It is said, "why?" as if it were said, in vain. For what they wished, namely, Christ's destruction, they accomplished not; for this is spoken of our Lord's persecutors, of whom also mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles. 2. "Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us" (ver. 3). Although it admits of another acceptation, yet is it more fitly understood as in the person of those who are said to "meditate vain things." So that "let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us," may be, let us do our endeavour, that the Christian religion do not bind us, nor be imposed upon us.

3. "He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall have them in derision" (ver. 4). The sentence is repeated; for "He who dwelleth in the heavens," is afterwards put, "the Lord;" and for "shall laugh them to scorn," is afterwards put, "shall have them in derision." Nothing of this however must be taken in a carnal sort, as if God either laugheth with cheek, or derideth with nostril; but it is to be understood of that power which He giveth to His saints, that they seeing things to come, namely, that the Name and rule of Christ is to pervade posterity and possess all nations, should understand that those men "meditate a vain thing." For this power whereby these things are foreknown is God's "laughter" and "derision." "He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn." If by "heavens" we understand holy souls, by these God, as foreknowing what is to come, will "laugh them to scorn, and have them in derision."

4. "Then He shall speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure" (ver. 5). For showing more clearly how He will "speak unto them," he added, He will "vex them;" so that "in His wrath," is, "in His sore displeasure." But by the "wrath and sore displeasure" of the Lord God must not be understood any mental perturbation; but the might whereby He most justly avengeth, by the subjection of all creation to His service. For that is to be observed and remembered which is written in the Wisdom of Solomon, "But Thou, Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity, and with great favour orderest us." The "wrath" of God then is an emotion which is produced in the soul which knoweth the law of God, when it sees this same law transgressed by the sinner. For by this emotion of righteous souls many things are avenged. Although the "wrath" of God can be well understood of that darkening of the mind, which overtakes those who transgress the law of God.

5. "Yet am I set by Him as King upon Sion, His holy hill, preaching His decree" (ver. 6). This is clearly spoken in the Person of the very Lord our Saviour Christ. But if Sion signify, as some interpret, beholding, we must not understand it of anything rather than of the Church, where daily is the desire raised of beholding the bright glory of God, according to that of the Apostle, "but we with open face beholding the glory of the Lord." Therefore the meaning of this is, Yet I am set by Him as King over His holy Church; which for its eminence and stability He calleth a mountain. "Yet I am set by Him as King." I, that is, whose "bands" they were meditating "to break asunder," and whose "yoke" to "cast away." "Preaching His decree." Who doth not see the meaning of this, seeing it is daily practised?

6. "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee" (ver. 7)., Although that day may also seem to be prophetically spoken of, on which Jesus Christ was born according to the flesh; and in eternity there is nothing past as if it had ceased to be, nor future as if it were not yet, but present only, since whatever is eternal, always is; yet as "today" intimates presentiality, a divine interpretation is given to that expression, "To-day have I begotten Thee," whereby the uncorrupt and Catholic faith proclaims the eternal generation of the power and Wisdom of God, who is the Only-begotten Son. 7. "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance" (ver. 8). This has at once a temporal sense with reference to the Manhood which He took on Himself, who offered up Himself as a Sacrifice in the stead of all sacrifices, who also maketh intercession for us; so that the words,

"ask of Me," may be referred to all this temporal dispensation, which has been instituted for mankind, namely, that the "nations" should be joined to the Name of Christ, and so be redeemed from death, and possessed by God. "I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance," which so possess them for their salvation, and to bear unto Thee spiritual fruit. "And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." The same repeated, "The uttermost parts of the earth," is put for "the nations;" but more clearly, that we might understand all the nations. And "Thy possession" stands for "Thine inheritance."

8. "Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron," with inflexible justice, and "Thou shalt break them like a potter's vessel" (ver. 9); that is, "Thou shalt break" in them earthly lusts, and the filthy doings of the old man, and whatsoever hath been derived and inured from the sinful clay. "And now understand, ye kings"(ver. 10). "And now;" that is, being now renewed, your covering of clay worn out, that is, the carnal vessels of error which belong to your past life, "now understand," ye who now are "kings;" that is, able now to govern all that is servile and brutish in you, able now too to fight, not as "they who beat the air, but chastening your bodies, and bringing them into subjection." "Be instructed, all ye who judge the earth." This again is a repetition; "Be instructed" is instead of "understand; and" ye who judge the earth instead of ye kings. For He signifies the spiritual by "those who judge the earth." For whatsoever we judge, is below us; and whatsoever is below the spiritual man, is with good reason called "the earth;" because it is defiled with earthly corruption.

9. "Serve the Lord with fear;" lest what is said, "Ye kings and judges of the earth," turn into pride: "And rejoice with trembling" (ver. 11). Very excellently is "rejoice" added, lest "serve the Lord with fear" should seem to tend to misery. But again, lest this same rejoicing should run on to unrestrained inconsiderateness, there is added "with trembling," that it might avail for a warning, and for the careful guarding of holiness. It can also be taken thus, "And now ye kings understand;" that is, And now that I am set as King, be ye not sad, kings of the earth, as if your excellency were taken from you, but rather "understand and be instructed." For it is expedient for you, that ye should be under Him, by whom understanding and instruction are given you. And this is expedient for you, that ye lord it not with rashness, but that

ye "serve the Lord" of all "with fear," and "rejoice" in bliss most sure and most pure, with all caution and carefulness, lest ye fall therefrom into pride.

10. "Lay hold of discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the righteous way" (ver. 12). This is the same as, "understand," and, "be instructed." For to understand and be instructed, this is to lay hold of discipline. Still in that it is said, "lay hold of," it is plainly enough intimated that there is some protection and defence against all things which might do hurt unless with so great carefulness it be laid hold of. "Lest at any time the Lord be angry," is expressed with a doubt, not as regards the vision of the prophet to whom it is certain, but as regards those who are warned; for they, to whom it is not openly revealed, are wont to think with doubt of the anger of God. This then they ought to say to themselves, let us "lay hold of discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and we perish from the righteous way." Now, how "the Lord be angry" is to be taken, has been said above. And "ye perish from the righteous way." This is a great punishment, and dreaded by those who have had any perception of the sweetness of righteousness; for he who perisheth from the way of righteousness, in much misery will wander through the ways of unrighteousness.

11. "When His anger shall be shortly kindled, blessed are all they who put their trust in Him;" that is, when the vengeance shall come which is prepared for the ungodly and for sinners, not only will it not light on those "who put their trust in" the Lord, but it will even avail for the foundation and exaltation of a kingdom for them. For he said not, "When His anger shall be shortly kindled," save "are all they who put their trust in Him," as though they should have this only thereby, to be exempt from punishment; but he said, "blessed;" in which there is the sum and accumulation of all good things. Now the meaning of "shortly" I suppose to be this, that it will be something sudden, whilst sinners will deem it far off and long to come.

PSALM 3

A Psalm OF David, When HE Fled From The Face OF Abessalon His Son. 1. The words, "I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up," lead us to believe that this Psalm is to be understood as in the Person of Christ; for they sound more applicable to the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, than to that history in which David's flight is described from the face of his rebellious son. And, since it is written of Christ's disciples, "The sons of the bridegroom fast not as long as the bridegroom is with them; it is

no wonder if by his undutiful son be here meant that undutiful disciple who betrayed Him. From whose face although it may be understood historically that He fled, when on his departure He withdrew with the rest to the mountain; yet in a spiritual sense, when the Son of God, that is the Power and Wisdom of God, abandoned the mind of Judas; when the Devil wholly occupied him; as it is written, "The Devil entered into his heart," may it be well understood that Christ fled from his face; not that Christ gave place to the Devil, but that on Christ's departure the Devil took possession. Which departure, I suppose, is called a flight in this Psalm, because of its quickness; which is indicated also by the word of our Lord, saying, "That thou doest, do quickly. So even in common conversation we say of anything that does not come to mind, it has fled from me; and of a man of much learning we say, nothing flies from him.

Wherefore truth fled from the mind of Judas, when it ceased to enlighten him. But Absalom, as some interpret, in the Latin tongue signifies, *Patris pax*, a father's peace. And it may seem strange, whether in the history of the kings, when Absalom carried on war against his father; or in the history of the New Testament, when Judas was, the betrayer of our Lord; how "father's peace" can be understood. But both in the former place they who read carefully, see that David in that war was at peace with his son, who even with sore grief lamented his death, saying, "O Absalom, my son, would God I had died for thee! And in the history of the New Testament by that so great and so wonderful forbearance of our Lord; in that He bore so long with him as if good, when He was not ignorant of his thoughts; in that He admitted him to the Supper in which He committed and delivered to His disciples the figure of His Body and Blood; finally, in that He received the kiss of peace at the very time of His betrayal; it is easily understood how Christ showed peace to. His betrayer, although he was laid waste by the intestine war of so abominable a device. And therefore is Absalom called "father's peace," because his father had the peace, which he had not.

2. "O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me!" (ver. 1). So multiplied indeed were they, that one even from the number of His disciples was not wanting, who was added to the number of His persecutors. "Many rise up against me; many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God" (ver. 2). It is clear that if they had had any idea that He would rise again, assuredly they would not have slain Him. To this end are those

speeches, "Let Him come down from the cross, if He be the Son of God;" and again, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." Therefore, neither would Judas have betrayed Him, if he had not been of the number of those who despised Christ, saying, "There is no salvation for Him in His God." 3. "But Thou, O Lord, art my taker." It is said to God in the nature of man, for the taking of man is, the Word made Flesh. "My glory." Even He calls God his glory, whom the Word of God so took, that God became one with Him. Let the proud learn, who unwillingly hear, when it is said to them, "For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" "And the lifter up of my head" (ver. 3). I think that this should be here taken of the human mind, which is not unreasonably called the head of the soul; which so inhered in, and in a sort coalesced with, the supereminent excellency of the Word taking man, that it was not laid aside by so great humiliation of the Passion.

4. "With my voice have I cried unto the Lord" (ver. 4); that is, not with the voice of the body, which is drawn out with the sound of the reverberation of the air; but with the voice of the heart, which to men speaks not, but with God sounds as a cry. By this voice Susanna was heard; and with this voice the Lord Himself commanded that prayer should be made in closets, that is, in the recesses of the heart noiselessly. Nor would one easily say that prayer is not made with this voice, if no sound of words is uttered from the body; since even when in silence we pray within the heart, if thoughts interpose alien from the mind of one praying, it cannot yet be said, "With my voice have I cried unto the Lord. Nor is this rightly said, save when the soul alone, taking to itself nothing of the flesh, and nothing of the aims of the flesh, in prayer, speaks to God, where He only hears. But even this is called a cry by reason of the strength of its intention." And He heard me out of His holy mountain. We have the Lord Himself called a mountain by the Prophet, as it is written, "The stone that was cut out without hands grew to the size of a mountain.

But this cannot be taken of His Person, unless peradventure He would speak thus, out of myself, as of His holy mountain He heard me, when He dwelt in me, that is, in this very mountain. But it is more plain and unembarrassed, if we understand that God out of His justice heard. For it was just that He should raise again from the dead the Innocent who was slain, and to whom evil had been recompensed for good, and that He should render to

the persecutor a meet reward, who repaid Him evil for good. For we read, "Thy justice is as the mountains of God." 5. "I slept, and took rest" (ver. 5). It may be not unsuitably remarked, that it is expressly said, "I," to signify that of His own Will He underwent death, according to that, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. Therefore, saith He, you have not taken Me as though against My will, and slain Me; but "I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up. Scripture contains numberless instances of sleep being put for death; as the Apostle says, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep. Nor need we make any question why it is added, "took rest," seeing that it has already been said, "I slept. Repetitions of this kind are usual in Scripture, as we have pointed out many in the second Psalm. But some copies have, "I slept, and was cast into a deep sleep. And different copies express it differently, according to the possible renderings of the Greek words, *egw de ekokoimhQhn kei upnwse*. Unless perhaps sleeping may be taken of one dying, but sleep of one dead: so that sleeping may be the transition into sleep, as awakening is the transition into wakefulness. Let us not deem these repetitions in the sacred writings empty ornaments of speech.

"I slept, and took rest," is therefore well understood as "I gave Myself up to My Passion, and death ensued. "And I rose, for the Lord will take Me up. This is the more to be remarked, how that in one sentence the Psalmist has used a verb of past and future time. For he has said, both "I rose," which is the past, and "will take Me up," which is the future; seeing that assuredly the rising again could not be without that taking up. But in prophecy the future is well joined to the past, whereby both are signified. Since things which are prophesied of as yet to come in reference to time are future; but in reference to the knowledge of those who prophesy they are already to be viewed as done. Verbs of the present tense are also mixed in, which shall be treated of in their proper place when they occur.

6. "I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me" (ver. 6). It is written in the Gospels how great a multitude stood around Him as He was suffering, and on the cross. "Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God" (ver. 7). It is not said to God, "Arise," as if asleep or lying down, but it is usual in holy Scripture to attribute to God what He doeth in us; not indeed universally, but where it can be done suitably; as when He is said to speak, when by His

gift Prophets speak, and Apostles, or whatsoever messengers of the truth. Hence that text, "Would you have proof of Christ, who speaketh in me?" For he doth not say, of Christ, by whose enlightening or order I speak; but he attributes at once the speaking itself to Him, by whose gift he spake. 7. "Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause. It is not to be pointed as if it were one sentence, "Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God; since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause. For He did not therefore save Him, because He smote His enemies; but rather He being saved, He smote them. Therefore it belongs to what follows, so that the sense is this; "Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners; that is, thereby hast Thou broken the teeth of the sinners, since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me. It is forsooth the punishment of the opposers, whereby. their teeth have been broken, that is, the words of sinners rending with their cursing the Son of God, brought to nought, as it were to dust; so that we may understand "teeth" thus, as words of cursing. Of which teeth the Apostle speaks, "If ye bite one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. The teeth of sinners can also be taken as the chiefs of sinners; by whose authority each one is cut off from the fellowship of godly livers, and as it were incorporated with evil livers. To these teeth are opposed the Church's teeth, by whose authority believers are cut off from the error of the Gentiles and divers opinions, and are translated into that fellowship which is the body of Christ.

With these teeth Peter was told to eat the animals when they had been killed, that is, by killing in the Gentiles what they were, and changing them into what he was himself. Of these teeth too of the Church it is said, "Thy teeth are as a flock of shorn sheep, coming up from the bath, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them. These are they who prescribe rightly, and as they prescribe, live; who do what is written, "Let your works shine before men, that they may bless your Father which is in heaven. For moved by their authority, they believe God who speaketh and worketh through these men; and separated from the world, to which they were once conformed, they pass over into the members of the Church. And rightly therefore are they, through whom such things are done, called teeth like to shorn sheep; for they have laid aside the burdens of earthly cares, and coming up from the bath, from the washing away of the filth of the world by the Sacrament of Baptism, every one beareth twins. For they fulfil the two

commandments, of which it is said, "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets; loving God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, and their neighbour as themselves. "There is not one barren among them," for much fruit they render unto God.

According to this sense then it is to be thus understood, "Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners," that is, Thou hast brought the chiefs of the sinners to nought, by smiting all who oppose Me without a cause. For the chiefs according to the Gospel history persecuted Him, whilst the lower people honoured Him. 8. "Salvation is of the Lord; and upon Thy people be Thy blessing" (ver. 8). In one sentence the Psalmist has enjoined men what to believe, and has prayed for believers. For when it is said, "Salvation is of the Lord," the words are addressed to men. Nor does it follow, "And upon Thy people" be "Thy blessing," in such wise as that the whole is spoken to men, but there is a change into prayer addressed to God Himself, for the very people to whom it was said, "Salvation is of the Lord." What else then doth he say but this? Let no man presume on himself, seeing that it is of the Lord to save from the death of sin; for, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." But do Thou, O Lord, bless Thy people, who look for salvation from Thee.

9. This Psalm can be taken as in the Person of Christ another way; which is that whole Christ should speak. I mean by whole, with His body, of which He is the Head, according to the Apostle, who says, "Ye are the body of Christ, and the members. He therefore is the Head of this body; wherefore in another place be saith, "But doing the truth in love, we may increase in Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, from whom the whole body is joined together and compacted. In the Prophet then at once, the Church, and her Head (the Church rounded amidst the storms of persecution throughout the whole world, which we know already to have come to pass), speaks, "O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! many rise up against me; wishing to exterminate the Christian name. "Many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. For they would not otherwise hope that they could destroy the Church, branching out so very far and wide, unless they believed that God had no care thereof. "But Thou, O Lord, art my taker; in Christ of course. For into that flesh the Church too hath been taken by the Word, "who was made flesh, and dwelt in us; for that "In heavenly places

hath He made us to sit together with Him. When the Head goes before, the other members will follow; for, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Justly then does the Church say, "Thou art my taker. My glory; for she doth not attribute her excellency to herself, seeing that she knoweth by whose grace and mercy she is what she is. "And the lifter up of my head," of Him, namely, who, "the First-born from the dead," ascended up into heaven. "With my voice have I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me out of His holy mountain. This is the prayer of all the Saints, the odour of sweetness, which ascends up in the sight of the Lord. For now the Church is heard out of this mountain, which is also her head; or, out of that justice of God, by which both His elect are set free, and their persecutors punished. Let the people of God also say, "I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up; that they may be joined, and cleave to their Head. For to this people is it said, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall lay hold on thee. Since they are taken out of sinners, of whom it is said generally, "But they that sleep, sleep in the night. Let them say moreover, "I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me; of the heathen verily that compass me about to extinguish everywhere, if they could, the Christian name. But how should they be feared, when by the blood of the martyrs in Christ, as by oil, the ardour of love is inflamed?

"Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. The body can address this to its own Head. For at His rising the body was saved; who "ascended up on high, led captivity captive, gave gifts unto men. For this is said by the Prophet, in the secret purpose of God, until that ripe harvest which is spoken of in the Gospel, whose salvation is in His Resurrection, who vouchsafed to die for us, shed out our Lord to the earth. "Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners. Now while the Church hath rule, the enemies of the Christian name are smitten with confusion; and, whether their curses or their chiefs, brought to nought. Believe then, O man, that "salvation is of the Lord: and," Thou, O Lord, may "Thy blessing" be "upon Thy people." 10. Each one too of us may say, when a multitude of vices and lusts leads the resisting mind in the law of sin, "O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! many rise up against me. And, since despair of recovery generally creeps in through the accumulation of vices, as though these same vices were mocking the soul, or even as though the Devil

and his angels through their poisonous suggestions were at work to make us despair, it is said with great truth, "Many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. But Thou, O Lord, art my taker. For this is our hope, that He hath vouchsafed to take the nature of man in Christ. "My glory; according to that rule, that no one should ascribe ought to himself. "And the lifter up of my head; either of Him, who is the Head of us all, or of the spirit of each several one of us, which is the head of the soul and body. For "the head of the woman is the man, and the head of the man is Christ. But the mind is lifted up, when it can be said already, "With the mind I serve the law of God; that the rest of man may be reduced to peaceable submission, when in the resurrection of the flesh "death is swallowed up in victory. "With my voice I have cried unto the Lord; with that most inward and intensive voice.

"And He heard me out of His holy mountain; Him, through whom He hath succoured us, through whose mediation He heareth us. "I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up. Who of the faithful is not able to say this, when he calls to mind the death of his sins, and the gift of regeneration? "I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me. Besides those which the Church universally hath borne and beareth, each one also hath temptations, by which, when compassed about, he may speak these words, "Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: that is, make me to arise. "Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause: it is well in God's determinate a purpose said of the Devil and his angels; who rage not only against the whole body of Christ, but also against each one in particular. "Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners. Each man hath those that revile him, he hath too the prime authors of vice, who strive to cut him off from the body of Christ. But "salvation is of the Lord. Pride is to be guarded against, and we must say, "My soul cleaved after Thee. "And upon Thy people" be "Thy blessing: that is, upon each one of us.

PSALM 4

TO The End, A Psalm Song TO David. 1. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." For this "end" signifies perfection, not consumption. Now it may be a question, whether every Song be a Psalm, or rather every Psalm a Song; whether there are some Songs which cannot be called Psalms, and some Psalms which cannot be called Songs. But the Scripture must be attended to, if haply "Song" do not denote a joyful theme. But

those are called Psalms which are sung to the Psalter; which the history as a high mystery declares the Prophet David to have used. Of which matter this is not the place to discourse; for it requires prolonged inquiry, and much discussion. Now meanwhile we must look either for the words of the Lord Man after the Resurrection, or of man in the Church believing and hoping on Him.

2. "When I called, the God of my righteousness heard me" (ver. 1). When I called, God heard me, the Psalmist says, of whom is my righteousness. "In tribulation Thou hast enlarged me. Thou hast led me from the straits of sadness into the broad ways of joy. For, "tribulation and straitness is on every soul of man that doeth evil. But he who says, "We rejoice in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; up to that where he says, "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us; he hath no straits of heart, they be heaped on him outwardly by them that persecute him. Now the change of person, for that from the third person, where he says, "He heard," he passes at once to the second, where he says, "Thou hast enlarged me; if it be not done for the sake of variety and grace, it is strange why the Psalmist should first wish to declare to men that he had been heard, and afterwards address Him who heard him. Unless perchance, when he had declared how he was heard, in this very enlargement of heart he preferred to speak with God; that he might even in this way show what it is to be enlarged in heart, that is, to have God already shed abroad in the heart, with whom he might hold converse interiorly. Which is rightly understood as spoken in the person of him who, believing on Christ, has been enlightened;

but in that of the very Lord Man, whom the Wisdom of God took, I do not see how this can be suitable. For He was never deserted by It. But as His very prayer against trouble is a sign rather of our infirmity, so also of that sudden enlargement of heart the same Lord may speak for His faithful ones, whom He has personated also when He said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink," and so forth. Wherefore here also He can say, "Thou hast enlarged me," for one of the least of His, holding converse with God, whose "love" he has "shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. "Have mercy upon me and hear my prayer. Why does he again ask, when already he declared that he had been heard and enlarged? It is for our sakes, of whom it is said, "But if we

hope for that we see not, we wait in patience; or is it, that in him who has believed that which is begun may be perfected?

3. "O ye sons of men, how long heavy in heart" (ver. 2). Let your error, says he, have lasted at least up to the coming of the Son of God; why then any longer are ye heavy in heart? When will ye make an end of crafty wiles, if now when the truth is present ye make it not? "Why do ye love vanity, and seek a lie?" Why would ye be blessed by the lowest things? Truth alone, from which all things are true, maketh blessed. For, "vanity is of deceivers, and all is vanity." "What profit hath a man of all his labour, wherewith he laboureth under the sun?" Why then are ye held back by the love of things temporal? Why follow ye after the last things, as though the first, which is vanity and a lie? For you would have them abide with you, which all pass away, as doth a shadow.

4. "And know ye that the Lord hath magnified his Holy One" (ver. 3). Whom but Him, whom He raised up from below, and placed in heaven at His right hand? Therefore doth he chide mankind, that they would turn at length from the love of this world to Him. But if the addition of the conjunction (for he says, "and know ye") is to any a difficulty, he may easily observe in Scripture that this manner of speech is usual in that language, in which the Prophets spoke. For you often find this beginning, "And" the Lord said unto him, "And" the word of the Lord came to him. Which joining by a conjunction, when no sentence has gone before, to which the following one may be annexed, peradventure admirably conveys to us, that the utterance of the truth in words is connected with that vision which goes on in the heart. Although in this place it may be said, that the former sentence, "Why do ye love vanity, and seek a lie?" is as if it were written, Do not love vanity, and seek a lie. And being thus read, it follows in the most direct construction, "and know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One." But the interposition of the *Diapsalma* forbids our joining this sentence with the preceding one. For whether this be a Hebrew word, as some would have it, which means, so be it; or a Greek word, which marks a pause in the psalmody (so as that *Psalma* should be what is sung in psalmody, but *Diapsalma* an interval of silence in the psalmody; that as the coupling of voices in singing is called *Sympsalma*, so their separation *Diapsalma*, where a certain pause of interrupted continuity is marked): whether I say it be the former, or the latter, or

something else, this at least is probable, that the sense cannot rightly be continued and joined, where the Diapsalma intervenes.

5. "The Lord will hear me, when I cry unto Him." I believe that we are here warned, that with great earnestness of heart, that is, with an inward and incorporeal cry, we should implore help of God. For as we must give thanks for enlightenment in this life, so must we pray for rest after this life. Wherefore in the person, either of the faithful preacher of the Gospel, or of our Lord Himself, it may be taken, as if it were written, the Lord will hear you, when you cry unto Him. 6. "Be ye angry, and sin not" (ver. 4) For the thought occurred, Who is worthy to be heard? or how shall the sinner not cry in vain unto the Lord? Therefore, "Be ye angry," saith he, "and sin not." Which may be taken two ways: either, even if ye be angry, do not sin; that is, even if there arise an emotion in the soul, which now by reason of the punishment of sin is not in our power, at least let not the reason and the mind, which is after God regenerated within, that with the mind we should serve the law of God, although with the flesh we as yet serve the law of sin consent thereunto; or, repent ye, that is, be ye angry with yourselves for your past sins, and henceforth cease to sin. "What you say in your hearts:" there is understood, "say ye:" so that the complete sentence is, "What ye say in your hearts, that say ye;" that is, be ye not the people of whom it is said, "with their lips they honour Me, but their heart is far from Me. In your chambers be ye pricked." This is what has been expressed already "in heart." For this is the chamber, of which our Lord warns us, that we should pray within, with closed doors. But, "be ye pricked," refers either to the pain of repentance, that the soul in punishment should prick itself, that it be not condemned and tormented in God's judgment; or, to arousing, that we should awake to behold the light of Christ, as if pricks were made use of. But some say that not, "be ye pricked," but, "be ye opened," is the better reading; because in the Greek Psalter it is *katanughte*, which refers to that enlargement of the heart, in order that the shedding abroad of love by the Holy Ghost may be received.

7. "Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord" (ver. 5). He says the same in another Psalm, "the sacrifice for God is a troubled spirit." Wherefore that this is the sacrifice of righteousness which is offered through repentance it is not unreasonably here understood. For what more righteous, than that each one should be angry with his own sins, rather than those of others, and that in self-punishment he should sacrifice himself unto God? Or

are righteous works after repentance the sacrifice of righteousness? For the interposition of Diapsalma not unreasonably perhaps intimates even a transition from the old life to the new life: that on the old man being destroyed or weakened by repentance, the sacrifice of righteousness, according to the regeneration of the new man, may be offered to God; when the soul now cleansed offers and places itself on the altar of faith, to be encompassed by heavenly fire, that is, by the Holy Ghost. So that this may be the meaning, "Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord;" that is, live uprightly, and hope for the gift of the Holy Ghost, that the truth, in which you have believed, may shine upon you.

8. But yet, "hope in the Lord," is as yet expressed without explanation. Now what is hoped for, but good things? But since each one would obtain from God that good, which he loves; and they are not easy to be found who love interior goods, that is, which belong to the inward man, which alone should be loved, but the rest are to be used for necessity, not to be enjoyed for pleasure; excellently did he subjoin, when he had said, "hope in the Lord" (ver. 6), "Many say, Who showeth us good things? This is the speech, and this the daily inquiry of all the foolish and unrighteous; whether of those who long for the peace and quiet of a worldly life, and from the frowardness of mankind find it not; who even in their blindness dare to find fault with the order of events, when involved in their own deservings they deem the times worse than these which are past: or, of those who doubt and despair of that future life, which is promised us; who are often saying, Who knows if it's true? or, who ever came from below, to tell us this? Very exquisitely then, and briefly, he shows (to those, that is, who have interior sight), what good things are to be sought; answering their question, who say, "Who showeth us good things? "The light of Thy countenance," saith he, "is stamped on us, O Lord.

This light is the whole and true good of man, which is seen not with the eye, but with the mind. But he says, "stamped on us," as a penny is stamped with the king's image. For man was made after the image and likeness of God, which he defaced by sin: therefore it is his true and eternal good, if by a new birth he be stamped. And I believe this to be the bearing of that which some understand skilfully; I mean, what the Lord said on seeing Caesar's tribute money, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's. As if He had said, In like manner as Caesar exacts

from you the impression of his image, so also does God: that as the tribute money is rendered to him, so should the soul to God, illumined and stamped with the light of His countenance. (Ver. 7. "Thou hast put gladness into my heart. Gladness then is not to be sought without by them, who, being still heavy in heart, "love vanity, and seek a lie; but within, where the light of God's countenance is stamped. For Christ dwelleth in the inner man, as the Apostle says; for to Him doth it appertain to see truth, since He hath said, "I am the truth. And again, when He spake in the Apostle, saying, "Would you receive a proof of Christ, who speaketh in me?

He spake not of course from without to him, but in his very heart, that is, in that chamber where we are to pray. 9. But men (who doubtless are many) who follow after things temporal, know not to say aught else, than, "Who showeth us good things? when the true and certain good within their very selves they cannot see. Of these accordingly is most justly said, what he adds next: "From the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, they have been multiplied. For the addition of His, is not superfluous. For the corn is God's: inasmuch as He is "the living bread which came down from heaven. The wine too is God's: for, "they shall be inebriated," he says, "with the fatness of thine house. The oil too is God's: of which it is said, "Thou hast fattened my head with oil. But those many, who say, "Who showeth us good things? and who see not that the kingdom of heaven is within them: these, "from the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, are multiplied. For multiplication does not always betoken plentifulness, and not, generally, scantiness: when the soul, given up to temporal pleasures, burns ever with desire, and cannot be satisfied; and, distracted with manifold and anxious thought, is not permitted to see the simple good. Such is the soul of which it is said, "For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things.

A soul like this, by the departure and succession of temporal goods, that is, "from the time of His corn, wine, and oil," filled with numberless idle fancies, is so multiplied, that it cannot do that which is commanded, "Think on the Lord in goodness, and in simplicity of heart seek Him. For this multiplicity is strongly opposed to that simplicity. And therefore leaving these, who are many, multiplied, that is, by the desire of things temporal, and who say, "Who showeth us good things? which are to be sought not with the eyes without, but with simplicity of heart within, the faithful man rejoices and

says, "In peace, together, I will sleep, and take rest" (ver. 8). For such men justly hope for all manner of estrangement of mind from things mortal, and forgetfulness of this world's miseries; which is beautifully and prophetically signified under the name of sleep and rest, where the most perfect peace cannot be interrupted by any tumult. But this is not had now in this life, but is to be hoped for after this life. This even the words themselves, which are in the future tense, show us. For it is not said, either, I have slept, and taken rest; or, I do sleep, and take rest; but, "I will sleep, and take rest. Then shall this corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; then shall death be swallowed up in victory. Hence it is said, "But if we hope for that we see not, we wait in patience."

10. Wherefore, consistently with this, he adds the last words, and says, "Since Thou, O Lord, in singleness hast made me dwell in hope." Here he does not say, wilt make; but, "hast made." In whom then this hope now is, there will be assuredly that which is hoped for. And well does he say, "in singleness." For this may refer in opposition to those many, who being multiplied from the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, say, "Who sheweth us good things?" For this multiplicity perishes, and singleness is observed among the saints: of whom it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, "and of the multitude of them that believed, there was one soul, and one heart." In singleness, then, and simplicity, removed, that is, from the multitude and crowd of things, that are born and die, we ought to be lovers of eternity, and unity, if we desire to cleave to the one God and our Lord.

PSALM 5

1. The title of the Psalm is, "For her who receiveth the inheritance." The Church then is signified, who receiveth for her inheritance eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ; that she may possess God Himself, in cleaving to whom she may be blessed, according to that, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth." What earth, but that of which it is said, "Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living"? And again more clearly, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup." And conversely the word Church is said to be God's inheritance according to that, "Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." Therefore is God said to be our inheritance, because He feedeth and sustaineth us: and we are said to be God's inheritance, because He ordereth and

ruleth us. Wherefore it is the voice of the Church in this Psalm called to her inheritance, that she too may herself become the inheritance of the Lord.

2. "Hear my words, O Lord" (ver. 1). Being called she calleth upon the Lord; that the same Lord being her helper, she may pass through the wickedness of this world, and attain unto Him. "Understand my cry." The Psalmist well shows what this cry is; how from within, from the chamber of the heart, without the body's utterance, it reaches unto God: for the bodily voice is heard, but the spiritual is understood. Although this too may be God's hearing, not with carnal ear, but in the omnipresence of His Majesty.

3. "Attend Thou to the voice of my supplication;" that is, to that voice, which he maketh request that God would understand: of which what the nature is, he hath already intimated, when he said, "Understand my cry. Attend Thou to the voice of my supplication, my King, and my God" (ver. 2). Although both the Son is God, and the Father God, and the Father and the Son together One God; and if asked of the Holy Ghost, we must give no other answer than that He is God; and when the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are mentioned together, we must understand nothing else, than One God; nevertheless Scripture is wont to give the appellation of King to the Son. According then to that which is said, "By Me man cometh to the Father," rightly is it first, "my King;" and then, "my God." And yet has not the Psalmist said, Attend Ye; but, "Attend Thou." For the Catholic faith preaches not two or three Gods, but the Very Trinity, One God. Not that the same Trinity can be together, now the Father, now the Son, now the Holy Ghost, as Sabellius believed: but that the Father must be none but the Father, and the Son none but the Son, and the Holy Ghost none but the Holy Ghost, and this Trinity but One God. Hence when the Apostle had said, "Of whom are all things, by whom are all things, in whom are all things," he is believed to have conveyed an intimation of the Very Trinity; and yet he did not add, to Them be glory; but, "to Him be glory."

4. "Because I will pray unto Thee (ver. 3). O Lord, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice. What does that, which he said above, "Hear Thou," mean, as if he desired to be heard immediately? But now he saith, "in the morning Thou wilt hear; not, hear Thou: and, "I will pray unto Thee; not, I do pray unto Thee: and, as follows, "in the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see; not, I do stand by Thee, and do see. Unless perhaps his former prayer marks the invocation itself: but being in darkness amidst the storms of this

world, he perceives that he does not see what he desires, and yet does not cease to hope, "For hope that is seen, is not hope. Nevertheless, he understands why he does not see, because the night is not yet past, that is, the darkness which our sins have merited. He says therefore, "Because I will pray unto Thee, O Lord; that is, because Thou art so mighty to whom I shall make my prayer, "in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice. Thou art not He, he says, that can be seen by those, from whose eyes the night of sins is not yet withdrawn: when the night then of my error is past, and the darkness gone, which by my sins I have brought upon myself, then "Thou wilt hear my voice. Why then did he say above not, "Thou wilt hear," but "hear Thou"?

Is it that after the Church cried out, "hear Thou," and was not heard, she perceived what must needs pass away to enable her to be heard? Or is it that she was heard above, but doth not yet understand that she was heard, because she doth not yet see by whom she hath been heard; and what she now says, "In the morning Thou wilt hear," she would have thus taken, In the morning I shall understand that I have been heard? Such is that expression, "Arise, O Lord," that is, make me arise. But this latter is taken of Christ's resurrection: but at all events that Scripture, "The Lord your God proveth you, that He may know whether ye love Him," cannot be taken in any other sense, than, that ye by Him may know, and that it may be made evident to yourselves, what progress ye have made in His love.

5. "In the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see" (ver. 3). What is, "I will stand," but "I will not lie down"? Now what else is, to lie down, but to take rest on the earth, which is a seeking happiness in earthly pleasures? "I will stand by," he says, "and will see." We must not then cleave to things earthly, if we would see God, who is beheld by a clean heart. "For Thou art not a God who hast pleasure in iniquity. The malignant man shall not dwell near Thee, nor shall the unrighteous abide before Thine eyes. Thou hast hated all that work iniquity, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. The man of blood, and the crafty man, the Lord will abominate" (vers. 4-6). Iniquity, malignity, lying, homicide, craft, and all the like, are the night of which we speak: on the passing away of which, the morning dawns, that God may be seen. He has unfolded the reason, then, why he will stand by in the morning, and see: "For," he says, "Thou art not a God who hast pleasure in iniquity." For if He were a God who had pleasure in iniquity, He could be seen even by

the iniquitous, so that He would not be seen in the morning, that is, when the night of iniquity is over.

6. "The malignant man shall not dwell near Thee:" that is, he shall not so see, as to cleave to Thee. Hence follows, "Nor shall the unrighteous abide before Thine eyes." For their eyes, that is, their mind is beaten back by the light of truth, because of the darkness of their sins; by the habitual practice of which they are not able to sustain the brightness of right understanding. Therefore even they who see sometimes, that is, who understand the truth, are yet still unrighteous, they abide not therein through love of those things, which turn away from the truth. For they carry about with them their night, that is, not only the habit, but even the love, of sinning. But if this night shall pass away, that is, if they shall cease to sin, and this love and habit thereof be put to flight, the morning dawns, so that they not only understand, but also cleave to the truth.

7. "Thou hast hated all that work iniquity. God's hatred may be understood from that form of expression, by which every sinner hates the truth. For it seems that she too hates those, whom she suffers not to abide in her. Now they do not abide, who cannot bear the truth. "Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. For this is the opposite to truth. But lest any one should suppose that any substance or nature is opposite to truth, let him understand that "a lie" has relation to that which is not, not to that which is. For if that which is be spoken, truth is spoken: but if that which is not be spoken, it is a lie. Therefore saith he, "Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie; because drawing back from that which is, they turn aside to that which is not. Many lies indeed seem to be for some one's safety or advantage, spoken not in malice, but in kindness: such was that of those midwives in Exodus, who gave a false report to Pharaoh, to the end that the infants of the children of Israel might not be slain. But even these are praised not for the fact, but for the disposition shown; since those who only lie in this way, will attain in time to a freedom from all lying. For in those that are perfect, not even these lies are found. For to these it is said, "Let there be in your mouth, yea, yea; nay, nay;

whatsoever is more, is of evil. Nor is it without reason written in another place, "The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul: lest any should imagine that the perfect and spiritual man ought to lie for this temporal life, in the death of which no soul is slain, neither his own, nor another's. But since it is one thing to lie, another to conceal the truth (if indeed it be one thing to say

what is false, another not to say what is true), if haply one does not wish to give a man up even to this visible death, he should be prepared to conceal what is true, not to say what is false; so that he may neither give him up, nor yet lie, lest he slay his own soul for another's body. But if he cannot yet do this, let him at all events admit only lies of such necessity, that he may attain to be freed even from these, if they alone remain, and receive the strength of the Holy Ghost, whereby he may despise all that must be suffered for the truth's sake. In fine, there are two kinds of lies, in which there is no great fault, and yet they are not without fault, either when we are in jest, or when we lie that we may do good. That first kind, in jest, is for this reason not very hurtful, because there is no deception. For he to whom it is said knows that it is said for the sake of the jest.

But the second kind is for this reason the more inoffensive, because it carries with it some kindly intention. And to say truth, that which has no duplicity, cannot even be called a lie. As if, for example, a sword be intrusted to any one, and he promises to return it, when he who intrusted it to him shall demand it: if he chance to require his sword when in a fit of madness, it is clear it must not be returned then, lest he kill either himself or others, until soundness of mind be restored to him. Here then is no duplicity, because he, to whom the sword was intrusted, when he promised that he would return it at the other's demand, did not imagine that he could require it when in a fit of madness. But even the Lord concealed the truth, when He said to the disciples, not yet strong enough, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: and the Apostle Paul when he said, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. Whence it is clear that it is not blamable, sometimes not to speak what is trite. But to say what is false is not found to have been allowed to the perfect.

8. "The man of blood, and the crafty man, the Lord will abominate." What he said above, "Thou hast hated all that work iniquity, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie," may well seem to be repeated here: so that one may refer "the man of blood" to "the worker of iniquity," and "the crafty man" to; the "lie." For it is craft, when one thing is done, another pretended. He used an apt word too, when he said, "will abominate." For the disinherited are usually called: abominated. Now this Psalm is, "for her who receiveth the inheritance;" and she adds the exulting joy of her hope, in saying, "But I, in the multitude of Thy mercy, will enter into Thine house" (ver. 7). "In the multi-

tude of mercy:" perhaps he means in the multitude of perfected and blessed men, of whom that city shall consist, of which the Church is now in travail, and is bearing few by few. Now that many men regenerated and perfected, are rightly called the multitude of God's mercy, who can deny; when it is most truly said, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? I will enter into Thine house:" as a stone into a building, I suppose, is the meaning. For what else is the house of God than the Temple of God, of which it is said, "for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are"? Of which building He is the cornerstone, whom the Power and Wisdom of God coeternal with the Father assumed.

9. "I will worship at Thy holy temple, in Thy fear." "At the temple," we understand as, "near" the temple. For he does not say, I will worship "in" Thy holy temple; but, "I will worship at Thy holy temple." It must be understood too to be spoken not of perfection, but of progress toward perfection: so that the words, "I will enter into Thine house," should signify perfection. But that this may come to a happy issue, "I will" first, he says, "worship at Thy holy temple." And perhaps on this account he added, "in Thy fear;" which is a great defence to those that are advancing toward salvation. But when any one shall have arrived there, in him comes to pass that which is written, "perfect love casteth out fear." For they do not fear Him who is now their friend, to whom it is said, "henceforth I will not call you servants, but friends," when they have been brought through to that which was promised.

10. "O Lord, lead me forth in Thy justice because of mine enemies" (ver. 8). He has here sufficiently plainly declared that he is on his onward road, that is, in progress toward perfection, not yet in perfection itself, when he desires eagerly that he may be led forth. But, "in Thy justice," not in that which seems so to men. For to return evil for evil seems justice: but it is not His justice of whom it is said, "He maketh His sun to rise on the good and on the evil:" for even when God punishes sinners, He does not inflict His evil on them, but leaves them to their own evil. "Behold," the Psalmist says, "he travailed with injustice, he hath conceived toil, and brought forth iniquity: he hath opened a ditch, and digged it, and hath fallen into the pit which he wrought: his pains shall be turned on his own head, and his iniquity shall descend on his own pate." When then God punishes, He punishes as a judge those that transgress the law, not by bringing evil upon them from Himself, but driving them on to that which they have chosen, to fill up the sum of

their misery. But man, when he returns evil for evil, does it with an evil will: and on this account is himself first evil, when he would punish evil.

11. "Direct in Thy sight my way." Nothing is clearer, than that he here sets forth that time, in which he is journeying onward. For this is a way which is traversed not in any regions of the earth, but in the affections of the heart. "In Thy sight," he says, "direct my way:" that is, where no man sees; who are not to be trusted in their praise or blame. For they can in no wise judge of another man's conscience, wherein the way toward God is traversed. Hence it is added, "for truth is not in their mouth" (ver. 9). To whose judgment of course then there is no trusting, and therefore must we fly within to conscience, and the sight of God. "Their heart is vain." How then can truth be in their mouth, whose heart is deceived by sin, and the punishment of sin? Whence men are called back by that voice, "Wherefore do ye love vanity, and seek a lie?"

12. "Their throat is an open sepulchre." It may be referred to signify gluttony, for the sake of which men very often lie by flattery. And admirably has he said, "an open sepulchre:" for this gluttony is ever gaping with open mouth, not as sepulchres, which, on the reception of corpses, are closed up. This also may be understood hereby, that with lying and blind flattery men draw to themselves those whom they entice to sin; and as it were devour them, when they turn them to their own way of living. And when this happens to them, since by sin they die, those by whom they are led along, are rightly called open sepulchres: for themselves too are in a manner lifeless, being destitute of the life of truth; and they take in to themselves dead men, whom having slain by lying words and a vain heart, they turn unto themselves. "With their own tongues they dealt craftily:" that is, with evil tongues. For this seems to be signified, when he says "their own." For the evil have evil tongues, that is, they speak evil, when they speak craftily. To whom the Lord saith, "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?"

13. "Judge them, O God: let them fall from their own thoughts" (ver. 10). It is a prophecy, not a curse. For he does not wish that it should come to pass; but he perceives what will come to pass. For this happens to them, not because he appears to have wished for it, but because they are such as to deserve that it should happen. For so also what he says after wards, "Let all that hope in Thee rejoice," he says by way of prophecy; since he perceives that they will rejoice. Likewise is it said prophetically, "Stir up Thy strength, and come:" for

he saw that He would come. Although the words, "Let them fall from their own thoughts," may be taken thus also, that it may rather be believed to be a wish for their good by the Psalmist, whilst they fall from their evil thoughts, that is, that they may no more think evil. But what follows, "drive them out," forbids this interpretation. For it can in no wise be taken in a favourable sense, that one is driven out by God. Wherefore it is understood to be said prophetically, and not of ill will; when this is said, which must necessarily happen to such as chose to persevere in those sins, which have been mentioned. "Let them," therefore, "fall from their own thoughts," is, let them fall by their self-accusing thoughts, "their own conscience also bearing witness," as the Apostle says, "and their thoughts accusing or excusing, in the revelation of the just judgment of God."

14. "According to the multitude of their ungodlinesses drive them out:" that is, drive them out far away. For this is "according to the multitude of their ungodlinesses," that they should be driven out far away. The ungodly then are driven out from that inheritance, which is possessed by knowing and seeing God: as diseased eyes are driven out from the shining of the light, when what is gladness to others is pain to them. Therefore these shall not stand in the morning, and see. And that expression is as great a punishment, as that which is said, "But for me it is good to cleave to the Lord," is a great reward. To this punishment is opposed, "Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord;" for similar to this expulsion is, "Cast him into outer darkness." 15. "Since they have embittered Thee, O Lord: I am," saith He, "the Bread which came down from heaven;" again, "Labour for the meat which wasteth not;" again, "Taste and see that the Lord is sweet." But to sinners the bread of truth is bitter. Whence they hate the mouth of him that speaketh the truth. These then have embittered God, who by sin have fallen into such a state of sickness, that the food of truth, in which healthy souls delight, as if it were bitter as gall, they cannot bear.

16. "And let all rejoice that hope in Thee;" those of course to whose taste the Lord is sweet. "They will exult for evermore, and Thou wilt dwell in them" (ver. 11). This will be the exultation for evermore, when the just become the Temple of God, and He, their Indweller, will be their joy. "And all that love Thy name shall glory in Thee:" as when what they love is present for them to enjoy. And well is it said, "in Thee," as if in possession of the inheritance, of which the title of the Psalm speaks: when they too are His in-

heritance, which is intimated by, "Thou wilt dwell in them." From which good they are kept back, whom God, according to the multitude of their ungodlinesses, driveth out. 17. "For Thou wilt bless the just man" (ver. 12). This is blessing, to glory in God, and to be inhabited by God. Such sanctification is given to the just. But that they may be justified, a calling goes before: which is not of merit, but of the grace of God. "For all have sinned, and want the glory of God." "For whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He, justified, them He also glorified." Since then calling is not of our merit, but of the goodness and mercy of God, he went on to say, "O Lord, as with the shield of Thy good will Thou hast crowned us." For God's good will goes before our good will, to call sinners to repentance. And these are the arms whereby the enemy is overcome, against whom it is said, "Who will bring accusation against God's elect?" Again, "if God be for us, who can be against us? Who spared not His Only Son, but delivered Him up for us all." "For if, when we were enemies, Christ died for us; much more being reconciled shall we be saved from wrath through Him." This is that unconquerable shield, whereby the enemy is driven back, when he suggests despair of our salvation through the multitude of tribulations and temptations.

18. The whole contents of the Psalm, then, are a prayer that she may be heard, from the words, "hear my words, O Lord," unto, "my King, and my God." Then follows a view of those things which hinder the sight of God, that is, a knowledge that she is heard, from the words, "because I shall pray unto Thee, O Lord, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice," unto, "the man of blood and the crafty man the Lord will abominate." Thirdly, she hopes that she, who is to be the house of God, even now begins to draw near to Him in fear, before that perfection which casteth out fear, from the words, "but I in the multitude of Thy mercy," unto, "I will worship at Thy holy temple in Thy fear." Fourthly, as she is progressing and advancing amongst those very things which she feels to hinder her, she prays that she may be assisted within, where no man seeth, lest she be turned aside by evil tongues, for the words, "O Lord, lead me forth in Thy justice because of my enemies," unto, "with their tongues they dealt craftily." Fifthly, is a prophecy of what punishment awaits the ungodly, when the just man shall scarcely be saved; and of what reward the just shall obtain, who, when they were called, came, and bore all things manfully, till they were brought to the end, from the words, "judge them, O God," unto the end of the Psalm.

PSALM 6

TO The End, IN The Hymns OF The Eighth, A Psalm TO David. 1. "Of the eighth," seems here obscure. For the rest of this title is more clear. Now it has seemed to some to intimate the day of judgment, that is, the time of the coming of our Lord, when He will come to judge the quick and dead. Which coming, it is believed, is to be, after reckoning the years from Adam, seven thousand years: so as that seven thousand years should pass as seven days, and afterwards that time arrive as it were the eighth day. But since it has been said by the Lord, "It is not yoursto know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power: and, "But of the day and that hour knoweth no man, no, neither angel, nor Power, neither the Son, but the Father alone: and again, that which is written, "that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief," shows clearly enough that no man should arrogate to himself the knowledge of that time, by any computation of years. For if that day is to come after seven thousand years, every man could learn its advent by reckoning the years. What comes then of the Son's even not knowing this? Which of course is said with this meaning, that men do not learn this by the Son, not that He by Himself doth not know it: according to that form of speech, "the Lord your God trieth you that He may know; that is, that He may make you know: and, "arise, O Lord; that is, make us arise.

When therefore the Son is thus said not to know this day; not because He knoweth it not, but because He causeth those to know it not, for whom it is not expedient to know it, that is, He doth not show it to them; what does that strange presumption mean, which, by a reckoning up of years, expects the day of the Lord as most certain after seven thousand years? 2. Be we then willingly ignorant of that which the Lord would not have us know: and let us inquire what this title, "of the eighth," means. The day of judgment may indeed, even without any rash computation of years, be understood by the eighth, for that immediately after the end of this world, life eternal being attained, the souls of the righteous will not then be subject unto times: and, since all times have their revolution in a repetition of those seven days, that per-adventure is called the eighth day, which will not have this variety. There is another reason, which may be here not unreasonably accepted, why the judgment should be called the eighth, because it will take place after two generations, one relating to the body, the other to the soul, For from Adam unto Moses the human race lived of the body, that is, according to the flesh:

which is called the outward and the old man, and to which the Old Testament was given, that it might prefigure the spiritual things to come by operations, albeit religious, yet carnal. Through this entire season, when men lived according to the body, "death reigned," as the Apostle saith, "even over those that had not sinned. Now it reigned "after the similitude of Adam's transgression," as the same Apostle saith;

for it must be taken of the period up to Moses, up to which time the works of the law, that is, those sacraments of carnal observance, held even those bound, for the sake of a certain mystery, who were subject to the One God. But from the coming of the Lord, from whom there was a transition from the circumcision of the flesh to the circumcision of the heart, the call was made, that man should live according to the soul, that is, according to the inner man, who is also called the "new man" by reason of the new birth and the renewing of spiritual conversation. Now it is plain that the number four has relation to the body, from the four well known elements of which it consists, and the four qualities of dry, humid, warm, cold. Hence too it is administered by four seasons, spring, summer, autumn, winter. All this is very well known. For of the number four relating to the body we have treated elsewhere somewhat subtilly, but obscurely: which must be avoided in this discourse, which we would have accommodated to the unlearned. But that the number three has relation to the mind may be understood from this, that we are commanded to love God after a threefold manner, with the whole heart, with the whole soul, with the whole mind: of each of which severally we must treat, not in the Psalms, but in the Gospels:

for the present, for proof of the relation of the number three to the mind, I think what has been said enough. Those numbers then of the body which have relation to the old man and the Old Testament, being past and gone, the numbers too of the soul, which have relation to the new man and the New Testament, being past and gone, a septenary so to say being passed; because everything is done in time, four having been distributed to the body, three to the mind; the eighth will come, the day of judgment: which assigning to deserts their due, will transfer at once the saint, not to temporal works, but to eternal life; but will condemn the ungodly to eternal punishment. 3. In fear of which condemnation the Church prays in this Psalm, and says, "Reprove me not, O Lord, in Thine anger" (ver. 1). The Apostle too mentions the anger of the judgment; "Thou treasurest up unto thyself," he

says, "anger against the day of the anger of the just judgment of God. In which he would not be reproved, whosoever longs to be healed in this life. "Nor in Thy rage chasten me. "Chasten," seems rather too mild a word; for it availeth toward amendment. For for him who is reproved, that is, accused, it is to be feared lest his end be condemnation. But since "rage" seems to be more than "anger," it may be a difficulty, why that which is milder, namely, chastening, is joined to that which is more severe, namely, rage. But I suppose that one and the same thing is signified by the two words. For in the Greek *qumoj*, which is in the first verse, means the same as *orgh*, which is in the second verse. But when the Latins themselves too wished to use two distinct words, they looked out for what was akin to "anger," and "rage" was used. Hence copies vary. For in some "anger" is found first, and then "rage: in others, for "rage," "indignation" or "choler" is used. But whatever the reading, it is an emotion of the soul urging to the infliction of punishment.

Yet this emotion must not be attributed to God, as if to a soul, of whom it is said, "but Thou, O Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity. Now that which is tranquil, is not disturbed. Disturbance then does not attach to God as judge: but what is done by His ministers, in that it is done by His laws, is called His anger. In which anger, the soul, which now prays, would not only not be reproved, but not even chastened, that is, amended or instructed. For in the Greek it is, *Paideuhj*, that is, instruct. Now in the day of judgment all are "reproved" that hold not the foundation, which is Christ. But they are amended, that is, purged, who "upon this foundation build wood, hay, stubble. For they shall suffer loss, but shall be saved, as by fire. What then does he pray, who would not be either reproved or amended in the anger of the Lord? what else but that he may be healed? For where sound health is, neither death is to be dreaded, nor the physician's hand with caustics or the knife.

4. He proceeds accordingly to say, "Pity me, O Lord, for I am weak: heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled" (ver. 2), that is, the support of my soul, or strength: for this is the meaning of "bones." The soul therefore says, that her strength is troubled, when she speaks of bones. For it is not to be supposed, that the soul has bones, such as we see in the body. Wherefore, what follows tends to explain it, "and my soul is troubled exceedingly" (ver. 3), lest because he mentioned bones, they should be understood as of the body. "And Thou, O Lord, how long?" Who does not see represented here a

soul struggling with her diseases; but long kept back by the physician, that she may be convinced what evils she has plunged herself into through sin? For what is easily healed, is not much avoided: but from the difficulty of the healing, there will be the more careful keeping of recovered health. God then, to whom it is said, "And Thou, O Lord, how long?" must not be deemed as if cruel: but as a kind convincer of the soul, what evil she hath procured for herself. For this soul does not yet pray so perfectly, as that it can be said to her, "Whilst thou art yet speaking I will say, Behold, here I am." That she may at the same time also come to know, if they who do turn meet with so great difficulty, how great punishment is prepared for the ungodly, who will not turn to God: as it is written in another place, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and ungodly appear?"

5. "Turn, O Lord, and deliver my soul" (ver. 4). Turning herself she prays that God too would turn to her: as it is said, "Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord." Or is it to be understood according to that way of speaking, "Turn, O Lord," that is make me turn, since the soul in this her turning feels difficulty and toil? For our perfected turning findeth God ready, as says the Prophet, "We shall find Him ready as the dawn." Since it was not His absence who is everywhere present, but our turning away that made us lose Him; "He was in this world," it is said, "and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." If, then, He was in this world, and the world knew Him not, our impurity doth not endure the sight of Him. But whilst we are turning ourselves, that is, by changing our old life are fashioning our spirit; we feel it hard and toilsome to be wrested back from the darkness of earthly lusts, to the serene and quiet and tranquillity of the divine light. And in such difficulty we say, "Turn, O Lord," that is, help us, that that turning may be perfected in us, which findeth Thee ready, and offering Thyself for the fruition of them that love Thee. And hence after he said, "Turn, O Lord," he added, "and deliver my soul:" cleaving as it were to the entanglements of this world, and suffering, in the very act of turning, from the thorns, as it were, of rending and tearing desires. "Make me whole," he says, "for Thy pity's sake." He knows that it is not of his own merits that he is healed: for to him sinning, and transgressing a given command, was just condemnation due. Heal me therefore, he says, not for my merit's sake, but for Thy pity's sake.

6. "For in death there is no one that is mindful of Thee" (ver. 5). He knows too that now is the time for turning unto God: for when this life shall have passed away, there remaineth but a retribution of our deserts. "But in hell who shall confess to Thee? That rich man, of whom the Lord speaks, who saw Lazarus in rest, but bewailed himself in torments, confessed in hell, yea so as to wish even to have his brethren warned, that they might keep themselves from sin, because of the punishment which is not believed to be in hell. Although therefore to no purpose, yet he confessed that those torments had deservedly lighted upon him; since he even wished his brethren to be instructed, lest they should fall into the same. What then is, "But in hell who will confess to Thee? Is hell to be understood as that place, whither the ungodly will be cast down after the judgment, when by reason of that deeper darkness they will no more see any light of God, to whom they may confess aught? For as yet that rich man by raising his eyes, although a vast gulf lay between, could still see Lazarus established in rest: by comparing himself with whom, he was driven to a confession of his own deserts. It may be understood also, as if the Psalmist calls sin, that is committed in contempt of God's law, death:

so as that we should give the name of death to the sting of death, because it procures death. "For the sting of death is sin. In which death this is to be unmindful of God, to despise His law and commandments: so that by hell the Psalmist would mean that blindness of soul which overtakes and enwraps the sinner, that is, the dying. "As they did not think good," the Apostle says, "to retain God in" their "knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. From this death, and this hell, the soul earnestly prays that she may be kept safe, whilst she strives to turn to God, and feels her difficulties. 7. Wherefore he goes on to say, "I have laboured in my groaning. And as if this availed but little, he adds, "I will wash each night my couch" (ver. 6). That is here called a couch, where the sick and weak soul rests, that is, in bodily gratification and in every worldly pleasure. Which pleasure, whoso endeavours to withdraw himself from it, washes with tears. For he sees that he already condemns carnal lusts; and yet his weakness is held by the pleasure, and willingly lies down therein, from whence none but the soul that is made whole can rise. As for what he says, "each night," he would perhaps have it taken thus: that he who, ready in spirit, perceives some light of truth, and yet, through weakness of the flesh, rests sometime in the pleasure of this

world, is compelled to suffer as it were days and nights in an alternation of feeling: as when he says, "With the mind I serve the law of God," he feels as it were day; again when he says, "but with the flesh the law of sin," he declines into night: until all night passeth away, and that one day comes, of which it is said, "In the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see. For then he will stand, but now he lies down, when he is on his couch; which he will wash each night, that with so great abundance of tears he may obtain the most assured remedy from the mercy of God.

"I will drench my bed with tears. It is a repetition. For when he says, "with tears," he shows with what meaning he said above, "I will wash. For we take "bed" here to be the same as "couch" above. Although, "I will drench," is something more than, "I will wash: since anything may be washed superficially, but drenching penetrates to the more inward parts; which here signifies weeping to the very bottom of the heart. Now the variety of tenses which he uses; the past, when he said, "I have laboured in my groaning; and the future, when he said, "I will wash each night my couch; the future again, "I will drench my bed with tears; this shows what every man ought to say to himself, when he labours in groaning to no purpose. As if he should say, It hath not profited when I have done this, therefore I will do the other.

8. "Mine eye is disordered by anger" (ver. 7): is it by his own, or God's anger, in which he maketh petition that he might not be reproved, or chastened? But if anger in that place intimate the day of judgment, how can it be understood now? Is it a beginning of it, that men here suffer pains and torments, and above all the loss of the understanding of the truth; as I have already quoted that which is said, "God gave them over to a reprobate mind"? For such is the blindness of the mind. Whosoever is given over thereunto, is shut out from the interior light of God: but not wholly as yet, whilst he is in this life. For there is "outer darkness," which is understood to belong rather to the day of judgment; that he should rather be wholly without God, whosoever whilst there is time refuses correction. Now to be wholly without God, what else is it, but to be in extreme blindness? If indeed God "dwell in inaccessible light," whereinto they enter, to whom it is said, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It is then the beginning of this anger, which in this life every sinner suffers. In fear therefore of the day of judgment, he is in trial and grief; lest he be brought to that, the disastrous commencement of which he experiences now. And therefore he did not say, mine eye is extinguished,

but, "mine eye is disordered by anger." But if he mean that his eye is disordered by his own anger, there is no wonder either in this. For hence perhaps it is said, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath;" because the mind, which, from her own disorder, is not permitted to see God, supposes that the inner sun, that is, the wisdom of God, suffers as it were a setting in her.

9. "I have grown old in all mine enemies." He had only spoken of anger (if it were yet of his own anger that he spoke): but thinking on his other vices, he found that he was entrenched by them all. Which vices, as they belong to the old life and the old man, which we must put off, that we may put on the new man, it is well said, "I have grown old." But "in all mine enemies," he means, either amidst these vices, or amidst men who will not be converted to God. For these, even if they know them not, even if they bear with them, even if they use the same tables and houses and cities, with no strife arising between them, and in frequent converse together with seeming concord: notwithstanding, by the contrariety of their aims, they are enemies to those who turn unto God. For seeing that the one love and desire this world, the others wish to be freed from this world, who sees not that the first are enemies to the last? For if they can, they draw the others into punishment with them. And it is a great grace, to be conversant daily with their words, and not to depart from the way of God's commandments. For often the mind which is striving to go on to God-ward, being rudely handled in the very road, is alarmed; and generally fulfils not its good intent, lest it should offend those with whom it lives, who love and follow after other perishable and transient goods. From such every one that is whole is separated, not in space, but in soul. For the body is contained in space, but the soul's space is her affection.

10. Wherefore after the labour, and groaning, and very frequent showers of tears, since that cannot be ineffectual, which is asked so earnestly of Him, who is the Fountain of all mercies, and it is most truly said, "the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart:" after difficulties so great, the pious soul, by which we may also understand the Church, intimating that she has been heard, see what she adds: "Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping" (ver. 8). It is either spoken prophetically, since they will depart, that is, the ungodly will be separated from the righteous, when the day of judgment arrives, or, for this time present. For although both are equally found in the same assemblies, yet on

the open floor the wheat is already separated from the chaff, though it be hid among the chaff. They can therefore be associated together, but cannot be carried away by the wind together.

11. "For the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping; The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord hath received my prayer" (ver. 9). The frequent repetition of the same sentiments shows not, so to say, the necessities of the narrator, but the warm feeling of his joy. For they that rejoice are wont so to speak, as that it is not enough for them to declare once for all the object of their joy. This is the fruit of that groaning in which there is labour, and those tears with which the couch is washed, and bed drenched: for, "he that sows in tears, shall reap in joy:" and, "blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." 12. "Let all mine enemies be ashamed and vexed" (ver. 10). He said above, "depart from me all ye: which can take place, as it has been explained, even in this life: but as to what he says, "let them be ashamed and vexed," I do not see how it can happen, save on that day when the rewards of the righteous and the punishments of the sinners shall be made manifest. For at present so far are the ungodly from being ashamed, that they do not cease to insult us. And for the most part their mockings are of such avail, that they make the weak to be ashamed of the name of Christ. Hence it is said, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My Father. But now whosoever would fulfil those sublime commands, to disperse, to give to the poor, that his righteousness may endure for ever; and selling all his earthly goods, and spending them on the needy, would follow Christ, saying, "We brought nothing into this world, and truly we can carry nothing out; having food and raiment, let us be therewith content; incurs the profane raillery of those men, and by those who will not be made whole, is called mad; and often to avoid being so called by desperate men, he fears to do, and puts off that, which the most faithful and powerful of all physicians hath ordered.

It is not then at present that these can be ashamed, by whom we have to wish that we be not made ashamed, and so be either called back from our proposed journey, or hindered, or delayed. But the time will come when they shall be ashamed, saying as it is written, "These are they whom we had sometimes in derision, and a parable of reproach: we fools counted their life madness, and their end to be without honour: how are they numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints? Therefore have we

erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined into us, nor the sun risen upon us: we have been filled with the way of wickedness and destruction, and have walked through rugged deserts, but the way of the Lord we have not known. What hath pride profited us, or what hath the vaunting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow."

13. But as to what he says, "Let them be turned and confounded," who would not judge it to be a most righteous punishment, that they should have a turning unto confusion, who would not have one unto salvation? After this he added, "exceeding quickly. For when the day of judgment shall have begun to be no longer looked for, when they shall have said, "Peace, then shall sudden destruction come upon them. Now whensoever it come, that comes very quickly, of whose coming we give up all expectation; and nothing makes the length of this life be felt but the hope of living. For nothing seems more quick, than all that has already passed in it. When then the day of judgment shall come, then will sinners feel how that all the life which passeth away is not long. Nor will that any way possibly seem to them to have come tardily, which shall have come without their desiring, or rather without their believing. Although it can too be taken in this place thus, that inasmuch as God has heard, so to say, her groans, and her long and frequent tears, she may be understood to be freed from her sins, and to have tamed every disordered impulse of carnal affection: as she saith, "Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping: and when she has had this happy issue, it is no marvel if she be already so perfect as to pray for her enemies.

The words then, "Let all mine enemies be ashamed, and vexed," may have this meaning; that they should repent of their sins, which cannot be effected without confusion and vexation. There is then nothing to hinder us from taking what follows too in this sense, "let them be turned and ashamed," that is, let them be turned to God, and be ashamed that they sometime gloried in the former darkness of their sins; as the Apostle says, "For what glory had ye sometime in those things of which ye are now ashamed? But as to what he added, "exceeding quickly," it must be referred either to the warm affection of her wish, or to the power of Christ; who converteth to the faith of the Gospel in such quick time the nations, which in their idols' cause did persecute the Church.

PSALM 7

A Psalm TO David Himself, Which HE Sung TO The Lord, For The Words OF Chusi, Son OF Jemini. 1. Now the story which gave occasion to this prophecy may be easily recognised in the second book of Kings. For there Chusi, the friend of king David, went over to the side of Abessalon, his son, who was carrying on war against his father, for the purpose of discovering and reporting the designs which he was taking against his father, at the instigation of Achitophel, who had revolted from David's friendship, and was instructing by his counsel, to the best of his power, the son against the father. But since it is not the story itself which is to be the subject of consideration in this Psalm, from which the prophet hath taken a veil of mysteries, if we have passed over to Christ, let the veil be taken away. And first let us inquire into the signification of the very names, what it means. For there have not been wanting interpreters, who investigating these same words, not carnally according to the letter, but spiritually, declare to us that Chusi should be interpreted silence; and Gemini, right-handed; Achitophel, brother's ruin. Among which interpretations, Judas, that traitor, again meets us, that Abessalon should bear his image, according to that interpretation of it as a father's peace; in that his father was full of thoughts of peace toward him: although he in his guile had war in his heart, as was treated of in the third Psalm.

Now as we find in the Gospels that the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ are called sons, so in the same Gospels we find they are called brethren also. For the Lord on the resurrection saith, "Go and say to My brethren. And the Apostle calls Him "the first begotten among many brethren. The ruin then of that disciple, who betrayed Him, is rightly understood to be a brother's ruin, which we said is the interpretation of Achitophel. Now as to Chusi, from the interpretation of silence, it is rightly understood that our Lord contended against that guile in silence, that is, in that most deep secret, whereby "blindness happened in part to Israel," when they were persecuting the Lord, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and "so all Israel might be saved. When the Apostle came to this profound secret and deep silence, he exclaimed, as if struck with a kind of awe of its very depth, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? Thus that great silence he does

not so much discover by explanation, as he sets forth its greatness in admiration. In this silence the Lord, hiding the sacrament of His adorable passion, turns the brother's voluntary ruin, that is, His betrayer's impious wickedness, into the order of His mercy and providence:

that what he with perverse mind wrought for one Man's destruction, He might by providential overruling dispose for all men's salvation. The perfect soul then, which is already worthy to know the secret of God, sings a Psalm unto the Lord, she sings "for the words of Chusi," because she has attained to know the words of that silence: for among unbelievers and persecutors there is that silence and secret. But among His own, to whom it is said, "Now I call you no more servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you: among His friends, I say, there is not the silence, but the words of the silence, that is, the meaning of that silence set forth and manifested. Which silence, that is, Chusi, is called the son of Gemini, that is, righthanded. For what was done for the Saints was not to be hidden from them. And yet He saith, "Let not the left hand know what the right hand doeth. The perfect soul then, to which that secret has been made known, sings in prophecy "for the words of Chusi," that is, for the knowledge of that same secret. Which secret God at her fight hand, that is, favourable and propitious unto her, has wrought. Wherefore this silence is called the Son of the right hand, which is, "Chusi, the son of Gemini."

2. "O Lord my God, in Thee have I hoped: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me" (ver. 1). As one to whom, already perfected, all the war and enmity of vice being overcome, there remaineth no enemy but the envious devil, he says, "Save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me (ver. 2): lest at any time he tear my soul as a lion." The Apostle says, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Therefore when the Psalmist said in the plural number, "Save me from all them that persecute me:" he afterwards introduced the singular, saying, "lest at any time he tear my soul as a lion." For he does not say, lest at any time they tear: he knew what enemy and violent adversary of the perfect soul remained. "Whilst there be none to redeem, nor to save:" that is, lest he tear me, whilst Thou redeemest not, nor savest. For, if God redeem not, nor save, he tears.

3. And that it might be clear that the already perfect soul, which is to be on her guard against the most insidious snares of the devil only, says this, see what follows. "O Lord my God, if I have done this" (ver. 3). What is it that he calls "this"? Since he does not mention the sin by name, are we to understand sin generally? If this sense displease us, we may take that to be meant which follows: as if we had asked, what is this that you say, "this"? He answers, "If there be iniquity in my hands. Now then it is clear that it is said of all sin, "If I have repaid them that recompense me evil" (ver. 4). Which none can say with truth, but the perfect. For so the Lord says, "Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven; who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the evil, and raineth on the just and the unjust. He then who repayeth not them that recompense evil, is perfect. When therefore the perfect soul prays "for the words of Chusi, the son of Jemini," that is, for the knowledge of that secret and silence, which the Lord, favourable to us and merciful, wrought for our salvation, so as to endure, and with all patience bear, the guiles of this betrayer:

as if He should say to this perfect soul, explaining the design of this secret, For thee ungodly and a sinner, that thine iniquities might be washed away by My blood-shedding, in great silence and great patience I bore with My betrayer; wilt not thou imitate me, that thou too mayest not repay evil for evil? Considering then, and understanding what the Lord has done for him, and by His example going on to perfection, the Psalmist says, "If I have repaid them that recompense me evil: that is, if I have not done what Thou hast taught me by Thy example: "may I therefore fall by mine enemies empty. And he says well, not, If I have repaid them that do me evil; but, who "recompense. For who so recompenseth, had received somewhat already. Now it is an instance of greater patience, not even to repay him evil, who after receiving benefits returns evil for good, than if without receiving any previous benefit he had had a mind to injure. If therefore he says, "I have repaid them that recompense me evil: that is, If I have not imitated Thee in that silence, that is, in Thy patience, which Thou hast wrought for me, "may I fall by mine enemies empty. For he is an empty boaster, who, being himself a man, desires to avenge himself on a man; and whilst he openly seeks to overcome a man, is secretly himself overcome by the devil, rendered empty by vain and proud joy, because he could not, as it were, be conquered.

The Psalmist knows then where a greater victory may be obtained, and where "the Father which seeth in secret will reward. Lest then he repay them that recompense evil, he overcomes his anger rather than another man, being instructed too by those writings, wherein it is written, "Better is he that overcometh his anger, than he that taketh a city. "If I have repaid them that recompense me evil, may I therefore fall by my enemies empty. He seems to swear by way of execration, which is the heaviest kind of oath, as when one says, If I have done so and so, may I suffer so and so. But swearing in a swearer's mouth is one thing, in a prophet's meaning another. For here he mentions what will really befall men who repay them that recompense evil; not what, as by an oath, he would imprecate on himself or any other.

4. "Let the enemy" therefore "persecute my soul and take it" (ver. 5). By again naming the enemy in the singular number, he more and more clearly points out him whom he spoke of above as a lion. For he persecutes the soul, and if he has deceived it, will take it. For the limit of men's rage is the destruction of the body; but the soul, after this visible death, they cannot keep in their power: whereas whatever souls the devil shall have taken by his persecutions, he will keep. "And let him tread my life upon the earth: that is, by treading let him make my life earth, that is to say, his food. For he is not only called a lion, but a serpent too, to whom it was said, "Earth shalt thou eat. And to the sinner was it said, "Earth thou art, and into earth shalt thou go. "And let him bring down my glory to the dust. This is that dust which "the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth," to wit, vain and silly boasting of the proud, puffed up, not of solid weight, as a cloud of dust carried away by the wind. Justly then has he here spoken of the glory, which he would not have brought down to dust. For he would have it solidly established in conscience before God, where there is no boasting. "He that glorieth," saith the Apostle, "let him glory in the Lord.

This solidity is brought down to the dust if one through pride despising the secrecy of conscience, where God only proves a man, desires to glory before men. Hence comes what the Psalmist elsewhere says, "God shall bruise the bones of them that please men. Now he that has well learnt or experienced the steps in overcoming vices, knows that this vice of empty glory is either alone, or more than all, to be shunned by the perfect. For that by which the soul first fell, she overcomes the last. "For the beginning of all sin is pride: and again, "The beginning of man's pride is to depart from God." 5.

"Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger" (ver. 6). Why yet does he, who we say is perfect, incite God to anger? Must we not see, whether he rather be not perfect, who, when he was being stoned, said, "O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"? Or does the Psalmist pray thus not against men, but against the devil and his angels, whose possession sinners and the ungodly are? He then does not pray against him in wrath, but in mercy, whosoever prays that that possession may be taken from him by that Lord "who justifieth the ungodly." For when the ungodly is justified, from ungodly he is made just, and from being the possession of the devil he passes into the temple of God. And since it is a punishment that a possession, in which one longs to have rule, should be taken away from him: this punishment, that he should cease to possess those whom he now possesses, the Psalmist calls the anger of God against the devil. "Arise, O Lord; in Thine anger." "Arise" (he has used it as "appear"), in words, that is, human and obscure; as though God sleeps, when He is unrecognised and hidden in His secret workings. "Be exalted in the borders of mine enemies." He means by borders the possession itself, in which he wishes that God should be exalted, that is, be honoured and glorified, rather than the devil, while the ungodly are justified and praise God. "And arise, O Lord my God, in the commandment that Thou hast given:" that is, since Thou hast enjoined humility, appear in humility; and first fulfil what Thou hast enjoined; that men by Thy example overcoming pride may not be possessed of the devil, who against Thy commandments advised to pride, saying, "Eat, and your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods."

6. "And the congregation of the people shall surround Thee." This may be understood two ways. For the congregation of the people can be taken, either of them that believe, or of them that persecute, both of which took place in the same humiliation of our Lord: in contempt of which the multitude of them that persecute surrounded Him; concerning which it is said, "Why have the heathen raged, and the people meditated vain things?" But of them that believe through His humiliation the multitude so surrounded Him, that it could be said with the greatest truth, "blindness in part is happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in:" and again, "Ask of me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thine inheritance, and the boundaries of the earth for Thy possession." "And for their sakes return Thou on high:" that is, for the sake of this congregation return Thou on high: which He is understood to have done by His resurrection and ascension into heaven. For

being thus glorified He gave the Holy Ghost, which before His exaltation could not be given, as it is written in the Gospel, "for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Having then returned on high for the sake of the congregation of the people, He sent the Holy Ghost: by whom the preachers of the Gospel being filled, filled the whole world with Churches.

7. It can be taken also in this sense: "Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger, and be exalted in the borders of mine enemies: that is, arise in Thine anger, and let not mine enemies understand Thee; so that to "be exalted," should be this, become high, that Thou mayest not be understood; which has reference to the silence spoken of above. For it is of this exaltation thus said in another Psalm, "And He ascended upon Cherubim, and flew: and, "He made darkness His secret place. In which exaltation, or concealment, when for their sins' desert they shall not understand Thee, who shall crucify Thee, "the congregation" of believers "shall surround Thee. For in His very humiliation He was exalted, that is, was not understood. So that, "And arise, O Lord my God, in the commandment that Thou hast given: may have reference to this, that is, when Thou showest Thyself, be high or deep that mine enemies may not understand Thee. Now sinners are the enemies of the just man, and the ungodly of the godly man. "And the congregation of the people shall surround Thee: that is, by this very circumstance, that those who crucify Thee understand Thee not, the Gentiles shall believe on Thee, and so "shall the congregation of the people surround Thee. But what follows, if this be the true meaning, has in it more pain, that it begins already to be perceived, than joy that it is understood.

For it follows, "and for their sakes return Thou on high," that is, and for the sake of this congregation of the human race, wherewith the Churches are crowded, return Thou on high, that is, again cease to be understood. What then is, "and for their sakes," but that this congregation too will offend Thee, so that Thou mayest most truly foretell and say, "Thinkest Thou when the Son of man shall come, He will find faith on the earth? Again, of the false prophets, who are understood to be heretics, He says, "Because of their iniquity the love of many shall wax cold. Since then even in the Churches, that is, in that congregation of peoples and nations, where the Christian name has most widely spread, there shall be so great abundance of sinners, which is already, in great measure, perceived; is not that famine of

the word here predicted, which has been threatened by another prophet also? Is it not too for this congregation's sake, who, by their sins, are estranging from themselves that light of truth, that God returns on high, that is, so that faith, pure and cleansed from the corruption of all perverse opinions, is held and received, either not at all, or by the very few of whom it was said, "Blessed is he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved"? Not without cause then is it said, "and for the sake of this" congregation "return Thou on high:

that is, again withdraw into the depth of Thy secrecy, even for the sake of this congregation of the peoples, that hath Thy name, and doeth not Thy deeds. 8. But whether the former exposition of this place, or this last be the more suitable, without prejudice to any one better, or equal, or as good, it follows very consistently, "the Lord judgeth the people. For whether He returned on high, when, after the resurrection, He ascended into heaven, well does it follow, "The Lord judgeth the people: for that He will come from thence to judge the quick and the dead. Or whether He return on high, when the understanding of the truth leaves sinful Christians, for that of His coming it has been said, "Thinkest thou the Son of Man on His coming will find faith on the earth? "The Lord" then "judgeth the people. What Lord, but Jesus Christ? "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. Wherefore this soul which prayeth perfectly, see how she fears not the day of judgment, and with a truly secure longing says in her prayer, "Thy kingdom come: judge me," she says, "O Lord, according to my righteousness. In the former Psalm a weak one was entreating, imploring rather the mercy of God, than mentioning any desert of his own: since the Son of God came "to call sinners to repentance. Therefore he had there said, "Save me, O Lord, for Thy mercy's sake; that is, not for my desert's sake.

But now, since being called he hath held and kept the commandments which he received, he is bold to say, "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, that is upon me. This is true harmlessness, which harms not even an enemy. Accordingly, well does he require to be judged according to his harmlessness, who could say with truth, "If I have repaid them that recompense me evil. As for what he added, "that is upon me," it can refer not only to harmlessness, but can be understood also with reference to righteousness; that the sense should be this, Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my

harmlessness, which righteousness and harmlessness is upon me. By which addition he shows that this very thing, that the soul is righteous and harmless, she has not by herself, but by God who giveth brightness and light. For of this he says in another Psalm, "Thou, O Lord, wilt light my candle. And of John it is said, that "he was not the light, but bore witness of the light. "He was a burning and shining candle. That light then, whence souls, as candles, are kindled, shines forth not with borrowed, but with original, brightness, which light is truth itself.

It is then so said, "According to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, that is upon me," as if a burning and shining candle should say, Judge me according to the flame which is upon me, that is, not that wherewith I am myself, but that whereby I shine enkindled of thee. 9. "But let the wickedness of sinners be consummated" (ver. 9). He says, "be consummated," be completed, according to that in the Apocalypse, "Let the righteous become more righteous, and let the filthy be filthy still. For the wickedness of those men appears consummate, who crucified the Son of God; but greater is theirs who will not live uprightly, and hate the precepts of truth, for whom the Son of God was crucified. "Let the wickedness of sinners," then he says, "be consummated," that is, arrive at the height of wickedness, that just judgment may be able to come at once. But since it is not only said, "Let the filthy be filthy still; but it is said also, "Let the righteous become more righteous; he joins on the words, "And Thou shalt direct the righteous, O God, who searcheth the hearts and reins. How then can the righteous be directed but in secret? when even by means of those things which, in the commencement of the Christian ages, when as yet the saints were oppressed by the persecution of the men of this world, appeared marvellous to men, now that the Christian name has begun to be in such high dignity, hypocrisy, that is pretence, has increased; of those, I mean, who by the Christian profession had rather please men than God. How then is the righteous man directed in so great confusion of pretence, save whilst God searcheth the hearts and reins; seeing all men's thoughts, which are meant by the word heart;

and their delights, which are understood by the word reins? For the delight in things temporal and earthly is rightly ascribed to the reins; for that it is both the lower part of man, and that region where the pleasure of carnal generation dwells, through which man's nature is transferred into this life of care, and deceiving joy, by the succession of the race. God then, searching

our heart, and perceiving that it is there where our treasure is, that is, in heaven; searching also the reins, and perceiving that we do not assent to flesh and blood, but delight ourselves in the Lord, directs the righteous man in his inward conscience before Him, where no man seeth, but He alone who perceiveth what each man thinketh, and what delighteth each. For delight is the end of care; because to this end does each man strive by care and thought, that he may attain to his delight. He therefore seeth our cares, who searcheth the heart. He seeth too the ends of cares, that is delights, who narrowly searcheth the reins; that when He shall find that our cares incline neither to the lust of the flesh, nor to the lust of the eyes, nor to the pride of life, all which pass away as a shadow, but that they are raised upward to the joys of things eternal, which are spoilt by no change, He may direct the righteous, even He, the God who searcheth the hearts and reins.

For our works, which we do in deeds and words, may be known unto men; but with what mind they are done, and to what end we would attain by means of them, He alone knoweth, the God who searcheth the hearts and reins. 10. "My righteous help is from the Lord, who maketh whole the upright in heart" (ver. 10). The offices of medicine are twofold, on the curing infirmity, the other the preserving health. According to the first it was said in the preceding Psalm, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; according to the second it is said in this Psalm, "If there be iniquity in my hands, if I have repaid them that recompense me evil, may I therefore fall by my enemies empty. For there the weak prays that he may be delivered, here one already whole that he may not change for the worse. According to the one it is there said, "Make me whole for Thy mercy's sake;"according to this other it is here said, "Judge me,O Lord, according to my righteousness. For there he asks for a remedy to escape from disease; but here for protection from falling into disease. According to the former it is said, "Make me whole, O Lord, according to Thymercy: according to the latter it is said, "My righteous help is from the Lord, who maketh whole the upright in heart. Both the one and the other maketh men whole; but the former removes them from sickness into health, the latter preserves them in this health. Therefore there the help is merciful, because the sinner hath no desert, who as yet longeth to be justified, "believing on Him who justifieth the ungodly; but here the help is righteous, because it is given to one already righteous.

Let the sinner then who said, "I am weak," say in the first place, "Make me whole, O Lord, for Thy mercy's sake; and here let the righteous man, who said, "If I have repaid them that recompense me evil," say, "My righteous help is from the Lord, who maketh whole the upright in heart. For if he sets forth the medicine, by which we may be healed when weak, how much more that by which we may be kept in health. For if "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, how much more being now justified shall we be kept whole from wrath through Him." 11. "My righteous help is from the Lord, who maketh whole the upright in heart. God, who searcheth the hearts and reins, directeth the righteous; but with righteous help maketh He whole the upright in heart. He doth not as He searcheth the hearts and reins, so make whole the upright in heart and reins; for the thoughts are both bad in a depraved heart, and good in an upright heart; but delights which are not good belong to the reins, for they are more low and earthly; but those that are good not to the reins, but to the heart itself. Wherefore men cannot be so called upright in reins, as they are called upright in heart, since where the thought is, there at once the delight is too; which cannot be, unless when things divine and eternal are thought of. "Thou hast given," he says, "joy in my heart," when he had said, "The light of Thy countenance has been stamped on us, O Lord. For although the phantoms of things temporal, which the mind falsely pictures to itself, when tossed by vain and mortal hope, to vain imagination oftentimes bring a delirious and maddened joy; yet this delight must be attributed not to the heart, but to the reins; for all these imaginations have been drawn from lower, that is, earthly and carnal things.

Hence it comes, that God, who searcheth he hearts and reins, and perceiveth in the heart upright thoughts, in the reins no delights, affordeth righteous help to the upright in heart, where heavenly delights are coupled with clean thoughts. And therefore when in another Psalm he had said, "Moreover even to-night my reins have chided me; he went on to say as touching help, "I foresaw the Lord alway in my sight, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Where he shows that he suffered suggestions only from the reins, not delights as well; for he had suffered these, then he would of course be moved. But he said, "The Lord is on my right hand, that I should not be moved; and then he adds, "Wherefore was my heart delighted; that the reins should have been able to chide, not delight him. The

delight accordingly was produced not in the reins, but there, where against the chiding of the reins God was foreseen to be on the right hand, that is, in the heart.

12. "God the righteous judge, strong (in endurance) and long-suffering" (ver. 11). What God is judge, but the Lord, who judgeth the people? He is righteous; who "shall render to every man according to his works." He is strong (in endurance); who, being most powerful, for our salvation bore even with ungodly persecutors. He is long-suffering; who did not immediately, after His resurrection, hurry away to punishment, even those that persecuted Him, but bore with them, that they might at length turn from that ungodliness to salvation: and still He beareth with them, reserving the last penalty for the last judgment, and up to this present time inviting sinners to repentance. "Not bringing in anger every day." Perhaps "bringing in anger" is a more significant expression than being angry (and so we find it in the Greek copies); that the anger, whereby He punisheth, should not be in Him, but in the minds of those ministers who obey the commandments of truth through whom orders are given even to the lower ministries, who are called angels of wrath, to punish sin: whom even now the punishment of men delights not for justice' sake, in which they have no pleasure, but for malice' sake. God then doth not "bring in anger every day," that is, He doth not collect His ministers for vengeance every day. For now the patience of God inviteth to repentance: but in the last time, when men "through their hardness and impenitent heart shall have treasured up for themselves anger in the day of anger, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, then He will brandish His sword."

13. "Unless ye be converted," He says, "He will brandish His sword" (ver. 12). The Lord Man Himself may be taken to be God's double-edged sword, that is, His spear, which at His first coming He will not brandish, but hideth as it were in the sheath of humiliation: but He will brandish it, when at the second coming to judge the quick and dead, in the manifest splendour of His glory, He shall flash light on His righteous ones, and terror on the ungodly. For in other copies, instead of, "He shall brandish His sword," it has been written, "He shall make bright His spear:" by which word I think the last coming of the Lord's glory most appropriately signified: seeing that is understood of His person, which another Psalm has, "Deliver, O Lord, my soul from the ungodly, Thy spear from the enemies of Thine hand. He hath bent

His bow, and made it ready." The tenses of the words must not be altogether overlooked, how he has spoken of "the sword" in the future, "He will brandish;" of "the bow" in the past, "He hath bent:" and these words of the past tense follow after.

14. "And in it He hath prepared the instruments of death: He hath wrought His arrows for the burning" (ver. 13). That bow then I would readily take to be the Holy Scripture, in which by the strength of the New Testament, as by a sort of string, the hardness of the Old has been bent and subdued. From thence the Apostles are sent forth like arrows, or divine preachings are shot. Which arrows "He has wrought for the burning," arrows, that is, whereby being stricken they might be inflamed with heavenly love. For by what other arrows was she stricken, who saith, "Bring me into the house of wine, place me among perfumes, crowd me among honey, for I have been wounded with love"? By what other arrows is he kindled, who, desirous of returning to God, and coming back from wandering, asketh for help against crafty tongues, and to whom it is said, "What shall be given thee, or what added to thee against the crafty tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with devastating coals: that is, coals, whereby, when thou art stricken and set on fire, thou mayest burn with so great love of the kingdom of heaven, as to despise the tongues of all that resist thee, and would recall thee from thy purpose, and to deride their persecutions, saying, "Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

For I am persuaded," he says, "that neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principality, nor things present, not things to come, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus for the burning hath He wrought His arrows. For in the Greek copies it is found thus, "He hath wrought His arrows for the burning. But most of the Latin copies have "burning arrows. But whether the arrows themselves burn, or make others burn, which of course they cannot do unless they burn themselves, the sense is complete. 15. But since he has said that the Lord has prepared not arrows only, but "instruments of death" too, in the bow, it may be asked, what are "instruments of death"? Are they, per-adventure, heretics? For they too, out of the same bow, that is, out of the same Scriptures, light upon souls not to be inflamed with love but destroyed with poison: which does not happen but

after their deserts: wherefore even this dispensation is to be assigned to the Divine Providence, not that it makes men sinners, but that it orders them after they have sinned. For through sin reaching them with an ill purpose, they are forced to understand them ill, that this should be itself the punishment of sin: by whose death, nevertheless, the sons of the Catholic Church are, as it were by certain thorns, so to say, aroused from slumber, and make progress toward the understanding of the holy Scriptures. "For there must be also heresies, that they which are approved," he says, "may be made manifest among you:" that is, among men, seeing they are manifest to God. Or has He haply ordained the same arrows to be at once instruments of death for the destruction of unbelievers, and wrought them burning, or for the burning, for the exercising of the faithful? For that is not false that the Apostle says, "To the one we are the savour of life unto life, to the other the savour of death unto death; and who is sufficient for these things?" It is no wonder then if the same Apostles be both instruments of death in those from whom they suffered persecution, and fiery arrows to inflame the hearts of believers.

16. Now after this dispensation righteous judgment will come: of which the Psalmist so speaks, as that we may understand that each man's punishment is wrought out of his own sin, and his iniquity turned into vengeance: that we may not suppose that that tranquillity and ineffable light of God brings forth from Itself the means of punishing sin; but that it so ordereth sins, that what have been delights to man in sinning, should be instruments to the Lord avenging. "Behold," he says, "he hath travailed with injustice." Now what had he conceived, that he should travail with injustice? "He hath conceived," he says, "toil." Hence then comes that, "In toil shall thou eat thy bread." Hence too that, "Come unto Me all ye that toil and are heavy laden; for My yoke is easy, and My burden light." For toil will never cease, except one love that which cannot be taken away against his will. For when those things are loved which we can lose against our wilt, we must needs toil for them most miserably; and to obtain them, amid the straitnesses of earthly cares, whilst each desires to snatch them for himself, and to be beforehand with another, or to wrest it from him, must scheme injustice. Duly then, and quite in order, hath he travailed with injustice, who has conceived toil. Now he bringeth forth what, save that with which he hath travailed, although he has not travailed with that which he conceived? For that is not born, which is not conceived; but seed is conceived, that which is formed from the seed is

born. Toil is then the seed of iniquity, but sin the conception of toil, that is, that first sin, to "depart from God." He then hath travailed with injustice, who hath conceived toil. "And he hath brought forth iniquity." "Iniquity" is the same as "injustice:" he hath brought forth then that with which he travailed. What follows next?

17. "He hath opened a ditch, and digged it" (ver. 15). To open a ditch is, in earthly matters, that is, as it were in the earth, to prepare deceit, that another fall therein, whom the unrighteous man wishes to deceive. Now this ditch is opened when consent is given to the evil suggestion of earthly lusts: but it is digged when after consent we press on to actual work of deceit. But how can it be, that iniquity should rather hurt the righteous man against whom it proceeds, than the unrighteous heart whence it proceeds? Accordingly, the stealer of money, for instance, while he desires to inflict painful harm upon another, is himself maimed by the wound of avarice. Now who, even out of his right mind, sees not how great is the difference between these men, when one suffers the loss of money, the other of innocence? "He will fall" then "into the pit which he hath made." As it is said in another Psalm, "The Lord is known in executing judgments; the sinner is caught in the works of his own hands."

18. "His toil shall be turned on his head, and his iniquity shall descend on his pate" (ver. 16). For he had no mind to escape sin: but was brought under sin as a slave, so to say, as the Lord saith, "Whosoever sinneth is a slave." His iniquity then will be upon him, when he is subject to his iniquity; for he could not say to the Lord, what the innocent and upright say, "My glory, and the lifter up of my head." He then will be in such wise below, as that his iniquity may be above, and descend on him; for that it weigheth him down and burdens him, and suffers him not to fly back to the rest of the saints. This occurs, when in an ill regulated man reason is a slave, and lust hath dominion. 19. "I will confess to the Lord according to His justice" (ver. 17). This is not the sinner's confession: for he says this, who said above most truly, "If there be iniquity in my hands: but it is a confession of God's justice, in which we speak thus, Verily, O Lord, Thou art just, in that Thou both so protectest the just, that Thou enlightenest them by Thyself; and so orderest sinners, that they be punished not by Thine, but by their own malice. This confession so praises the Lord, that the blasphemies of the ungodly can avail nothing, who, willing to excuse their evil deeds, are unwilling to attribute to

their own fault that they sin, that is, are unwilling to attribute their fault to their fault. Accordingly they find either fortune or fate to accuse, or the devil, to whom He who made us hath willed that it should be in our power to refuse consent: or they bring in another nature, which is not of God: wretched waverers, and erring, rather than confessing to God, that He should pardon them. For it is not fit that any be pardoned, except he says, I have sinned. He, then, that sees the deserts of souls so ordered by God, that while each has his own given him, the fair beauty of the universe is in no part violated, in all things praises God: and this is not the confession of sinners, but of the righteous.

For it is not the sinner's confession when the Lord says, "I confess to Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them to babes. Likewise in Ecclesiasticus it is said, "Confess to the Lord in all His works: and in confession ye shall say this, All the works of the Lord are exceeding good. Which can be seen in this Psalm, if any one with a pious mind, by the Lord's help, distinguish between the rewards of the righteous and the penalties of the sinners, how that in these two the whole creation, which God made and rules, is adorned with a beauty wondrous and known to few. Thus then he says, "I will confess to the Lord according to His justice," as one who saw that darkness was not made by God, but ordered nevertheless. For God said, "Let light be made, and light was made. He did not say, Let darkness be made, and darkness was made: and yet He ordered it. And therefore it is said, "God divided between the light, and the darkness: and God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. This is the distinction, He made the one and ordered it: but the other He made not, but yet He ordered this too. But now that sins are signified by darkness, so is it seen in the Prophet, who says, "And thy darkness shall be as the noon day:

and in the Apostle, who says, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness: and above all that text, "Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Not that there is any nature of darkness. For all nature, in so far as it is nature, is compelled to be. Now being belongs to light: not being to darkness. He then that leaves Him by whom he was made, and inclines to that whence he was made, that is, to nothing, is in this sin endarkened: and yet he does not utterly perish, but he is ordered among the lowest things. Therefore after the Psalmist said, "I will confess unto the Lord:

that we might not understand it of confession of sins, he adds lastly, "And I will sing to the name of the Lord most high. Now singing has relation to joy, but repentance of sins to sadness.

20. This Psalm can also be taken in the person of the Lord Man: if only that which is there spoken in humiliation be referred to our weakness, which He bore.

PSALM 8

TO The End, For The Wine-Presses, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. He seems to say nothing of wine-presses in the text of the Psalm of which this is the title. By which it appears, that one and the same thing is often signified in Scripture by many and various similitudes. We may then take wine-presses to be Churches, on the same principle by which we understand also by a threshing-floor the Church. For whether in the threshing-floor, or in the wine-press, there is nothing else done but the clearing the produce of its covering; which is necessary, both for its first growth and increase, and arrival at the maturity either of the harvest or the vintage. Of these coverings or supporters then; that is, of chaff, on the threshing-floor, the corn; and of husks, in the presses, the wine is stripped: as in the Churches, from the multitude of worldly men, which is collected together with the good, for whose birth and adaptating to the divine word that multitude was necessary, this is effected, that by spiritual love they be separated through the operation of God's ministers. For now so it is that the good are, for a time, separated from the bad, not in space, but in affection: although they have converse together in the Churches, as far as respects bodily presence. But another time will come, the corn will be stored up apart in the granaries, and the wine in the cellars. "The wheat," saith he, "He will lay up in garners; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable." The same thing may be thus understood in another similitude: the wine He will lay up in cellars, but the husks He will cast forth to cattle: so that by the bellies of the cattle we may be allowed by way of similitude to understand the pains of hell.

2. There is another interpretation concerning the wine-presses, yet still keeping to the meaning of Churches. For even the Divine Word may be understood by the grape: for the Lord even has been called a Cluster of grapes; which they that were sent before by the people of Israel brought from the land of promise hanging on a staff, crucified as it were. Accordingly, when the Divine Word maketh use of, by the necessity of declaring Himself, the

sound of the voice, whereby to convey Himself to the ears of the hearers; in the same sound of the voice, as it were in husks, knowledge, like the wine, is enclosed: and so this grape comes into the ears, as into the pressing machines of the wine-pressers. For there the separation is made, that the sound may reach as far as the ear; but knowledge be received in the memory of those that hear, as it were in a sort of vat; whence it passes into discipline of the conversation and habit of mind, as from the vat into the cellar: where if it do not through negligence grow sour, it will acquire soundness by age. For it grew sour among the Jews, and this sour vinegar they gave the Lord to drink. For that wine, which from the produce of the vine of the New Testament the Lord is to drink with His saints in the kingdom of His Father. must needs be most sweet and most sound.

3. "Wine-presses" are also usually taken for martyrdoms, as if when they who have confessed the name of Christ have been trodden down by the blows of persecution, their mortal remains as husks remained on earth, but their souls flowed forth into the rest of a heavenly habitation. Nor yet by this interpretation do we depart from the fruitfulness of the Churches. It is sung then, "for the wine-presses," for the Church's establishment; when our Lord after His resurrection ascended into heaven. For then He sent the Holy Ghost: by whom the disciples being fulfilled preached with confidence the Word of God, that Churches might be collected. 4. Accordingly it is said, "O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is Thy Name in all the earth!" (ver. 1). I ask, how is His Name wonderful in all the earth? The answer is, "For Thy glory has been raised above the heavens." So that the meaning is this, O Lord, who art our Lord, how do all that inhabit the earth admire Thee! for Thy glory hath been raised from earthly humiliation above the heavens. For hence it appeared who Thou wast that descendedst, when it was by some seen, and by the rest believed, whither it was that Thou ascendedst.

5. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, because of Thine enemies" (ver. 2). I cannot take babes and sucklings to be any other than those to whom the Apostle says, "As unto babes in Christ I have given you milk to drink, not meat." Who were meant by those who went before the Lord praising Him, of whom the Lord Himself used this testimony, when He answered the Jews who bade Him rebuke them, "Have ye not read, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise?" Now with good reason He says not, Thou hast made, but,

"Thou hast made perfect praise." For there are in the Churches also those who now no more drink milk, but eat meat: whom the same Apostle points out, saying, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect;" but not by those only are the Churches perfected; for if there were only these, little consideration would be had of the human race. But consideration is had, when they too, who are not as yet capable of the knowledge of things spiritual and eternal, are nourished by the faith of the temporal history, which for our salvation after the Patriarchs and Prophets was administered by the most excellent Power and Wisdom of God, even in the Sacrament of the assumed Manhood, in which there is salvation for every one that believeth; to the end that moved by Its authority each one may obey Its precepts, whereby being purified and "rooted and grounded in love," he may be able to run with Saints, no more now a child in milk, but a young man in meat, "to comprehend the breadth, the length, the height, and depth, to know also the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ."

6. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, because of Thine enemies. By enemies to this dispensation, which has been wrought through Jesus Christ and Him crucified, we ought generally to understand all who forbid belief in things unknown, and promise certain knowledge: as all heretics do, and they who in the superstition of the Gentiles are called philosophers. Not that the promise of knowledge is to be blamed; but because they deem the most healthful and necessary step of faith is to be neglected, by which we must needs ascend to something certain, which nothing but that which is eternal can be. Hence it appears that they do not possess even this knowledge, which in contempt of faith they promise; seeing that they know not so useful and necessary a step thereof. "Out of the mouth," then "of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise," Thou, our Lord, declaring first by the Apostle, "Except ye believe, ye shall not understand; and saying by His own mouth, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and shall believe. "Because of the enemies: against whom too that is said, "I confess to Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them unto babes. "From the wise," he saith, not the really wise, but those who deem themselves such. "That Thou mayest destroy the enemy and the defender. Whom but the heretic?

For he is both an enemy and a defender, who when he would assault the Christian faith, seems to defend it. Although the philosophers too of this

world may be well taken as the enemies and defenders: forasmuch as the Son of God is the Power and Wisdom of God by which every one is enlightened who is made wise by the truth: of which they profess themselves to be lovers, whence too their name of philosophers; and therefore they seem to defend it, while they are its enemies, since they cease not to recommend noxious superstitions, that the elements of this world should be worshipped and revered. 7. "For I shall see Thy heavens, the works of Thy fingers" (ver. 3). We read that the law was written with the finger of God, and given through Moses, His holy servant: by which finger of God many understand the Holy Ghost. Wherefore if, by the fingers of God, we are right in understanding these same ministers filled with the Holy Ghost, by reason of this same Spirit which worketh in them, since by them all holy Scripture has been completed for us; we understand consistently with this, that, in this place, the books of both Testaments are called "the heavens." Now it is said too of Moses himself, by the magicians of king Pharaoh, when they were conquered by him, "This is the finger of God." And what is written, "The heavens shall be rolled up as a book." Although it be said of this aethereal heaven, yet naturally, according to the same image, the heavens of books are named by allegory. "For I shall see," he says, "the heavens, the works of Thy fingers:" that is, I shall discern and understand the Scriptures, which Thou, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, hast written by Thy ministers.

8. Accordingly the heavens named above also may be interpreted as the same books, where he says, "For Thy glory hath been raised above the heavens: so that the complete meaning should be this, "For Thy glory hath been raised above the heavens; for Thy glory hath exceeded the declarations of all the Scriptures: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise," that they should begin by belief in the Scriptures, who would arrive at the knowledge of Thy glory: which hath been raised above the Scriptures, in that it passeth by and transcends the announcements of all words and languages. Therefore hath God lowered the Scriptures even to the capacity of babes and sucklings, as it is sung in another Psalm, "And He lowered the heaven, and came down: and this did He because of the enemies, who through pride of talkativeness, being enemies of the cross of Christ, even when they do speak some truth, still cannot profit babes and sucklings. So is the enemy and defender destroyed, who, whether he seem to defend wisdom, or even the name of Christ, still, from the step of this faith, assaults

that truth, which he so readily makes promise of. Whereby too he is convicted of not possessing it; since by assaulting the step thereof, namely faith, he knows not how one should mount up thereto.

Hence then is the rash and blind promiser of truth, who is the enemy and defender, destroyed, when the heavens, the works of God's fingers, are seen, that is, when the Scriptures, brought down even to the slowness of babes, are understood; and by means of the lowness of the faith of the history, which was transacted in time, they raise them, well nurtured and strengthened, unto the grand height of the understanding of things eternal, up to those things which they establish. For these heavens, that is, these books, are the works of God's fingers; for by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the Saints they were completed. For they that have regarded their own glory rather than man's salvation, have spoken without the Holy Ghost, in whom are the bowels: of the mercy of God. 9. "For I shall see the heavens, the works of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained." The moon and stars are ordained in the heavens; since both the Church universal, to signify which the moon is often put, and Churches in the several places particularly, which I imagine to be intimated by the name of stars, are established in the same Scriptures, which we believe to be expressed by the word heavens. But why the moon justly signifies the Church, will be more seasonably considered in another Psalm, where it is said, "The sinners have bent their bow, that they may shoot in the obscure moon the upright in heart."

10. "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? (ver. 4). It may be asked, what distinction there is between man and son of man. For if there were none, it would not be expressed thus, "man, or son of man," disjunctively. For if it were written thus, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, and son of man, that Thou visitest him?" it might appear to be a repetition of the word "man. But now when the expression is, "man or son of-man," a distinction is more clearly intimated. This is certainly to be remembered, that every son of man is a man; although every man cannot be taken to be a son of man. Adam, for instance, was a man, but not a son of man. Wherefore we may from hence consider and distinguish what is the difference in this place between man and son of man; namely, that they who bear the image of the earthy man, who is not a son of man, should be signified by the name of men; but that they who bear the image of the heavenly Man should be rather called sons of men; for the

former again is called the old man and the latter the new; but the new is born of the old, since spiritual regeneration is begun by a change of an earthy, and worldly life; and therefore the latter is called son of man.

"Man" then in this place is earthy, but "son of man" heavenly; and the former is far removed from God, but the latter present with God; and therefore is He mindful of the former, as in far distance from Him; but the latter He visiteth, with whom being present He enlighteneth him with His countenance. For "salvation is far from sinners; and, "The light of Thy countenance hath been stamped upon us, O Lord. So in another Psalm he saith, that men in conjunction with beasts are made whole together with these beasts, not by any present inward illumination, but by the multiplication of the mercy of God, whereby His goodness reacheth even to the lowest things; for the wholeness of carnal men is carnal, as of the beasts; but separating the sons of men from those whom being men he joined with cattle, he proclaims that they are made blessed, after a far more exalted method, by the enlightening of the truth itself, and by a certain inundation of the fountain of life. For he speaketh thus: "Men and beasts Thou wilt make whole, O Lord, as Thy mercy hath been multiplied, O God. But the sons of men shall put their trust in the covering of Thy wings. They shall be inebriated with the richness of Thine house, and of the torrent of Thy pleasures Thou shall make them drink. For with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light. Extend Thy mercy to them that know Thee.

Through the multiplication of mercy then He is mindful of man, as of beasts; for that multiplied mercy reacheth even to them that are afar off; but He visiteth the son of man, over whom, placed under the covering of His wings, He extendeth mercy, and in His light giveth light, and maketh him drink of His pleasures, and inebriateth him with the richness of His house, to forget the sorrows and the wanderings of his former conversation. This son of man, that is, the new man, the repentance of the old man begets with pain and tears. He, though new, is nevertheless called yet carnal, whilst he is fed with milk; "I would not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal," says the Apostle. And to show that they were already regenerate, he says, "As unto babes in Christ, I have given you milk to drink, not meat. And when he relapses, as often happens, to the old life, he hears in reproof that he is a man; "Are ye not men," he says, "and walk as men?"

11. Therefore was the son of man first visited in the person of the very Lord Man, born of the Virgin Mary. Of whom, by reason of the very weakness of the flesh, which the Wisdom of God vouchsafed to bear, and the humiliation of the Passion, it is justly said, "Thou hast lowered Him a little lower than the Angels" (ver. 5). But that glorifying is added, in which He rose and ascended up into heaven; "With glory," he says, "and with honour hast Thou crowned Him; and hast set Him over the works of Thine hands" (ver. 6). Since even Angels are the works of God's hands, even over Angels we understand the Only-begotten Son to have been set; whom we hear and believe, by the humiliation of the carnal generation and passion, to have been lowered a little lower than the Angels. 12. "Thou hast put," he says, "all things in subjection under His feet. When he says, "all things," he excepts nothing. And that he might not be allowed to understand it otherwise, the Apostle enjoins it to be believed thus, when he says, "He being excepted which put all things under Him. And to the Hebrews he uses this very testimony from this Psalm, when he would have it to be understood that all things are in such sort put under our Lord Jesus Christ, as that nothing should be excepted. And yet he does not seem, as it were, to subjoin any great thing, when he says, "All sheep and oxen, yea, moreover, the beasts of the field, birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea" (ver. 7). For, leaving the heavenly excellencies and powers, and all the hosts of Angels, leaving even man himself, he seems to have put under Him the beasts merely; unless by sheep and oxen we understand holy souls, either yielding the fruit of innocence, or even working that the earth may bear fruit, that is, that earthly men may be regenerated unto spiritual richness. By these holy souls then we ought to understand not those of men only, but of all Angels too, if we would gather from hence that all things are put under our Lord Jesus Christ.

For there will be no creature that will not be put under Him, under whom the pre-eminent spirits, that I may so speak, are put. But whence shall we prove that sheep can be interpreted even, not of men, but of the blessed spirits of the angelical creatures on high? May we from the Lord's saying that He had left ninety and nine sheep in the mountains, that is, in the higher regions, and had come down for one? For if we take the one lost sheep to be the human soul in Adam, since Eve even was made out of his side, for the spiritual handling and consideration of all which things this is not the time,

it remains that, by the ninety and nine left in the mountains, spirits not human, but angelical, should be meant. For as regards the oxen, this sentence is easily despatched; since men themselves are for no other reason called oxen, but because by preaching the Gospel of the word of God they imitate Angels, as where it is said, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. How much more easily then do we take the Angels themselves, the messengers of truth, to be oxen, when Evangelists by the participation of their title are called oxen? "Thou hast put under" therefore, he says, "all sheep and oxen," that is, all the holy spiritual creation;

in which we include that of holy men, who are in the Church, in those wine-presses to wit, which are intimated under the other similitude of the moon and stars. 13. "Yea moreover," saith he, "the beasts of the field. The addition of "moreover" is by no means idle. First, because by beasts of the plain may be understood both sheep and oxen: so that, if goats are the beasts of rocky and mountainous regions, sheep may be well taken to be the beasts of the field. Accordingly had it been written even thus, "all sheep and oxen and beasts of the field; it might be reasonably asked what beasts of the plain meant, since even sheep and oxen could be taken as such. But the addition of "moreover" besides, obliges us, beyond question, to recognise some difference or another. But under this word, "moreover," not only "beasts of the field," but also "birds of the air, and fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea" (ver. 8), are to be taken in. What is then this distinction? Call to mind the "wine-presses," holding husks and wine; and the threshing-floor, containing chaff and corn; and the nets, in which were enclosed good fish and bad; and the ark of Noah, in which were both unclean and clean animals: and you will see that the Churches for a while, now in this time, unto the last time of judgment, contain not only sheep and oxen, that is, holy laymen and holy ministers, but "moreover beasts of the field, birds of the air, and birds of the sea, that walk through the paths of the sea.

For the beasts of the field were very fitly understood, as men rejoicing in the pleasure of the flesh where they mount up to nothing high, nothing laborious. For the field is also "the broad way, that leadeth to destruction: and in a field is Abel slain. Wherefore there is cause to fear, test one coming down from the mountains of God's righteousness ("for thy righteousness," he says, "is as the mountains of God") making choice of the broad and easy paths of carnal pleasure, be slain by the devil. See now too "the birds of heav-

en," the proud, of whom it is said, "They have set their mouth against the heaven. See how they are carried on high by the wind, "who say, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own, who is our Lord? Behold too the fish of the sea, that is, the curious; who walk through the paths of the sea, that is, search in the deep after the temporal things of this world: which, like: paths in the sea, vanish and perish, as quickly as the water comes together again after it has given room, in their passage, to ships, or to whatsoever walketh or swimmeth. For he said not merely, who walk the paths of the sea; but "walk through," he said; showing the very determined earnestness of those who seek after vain and fleeting things. Now these three kinds of vice, namely, the pleasure of the flesh, and pride, and curiosity, include all sins.

And they appear to me to be enumerated by the Apostle John, when he says, "Love not the world; for all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For through the eyes especially prevails curiosity. To what the rest indeed belong is clear. And that temptation of the Lord Man was threefold: by food, that is, by the lust of the flesh, where it is suggested, "command these stones that they be made bread: by vain boasting, where, when stationed on a mountain, all the kingdoms of this earth are shown Him, and promised if He would worship: by curiosity, where, from the pinnacle of the temple, He is advised to cast Himself down, for the sake of trying whether He would be borne up by Angels. And accordingly after that the enemy could prevail with Him by none of these temptations, this is said of him, "When the devil had ended all his temptation. With a reference then to the meaning of the wine-presses, not only the wine, but the husks too are put under His feet; to wit, not only sheep and oxen, that is, the holy souls of believers, either in the laity, or in the ministry; but moreover both beasts of pleasure, and birds of pride, and fish of curiosity. All which classes of sinners we see mingled now in the Churches with the good and holy. May He work then in His Churches, and separate the wine from the husks:

let us give heed, that we be wine, and sheep or oxen; not husks, or beasts of the field, or birds of heaven, or fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea. Not that these names can be understood and explained in this way only, but the explanation of them must be according to the place where they are found. For elsewhere they have other meanings. And this rule

must be kept to in every allegory, that what is expressed by the similitude should be considered agreeably to the meaning of the particular place: for this is the manner of the Lord's and the Apostles' teaching. Let us repeat then the last verse, which is also put at the beginning of the Psalm, and let us praise God, saying, "O Lord our Lord, how wonderful is Thy name in all the earth! For fitly, after the matter of the discourse, is the return made to the heading, whither all that discourse must be referred.

PSALM 9

1. The inscription of this Psalm is, "To the end for the hidden things of the Son, a Psalm of David himself. As to the hidden things of the Son there may be a question: but since he has not added whose, the very only-begotten Son of God should be understood. For where a Psalm has been inscribed of the son of David, "When," he says, "he fled from the face of Absalom his son; although his name even was mentioned, and therefore there could be no obscurity as to whom it was spoken of: yet it is not merely said, from the face of son Absalom; but "his" is added. But here both because "his" is not added, and much is said of the Gentiles, it cannot properly be taken of Absalom. For the war which that abandoned one waged with his father, no way relates to the Gentiles, since there the people of Israel only were divided against themselves. This Psalm is then sung for the hidden things of the only-begotten Son of God. For the Lord Himself too, when, without addition, He uses the word Son, would have Himself, the Only-begotten to be understood; as where He says, "If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed. For He said not, the Son of God; but in saying merely, Son, He gives us to understand whose Son it is.

Which form of expression nothing admits of, save His excellency of whom we so speak, that, though we name Him not, He can be understood. For so we say, it rains, clears up, thunders, and such like expressions; and we do not add who does it all; for that the excellency of the doer spontaneously presents itself to all men's minds, and does not want words. What then are the hidden things of the Son? By which expression we must first understand that there are some things of the Son manifest, from which those are distinguished which are called hidden. Wherefore since we believe two advents of the Lord, one past, which the Jews understood not: the other future, which we both hope for; and since the one which the Jews understood not, profited the Gentiles; "For the hidden things of the Son" is not unsuitably understood

to be spoken of this advent, in which "blindness in part is happened to Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in."

For notice of two judgments is conveyed to us throughout the Scriptures, if any one will give heed to them, one hidden, the other manifest. The hidden one is passing now, of which the Apostle Peter says, "The time is come that judgment should begin from the house of the Lord." The hidden judgment accordingly is the pain, by which now each man is either exercised to purification, or warned to conversion, or if he despise the calling and discipline of God, is blinded unto damnation. But the manifest judgment is that in which the Lord, at His coming, will judge the quick and the dead, all men confessing that it is He by whom both rewards shall be assigned to the good, and punishments to the evil. But then that confession will avail, not to the remedy of evils, but to the accumulation of damnation. Of these two judgments, the one hidden, the other manifest, the Lord seems to me to have spoken, where He says, "Whoso believeth on Me hath passed from death unto life, and shall not come into judgment;" into the manifest judgment, that is. For that which passes from death unto life by means of some affliction, whereby "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," is the hidden judgment. "But whoso believeth not," saith He, "hath been judged already:" that is, by this hidden judgment hath been already prepared for that manifest one. These two judgments we read of also in Wisdom, whence it is written, "Therefore unto them, as to children without the use of reason, Thou didst give a judgment to mock them; But they that have not been corrected by this judgment have felt a judgment worthy of God." Whoso then are not corrected by this hidden judgment of God, shall most worthily be punished by that manifest one. ...

2. "I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart" (ver. 1). He doth not, with a whole heart, confess unto God, who doubteth of His Providence in any particular: but he who sees already the hidden things of the wisdom of God, how great is His invisible reward, who saith, "We rejoice in tribulations;" and how all torments, which are inflicted on the body, are either for the exercising of those that are converted to God, or for warning that they be converted, or for just preparation of the obdurate unto their last damnation: and so now all things are referred to the governance of Divine Providence, which fools think done as it were by chance and at random, and without any Divine ordering. "I will tell all Thy marvels." He tells all God's

marvels, who sees them performed not only openly on the body, but invisibly indeed too in the soul, but far more sublimely and excellently. For men earthly, and led wholly by the eye, marvel more that the dead Lazarus rose again in the body, than that Paul the persecutor rose again in soul. But since the visible miracle calleth the soul to the light, but the invisible enlighteneth the soul that comes when called, he tells all God's marvels, who, by believing the visible, passes on to the understanding of the invisible.

3. "I will be glad and exult in Thee" (ver. 2). Not any more in this world, not in pleasure of bodily dalliance, not in relish of palate and tongue, not in sweetness of perfumes, not in joyousness of passing sounds, not in the variously coloured forms of figure, not in vanities of men's praise, not in wedlock and perishable offspring, not in superfluity of temporal wealth, not in this world's getting, whether it extend over place and space, or be prolonged in time's succession: but, "I will be glad and exult in Thee," namely, in the hidden things of the Son, where "the light of Thy countenance hath been stamped on us, O Lord:" for, "Thou wilt hide them," saith he, "in the hiding place of Thy countenance." He then will be glad and exult in Thee, who tells all Thy marvels. And He will tell all Thy marvels (since it is now spoken of prophetically), "who came not to do His own will, but the will of Him who sent Him."

4. For now the Person of the Lord begins to appear speaking in this Psalm. For it follows, "I will sing to Thy Name, O Most High, in turning mine enemy behind." His enemy then, where was he turned back? Was it when it was said to him, "Get thee behind, Satan"? For then he who by tempting desired to put himself before, was turned behind, by failing in deceiving Him who was tempted, and by availing nothing against Him. For earthly men are behind: but the heavenly man is preferred before, although he came after. For "the first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is from heaven, heavenly." But from this stock he came by whom it was said, "He who cometh after me is preferred before me." And the Apostle forgets "those things that are behind, and reaches forth unto those things that are before." The enemy, therefore, was turned behind, after that he could not deceive the heavenly Man being tempted; and he turned himself to earthy men, where he can have dominion. ...For in truth the devil is turned behind, even in the persecution of the righteous, and he, much more to their advantage, is a persecutor, than if he went before as a leader and a prince. We midst

sing then to the Name of the Most High in turning the enemy behind: since we ought to choose rather to fly from him as a persecutor, than to follow him as a leader. For we have whither we may fly and hide ourselves in the hidden things of the Son; seeing that "the Lord hath been made a refuge for us."

5. "They will be weakened, and perish from Thy face" (ver. 3). Who will be weakened and perish, but the unrighteous and ungodly? "They will be weakened," while they shall avail nothing; "and they shall perish," because the ungodly will not be; "from the face" of God, that is, from the knowledge of God, as he perished who said, "But now I live not, but Christ liveth in me." But why will the ungodly "be weakened and perish from thy face?" "Because," he saith, "Thou hast made my judgment, and my cause:" that is, the judgment in which I seemed to be judged, Thou hast made mine; and the cause in which men condemned me just and innocent, Thou hast made mine. For such things served Him for our deliverance: as sailors too call the wind theirs, which they take advantage of for prosperous sailing. 6. "Thou satest on the throne Who judgest equity" (ver. 4). Whether the Son say this to the Father, who said also, "Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above," referring this very thing, that the Judge of men was judged for men's advantage, to the Father's equity and His own hidden things: or whether man say to God, "Thou satest on the throne Who judgest equity," giving the name of God's throne to his soul, so that his body may peradventure be the earth, which is called God's "footstool:" for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself:" or whether the soul of the Church, perfect now and without spot and wrinkle, worthy, that is, of the hidden things of the Son, in that "the King hath brought her into His chamber," say to her spouse, "Thou satest upon the throne Who judgest equity," in that Thou hast risen from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and sittest at the right hand of the Father: whichsoever, I say, of those opinions, whereunto this verse may be referred, is preferred, it transgresses not the rule of faith.

7. "Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and the ungodly hath perished" (ver. 5). We take this to be more suitably said to the Lord Jesus Christ, than said by Him. For who else hath rebuked the heathen, and the ungodly perished, save He, who after that He ascended up into heaven, sent the Holy Ghost, that, filled by Him, the Apostles should preach the word of God with bold-

ness, and freely reprove men's sins? At which rebuke the ungodly perished; because the ungodly was justified and was made godly. "Thou hast effaced their name for the world, and for the world's world. The name of the ungodly hath been effaced. For they are not called ungodly who believe in the true God. Now their name is effaced "for the world," that is, as long as the course of the temporal world endures. "And for the world's world. What is "the world's world," but that whose image and shadow, as it were, this world possesses? For the change of seasons succeeding one another, whilst the moon is on the wane, and again on the increase, whilst the sun each year returns to his quarter, whilst spring, or summer, or autumn, or winter passes away only to return, is in some sort an imitation of eternity. But this world's world is that which abides in immutable eternity. As a verse in the mind, and a verse in the voice, the former is understood, the latter heard; and the former fashions the latter;

and hence the former works in art and abides, the latter sounds in the air and passes away. So the fashion of this changeable world is defined by that world unchangeable which is called the world's world. And hence the one abides in the art, that is, in the Wisdom and Power of God: but the other is made to pass in the governance of creation. If after all it be not a repetition, so that after it was said "for the world," lest it should be understood of this world that passeth away, it were added "for the world's world. For in the Greek copies it is thus, *eid ton aiwna, kai ej ton aipna ton aipnoj* Which the Latins have for the most rendered, not, "for the world, and for the world's world; but, "for ever, and for the world's world," that in the words "for the world's world," the words "for ever," should be explained. "The name," then, "of the ungodly Thou hast effaced for ever," for from henceforth the ungodly shall never be. And if their name be not prolonged unto this world, much less unto the world's world.

8. "The swords of the enemy have failed at the end" (ver. 6). Not enemies in the plural, but this enemy in the singular. Now what enemy's swords have failed but the devil's? Now these are understood to be divers erroneous opinions, whereby as with swords he destroys souls, In overcoming these swords, and in bringing them to failure, that sword is employed, of which it is said in the seventh Psalm, "If ye be not converted, He will brandish His sword. And peradventure this is the end, against which the swords of the enemy fail; since up to it they are of some avail. Now it worketh secretly, but in the last

judgment it will be brandished openly. By it the cities are destroyed. For so it follows, "The swords of the enemy have failed at the end: and Thou hast destroyed the cities. Cities indeed wherein the devil rules, where crafty and deceitful counsels hold, as it were, the place of a court, on which supremacy attend as officers and ministers the services of all the members, the eyes for curiosity, the ears for lasciviousness, or for whatsoever else is gladly listened to that bears on evil, the hands for rapine or any other violence or pollution soever, and all the other members after this manner serving the tyrannical supremacy, that is, perverse counsels. Of this city the commonalty, as it were, are all soft affections and disturbing emotions of the mind, stirring up daily seditions in a man.

So then where a king, where a court, where ministers, where commonalty are found, there is a city. Now again would such things be in bad cities, unless they were first in individual men, who are, as it were, the elements and seeds of cities. These cities He destroys, when on the prince being shut out thence, of whom it was said, "The prince of this world" has been "cast out," these kingdoms are wasted by the word of truth, evil counsels are laid to sleep, vile affections tamed, the ministries of the members and senses taken captive, and transferred to the service of righteousness and good works: that as the Apostle says, "Sin should no more reign in" our "mortal body," and so forth. Then is the soul at peace, and the man is disposed to receive rest and blessedness. "Their memorial has perished with uproar: with the uproar, that is, of the ungodly. But it is said, "with uproar," either because when ungodliness is overturned, there is uproar made: for none passeth to the highest place, where there is the deepest silence, but he who with much uproar shall first have warred with his own vices: or "with uproar," is said, that the memory of the ungodly should perish in the perishing even of the very uproar, in which ungodliness riots.

9. "And the Lord abideth for ever" (ver. 7). "Wherefore" then "have the heathen raged, and the people imagined vain things against the Lord, and against His anointed:" for "the Lord abideth for ever. He hath prepared His seat in judgment, and He shall judge the world in equity." He prepared His seat when He was judged. For by that patience Man purchased heaven, and God in Man profited believers. And this is the Son's hidden judgment. But seeing He is also to come openly and in the sight of all to judge the quick and the dead, He hath prepared His seat in the hidden judgment: and He

shall also openly "Judge the world in equity:" that is, He shall distribute gifts proportioned to desert, setting the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left. "He shall judge the people with justice"(ver. 8). This is the same as was said above, "He shall judge the world in equity." Not as men judge who see not the heart, by whom very often worse men are acquitted than are condemned: but "in equity" and "with justice" shall the Lord judge, "conscience bearing witness, and thoughts accusing, or else excusing."

10. "And the Lord hath become a refuge to the poor" (ver. 9). Whatsoever be the persecutions of that enemy, who hath been turned behind, what harm shall he do to them whose refuge the Lord hath become? But this will be, if in this world, in which that one has an office of power, they shall choose to be poor, by loving nothing which either here leaves a man while he lives and loves, or is left by him when he dies. For to such a poor man hath the Lord become a refuge, "an Helper in due season, in tribulation." Lo, He maketh poor, for "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." For what "an Helper in due season" is, he explained by adding "in tribulation." For the soul is not turned to God, save when it is turned away from this world: nor is it more seasonably turned away from this world, except toils and pains be mingled with its trifling and hurtful and destructive pleasures.

11. "And let them who know Thy Name, hope in Thee" (ver. 10), when they shall have ceased hoping in wealth, and in the other enticements of this world. For the soul indeed that seeketh where to fix her hope, when she is torn away from this world, the knowledge of God's Name seasonably receives. For the mere Name of God hath now been published everywhere: but the knowledge of the name is, when He is known whose name it is. For the name is not a name for its own sake, but for that which it signifies. Now it has been said, "The Lord is His Name." Wherefore whoso willingly submits himself to God as His servant, hath known this name. "And let them who know Thy Name hope in Thee" (ver. 10), Again, the Lord saith to Moses, "I am That I am; and Thou shalt say to the children of Israel, I Am, hath sent me." "Let them" then "who know Thy Name, hope in Thee;" that they may not hope in those things which flow by in time's quick revolution, having nothing but "will be" and "has been." For what in them is future, when it arrives, straightway becomes the past; it is awaited with eagerness, it is lost with pain. But in the nature of God nothing will be, as if it were not yet; or hath been, as if it were no longer: but there is only that which is, and this is etern-

ity. Let them cease then to hope in and love things temporal, and let them apply themselves to hope eternal, who know His name who said, "I am That I am;" and of whom it was said, "I Am hath sent me." "For Thou hast not forsaken them that seek Thee, O Lord." Whoso seek Him, seek no more things transient and perishable; "For no man can serve two masters."

12. "Sing to the Lord, who dwelleth in Sion" (ver. 11), is said to them, whom the Lord forsakes not as they seek Him. He dwelleth in Sion, which is interpreted watching, and which beareth the likeness of the Church that now is; as Jerusalem beareth the likeness of the Church that is to come, that is, the city of Saints already enjoying life angelical; for Jerusalem is by interpretation the vision of peace. Now watching goes before vision, as this Church goes before that one which is promised, the city immortal and eternal. But in time it goes before, not in dignity: because more honourable is that whither we are striving to arrive, than what we practise, that we may attain to arrive; now we practise watching, that we may arrive at vision. But again this same Church which now is, unless the Lord inhabit her, the most earnest watching might run into any sort of error. And to this Church it was said, "For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are:" again, "that Christ may dwell in the inner man in your hearts by faith." It is enjoined us then, that we sing to the Lord who dwelleth in Sion, that with one accord we praise the Lord, the Inhabitant of the Church. "Show forth His wonders among the heathen." It has both been done, and will not cease to be done.

13. "For requiring their blood He hath remembered" (ver. 12). As if they, who were sent to preach the Gospel, should make answer to that injunction which has been mentioned, "Show forth His wonders among the heathen," and should say, "O Lord, who hath believed our report?" and again, "For Thy sake we are killed all the day long;" the Psalmist suitably goes on to say, That Christians not without great reward of eternity will die in persecution, "for requiring their blood He hath remembered." But why did he choose to say, "their blood"? Was it, as if one of imperfect knowledge and less faith should ask, How will they "show them forth," seeing that the infidelity of the heathen will rage against them; and he should be answered, "For requiring their blood He hath remembered," that is, the last judgment will come, in which both the glory of the slain and the punishment of the slayers shall be made manifest? But let no one suppose "He hath remembered" to be so used, as though forgetfulness can attach to God; but since the judgment will be after

a long interval, it is used in accordance with the feeling of weak men, who think God hath forgotten, because He doth not act so speedily as they wish. To such is said what follows also, "He hath not forgotten the cry of the poor:" that is, He hath not, as you suppose, forgotten. As if they should on hearing, "He hath remembered," say, Then He had forgotten; No, "He hath not forgotten," says the Psalmist, "the cry of the poor."

14. But I ask, what is that cry of the poor, which God forgetteth not? Is it that cry, the words whereof are these, "Pity me, O Lord, see my humiliation at the hands of my enemies"? (ver. 13). Why then did he not say, Pity "us" O Lord, see our humiliation at the hands of "our" enemies, as if many poor were crying; but as if one, Pity "me," O Lord? Is it because One intercedeth for the Saints, "who" first "for our sakes became poor, though He was rich," and it is He who saith, "Who exaltest me from the gates of death (ver. 14), that I may declare all Thy praises in the gates of the daughter of Sion"? For man is exalted in Him, not that Man only which He beareth, which is the Head of the Church; but whosoever one of us also is among the other members, and is exalted from all depraved desires; which are the gates of death, for that through them is the road to death. But the joy in the fruition is at once death itself, when one gains what he hath in abandoned wilfulness coveted: for "coveting is the root of all evil:" and therefore is the gate of death, for "the widow that liveth in pleasures is dead." At which pleasures we arrive through desires as it were through the gates of death. But all highest purposes are the gates of the daughter of Sion, through which we come to the vision of peace in the Holy Church. ...Or haply are the gates of death the bodily senses and eyes, which were opened when the man tasted of the forbidden tree, ... and are the gates of the daughter of Sion the sacraments and beginnings of faith, which are opened to them that knock, that they may arrive at the hidden things of the Son? ..

15. Then follows, "I will exult for Thy salvation: that is, with blessedness shall I be holden by Thy salvation, which is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God. Therefore says the Church, which is here in affliction and is saved by hope, as long as the hidden judgment of the Son is, in hope she says, "I will exult for Thy salvation: for now she is worn down either by the roar of violence around her, or by the errors of the heathen. "The heathen are fixed in the corruption, which they made" (ver. 15). Consider ye how punishment is reserved for the sinner, out of his own works; and how they

that have wished to persecute the Church, have been fixed in that corruption, which they thought to inflict. For they were desiring to kill the body, whilst they themselves were dying in soul. "In that snare which they hid, has their foot been taken. The hidden snare is crafty devising. The foot of the soul is well understood to be its love: which, when depraved, is called coveting or lust; but when upright, love or charity. ...And the Apostle says, "That being rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to take in. The foot then of sinners, that is, their love, is taken in the snare, which they hide: for when delight shall have followed on to deceitful dealing, when God shall have delivered them over to the lust of their heart;

that delight at once binds them, that they dare not tear away their love thence and apply it to profitable objects; for when they shall make the attempt, they will be pained in heart, as if desiring to free their foot from a fetter: and giving way trader this pain they refuse to withdraw from pernicious delights. "In the snare" then "which they have hid," that is, in deceitful counsel, "their foot hath been taken," that is, their love, which through deceit attains to that vain joy whereby pain is purchased. 16. "The Lord is known executing judgments" (ver. 16). These are God's judgments. Not from that tranquillity of His blessedness, nor from the secret places of wisdom, wherein blessed souls are received, is the sword, or fire, or wild beast, or any such thing brought forth, whereby sinners maybe tormented: but how are they tormented, and how does the Lord do judgment? "In the works," he says, "of his own hands hath the sinner been caught." 17. Here is interposed, "The song of the diapsalma" (ver. 16): as it were the hidden joy, as far as we can imagine, of the separation which is now made, not in place, but in the affections of the heart, between sinners and the righteous, as of the corn from the chaff, as yet on the floor. And then follows, "Let the sinners be turned into hell" (ver. 17): that is, let them be given into their own hands, when they are spared, and let them be ensnared in deadly delight. "All the nations that forget God." Because "when they did not think good to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind."

18. "For there shall not be forgetfulness of the poor man to the end" (ver. 18); who now seems to be in forgetfulness, when sinners are thought to flourish in this world's happiness, and the righteous to be in travail: but "the patience," saith He, "of the poor shall not perish for ever." Wherefore there is need of patience now to bear with the evil, who are already separated in will,

till they be also separated at the last judgment. 19. "Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail" (ver. 19). The future judgment is prayed for: but before it come, "Let the heathen," saith he, "be judged in Thy sight:" that is, in secret; which is called in God's sight, with the knowledge of a few holy and righteous ones. "Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord." (ver. 20). He seems to me to point out Antichrist: of whom the Apostle says, "When the man of sin shall be revealed." "Let the heathen know that they are men." That they who will be set free by the Son of God, and belong to the Son of Man, and be sons of men, that is, new men, may serve man, that is, the old man the sinner, "for that they are men."

20. And because it is believed that he is to arrive at so great a pitch of empty glory, and he will be permitted to do so great things, both against all men and against the Saints of God, that then some weak ones shall indeed think that God cares not for human affairs, the Psalmist interposing a diapsalma, adds as it were the voice of men groaning and asking why judgment is deferred.

PSALM 10

"Why, O Lord," saith he, "hast Thou withdrawn afar off?" (ver. 1). Then he who thus inquired, as if all on a sudden he understood, or as if he asked, though he knew, that he might teach, adds, "Thou despisest in due seasons, in tribulations:" that is, Thou despisest seasonably, and causest tribulations to inflame men's minds with longing for Thy coming. For that fountain of life is sweeter to them that have much thirst. Therefore he hints the reason of the delay, saying, "Whilst the ungodly vaunteth himself, the poor man is inflamed" (ver. 2). Wondrous it is and true with what earnestness of good hope the little ones are inflamed unto an upright living by comparison with sinners. In which mystery it comes to pass, that even heresies are permitted to exist; not that heretics themselves wish this, but because Divine Providence worketh this result from their sins, which both maketh and ordaineth the light; but ordereth only the darkness, that by comparison therewith the light may be more pleasant, as by comparison with heretics the discovery of truth is more sweet. For so, by this comparison, the approved, who are known to God, are made manifest among men.

1. "They are taken in their thoughts, which they think:" that is, their evil thoughts become chains to them. But how become they chains? "For the sinner is praised," saith he, "in the desires of his soul" (ver. 3). The tongues of

flatterers bind souls in sin. For there is pleasure in doing those things, in which not only is no reprove feared, but even an approver heard. "And he that does unrighteous deeds is blessed." Hence "are they taken in their thoughts, which they think." 2. "The sinner hath angered the Lord" (ver. 4). Let no one congratulate the man that prospers in his way, to whose sins no avenger is nigh, and an approver is by. This is the greater anger of the Lord. For the sinner hath angered the Lord, that he should suffer these things, that is, should not suffer the scourging of correction. "The sinner hath angered the Lord: according to the multitude of His anger He will not search it out." Great is His anger, when He searcheth not out, when He as it were forgetteth and marketh not sin, and by fraud and wickednessman attains to riches and honours: which will especially be the case in that Antichrist, who will seem to man blessed to that degree, that he will even be thought God. But how great this anger of God is, we are taught by what follows.

3. "God is not in his sight, his ways are polluted in all time" (ver. 5). He that knows what in the soul gives joy and gladness, knows how great an ill it is to be abandoned by the light of truth: since a great ill do men reckon the blindness of their bodily eyes, whereby this light is withdrawn. How great then the punishment he endures, who through the prosperous issue of his sins is brought to that pass, that God is not in his sight, and that his ways are polluted in all time, that is, his thoughts and counsels are unclean! "Thy judgments are taken away from his face." For the mind conscious of evil, whilst it seems to itself to suffer no punishment, believes that God cloth not judge, and so are God's judgments taken away from its face; while this very thing is great condemnation. "And he shall have dominion over all his enemies." For so is it delivered, that he will overcome all kings, and alone obtain the kingdom; since too according to the Apostle, who preaches concerning him, "He shall sit in the temple of God, exalting himself above all that is worshipped and that is called God."

4. And seeing that being delivered over to the lust of his own heart, and predestinated to extreme condemnation, he is to come, by wicked arts, to that vain and empty height and rule; therefore it follows, "For he hath said in his heart, I shall not move from generation to generation without evil" (ver. 6): that is, my fame and my name will not pass from this generation to the generation of posterity, unless by evil arts I acquire so lofty a

principality, that posterity cannot be silent concerning it. For a mind abandoned and void of good arts, and estranged from the light of righteousness, by bad arts devises a passage for itself to a fame so lasting, as is celebrated even in posterity. And they that cannot be known for good, desire that men should speak of them even for ill, provided that their name spread far and wide. And this I think is here meant, "I shall not move from generation to generation without evil." There is too another interpretation, if a mind vain and full of error supposes that it cannot come from the mortal generation to the generation of eternity, but by bad arts: which indeed was also reported of Simon, when he thought that he would gain heaven by wicked arts, and pass from the human generation to the generation divine by magic. Where then is the wonder, if that man of sin too, who is to fill up all the wickedness and ungodliness, which all false prophets have begun, and to do such "great signs; that, if it were possible, he should deceive the very elect," shall say in his heart, "I shall not move from generation to generation without evil"?

5. "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness and deceit" (ver. 7). For it is a great curse to seek heaven by such abominable arts, and to get together such earnings for acquiring the eternal seat. But of this cursing his mouth is full. For this desire shall not take effect, but within his mouth only will avail to destroy him, who dared promise himself such things with bitterness and deceit, that is, with anger and insidiousness, whereby he is to bring over the multitude to his side. "Under his tongue is toil and grief." Nothing is more toilsome than unrighteousness and ungodliness: upon which toil follows grief; for that the toil is not only without fruit, but even unto destruction. Which toil and grief refer to that which he hath said in his heart, "I shall not be moved from generation to generation without evil." And therefore, "under his tongue," not on his tongue, because he will devise these things in silence, and to men will speak other things, that he may appear good and just, and a son of God.

6. "He lieth in ambush with the rich" (ver. 8). What rich, but those whom he will load with this world's gifts? And he is therefore said to lie in ambush with them, because he will display their false happiness to deceive men; who, when with a perverted will they desire to be such as they, and seek not the good things eternal, will fall into his snares. "That in the dark he may kill the innocent." "In the dark," I suppose, is said, where it is not easily understood what should be sought, or what avoided. Now to kill the innocent,

is of an innocent to make one guilty. 7. "His eyes look against the poor," for he is chiefly to persecute the righteous, of whom it is said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (ver. 9). "He lieth in wait in a secret place, as a lion in his den." By a lion in a den, he means one in whom both violence and deceit will work. For the first persecution of the Church was violent, when by proscriptions, by torments, by murders, the Christians were compelled to sacrifice: another persecution is crafty, which is now conducted by heretics of any kind and false brethren: there remains a third, which is to come by Antichrist, than which there is nothing more perilous; for it will be at once violent and crafty. Violence he will exert in empire, craft in miracles. To the violence, the word "lion" refers; to craft, the words "in his den." And these are again repeated with a change of order. "He lieth in wait," he says, "that he may catch the poor;" this hath reference to craft: but what follows, "To catch the poor whilst he draweth him," is put to the score of violence. For "draweth" means, he bringeth him to himself by violence, by whatever tortures he can.

8. Again, the two which follow are the same "In his snare he will humble him," is craft (ver. 10). "He shall decline and fall, whilst he shall have domination over the poor," is violence. For a "snare" naturally points to "lying in wait:" but domination most openly conveys the idea of terror. And well does he say, "He will humble him in his snare." For when he shall begin to do those signs, the more wonderful they shall appear to men, the more those Saints that shall be then will be despised, and, as it were, set at nought: he, whom they shall resist by righteousness and innocence, shall seem to overcome by the marvels that he does. But "he shall decline and fall, whilst he shall have domination over the poor;" that is, whilst he shall inflict whatsoever punishments he will upon the servants of God that resist him.

9. But how shall he decline, and fall? "For he hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; He turneth away His face, that He see not unto the end" (ver. 11). This is declining, and the most wretched fall, while the mind of a man prospers as it were in its iniquities, and thinks that it is spared; when it is being blinded, and kept for an extreme and timely vengeance: of which the Psalmist now speaks: "Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted" (ver. 12): that is, let Thy power be made manifest. Now he had said above, "Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail, let the heathen be judged in Thy sight: that is, in secret, where God alone seeth. This comes to pass when the ungodly have

arrived at what seems great happiness to men: over whom is placed a law-giver, such as they had deserved to have, of whom it is said, "Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord, let the heathen know that they are men. But now after that hidden punishment and vengeance it is said, "Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted; not of course in secret, but now in glory most manifest. "That Thou forget not the poor unto the end; that is, as the ungodly think, who say, "God hath forgotten, He turneth away His face, that He should not see unto the end.

Now they deny that God seeth unto the end, who say that He careth not for things human and earthly, for the earth is as it were the end of things; in that it is the last element, in which men labour in most orderly sort, but they cannot see the order of their labours, which specially belongs to the hidden things of the Son. The Church then labouring in such times, like a ship in great waves and tempests, awaketh the Lord as if He were sleeping, that He should command the winds, and calm should be restored. He says therefore, "Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted, that Thou forget not the poor unto the end." 10. Accordingly understanding now the manifest judgment, and in exultation at it, they say, "Wherefore hath the ungodly angered God?" (ver. 13); that is, what hath it profited him to do so great evil? "For he said in his heart, He will not require it." Then follows, "For Thou seest toil and considerest anger, to deliver them into Thine hands" (ver. 14). This sentence looks for distinct explanation, wherein if there shall be error it becomes obscure. For thus has the ungodly said in his heart, God will not require it, as though God regarded toil and anger, to deliver them into His hands; that is, as though He feared toil and anger, and for this reason would spare them, lest their punishment be too burdensome to Him, or lest He should be disturbed by the storm of anger: as men generally act, excusing themselves of vengeance, to avoid toil or anger.

11. "The poor hath been left unto Thee." For therefore is he poor, that is, hath despised all the temporal goods of this world, that Thou only mayest be his hope. "Thou wilt be a helper to the orphan," that is, to him to whom his father this world, by whom he was born after the flesh, dies, and who can already say, "The world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world." For of such orphans God becomes the Father. The Lord teaches us in truth that His disciples do become orphans, to whom He saith, "Call no man father on earth." Of which He first Himself gave an example in saying, "Who is my

mother, and who my brethren?" Whence some most mischievous heretics would assert that He had no mother; and they do not see that it follows from this, if they pay attention to these words, that neither had His disciples fathers. For as He said, "Who is my mother?" so He taught them, when He said, "Call no man your father on earth."

12. "Break the arm of the sinner and of the malicious" (ver. 15); of him, namely, of whom it was said above, "He shall have dominion over all his enemies." He called his power then, his arm; to which Christ's power is opposed, of which it is said, "Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted. His fault shall be required, and he shall not be found because of it;" that is he shall be judged for his sins, and himself shall perish because of his sin. After this, what wonder if there follow, "The Lord shall reign for ever and world without end; ye heathen shall perish out of His earth"? (ver. 16). He uses heathen for sinners and ungodly. 13. "The Lord hath heard the longing of the poor"(ver. 17): that longing wherewith they were burning, when in the straits and tribulations of this world they desired the day of the Lord. "Thine ear hath heard the preparation of their heart." This is the preparation of the heart, of which it is sung in another Psalm, "My heart is prepared, O God, my heart is prepared." of which the Apostle says, "But if we hope for what we see not, we do with patience wait for it." Now, by the ear of God, we ought, according to a general rule of interpretation, to understand not a bodily member, but the power whereby He heareth; and so (not to repeat this often) by whatever members of His are mentioned, which in us are visible and bodily, must be understood powers of operation. For we must not suppose it anything bodily, in that the Lord God hears not the sound of the voice, but the preparation of the heart.

14. "To judge for the orphan and the humble" (ver. 18): that is, not for him who is conformed to this world, nor for the proud. For it is one thing to judge the orphan, another to judge for the orphan. He judges the orphan even, who condemns him; but he judges for the orphan, who delivers sentence for him. "That man add not further to magnify himself uponearth." For they are men, of whom it wassaid, "Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord: let the heathen know that they are men." But he too, who in this same passage is understood to be placed over them, will be man, of whom it is now said, "That man add not further to magnify himself upon earth:" namely,

when the Son of Man shall come to judge for the orphan, who hath put off from himself the old man, and thus, as it were, buried his father.

15. After the hidden things then of the Son, of which, in this Psalm, many things have been said, will come the manifest things of the Son, of which a little has been now said at the end of the same Psalm. But the title is given from the former, which here occupy the larger portion. Indeed, the very day of the Lord's advent may be rightly numbered among the hidden things of the Son, although the very presence of the Lord itself will be manifest. For of that day it is said, that no man knoweth it, neither angels, nor powers, nor the Son of man. What then so hidden, as that which is said to be hidden even to the Judge Himself, not as regards knowledge, but disclosure? But concerning the hidden things of the Son, even if any one would not wish to understand the Son of God, but of David himself, to whose name the whole Psalter is attributed, for the Psalms we know are called the Psalms of David, let him give ear to those words in which it is said to the Lord, "Have mercy on us, O Son of David: and so even in this manner let him understand the same Lord Christ, concerning whose hidden things is the inscription of this Psalm. For so likewise is it said by the Angel: "God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.

Nor to this understanding of it is the sentence opposed in which the same Lord asks of the Jews, "If Christ be the Son of David, how then doth he in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, until I put Thine enemies under Thy feet. For it was said to the unskilled, who although they looked for Christ's coming, yet expected Him as man, not as the Power and Wisdom of God. He teacheth then, in that place, the most true and pure faith, that He is both the Lord of king David, in that He is the Word in the beginning, God with God, by which all things were made; and Son, in that He was made to him of the seed of David according to the flesh. For He doth not say, Christ is not David's Son, but if ye already hold that He is his Son, learn how He is his Lord: and do not hold in respect of Christ that He is the Son of Man, for so is He David's Son; and leave out that He is the Son of God, for so is He David's Lord.

PSALM 11

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. This title does not require a fresh consideration: for the meaning of, "to the end," has already been sufficiently handled. Let us then look to the text itself of the Psalm, which to me

appears to be sung against the heretics, who, by rehearsing and exaggerating the sins of many in the Church, as if either all or the majority among themselves were righteous, strive to turn and snatch us away from the breasts of the one True Mother Church: affirming that Christ is with them, and warning us as if with piety and earnestness, that by passing over to them we may go over to Christ, whom they falsely declare they have. Now it is known that in prophecy Christ, among the many names in which notice of Him is conveyed in allegory, is also called a mountain. We must accordingly answer these people, and say, "I trust in the Lord: how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow?" (ver. 1). I keep to one mountain wherein I trust, how say ye that I should pass over to you, as if there were many Christs? Or if through pride you say that you are mountains, I had indeed need to be a sparrow winged with the powers and commandments of God: but these very things hinder my flying to these mountains, and placing my trust in proud men. I have a house where I may rest, in that I trust in the Lord. For even "the sparrow hath found her a house," and, "The Lord hath become a refuge to the poor." Let us say then with all confidence, lest while we seek Christ among heretics we lose Him, "In the Lord I trust: how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow?"

2. "For, lo, sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart" (ver. 2). These be the terrors of those who threaten us as touching sinners, that we may pass over to them as the righteous. "Lo," they say, "the sinners have bent the bow:" the Scriptures, I suppose, by carnal interpretation of which they emit envenomed sentences from them. "They have prepared their arrows in the quiver:" the same words, that is, which they will shoot out on the authority of Scripture, they have prepared in the secret place of the heart. "That they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart:" that when they see, from the Church's light being obscured by the multitude of the unlearned and the carnal, that they cannot be convicted, they may corrupt good manners by evil communications. But against all these terrors we must say, "In the Lord I trust."

3. Now I remember that I promised to consider in this Psalm with what suitableness the moon signifies the Church. There are two probable opinions concerning the moon: but of these which is the true, I suppose it either impossible or very difficult for a man to decide. For when we ask whence the

moon has her light, some say that it is her own, but that of her globe half is bright, and half dark: and when she revolves in her own orbit, that part wherein she is bright gradually turns towards the earth, so as that it may be seen by us; and that therefore at first her appearance is as if she were horned. ...According to this opinion the moon in allegory signifies the Church, because in its spiritual part the Church is bright, but in its carnal part is dark: and sometimes the spiritual part is seen by good works, but sometimes it lies hid in the conscience, and is known to God alone, since in the body alone is it seen by men. ...But according to the other opinion also the moon is understood to be the Church, because she has no light of her own, but is lighted by the only-begotten Son of God, who in many places of holy Scripture is allegorically called the Sun.

Whom certain heretics being ignorant of, and not able to discern Him, endeavour to turn away the minds of the simple to this corporeal and visible sun, which is the common light of the flesh of men and flies, and some they do pervert, who as long as they cannot behold with the mind the inner light of truth, will not be content with the simple Catholic faith; which is the only safety to babes, and by which milk alone they can arrive in assured strength at the firm support of more solid food. Whichever then of these two opinions be the true, the moon in allegory is fitly understood as the Church. Or if in such difficulties as these, troublesome rather than edifying, there be either no satisfaction or no leisure to exercise the mind, or if the mind itself be not capable of it, it is sufficient to regard the moon with ordinary eyes, and not to seek out obscure causes, but with all men to perceive her increasings and fulnesses and wanings; and if she wanes to the end that she may be renewed, even to this rude multitude she sets forth the image of the Church, in which the resurrection of the dead is believed.

4. Next we must enquire, what in this Psalm is meant by "the obscure moon," in which sinners have prepared to shoot at the upright in heart? For not in one way only may the moon be said to be obscure: for when her monthly course is finished, and when her brightness is interrupted by a cloud, and when she is eclipsed at the full, the moon may be called obscure. It may then be understood first of the persecutors of the Martyrs, for that they wished in the obscure moon to shoot at the upright in heart; whether it be yet in the time of the Church's youth, because she had not yet shone forth in greatness on the earth, and conquered the darkness of heathen supersti-

tions; or by the tongues of blasphemers and such as defame the Christian name, when the earth was as it were beclouded, the moon, that is, the Church, could not be clearly seen; or when by the slaughter of the Martyrs themselves and so great effusion of blood, as by that eclipse and obscuration, wherein the moon seems to exhibit a bloody face, the weak were deterred from the Christian name; in which terror sinners shot out words crafty and sacrilegious to pervert even the upright in heart.

And secondly, it can be understood of these sinners, whom the Church contains, because at that time, taking the opportunity of this moon's obscurity, they committed many crimes, which are now tauntingly objected to us by the heretics, whereas their founders are said to have been guilty of them. But howsoever that be which was done in the obscure moon, now that the Catholic name is spread and celebrated throughout the whole world, what concern of mine is it to be disturbed by things unknown? For "in the Lord I trust; nor do I listen to them that say to my soul, "Remove into the mountains as a sparrow. For, lo, sinners have bent the bow, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart. Or if the moon seem even now obscure to them, because they would make it uncertain which is the Catholic Church, and they strive to convict her by the sins of those many carnal men whom she contains; what concern is this to him, who says in truth, "In the Lord I trust"? By which word every one shows that he is himself wheat, and endures the chaff with patience unto the time of winnowing.

5. "In the Lord," therefore, "I trust." Let them fear who trust in man, and cannot deny that they are of man's party, by whose grey hairs they swear; and when in conversation it is demanded of them, of what communion they are, unless they say that they are of his party, they cannot be recognised. ...Or perhaps you will say that it is written, "Ye shall know them by their works"? I see indeed marvellous works the daily violences of the Circumcelliones, with the bishops and presbyters for their leaders, flying about in every direction, and calling their terrible clubs "Israels;" which men now living daily see and feel. But for the times of Macarius, respecting which they raise an invidious cry, most men have not seen them, and no one sees them now: and any Catholic who saw them could say, if he wished to be a servant of God, "In the Lord I trust." ...

6. Let the Catholic soul then say, "In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? For, lo, the sinners have bent

the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart: and from them let her turn her speech to the Lord and say, "For they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected" (ver. 3). And this let her say not against these only, but against all heretics. For they have all, as far as in them lies, destroyed the praise which God hath perfected out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, when they disturb the little ones with vain and I scrupulous questions, and suffer them not to be nourished with the milk of faith. As if then it were said to this soul, why do they say to you, "Remove into the mountains as a sparrow; why do they frighten you with sinners, who "have bent the bow, to shoot in the obscure moon at the upright in heart"? She answers, Therefore it is they frighten me, "because they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected. Where but in their conventicles, where they nourish not with milk, but kill with poison the babes and ignorant of the interior light. "But what hath the Just done? If Macarius, if Caecilianus, offend you, what hath Christ done to you, who said, "My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you; which ye with your abominable dissensions have violated?

What hath Christ done to you? who with such exceeding patience endured His betrayer, as to give to him, as to the other Apostles, the first Eucharist consecrated with His own hands, and blessed with His own mouth. What hath Christ done to you? who sent this same betrayer, whom He called a devil, who before betraying the Lord could not show good faith even to the Lord's purse, with the other disciples to preach the kingdom of heaven; that He might show that the gifts of God come to those that with faith receive them, though he, through whom they receive them, be such as Judas was. 7. "The Lord is in His holy temple" (ver. 4), yea in such wise as the Apostle saith, "For the temple of God is holy, which" temple "ye are." "Now if any man shall violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy." He violateth the temple of God, who violateth unity: for he "holdeth not the head, from which the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the working after the measure of every part maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love." The Lord is in this His holy temple; which consisteth of His many members, fulfilling each his own separate duties, by love built up into one building. Which temple he violateth, who for the sake of his own pre-eminence separateth himself from the Catholic society. "The Lord is in His holy temple; the

Lord, His seat is in heaven." If you take heaven to be the just man, as you take the earth to be the sinner, to whom it was said, "Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go;" the words, "The Lord is in His holy temple" you will understand to be repeated, whilst it is said, "The Lord, His seat is in heaven."

8. "His eyes look upon the poor." His to Whom the poor man hath been left, and Who hath been made a refuge to the poor. And therefore all the seditions and tumults within these nets, until they be drawn to shore, concerning which heretics upbraid us to their own ruin and our correction, are caused by those men, who will not be Christ's poor. But do they turn away God's eyes from such as would be so? "For His eyes look upon the poor." Is it to be feared lest, in the crowd of the rich, He may not be able to see the few poor, whom He brings up in safe keeping in the bosom of the Catholic Church? "His eyelids question the sons of men." Here by that rule I would wish to take "the sons of men" of those that from old men have been regenerated by faith. For these, by certain obscure passages of Scripture, as it were the closed eyes of God, are exercised that they may seek: and again, by certain clear passages, as it were the open eyes of God, are enlightened that they may rejoice. And this frequent closing and opening in the holy Books are as it were the eyelids of God; which question, that is, which try the "sons of men;" who are neither wearied with the obscurity of the matter, but exercised; nor puffed up by knowledge, but confirmed.

9. "The Lord questioneth the righteous and ungodly" (ver. 5). Why then do we fear lest the ungodly should be any hurt to us, if so be they do with insincere heart share the sacraments with us, seeing that He "questioneth the righteous and the ungodly." "But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul:" that is, not him who believeth God, and putteth not his hope in man, but only his own soul doth the lover of iniquity hurt. 10. "He shall rain snares upon the sinners" (ver. 6). If by clouds are understood prophets generally, whether good or bad, who are also called false prophets: false prophets are so ordered by the Lord God, that by them He may rain snares upon sinners. For no one, but the sinner, falls into a following of them, whether by way of preparation for the last punishment, if he shall choose to persevere in sin; or to dissuade from pride, if in time he shall come to seek God with a more sincere intent. But if by clouds are understood good and true prophets only; by these too it is clear that God raineth snares upon sinners, although by them He

watereth also the godly unto fruitfulness. "To some," saith the Apostle, "we are the savour of life unto life; to some the savour of death unto death. For not prophets only, but all who with the word of God water souls, may be called clouds. Who when they are understood amiss, God raineth snares upon sinners; but when they are understood aright, He maketh the hearts of the godly and believing fruitful. As, for instance, the passage, "and they two shall be in one flesh," if one interpret it with an eye to lust, He raineth a snare upon the sinner. But if you understand it, as he who says, "But I speak concerning Christ and the Church," He raineth a shower on the fertile soil. Now both are effected by the same cloud, that is, holy Scripture.

Again the Lord says, "Not that which goeth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out. The sinner hears this, and makes ready his palate for gluttony: the righteous hears it, and is guarded against the superstitious distinction in meats. Here then also out of the same cloud of Scripture, according to the several desert of each, upon the sinner the rain of snares, upon the righteous the rain of fruitfulness, is poured. 11. "Fire and brimstone and the blast of the tempest is the portion of their cup." This is their punishment and end, by whom the name of God is blasphemed; that first they should be wasted by the fire of their own lusts, then by the ill savour of their evil deeds cast off from the company of the blessed, at last carried away and overwhelmed suffer penalties unspeakable. For this is the portion of their cup: as of the righteous, "Thy cup inebriating how excellent is it! for they shall be inebriated with the richness of Thine house." Now I suppose a cup is mentioned for this reason, that we should not suppose that anything is done by God's providence, even in the very punishments of sinners, beyond moderation and measure. And therefore as if he were giving a reason why this should be, he added, "For the Lord is righteous, and hath loved righteousnesses" (ver. 7). The plural not without meaning, but only because he speaks of men, is as that righteousnesses be understood to be used for righteous men. For in many righteous men there seem, so to say, to be righteousnesses, whereas there is one only righteousness of God whereof they all participate. Like as when one face looks upon many mirrors, what in it is one only, is by those many mirrors reflected manifoldly. Wherefore he recurs to the singular, saying, "His face hath seen equity." Perhaps, "His face hath seen equity," is as if it were said, Equity hath been seen in His face, that is, in knowledge of Him. For God's face is the power by which He is made known

to them that are worthy. Or at least, "His face hath seen equity," because He doth not allow Himself to be known by the evil, but by the good; and this is equity.

12. But if any one would understand the moon of the synagogue, let him refer the Psalm to the Lord's passion, and of the Jews say, "For they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected;" and of the Lord Himself, "But what hath the Just done?" whom they accused as the destroyer of the Law: whose precepts, by their corrupt living, and by despising them, and by setting up their own, they had destroyed, so that the Lord Himself may speak as Man, as He is wont, saying, "In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow?" by reason, that is, of the fear of those who desire to apprehend and crucify Him. Since the interpretation is not unreasonable of sinners wishing to "shoot at the upright in heart," that is, those who believed in Christ, "in the obscure moon," that is, the Synagogue filled with sinners. To this too the words, "The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord, His seat is in heaven," are suitable; that is, the Word in Man, or the very Son of Man who is in heaven. "His eyes look upon the poor;" either on to Him whom He assumed as God, or for whom He suffered as Man. "His eyelids question the sons of men." The closing and opening of the eyes, which is probably meant by the word eyelids, we may take to be His death and resurrection, whereby He tried the sons of men His disciples, terrified at His passion, and gladdened by the resurrection. "The Lord questioneth the righteous and ungodly," even now from out of Heaven governing the Church. "But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul." Why it is so, what follows teaches us. For "He shall rain snares upon the sinners:" which is to be taken according to the exposition above given, and so on with all the rest to the end of the Psalm.

PSALM 12

TO The End, For The Eighth, A Psalm OF David. 1. It has been said on the sixth Psalm, that "the eighth" may be taken as the day of judgment. "For the eighth" may also be taken "for the eternal age;" for that after the time present, which is a cycle of seven days, it shall be given to the Saints. 2. "Save me, O Lord, for the holy hath failed;" that is, is not found: as we speak when we say, Corn fails, or, Money fails. "For the truths have been minished from among the sons of men" (ver. 1). The truth is one, whereby holy souls are enlightened: but forasmuch as there are many souls, there may be said in them

to be many truths: as in mirrors there are seen many reflections from one face. 3. "He hath talked vanity each man to his neighbour" (ver. 2). By neighbour we must understand every man: for that there is no one with whom we should work evil; "and the love of our neighbour worketh no evil." "Deceitful lips, with a heart and a heart they have spoken evil things." The repetition, "with a heart and a heart," signifies a double heart.

4. "May the Lord destroy all deceitful lips" (ver. 3). He says "all," that no one may suppose himself excepted: as the Apostle says, "Upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and of the Greek." "The tongue speaking great things:" the proud tongue. 5. "Who have said, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?" (ver. 4). Proud hypocrites are meant, putting confidence in their speech to deceive men, and not submitting themselves to God. 6. "Because of the wretchedness of the needy and the sighing of the poor, now I will arise, saith the Lord" (ver. 5). For so the Lord Himself in the Gospel pitied His people, because they had no ruler, when they could well obey. Whence too it is said in the Gospel, "The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few." But this must be taken as spoken in the person of God the Father, who, because of the needy and the poor, that is, who in need and poverty were lacking spiritual good things, vouchsafed to send His own Son. From thence begins His sermon on the mount to Matthew, where He says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "I will place in salvation." He does not say what He would place: but, "in salvation," must be understood as, in Christ; according to that, "For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." And hence He is understood to have placed in Him what appertains to the taking away the wretchedness of the needy, and the comforting the sighing of the poor. "I will deal confidently in Him:" according to that in the Gospel, "For He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."

7. "The words of the Lord" are "pure words" (ver. 6). This is in the person of the Prophet himself, "The words of the Lord" are "pure words." He says "pure," without the alloy of pretence. For many preach the truth impurely; for they sell it for the bribe of the advantages of this life. Of such the Apostle says, that they declared Christ not purely. "Silver tried by the fire for the earth." These words of the Lord by means of tribulations approved to sinners. "Purified seven times:" by the fear of God, by godliness, by knowledge, by might, by counsel, by understanding, by wisdom. For seven steps also of

beatitude there are, which the Lord goes over, according to Matthew, in the same sermon which He spake on the Mount, "Blessed" are "the poor in spirit, blessed the meek, blessed they that mourn, blessed they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, blessed the merciful, blessed the pure in heart, blessed the peacemakers." Of which seven sentences, it may be observed how all that long sermon was spoken. For the eighth where it is said, "Blessed" are "they which suffer persecution for righteousness' sake," denotes the fire itself, whereby the silver is proved seven times. And at the termination of this sermon it is said, "For He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes. Which refers to that which is said in this Psalm, "I deal confidently in Him."

8. "Thou, O Lord, shalt preserve us, and keep us from this generation to eternity" (ver. 7): here as needy and poor, there as wealthy and rich. 9. "The ungodly walk in a circle round about" (ver. 8): that is, in the desire of things temporal, which revolves as a wheel in a repeated circle of seven days; and therefore they do not arrive at the eighth, that is, at eternity, for which this Psalm is entitled. So too it is said by Solomon, "For the wise king is the winner of the ungodly, and he bringeth on them the wheel of the wicked.- After Thine height Thou hast multiplied the sons of men." For there is in temporal things too a multiplication, which turns away from the unity of God. Hence "the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things." But the righteous are multiplied "after the height of God," when "they shall go from strength to strength."

PSALM 13

Unto The End, A Psalm OF David. 1. "For Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth." "How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me unto the end?" (ver. 1) that is, put me off as to spiritually understanding Christ, who is the Wisdom of God, and the true end of all the aim of the soul. "How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from me?" As God doth not forget, so neither doth He turn His face away: but Scripture speaks after our manner. Now God is said to turn away His face, when He doth not give to the soul, which as yet hath not the pure eye of the mind, the knowledge of Himself. 2. "How long shall I place counsel in my soul?" (ver. 2). There is no need of counsel but in adversity. Therefore "How long shall I place counsel in my soul?" is as if it were said, How long shall I be in adversity? Or at least it is an answer, so that

the meaning is this, So long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me to the end, and so long turn away Thy face from me, until I shall place counsel in mine own soul: so that except a man place counsel in his own soul to work mercy perfectly, God will not direct him to the end, nor give him that full knowledge of Himself, which is "face to face." "Sorrow in my heart through the day?" How long shall I have, is understood. And "through the day" signifies continuance, so that day is taken for time: from which as each one longs to be free, he has sorrow in his heart, making entreaty to rise to things eternal, and not endure man's day.

3. "How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?" either the devil, or carnal habit. 4. "Look on me, and hear me, O Lord my God" (ver. 3). "Look on me," refers to what was said, "How long" dost "Thou turn away Thy face from me." "Hear," refers to what was said, "How long wilt Thou forget me to the end? Lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not in death." The eyes of the heart must be understood, that they be not closed by the pleasurable eclipse of sin. 5. "Lest at any time mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him" (ver. 4). The devil's mockery is to be feared. "They that trouble me will exult, if I be moved;" the devil and his angels; who exulted not over that righteous man, Job, when they troubled him; because he was not moved, that is, did not draw back from the steadfastness of his faith.

6. "But I have hoped in Thy mercy" (ver. 5). Because this very thing, that a man be not moved, and that he abide fixed in the Lord, he should not attribute to self: lest when he glories that he hath not been moved, he be moved by this very pride. "My heart shall exult in Thy salvation;" in Christ, in the Wisdom of God. "I will sing to the Lord who hath given me good things;" spiritual good things, not belonging to man's day. "And I will chant to the name of the Lord most high" (ver. 6); that is, I give thanks with joy, and in most due order employ my body, which is the song of the spiritual soul. But if any distinction is to be marked here, "I will sing" with the heart, "I will chant" with my works; "to the Lord," that which He alone seeth, but "to the name of the Lord," that which is known among men, which is serviceable not for Him, but for us.

PSALM 14

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. What "to the end" means, must not be too often repeated. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" as the Apostle saith. We believe on Him, when

we begin to enter on the good road: we shall see Him, when we shall get to the end. And therefore is He the end. 2. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (ver. 1). For not even have certain sacrilegious and abominable philosophers, who entertain perverse and false notions of God, dared to say, "There is no God." Therefore it is, hath said "in his heart;" for that no one dares to say it, even if he has dared to think it. "They are corrupt, and become abominable in their affections:" that is, whilst they love this world and love not God; these are the affections which corrupt the soul, and so blind it, that the fool can even say, "in his heart, There is no God. For as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." "There is none that doeth goodness, no not up to one." "Up to one," can be understood either with that one, so that no man be understood: or besides one, that the Lord Christ may be excepted. As we say, This field is up to the sea; we do not of course reckon the sea together with the field. And this is the better interpretation, so that none be understood to have done goodness up to Christ; for that no man can do goodness, except He shall have shown it. And that is true; for until a man know the one God, he cannot do goodness.

3. "The Lord from heaven looked out upon the sons of men, to see if there be one understanding, or seeking after God" (ver. 2). It may be interpreted, upon the Jews; as he may have given them the more honourable name of the sons of men, by reason of their worship of the One God, in comparison with the Gentiles; of whom I suppose it was said above, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," etc. Now the Lord looks out, that He may see, by His holy souls: which is the meaning of, "from heaven." For by Himself nothing is hid from Him. 4. "All have gone out of the way, they have together become useless:" that is, the Jews have become as the Gentiles, who were spoken of above. "There is none that doeth good, no not up to one" (ver. 3), must be interpreted as above. "Their throat is an open sepulchre." Either the voracity of the ever open palate is signified: or allegorically those who slay, and as it were devour those they have slain, into whom they instil the disorder of their own conversation. Like to which with the contrary meaning is that which was said to Peter, "Kill and eat;" that he should convert the Gentiles to his own faith and good conversation. "With their tongues they have dealt craftily." Flattery is the companion of the greedy and of all bad men. "The poison of asps is under their lips." By "pois-

on," he means deceit; and "of asps," because they will not hear the precepts of the law, as asps "will not hear the voice of the charmer;" which is said more clearly in another Psalm. "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:" this is, "the poison of asps." "Their feet are Swift to shed blood." He here shows forth the habit of ill doing. "Destruction and unhappiness" are "in their ways." For all the ways of evil men are full of toil and misery. Hence the Lord cries out, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. For My yoke is easy and My burden light." "And the way of peace have they not known:" that way, namely, which the Lord, as I said, mentions, in the easy yoke and light burden. "There is no fear of God before their eyes." These do not say, "There is no God;" but yet they do not fear God.

5. "Shall not all, who work iniquity, know?" (ver. 4). He threatens the judgment. "Who devour My people as the food of bread:" that is, daily. For the food of bread is daily food. Now they devour the people, who serve their own ends out of them, not referring their ministry to the glory of God, and the salvation of those over whom they are. 6. "They have not called upon the Lord." For he doth not really call upon Him, who longs for such things as are displeasing to Him. "There they trembled for fear, where no fear was" (ver. 5): that is, for the loss of things temporal. For they said, "If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him; and the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation." They feared to lose an earthly kingdom, where no fear was; and they lost the kingdom of heaven, which they ought to have feared. And this must be understood of all temporal goods, the loss of which when men fear, they come not to things eternal.

7. "For God is in the just generation." It refers to what went before, so that the sense is, "shall not all they that work iniquity know that the Lord is in the just generation;" that is, He is not in them who love the world. For it is unjust to leave the Maker of the worlds, and "serve the creature more than the Creator." Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, for the Lord is his hope" (ver. 6): that is, ye have despised the humble coming of the Son of God, because ye saw not in Him the pomp of the world: that they, whom he was calling, should put their hope in God alone, not in the things that pass away. 8. "Who will give salvation to Israel out of Sion?" (ver. 7). Who but He whose humiliation ye have despised? is understood. For He will come in glory to the judgment of the quick and the dead, and the kingdom of the just:

that, forasmuch as in that humble coming "blindness hath happened in part unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in," in that other should happen what follows, "and so all Israel should be saved." For the Apostle too takes that testimony of Isaiah, where it is said, "There shall come out of Sion He who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:" for the Jews, as it is here, "Who shall give salvation to Israel out of Sion?" "When the Lord shall turn away the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad." It is a repetition, as is usual: for I suppose, "Israel shall be glad," is the same as, "Jacob shall rejoice."

PSALM 15

A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. Touching this title there is no question. "O Lord who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle?" (ver. 1). Although tabernacle be sometimes used even for an everlasting habitation: yet when tabernacle is taken in its proper meaning, it is a thing of war. Hence soldiers are called tent-fellows, as having their tents together. This sense is assisted by the words, "Who shall sojourn?" For we war with the devil for a time, and then we need a tabernacle wherein we may refresh ourselves. Which specially points out the faith of the temporal Dispensation, which was wrought for us in time through the Incarnation of the Lord. "And who shall rest in Thy holy mountain?" Here perhaps he signifies at once the eternal habitation itself, that we should understand by "mountain" the supereminence of the love of Christ in life eternal. 2. "He who walketh without stain, and worketh righteousness" (ver. 2). Here he has laid down the proposition; in what follows he sets it forth in detail.

3. "Who speaketh the truth in his heart." For some have truth on their lips, and not in their heart. As if one should deceitfully point out a road, knowing that there were robbers there, and should say, If you go this way, you will be safe from robbers; and it should turn out that in fact there were no robbers found there: he has spoken the truth, but not in his heart. For he supposed it to be otherwise, and spoke the truth in ignorance. Therefore it is not enough to speak the truth, unless it be so also in heart. "Who hath practised no deceit in his tongue" (ver. 3). Deceit is practised with the tongue, when one thing is professed with the mouth, another concealed in the breast. "Nor done evil to his neighbour." It is well known that by "neighbour," every man should be understood. "And hath not entertained slander

against his neighbour," that is, hath not readily or rashly given credence to an accuser.

4. "The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight" (ver. 4). This is perfection, that the malicious one have no force against a man; and that this be "in his sight;" that is, that he know most surely that the malicious is not, save when the mind turns itself away from the eternal and immutable form of her own Creator to the form of the creature, which was made out of nothing. "But those that fear the Lord, He glorifieth:" the Lord Himself, that is. Now "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." As then the things above belong to the perfect, so what he is now going to say belongs to beginners. 5. "Who sweareth unto his neighbour, and deceiveth him not." "Who hath not given his money upon usury, and hath not taken rewards against the innocent" (ver. 5). These are no great things: but he who is not able to do even this, much less able is he to speak the truth in his heart, and to practise no deceit in his tongue, but as the truth is in the heart, so to profess and have it in his mouth, "yea, yea; nay, nay;" and to do no evil to his neighbour, that is, to any man; and to entertain no slander against his neighbour: all which are the virtues of the perfect, in whose sight the malicious one hath been brought to nought. Yet he concludes even these lesser things thus, "Whoso doeth these things shall not be moved for ever:" that is, he shall attain unto those greater things, wherein is great and unshaken stability. For even the very tenses are, perhaps not without cause, so varied, as that in the conclusion above the past tense should be used, but in this the future. For there it was said, "The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight:" but here, "shall not be moved for ever."

PSALM 16

The Inscription OF The Title, OF David Himself. 1. Our King in this Psalm speaks in the character of the human nature He assumed, of whom the royal title at the time of His passion was eminently set forth. 2. Now He saith as follows; "Preserve me, O Lord, for in Thee have I hoped" (ver. 1): "I have said to the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou requirest not my goods" (ver. 2): for with my goods Thou dost not look to be made blessed. 3. "To the saints who are on His earth" (ver. 3): to the saints who have placed their hope in the land of the living, the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, whose spiritual conversation is, by the anchor of hope, fixed in that country, which is rightly called God's earth; although as yet in this earth too they be conversant in the flesh.

"He hath wonderfully fulfilled all My wishes in them." To those saints then He hath wonderfully fulfilled all My wishes in their advancement, whereby they have perceived, how both the humanity of My divinity hath profited them that I might die, and the divinity of the humanity that I might rise again.

4. "Their infirmities have been multiplied" (ver. 4): their infirmities have been multiplied not for their destruction, but that they might long for the Physician. "Afterwards they made haste." Accordingly after infirmities multiplied they made haste, that they might be healed. "I will not gather together their assemblies by blood." For their assemblies shall not be carnal, nor will I gather them together as one propitiated by the blood of cattle. "Nor will I be mindful of their names within My lips." But by a spiritual change what they have been shall be forgotten; nor by Me shall they be any more called either sinners, or enemies, or men; but righteous, and My brethren, and sons of God through My peace. 5. "The Lord is the portion of Mine inheritance, and of My cup" (ver. 5). For together with Me they shall possess the inheritance, the Lord Himself. Let others choose for themselves portions, earthly and temporal, to enjoy: the portion of the Saints is the Lord eternal. Let others drink of deadly pleasures, the portion of My cup is the Lord. In that I say, "Mine," I include the Church: for where the Head is, there is the body also. For into the inheritance will I gather together their assemblies, and by the inebriation of the cup I will forget their old names. "Thou art He who will restore to Me My inheritance:" that to these too, whom I free, may be known "the glory wherein I was with Thee before the world was made." For Thou wilt not restore to Me that which I never lost, but Thou wilt restore to these, who have lost it, the knowledge of that glory: in whom because I am, Thou wilt restore to Me.

6. "The lines have fallen to me in glorious places" (ver. 6). The boundaries of my possession have fallen in Thy glory as it were by lot, like as God is the possession of the Priests and Levites. "For Mine inheritance is glorious to Me." "For Mine inheritance is glorious," not to all, but to them that see; in whom because I am, "it is to Me." 7. "I will bless the Lord, who hath given Me understanding" (ver. 7): whereby this inheritance may be seen and possessed. "Yea moreover too even unto night my reins have chastened Me." Yea besides understanding, even unto death, My inferior part, the assumption of flesh, hath instructed Me, that I might experience the darkness of mortality,

which that understanding hath not. 8. "I foresaw the Lord in My sight always" (ver. 8). But coming into things that pass away, I removed not Mine eye from Him who abideth ever, foreseeing this, that to Him I should return after passing through the things temporal. "For He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved." For He favoureth Me, that I should abide fixedly in Him.

9. "Wherefore My heart was glad, and My tongue exulted" (ver. 9). Wherefore both in My thoughts is gladness, and in my words exultation. "Moreover too My flesh shall rest in hope." Moreover too My flesh shall not fail unto destruction, but shall sleep in hope of the resurrection. 10. "For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell" (ver. 10). For Thou wilt neither give My soul for a possession to those parts below. "Neither wilt Thou grant Thine Holy One to see corruption." Neither wilt Thou suffer that sanctified body, whereby others are to be also sanctified, to see corruption. "Thou hast made known to Me the paths of life" (ver. 11). Thou hast made known through Me the paths of humiliation, that men might return to life, from whence they fell through pride; in whom because I am, "Thou hast made known to Me." "Thou wilt fill Me with joy with Thy countenance." Thou wilt fill them with joy, that they should seek nothing further, when they shall see Thee "face to face;" in whom because I am, "Thou wilt fill Me." "Pleasure is at Thy right hand even to the end." Pleasure is in Thy favour and mercy in this life's journey, leading on even to the end of the glory of Thy countenance.

PSALM 17

A Prayer OF David Himself. 1. This prayer must be assigned to the Person of the Lord, with the addition of the Church, which is His body. 2. "Hear My righteousness, O God, consider My supplication" (ver. 1). "Hearken unto My prayer, not in deceitful lips:" not going forth to Thee in deceitful lips. "Let My judgment from Thy countenance go forth" (ver. 2). From the enlightening of the knowledge of Thee, let Me judge truth. Or at least, let My judgment go forth, not in deceitful lips, from Thy countenance, that is, that I may not in judging utter aught else than I understand in Thee. "Let Mine eyes see equity:" the eyes, of course, of the heart. 3. "Thou hast proved and visited Mine heart in the night- season" (ver. 3). For this Mine heart hath been proved by the visitation of tribulation. "Thou hast examined Me by fire, and iniquity hath not been found in Me." Now not night only, in that it is wont

to disturb, but fire also, in that it burns, is this tribulation to be called; whereby when I was examined I was found righteous.

4. "That My mouth may not speak the works of men" (ver. 4). That nothing may proceed out of My mouth, but what relates to Thy glory and praise; not to the works of men, which they do beside Thy will. "Because of the words of Thy lips." Because of the words of Thy peace, or of Thy prophets. "I have kept hard ways." I have kept the toilsome ways of human mortality and suffering. 5. "To perfect My steps in Thy paths" (ver. 5). That the love of the Church might be perfected in the strait ways, whereby she arrives at Thy rest. "That My footsteps be not moved." That the signs of My way, which, like footsteps, have been imprinted on the Sacraments and Apostolical writings, be not moved, that they may mark them who would follow Me. Or at least, that I may still abide fixedly in eternity, after that I have accomplished the hard ways, and have finished My steps in the straits of Thy paths.

6. "I have cried out, for Thou hast heard Me, O God" (ver. 6). With a free and strong effort have I directed My prayers unto Thee: for that I might have this power, Thou hast heard Me when praying more weakly. "Incline Thine ear to Me, and hear My words." Let not Thy hearing forsake My humiliation. 7. "Make Thy mercies marvellous" (ver. 7). Let not Thy mercies be disesteemed, lest they be loved too little. 8. "Who savest them that hope in Thee from such as resist Thy right hand:" from such as resist the favour, whereby Thou favourest Me. "Keep Me, O Lord, as the apple of Thine eye" (ver. 8): which seems very little and minute: yet by it is the sight of the eye directed, whereby the light is distinguished from the darkness; as by Christ's humanity, the divinity of the Judgment distinguishing between the righteous and sinners. "In the covering of Thy wings protect Me." In the defence of Thy love and mercy protect Me. "From the face of the ungodly who have troubled Me" (ver. 9).

9. "Mine enemies have compassed about My soul;" "they have shut up their own fat" (ver. 10). They have been covered with their own gross joy, after that their desire hath been satiated with wickedness. "Their mouth hath spoken pride." And therefore their mouth spoke pride, in saying, "Hail, King of the Jews," and other like words. 10. "Casting Me forth they have now compassed Me about" (ver. 11). Casting Me forth outside the city, they have now compassed Me about on the Cross. "Their eyes they have determined to turn down on the earth." The bent of their heart they have determined to turn

down on these earthly things: deeming Him, who was slain, to endure a mighty evil, and themselves, that slew Him, none. 11. "As a lion ready for prey, have they taken Me" (ver. 12). They have taken Me, like that adversary who "walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." "And as a lion's whelp dwelling in secret places." And as his whelp, the people to whom it was said, "Ye are of your father the devil:" meditating on the snares, whereby they might circumvent and destroy the just One.

12. "Arise, O Lord, prevent them, and cast them down" (ver. 13). Arise, O Lord, Thou whom they suppose to be asleep, and regardless of men's iniquities; be they blinded before by their own malice, that vengeance may prevent their deed; and so cast them down. 13. "Deliver My soul from the ungodly." Deliver My soul, by restoring Me after the death, which the ungodly have inflicted on Me. "Thy weapon: from the enemies of Thine hand" (ver. 14). For My soul is Thy weapon, which Thy hand, that is, Thy eternal Power, hath taken to subdue thereby the kingdoms of iniquity, and divide the righteous from the ungodly. This weapon then "deliver from the enemies of Thine hand," that is of Thy Power that is from Mine enemies. "Destroy them, O Lord, from off the earth, scatter them in their life." O Lord, destroy them from off the earth, which they inhabit, scatter them throughout the world in this life, which only they think their life, who despair of life eternal. "And by Thy hidden things their belly hath been filled." Now not only this visible punishment shall overtake them, but also their memory hath been filled with sins, which as darkness are hidden from the light of Thy truth, that they should forget God. "They have been filled with swine's flesh." They have been filled with uncleanness, treading under foot the pearls of God's words. "And they have left the rest to their babes:" crying out, "This sin be upon us and upon our children."

14. "But I shall appear in Thy righteousness in Thy sight" (ver. 15). But I, Who have not appeared to them that, with their filthy and darkened heart, cannot see the light of wisdom, "I shall appear in Thy righteousness in Thy sight." "I shall be satiated, when Thy glory shall be manifested." And when they have been satiated with their uncleanness, that they could not know Me, I shall be satiated, when Thy glory shall be manifested, in them that know Me. In that verse indeed where it is said, "filled with swine's flesh," some copies have, "filled with children:" for from the ambiguity of the Greek

a double interpretation has resulted. Now by "children" we understand works; and as by good children, good works, so by evil, evil.

PSALM 18

TO The End, For The Servant OF The Lord, David Himself. 1. That is, for the strong of hand, Christ in His Manhood. "The words of this song which he spoke to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies, and of the hand of Saul; and he said, On the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies and of the hand of Saul:" namely, the king of the Jews, whom they had demanded for themselves. For as "David" is said to be by interpretation, strong of hand; so "Saul" is said to be demanding. Now it is well known, how that People demanded for themselves a king, and received him for their king, not according to the will of God, but according to their own will. 2. Christ, then, and the Church, that is, whole Christ, the Head and the Body, saith here, "I will love Thee, O Lord, My strength" (ver. 1). I will love Thee, O Lord, by whom I am strong.

3. "O Lord, My stay, and My refuge, and My deliverer" (ver. 2). O Lord, who hast stayed Me, because I sought refuge with Thee: and I sought refuge, because Thou hast delivered Me. "My God is My helper; and I will hope in Him." My God, who hast first afforded me the help of Thy call, that I might be able to hope in Thee. "My defender, and the horn of My salvation, and My redeemer." My defender, because I have not leant upon Myself, lifting up as it were the horn of pride against Thee; but have found Thee a horn indeed, that is, the sure height of salvation: and that I might find it, Thou redeemedst Me. 4. "With praise will I call upon the Lord, and I shall be safe from Mine enemies" (ver. 3). Seeking not My own but the Lord's glory, I will call upon Him, and there shall be no means whereby the errors of ungodliness can hurt Me.

5. "The pains of death," that is, of the flesh, have "compassed Me about. And the overflowings of ungodliness have troubled Me" (ver. 4). Ungodly troubles stirred up for a time, like torrents of rain which will soon subside, have come on to trouble Me. 6. "The pains of hell compassed Me about" (ver. 5). Among those that compassed Me about to destroy Me, were pains of envy, which work death, and lead on to the hell of sin. "The snares of death prevented Me." They prevented Me, so that they wished to hurt Me first, which shall afterwards be recompensed unto them. Now they seize unto destruction

such men as they have evilly persuaded by the boast of righteousness: in the name but not in the reality of which they glory against the Gentiles. 7. "And in Mine oppression I called upon the Lord, and cried unto My God. And He heard My voice from His holy temple" (ver. 6). He heard from My heart, wherein He dwelleth, My voice. "And My cry in His sight entered into His ears;" and My cry, which I utter, not in the ears of men, but inwardly before Him Himself, "entered into His ears."

8. "And the earth was moved and trembled" (ver. 7). When the Son of Man was thus glorified, sinners were moved and trembled. "And the foundations of the mountains were troubled." And the hopes of the proud, which were in this life, were troubled. "And were moved, for God was wroth with them." That is, that the hope of temporal goods might have now no more establishment in the hearts of men. 9. "There went up smoke in His wrath" (ver. 8). The tearful supplication of penitents went up, when they came to know God's threatenings against the ungodly. "And fire burneth from His face." And the ardour of love after repentance burns by the knowledge of Him. "Coals were kindled from Him." They, who were already dead, abandoned by the fire of good desire and the light of righteousness, and who remained in coldness and darkness, re-enkindled and enlightened, have come to life again.

10. "And He bowed the heaven, and came down" (ver. 9). And He humbled the just One, that He might descend to men's infirmity. "And darkness under His feet." And the ungodly, who savour of things earthly, in the darkness of their own malice, knew not Him: for the earth under His feet is as it were His footstool. 11. "And He mounted above the cherubim, and did fly" (ver. 10). And He was exalted above the fulness of knowledge, that no man should come to Him but by love: for "love is the fulfilling of the law." And full soon He showed to His lovers that He is incomprehensible, lest they should suppose that He is comprehended by corporeal imaginations. "He flew above the wings of the winds." But that swiftness, whereby He showed Himself to be incomprehensible, is above the powers of souls, whereon as upon wings they raise themselves from earthly fears into the air of liberty.

12. "And hath made darkness His hiding place" (ver. 11). And hath settled the obscurity of the Sacraments, and the hidden hope in the heart of believers, where He may lie hid, and not abandon them. In this darkness too, wherein "we yet walk by faith, and not by sight," as long as "we hope for what

we see not, and with patience wait for it." Round about Him is His tabernacle." Yet they that believe Him turn to Him and encircle Him; for that He is in the midst of them, since He is equally the friend of all, in whom as in a tabernacle He at this time dwells. "Dark water in clouds of air." Nor let any one on this account, if he understand the Scripture, imagine that he is already in that light, which will be when we shall have come out of faith into sight: for in the prophets and in all the preachers of the word of God there is obscure teaching.

13. "In respect of the brightness in His sight" (ver. 12): in comparison with the brightness, which is in the sight of His manifestation. "His clouds have passed over." The preachers of His word are not now bounded by the confines of Judaea, but have passed over to the Gentiles. "Hail and coals of fire." Reproofs are figured, whereby, as by hail, the hard hearts are bruised: but if a cultivated and genial soil, that is, a godly mind, receive them, the hail's hardness dissolves into water, that is, the terror of the lightning-charged, and as it were frozen, reproof dissolves into satisfying doctrine; and hearts kindled by the fire of love revive. All these things in His clouds have passed over to the Gentiles. 14. "And the Lord hath thundered from heaven" (ver. 13). And in confidence of the Gospel the Lord hath sounded forth from the heart of the just One. "And the Highest gave His voice;" that we might entertain it, and in the depth of human things, might hear things heavenly.

15. "And He sent out His arrows, and scattered them" (ver. 14). And He sent out Evangelists traversing straight paths on the wings of strength, not in their own power, but His by whom they were sent. And "He scattered them," to whom they were sent, that to some of them they should be "the saviour of life unto life, to others the saviour of death unto death." "And He multiplied lightnings, and troubled them." And He multiplied miracles, and troubled them. 16. "And the fountains of water were seen. And the fountains of water springing up into everlasting life," which were made in the preachers, were seen. "And the foundations of the round world were revealed" (ver. 15). And the Prophets, who were not understood, and upon whom was to be built the world of believers in the Lord, were revealed. "At Thy chiding, O Lord:" crying out, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." "At the blasting of the breath of Thy displeasure;" saying, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

17. "He hath sent down from on high, and hath fetched Me (ver. 16): by calling out of the Gentiles for an inheritance "a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle." "He hath taken Me out of the multitude of waters." He hath taken Me out of the multitude of peoples. 18. "He hath delivered Me from My strongest enemies" (ver. 17). He hath delivered Me from Mine enemies, who prevailed to the afflicting and overturning of this temporal life of Mine. "And from them which hate Me; for they are too strong for Me:" as long as I am under them knowing not God. 19. "They have prevented Me in the day of My affliction" (ver. 18). They have first injured Me, in the time when I am bearing a mortal and toilsome body. "And the Lord hath become My stay." And since the stay of earthly pleasure was disturbed and torn up by the bitterness of misery, the Lord hath become My stay.

20. "And hath brought Me forth into a broad place" (ver. 19). And since I was enduring the straits of the flesh, He brought Me forth into the spiritual breadth of faith. "He hath delivered Me, because He desired Me." Before that I desired Him, He delivered Me from My most powerful enemies (who were envious of Me when I once desired Him), and from them that hated Me, because I do desire Him. 21. "And the Lord shall reward Me according to My righteousness" (ver. 20). And the Lord shall reward Me according to the righteousness of My good will, who first showed mercy, before that I had the good will. "And according to the cleanness of My hands He will recompense Me." And according to the cleanness of My deeds He will recompense Me, who hath given Me to do well by bringing Me forth into the broad place of faith.

22. "Because I have kept the ways of the Lord" (ver. 21). That the breadth of good works, that are by faith, and the long-suffering of perseverance should follow after. 23. "Nor have I walked impiously apart from My God." "For all His judgments are in My sight" (ver. 22). "For" with persevering contemplation I weigh "all His judgments," that is, the rewards of the righteous, and the punishments of the ungodly, and the scourges of such as are to be chastened, and the trials of such as are to be proved. "And I have not cast out His righteousness from Me:" as they do that faint under their burden of them, and return to their own vomit. 24. "And I shall be undefiled with Him, and I shall keep Myself from Mine iniquity" (ver. 23). 25. "And the Lord shall reward Me according to My righteousness (ver. 24). Accordingly not only for the breadth of faith, which worketh by love; but also for the

length of perseverance, will the Lord reward Me according to My righteousness. "And according to the cleanness of My hands in the sight of His eyes." Not as men see, but "in the sight of His eyes." For "the things that are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal:" whereto the height of hope appertains.

26. "With the holy Thou shalt be holy" (ver. 25). There is a hidden depth also, wherein Thou art known to be holy with the holy, for that Thou makest holy. "And with the harmless Thou shalt be harmless." For Thou harmest no man, but each one is bound by the bands of his own sins. 27. "And with the chosen Thou shalt be chosen." (ver. 26). And by him whom Thou choosest, Thou art chosen. "And with the froward Thou shalt be froward." And with the froward Thou seemest froward: for they say, "The way of the Lord is not right:" and their way is not right. 28. "For Thou wilt make whole the humble people" (ver. 27). Now this seems froward to the froward, that Thou wilt make them whole that confess their sins. "And Thou wilt humble the eyes of the proud." But them that are "ignorant of God's righteousness, and seek to establish their own," Thou wilt humble.

29. "For thou wilt light My candle, O Lord" (ver. 28). For our light is not from ourselves; but "Thou wilt light my candle, O Lord. O my God, Thou wilt enlighten my darkness." For we through our sins are darkness; but "Thou, O my God, wilt enlighten my darkness." 30. "For by Thee shall I be delivered from temptation" (ver. 29). For not by myself, but by Thee, shall I be delivered from temptation. "And in my God shall I leap over the wall." And not in myself, but in my God shall I leap over the wall, which sin has raised between men and the heavenly Jerusalem. 31. "My God, His way is undefiled" (ver. 30). My God cometh not unto men, except they shall have purified the way of faith, whereby He may come to them; for that "His way is undefiled." "The words of the Lord have been proved by fire." The words of the Lord are tried by the fire of tribulation. "He is the Protector of them that hope in Him." And all that hope not in themselves, but in Him, are not consumed by that same tribulation. For hope followeth faith.

32. "For who is God, but the Lord?" (ver. 31) whom we serve. "And who God, but our God?" And who is God, but the Lord? whom after good service we sons shall possess as the hoped-for inheritance. 33. "God, who hath girded me with strength" (ver. 32). God, who hath girded me that I might be strong, lest the loosely flowing folds of desire hinder my deeds and steps.

"And hath made my way undefiled." And hath made the way of love, whereby I may come to Him, undefiled, as the way of faith is undefiled, whereby He comes to me. 34. "Who hath made my feet perfect like harts' feet" (ver. 33). Who hath made my love perfect to surmount the thorny and dark entanglements of this world. "And will set me up on high." And will fix my aim on the heavenly habitation, that "I may be filled with all the fulness of God."

35. "Who teacheth my hands for battle" (ver. 34). Who teacheth me to work for the overthrow of mine enemies, who strive to shut the kingdom of heaven against us. "And Thou hast made mine arms as a bow of steel." And Thou hast made my earnest striving after good works unwearied. 36. "And Thou hast given me the defence of my salvation, and Thy right hand hath held me up" (ver. 35). And the favour of Thy grace hath held me up. "And Thy discipline hath directed me to the end." And Thy correction, not suffering me to wander from the way, hath directed me that whatsoever I do, I refer to that end, whereby I may cleave to Thee. "And this Thy discipline, it shall teach me." And that same correction of Thine shall teach me to attain to that, whereunto it hath directed me. 37. "Thou hast enlarged my steps under me" (ver. 36). Nor shall the straits of the flesh hinder me; for Thou hast enlarged my love, working in gladness even with these mortal things and members which are under me. "And my footsteps have not been weakened." And either my goings, or the marks which I have imprinted for the imitation of those that follow, have not been weakened.

38. "I will follow up mine enemies, and seize them" (ver. 37). I will follow up my carnal affections, and will not be seized by them, but will seize them, so that they may be consumed. "And I will not turn, till they fail." And from this purpose I will not turn myself to rest, till they fail who make a tumult about me. 39. "I will break them, and they shall not be able to stand" (ver. 38); and they shall not hold out against me. "They shall fall under my feet." When they are cast down, I will place before me the loves whereby I walk for evermore. 40. "And Thou hast girded me with strength to the war" (ver. 39). And the loose desires of my flesh hast Thou bound up with strength, that in such a fight I may not be encumbered. "Thou hast supplanted under me them that rose up against me." Thou hast caused them to be deceived, who followed upon me, that they should be brought under me, who desired to be over me.

41. "And thou hast given mine enemies the back to me" (ver. 40). And thou hast turned mine enemies, and hast made them to be a back to me, that is, to follow me. "And Thou hast destroyed them that hate me." But such other of them as have persisted in hatred, Thou hast destroyed. 42. "They have cried out, and there was none to save them" (ver. 41). For who can save them, whom Thou wouldest not save? "To the Lord, and He did not hear them." Nor did they cry out to any chance one, but to the Lord: and He did not judge them worthy of being heard, who depart not from their wickedness. 43. "And I will beat them as small as dust before the face of the wind" (ver. 42). And I will beat them small; for dry they are, receiving not the shower of God's mercy; that borne aloft and puffed up with pride they may be hurried along from firm and unshaken hope, and as it were from the earth's solidity and stability. "As the clay of the streets I will destroy them." In their wanton and loose course along the broad ways of perdition, which many walk, will I destroy them.

44. "Thou wilt deliver Me from the contradictions of the people" (ver. 43). Thou wilt deliver Me from the contradictions of them who said, "If we send Him away, all the world will go after Him." 45. "Thou shalt make Me the head of the Gentiles. A people whom I have not known have served Me." The people of the Gentiles, whom in bodily presence I have not visited, have served Me. "At the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me" (ver. 44). They have not seen Me with the eye: but, receiving my preachers, at the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me. 46. "The strange children have lied unto Me." Children, not to be called Mine, but rather strange children, to whom it is rightly said, "Ye are of your father the devil," have lied unto Me. "The strange children have waxen old" (ver. 45). The strange children, to whom for their renovation I brought the new Testament, have remained in the old man. "And they have halted from their own paths." And like those that are weak in one foot, for holding the old they have rejected the new Testament, they have become halt, even in their old Law, rather following their own traditions, than God's. For they brought frivolous charges of unwashed hands, because such were the paths, which themselves had made and worn by long use, in wandering from the ways of God's commands.

47. "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my God." "But to be carnally minded is death:" for "the Lord liveth, and blessed be my God. And let the God of my salvation be exalted" (ver. 46). And let me not think after an earthly fashion

of the God of my salvation; nor look from Him for this earthly salvation, but that on high. 48. "O God, who givest Me vengeance, and subduest the people under Me" (ver. 47). O God, who avengest Me by subduing the people under Me. "My Deliverer from My angry enemies:" the Jews crying out, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him." 49. "From them that rise up against Me Thou wilt exalt Me" (ver. 48). From the Jews that rise up against Me in My passion, Thou wilt exalt Me in My resurrection. "From the unjust man Thou wilt deliver Me." "From their unjust rule Thou wilt deliver Me.

50. "For this cause will I confess to Thee among the Gentiles, O Lord" (ver. 49). For this cause shall the Gentiles confess to Thee through Me, O Lord. "And I will sing unto Thy Name." And Thou shall be more widely known by My good deeds. 51. "Magnifying the salvation of His King" (ver. 50). God, who magnifieth, so as to make wonderful, the salvation, which His Son giveth to believers. "And showing mercy to His Christ:" God, who showeth mercy to His Christ: "To David and to His seed for evermore:" to the Deliverer Himself strong of hand, who hath overcome this world; and to them whom, as believers in the Gospel, He hath begotten for evermore. What things soever are spoken in this Psalm which cannot apply to the Lord Himself personally, that is to the Head of the Church, must be referred to the Church. For whole Christ speaks here, in whom are all His members.

PSALM 19

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. It is a well-known title; nor does the Lord Jesus Christ say what follows, but it is said of Him. 2. "The heavens tell out the glory of God" (ver. 1). The righteous Evangelists, in whom, as in the heavens, God dwelleth, set forth the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, or the glory wherewith the Son glorified the Father upon earth. "And the firmament showeth forth the works of His hands." And the firmament showeth forth the deeds of the Lord's power, that now made heaven by the assurance of the Holy Ghost, which before was earth by fear. 3. "Day unto day uttereth word" (ver. 2). To the spiritual the Spirit giveth out the fulness of the unchangeable Wisdom of God, the Word which in the beginning is God with God. "And night unto night announceth knowledge." And to the fleshly, as to those afar off, the mortality of the flesh, by conveying faith, announceth future knowledge.

4. "There is no speech nor language, in which their voices are not heard" (ver. 3). In which the voices of the Evangelists have not been heard,

seeing that the Gospel was preached in every tongue. 5. "Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world" (ver. 4). 6. "In the sun hath He set His tabernacle." Now that He might war against the powers of temporal error, the Lord, being about to send not peace but a sword on earth, in time, or in manifestation, set so to say His military dwelling, that is, the dispensation of His incarnation. "And He as a bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber" (ver. 5). And He, coming forth out of the Virgin's womb, where God was united to man's nature as a bridegroom to a bride. "Rejoiced as a giant to run His way." Rejoiced as One exceeding strong, and surpassing all other men in power incomparable, not to inhabit, but to run His way. For, "He stood not in the way of sinners."

7. "His going forth is from the highest heaven" (ver. 6). From the Father is His going forth, not that in time, but from everlasting, whereby He was born of the Father. "And His meeting is even to the height of heaven." And in the fulness of the Godhead He meets even to an equality with the Father. "And there is none that may hide himself from His heat." But whereas, "the Word was even made flesh, and dwelt in us," assuming our mortality, He permitted no man to excuse himself from the shadow of death; for the heat of the Word penetrated even it. 8. "The law of the Lord is undefiled, converting souls" (ver. 7). The law of the Lord, therefore, is Himself who came to fulfil the law, not to destroy it; an undefiled law, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth," not oppressing souls with the yoke of bondage, but converting them to imitate Him in liberty. "The testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom to babes." "The testimony of the Lord is sure;" for, "no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him," which things have been hidden from the wise and revealed to babes; for, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."

9. "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart" (ver. 8). All the statutes of the Lord are right in Him who taught not what He did not; that they who should imitate Him might rejoice in heart, in those things which they should do freely with love, not slavishly with fear. "The commandment of the Lord is lucid, enlightening the eyes." "The commandment of the Lord is lucid," with no veil of carnal observances, enlightening the sight of the inner man. 10. "The fear of the Lord is chaste, enduring for ever" (ver. 9). "The fear of the Lord;" not that distressing fear under the law, dreading exceedingly the withdrawal of temporal goods, by the love of which the soul com-

mits fornication; but that chaste fear wherewith the Church, the more ardently she loves her Spouse, the more carefully does she take heed of offending Him, and therefore, "perfect love casteth" not "out" this "fear," but it endureth for ever.

11. "The judgments of the Lord are true, justified together." The judgments of Him, who "judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son," are justified in truth unchangeably. For neither in His threatenings nor His promises doth God deceive any man, nor can any withdraw either from the ungodly His punishment, or from the godly His reward. "To be desired more than gold, and much precious stone" (ver. 10). Whether it be "gold and stone itself much," or "much precious," or "much to be desired," still, the judgments of God are to be desired more than the pomp of this world; by desire of which it is brought to pass that the judgments of God are not desired, but feared, or despised, or not believed. But if any be himself gold and precious stone, that he may not be consumed by fire, but received into the treasury of God, more than himself does he desire the judgments of God, whose will he preferreth to his own. "And sweeter than honey and the honey comb." And whether one be even now honey, who, disenthralled already from the chains of this life, is awaiting the day when he may come up to God's feast; or whether he be yet as the honey comb, wrapped about with this life as it were with wax, not mixed and become one with it, but filling it, needing some pressure of God's hand, not oppressing but expressing it, whereby from life temporal it may be strained out into life eternal: to such an one the judgments of God are sweeter than he himself is to himself, for that they are "sweeter than honey and the honey comb."

12. "For Thy servant keepeth them" (ver. 11). For to him who keepeth them not the day of the Lord is bitter. "In keeping them there is great reward." Not in any external benefit, but in the thing itself, that God's judgments are kept, is there great reward; great because one rejoiceth therein. 13. "Who understandeth sins?" (ver. 12) But what sort of sweetness can there be in sins, where there is no understanding? For who can understand sins, which close the very eye, to which truth is pleasant, to which the judgments of God are desirable and sweet? yea, as darkness closes the eye, so do sins the mind, and suffer it not to see either the light, or itself. 14. "Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret faults." From the lusts which lie hid in me, cleanse me, O Lord. "And from the" faults "of others preserve Thy servant" (ver. 13). Let me

not be led astray by others. For he is not a prey to the faults of others, who is cleansed from his own. Preserve therefore from the lusts of others, not the proud man, and him who would be his own master, but, Thy servant. "If they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled." If neither my own secret sins, nor those of others, get the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. For there is no third source of sin, but one's own secret sin, by which the devil fell, and another's sin, by which man is seduced, so as by consenting to make it his own. "And I shall be cleansed from the great offence." What but pride? for there is none greater than apostasy from God, which is "the beginning of the pride of man." And he shall indeed be undefiled, who is free from this offence also; for this is the last to them who are returning to God, which was the first as they departed from Him.

15. "And the words of my mouth shall be pleasing, and the meditation of my heart is always in Thy sight" (ver. 14). The meditation of my heart is not after the vain glory of pleasing men, for now there is pride no more, but in Thy sight alway, who regardest a pure conscience "O Lord, my Helper, and my Redeemer" (ver. 15). O Lord, my Helper, in my approach to Thee; for Thou art my Redeemer, that I might set out unto Thee: lest any attributing to his own wisdom his conversion to Thee, or to his own strength his attaining to Thee, should be rather driven back by Thee, who resistest the proud; for he is not cleansed from the great offence, nor pleasing in Thy sight, who redeemest us that we may be converted, and helpest us that we may attain unto Thee.

PSALM 20

TO The End, A Psalm OF David. 1. This is a well-known title; and it is not Christ who speaks; but the prophet speaks to Christ, under the form of wishing, foretelling things to come. 2. "The Lord hear Thee in the day of trouble" (ver. 1). The Lord hear Thee in the day in which Thou saidst, "Father glorify Thy Son." "The name of the God of Jacob protect Thee." For to Thee belongeth the younger people. Since "the elder shall serve the younger." 3. "Send Thee help from the Holy, and from Sion defend Thee" (ver. 2). Making for Thee a sanctified Body, the Church, from watching safe, which waiteth when Thou shalt come from the wedding. 4. "Be mindful of all Thy sacrifice" (ver. 3). Make us mindful of all Thy injuries and spiteful treatment, which Thou hast borne for us. "And be Thy whole burnt offering

made fat." And turn the cross, whereon Thou wast wholly offered up to God, into the joy of the resurrection.

5. "Diapsalma." The Lord render to Thee according to Thine Heart" (ver. 4). The Lord render to Thee, not according to their heart, who thought by persecution they could destroy Thee; but according to Thine Heart, wherein Thou knewest what profit Thy passion would have. "And fulfil all Thy counsel." "And fulfil all Thy counsel," not only that whereby Thou didst lay down Thy life for Thy friends, that the corrupted grain might rise again to more abundance; but that also whereby "blindness in part hath happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and so an Israel might be saved." 6. "We will exult in Thy salvation" (ver. 5). We will exult in that death will in no wise hurt Thee; for so Thou wilt also show that it cannot hurt us either. "And in the name of the Lord our God will we be magnified." And the confession of Thy name shall not only not destroy us, but shall even magnify us.

7. "The Lord fulfil all Thy petitions." The Lord fulfil not only the petitions which Thou madest on earth, but those also whereby Thou intercedest for us in heaven. "Now have I known that the Lord hath saved his Christ" (ver. 6). Now hath it been shown to me in prophecy, that the Lord will raise up His Christ again. "He will hear Him from His holy heaven." He will hear Him not from earth only, where He prayed to be glorified; but from heaven also, where interceding for us at the Right Hand of the Father, He hath from thence shed abroad the Holy Spirit on them that believe on Him. "In strength is the safety of His right hand." Our strength is in the safety of His favour, when even out of tribulation He giveth help, that "when we are weak, then we may be strong." "For vain is "that "safety of man," which comes not of His right hand but of His left: for thereby are they lifted up to great pride, whosoever in their sins have secured a temporal safety.

8. "Some in chariots, and some in horses" (ver. 7). Some are drawn away by the ever moving succession of temporal goods; and some are preferred to proud honours, and in them exult: "But we will exult in the name of the Lord our God." But we, fixing our hope on things eternal, and not seeking our own glory, will exult in the name of the Lord our God. 9. "They have been bound, and fallen" (ver. 8). And therefore were they bound by the lust of temporal things, fearing to spare the Lord, lest they should lose their place by "the Romans:" and rushing violently on the stone of offence and rock of

stumbling, they fell from the heavenly hope: to whom the blindness in part of Israel hath happened, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish their own. "But we are risen, and stand upright." But we, that the Gentile people might enter in, out of the stones raised up as children to Abraham, who followed not after righteousness, have attained to it, and are risen; and not by our own strength, but being justified by faith, we stand upright.

10. "O Lord, save the King:" that He, who in His Passion hath shown us an example of conflict, should also offer up our sacrifices, the Priest raised from the dead, and established in heaven. "And hear us in the day when we shall call on Thee" (ver. 9). And as He now offereth for us, "hear us in the day when we shall call on Thee."

PSALM 21

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. The title is a familiar one; the Psalm is of Christ. 2. "O Lord, the King shall rejoice in Thy strength" (ver. 1). O Lord, in Thy strength, whereby the Word was made flesh, the Man Christ Jesus shall rejoice. "And shall exult exceedingly in Thy salvation." And in that, whereby Thou quickenest all things, shall exult exceedingly. 3. "Thou hast given Him the desire of His soul" (ver. 2). He desired to eat the Passover, and to lay down His life when He would, and again when He would to take it; and Thou hast given it to Him. "And hast not deprived Him of the good pleasure of His lips." "My peace," saith He, "I leave with you:" and it was done. 4. "For Thou hast presented Him with the blessings of sweetness" (ver. 3). Because He had first quaffed the blessing of Thy sweetness, the gall of our sins did not hurt Him. "Diapsalma. Thou hast set a crown of precious stone on His Head." At the beginning of His discoursing precious stones were brought, and compassed Him about; His disciples, from whom the commencement of His preaching should be made.

5. "He asked life; and Thou gavest Him:" He asked a resurrection, saying, "Father, glorify Thy Son;" and Thou gavest it Him, "Length of days for ever and ever" (ver. 4). The prolonged ages of this world which the Church was to have, and after them an eternity, world without end. 6. "His glory is great in Thy salvation" (ver. 5). Great indeed is His glory in the salvation, whereby Thou hast raised Him up again. "Glory and great honour shalt Thou lay upon Him." But Thou shalt yet add unto Him glory and great honour, when Thou shalt place Him in heaven at Thy right hand. 7. "For Thou shalt give

Him blessing for ever and ever." This is the blessing which Thou shalt give Him for ever and ever: "Thou shall make Him glad in joy together with Thy countenance" (ver. 6). According to His manhood, Thou shall make Him glad together with Thy countenance, which He lifted up to Thee.

8. "For the King hopeth in the Lord." For the King is not proud, but humble in heart, he hopeth in the Lord. "And in the mercy of the Most Highest He shall not be moved" (ver. 7). And in the mercy of the Most Highest His obedience even unto the death of the Cross shall not disturb His humility. 9. "Let Thy hand be found by all Thine enemies." Be Thy power, O King, when Thou comest to judgment, found by all Thine enemies; who in Thy humiliation discerned it not. "Let Thy right hand find out all that hate Thee" (ver. 8). Let the glory, wherein Thou reignest at the right hand of the Father, find out for punishment in the day of judgment all that hate Thee ; for that now they have not found it. 10. "Thou shalt make them like a fiery oven:" Thou shalt make them on fire within, by the consciousness of their ungodliness: "In the time of Thy countenance:" in the time of Thy manifestation. "The Lord shall trouble them in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them" (ver. 9). And then, being troubled by the vengeance of the Lord, after the accusation of their conscience, they shall be given up to eternal fire, to be devoured.

11. "Their fruit shalt Thou destroy out of the earth." Their fruit, because it is earthly, shalt Thou destroy out of the earth. "And their seed from the sons of men" (ver. 10). And their works; or, whomsoever they have seduced, Thou shalt not reckon among the sons of men, whom Thou hast called into the everlasting inheritance. 12. "Because they turned evils against Thee." Now this punishment shall be recompensed to them, because the evils which they supposed to hang over them by Thy reign, they turned against Thee to Thy death. "They imagined a device, which they were not able to establish" (ver. 11). They imagined a device, saying, "It is expedient that one die for all:" which they were not able to establish, not knowing what they said. 13. "For Thou shalt set them low." For Thou shalt rank them among those from whom in degradation and contempt Thou wilt turn away. "In Thy leavings Thou shalt make ready their countenance" (ver. 12). And in these things that Thou leavest, that is, in the desires of an earthly kingdom, Thou shalt make ready their shamelessness for Thy passion.

14. "Be Thou exalted, O Lord, in Thy strength" (ver. 13). Be Thou, Lord, whom in humiliation they did not discern, exalted in Thy strength, which they thought weakness. "We will sing and praise Thy power." In heart and in deed we will celebrate and make known Thy marvels.

PSALM 22

TO The End, For The Taking UP OF The Morning, A Psalm OF David. 1. "To the end," for His own resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself speaketh. For in the morning on the first day of the week was His resurrection, whereby He was taken up, into eternal life, "Over whom death shall have no more dominion." Now what follows is spoken in the person of The Crucified. For from the head of this Psalm are the words, which He cried out, whilst hanging on the Cross, sustaining also the person of the old man, whose mortality He bare. For our old man was nailed together with Him to the Cross. 2. "O God, my God, look upon me, why hast Thou forsaken me far from my salvation?" (ver. 1). Far removed from my salvation: for "salvation is far from sinners." "The words of my sins." For these are not the words of righteousness, but of my sins. For it is the old man nailed to the Cross that speaks, ignorant even of the reason why God hath forsaken him: or else it may be thus, The words of my sins are far from my salvation.

3. "My God, I will cry unto Thee in the daytime, and Thou wilt not hear (ver. 2). My God, I will cry unto Thee in the prosperous circumstances of this life, that they be not changed; and Thou wilt not hear, because I shall cry unto Thee in the words of my sins. "And in the night-season, and not to my folly." And so in the adversities of this life will I cry to Thee for prosperity; and in like manner Thou wilt not hear. And this Thou doest not to my folly, but rather that I may have wisdom to know what Thou wouldest have me cry for, not with the words of sins out of longing for life temporal, but with the words of turning to Thee for life eternal. 4. "But Thou dwellest in the holy place, O Thou praise of Israel" (ver. 3). But Thou dwellest in the holy place, and therefore wilt not hear the unclean words of sins. The "praise" of him that seeth Thee; not of him who hath sought his own praise in tasting of the forbidden fruit, that on the opening of his bodily eyes he should endeavour to hide himself from Thy sight.

5. "Our Fathers hoped in Thee." All the righteous, namely, who sought not their own praise, but Thine. "They hoped in Thee, and Thou deliveredst them" (ver. 4). 6. "They cried unto Thee, and were saved." They cried unto

Thee, not in the words of sins, from which salvation is far; and therefore were they saved. "They hoped in Thee, and were not confounded" (ver. 5). "They hoped in Thee," and their hope did not deceive them. For they placed it not in themselves. 7. "But I am a worm, and no man" (ver. 6). But I, speaking now not in the person of Adam, but I in My own person, Jesus Christ, was born without human generation in the flesh, that I might be as man beyond men; that so at least human pride might deign to imitate My humility. "The scorn of men, and outcast of the people." In which humility I was made the scorn of men, so as that it should be said, as a reproachful railing, "Be thou His disciple: " and that the people despise Me.

8. "All that saw Me laughed Me to scorn" (ver. 7). All that saw Me derided Me. "And spake with the lips, and shook the head." And they spoke, not with the heart, but with the lips. 9. For they shook their head in derision, saying, "He trusted in the Lord let Him deliver Him: " let Him save Him, since He desireth Him" (ver. 8). These were their words; but they were spoken "with the lips." 10. "Since Thou art He who drew Me out of the womb" (ver. 9). Since Thou art He who drew Me, not only out of that Virgin womb (for this is the law of all men's birth, that they be drawn out of the womb), but also out of the womb of the Jewish nation; by the darkness whereof he is covered, and not yet born into the light of Christ, whosoever places his salvation in the carnal observance of the Sabbath, and of circumcision, and the like. "My hope from My mother's breasts." "My hope," O God, not from the time when I began to be fed by the milk of the Virgin's breasts; for it was even before; but from the breasts of the Synagogue, as I have said, out of the womb, Thou hast drawn Me, that I should not suck in the customs of the flesh.

11. "I have been strengthened in Thee from the womb" (ver. 10). It is the womb of the Synagogue, which did not carry Me, but threw Me out: but I fell not, for Thou heldest me. "From My mother's womb Thou art My God." "From My mother's womb: My mother's womb did not cause that, as a babe, I should be forgetful of Thee. 12. "Thou art My God," "depart not from Me; for trouble is hard at hand" (ver. 11). Thou art, therefore, My God, depart not from Me; for trouble is nigh unto Me; for it is in My body. "For there is none to help." For who helpeth, if Thou helpest not? 13. "Many calves came about Me." The multitude of the wanton populace came about Me. "Fat bulls closed Me in" (ver. 12). And their leaders, glad at My oppression, "closed Me in." 14. "They opened their mouth upon Me" (ver. 13). They opened their mouth

upon Me, not out of Thy Scripture, but of their own lusts. "As a ravening and roaring lion." As a lion, whose ravening is, that I was taken and led; and whose roaring, "Crucify, Crucify."

15. "I was poured out like water, and all My bones were scattered" (ver. 14). "I was poured out like water," when My persecutors fell: and through fear, the stays of My body, that is, the Church, My disciples were scattered from Me. "My heart became as melting wax, in the midst of my belly." My wisdom, which was written of Me in the sacred books, was, as if hard and shut up, not understood: but after that the fire of My Passion was applied, it was, as if melted, manifested, and entertained in the memory of My Church. 16. "My strength dried up as a potsherd" (ver. 15). My strength dried up by My Passion; not as hay, but a potsherd, which is made stronger by fire. "And My tongue cleaved to My jaws." And they, through whom I was soon to speak, kept My precepts in their hearts. "And Thou broughtest Me down to the dust of death." And to the ungodly appointed to death, whom the wind casteth forth as dust from the face of the earth, Thou broughtest Me down.

17. "For many dogs came about Me" (ver. 16). For many came about Me barking, not for truth, but for custom. "The council of the malignant came about Me." The council of the malignant besieged Me. "They pierced My hands and feet." They pierced with nails My hands and feet. 18. "They numbered distinctly all My bones" (ver. 17). They numbered distinctly all My bones, while extended on the wood of the Cross. "Yea, these same regarded, and beheld Me." Yea, these same, that is, unchanged, regarded and beheld Me. 19. "They divided My garments for themselves, and cast the lot upon My vesture" (ver. 18). 20. "But Thou, O Lord, withhold not Thy help far from Me" (ver. 19). But Thou, O Lord, raise Me up again, not as the rest of men, at the end of the world, but immediately. "Look to My defence." "Look," that they in no wise hurt Me.

21. "Deliver My soul from the sword." "Deliver My soul" from the tongue of dissension. "And My only One from the hand of the dog" (ver. 20). And from the power of the people, barking after their custom, deliver My Church. 22. "Save Me from the lion's mouth:" save Me from the mouth of the kingdom of this world: "and my humility from the horns of the unicorns" (ver. 21). And from the loftiness of the proud, exalting themselves to special pre-eminence, and enduring no partakers, save My humility. 23. "I will declare Thy name to My brethren" (ver. 22). I will declare Thy name to

the humble, and to My Brethren that love one another as they have been beloved by Me. "In the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee." In the midst of the Church will I with rejoicing preach Thee. 24. "Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him." "Ye that fear the Lord," seek not your own praise, but "praise Him." "All ye seed of Jacob, magnify Him" (ver. 23). All ye seed of him whom the elder shall serve, magnify Him.

25. "Let all the seed of Israel fear Him." Let all who have been born to a new life, and restored to the vision of God "fear Him." "Since He hath not despised, nor disregarded the prayer of the poor man" (ver. 24). Since He hath not despised the prayer, not of him who, crying unto God in the words of sins was loath to overpass a vain life, but the prayer of the poor man, not swollen up with transitory pomps. "Nor hath He turned away His face from Me." As from him who said, I will cry unto Thee, but Thou wilt not hear. "And when I cried unto Him He heard Me." 26. "With Thee is My praise" (ver. 25). For I seek not Mine own praise, for Thou art My praise, who dwellest in the holy place; and, praise of Israel, Thou hearest The Holy One now beseeching Thee. "In the great Church I will confess Thee." In the Church of the whole world" I will confess Thee." "I will offer My vows in the sight of them that fear Him." I will offer the sacraments of My Body and Blood in the sight of them that fear Him.

27. "The poor shall eat, and be filled" (ver. 26). The humble and the despisers of the world shall eat, and imitate Me. For so they will neither desire this world's abundance, nor fear its want. "And they shall praise the Lord, who seek Him." For the praise of the Lord is the pouring out of that fulness. "Their hearts shall live for ever and ever." For that food is the food of the heart. 28. "All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord" (ver. 27). They shall remember themselves: for, by the Gentiles, born in death and bent on outward things, God had been forgotten; and then shall all the borders of the earth be turned to the Lord. "And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight." And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in their own consciences.

29. "For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations" (ver. 28). For the kingdom is the Lord's, not proud men's: and He shall rule over the nations. 30. "All the rich of the earth have eaten, and worshipped" (ver. 29). The rich of the earth too have eaten the Body of their Lord's humiliation, and though they have not, as the poor, been filled even

to imitation, yet they have worshipped. "In His sight shall fall all that descend to earth." For He alone seeth how all they fall, who abandoning a heavenly conversation, make choice, on earth, to appear happy to men, who see not their fall. 31. "And My Soul shall live to Him." And My Soul, which in the contempt of this world seems to men as it were to die, shall live, not to itself, but to Him. "And My seed shall serve Him" (ver. 30). And My deeds, or they who through Me believe on Him, shall serve Him.

32. "The generation to come shall be declared to the Lord" (ver. 31). The generation of the New Testament shall be declared to the honour of the Lord. "And the heavens shall declare His righteousness." And the Evangelists shall declare His righteousness. "To a people that shall be born, whom the Lord hath made." To a people that shall be born to the Lord through faith.

PSALM 23

1 A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. The Church speaks to Christ: "The Lord feedeth me, and I shall lack nothing" (ver. 1). The Lord Jesus Christ is my Shepherd, "and I shall lack nothing." 2. "In a place of pasture there hath He placed me" (ver. 2). In a place of fresh pasture, leading me to faith, there hath He placed me to be nourished. "By the water of refreshing hath He brought me up." By the water of baptism, whereby they are refreshed who have lost health and strength, hath He brought me up. 3. "He hath converted my soul: He hath led me forth in the paths of righteousness, for His Name's sake" (ver. 3). He hath brought me forth in the narrow ways, wherein few walk, of His righteousness; not for my merit's sake, but for His Name's sake. 4. "Yea, though I walk in the midst of the shadow of death" (ver. 4). Yea, though I walk in the midst of this life, which is the shadow of death. "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." I will fear no evil, for Thou dwellest in my heart by faith: and Thou art now with me, that after the shadow of death I too may be with Thee. "Thy rod and Thy staff, they have comforted me." Thy discipline, like a rod for a flock of sheep, and like a staff for children of some size, and growing out of the natural into spiritual life, they have not been grievous to me; rather have they comforted me: because Thou art mindful of me.

25. "Thou hast prepared a table in my sight, against them that trouble me" (ver. 5). Now after the rod, whereby, whilst a little one, and living the natural life, I was brought up among the flock in the pastures; after that rod, I say, when I began to be under the staff, Thou hast prepared a table in my

sight, that I should no more be fed as a babe with milk, but being older should take meat, strengthened against them that trouble me. "Thou hast fattened my head with oil." Thou hast gladdened my mind with spiritual joy. "And Thy inebriating cup, how excellent is it!" And Thy cup yielding forgetfulness of former vain delights, how excellent is it! 6. "And Thy mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:" that is, as long as I live in this mortal life, not Thine, but mine. "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord for length of days" (ver. 6). Now Thy mercy shall follow me not here only, but also that I may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

PSALM 24

A Psalm OF David Himself, ON The First Day OF The Week. 1. A Psalm of David himself, touching the glorifying and resurrection of the Lord, which took place catty in the morning on the first day of the week, which is now called the Lord's Day. 2. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the compass of the world, and all they that dwell therein" (ver. 1); when the Lord, being glorified, is announced for the believing of all nations; and the whole compass of the world becomes His Church. "He hath founded it above the seas." He hath most firmly established it above all the waves of this world, that they should be subdued by it, and should not hurt it. "And hath prepared it above the rivers" (ver. 2). The rivers flow into the sea, and men of lust lapse into the world: these also the Church, which, when worldly lusts have been conquered by the grace of God, hath been prepared by love for the reception of immortality, subdues.

3. "Who shall ascend into the mount of the Lord?" Who shall ascend to the height of the righteousness of the Lord? "Or who shall stand in His holy place?" (ver. 3). Or who shall abide in that place, whither He shall ascend, founded above the seas, and prepared above the rivers? 4. "The innocent of hand, and the pure in heart" (ver. 4). Who then shall ascend thither, and abide there, but the guiltless in deed, and pure in thought? "Who hath not received his soul in vain." Who hath not reckoned his soul among things that pass away, but feeling it to be immortal, hath longed for an eternity stedfast and unchangeable. "And hath not sworn in deceit to his neighbour." And therefore without deceit, as things eternal are simple and undeceiving, hath so behaved himself to his neighbour. 5. "This man shall receive blessing from the Lord, and mercy from the God of his salvation" (ver. 5).

6. "This is the generation of them that seek the Lord" (ver. 6). For thus are they born that seek Him. "Of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob. Diapsalma." Now they seek the face of God, who gave the pre-eminence to the younger born. 7. "Take away your gates, ye princes" (ver. 7). All ye, that seek rule among men, remove, that they hinder not, the entrances which ye have made, of desire and fear. "And be ye lift up, ye everlasting gates." And be ye lift up, ye entrances of eternal life, of renunciation of the world, and conversion to God. "And the King of glory shall come in." And the King, in whom we may glory without pride, shall come in: who having overcome the gates of death, and having opened for Himself the heavenly places, fulfilled that which He said, "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world."

8. "Who is this King of glory?" Mortal nature is awe-struck in wonder, and asks, "Who is this King of glory?" "The Lord strong and mighty." He whom thou didst deem weak and overwhelmed. "The Lord mighty in battle" (ver. 8). Handle the scars, and thou wilt find them made whole, and human weakness restored to immortality. The glorifying of the Lord, which was owing to earth, where It warred with death, hath been paid. 9. "Take away your gates, ye princes." Let us go hence straightway into heaven. Again, let the Prophet's trumpet cry aloud, "Take away too, ye princes of the air, the gates, which ye have in the minds of men who `worship the host of heaven.'" "And be ye lift up, ye everlasting gates." And be ye lift up, ye doors of everlasting righteousness, of love, and chastity, through which the soul loveth the One True God, and goeth not a-whoring with the many that are called gods. "And the King of glory shall come in" (ver. 9). "And the King of glory shall come in," that He may at the right hand of the Father intercede for us.

10. "Who is this King of glory?" What! dost thou too, prince of the power of this air, marvel and ask, "Who is this King of glory?" "The Lord of powers, He is the King of glory" (ver. 10). Yea, His Body now quickened, He who was tempted marches above thee; He who was tempted by the angel, the deceiver, goes above all angels. Let none of you put himself before us and stop our way, that he may be worshipped as a god by us: neither principality, nor angel, nor power, separateth us from the love of Christ. It is good to trust in the Lord, rather than to trust in a prince; that he who glorieth, should glory in the Lord. These indeed are powers in the administration of this world, but "the Lord of powers, He is the King of glory."

PSALM 25

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself. 1. Christ speaks, but in the person of the Church: for what is said has reference rather to the Christian People turned unto God. 2. "Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up my soul" (ver. 1): with spiritual longing have I lift up the soul, that was trodden down on the earth with carnal longings. "O my God, in Thee I trust, I shall not be ashamed" (ver. 2). O my God, from trusting in myself I was brought even to this weakness of the flesh; and I who on abandoning God wished to be as God, fearing death from the smallest insect, was in derision ashamed for my pride; now, therefore, "in Thee I trust, I shall not be ashamed." 3. "And let not my enemies mock me." And let them not mock me, who by ensnaring me with serpent-like and secret suggestions, and prompting me with "Well done, well done," have brought me down to this. "For all that wait upon Thee shall not be confounded" (ver. 3).

4. "Let them be confounded who do vain things unrighteously." Let them be confounded who act unrighteously for the acquiring things that pass away. "Make Thy ways, O Lord, known to me, and teach me Thy paths" (ver. 4): not those which are broad, and lead the many to destruction; but Thy paths, narrow, and known to few, teach Thou me. 5. "In Thy truth guide me:" avoiding error. "And teach me:" for by myself I know nothing, but falsehood. "For Thou art the God of my salvation; and for Thee have I waited all the day" (ver. 5). For dismissed by Thee from Paradise, and having taken my journey into a far country? I cannot by myself return, unless Thou meetest the wanderer: for my return hath throughout the whole tract of this world's time waited for Thy mercy. 6. "Remember Thy compassions, O Lord" (ver. 6). Remember the works of Thy mercy, O Lord; for men deem of Thee as though Thou hadst forgotten. "And that Thy mercies are from eternity." And remember this, that Thy mercies are from eternity. For Thou never wast without them, who hast subjected even sinful man to vanity indeed, but in hope; and not deprived him of so many and great consolations of Thy creation.

7. "Remember not the offences of my youth and of my ignorance" (ver. 7). The offences of my presumptuous boldness and of my ignorance reserve not for vengeance, but let them be as if forgotten by Thee. "According to Thy mercy, be mindful of me, O God." Be mindful indeed of me, not according to the anger of which I am worthy, but according to Thy mercy which is

worthy of Thee. "For Thy goodness, O Lord." Not for my deservings, but for Thy goodness, O Lord. 8. "Gracious and upright is the Lord" (ver. 8). The Lord is gracious, since even sinners and the ungodly He so pitied, as to forgive all that is past; but the Lord is upright too, who after the mercy of vocation and pardon, which is of grace without merit, will require merits meet for the last judgment. "Wherefore He will establish a law for them that fail in the way." For He hath first bestowed mercy to bring them into the way.

9. "He will guide the meek in judgment." He will guide the meek, and will not confound in the judgment those that follow His will, and do not, in withstanding It, prefer their own. "The gentle He will teach His ways" (ver. 9). He will teach His ways, not to those that desire to run before, as if they were better able to rule themselves; but to those who do not exalt the neck, nor lift the heel, when the easy yoke and the light burden is laid upon them. 10. "All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth" (ver. 10). And what ways will He teach them, but mercy wherein He is placable, and truth wherein He is incorrupt? Whereof He hath exhibited the one in forgiving sins, the other in judging deserts. And therefore "all the ways of the Lord" are the two advents of the Son of God, the one in mercy, the other in judgment. He then attaineth unto Him holding on His ways, who seeing himself freed by no deserts of his own, lays pride aside, and henceforward bewares of the severity of His trial, having experienced the clemency of His help. "To them that seek His testament and His testimonies." For they understand the Lord as merciful at His first advent, and as the Judge at His second, who in meekness and gentleness seek His testament, when with His Own Blood He redeemed us to a new life; and in the Prophets and Evangelists, His testimonies.

11. "For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou wilt be favourable to my sin; for it is manifold" (ver. 11). Thou hast not only forgiven my sins, which I committed before I believed; but also to my sin, which is manifold, since even in the way there is no lack of stumbling, Thou wilt be made favourable by the sacrifice of a troubled spirit. 12. "Who is the man that feareth the Lord:" from which fear he begins to come to wisdom. "He shall establish a law for him in the way, which he hath chosen" (ver. 12). He shall establish a law for him in the way, which in his freedom he has taken, that he may not sin now with impunity. 13. "His soul shall dwell in good, and his seed shall, by inheritance, possess the earth" (ver. 13). And his work shall possess the stable inheritance of a renewed body.

14. "The Lord is the stay of them that fear Him" (ver. 14). Fear seems to belong to the weak, but the Lord is the stay of them that fear Him. And the Name of the Lord, which hath been glorified throughout the whole world, is a stay to them that fear Him. "And His testament, that it may be manifested unto them." And He maketh His testament to be manifested unto them, for the Gentiles and the bounds of the earth are Christ's inheritance. 15. "Mine eyes are ever unto the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare" (ver. 15). Nor would I fear the dangers of earth, while I look not upon the earth: for He upon whom Look, will pluck my feet out of the snare. 16. "Look upon me, and have mercy upon me; for I am single and poor" (ver. 16). For I am a single people, keeping the lowliness of Thy single Church, which no schisms or heresies possess.

17. "The tribulations of my heart have been multiplied" (ver. 17). The tribulations of my heart have been multiplied by the abounding of iniquity and the waxing cold of love. "O bring Thou me out of my necessities." Since I must needs bear this, that by enduring unto the end I may be saved, bring Thou me out of my necessities. 18. "See my humility and my travail" (ver. 18). See my humility, whereby I never, in the boast of righteousness, break off from unity; and my travail, wherein I bear with the unruly ones that are mingled with me. "And forgive all my sins." And, propitiated by these sacrifices, forgive all my sins, not those only of youth and my ignorance before I believed, but those also which, living now by faith, I commit through infirmity, or the darkness of this life. 19. "Consider mine enemies, how they are multiplied" (ver. 19). For not only without, but even within, in the Church's very communion, they are not wanting. "And with an unrighteous hate they hate me." And they hate me who love them.

20. "Keep my soul, and deliver me." Keep my soul, that I turn not aside to imitate them; and draw me out from the confusion wherein they are mingled with me. "Let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in Thee" (ver. 20). Let me not be confounded, if haply they rise up against me: for not in myself, but in Thee have I put my trust. 21. "The innocent and the upright have cleaved to me, for I have waited for Thee, O Lord" (ver. 21). The innocent and the upright, not in bodily presence only, as the evil, are mingled with me, but in the agreement of the heart in the same innocence and uprightness cleave to me: for I have not fallen away to imitate the evil; but I have waited for Thee, expecting the winnowing of Thy last harvest. 22.

"Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles" (ver. 22). "Redeem Thy people, O God," whom Thou hast prepared to see Thee, out of his troubles, not those only which he bears without, but those also which he bears within.

PSALM 26

OF David Himself. 1. It may be attributed to David himself, not the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, but the whole Church now perfectly established in Christ. 2. "Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my innocence" (ver. 1). Judge me, O Lord, for, after the mercy which Thou first showedst me, I have some desert of my innocence, the way whereof I have kept. "And trusting in the Lord I shall not be moved." And yet not even so trusting in myself, but in the Lord, I shall abide in Him. 3. "Prove me, O Lord, and try me" (ver. 2). Lest, however, any of my secret sins should be hid from me, prove me, O Lord, and try me, making me known, not to Thee from whom nothing is hid, but to myself, and to men. "Burn my reins and my heart." Apply a remedial purgation, as it were fire, to my pleasures and thoughts. "For Thy mercy is before mine eyes" (ver. 3). For, that I be not consumed by that fire, not my merits, but Thy mercy, whereby Thou hast brought me on to such a life, is before my eyes. "And I have been pleasing in Thy truth." And since my own falsehood hath been displeasing to me, but Thy truth pleasing, I have myself been pleasing also with it and in it.

4. "I have not sat with the council of vanity" (ver. 4). I have not chosen to give my heart to them who endeavour to provide, what is impossible, how they may be blessed in the enjoyment of things transitory. "And I will not enter in with them that work wickedly." And since this is the very cause of all wickedness, therefore I will not have my conscience hid, with them that work wickedly. 5. "I have hated the congregation of evil doers." But to arrive at this council of vanity, congregations of evil doers are formed, which I have hated. "And I will not sit with the ungodly" (ver. 5). And, therefore, with such a council, with the ungodly, I will not sit, that is, I will not place my consent. "And I will not sit with the ungodly." 6. "I will wash mine hands amid the innocent" (ver. 6). I will make clean my works among the innocent: among the innocent will I wash mine hands, with which I shall embrace Thy glorious gifts. "And I will compass Thy altar, O Lord."

7. "That I may hear the voice of Thy praise." That I may learn how to praise Thee. "And that I may declare all Thy wondrous works" (ver. 7). And after I have learnt, I may set forth all Thy wondrous works. 8. "O Lord, I

have loved the beauty of Thy house:" of Thy Church. "And the place of the habitation of Thy glory" (ver. 8): where Thou dwellest, and art glorified. 9. "Destroy not my soul with the ungodly" (ver. 9). Destroy not then, together with them that hate Thee, my soul, which hath loved the beauty of Thy house. "And my life with the men of blood." And with them that hate their neighbour. For Thy house is beautified with the two commandments. 10. "In whose hands is wickedness." Destroy me not then with the ungodly and the men of blood, whose works are wicked. "Their right hand is full of gifts" (ver. 10). And that which was given them to obtain eternal salvation, they have converted into the receiving this world's gifts, "supposing that godliness is a trade."

11. "But I have walked in mine innocence: deliver me, and have mercy on me" (ver. 11). Let so great a price of my Lord's Blood avail for my complete deliverance: and in the dangers of this life let not Thy mercy leave me. 12. "My foot hath stood in uprightness." My Love hath not withdrawn from Thy righteousness. "In the Churches I will bless Thee, O Lord" (ver. 12). I will not hide Thy blessing, O Lord, from those whom Thou hast called; for next to the love of Thee I join the love of my neighbour.

PSALM 27

OF David Himself, Before HE Was Anointed. 1. Christ's young soldier speaketh, on his coming to the faith. "The Lord is my light, and my salvation: whom shall I fear?" (ver. 1). The Lord will give me both knowledge of Himself, and salvation: who shall take me from Him? "The Lord is the Protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?" The Lord will repel all the assaults and snares of mine enemy: of no man shall I be afraid. 2. "Whilst the guilty approach unto me to eat up my flesh" (ver. 2). Whilst the guilty come near to recognise and insult me, that they may exalt themselves above me in my change for the better; that with their reviling tooth they may consume not me, but rather my fleshly desires. "Mine enemies who trouble me." Not they only who trouble me, blaming me with a friendly intent, and wishing to recall me from my purpose, but mine enemies also. "They became weak, and fell." Whilst then they do this with the desire of defending their own opinion, they became weak to believe better things, and began to hate the word of salvation, whereby I do what displeases them.

3. "If camps stand together against me, my heart will not fear." But if the multitude of gain-sayers conspire to stand together against me, my heart will

not fear, so as to go over to their side. "If war rise up against me, in this will I trust" (ver. 3). If the persecution of this world arise against me, in this petition, which I am pondering, will I place my hope. 4. "One have I asked of the Lord, this will I require." For one petition have I asked the Lord, this will I require. "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life" (ver. 4). That as long as I am in this life, no adversities may exclude me from the number of them who hold the unity and the truth of the Lord's faith throughout the world. "That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord." With this end, namely, that persevering in the faith, the delightful vision may appear to me, which I may contemplate face to face. "And I shall be protected, His temple." And death being swallowed up in victory, I shall be clothed with immortality, being made His temple.

5. "For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils" (ver. 5). For He hath hidden me in the dispensation of His Incarnate Word in the time of temptations, to which my mortal life is exposed. "He hath protected me in the secret place of His tabernacle." He hath protected me, with the heart believing unto righteousness. 6. "On a rock hath He exalted me." And that what I believed might be made manifest for salvation, He hath made my confession to be conspicuous in His own strength. "And now, lo! He hath exalted mine head above mine enemies" (ver. 6). What doth He reserve for me at the last, when even now the body is dead because of sin, lo! I feel that my mind serves the law of God, and is not led captive under the rebellious law of sin? "I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the sacrifice of rejoicing." I have considered the circuit of the world, believing on Christ; and in that for us God was humbled in time, I have praised Him with rejoicing: for with such sacrifice He is well pleased. "I will sing and give praises to the Lord." In heart and in deed I will be glad in the Lord.

7. "Hear my voice, O Lord, wherewith I have cried unto Thee" (ver. 7). Hear, Lord, my interior voice, which with a strong intention I have addressed to Thy ears. "Have mercy upon me, and hear me." Have mercy upon me, and hear me therein. 8. "My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance" (ver. 8). For I have not exhibited myself to men; but in secret, where Thou alone hearest, my heart hath said to Thee; I have not sought from Thee aught without Thee as a reward, but Thy countenance. "Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek." In thus search will I perseveringly persist: for not aught that is common, but Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek,

that I may love Thee freely, since nothing more precious do I find. 9. "Turn not away Thy face from me" (ver. 9): that I may find what I seek. "Turn not aside in anger from Thy servant:" lest, while seeking Thee, I fall in with somewhat else. For what is more grievous than this punishment to one who loveth and seeketh the truth of Thy countenance? "Be Thou my Helper." How shall I find it, if Thou help me not? "Leave me not, neither despise me, O God my Saviour." Scorn not that a mortal dares to seek the Eternal for Thou, God dost heal the wound of my sin.

10. "For my father and my mother have left me" (ver. 10). For the kingdom of this world and the city of this world, of which I was born in time and mortality, have left me seeking Thee, and despising what they promised, since they could not give what I seek. "But the Lord took me up." But the Lord, who can give me Himself, took me up. 11. "Appoint me a law, O Lord, in Thy way" (ver. 11). For me then who am setting out toward Thee, and commenting so great a profession, of arriving at wisdom, from fear, appoint, O Lord, a law in Thy way, lest in my wandering Thy rule abandon me. "And direct me in the right path because of mine enemies." And direct me in the right way of its straits. For it is not enough to begin, since enemies cease not until the end is attained.

12. "Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me" (ver. 12). Suffer not them that trouble me to be satiated with my evils. "For unrighteous witnesses have risen up against me." For there have risen up against me they that speak falsely of me, to remove and call me back from Thee, as if I seek glory of men. "And iniquity hath lied unto itself." Therefore iniquity hath been pleased with its own lie. For me it hath not moved, to whom because of this there hath been promised a greater reward in heaven. 13. "I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living" (ver. 13). And since my Lord hath first suffered these things, if I too despise the tongues of the dying ("for the mouth that lieth slayeth the soul"), I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living, where there is no place for falsity.

14. "Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man: and let thy heart be strong, yea wait on the Lord" (ver. 14). But when shall this be? It is arduous for a mortal, it is flow to a lover: but listen to the voice, that deceiveth not, of him that saith, "Wait on the Lord." Endure the burning of the reins manfully, and the burning of the heart stoutly. Think not that what thou dost not as

yet receive is denied thee. That thou faint not in despair, see how it is said, "Wait on the Lord."

PSALM 28

OF David Himself. 1. It is the Voice of the Mediator Himself, strong of hand in the conflict of the Passion. Now what He seems to wish for against His enemies, is not the wish of malevolence, but the declaration of their punishment; as in the Gospel, with the dries, in which though He had performed miracles, yet they had not beloved on Him, He doth not wish in any evil will what He sixth, but predicteth what is impending over them. 2. "Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; My God, be not silent from me" (ver. 1). Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; My God, separate not the unity of Thy Word from that which as Man I am. "Lest at any time Thou be silent from me: and I shall be like them that go down into the pit." For from this, that the Eternity of Thy Word ceaseth not to unite Itself to Me, it comes that I am not such a man as the rest of men, who are born into the deep misery of this world: where, as if Thou art silent, Thy Word is not recognised. "Hear, O Lord, the voice of my supplication, whist I pray unto Thee, whilst I hold up my hands to Thy holy temple" (ver. 2). Whilst I am crucified for their salvation, who on believing become Thy holy temple.

3. "Draw not My Soul away with sinners, and destroy me not with them that work iniquity, with them that speak peace with their neighbours" (ver. 3). With them that say unto Me, "We know that Thou art a Master come from God." "But evil in their hearts." But they speak evil in their hearts. 4. "Give unto them according to their works" (ver. 4). Give unto them according to their works, for this is just. "And according to the malice of their affections." For aiming at evil, they cannot discover good. "According to the works of their hands give Thou unto them." Although what they have done may avail for salvation to others, yet give Thou unto them according to the works of their wills. "Pay them their recompense." Because, for the truth which they heard, they wished to recompense deceit; let their won deceit deceive them. 5. "For they have not had understanding in the works of the Lord" (ver. 5). And whence is it clear that this hath befallen them? From this forsooth, "for they have not had understanding in the works of the Lord." This very thing, in truth, hath been, even now, their recompense, that in Him whom they tempted with malicious intent as a Man, they should not recognise God, with what design the Father sent Him in the Flesh. "And the

works of His hands." Nor be moved by those visible works, which are laid out before their very eyes. "Thou shalt destroy them, and not build them up." Let them do Me no hurt, nay, nor again in their endeavour to raise engines against My Church, let them aught avail.

6. "Blessed be the Lord, for He hath heard the voice of My prayer" (ver. 6).
7. "The Lord My Helper and My Protector" (ver. 7). The Lord helping Me in so great sufferings, and protecting Me with immortality in My resurrection. "In Him hath My Heart trusted, and I have been helped." "And My Flesh hath flourished again:" that is, and My Flesh hath risen again. "And of my will I will confess unto Him." Wherefore, the fear of death being now destroyed, not by the necessity of fear under the Law, but with a free will with the Law, shall they who believe on Me, confess unto Him; and because I am in them, I will confess. 8. "The Lord is the strength of His people" (ver. 8). Not that people "ignorant of the righteousness of God, and willing to establish their own." For they thought not themselves strong in themselves: for the Lord is the strength of His people, struggling in this life's difficulties with the devil. "And the protector of the salvation of His Christ." That, having saved them by His Christ after the strength of war, He may protect them at the last with the immortality of peace.

9. "Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance" (ver. 9). I intercede therefore, after My Mesh hath flourished again, because Thou hast said, "Desire of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance;" "Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance:" for "all Mine are Thine." "And rule them, and set them up even for even" And rule them in this temporal life, and raise them from hence into life eternal.

PSALM 29

A Psalm OF David Himself, OF The Consummation OF The Tabernacle. 1. A Psalm of the Mediator Himself, strong of hand, of the perfection of the Church in this world, where she wars in time against the devil. 2. The Prophet speaks, "Bring unto the Lord, O ye Sons of God, bring unto the Lord the young of rams" (ver. 1). Bring unto the Lord yourselves, whom the Apostles, the leaders of the flocks, have begotten by the Gospel. "Bring unto the Lord glory and honour" (ver. 2). By your works let the Lord be glorified and honoured. "Bring unto the Lord glory to His name." Let Him be made known gloriously throughout the world. "Worship the Lord in His holy court." Worship the Lord in your heart enlarged and sanctified. For ye are

His regal holy habitation. 3. "The Voice of the Lord is upon the waters" (ver. 3). The Voice of Christ is upon the people. "The God of majesty hath thundered." The God of majesty, from the cloud of the flesh, hath awfully preached repentance. "The Lord is upon many waters." The Lord Jesus Himself, after that He sent forth His Voice upon the people, and so.

4. "The Voice of the Lord is in power" (ver. 4). The Voice of the Lord now in them themselves, making them powerful. "The Voice of the Lord is in great might." The Voice of the Lord working great things in them. 5. "The Voice of the Lord breaking the cedars" (ver. 5). The Voice of the Lord humbling the proud in brokenness of heart. "The Lord shall break the cedars of Libanus." The Lord by repentance shall break them that are lifted on high by the splendour of earthly nobility, when to confound them He shall have "chosen the base things of this world," in the which to display His Divinity. 6. "And shall bruise them as the calf of Libanus" (ver. 6). And when their proud exaltation hath been cut off, He will lay them low after the imitation of His Own humility, who like a calf was led to slaughter by the nobility of this world. "For the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers agreed together against the Lord, and against His Christ." "And the Beloved is as the young of the unicorns." For even He the Beloved, and the Only One of the Father, "emptied Himself" of His glory; and was made man, like a child of the Jews, that were "ignorant of God's righteousness," and proudly boasting of their own righteousness as peculiarly theirs.

7. "The Voice of the Lord cutting short the flame of fire" (ver. 7). The Voice of the Lord, without any harm to Himself, passing through all the excited ardour of them that persecute Him, or dividing the furious rage of His persecutors, so that some should say, "Is not this haply the very Christ;" others, "Nay; but He deceiveth the people:" and so cutting short their mad tumult, as to pass some over into His love, and leave others in their malice. 8. "The Voice of the Lord moving the wilderness" (ver. 8). The Voice of the Lord moving to the faith the Gentiles once "without hope, and without God in the world;" where no prophet, no preacher of God's word, as it were, no man had dwelt. "And the Lord will move the desert of Cades." And then the Lord will cause the holy word of His Scriptures to be fully known, which was abandoned by the Jews who understood it not.

9. "The Voice of the Lord perfecting the stags" (ver. 9). For the Voice of the Lord hath first perfected them that overcame and repelled the

envonomed tongues. "And will reveal the woods." And then will He reveal to them the darknesses of the Divine books, and the shadowy depths of the mysteries, where they feed with freedom. "And in His temple doth every man speak of His glory." And in His Church all born again to an eternal hope praise God, each for His own gift, which He hath received from the Holy Spirit. 10. "The Lord inhabiteth the deluge" (ver. 10). The Lord therefore first inhabiteth the deluge of this world in His Saints, kept safely in the Church, as in the ark. "And the Lord shall sit a King for ever." And afterward He will sit reigning in them for ever. 11. "The Lord will give strength to His people" (ver. 11). For the Lord will give strength to His people fighting against the storms and whirlwinds of this world, for peace in this world He hath not promised them. "The Lord will bless His people in peace." And the same Lord will bless His people, affording them peace in Himself; for, saith He, "My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you."

PSALM 30

TO The End, The Psalm OF The Canticle OF The Dedication OF The House, OF David Himself. 1. To the end, a Psalm of the joy of the Resurrection, and the change, the renewing of the body to an immortal state, and not only of the Lord, but also of the whole Church. For in the former Psalm the tabernacle was finished, wherein we dwell in the time of war: but now the house is dedicated, which will abide in peace everlasting. 2. It is then whole Christ who speaketh. "I will exalt Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up" (ver. 1). I will praise Thy high Majesty, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up. "Thou hast not made Mine enemies to rejoice over Me." And those, who have so often endeavoured to oppress Me with various persecutions throughout the world, Thou hast not made to rejoice over Me.

3. "O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed Me" (ver. 2). O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and I no longer hear about a body enfeebled and sick by mortality. 4. "O Lord, Thou hast brought back My Soul from hell, and Thou hast saved Me from them that go down into the pit" (ver. 3). Thou hast saved Me from the condition of profound darkness, and the lowest slough of corruptible flesh. 5. "Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His." The prophet seeing these future things, rejoiceth, and saith, "Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His. And make confession of the remembrance of His holiness" (ver. 4). And make confession to Him, that He hath not forgotten the sanctification, wherewith He hath sanctified you, al-

though all this intermediate period belong to your desires. 6. "For in His indignation is wrath" (ver. 5). For He hath avenged against you the first sin, for which you have paid by death. "And life in His will." And life eternal, whereunto you could not return by any strength of your own, hath He given, because He so would. "In the evening weeping will tarry." Evening began, when the light of wisdom withdrew from sinful man, when he was condemned to death: from this evening weeping will tarry, as long as God's people are, amid labours and temptations, awaiting the day of the Lord. "And exultation in the morning." Even to the morning, when there will be the exultation of the resurrection, which hath shone forth by anticipation in the morning resurrection of the Lord.

7. "But I said in my abundance, I shall not be moved for ever" (ver. 6). But I, that people which was speaking from the first, said in mine abundance, suffering now no more any want, "I shall not be moved for ever." 8. "O Lord, in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty" (ver. 7). But that this my abundance, O Lord, is not of myself, but that in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty, I have learnt from this, "Thou turnedst away Thy Face from me, and I became troubled;" for Thou hast sometimes turned away Thy Face from the sinner, and I became troubled, when the illumination of Thy knowledge withdrew from me. 9. "Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto my God will I pray" (ver. 8). And bringing to mind that time of my trouble and misery, and as it were established therein, I hear the voice of Thy First-Begotten, my Head, about to die for me, and saying "Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto My God will I pray."

10. "What profit" is there in the shedding of My blood, whilst I go down to corruption? "Shall dust confess unto Thee?" For if I shall not rise immediately, and My body shall become corrupt, "shall dust confess unto Thee?" that is, the crowd of the ungodly, whom I shall justify by My resurrection? "Or declare Thy truth?" Or for the salvation of the rest declare Thy truth? 11. "The Lord hath heard, and had mercy on Me, the Lord hath become My helper." Nor did "He suffer His holy One to see corruption" (ver. 10). 12. "Thou hast turned My mourning into joy to Me" (ver. 11). Whom I, the Church, having received, the First-Begotten from the dead, now in the dedication of Thine house, say, "Thou hast turned my mourning into joy to me. Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness." Thou hast torn off the veil of

my sins, the sadness of my mortality; and hast girded me with the first robe, with immortal gladness.

13. "That my glory should sing unto Thee, and I should not be pricked" (ver. 12). That now, not my humiliation, but my glory should not lament, but should sing unto Thee, for that now out of humiliation Thou hast exalted me; and that I should not be pricked with the consciousness of sin, with the fear of death, with the fear of judgment. "O Lord, my God, I will confess unto Thee for ever." And this is my glory, O Lord, my God, that I should confess unto Thee for ever, that I have nothing of myself, but that all my good is of Thee, who art "God, All in all."

PSALM 31

TO The End, A Psalm OF David Himself, AN Ecstasy. 1. To the end a Psalm of David Himself, the Mediator strong of hand in persecutions. For the word ecstasy, which is added to the title, signifies a transport of the mind, which is produced either by a panic, or by some revelation. But in this Psalm the panic of the people of God troubled by the persecution of all the heathen, and by the failing of faith throughout the world, is principally seen. But first the Mediator Himself speaks: then the People redeemed by His Blood gives thanks: at last in trouble it speaks at length, which is what belongs to the ecstasy; but the Person of the Prophet himself is twice interposed, near the end, and at the end. 2. "In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me not be put to confusion for ever" (ver. 1). In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me never be confounded, whilst they shall insult Me as one like other men. "In Thy righteousness rescue Me, and deliver Me." And in Thy righteousness rescue Me from the pit of death, and deliver Me out of their company.

3. "Bend down Thine ear unto Me" (ver. 2). Hear Me in My humiliation, nigh at hand unto Me. "Make haste to deliver Me." Defer not to the end of the world, as with all who believe on Me, My separation from sinners. "Be unto Me a God who protecteth Me." Be unto Me God, and Protector. "And a house of refuge, that Thou mayest save Me." And as a house, wherein taking refuge I may be saved. 4. "For Thou art My strength, and My refuge" (ver. 3). For Thou art unto Me My strength to bear My persecutors, and My refuge to escape them. "And for Thy Name's sake Thou shalt be My guide, and shalt nourish Me." And that by Me Thou mayest be known to all the Gentiles. I will in all things follow Thy will; and, by assembling, by degrees, Saints unto Me, Thou shalt fulfil My body, and My perfect stature.

5. "Thou shalt bring Me out of this trap, which they have hidden for Me" (ver. 4). Thou shalt bring Me out of these snares, which they have hidden for Me. "For Thou art My Protector." 6. "Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit" (ver. 5). To Thy power I commend My Spirit, soon to receive It back. "Thou hast redeemed Me, O Lord God of truth?" Let the people too, redeemed by the Passion of their Lord, and joyful in the glorifying of their Head, say, "Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." 7. "Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly" (ver. 6). Thou hatest them that hold to the false happiness of the world. "But I have trusted in the Lord." 8. "I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy:" which doth not deceive me. "For Thou hast regarded My humiliation:" wherein Thou hast subjected me to vanity in hope. "Thou hast saved my soul from necessities" (ver. 7). Thou hast saved my soul from the necessities of fear, that with a free love it may serve Thee.

9. "And hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy" (ver. 8). And hast not shut me up, that I should have no opening for recovering unto liberty, and be given over for ever into the power of the devil, ensnaring me with the desire of this life, and terrifying me with death. "Thou hast set my feet in a large room." The resurrection of my Lord being known, and mine own bring promised me, my love, having been brought out of the straits of fear, walks abroad in continuance, into the expanse of liberty. 10. "Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled" (ver. 9). But what is this unlooked-for cruelty of the persecutors, striking such dread into me? "Have mercy on me, O Lord ." For I am now no more alarmed for death, but for torments and tortures. "Mine eye hath been disordered by anger." I had mine eye upon Thee, that Thou shouldest not abandon me: Thou art angry, and hast disordered it. "My soul, and my belly." By the same anger my soul hath been disturbed, and my memory, whereby I retained what my God hath suffered for me, and what He hath promised me.

11. "For my life hath failed in pain" (ver 10). For my life is to confess Thee, but it failed in pain, when the enemy had said, Let them be tortured until they deny Him. "And my years in groanings." The time that I pass in this world is not taken away from me by death, but abides, and is spent in groanings. "My strength hath been weakened by want" I want the heath of this body, and racking pains come on me: I want the dissolution of the body, and death forbears to come: and in this want my confidence hath been weakened. "And my bones have been disturbed." And my steadfastness hath

been disturbed. 12. "I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies" (ver 11). All the wicked are my enemies; and nevertheless they for their wickednesses are tortured only till they confess: I then have overpassed their reproach, I, whose confession death doth not follow, but racking pains follow upon it. "And to my neighbours too much." This hath seemed too much to them, who were already drawing near to know Thee, and to hold the faith that I hold. "And a fear to mine acquaintance." And into my very acquaintance I struck fear by the example of my dreadful tribulation. "They that did see me, fled without from me." Because they did not understand my inward and invisible hope, they fled from me into things outward and visible.

13. "I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart" (ver. 12). And they have forgotten me, as if I were dead from their hearts. "I have become as a lost vessel." I have seemed to myself to be lost to all the Lord's service, living in this world, and gaining none, when all were afraid to join themselves unto me. 14. "For I have heard the rebuking of many dwelling by in a circuit" (ver. 13). For I have heard many rebuking me, in the pilgrimage of this world near me, following the circuit of time, and refusing to return with me to the eternal country. "Whilst they were assembling themselves together against me, they conspired that they might take my soul." That my soul, which should by death easily escape from their power, might consent unto them, they imagined a device, whereby they would not suffer me even to die.

15. "But I have hoped in Thee, O Lord; I have said, Thou art my God" (ver. 14). For Thou hast not changed, that Thou shouldest not save, Who dost correct 16. "In Thy hands" are "my lots" (ver. 15). In Thy power are my lots. For I see no desert for which out of the universal ungodliness of the human race Thou hast elected me particularly to salvation. And though there be with Thee some just and secret order in my election, yet I, from whom this is hid, have attained by lot unto my Lord's vesture. "Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me," 17. "Make Thy Face to shine upon Thy servant" (ver. 16). Make it known to men, who do not think that I belong unto Thee, that Thy Face is bent upon me, and that I serve Thee. "Save me in Thy mercy."

18. "O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee" (ver. 17). O Lord, let me not be put to shame by those who insult me, for that I have called upon Thee. "Let the ungodly be ashamed, and be brought down

to hell." Let them rather who call upon stones be ashamed, and made to dwell with darkness. 19. "Let the deceitful lips be made dumb" (ver. 18). In making known to the peoples Thy mysteries wrought in me, strike with dumb amazement the lips of them that invent falsehood of me. "Which speak iniquity against the Righteous, in pride and contempt." Which speak iniquity against Christ, in their pride and contempt of Him as a crucified man. 20. "How great" is "the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord" (ver. 19). Here the Prophet exclaims, having sight of all this, and admiring how manifoldly plenteous is Thy sweetness, O Lord. "Which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee." Even those, whom Thou correctest, Thou lovest much: but lest they should go on negligently from relaxed security, Thou hidest from them the sweetness of Thy love, for whom it is profitable to fear Thee. "Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee." But Thou hast perfected this sweetness for them that hope in Thee. For Thou dost not withdraw from them what they look for perseveringly even unto the end. "In sight of the sons of men." For it does not escape the notice of the sons of men, who now live no more after Adam, but after the Son of Man. "Thou wilt hide them in the hidden place of Thy Countenance:" which seat Thou shalt preserve for everlasting in the hidden place of the knowledge of Thee for them that hope in Thee. "From the troubling of men." So that now they suffer no more trouble from men.

21. "Thou wilt protect them in Thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues" (ver. 20). But here meanwhile whilst evil tongues murmur against them, saying, Who hath come thence? Thou wilt protect them in the tabernacle, that of faith in those things, which the Lord wrought and endured for us in time. 22. "Blessed be the Lord; for He hath made His mercy marvellous, in the city of compassing" (ver. 21). Blessed be the Lord, for after the correction of the sharpest persecutions He hath made His mercy marvellous to all throughout the world, in the circuit of human society. 23. "I said in my ecstasy" (ver. 22). Whence that people again speaking saith, I said in my fear, when the heathen were raging horribly against me. "I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine eyes." For if Thou hadst regard to me, Thou wouldst not suffer me to endure these things. "Therefore Thou heardest, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I cried unto Thee." Therefore putting a limit to correction, and showing that I have part in Thy care, Thou heardest, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I raised it high out of tribulation.

24. "Love the Lord, all ye His saints" (ver. 23). The Prophet again exhorts, having sight of these things, and saith, "Love the Lord, all ye His saints; for the Lord will require truth." Since "if the righteous shall scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear?" "And He will repay them that do exceeding proudly." And He will repay them who even when conquered are not converted, because they are very proud. 25. "Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened" (ver. 24): working good without fainting, that ye may reap in due season. "All ye who trust in the Lord:" that is, ye who duly fear and worship Him, trust ye in the Lord.

PSALM 32

TO David Himself; For Understanding. 1. To David himself; for understanding; by which it is understood that not by the merits of works, but by the grace of God, man his delivered, confessing his sins. 2. "Blessed are they whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (ver. 1): and whose sins are buried in oblivion. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin, nor is there guile in his mouth" (ver. 2): nor has he in his mouth boastings of righteousness, when his conscience is full of sins. 3. "Because I kept silence, my bones waxed old:" because I made not with my mouth "confession unto salvation," all firmness in me has grown old in infirmity. "Through my roaring all the day long" (ver. 3): when I was ungodly and a blasphemer, crying against God, as though defending and excusing my sins. 4. "Because day and night Thy Hand was heavy upon me:" because, through the continual punishment of Thy scourges, "I was turned in misery, while a thorn was fixed through me" (ver. 4): I was made miserable by knowing my misery, being pricked with an evil conscience.

5. "I acknowledged my sin, and my unrighteousness have I not hid:" that is, my unrighteousness have I not concealed. "I said, I will confess against myself my unrighteousness to the Lord:" I said, I will confess, not against God (as in my ungodly crying, when I kept silence), but against myself, my unrighteousness to the Lord. "And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart" (ver. 5); hearing the word of confession in the heart, before it was uttered with the voice. 6. "For this shall every one that is holy pray unto Thee in an acceptable time:" for this wickedness of heart shall every one that is righteous pray unto Thee. For not by their own merits will they be holy, but by that acceptable time, that is, at His coming, who redeemed us from sin. "Nevertheless in the flood of great waters they shall not come nigh him" (ver.

6): nevertheless, let none think, when the end has come suddenly, as in the days of Noah, that there remaineth a place of confession, whereby he may draw nigh unto God.

7. "Thou art my refuge from the pressures, which have compassed me about:" Thou art my refuge from the pressure of my sins, which hath compassed my heart. "O Thou, my Rejoicing, deliver me from them that compass me about" (ver. 7): in Thee is my joy: deliver me from the sorrow which my sins bring upon me. 8. Diapsalma. The answer of God: "I will give thee understanding, and will set thee in the way in which thou shalt go;" I will give thee understanding after confession, that thou depart not from the way in which thou shouldest go; lest thou wish to be in thine own power. "I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee" (ver. 8); so will make sure upon thee My Love. 9. "Be not ye like unto horse or mule, which have no understanding:" and therefore would govern themselves. But saith the Prophet, "Hold in their jaws with bit and bridle." Do Thou then, O God, unto them "that will not come nigh Thee" (ver. 9), what man doth to horse and mule, that by scourges Thou make them to bear Thy rule.

10. "Many are the scourges of the sinner:" much is he scourged, who, confessing not his sins to God, would be his own ruler. "But he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy compasseth him about" (ver. 10); but he that trusteth in the Lord, and submitteth himself to His rule, mercy shall compass him about. 11. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous:" be glad, and rejoice, ye righteous, not in yourselves, but in the Lord. "And glory, all ye that are right in heart" (ver. 11): and glory in Him, all ye who understand that it is right to be subject unto Him, that so ye may be placed above all things beside.

PSALM 33

1. "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous:" rejoice, O ye righteous, not in yourselves, for that is not safe; but in the Lord. "For praise is comely to the upright" (ver. 1): these praise the Lord, who submit themselves unto the Lord; for else they are distorted and perverse. 2. "Praise the Lord with harp:" praise the Lord, presenting unto Him your bodies a living sacrifice. "Sing unto Him with the psaltery for ten strings" (ver. 2): let your members be servants to the love of God, and of your neighbour, in which are kept both the three and the seven commandments. 3. "Sing unto Him a new song:" sing unto Him a song of the grace of faith. "Sing skilfully unto Him with jubilation" (ver. 3): sing skillfully unto Him with rejoicing. 4. "For the Word of the

Lord is right:" for the Word of the Lord is right, to make you that which of yourselves ye cannot be. "And all His works are done in faith" (ver. 4): lest any think that by the merit of works he hath arrived at faith, when in faith are done all the works which God Himself loveth.

5. "He loveth Mercy and Judgment:" for He loveth Mercy, which now He showeth first; and Judgment, wherewith He exacteth that which He hath first shown. "The earth is full is full of the Mercy of the Lord" (ver. 5): throughout the whole world are sins forgiven unto men by the Mercy of the Lord. 6. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made firm:" Lord were the righteous made strong. "And all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth" (ver. 6). And all their faith by His Holy Spirit. 7. "He gathereth the waters of the sea together as into a bottle:" He gathered the people of the world together, to confession of mortified sin, lest through pride they flow too freely. "He layeth up the up the deep in storehouses" (ver. 7): and keepeth in them His secrets for riches. 8. "Let all the earth fear the Lord:" let every sinner fear, that so he may cease to sin. "Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him" (ver. 8): not of the terrors of men, or of any creature, but of Him let them stand in awe.

9. "For He spake, and they were made:" for no other one made those things which are to fear; but He spake, and they were made. "He commanded, and they were created" (ver. 9): He commanded by His Word, and they were created. 10. "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought;" of them that seek not His Kingdom, but kingdoms of their own. "He maketh the devices of the people of none effect:" of them that covet earthly happiness. "And reproveth the counsels of princes" (ver. 10): of them that seek to rule over such peoples. 11. "But the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever;" but the counsel of the Lord, whereby He maketh none blessed but him that submitteth unto Himself, standeth for ever. The thoughts of His Heart to all generations" (ver. 11): the thoughts of His Wisdom are not mutable, but endure to all generations.

12. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord:" one nation is blessed, belonging to the heavenly city, which hath not chosen save the Lord for their God: "And the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance" (ver. 12): and which not of itself, but by the gift of God, hath been chosen, that He by possessing it may not suffer it to be uncared for and miserable. 13. "The Lord looketh from Heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of

men" (ver. 13). From the souls of the righteous, the Lord looketh mercifully upon all who would rise to newness of life. 14. "From His prepared habitation:" from His habitation of assumed Humanity, which He prepared for Himself. "He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth" (ver. 14): He looketh mercifully upon all who live in the flesh, that He may be over them in ruling them.

15. "He fashioneth their hearts singly:" He giveth spiritually to their hearts their proper gifts, so that neither the whole body may be eye, nor the whole heating; but that one in this manner, another in that manner, may be incorporated with Christ. "He understandeth all their works" (ver. 15). Before Him are all their works understood. 16. "A king shall not be saved by much strength:" he shall not be saved who ruleth his own flesh, if he presume much upon his own strength. "Neither shall a giant be saved by much strength" (ver. 16): nor shall he be saved whoever warreth against the habit of his own lust, or against the devil and his angels, if he trust much to his own might. 17. "A horse is a deceitful thing for safety:" he is deceived, who thinketh either that through men he gaineth salvation received among men, or that by the impetuosity of his own courage he is defended from destruction. "In the abundance of his strength shall he not be saved" (ver. 17).

18. "Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him:" because if thou seek salvation, behold, the love of the Lord is upon them that fear Him. "Upon them that hope in His mercy" (ver. 18): that hope not in their own strength, but in His mercy. 19. "To denver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine" (ver. 19). To give them the nourishment of the Word, and of Everlasting Truth, which they lost while presuming on their own strength, and therefore have not even their own strength, from lack of righteousness. 20. "My soul shall be patient for the Lord:" that hereafter it may be filled with dainties incorruptible, meanwhile, whilst here it remaineth, my soul shall be patient for the Lord. "For He is our Helper and Defender" (ver. 20): our Helper He is, while we endeavour after Him; and our Defender, while we resist the adversary.

21. "For our heart shall rejoice in Him:" for not in ourselves, wherein without Him there is great need; but in Himself shall our heart rejoice. "And we have trusted in His holy Name" (ver. 21); and therefore have we trusted that we shall come to God, because unto us absent hath He sent, through faith, His own Name. 22. "Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as

we have hoped in Thee" (ver. 22): let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us; for hope confoundeth not, because we have hoped in Thee.

PSALM 34

A Psalm OF David, When HE Changed His Countenance Before Abimelech, And HE Sent Him Away, And HE Departed. 1. Because there was there a sacrifice after the order of Aaron, and afterwards He of His Own Body and Blood appointed a sacrifice after the order of Melchizedek; He changed then His Countenance in the Priesthood, and sent away the kingdom of the Jews, and came to the Gentiles. What then is, "He affected"? He was full of affection. For what is so full of affection as the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, seeing our infirmity, that He might deliver us from everlasting death, underwent temporal death with such great injury and contumely? "And He drummed:" because a drum is not made, except when a skin is extended on wood; and David drummed, to signify that Christ should be crucified. But, "He drummed upon the doors of the city:" what are "the doors of the city," but our hearts which we had closed against Christ, who by the drum of His Cross hath opened the hearts of mortal men? "And was carried in His Own Hands:" how "carried in His Own Hands"? Because when He commended His Own Body and Blood, He took into His Hands that which the faithful know; and in a manner carried Himself, when He said, "This is My Body." "And He fell down at the doors of the gate;" that is, He humbled Himself. For this it is, to fall down even at the very beginning of our faith. For the door of the gate is the beginning of faith; whence beginneth the Church, and arriveth at last even unto sight: that as it believeth those things which it seeth not, it may deserve to enjoy them, when it shall have begun to see face to face. So is the title of the Psalm; briefly we have heard it; let us now hear the very words of Him that affecteth, and drummeth upon the doors of the city.

2. "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be ever in my mouth" (ver. 1). So speaketh Christ, so also let a Christian speak; for a Christian is in the Body of Christ; and therefore was Christ made Man, that that Christian might be enabled to be an Angel, who saith, "I will bless the Lord at all times." When shall I "bless the Lord"? When He blesseth thee? When the goods of this world abound? When thou hast great abundance of corn, oil, and wine, of gold and silver, of servants and cattle; when this mortal health remaineth unwounded and sound; when all that are born to thee grow up, nothing is withdrawn by immature death, happiness wholly

reigneth in thy house, and all things overflow around thee; then shalt thou bless the Lord? No; but "at all times." Therefore both then, and when according to the time, or according to the scourges of our Lord God, these things are troubled, are taken away, are seldom born to thee, and born pass away. For these things come to pass, and thence followeth penury, need, labour, pain, and temptation. But thou, who hast sung, "I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall be ever in my mouth," both when He giveth them, bless; and when He taketh them away, bless. For it is He that giveth, it is He that taketh away: but Himself from him that blesseth Him He taketh not away.

3. But who is it that blesseth the Lord at all times, except the humble in heart. For very humility taught our Lord in His Own Body and Blood: because when He commendeth His Own Body and Blood, He commendeth His Humility, in that which is written in this history, in that seeming madness of David, which we have passed by, "And his spittle ran down over his beard." When the Apostle was read, Ye heard the same spittle, but running down over the beard. One saith perhaps, What spittle have we heard? Was it not read but now, where the Apostle saith, "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom?" But now it was read, "But we preach," saith he, "Christ crucified" (for then He drummed), "unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. Because the Foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than men." For spittle signifieth foolishness; spittle signifieth weakness. But if the Foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than men; let not the spittle as it were offend thee, but observe that it runneth down over the beard: for as by the spittle, weakness; so by the beard, strength is signified. He covered then His Strength by the body of His Weakness, and that which without was weak, appeared as it were in spittle; but within His Divine Strength was covered as a beard. Therefore humility is commended unto us. Be humble if thou wouldest bless the Lord at all times, and that His praise should be ever in thy mouth. ...

4. But wherefore doth man bless the Lord at all times? Because he is humble. What is it to be humble? To take not praise unto himself. Who would himself be praised, is proud: who is not proud, is humble. Wouldest thou not then be proud? That thou mayest be humble, say what is here writ-

ten; "In the Lord shall my soul be praised: the humble shall hear thereof and be glad" (ver. 2). Those then who will not be praised in the Lord, are not humble, but fierce, rough, lifted up, proud. Gentle cattle would the Lord have; be thou the Lord's jumentum; that is, be thou humble. He sitteth upon thee, He ruleth thee: fear not lest thou stumble, and fall headlong: that indeed is thy infirmity; but consider Who sitteth upon thee. Thou art an ass's colt, but thou carriest Christ. For even He on an ass's colt came into the city; and that beast was gentle. ..."Be not ye as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding." For horse and mule sometimes lift up their neck, and by their own fierceness throw off their rider. They are tamed with the bit, with bridle, with stripes, until they learn to submit, and to carry their master. But thou, before thy jaws are bruised with the bridle, be humble, and carry thy Lord: wish not praise for thyself, but praised be He who sitteth upon thee, and say thou, "In the Lord shall my soul be praised; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." ...

5. Now followeth, "O magnify the Lord with me" (ver. 3). Who is this that exhorteth us, that we should magnify the Lord with him? Whoever, Brethren, is in the body of Christ, ought for this to labour, that the Lord may be magnified with him. For he loveth the Lord, whoever he is. And how doth he love Him? So as not to envy his fellow-lover. ...Let them blush who so love God as to envy others. Abandoned men love a charioteer, and whoever loveth a charioteer or hunter, wisheth the whole people to love with him, and exhorteth, saying, Love with me this pantomime, love with me this or that shame. He calleth among the people that shame may be loved with him; and doth not a Christian call in the Church, that the Truth of God may be loved with him? Stir up then love in yourselves, Brethren; and call to every one of yours, and say, "O magnify the Lord with me." Let there be in you that fervour. Wherefore are these things recited and explained? If ye love God, bring quickly to the love of God all who are joined unto you, and all who are in your house; if the Body of Christ is loved by you, that is, if the unity of the Church, bring them quickly to enjoy, and say, "O magnify the Lord with me."

6. "And let us exalt His Name together." What is, "let us exalt His Name together"? That is, in one. For many copies so have it, "O magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt His Name in one." Whether it be said, "together," or "in one," it is the same thing. Therefore bring quickly whom ye can, by ex-

horting, by transporting, by beseeching, by disputing, by rendering a reason, with meekness, with gentleness. Bring them quickly unto love; that if they magnify the Lord, they may magnify Him in one. ... 7. "I sought the Lord, and He heard me" (ver. 4). Where heard the Lord? Within. Where giveth He? Within. There thou prayest, there thou art heard, there thou art blessed. Thou hast prayed, thou art heard, thou art blessed; and he knoweth not who standeth by thee: it is all carried on in secret, as the Lord saith in the Gospel, "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." When therefore thou enterest into thy chamber, thou enterest into thy heart. Blessed are they who rejoice when they enter into their heart, and find therein nought of evil. ...

8. "I sought the Lord, and He heard me." Who then are not heard, seek not the Lord. Attend, Holy Brethren; he said not, I sought gold from the Lord, and He heard me; I sought from the Lord long life, and He heard me; I sought from the Lord this or that, and He heard me. It is one thing to seek anything from the Lord, another to seek the Lord Himself. "I sought" (saith he) "the Lord, and He heard me." But thou, when thou prayest, saying, Kill that my enemy, seekest not the Lord, but, as it were, makest thyself a judge over thy enemy, and makest thy God an executioner. How knowest thou that he is not better than thou, whose death thou seekest? In that very thing haply he is, that he seeketh not thine. Therefore seek not from the Lord anything without, but seek the Lord Himself, and He will hear thee, and while thou yet speakest, He will say, "Lo, here I am." ...

9. I have said who was the exhorter, namely, that lover who would not alone embrace what he loveth, and saith, "Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened" (ver. 5). For he saith what he himself proved. For some spiritual person in the Body of Christ, or even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself according to the flesh, the Head exhorting His Own Members, saith; what? "Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. Or rather some spiritual Christian inviteth us to approach to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But let us approach to Him and be lightened; not as the Jews approached to Him, that they might be darkened; for they approached to Him that they might crucify Him: let us approach to Him that we may receive His Body and Blood. They by Him crucified were darkened; we by eating and drinking The Crucified are lightened. "Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. Lo, this is said to

the Gentiles. Christ was crucified amid the Jews raging and seeing; the Gentiles were absent; lo, they have approached who were in darkness, and they who saw not are lightened. Whereby approach the Gentiles? By following with faith, by longing with the heart, by running with charity. Thy feet are thy charity. Have two feet, be not lame. What are thy two feet? The two commandments of love, of thy God, and of thy Neighbour.

With these feet run thou unto God, approach unto Him, for He hath both exhorted thee to run, and hath Himself shed His Own Light, as he hath magnificently and divinely continued. "And your faces shall not be ashamed. "Approach" (saith he) "unto Him, and be ye lightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed. No face shall be ashamed but of the proud. Wherefore? Because he would be lifted up, and when he hath suffered insult, or ignominy, or mischance in this world, or any affliction, he is ashamed. But fear not thou, approach unto Him, and thou shalt not be ashamed. ... 10. As the Prophet testifieth, "The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him" (ver. 6). He teacheth thee how thou mayest be heard. Therefore art thou not heard, because thou art rich. Lest haply thou say, thou criedst and wast not heard, hear wherefore; "The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him." As poor cry thou, and the Lord heareth. And how shall I cry as poor? By not, if thou hast aught, presuming therefrom upon thy own strength: by understanding that thou art needy; by understanding that so long art thou poor, as thou hast not Him who maketh thee rich. But how did the Lord hear him? "And saved him out of all his troubles." And how saveth He men out of all their troubles? "The Angel of the Lord shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them" (ver. 7). So it is written, brethren, not as some bad copies have it, "The Lord shall send His Angel round about them that fear Him, and He shall deliver them:" but thus, "The Angel of the Lord shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them." Whom called He here the Angel of the Lord, who shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them? Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is called in Prophecy, the Angel of the great Counsel, the Messenger of the great Counsel; so the Prophets called Him. Even He then, the Angel of the great Counsel, that is, the Messenger, shall send unto them that fear the Lord, and shall deliver them. Fear not then lest thou be hid: wheresoever thou hast feared the Lord, there doth that Angel know thee, who shall send to succour thee, and shall deliver thee.

11. Now will He speak openly of the same Sacrament, whereby He was carried in His Own Hands. "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (ver. 8). Doth not the Psalm now open itself, and show thee that seeming insanity and constant madness, the same insanity and sober inebriety of that David, who in a figure showed I know not what, when in the person of king Achis they said to him, How is it? Widen the Lord said, "Except a man eat My Flesh and drink My Blood, he shall have no life in him"? And they in whom reigned Achis, that is, error and ignorance, said; what said they? "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" If thou art ignorant, "Taste and see that the Lord is good:" but if thou understandest not, thou art king Achis: David shall change His Countenance and shall depart from thee, and shall quit thee, and shall depart.

12. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Why needeth this to be explained at length? Whoever trusteth not in the Lord, is miserable. Who is there that trusteth not in the Lord? He that trusteth in himself. ... 13. "O fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him" (ver. 9). For many therefore will not fear God the Lord, lest they suffer hunger. It is said to them, Defraud not; and they say, Whence can I feed myself? No art can be without imposture; no business can be without fraud. But fraud God punisheth: fear God. But if I should fear God, I shall not have whence to live. "O fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. He promiseth plenty to him that trembleth, and doubteth, lest haply if he should fear God, he should lose things superfluous. The Lord fed thee despising Him, and will He desert thee fearing Him? Attend, and say not, Such an one is rich, and I am poor. I fear the Lord, he by not fearing how much has he gained, and I by fearing am bare! See what follows; "The rich do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (ver. 10). If thou receive it according to the letter, He seemeth to deceive thee, for thou seest that many rich men that are wicked die in their riches, and are not made poor while they live; thou seest them grow old, and come even to the end of life amid great abundance and riches.

Thou seest their funeral pomp celebrated with great profusion, the man himself brought rich even to the sepulchre, having expired in beds of ivory, his family weeping around; and thou sayest in thy mind, if haply thou knowest some both sins and crimes done by him: I know what things that man hath done; lo, he hath grown old, he hath died in his bed, his friends follow

him to the grave, his funeral is celebrated with all this pomp; I know what he hath done; the Scripture has deceived me, and has spoken falsely, where I hear and sing; "The rich do lack and suffer hunger. When was this man in need? when did he suffer hunger?" But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Daily I rise up to Church, daily I bend the knee, daily I seek the Lord, and have nothing good: this man sought not the Lord, and he hath died in the midst of all these good things! Thus thinking, the snare of offence choketh him; for he seeketh mortal food on the earth, and seeketh not a true reward in heaven, and so he putteth his head into the devil's noose, his jaws are tied close, and the devil holdeth him fast unto evil doing, that so he may imitate the evil men, whom he seeth to die in such plenty.

14. Therefore understand it not so. ...When thou art filled with spiritual riches, canst thou be poor? And was he therefore rich, because he had a bed of ivory; and art thou poor who hast the chamber of thy heart filled with such jewelry of virtues, justice, truth, charity, faith, endurance? Unfold thy riches, if thou hast them, and compare them with the riches of the rich. But such an one has found in the market mules of great value, and has bought them. If thou couldest find faith to be sold, how much wouldest thou give for that, which God willeth that thou shouldest have gratis, and thou art ungrateful? Those rich then lack, they lack, and what is heavier, they lack bread. ...For He hath said, "I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven." And again, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing:" but what manner of good, I have already said.

15. "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord" (ver. 11). Ye think, brethren, that I say this: think that David saith it; think that an Apostle saith it; nay think that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself saith it; "Come, ye children, hearken unto Me." Let us hearken unto Him together: hearken ye unto Him through us. For He would teach us; He the Humble, He that drummeth, He that affecteth, would teach us. ... 16. "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days?" (ver. 12). He asketh a question. Doth not every one among you answer, I? Is there any man among you that loveth not life, that is, that desireth not life, and loveth not to see good days? Do ye not daily thus murmur, and thus speak; How long shall we suffer these things? Daily are they worse and worse: in our fathers' time were days more joyful, were days better. O if thou couldest ask those

same, thy fathers, in like manner would they murmur to thee of their own days. Our fathers were happy, miserable are we, evil days have we: such an one ruled over us, we thought that after his death might some refreshing be given to us; worse things have come: O God, show unto us good days! "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days?" Let him not seek here good days. A good thing he seeketh, but not in its right place doth he seek it. As, if thou shouldest seek some righteous man in a country, wherein he lived not, it would be said to thee, A good man thou seekest, a great man thou seekest, seek him still, but not here; in vain thou seekest him here, thou wilt never find him. Good days thou seekest, together let us seek them, seek not here. ...Read the Scriptures. ...

17. Let not a Christian then murmur, let him see whose steps he followeth: but if he loveth good days, let him hearken unto Him teaching and saying, "Come, ye children, hearken unto Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." What wouldest thou? Life and good days. Hear, and do. "Keep thy tongue from evil" (ver. 13). This do. I will not, saith a miserable man, I will not keep my tongue from evil, and yet I desire life and good days. If a workman of thine should say to thee, I indeed lay waste this vineyard, yet I require of thee my reward; thou broughtest me to the vineyard to lop and prune it, I cut away all the useful wood, I will cut short also the very trunks of the vines, that thou have thereon nothing to gather, and when I have done this, thou shall repay to me my labour. Wouldest thou not call him mad? Wouldest thou not drive him from thy house or ever he put his hand to the knife? Such are those men who would both do evil, and swear falsely, and speak blasphemy against God, and murmur, and defraud, and be drunken, and dispute, and commit adultery, and use charms, and consult diviners, and withal see good days. To such it is said, thou canst not doing ill seek a good reward. If thou art unjust, shall God also be unjust? What shall I do, then? What desirest thou? Life I desire, good days I desire. "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile," that is, defraud not any, lie not to any.

18. But what is, "Depart from evil"? (ver. 14). It is little that thou injure none, murder none, steal not, commit not adultery, do no wrong, speak no false witness; "Depart from evil." When thou hast departed, thou sayest, Now I am safe, I have done all, I shall have life, I shall see good days. Not only saith he, "Depart from evil," but also, "and do good." It is nothing that thou spoil not: clothe the naked. If thou hast not spoiled, thou hast declined from

evil; but thou wilt not do good, except thou receive the stranger into thine house. So then depart from evil, as to do good. "Seek peace, and ensue it." He hath not said, Thou shalt have peace here; seek it, and ensue it. Whither shall I ensue it? Whither it hath gone before. For the Lord is our peace, hath risen again, and hath ascended into Heaven. "Seek peace, and ensue it;" because when thou also hast risen, this mortal shall be changed, and thou shall embrace peace there where no man shall trouble thee. For there is perfect peace, where thou wilt not hunger. ...

19. "The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous:" fear not then; labour; the eyes of the Lord are upon thee. "And His Ears are open unto their prayers" (ver. 15). What wouldest thou more? If an householder in a great house should not hearken to a servant murmuring, he would complain, and say, What hardship do we here suffer, and none heareth us. Canst thou say this of God, What hardships I suffer, and none heareth me? If He heard me, haply, sayest thou, He would take away my tribulation: I cry unto Him, and yet have tribulation. Only do thou hold fast His ways, and when thou art in tribulation, He heareth thee. But He is a Physician, and still hast thou something of putrefaction; thou criest out, but still He cutteth, and taketh not away His Hand, until He hath cut as much as pleaseth Him. For that Physician is cruel who heareth a man, and spareth his wound and putrefaction. How do mothers rub their children in the baths for their health. Do not the little ones cry out in their hands? Are they then cruel because they spare not, nor hearken unto their tears? Are they not full of affection? And yet the children cry out, and are not spared. So our God also is full of charity, but therefore seemeth He not to hear, that He may spare and heal us for everlasting.

20. Haply say the wicked, I securely do evil, because the Eyes of the Lord are not upon me: God attendeth to the righteous, me He seeth not, and whatever I do, I do securely. Immediately added the Holy Spirit, seeing the thoughts of men, and said, "But the Face of the Lord is against them that do evil; to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth" (ver. 16). 21. "The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and delivered them out of all their troubles" (ver. 17). Righteous were the Three Children; out of the furnace cried they unto the Lord, and in His praises their flames cooled. The flame could not approach nor hurt the innocent and righteous Children praising God, and He delivered them out of the fire. Some one saith, Lo, truly righteous were those who were heard, as it is written, "The righteous

cried, and the Lord heard them, and delivered them out of all their troubles: but I have cried, and He delivereth me not; either I am not righteous, or I do not the things which He commandeth me, or haply He seeth me not. Fear not: only do what He commandeth; and if He deliver thee not bodily, He will deliver thee spiritually. For He who took out of the fire the Three Children, did He take out of the fire the Maccabees? Did not the first sing hymns in the flames, these last in the flames expire? The God of the Three Children, was not He the God also of the Maccabees? The one He delivered, the other He delivered not. Nay, He delivered both: but the Three Children He so delivered, that even the carnal were confounded; but the Maccabees therefore He delivered not so, that those who persecuted them should go into greater torments, while they thought that they had overcome God's Martyrs.

He delivered Peter, when the Angel came unto him being in prison, and said, "Arise, and go forth," and suddenly his chains were loosed, and he followed the Angel, and He delivered him. Had Peter lost righteousness when He delivered him not from the cross? Did He not deliver him then? Even then He delivered him. Did his long life make him unrighteous? Haply He heard him more at last than at first, when truly He delivered him out of all his troubles. For when He first delivered him, how many things did he suffer afterwards! For thither He sent him at last, where he could have suffered no evil. 22. "The Lord is nigh unto them that have broken their heart; and saveth such as be lowly in spirit" (ver. 18). God is High: let a Christian be lowly. If he would that the Most High God draw nigh unto him, let him be lowly. A great mystery, Brethren. God is above all: thou raisest thyself, and touchest not Him: thou humblest thyself, and He descendeth unto thee. "Many are the troubles of the righteous" (ver. 19): doth He say, "Therefore let Christians be righteous, therefore let them hear My Word, that they may suffer no tribulation? He promiseth not this; but saith, "Many are the troubles of the righteous." Rather, if they be unrighteous they have fewer troubles, if righteous they have many. But after few tribulations, or none, these shall come to tribulation everlasting, whence they shall never be delivered: but the righteous after many tribulations shall come to peace everlasting, where they shall never suffer any evil. "Many are the tribulations of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of all."

23. "The Lord keepeth all their bones: not one of them shall be broken" (ver. 20): this also, Brethren, let us not receive carnally. Bones are

the firm supports of the faithful. For as in flesh our bones give firmness, so in the heart of a Christian it is faith that gives firmness. The patience then which is in faith, is as the bones of the inner man: this is that which cannot be broken. "The Lord keepeth all their bones: not one of them shall be broken. If of our Lord God Jesus Christ he had said this, "The Lord keepeth all the bones of His Son; not one of them shall be broken; as is prefigured of Him also in another place, when the lamb was spoken of that should be slain, and it was said of it, "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof: then was it fulfilled in the Lord, because when He hung upon the Cross, He expired before they came to the Cross, and found His Body lifeless already, and would not break His legs, that it might be fulfilled which was written. But He gave this promise to other Christians also, "The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken. Therefore, Brethren, if we see any Saint suffer tribulation, and haply either by a Physician so cut, or by some persecutor so mangled, that his bones be broken;

let us not say, This man was not righteous, for this hath the Lord promised to His righteous, of whom He said, "The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken. Wouldest thou see that He spoke of other bones, those which we called the firm supports of faith, that is, patience and endurance in all tribulations? For these are the bones which are not broken. Hear, and see ye in the very Passion of our Lord, what I say. The Lord was in the middle Crucified; near Him were two thieves: the one mocked, the other believed: the one was condemned, the other justified: the one had his punishment both in this world, and that which shall be, but unto the other said the Lord, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shall thou be with Me in Paradise; and yet those who came brake not the bones of the Lord, but of the thieves they brake: as much were broken the bones of the thief who blasphemed, as of the thief who believed. Where then is that which is spoken, "The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken"? Lo, unto whom He said, "To-day shall thou be with Me in Paradise," could He keep all his bones? The Lord answereth thee: Yea, I kept them: for the firm support of his faith could not be broken by those blows whereby his legs were broken.

24. "The death of sinners is the worst" (ver. 21). Attend, Brethren, for the sake of those things which I said. Truly Great is the Lord, and His Mercy, truly Great is He who gave to us to eat His Body, wherein He suffered such great things, and His Blood to drink. How regardeth He them that think

evil and say, "Such an one died ill, by beasts was he devoured: he was not a righteous man, therefore he perished ill; for else would he not have perished. Is he then righteous who dieth in his own house and in his own bed? This then (sayest thou) it is whereat I wonder; because I know the sins and the crimes of this same man, and yet he died well; in his own house, within his own doors, with no injury of travel, with none even in mature age. Hearken, "The death of sinners is worst. What seemeth to thee a good death, is worst if thou couldest see within. Thou seest him outwardly lying on his bed, dost thou see him inwardly carried to hell? Hearken, Brethren, and learn from the Gospel what is the "worst death" of sinners. Were there not two in that age, a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; another a poor man who lay at his door full of sores, and the dogs came and licked his sores, and he desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table?

Now it came to pass that the poor man died (righteous was that poor man), and was carried by Angels into Abraham's bosom. He who saw his body lying at the rich man's door, and no man to bury it, what haply said he? So die he who is my enemy; and whoever persecutes me, so may I see him. His body is accursed with spitting, his wounds stink; and yet in Abraham's bosom he resteth. If we are Christians, let us believe: if we believe not, Brethren, let none feign himself a Christian. Faith bringeth us to the end. As the Lord spake these things, so are they. Doth indeed an astrologer speak unto thee, and it is true, and doth Christ speak, and it is false? But by what sort of death died the rich man? What sort of death must it not be in purple and fine linen, how sumptuous, how pompous! What funeral ceremonies were there! In what spices was that body buried! And yet when he was in hell, being in torments, from the finger of that despised poor man he desired one drop of water to be poured upon his burning tongue, and obtained it not. Learn then what meaneth, "The death of sinners is worst; and ask not beds covered with costly garments, and to have the flesh wrapped in many rich things, friends exhibiting a show of lamentation, a household beating their breasts, a crowd of attendants going before and following when the body is carried out, marble and gilded memorials.

For if ye ask those things, they answer you what is false, that of many not light sinners, but altogether wicked, the death is best, who have deserved to be so lamented, so embalmed, so covered, so carried out, so entombed. But

ask the Gospel, and it will show to your faith the soul of the rich man burning in torments, which was nothing profited by all those honours and obsequies, which to his dead body the vanity of the living did afford. 25. But because there are many kinds of sinners, and not to be a sinner is difficult, or perhaps in this life impossible, he added immediately, of what kind of sinners the death is worst. "And they that hate the righteous one" (saith he) "shall perish." What righteous one, but "Him that justifieth the ungodly"? Whom, but our Lord Jesus Christ, who is also "the propitiation for our sins"? Who then hate Him, have the worst death; because they die in their sins, who are not through Him reconciled to our God. "For the Lord redeemeth the souls of His servants." But according to the soul is death to be understood either the worst or best, not according to bodily either dishonour, or honours which men see. "And none of them which trust in Him shall perish" (ver. 22); this is the manner of human righteousness, that mortal life, however advanced, because without sin it cannot be, in this perisheth not, while it trusteth in Him, in whom is remission of sins. Amen.

PSALM 35

1. ...The title of it causeth us no delay, for it is both brief, and to be understood not difficult, especially to those nursed in the Church of God. For so it is, "To David himself." The Psalm then is to David himself: now David is interpreted, Strong in hand, or Desirable. The Psalm then is to the Strong in hand, and Desirable, to Him who for us hath overcome death, who unto us hath promised life: for in this is He Strong in hand, that He hath overcome death for us; in this is He Desirable, that He hath promised unto us life eternal. For what stronger than that Hand which touched the bier, and he that was dead rose up? What stronger than that Hand which overcame the world, not armed with steel, but pierced with wood? Or what more desirable than He, whom not having seen, the Martyrs wished even to die, that they might be worthy to come unto Him? Therefore is the Psalm unto Him: to Him let our heart, to Him our tongue sing worthily: if yet Himself shall deign to give somewhat to sing. ...

2. "Judge Thou, O Lord" (saith he), "them that hurt me, and fight Thou against them that fight against me" (ver. 1). "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And whereby doth God this for us? "Take hold" (saith he) "of arms and shield, and rise up to my help" (ver. 2). A great spectacle is it, to see God armed for thee. And what is His Shield, what are His Arms? "Lord," in

another place saith the man who here also speaketh, "as with the shield of Thy good-will hast Thou compassed us." But His Arms, wherewith He may not only us defend, but also strike His enemies, if we have well profited, shall we ourselves be. For as we from Him have this, that we be armed, so is He armed from us. But He is armed from those whom He hath made, we are armed with those things which we have received from Him who made us: These our arms the Apostle in a certain place calleth, "The shield of Faith, the helmet of Salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." He hath armed us with such arms as ye have heard, arms admirable, and unconquered, insuperable and shining; spiritual truly and invisible, because we have to fight also against invisible enemies. If thou seest thine enemy, let thine arms be seen. We are armed with faith in those things which we see not, and we overthrow enemies whom we see not. ...

3. "Pour forth the weapon, and stop the way against them that persecute me" (ver. 3). Who are they that persecute thee? Haply thy neighbour, or he whom thou hast offended, or to whom thou hast done wrong, or who would take away what is thine, or against whom thou preachest the truth, or whose sin thou rebukest, or whom living ill by thy well living thou offendest. There are indeed even these enemies to us, and they persecute us: but other enemies we are taught to know, those against whom we fight invisibly, of whom the Apostle warneth us, saying, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," that is, against men; not against those whom ye see, but against those whom ye see not; "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the world, of this darkness." ... "The whole world lieth in wickedness;" therefore the Apostle explained of what world they were rulers, he said, "of this darkness." The rulers of this world, I say, are the rulers of this darkness. ...

4. And what follows? "Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul" (ver. 4): for to this end they seek after it, to destroy it. For I would that they would seek it for good! for in another Psalm he blameth this in men, that there was none who would seek after his soul: "Refuge failed me: there was none that would seek after my soul." Who is this that saith, "There was none that would seek after my soul"? Is it haply He, of whom so long before it was predicted, "They pierced My Hands and My Feet, they numbered all My Bones, they stared and looked upon Me, they have parted My Garments among them, and cast lots for My Vesture"? Now all these things were done before their eyes, and there was none who would seek

after His Soul. ... 5. ...Many have been confounded to their health: many, put to shame, have passed over from the persecution of Christ to the society of His members with devoted piety; and this would not have been, had they not been confounded and put to shame. Therefore he wished well to them. ...Let them not go before, but follow; let them not give counsel, but take it. For Peter would go before the Lord, when the Lord spake of His future Passion: he would to Him as it were give counsel for His health. The sick man to the Saviour give counsel for His health! And what said he to the Lord, affirming that His future Passion? "Be it far from Thee, Lord. Be gracious to Thyself. This shall not be to Thee." He would go before that the Lord might follow; and what said He? "Get thee behind Me, Satan." By going before thou art Satan, by following thou wilt be a disciple. The same then is said to these also, "Let them be turned back and brought to confusion that think evil against me." For when they have begun to follow after, now they will not think evil against me, but desire my good.

6. What of others? For all are not so conquered as to be converted and believe: many continue in obstinacy, many preserve in heart the spirit of going before, and if they exert it not, yet they labour with it, and finding opportunity bring it forth. Of such, what followeth? "Let them be as dust before the wind" (ver. 5). "Not so are the ungodly, not so; but as the dust which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth." The wind is temptation; the dust are the ungodly. When temptation cometh, the dust is raised, it neither standeth nor resisteth. "Let them be as dust before the wind, and let the Angel of the Lord trouble them." "Let their way be darkness and slipping" (ver. 6). A horrible way! Darkness alone who feareth not? A slippery way alone who avoids not? In a dark and slippery way how shall thou go? where set foot? These two ills are the great punishments of men: darkness, ignorance; a slippery way, luxury. "And let the Angel of the Lord persecute them;" that they be not able to stand. i For any one in a dark and slippery way, when he seeth that if he move his foot he will fall, and there is no light before his feet, haply resolveth to wait until light come; but here is the Angel of the Lord persecuting them. These things he predicted would come upon them, not as though he wished them to happen. Although the Prophet in the Spirit of God so speaketh these things, even as God doth the same, with sure judgment, with a judgment good, righteous, holy, tranquil; not moved with

wrath, not with bitter jealousy, not with desire of wreaking enmities, but of punishing wickedness with righteousness; nevertheless, it is a prophecy.

7. But wherefore these so great evils? By what desert? Hear by what desert. "For without cause have they hid for me the corruption of their trap" (ver. 7). For Him that is our Head, observe, the Jews did this: they hid the corruption of their trap. For whom hid they their trap? For Him who saw the hearts of those that hid. But yet was He among them like one ignorant, as though He were deceived, whereas they were in that deceived, that they thought Him to be deceived. For therefore was He as though deceived, living among them, because we among such as they were so to live, as to be without doubt deceived. He saw His betrayer, and chose him the more to a necessary work. By his evil He wrought a great good: and yet among the twelve was he chosen, lest even the small number of twelve should be without one evil. This was an example of patience to us, because it was necessary that we should live among the evil: it was necessary that we should endure the evil, either knowing them or knowing them not: an example of patience He gave thee lest thou shouldest fail, when thou hast begun to live among the evil. And because that School of Christ in the twelve failed not, how much more ought we to be firm, when in the great Church is fulfilled what was predicted of the mixture of the evil. ...

8. But yet what is to be done? "Without a cause have they hid for me the corruption of their trap." What meaneth, "Without a cause"? I have done them no evil, I have hurt them not at all. "Vainly have they reviled my soul." What is, "Vainly"? Speaking falsely, proving nothing. "Let a trap come upon them which they know not of" (ver. 8). A magnificent retribution, nothing more just! They have hidden a trap that I might know not: let a trap come upon them which they know not of. For I know of their trap. But what, trap is coming upon them? That which they know not of. Let us hear, lest haply he speak of that. "Let a trap come upon them, which they know not of." Perhaps that is one which they hid for him, that another which shall come upon themselves. Not so: but what? "The wicked shall be holden with the cords of his own sins." Thereby are they deceived, whereby they would deceive. Thence shall come mischief to them, whence they endeavoured mischief. For it follows, "And let the net which they have hidden catch themselves, and let them fall into their own trap." As if any one should prepare a cup of poison for another, and forgetting should drink it up himself: or as if

one should dig a pit, that his enemy might fall thereinto in the darkness and himself forgetting what he had dug, should first walk that way, and fall into it. ...

9. This then for the wicked that would hurt me: what for me? "But my soul shall rejoice in the Lord" (ver. 9); as in Him from whom it hath heard, "I am thy salvation; as not seeking other riches from without; as not seeking to abound in pleasures and good things of earth; but loving freely the true Spouse, not from Him wishing to receive aught that may delight, but Him alone proposing to itself, by whom it may be delighted. For what better than God will be given unto me? God loveth me: God loveth thee. See He hath proposed to thee, Ask what thou wilt. If the emperor should say to thee, Ask what thou wilt, what commands, what dignities, wouldest thou burst forth with! What great things wouldest thou propose to thyself, both to receive and to bestow! When God saith unto thee, Ask what thou wilt, what wilt thou ask? empty thy mind, exert thy avarice, stretch forward as far as possible, and enlarge thy desire: it is not any one, but Almighty God that said, Ask what thou wilt. If of possessions thou art a lover, thou wilt desire the whole earth, that all who are born may be thy husbandmen, or thy slaves. And what when thou hast possessed the whole earth? Thou wilt ask the sea, in which yet thou canst not live. In this greediness the fishes will have the better of thee. But perhaps thou wilt possess the islands. Pass over these also;

ask the air although thou canst not fly; stretch thy desire even unto the heavens, call thine own the sun, the moon, and the stars, because He who made all said, Ask what thou wilt: yet nothing wilt thou find more precious, nothing wilt thou find better, than Himself who made all things. Him seek, who made all things, and in Him and from Him shalt thou have all things which He made. All things are precious, because all are beautiful; but what more beautiful than He? Strong are they; but what stronger than He? And nothing would He give thee rather than Himself. If aught better thou hast found, ask it. If thou ask aught else, thou wilt do wrong to Him, and harm to thyself, by preferring to Him that which He made, when He would give to thee Himself who made. ... "But my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; it shall rejoice in His salvation." The salvation of God is Christ: "For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." 10. "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee" (ver. 10). Who can speak anything worthily of these words? I think them only to be pronounced, not to be expounded. Why seekest thou this or

that? What is like unto thy Lord? Him hast thou before thee. "The unrighteous have declared unto me delights, but not after Thy law, O Lord!" Persecutors have been who have said, Worship Saturn, worship Mercury. I worship not idols (saith he): "Lord, who is like unto Thee? They have eyes, and see not; ears have they, but they hear not." "Lord, who is like unto Thee," who hast made the eye to see, the ear to hear? But I (saith he) worship not idols, for them a workman made. Worship a tree or mountain; did a workman make them also? Here too, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Earthly things are shown unto me; Thou art Creator of the earth. And from these haply they turn to the higher creation, and say to me, Worship the Moon, worship this Sun, who with his light, as a great lamp in the Heavens, maketh the day. Here also I plainly say, "Lord, who is like unto Thee?" The Moon and the Stars Thou hast made, the Sun to rule the day hast Thou kindled, the Heavens hast Thou framed together. There are many invisible things better. But haply here also it is said to me, Worship Angels, adore Angels. And here also will I say, "Lord, who is like unto Thee?" Even the Angels Thou hast created. The Angels are nothing, but by seeing Thee. It is better with them to possess Thee, than by worshipping them to fall from Thee.

11. O Body of Christ, Holy Church, let all thy bones say, "Lord, who is like unto thee?" And if the flesh under persecution hath fallen away, let the bones say, "Lord, who is like unto Thee?" For of the righteous it is said, "The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken." Of how many righteous have the bones under persecution been broken? Finally, "The just shall live by faith," and "Christ justifieth the ungodly." But how justifieth He any except believing and confessing? "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Therefore also that thief, although from His theft led to the judge, and from the judge to the cross, yet on the very cross was justified: with his heart he believed, with his mouth he confessed. For neither to a man unrighteous and not already justified, would the Lord have said, "To-day shall thou be with Me in Paradise," and yet his bones were broken. For when they came to take down the bodies, by reason of the approaching Sabbath, the Lord was found already dead, and His Bones were not broken. But of those that yet lived, that they might be taken down, the legs were broken, that so from this pain having died, they might be buried. Were then of the one thief, who persisted in his ungodliness on the cross, the bones broken, and not also of the other

who with his heart believed, and with his mouth made confession unto salvation? Where then is that which was said, "The Lord keepeth all his bones; not one of them shall be broken;" except that in the Body of the Lord the name of bones is given to all the righteous, the firm in heart, the strong, yielding to no persecutions, no temptations, so as to consent unto evil? ...

12. "Which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him; yea, the poor and needy from him that spoileth him." ...Who that deliverest, but He who is Strong in hand? Even that David shall deliver the poor from him that is too strong for him. For the devil was too strong for thee, and held thee, because he conquered thee, when thou consentedst unto him. But what hath the Strong in hand done? "No man entereth into a strong man's house, to spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man." By His own Power, most Holy, most Magnificent, hath He bound the devil by pouring forth the weapon to stop the way against him, that He may deliver the poor and needy, to whom there was no helper. For who is thy helper but the Lord to whom thou sayest, "O Lord, My Strength, and My Redeemer." If thou wilt presume of thy own strength, thereby wilt thou fall, whereof thou hast presumed: if of another's, he would lord it over thee, not succour thee. He then alone is to be sought Who hath redeemed them, and made them free, and hath given His Blood to purchase them, and of His servants hath made them His Brethren. ...

13. Let then our Head say, "False witnesses did rise up, they laid to My charge things that I knew not" (ver. 11). But let us say to our Head, Lord, what knewest Thou not? Didst Thou indeed know not anything? Didst Thou not know the hearts of them that charged Thee? Didst Thou not foresee their deceits? Didst Thou not give Thyself into their hands knowingly? Hadst Thou not come that Thou mightest suffer by them? What then knewest Thou not? He knew not sin, and thereby He knew not sin, not by not judging, but by not committing. There are phrases of this kind also in daily use, as when thou sayest of any one, He knoweth not to stand, that is, he doth not stand; and, He knoweth not to do good, because he doth not good; and, He knoweth not to do ill, because he doth not ill. ...What knew not Christ so much, as to blaspheme? Thereof was He called in question by His persecutors, and because He spake truth, He was judged to have spoken blasphemy? But by whom? By them of whom it followeth, "They rewarded Me evil for good, and barrenness to My Soul" (ver. 12). I gave unto them fruitful-

ness, they rewarded Me barrenness; I gave life, they death; I honour, they dishonour; I medicine, they wounds; and in all these which they rewarded Me, was truly barrenness. This barrenness in the tree He cursed, when seeking fruit He found none. Leaves there were, and fruit there was not: words there were, and deeds there were not. See of words abundance, and of deeds barrenness. "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, stealest: thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, committest adultery." Such were they who charged Christ with things that He knew not.

14. "But I, when they troubled me, clothed myself with sackcloth, and humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer shall return into mine own bosom" (ver. 13)... Brethren, if for some little space with pious curiosity we lift the veil, and search with the intent eye of the heart the inner part of this Scripture, we find that even this the Lord did. Sackcloth, haply He calleth His mortal flesh. Wherefore Sackcloth? For the likeness of sinful flesh. For the Apostle saith, "God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that through sin He might condemn sin in the flesh: that is, He clothed His Own Son with sackcloth, that through sackcloth He might condemn the goats. Not that there was sin, I say not in the Word of God, but not even in that Holy Soul and Mind of a Man, which the Word and Wisdom of God had so joined to Himself as to be One Person. Nay, nor even in His very Body was any sin, but the likeness of sinful flesh there was in the Lord; because death is not but by sin, and surely that Body was mortal. For had It not been mortal, It had not died; had It not died, It had not risen again; had It not risen again, It had not showed us an example of eternal life. So then death, which is caused by sin, is called sin;

as we say the Greek tongue, the Latin tongue, meaning not the very member of flesh, but that which is done by the member of flesh. For the tongue in our members is one among others, as the eyes, nose, ears, and the rest: but the Greek tongue is Greek words, not that the tongue is words, but that words are by the tongue. ...So then the sin of the Lord is that which was caused by sin; because He assumed flesh, of the same lump which had deserved death by sin. For to speak more briefly, Mary who was of Adam died for sin, Adam died for sin, and the Flesh of the Lord which was of Mary died to put away sin. With this sackcloth the Lord clothed Himself, and therefore was He not known, because He lay hid under sackcloth. "When they," saith He, "troubled Me, I clothed Myself with sackcloth: that is, they raged, I lay

hid. For had He not willed to lie hid neither could He have died, since in one moment of time one drop only of His Power, if indeed it is to be called a drop, He put forth, when they wished to seize Him, and at His one question, "Whom seek ye? they all went back and fell to the ground. Such power could He not have humbled in passion, if He had not lain hid under sackcloth.

15. Again, if we have understood the sackcloth, how understand we the fasting? Wished Christ to eat, when He sought fruit on the tree, and if He had found, would He have eaten? Wished Christ to drink, when He said to the woman of Samaria, "Give Me to drink"? when He said on the Cross, "I thirst"? For what hungered, for what thirsted Christ, but our good works? Because in them that crucified and persecuted Him He had found no good works, He fasted; for they rewarded barrenness to His soul. For what a fast was His, who found barely one thief, whom on the Cross He might taste! For the Apostles had fled, and had hidden themselves in the multitude. And even Peter, who even to the death of his Lord had promised to persevere, had now thrice denied Him, had now wept, and still lay hid in the multitude, still feared lest He should be known. Lastly, having seen Him dead, all of them despaired of their own safety and despairing He found them, after His resurrection, and when He spake with them, found them grieving and mourning, no longer hoping anything. ...In great fasting had the Lord remained, had He not refreshed them that He might feed on them. For He refreshed them, He comforted them, He confirmed them, and into His Own Body converted them. In this manner then was our Lord also in fasting.

16. "And My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom." In the bosom of this verse is plainly a great depth, and may the Lord grant that it be fathomable by us. For in the "bosom" a secret is understood. And we ourselves, Brethren, are here well admonished to pray within our own bosom, where God seeth, where God heareth, where no human eye penetrateth, where none seeth but He who succoureth; where Susanna prayed, and her voice, though it was not heard by men, yet by God was heard. ...We read also that in the mount Jesus prayed alone, we read that He passed the night in prayer, even at the time of His Passion. What then? "And My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom." I know not what better to understand concerning the Lord: take meanwhile what now occurs; perhaps something better will occur hereafter, either to me or to some better: "My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom:" this I understand to be said, because in His Own Bosom He

had the Father. "For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." In Himself He had Him to whom He prayed. He was not far from Him, for Himself had said, "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me." But because prayer rather belongeth to very Man (for according as Christ is the Word, He prayeth not, but heareth prayer; and seeketh not to be succoured for Himself, but with the Father succoureth all): what is, "My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom," but in Me My Manhood invoketh in Me My Godhead.

17. "As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him: as one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself" (ver. 14). Now looketh He back to His Own Body: let us now look to this. When we rejoice in prayer, when our mind is calmed, not by the world's prosperity, but by the light of Truth: (who perceiveth this light, knoweth what I say, and he seeth and acknowledgeth what is said, "As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him"): even then our soul pleaseth God, not placed afar off, for, "In Him," saith one, "we live and move and have our being," but as a Brother, as a Neighbour, as a Friend. But if it be not such that it can so rejoice, so shine, so approach, so cleave unto Him, and seeth itself far off thence, then let it do what followeth, "As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled Myself. As our Brother, so I pleased Him," said He, drawing near; "As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled Myself," said He, removed and set afar off. ...Did not Peter draw near, when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God"? And yet the same man became afar off by saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee. Lastly, what said He, his Neighbour, as it were, to him drawing near? "Blessed art thou, Simon, Barjona. To him afar off, as it were, and unlike, what said He? "Get thee behind Me, Satan.

To him drawing near, "Flesh and blood," saith He, "hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father, which is in Heaven. His Light is shed over thee, in His Light thou shinest. But when having become afar off, he spake against the Lord's Passion, which should be for our Salvation, "Thou savourest not," said He, "the things that be of God, but those that be of men," One rightly placing together both of these saith in a certain Psalm, "I said in my ecstasy, I am cast off from before Thine Eyes. In my ecstasy, would he not have said, had he not drawn near; for ecstasy, is the transporting of the mind. He poured: over himself his own soul, and drew near unto God; and through some cloud and weight of the flesh being again cast down to earth, and re-collecting where he had been, and seeing where he was, he said, "I am cast off

from before Thine Eyes. This then, "As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him," may He grant to be done in us; but when that is not, let even this be done, "As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself."

18. And against Me they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together (ver. 15), against Me only: they rejoicing, I sorrowful. But we heard just now in the Gospel, "Blessed are they that mourn." If they are blessed that mourn, miserable are they that laugh. "Against Me they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: scourges were gathered together against Me, and they knew not." Because they laid to My charge things that I knew not, they also knew not Whom they charged. 19. "They tempted Me, and mocked Me with mocking" (ver. 16). That is, they derided Me, they insulted Me; this of the Head, this of the Body. Consider, Brethren, the glory of the Church which now is; remember its past dishonours, remember how once were Christians everywhere put to flight, and wherever found, mocked, beaten, slain, exposed to beasts, burned, men rejoicing against them. As it was to the Head, so it is also to the Body. For as it was to the Lord on the Cross, so has it been to His Body in all that persecution which was made but now: nor even now cease the persecutions of the same. Wherever men find a Christian, they are wont to insult, to persecute, to deride him, to call him dull, senseless, of no spirit, of no knowledge. Do they what they will, Christ is in Heaven: do they what they will, He hath honoured His punishment, already hath He fixed His Cross in the foreheads of all; the ungodly is permitted to insult, to rage he is not permitted; but yet from that which the tongue uttereth, is understood what he beareth in his heart: "They gnashed upon Me with their teeth."

20. "Lord, when wilt Thou look on? Rescue My Soul from their deceits, My Darling from the lions" (ver. 17). For to us the time is slow; and in our person is this said, "When wilt Thou look on?" that is, when shall we see vengeance upon those who insult us? When shall the Judge, overcome by weariness, hear the widow? But our Judge, not from weariness, but from love, delayeth our salvation; from reason, not from need; not that He could not even now succour us, but that the number of us all may be filled up even to the end. And yet out of our desire, what do we say? "Lord, when wilt Thou look on? Rescue My Soul from their deceits, My Darling from the lions:" that is, My Church from raging powers. 21. Lastly, wouldest thou know what is that Darling? Read the words following: "I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, in the great Congregation; in a weighty people will I praise Thee" (ver. 18).

Truly saith He, "I will confess unto Thee:" for confession is made in all the multitude, but not in all is God praised: the whole multitude heareth our confession, but not in all the multitude is the praise of God. For in all the whole multitude, that is, in the Church which is spread abroad in the whole world, is chaff, and wheat: the chaff flieth, the wheat remaineth; therefore, "in a weighty people will I praise Thee." In a weighty people, which the wind of temptation carries not away, in such is God praised. For in the chaff He is ever blasphemed. ...

22. "Let not them that are Mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over Me: for they rejoice over Me because of My chaff. "Who hate Me without a cause; that is, whom I never hurt; "winking with their eyes" (ver. 19): that is, pretending hypocrites, "For they spake indeed peace to Me" (ver. 20). What is, "winking with their eyes"? Declaring by their looks, what they carry not in their heart. And who are these "winking with their eyes"? "For they spake indeed peace to Me; and with wrath devised craftily. "Yea they opened their mouth wide against Me" (ver. 21). First winking with their eyes, those lions sought to ravish and devour; first fawning they spake peace, and then with wrath devised craftily. What peace spake they? "Master, we know that Thou acceptest not man's person, and teachest the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? They spake indeed peace unto Me. What then? Didst not Thou know them, and deceived they Thee, winking with their eyes? Truly He knew them; therefore said He, "Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Afterward, "they opened their mouth wide against Me," crying, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him! and said, Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it. This, when they insulted Him, "Aha, Aha, Prophecy unto us, Thou Christ. As their peace was pretended when they tempted Him concerning the money, so now insulting was their praise. "They said, Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it" (ver. 21): that is, Thy deeds, Thy miracles.

This Man is the Christ. "If He be the Christ, let Him come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him. He saved others, Himself He cannot save. "Our eyes have seen it. This is all whereof He boasted Himself, when "He called Himself the Son of God. But the Lord was hanging patient upon the Cross: His power had He not lost, but He showed His patience. For what great thing was it for Him to come down from the Cross, who could afterward rise again from the sepulchre? But He seems to have yielded to His insulters; and this, beloved, that having risen again He should show Himself to

His own, and not to them, and this is a great mystery; for His resurrection signified the New Life, but the New Life is known to His friends, not to His enemies. 23. "This Thou hast seen, O Lord; keep not silence" (ver. 22). What is, "keep not silence"? Judge Thou. For of judgment it is said in a certain place, "I have kept silence; shall I keep silence for ever? And of the delaying of judgment it is said to the sinner, "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself. How keepeth He silence, who speaketh by the Prophets, who speaketh with His own mouth in the Gospel, who speaketh by the Evangelists, who speaketh by us, when we speak the truth? What then? He keepeth silence from judgment, not from precept, not from doctrine.

But this His judgment the Prophet in a manner invoceth, and predicteth: "Thou hast seen, O Lord: keep not silence; that is, Thou wilt not keep silence, needs must that Thou wilt judge. "O Lord, be not far from Me. Until Thy judgment come, be not far from Me, as Thou hast promised, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." 24. "Arise, Lord, and attend to My judgment" (ver. 23). To what judgment? That Thou art in tribulation; that Thou art tormented with labours and pains? Do not even many wicked men suffer the same? To what judgment? Therefore art Thou righteous, because Thou sufferest these things? No: but what? "To My judgment." What followeth? "Attend to My judgment; even to My cause, My God, and My Lord." Not to My punishment, but to My cause: not to that which the robber hath in common with Me, but to that whereof is said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." For this cause is distinguished. For punishment is equal to good and bad. Therefore Martyrs, not the punishment, but the cause maketh, for if punishment made Martyrs, all the mines would be full of Martyrs, every chain would drag Martyrs, all that are executed with the sword would be crowned. Therefore let the cause be distinguished; let none say, because I suffer, I am righteous. Because He who first suffered, suffered for righteousness' sake, therefore He added a great exception, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." For many having a good cause do persecution, and many having a bad cause suffer persecution. For if persecution could not be done rightly, it had not been said in a certain Psalm, "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him did I persecute." ...Let none then say, I suffer persecution: let him not sift the punishment, but prove the cause: lest if he prove not the cause, he be numbered

with the ungodly. Therefore how watchfully, how excellently hath This Man recommended Himself, "O Lord, attend to My judgment," not to My punishments; "even to My cause, My God, and My Lord."

25. "Judge me, O Lord, according to My righteousness" (ver. 24); that is, attend to My cause. Not according to My punishment, but "according to My righteousness, O Lord, My God," that is, according to this judge Thou Me. "And let them not rejoice over Me;" that is, Mine enemies. 26. "Let them not say in their heart, Aha, aha, so would we have it" (ver. 25); that is, We have done what we could, we have slain him, we have taken him away. "Let them not say:" show them that they have done nothing. "Let them not say, We have swallowed him up." Whence say those Martyrs, "If the Lord had not been on our side, then they had swallowed us up quick." What is, "had swallowed us up"? Had passed into their own body. For that thou swallowest up, which thou passest into thy own body. The world would swallow thee up; swallow thou the world, pass it into thy own body: kill and eat. As it was said to Peter, "Kill and eat;" do thou kill in them what they are, make them what thou art. But if they on the other hand persuade thee to ungodliness, thou art swallowed up by them. Not when they persecute thee art thou swallowed up by them, but when they persuade thee to be what they are. "Let them not say, We have swallowed him up." Do thou swallow up the body of Pagans. Why the body of Pagans? It would swallow thee up. Do thou to it, what it would to thee. Therefore perhaps that calf, being ground to powder, was cast into the water and given to the children of Israel to drink, that so the body of ungodliness might be swallowed up by Israel. "Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour" (ver. 26); so that we may swallow up them ashamed and brought to confusion. "Who speak evil against me:" let them be ashamed, let them be brought to confusion.

27. What sayest thou now, the Head with the Members? "Let them shout for joy and be glad that favour My righteous cause:" who cleave to My Body. Yea, let them say "continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant" (ver. 27). "And my tongue shall speak of Thy righteousness, and of Thy praise all the day long" (ver. 28). And whose tongue endureth to speak the praise of God all the day long? See now I have made a discourse something longer; ye are wearied. Who endureth to praise God all the day long? I will suggest a remedy, whereby thou mayest praise

God all the day long if thou wilt. Whatever thou dost, do well, and thou hast praised God. When thou singest an hymn, thou praisest God, but what doth thy tongue, unless thy heart also praise Him? Hast thou ceased from singing hymns, and departed, that thou mayest refresh thyself? Be not drunken, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou go away to sleep? Rise not to do evil, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou transact business? Do no wrong, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou till thy field? Raise not strife, and thou hast praised God. In the innocency of thy works prepare thyself to praise God all the day long.

PSALM 36

1. ... "The ungodly hath said in himself that he will sin: there is no fear of God before his eyes" (ver. 1). Not of one man, but of a race of ungodly men he speaketh, who fight against their own selves, by not understanding, that so they may live well; not because they cannot, but because they will not. For it is one thing, when one endeavours to understand some thing, and through infirmity of flesh cannot; as saith the Scripture in a certain place, "For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things;" but another when the human heart acts mischievously against itself, so that what it could understand, if it had but good will thereto, it understandeth not, not because it is difficult, but because the will is contrary. But so it is when men love their own sins, and hate God's Commandments. For the Word of God is thy adversary, if thou be a friend to thy ungodliness; but if thou art an adversary to thy ungodliness, the Word of God is thy friend, as well as the adversary of thy ungodliness. ...

2. "For he hath wrought deceitfully in His sight" (ver. 2). In whose sight? In His, whose fear was not before the eyes of him that did work deceitfully. "To find out his iniquity, and hate it. He wrought so as not to find it. For there are men who as it were endeavour to seek out their iniquity, and fear to find it; because if they should find it, it is said to them, Depart from it: this thou didst before thou knewest; thou didst iniquity being in ignorance; God giveth pardon: now thou hast discovered it, forsake it, that to thy ignorance pardon may easily be given; and that with a clear face thou mayest say to God, "Remember not the sins of my youth, and of my ignorance. Thus he seeketh it, thus he feareth lest he find it; for he seeketh it deceitfully. When saith a man, I knew not that it was sin? When he hath seen that it is sin, and

ceaseth to do the sin, which he did only because he was ignorant: such an one in truth would know his sin, to find it out, and hate it. But now many "work deceitfully to find out their iniquity: they work not from their heart to find it out and hate it. But because in the very search after iniquity, there is deceit, in the finding it there will be defence of it. For when one hath found his iniquity, lo now it is manifest to him that it is iniquity.

Do it not, thou sayest. And he who wrought deceitfully to find it out, now he hath found, hateth it not; for what saith he? How many do this! Who is there that doth it not? And will God destroy them all? Or at least he saith this: if God would not these things to be done, would men live who commit the same? Seest thou that thou didst work deceitfully to find out thy iniquity? For if not deceitfully but sincerely thou hadst wrought, thou wouldest now have found it out, and hated it; now thou hast found it out, and thou defendest it; therefore thou didst work deceitfully, when thou soughtest it. 3. "The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he would not understand, that he might do good" (ver. 3). Ye see that he attributeth that to the will: for there are men who would understand and cannot, and there are men who would not understand, and therefore understand not. "He would not understand, that he might do good." 4. "He hath meditated iniquity on his bed." What said He, "On his bed?" (ver. 4). "The ungodly hath said in himself, that he will sin:" what above he said, in himself, that here he said, "On his bed." Our bed is our heart: there we suffer the tossing of an evil conscience; and there we rest when our conscience is good. Whoso loveth the bed of his heart, let him do some good therein. There is our bed, where the Lord Jesus Christ commands us to pray. "Enter into thy chamber, and shut thy door." What is, "Shut thy door?" Expect not from God such things as are without, but such as are within; "and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Who is he that shutteth not the door? He who asketh much from God such things, and in such wise directeth all his prayers, that he may receive the goods that are of this world. Thy door is open, the multitude seeth when thou prayest. What is it to shut thy door? To ask that of God, which God alone knoweth how He giveth. What is that for which thou prayest, when thou hast shut the door? What "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, or hath entered into the heart of man." And haply it hath not entered into thy verybed, that is, into thy heart. But God knoweth what He will give:

but when shall it be? When the Lord shall be revealed, when the Judge shall appear. ...

5. "He hath set himself in every way that is not good." What is, "he hath set himself"? He hath sinned perseveringly. Whence also of a certain pious and good man it is said, "He hath not stood in the way of sinners." As this "hath not stood," so that "hath set himself." "But wickedness hath he not hated." There is the end, there the fruit: if a man cannot but have wickedness, let him at least hate it. For when thou hatest it, it scarcely occurs to thee to do any wickedness. For sin is in our mortal body, but what saith the Apostle? "Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." When beginneth it not to be therein? When that shall be fulfilled in us which he saith, "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality." Before this come to pass, there is a delighting in sin in the body, but greater is the delighting and the pleasure in the Word of Wisdom, in the Commandment of God. Overcome sin and the lust thereof. Sin and iniquity do thou hate, that thou mayest join thyself to God, who hateth it as well as thou. Now being joined in mind unto the Law of God, in mind thou servest the Law of God. And if in the flesh thou therefore servest the law of sin, because there are in thee certain carnal delightings, then will there be none when thou shalt no longer fight. It is one thing not to fight, and to be in true and lasting peace; another to fight and overcome; another to fight and to be overcome; another not to fight at all, but to be carried away. ...

6. "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and Thy truth reacheth even unto the clouds" (ver. 5). I know not what Mercy of Him he meaneth, which is in the heavens. For the Mercy of the Lord is also in the earth. Thou hast it written, "The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord." Of what Mercy then speaketh He, when He saith, "Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens"? The gifts of God are partly temporal and earthly, partly eternal and heavenly. Whoso for this worshippeth God, that he may receive those temporal and earthly goods, which are open to all, is still as it were like the brutes: he enjoyeth indeed the Mercy of God, but not that which is excepted, which shall not be given, save only to the righteous, to the holy, to the good. What are the gifts which abound to all? "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Who hath not this Mercy of God, first that he hath being, that he is distinguished from the

brutes, that he is a rational animal, so as to understand God; secondly, that he enjoys this light, this air, rain, fruits, diversity of seasons, and all the earthly comforts, health of body, the affection of friends, the safety of his family? All these are good, and they are God's gifts. ...

7. But this man rightly understood what mercy he should pray for from God. "Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens; and Thy Truth reacheth even to the clouds." That is, the Mercy which Thou givest to Thy Saints, is Heavenly, not earthly; is Eternal, not temporal. And how couldest Thou declare it unto men? Because "Thy Truth reacheth even unto the clouds." For who could know the Heavenly Mercy of God, unless God should declare it unto men? How did He declare it? By sending His truth even unto the clouds. What are the clouds? The Preachers of the Word of God. ... Truth reached even to the clouds: therefore unto us could be declared the Mercy of God, which is in Heaven and not in earth. And truly, Brethren, the clouds are the Preachers of the Word of Truth. When God threateneth through His Preachers, He thunders through the clouds. When God worketh miracles through His Preachers, He lightneth through the clouds, He terrifieth through the clouds, and watereth by the rain. Those Preachers, then, by whom is preached the Gospel of God, are the clouds of God. Let us then hope for Mercy, but for that which is in the Heavens.

8. "Thy Righteousness is like the mountains of God: Thy Judgments are a great deep" (ver. 6). Who are the mountains of God? Those who are called clouds, the same are also the mountains of God. The great Preachers are the mountains of God. And as when the sun riseth, he first clothes the mountains with light, and thence the light descends to the lowest parts of the earth: so our Lord Jesus Christ, when He came, first irradiated the height of the Apostles, first enlightened the mountains, and so His Light descended to the valley of the world. And therefore saith He in a certain Psalm, "I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help." But think not that the mountains themselves will give thee help: for they receive what they may give, give not of their own. And if thou remain in the mountains, thy hope will not be strong: but in Him who enlighteneth the mountains, ought to be thy hope and presumption. Thy help indeed will come to thee through the mountains, because the Scriptures are administered to thee through the mountains, through the great Preachers of the Truth: but fix not thy hope in them. Hear what He saith next following: "I lifted up mine

eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help." What then? Do the mountains give thee help? No; hear what follows, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made Heaven and earth." Through the mountains cometh help, but not from the mountains. From whom then? "From the Lord, which made Heaven and earth." ...

9. "Thy Judgments are like the great abyss. The abyss he calleth the depth of sin, whither every one cometh by despising God; as in a certain place it is said, "God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do the things which are not convenient." ...Because then they were proud and ungrateful, they were held worthy to be delivered up to the lusts of their own hearts, and became a great abyss, so that they not only sinned, but also worked craftily, lest they should understand their iniquity, and hate it. That is the depth of wickedness, to be unwilling to find it out and to hate it. But how one cometh to that depth, see; "Thy Judgments are the great abyss. As the mountains are by the Righteousness of God, who through His Grace become great: so also through His Judgments come they unto the depth, who sink lowest. By this then let the mountains delight thee, by this turn away from the abyss, and turn thyself unto that, of which it is said, "My help cometh from the Lord. But whereby? "I have lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains. What meaneth this? I will speak plainly. In the Church of God thou findest an abyss, thou findest also mountains; thou findest there but few good, because the mountains are few, the abyss broad; that is, thou findest many living ill after the wrath of God, because they have so worked that they are delivered up to the lusts of their own heart;

so now they defend their sins and confess them not; but say, Why? What have I done? Such an one did this, and such an one did that. Now will they even defend what the Divine Word reproves. This is the abyss. Therefore in a certain place saith the Scripture (hear this abyss), "The sinner when he cometh unto the depth of sin despiseth. See, "Thy Judgments are like the great abyss. But yet not art thou a mountain; not yet art thou in the abyss; fly from the abyss, tend towards the mountains; but yet remain not on the mountains. "For thy help cometh from the Lord, which made Heaven and earth." 10. Because he said, Thy Mercy is in the Heavens, that it may be known to be also on earth, he said, "O Lord, Thou surest man and beast, as Thy Mercy is multiplied, O God" (ver. 7). Great is Thy Mercy, and manifold is Thy Mercy, O God; and that showest Thou both to man and beast. For

from whom is the saving of men? From God. Is not the saving of beasts also from God? For He who made man, made also beasts; He who made both, saveth both; but the saving of beasts is temporal. But there are who as a great thing ask this of God, which He hath given to beasts. "Thy Mercy, O God, is multiplied," so that not only unto men, but unto beasts also is given the same saving which is given to men, a carnal and temporal saving.

11. Have not men then somewhat reserved with God, which beasts deserve not, and where-unto beasts arrive not? They have evidently. And where is that which they have. "The children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings." Attend, my Beloved, to this most pleasant sentence; "Thou savest man and beast." First, he spake of "man and beast," then of "the children of men;" as though "men" were one, "the children of men" other. Sometimes in Scripture children of men is said generally of all men, sometimes in some proper manner, with some proper signification, so that not all men are understood; chiefly when there is a distinction. For not without reason is it here put; "O Lord, Thou savest man and beast: but the children of men;" as though setting aside the first, he keepeth separate the children of men. Separate from whom? Not only from beasts, but also from men, who seek from God the saving of beasts, and desire this as a great thing. Who then are the children of men? Those who put their trust under the shadow of His wings. For those men together with beasts rejoice in possession, but the children of men rejoice in hope: those follow after present goods with beasts, these hope for future goods with Angels. ...

12. "They shall be satiated with the fulness of Thy House" (ver. 8). He promiseth us some great thing. He would speak it, and He speaketh it not. Can He not, or do not we receive it? I dare, my Brethren, to say, even of holy tongues and hearts, by which Truth is declared to us, that it can neither be spoken, which they declared, nor even thought of. For it is a great thing, and ineffable; and even they saw through a glass darkly, as saith the Apostle, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Lo, they who saw through a glass darkly, thus burst forth. What then shall we be, when we shall see face to face? That with which they travailed in heart, and could not with their tongue bring forth, that men might receive it. For what necessity was there that he should say, "They shall be satiated with the fulness of Thy House"? He sought a word whereby to express from human things what he would say; and because he saw that men drowning themselves in drunken-

ness receive indeed wine without measure, but lose their senses, he saw what to say; for when shall have been received that ineffable joy, then shall be lost in a manner the human soul, it shall become Divine, and be satiated with the fulness of God's House. Wherefore also in another Psalm it is said, "Thy cup inebriating, how excellent is it!

With this cup were the Martyrs satiated when going to their passion, they knew not their own. What so inebriated as not to know a wife weeping, not children, not parents? They knew them not they thought not that they were before their eyes. Wonder not: they were inebriated Wherewith were they so? Lo, they had received a cup wherewith they were satiated Wherefore he also gives thanks to God, saying "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? I will take the cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. Therefore, Brethren of men, let us be children and let us trust under the shadow of His wings and be satiated with the fulness of His House As I could, I have spoken; and as far as I can I see; and how far I see, I cannot speak. "And of the torrent of Thy Pleasure shalt Thou give them to drink. A torrent we call water coming with a flood. There will be a flood of God's Mercy to overflow and inebriate those who now put their trust under the shadow of His wings. What is that Pleasure? As it were a torrent inebriating the thirsty. Let him then who thirsts now, lay up hope: whoso thirsts now, let him have hope; when inebriated, he shall have possession: before he have possession, let him thirst in hope. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

13. With what fountain then wilt thou be overflowed, and whence runneth such a torrent of His Pleasure? "For with Thee," saith he, "is the fountain of Life." What is the fountain of Life, but Christ? He came to thee in the flesh, that He might bedew thy thirsty lips: He will satisfy thee trusting, who bedewed thee thirsting. "For with Thee is the fountain of Life; in Thy Light shall we see light" (ver. 9). Here a fountain is one thing, light another: there not so. For that which is the Fountain, the same is also Light: and whatever thou wilt thou callest It, for It is not what thou callest It: for thou canst not find a fit name: for It remaineth not in one name. If thou shouldst say, that It is Light only, it would be said to thee, Then without cause am I told to hunger and thirst, for who is there that eateth light? It is said to me plainly, directly, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." If It is Light, my eyes must I prepare. Prepare also lips; for That which is Light is

also a Fountain: a Fountain, because It satisfieth the thirsty: Light, because It enlighteneth the blind. Here sometimes, light is in one place, a fountain in another. For sometimes fountains run even in darkness; and sometimes in the desert thou sufferest the sun, findest no fountain: here then can these two be separated: there thou shall not be wearied, for there is a Fountain; there thou shall not be darkened, for there is Light.

14. "Show forth Thy Mercy unto them that know Thee; Thy Righteousness to them that are of a right heart" (ver. 10). As I have said, Those are of a right heart who follow in this life the Will of God. The will of God is sometimes that thou shouldest be whole, sometimes that thou shouldest be sick. If when thou art whole God's Will be sweet, and when thou art sick God's Will be bitter; thou art not of a right heart. Wherefore? Because thou wilt not make right thy will according to God's Will, but wilt bend God's Will to thine. That is right, but thou art crooked: thy will must be made right to That, not That made crooked to thee; and thou wilt have a right heart. It is well with thee in this world; be God blessed, who comforteth thee: it goeth hardly with thee in this world; be God blessed, because He chasteneth and proveth thee; and so wilt thou be of a right heart, saying, "I will bless the Lord at all times: His Praise shall be ever in my mouth."

15. "Let not the foot of pride come against me" (ver. 11). But now he said, The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings: they shall be satiated with the fulness of Thy House. When one hath begun to be plentifully overflowed with that Fountain, let him take heed lest he grow proud. For the same was not wanting to Adam, the first man: but the foot of pride came against him, and the hand of the sinner removed him, that is, the proud hand of the devil. As he who seduced him, said of himself, "I will sit in the sides of the north; so he persuaded him, by saying, "Taste, and ye shall be as gods. By pride then have we so fallen as to arrive at this mortality. And because pride had wounded us, humility maketh us whole. God came humbly, that from such great wound of pride He might heal man. He came, for "The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us. He was taken by the Jews; He was reviled of them. Ye heard when the Gospel was read, what they said, and to Whom they said, "Thou hast a devil: and He said not, Ye have a devil, for ye are still in your sins, and the devil possesseth your hearts. He said not this, which if He had said, He had said truly: but it was

not meet that He should say it, lest He should seem not to preach Truth, but to retort evil speaking.

He let go what He heard as though He heard it not. For a Physician was He, and to cure the madman had He come. As a Physician careth not what he may hear from the madman; but how the madman may recover and become sane; nor even if he receive a blow from the madman, careth he; but while he to him giveth new wounds, he cureth his old fever: so also the Lord came to the sick man, to the madman came He, that whatever He might hear, whatever He might suffer, He should despise; by this very thing teaching us humility, that being taught by humility, we might be healed from pride: from which he here prayeth to be delivered, saying, "Let not the foot of pride come against me; neither let the hand of the sinner remove me. For if the foot of pride come, the hand of the sinner removeth. What is the hand of the sinner? The working of him that adviseth ill. Hast thou become proud? Quickly he corrupteth thee who adviseth ill. Humbly fix thyself in God, and care not much what is said to thee. Hence is that which is elsewhere spoken, "From my secret sins cleanse Thou me; and from others' sins also keep Thy servant. What is, "From my secret sins"? "Let not the foot of pride come against me. What is, "From other men's sins also keep Thy servant"? "Let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

Keep that which is within, and thou shall not fear from without. 16. But wherefore so greatly fearest thou this? Because it is said, "Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity" (ver. 12); so that they have come into that abyss of which it is said, "Thy judgments are like the great abyss: so that they have come even to that deep wherein sinners who despise have fallen. "Have fallen. Whereby did they first fall? By the foot of pride. Hear the foot of pride. "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God. Therefore came against them the foot of pride, whereby they came into the depth. "God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do those things which are not convenient. The root of sin, and the head of sin feared he who said, "Let not the foot of pride come against me. Wherefore said he, "the foot"? Because by walking proudly man deserted God, and departed from Him. His foot, called he his affection. "Let not the foot of pride come against me: let not the hand of the wicked remove me: that is, let not the works of the wicked remove me from Thee, that I should wish to imitate them. But wherefore said he this against pride, "Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity"? Because those

who now are ungodly, have fallen by pride. Therefore when the Lord would caution His Church, He said, "It shall watch thy head, and thou shall watch his heel.

The serpent watcheth when the foot of pride may come against thee, when thou mayest fall, that he may cast thee down. But watch thou his head: the beginning of all sin is pride. "Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity: they are driven out, and are not able to stand. He first, who in the Truth stood not, then, through him, they whom God sent out of Paradise. Whence he, the humble, who said that he was not worthy to unloose His shoe's latchet, is not driven out, but standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice; not because of his own, lest the foot of pride come against him, and he be driven out, and be not able to stand. ...

PSALM 37

On the First Part of the Psalm. 1. With terror do they hear of the coming of the last day, who will not be secure by living well: and who fain would live ill, long. But it was for useful purposes that God willed that day to remain unknown; that the heart may be ever ready to expect that of which it knows it is to come, but knows not when it is to come. Seeing, however, that our Lord Jesus Christ was sent to us to be our "Master," He said, that "of the day not even the Son of Man knew," because it was not part of His office as our Master that through Him it should become known to us. For indeed the Father knoweth nothing that the Son knoweth not; since that is the Very Knowledge of the Father Itself, which is His Wisdom; now His Son, His Word, is "His Wisdom." But because it was not for our good to know that, which however was known to Him who came indeed to teach us, though not to teach us that which it was not good for us to know, He not only, as a Master, taught us something, but also, as a Master, left something untaught. For, as a Master, He knew how both to teach us what was good for us, and not to teach us what was injurious. Now thus, according to a certain form of speech, the Son is said not to know what He does not teach: that is, in the same way that we are daily in the habit of speaking, He is said not to know what He causes us not to know. ...

2. This it is that disturbs you who are a Christian; that you see men of bad lives prospering, and surrounded with abundance of things like these; you see them sound in health, distinguished with proud honours; you see their fam-

ily unvisited by misfortune; the happiness of their relatives, the obsequious attendance of their dependants, their most commanding influence, their life uninterrupted by any sad event; you see their characters most profligate, their external resources most affluent; and your heart says that there is no Divine judgment; that all things are carried to and fro by accidents, and blown about in disorderly; and irregular motions. For if God, thou sayest, regarded human affairs, would his iniquity flourish, and my innocence suffer? Every sickness of the soul hath in Scripture its proper remedy. Let him then whose sickness is of that kind that he says in his heart things like these, let him drink this Psalm by way of potion. ...

3. "Be not envious because of evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity" (ver. 1). "For they shall soon wither like the grass, and shall fade like the herbs of the meadow" (ver. 2). That which to thee seemeth long, is "soon" in the sight of God. Conform thou thyself to God; and it will be "soon" to thee. That which he here calls "grass," that we understand by the "herbs of the meadow. They are some worthless things, occupying the surface only of the ground, they have no depth of root. In the winter then they are green; but when the summer sun shall begin to scorch, they will wither away. For now it is the season of winter. Thy glory cloth not as yet appear. But if thy love hath but a deep root, like that of many trees during winter, the frost passes away, the summer (that is, the Day of Judgment) will come; then will the greenness of the grass wither away. Then will the glory of the trees appear. "For ye" (saith the Apostle) "are dead. even as trees seem to be in winter, as it were dead, as it were withered. What is our hope then, if we are dead? The root is within; where our root is, there is our life also, for there our love is fixed. "And your life is hid with Christ in God. When shall he wither who is thus rooted? But when will our spring be? When our summer?

When will the honour of foliage clothe us around, and the fulness of fruit make us rich? When shall this come to pass? Hear what follows: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. And what then shall we do now? "Be not envious because of the evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon wither like the grass, and fade like the herb of the meadow." 4. What shouldest thou do then? "Trust in the Lord" (ver. 3). For they too trust, but not "in the Lord." Their hope is perishable. Their hope is short-lived, frail, fleeting, transitory, baseless. "Trust thou in the Lord." "Behold," thou sayest,

"I do trust; what am I to do?" "And do good." Do not do that evil which thou beholdest in those men, who are prosperous in wickedness. "Do good, and dwell in the land." Lest haply thou shouldest be doing good without "dwelling in the land." For it is the Church that is the Lord's land. It is her whom He, the Father, the tiller of it, waters and cultivates. For there are many that, as it were, do good works, but yet, in that they do not "dwell in the land," they do not belong to the husbandman. Therefore do thou thy good, not outside of the land, but do thou "dwell in the land." And what shall I have?

"And thou shalt be fed in its riches." What are the riches of that land? Her riches are her Lord! Her riches are her God! He it is to whom it is said, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup." In a late discourse we suggested to you, dearly beloved, that God is our possession, and that we are at the same time God's possession. Hear how that He is Himself the riches of that land. "Delight thyself in the Lord" (ver. 4). As if thou hadst put the question, and hadst said "Show me the riches of that land, in which thou biddest me dwell", he says, "Delight thyself in the Lord." 5. "And He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Understand in their proper signification, "the desires of thine heart." Distinguish the "desires of thine heart" from the desires of thy flesh; distinguish as much as thou canst. It is not without a meaning that it is said in a certain Psalm, "God is" (the strength) "of mine heart." For there it says in what follows: "And God is my portion for ever." For instance: One labours under bodily blindness. He asks that he may receive his sight. Let him ask it; for God does that too, and gives those blessings also. But these things are asked for even by the wicked. This is a desire of the flesh. One is sick, and prays to be made sound. From the point of death he is restored to health. That too is a desire of the flesh, as are all of such a kind. What is "the desire of the heart"? As the desire of the flesh is to wish to have one's eyesight restored, to enable him, that is, to see that light, which can be seen by such eyes; so "the desire of the heart" relates to a different sort of light. For, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Delight thou thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."

6. "Behold" (you say), "I do long after it, I do ask for it, I do desire it. Shall I then accomplish it?" No. Who shall then? "Reveal thy way unto the Lord: trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass" (ver. 5). Mention to Him what thou sufferest, mention to Him what thou dost desire. For what is it that thou sufferest? "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against

the flesh." What is it then that thou dost desire? "Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And because it is He "Himself" that "will bring it to pass," when thou shall have "revealed thy ways unto Him;" hear what follows: "The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." What is it then that He is to bring to pass, since it is said, "Reveal thy way unto Him, and He will bring it to pass"? What will He bring to pass?

"And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light" (ver. 6). For now, "thy righteousness" is hid. Now it is a thing of faith; not yet of sight. You believe something that you may do it. You do not yet see that in which you believe. But when thou shall begin to see that, which thou didst believe before, "thy righteousness will be brought forth to the light," because it is thy faith that was thy righteousness. For "the just lives by faith." 7. "And He shall bring forth thy judgment as the noon-day." That is to say, "as the clear light." It was too little to say, "as the light." For we call it "light" already, even when it but dawns: we call it light even while the sun is rising. But never is the light brighter than at mid-day. Therefore He will not only "bring forth thy righteousness as the light," but "thy judgment shall be as the noon-day." For now dost thou make thy "judgment" to follow Christ. This is thy purposé: this is thy choice: this is thy "judgment."...

8. "What should I do then?" Hear what thou shouldest do. "Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him" (ver. 7). Be this thy life, to obey His commandments. For this is to submit thee to Him; and to entreat Him until He give thee what He hath promised. Let good works "continue;" let prayer "continue." For "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Wherein dost thou show that thou art "submitted to Him"? In doing what He hath commanded. But haply thou dost not receive thy wages as yet, because as yet thou art not able. For He is already able to give them; but thou art not already able to receive them. Exercise thou thyself in works. Labour in the vineyard; at the close of the day crave thy wages. "Faithful is He" who brought thee into the vineyard. "Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him."

9. "See! I do so; I do 'submit to the Lord, and I do entreat.' But what do you think? That neighbour of mine is a wicked man, living a bad life, and prosperous! His thefts, adulteries, robberies, are known to me. Lifted up above every one, proud, and raised on high by wickedness, he deigns not to notice me. In these circumstances, how shall I hold out with patience?" This is a sickness; drink, by way of remedy. "Fret not thyself because of him who

prospereth in his way." He prospereth, but it is "in his way:" thou sufferest, but it is in God's way! His portion is prosperity on his way, misery on arriving at its end: yours, toil on the road, happiness in its termination. "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; and the way of the ungodly shall perish." Thou walkest those ways which "the Lord knoweth," and if thou dost suffer toil in them, they do not deceive thee. The "way of the ungodly" is but a transitory happiness; at the end of the way the happiness is at an end also. Why? Because that way is "the broad road;" its termination leads to the pit of hell. Now, thy way is narrow; and "few there be" that enter in through it: but into how ample a field it comes at the last, thou oughtest to consider. "Fret not thyself at him who prospereth in his way; because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass."

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath" (ver. 8). Wherefore art thou wroth? Wherefore is it that, through that passion and indignation, thou dost blaspheme, or almost blaspheme? Against "the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass, cease from anger, and forsake wrath." Knowest thou not whither that wrath tempts thee on? Thou art on the point of saying unto God, that He is unjust. It tends to that. "Look! why is that man prosperous, and this man in adversity?" Consider what thought it begets: stifle the wicked notion. "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath:" so that now returning to thy senses, thou mayest say, "Mine eye is disturbed because of wrath." What eye is that, but the eye of faith? To the eye of thy faith I appeal. Thou didst believe in Christ: why didst thou believe? What did He promise thee? If it was the happiness of this world that Christ promised thee, then murmur against Christ; yes! murmur against Him, when thou seest the wicked flourishing. What of happiness did He promise? What, save in the Resurrection of the Dead? But what in this life? That which was His portion. His portion, I say! Dost thou, servant and disciple, disdain what thy Lord, what thy Master bore? ...

"For evil-doers shall be cut off" (ver. 9). "But I see their prosperity." Believe Him who saith, "they shall be cut off;" Him who seeth better than thou, since His eye anger cannot cloud. "For evil-doers shall be cut off. But those that wait upon the Lord," -not upon any one that can deceive them; but verily on Him who is the Truth itself, -"But those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land." What "land," but that Jerusalem, with the love of which whosoever is inflamed, shall come to peace at the last. 10. "But how long is the sinner to flourish? How long shall I have to endure?" Thou art im-

patient; that which seems long to thee, will soon come to pass. It is infirmity makes that seem long, which is really short, as is found in the case of the longings of sick men. Nothing seems so long as the mixing of the potion for him when athirst. For all that his attendants are making all speed, lest haply the patient be angry; "When will it be done? (he cries). When will it be drest? When will it be served?" Those who are waiting upon you are making haste, but your infirmity fancies that long which is being done with expedition. Behold ye, therefore, our Physician complying with the infirmity of the patient, saying, "How long shall I have to endure? How long will it be?"

"Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be" (ver. 10). Is it certainly among sinners, and because of the sinner, that thou murmurest? "A little while, and he shall not be. Lest haply because I said, "They that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land," thou shouldest think that waiting to be of very long duration. Wait "a little while," thou shalt receive without end what thou waitest for. A little while, a moderate space. Review the years from Adam's time up to this day; run through the Scriptures. It is almost yesterday that he fell from Paradise! So many ages have been measured out, and unrolled. Where now are the past ages? Even so, however, shall the few which remain, pass away also. Hadst thou been living throughout all that time, since Adam was banished from Paradise up to this present day, thou wouldest certainly see that the life, which had thus flown away, had not been of long duration. But how long is the duration of each individual's life? Add any number of years you please: prolong old age to its longest duration: what is it? Is it not but a morning breeze? Be it so, however, that the Day of Judgment is far off, when the reward of the righteous and of the unrighteous is to come: your last day at all events cannot be far off. Make thyself ready against this! For such as thou shall have departed from this life, shalt thou be restored to the other.

At the close of that short life, you will not yet be, where the Saints shall be, to whom it shall be said, "Come, ye blessed of My Father: inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. You will not yet be there? Who does not know that? But you may already be there, where that beggar, once "covered with sores," was seen at a distance, at rest, by that proud and unfruitful "rich man" in the midst of his torments. Surely hid in that rest thou waitest in security for the Day of Judgment, when thou art to receive again a body, to be changed so as to be made equal to an Angel. How

long then is that for which we are impatient, and are saying, "When will it come? Will it tarry long? This our sons will say hereafter, and our sons' sons will say too; and, though each one of these in succession will say this same thing, that "little while" that is yet to be, passes away, as all that is already past hath passed away already! O thou sick one! "Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be. Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and thou shalt not find him." ...

11. "But the meek shall inherit the land" (ver. 11). That land is the one of which we have often spoken, the holy Jerusalem, which is to be released from these her pilgrimages, and to live for ever with God, and on God. Therefore, "They shall inherit the land." What shall be their delight? "And they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Let the ungodly man delight himself here in the multitude of his gold, in the multitude of his silver, in the multitude of his slaves, in the multitude, lastly, of his baths, his roses, his intoxicating wines, his most sumptuous and luxurious banquets. Is this the power thou enviest? Is this the glory that delights thee? Would not his fate be worthy to be deplored, even if he were to be so for ever? What shall be thy delights? "And they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Peace shall be thy gold. Peace shall be thy silver. Peace shall be thy lands. Peace shall be thy life, thy God Peace. Peace shall be to thee whatsoever thou dost desire. ...

On the Second Part of the Psalm. 1. Then follow these words: "The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth" (ver. 12): "But the Lord shall laugh at him" (ver. 13). At whom? Surely at the sinner, "gnashing upon" the other "with his teeth." But wherefore shall the Lord "laugh at him"? "For He foreseeth that his day is coming." He seems indeed full of wrath, while, ignorant of the morrow that is in store for him, he is threatening the just. But the Lord beholds and "foresees his day." "What day?" That in which "He will render to every man according to his works." For he is "treasuring up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the just judgment of God." But it is the Lord that foresees it; thou dost not foresee it. It hath been revealed to thee by Him who foresees it. Thou didst not know of the "day of the unrighteous," in which he is to suffer punishment. But He who knows it hath revealed it to thee. It is a main part of knowledge to join thyself to Him who hath knowledge. He hath the eyes of knowledge: have thou the eyes of a believing mind. That which God "sees,"

be thou willing to believe. For the day of the unjust, which God foresees, will come. What day is that? The day for all vengeance! For it is necessary that vengeance should be taken upon the ungodly, that vengeance be taken upon the unjust, whether he turn, or whether he turn not. For if he shall turn from his ways, that very thing, that his "injustice is come to an end," is the infliction of vengeance. ...

2. "The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright heart" (ver. 14). "Their weapon shall enter into their own heart" (ver. 15). It is an easy thing for his weapon, that is, his sword, to reach thy body, even as the sword of the persecutors reached the body of the Martyrs, but when the body had been smitten, "the heart" remained unhurt; but his heart who "drew out the sword against" the body of the just did not clearly remain unhurt. This is attested by this very Psalm. It saith, Their weapon, that is, "Their sword shall," not go into their body, but, "their weapon shall go into their own heart." They would fain have slain him in the body. Let them die the death of the soul. For those whose bodies they sought to kill, the Lord hath freed from anxiety, saying, "Fear not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul." ...

3. "And their bows shall be broken." What is meant by, "And their bows shall be broken"? Their plots shall be frustrated. For above He hath said, "The wicked have drawn out the sword and bent their bows." By the "drawing out of the sword" he would have understood open hostility; but by the "bending of the bow," secret conspiracies. See! His sword destroys himself, and his laying of snares is frustrated. What is meant by frustrated? That it does no mischief to the righteous. How then, for instance (you ask), did it do no mischief to the man, whom it thus stripped of his goods, whom it reduced to straitened circumstances by taking away his possessions? He has still cause to sing, "A little that a righteous man hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly" (ver. 16). 4. ... "For the arms of the wicked shall be broken" (ver. 17). Now by "their arms" is meant their power. What will he do in hell? Will it be what the rich man had to do, he who was wont "to fare sumptuously" in the upper world, and in hell "was tormented"? Therefore their arms shall be broken; "but the Lord upholdeth the righteous." How does He "uphold" them? What saith He unto them? Even what is said in another Psalm, "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage; and let thine heart be strengthened. Wait, I

say, on the Lord." What is meant by this, "Wait on the Lord"? Thou sufferest but for a time; thou shalt rest for ever: thy trouble is short; thy happiness is to be everlasting. It is but for "a little while" thou art to sorrow; thy joy shall have no end. But in the midst of trouble does thy "foot" begin to "slip"? The example even of Christ's sufferings is set before thee. Consider what He endured for thee, in whom no cause was found why He should endure it? How great soever be thy sufferings, thou wilt not come to those insults, those scourgings, to that robe of shame, to that crown of thorns, and last of all to that Cross, which He endured; because that is now removed from the number of human punishments. For though under the ancients criminals were crucified, in the present day no one is crucified. It was honoured, and it came to an end. It came to an end as a punishment; it is continued in glory. It hath removed from the place of execution to the foreheads of Emperors. He who hath invested His very sufferings with such honour, what doth He reserve for His faithful servants? ...

5. But observe whether that was fulfilled in his case which the Psalm now speaks of. "The Lord strengtheneth the righteous.-Not only so" (saith that same Paul, whilst suffering many evils), "but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience hope; but hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Justly is it said by him, now righteous, now "strengthened." As therefore those who persecuted him did no harm to him, when now "strengthened," so neither did he himself do any harm to those whom he persecuted. "But the Lord," he saith, "strengtheneth the righteous." ... 6. Therefore "the Lord does strengthen the righteous." In what way does He strengthen them? "The Lord knoweth the ways of the spotless ones" (ver. 18). When they suffer ills, they are believed to be walking ill ways by those who are ignorant, by those who have not knowledge to discern "the ways of the spotless ones." He who "knoweth those ways," knoweth by what way to lead His own, "them that are gentle," in the right way. Whence in another Psalm he said, "The meek shall He guide in judgment; them that are gentle will He teach His way." How, think you, was that beggar, who lay covered with sores before the rich man's door, spurned by the passers by! How did they, probably, close their nostrils and spit at him! The Lord, however, knew how to reserve Paradise for him. How did they, on the other hand, desire for themselves the life of him who

was "clad in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day!" But the Lord, who foresaw that man's "day coming," knew the torments, the torments without end, that were in store for him. Therefore "The Lord knoweth the ways of the upright."

7. "And their inheritance shall be for ever" (ver. 18). This we hold by faith. Doth the Lord too know it by faith? The Lord knoweth those things with as clear a manifestation, as we cannot speak of even when we shall be made equal to the Angels. For the things that shall be manifest to us, shall not be equally manifest to us as they are now to Him, who is incapable of change. Yet even of us ourselves what is said? "Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." There is therefore surely some blissful vision reserved for us; and if it can be now in some measure conceived, "darkly and through a glass," yet cannot we in any way express in language the ravishing beauty of that bliss, which God reserves for them that fear Him, which He consummates in those that hope in Him, It is for that destination that our hearts are being disciplined in all the troubles and trials of this life. Wonder not that it is in trouble that thou art disciplined for it. It is for something glorious that thou art being disciplined. Whence comes that speech of the now strengthened righteous man: "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us"? What is that promised glory to be, but to be made equal to the Angels and to see God? How great a benefit doth he bestow on the blind man, who makes his eyes sound so as to be able to see the light of this life. ...What reward then shall we give unto that Physician who restores soundness to our inward eyes, to enable them to see a certain eternal Light, which is Himself? ...

8. "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time" (ver. 19). In the day of trouble, in the day of distress, they shall not be "ashamed," as he is ashamed whose hope deceives him. Who is the man that is "ashamed"? He who saith, "I have not found that which I was in hopes of." Nor undeservedly either; for thou didst hope it from thyself or from man, thy friend. But "cursed is he that putteth his trust in man." Thou art ashamed, because thy hope hath deceived thee; thy hope that was set on a lie. For "every man is a liar." But if thou dost place thy hopes on thy God, thou art not made "ashamed." For He in whom thou hast put thy trust, cannot be deceived. Whence also the man

whom we mentioned just above, the now "strengthened" righteous man, when fallen on an evil time, on the day of tribulation, what saith he to show that he was not "ashamed"? "We glory in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; but hope maketh not ashamed." Whence is it that hope "maketh not ashamed"? Because it is placed on God. Therefore follows immediately, "Because the love of God is spread in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us." The Holy Spirit hath been given to us already: how should He deceive us, of whom we possess such an "earnest" already? "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied." ...

9. "For the wicked shall perish. But the enemies of the Lord, when they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall consume away utterly, even as the smoke" (ver. 20). Recognise from the comparison itself the thing which he intimates. Smoke, breaking forth from the place where fire has been, rises up on high, and by the very act of rising up, it swells into a large volume: but the larger that volume is, the more unsubstantial does it become; for from that very largeness of volume, which has no foundation or consistency, but is merely loose, shifting and evanescent, it passes into air, and dissolves; so that you perceive its very largeness to have been fatal to it. For the higher it ascends, the farther it is extended, the wider the circumference which it spreads itself over, the thinner, and the more rare and wasting and evanescent does it become. "But the enemies of the Lord, when they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall consume away utterly even as the smoke." Of such as these was it said, "As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the Truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." But how is it that they resist the Truth, except by the vain inflation of their swelling pride, while they raise themselves up on high, as if great and righteous persons, though on the point of passing away into empty air? But what saith he of them? As if speaking of smoke, he says, "They shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, even as theirs also was." ...

10. "The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again" (ver. 20). He receiveth, and will not repay. What is it he will not repay? Thanksgiving. For what is it that God would have of thee, what doth He require of thee, except that He may do thee good? And how great are the benefits which the sinner hath received, and which he will not repay! He hath received the gift of being; he

hath received the gift of being a man; and of a being highly distinguished above the brutes; he hath received the form of a body, and the distinction of the senses in the body, eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, the nostrils for smelling, the palate for tasting, the hands for touching, and the feet for walking; and even the very health and soundness of the body. But up to this point we have these things in common even with the brute; he hath received yet more than this; a mind capable of understanding, capable of Truth, capable of distinguishing right from wrong; capable of seeking after, of longing for, its Creator, of praising Him, and fixing itself upon Him. All this the wicked man hath received as well as others; but by not living well, he fails to repay that which he owes. Thus it is, "the wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: he will not requite Him from whom he hath received; he will not return thanks; nay, he will even render evil for good, blasphemies, murmuring against God, indignation.

Thus it is that he "borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous showeth mercy, and lendeth" (ver. 21). The one therefore hath nothing; the other hath. See, on the one side, destitution: see, on the other, wealth. The one receiveth and "payeth not again: the "other showeth mercy, and lendeth: and he hath more than enough. What if he is poor? Even so he is rich; do you but look at his riches with the eyes of Religion. For thou lookest at the empty chest; but dost not look at the conscience, that is full of God. ... 11. "For such as shall bless Him shall inherit the land" (ver. 23), that is, they shall possess that righteous One: the only One who both is truly righteous, and maketh righteous: who both was poor in this world, and brought great riches to it, wherewith to make those rich whom He found poor. For it is He who hath enriched the hearts of the poor with the Holy Spirit; and having emptied out their souls by confession of sins, hath filled them with the richness of righteousness: He who was able to enrich the fisherman, who, by forsaking his nets, spurned what he possessed already, but sought to draw up what he possessed not. For "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." And it was not by an orator that He gained to Himself the fisherman; but by the fisherman that He gained to Himself the orator; by the fisherman that He gained the Senator; by the fisherman that He gained the Emperor. For "such as shall bless Him shall inherit the land;" they shall be fellow-heirs with Him, in that "land of the living," of

which it is said in another Psalm, "Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living." ...

12. Observe what follows: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in His way" (ver. 23). That man may himself "delight in the Lord's way," his steps are ordered by the Lord Himself. For if the Lord did not order the steps of man, so crooked are they naturally, that they would always be going through crooked paths, and by pursuing crooked ways, would be unable to return again. He however came, and called us, and redeemed us, and shed His blood; He hath given this ransom; He hath done this good, and suffered these evils. Consider Him in what He hath done, He is God! Consider Him in what He hath suffered, He is Man! Who is that God-Man? Hadst not thou, O man, forsaken God, God would not have been made Man for thee! For that was too little for thee to requite, or for Him to bestow, that He had made thee man; unless He Himself should become Man for thee also. For it is He Himself that hath "ordered our steps;" that we should "delight in His way." ...

13. Now if man were to be through the whole of his life in toil, and in sufferings, in pain, in tortures, in prison, in scourgings, in hunger, and in thirst, every day and every hour through the whole length of life, to the period of old age, yet the whole life of man is but a few days. That labour being over, there is to come the Eternal Kingdom; there is to come happiness without end; there is to come equality with the Angels; there is to come Christ's inheritance, and Christ, our "joint Heir," is to come. How great is the labour, for which thou receivest so great a recompense? The Veterans who serve in the wars, and move in the midst of wounds for so many years, enter upon the military service from their youth, and quit it in old age: and to obtain a few days of repose in their old age, when age itself begins to weigh down those whom the wars do not break down, how great hardships do they endure; what marches, what frosts, what burning suns; what privations, what wounds, and what dangers! And while suffering all these things, they fix their thoughts on nothing but those few days of repose in old age, at which they know not whether they will ever arrive. Thus it is, the "steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in His way. This is the point with which I commenced.

If thou dost "delight in the way" of Christ, and art truly a Christian (for he is a Christian indeed who does not despise the way of Christ, but "de-

lighteth in" following Christ's "way" through His sufferings), do not thou go by any other way than that by which He Himself hath also gone. It appears painful, but it is the very way of safety; another perhaps is delightful, but it is full of robbers. "And he delighteth in His way." 14. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth his hand" (ver. 24). See what it is "to delight in" Christ's "way." Should it happen that he suffers some tribulation; some forfeiture of honour, some affliction, some loss, some contumely, or all those other accidents incident to mankind frequently in this life, he sets the Lord before him, what kind of trials He endured! and, "though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth his hand," because He has suffered before him. For what shouldest thou fear, O man, whose steps are ordered so, that thou shouldest "delight in the way of the Lord"? What shouldest thou fear? Pain? Christ was scourged. Shouldest thou fear contumelies? He was reproached with, "Thou hast a devil," who was Himself casting out the devils. Haply thou fearest faction, and the conspiracy of the wicked. Conspiracy was made against Him. Thou canst not make clear the purity of thy conscience in some accusation, and sufferest wrong and violence, because false witnesses are listened to against thee. False witness was borne against Him first, not only before His death, but also after His resurrection. ...

On the Third Part of the Psalm. 1. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (ver. 25). If it is spoken but in the person of one single individual, how long is the whole life of one man? And what is there wonderful in the circumstance, that a single man, fixed in some one part of the earth, should not, throughout the whole space of his life, being so short as maws life is, have ever seen "the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread," although he may have advanced from youth to age. It is not anything worthy of marvel; for it might have happened, that before his lifetime there should have been some "righteous man seeking bread;" it might have happened, that there had been some one in some other part of the earth not where he himself was. Hear too another thing, which makes an impression upon us. Any single one among you (look you) who has now grown old, may perhaps, when, looking back upon the past course of his life, he turns over in his thoughts the persons whom he has known, not find any instance of a righteous man begging bread, or of his seed begging bread, suggest itself to him; but nevertheless he

turns to the inspired Scriptures, and finds that righteous Abraham was straitened, and suffered hunger in his own country, and left that land for another; he finds too that the son of the very same man, Isaac, removed to other countries in search of bread, for the same cause of hunger. And how will it be true to say, "I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread"? And if he finds this true in the duration of his own life, he finds it is otherwise in the inspired writings, which are more trustworthy than human-life is.

2. What are we to do then? Let us be seconded by your pious attention, so that we may discern the purpose of God in these verses of the Psalm, what it is He would have us understand by them. For there is a fear, lest any unstable person, not capable of understanding the Scriptures spiritually, should appeal to human instances, and should observe the virtuous servants of God to be sometimes in some necessity, and in want, so as to be compelled to beg bread: should particularly call to mind the Apostle Paul, who says, "In hunger and thirst; in cold and nakedness; and should stumble thereat, saying to himself, "Is that certainly true which I have been singing? Is that certainly true, which I have been sounding forth in so devout a voice, standing in church? 'I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.'" Lest he should say in his heart, "Scripture deceives us; and all his limbs should be paralyzed to good works: and when those limbs within him, those limbs of the inner man, shall have been paralyzed (which is the more fearful paralysis), he should henceforth leave off from good works, and say to himself, "Wherefore do I do good works?"

Wherefore do I break my bread to the hungry, and clothe the naked, and take home to mine house him who hath no shelter, putting faith in that which is written? 'I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread;' whereas I see so many persons who live virtuously, yet for the most part suffering from hunger. But if perhaps I am in error in thinking the man who is living well, and the man who is living ill, to be both of them living well, and if God knows him to be otherwise; that is, knows him, whom I think just, to be unjust, what am I to make of Abraham's case, who is commended by Scripture itself as a righteous person? What am I to make of the Apostle Paul, who says, 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.' What? that I should myself be in evils such as he endured, 'In hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness?'

3. Whilst therefore he thus thinks, and whilst his limbs are paralyzed to the power of good works, can we, my brethren, as it were, lift up the sick of the palsy; and, as it were, "lay open the roof" of this Scripture, and let him down before the Lord? For you observe that it is obscure. If obscure therefore, it is covered. And I behold a certain patient paralytic in mind, and I see this roof, and am convinced that Christ is concealed beneath the roof. Let me, as far as I am able, do that which was praised in those who opened the roof, and let down the sick of the palsy before Christ; that He might say unto him, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." For it was so that He made the inner man whole of his palsy, by loosing his sins, by binding fast his faith. ...

4. But who is "the righteous" man, who "hath never been seen forsaken, nor his seed begging bread"? If you understand what is meant by "bread," you understand who is meant by him. For the "bread" is the Word of God, which never departs from the righteous man's mouth. ...See now if "holy meditation doth 'keep thee'" in the rumination of this bread, then "hast thou never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." 5. "He is always merciful, and lendeth" (ver. 26). "Foeneratur" is used in Latin indeed, both for him who lendeth, and for him who borroweth. But in this passage the meaning is more plain, if we express it by "foenerat. What matters it to us, what the grammarians please to rule? It were better for us to be guilty of a barbarism, so that ye understand, than that in our propriety of speech ye be left unprovided. Therefore, that "righteous man is all day merciful, and (foenerat) lendeth. Let not the lenders of money on usury, however, rejoice. For we find it is a particular kind of lender that is spoken of, as it was a particular kind of bread; that we may, in all passages, "remove the roof," and find our way to Christ. I would not have you be lenders of money on usury; and I would not have you be such for this reason, because God would not have you. ...Whence does it appear that God would not have it so? It is said in another place, "He that putteth not out his money to usury. And how detestable, odious, and execrable a thing it is, I believe that even usurers themselves know. Again, on the other hand, I myself, nay rather our God Himself bids thee be an usurer, and says to thee, "Lend unto God. If thou lendest to man, hast thou hope? and shalt thou not have hope, if thou lendest to God?

If thou hast lent thy money on usury to man, that is, if thou hast given the loan of thy money to one, from whom thou dost expect to receive some-

thing more than thou hast given, not in money only, but anything, whether it be wheat, or wine, or oil, or whatever else you please, if you expect to receive more than you have given, you are an usurer, and in this particular are not deserving of praise, but of censure. "What then," you say, "am I to do, that I may 'lend' profitably? Consider what the usurer does. He undoubtedly desires to give a less sum, and to receive a larger; do thou this also; give thou a little, receive much. See how thy principal grows, and increases! Give "things temporal," receive "things eternal: give earth, receive heaven! And perhaps thou wouldest say, "To whom shall I give them? The self-same Lord, who bade thee not lend on usury, comes forward as the Person to whom thou shouldest lend on usury! Hear from Scripture in what way thou mayest "lend unto the Lord. "He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord. For the Lord wanteth not aught of thee. But thou hast one who needs somewhat of thee: thou extendest it to him; he receives it. For the poor hath nothing to return to thee, and yet he would himself fain requite thee, and finds nothing wherewith to do it: all that remains in his power is the good-will that desires to pray for thee.

Now when the poor man prays for thee, he, as it were, says unto God, "Lord, I have borrowed this; be Thou surety for me. Then, though you have no bond on the poor man to compel his repayment, yet you have on a spon-sible security. See, God from His own Scriptures saith unto thee; "Give it, and fear not; I repay it. It is to Me thou givest it. In what way do those who make themselves sureties for others, express themselves? What is it that they say? "I repay it: I take it upon myself. It is to me you are giving it. Do we then suppose that God also says this, "I take it on Myself. It is unto me thou givest it"? Assuredly, if Christ be God, of which there is no doubt, He hath Himself said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat. And when they said unto Him, "When saw we Thee hungry? that He might show Himself to be the Surety for the poor, that He answers for all His members, that He is the Head, they the members, and that when the members receive, the Head receiveth also; He says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these that belong to Me, ye have done it unto Me. Come, thou covetous usurer, consider what thou hast given; consider what thou art to receive.

Hadst thou given a small sum of money, and he to whom thou hadst given it were to give thee for that small sum a great villa, worth incomparably more money than thou hadst given, how great thanks wouldest thou render,

with how great joy wouldst thou be transported! Hear what possession He to whom thou hast been lending bestows. "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive" -What? The same that they have given? God forbid! What you gave were earthly things, which, if you had not given them, would have; become corrupted on earth. For what could you have made of them, if you had not given them? That which on earth would have been lost, has been preserved in heaven. Therefore what we are to receive is that which hath been preserved. It is thy desert that hath been preserved, thy desert hath been made thy treasure. For consider what it is that thou art to receive. Receive-" the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. On the other hand, what shall be their sentence, who would not "lend"? "Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And what is the kingdom which we receive called? Consider what follows: "And these shall go into everlasting burning; but the righteous into life eternal. Make interest for this; purchase this. Give your money on usury to earn this. You have Christ throned in heaven, begging on earth. We have discovered in what way the righteous lendeth. "He is alway merciful, and lendeth."

6. "And his seed is blessed." Here too let not any carnal notion suggest itself. We see many of the sons of the righteous dying of hunger; in what sense then will his seed be blessed? His seed is that which remains of him afterwards that wherewith he soweth here, and will here-after reap. For the Apostle says, "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore time," he says, "let us do good unto all men." This is that "seed" of thine which shall "be blessed." You commit it to the earth, and gather ever so much more; and dost thou lose it in committing it to Christ? See it expressly termed "seed" by the Apostle, when he was speaking of alms. For this he saith; "He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth in blessings, shall also reap in blessings." ...

7. Observe therefore what follows, and be not slothful. "Depart from evil, and do good" (ver. 27). Do not think it to be enough for thee to do, if thou dost not strip the man who is already clothed. For in not stripping the man who is already clothed, thou hast indeed "departed from evil: but do not be barren, and wither. So choose not to strip the man who is clothed already, as to clothe the naked. For this is to "depart from evil, and to do good. And you will say, "What advantage am I to derive from it? He to whom thou lendest

has already assured thee of what He will give thee. He will give thee everlasting life. Give to Him, and fear not! Hear too what follows: "Depart from evil, and do good, and dwell for evermore. And think not when thou givest that no one sees thee, or that God forsakes thee, when haply after thou hast given to the poor, and some loss, or some sorrow for the property thou hast lost, should follow, and thou shouldest say to thyself, "What hath it profited me to have done good works? I believe God doth not love the men who do good. Whence comes that buzz, that subdued murmur among you, except that those expressions are very common? Each one of you at this present moment recognises these expressions, either in his own lips, or on those of his friend. May God destroy them; may He root out the thorns from His field;

may He plant "the good seed," and "the tree bearing fruit"! For wherefore art thou afflicted, O man, that thou hast given some things away to the poor, and hast lost certain other things? Seest thou not that it is what thou hast not given, that thou hast lost? Wherefore dost thou not attend to the voice of thy God? Where is thy faith? wherefore is it so fast asleep? Wake it up in thy heart. Consider what the Lord Himself said unto thee, while exhorting thee to good works of this kind: "Provide yourselves bags which wax not old; a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth. Call this to mind therefore when you are lamenting over a loss. Wherefore dost thou lament, thou fool of little mind, or rather of unsound mind? Wherefore didst thou lose it, except that thou didst not lend it to Me? Wherefore didst thou lose it? Who has carried it off? Thou wilt answer, "A thief. Was it not this, that I forewarned thee of? that thou shouldest not lay it up where the thief could approach? If then he who has lost anything, grieves, let him grieve for this, that he did not lay it up there, whence it could not be lost.

8. "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints" (ver. 28). When the Saints suffer affliction, think not that God doth not judge, or doth not judge righteously. Will He, who warns thee to judge righteously, Himself judge unrighteously? He "loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints." But (think) how the "life" of the Saints is "hid with Him," in such a manner, that who now suffer trouble on earth, like trees in the winter-time, having no fruit and leaves, when He, like a newly-risen sun, shall have appeared, that which before was living in their root, will show itself forth in fruits. He does then "love judgment, and doth not forsake His Saints." ... 9. "But the unrighteous shall be punished; the seed of the wicked shall be cut

off." Just as the "seed of the" other "shall be blessed," so shall the "seed of the wicked be cut off." For the "seed" of the wicked is the works of the wicked. For again, on the other hand, we find the son of the wicked man flourish in the world, and sometimes become righteous, and flourish in Christ. Be careful therefore how thou takest it; that thou mayest remove the covering, and make thy way to Christ. Do not take the text in a carnal sense; for thou wilt be deceived. But "the seed of the wicked"-all the works of the wicked-"will be cut off:" they shall have no fruit. For they are effective indeed for a short time; afterwards they shall seek for them, and shall not find the reward of that which they have wrought. For it is the expression of those who lose what they have wrought, that text which says, "What hath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow." "The seed of the wicked," then, "shall be cut off."

10. "The righteous shall inherit the land" (ver. 29). Here again let not covetousness steal on thee, nor promise thee some great estate; hope not to find there, what you are commanded to despise in this world. That "land" in the text, is a certain "land of the living," the kingdom of the Saints. Whence it is said: "Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living." For if thy life too is the same life as that there spoken of, think what sort of "land" thou art about to inherit. That is "the land of the living;" this the land of those who are about to die: to receive again, when dead, those whom it nourished when living. Such then as is that land, such shall the life itself be also: if the life be for ever, "the land" also is to be thine "for ever." And how is "the land" to be thine "for ever"?

"And they shall dwell therein" (it says) "for ever." It must therefore be another land, where "they are to dwell therein for ever." For of this land (of this earth) it is said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away." 11. "The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom" (ver. 30). See here is that "bread." Observe with what satisfaction this righteous man feedeth upon it; how he turns wisdom over and over in his mouth. "And his tongue talketh of judgment." "The law of his God is in his heart" (ver. 31). Lest haply thou shouldest think him to have that on his lips, which he hath not in his heart, lest thou shouldest reckon him among those of whom it is said, "This people honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." And of what use is this to him? "And none of his steps shall slide." The "word of God in the heart" frees from the snare; the "word of God in the heart" delivers from the evil way; "the

word of God in the heart" delivers from "the slippery place." He is with thee, Whose word departeth not from thee. Now what evil doth he suffer, whom God keepeth? Thou settest a watchman in thy vineyard, and feelest secure from thieves; and that watchman may sleep, and may himself fall, and may admit a thief. But "He who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." "The law of his God is in his heart, and none of his steps shall slide." Let him therefore live free from fear; let him live free from fear even in the midst of the wicked; free from fear even in the midst of the ungodly. For what evil can the ungodly or unrighteous man do to the righteous? Lo! see what follows.

"The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him" (ver. 32). For he says, what it was foretold in the book of Wisdom that he should say, "He is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his life is not like other men's." Therefore he "seeks to slay him." What? Doth the Lord, who keepeth him, who dwelleth with him, who departeth not from his lips, from his heart, doth He forsake him? What then becomes of what was said before: "And He forsaketh not His Saints"? 12. "The wicked therefore watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. But the Lord will not leave him in his hands" (ver. 33). Wherefore then did He leave the Martyrs in the hands of the ungodly? Wherefore did they do unto them "whatsoever they would"? Some they slew with the sword; some they crucified; some they delivered to the beasts; some they burnt by fire; others they led about in chains, till wasted out by a long protracted decay. Assuredly "the Lord forsaketh not His Saints." He will not "leave him in his hands." Lastly, wherefore did He leave His own Son in "the hands of the ungodly"? Here also, if thou wouldest have all the limbs of thy inner man made strong, remove the covering of the roof, and find thy way to the Lord. Hear what another Scripture, foreseeing our Lord's future suffering at the hands of the ungodly, saith. What saith it? "The earth is given into the hands of the wicked." What is meant by "earth" being "given into the hands of the ungodly"? The delivering of the flesh into the hands of the persecutors. But God did not leave "His righteous One" there: from the flesh, which was taken captive, He leads forth the soul unconquered. ...

"The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when there shall be judgment for him" (ver. 33). Some copies have it, "and when He shall judge him, there shall be judgment for him." "For him," however, means when sentence is passed upon him. For we can express ourselves so as to say to

a person, "Judge for me," i.e. "hear my cause." When therefore God shall begin to hear the cause of His righteous servant, since "we must all" be presented "before the tribunal of Christ," and stand before it to receive every one "the things he hath done in this body," whether good or evil, when therefore he shall have come to that Judgment, He will not condemn him; though he may seem to be condemned in this present life by man. Even though the Proconsul may have passed sentence on Cyprian, yet the earthly seat of judgment is one thing, the heavenly tribunal is another. From the inferior tribunal he receives sentence of death; from the superior one a crown, "Nor will He condemn him when there shall be judgment for him."

13. "Wait on the Lord" (ver. 34). And while I am waiting upon Him, what am I to do?—"and keep His ways." And if I keep them, what am I to receive? "And He shall exalt thee to inherit the land." "What land"? Once more let not any estate suggest itself to your mind:-the land of which it is said, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." What of those who have troubled us, in the midst of whom we have groaned, whose scandals we have patiently endured, for whom, while they were raging against us, we have prayed in vain? What will become of them? What follows? "When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it." ... "I have seen the ungodly lifted up on high, and rising above the cedars of Libanus" (ver. 35). And suppose him to be "lifted up on high;" suppose him to be towering above the "rest;" what follows?

"I passed by, and, lo, he was not! I sought him, and his place could nowhere be found!" (ver. 36). Why was he "no more, and his place nowhere to be found"? Because thou hast "passed by." But if thou art yet carnally-minded, and that earthly prosperity appears to thee to be true happiness, thou hast not yet "passed by" him; thou art either his fellow, or thou art below him; go on, and pass him; and when thou hast made progress, and hast passed by him, thou observest him by the eye of faith; thou seest his end, thou sayest to thyself, "Lo! he who so swelled before, is not!" just as if it were some smoke that thou wert passing near to. For this too was said above in this very Psalm, "They shall consume and fade away as the smoke." ... 14. "Keep innocency" (ver. 37); keep it even as thou usedst to keep thy purse, when thou wert covetous; even as thou usedst to hold fast that purse, that it might not be snatched from thy grasp by the thief, even so "keep innocency," lest that be snatched from thy grasp by the devil. Be that thy sure inheritance, of which

the rich and the poor may both be sure. "Keep innocency." What doth it profit thee to gain gold, and to lose innocence?

"Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing which is right." Keep thou thine eyes "right," that thou mayest see "the thing which is right;" not perverted, wherewith thou lookest upon the wicked; not distorted, so that God should appear to thee distorted and wrong, in that He favours the wicked, and afflicts the faithful with persecutions. Dost thou not observe how distorted thy vision is? Set right thine eyes, and "behold the thing that is right." What "thing that is right"? Take no heed of things present. And what wilt thou see? "For there is a remainder for the man that maketh peace." What is meant by "there is a remainder"? When thou art dead, thou shall not be dead. This is the meaning of "there is a remainder." He will still have something remaining to him, even after this life, that is to say, that "seed," which "shall be blessed." Whence our Lord saith, "He that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live;" - "seeing there is a remainder for the man that maketh peace."

15. "But the transgressors shall be destroyed in the self-same thing" (ver. 38). What is meant by, "in the self-same thing"? It means for ever: or all together in one and the same destruction. "The remainder of the wicked shall be cut off." Now there is "(a remainder) for the man that maketh peace:" they therefore who are not peace-makers, are ungodly. For, "Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God." 16. "But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, and He is their strength in the time of trouble" (ver. 39). "And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the sinners" (ver. 40). At present therefore let the righteous bear with the sinner; let the wheat bear with the tares; let the grain bear with the chaff: for the time of separation will come, and the good seed shall be set apart from that which is to be consumed with fire. The one will be consigned to the garner, the other to "everlasting burning;" for it was for this reason that the just and the unjust were at the first together; that the one should lay a stumbling-block, that the other should be proved; that afterwards the one should be condemned, the other receive a crown. ...

PSALM 38

A Psalm TO David Himself, ON The Remembrance OF The Sabbath. 1. What doth this recollection of the Sabbath mean? What is this Sabbath? For it is with groaning that he "calls it to recollection." You have both heard

already when the Psalm was read, and you will now hear it when we shall go over it, how great is his groaning, his mourning, his tears, his misery. But happy he who is wretched after this manner! Whence the Lord also in the Gospel called some who mourn blessed. "How should he be blessed if he is a mourner? How blessed, if he is miserable?" Nay rather, he would be miserable, if he were not a mourner. Such an one then let us understand here too, calling the Sabbath to remembrance (*viz.*), some mourner or other: and would that we were ourselves that "some one or other"! For there is here some person sorrowing, groaning, mourning, calling the Sabbath to remembrance. The Sabbath is rest. Doubtless he was in some disquietude, who with groaning was calling the Sabbath to remembrance. ...

2. "O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine indignation; neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure" (ver. 1). For it will be that some shall be chastened in God's "hot displeasure," and rebuked in His "indignation." And haply not all who are "rebuked" will be "chastened;" yet are there some that are to be saved in the chastening. So it is to be indeed, because it is called "chastening," but yet it shall be "so as by fire." But there are to be some who will be "rebuked," and will not be "corrected." For he will at all events "rebuke" those to whom He will say, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat." ... "Neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure;" so that Thou mayest cleanse me in this life, and make me such, that I may after that stand in no need of the cleansing fire, for those "who are to be saved, yet so as by fire." Why? Why, but because they "build upon the foundation, wood, stubble, and hay." Now they should build on it, "gold, silver, and precious stones;" and should have nothing to fear from either fire: not only that which is to consume the ungodly for ever, but also that which is to purge those who are to escape through the fire. For it is said, "he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." And because it is said, "he shall be saved," that fire is thought lightly of. For all that, though we should be "saved by fire," yet will that fire be more grievous than anything that man can suffer in this life whatsoever. ...

3. Now on what ground does this person pray that he may not be "rebuked in indignation, nor chastened in hot displeasure"? (He speaks) as if he would say unto God, "Since the things which I already suffer are many in number, I pray Thee let them suffice;" and he begins to enumerate them, by way of satisfying God; offering what he suffers now, that he may not have to suffer worse evils hereafter. 4. "For Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy

hand presseth me sore" (ver. 2). "There is no soundness in my flesh, from the face of Thine anger" (ver. 3). He has now begun telling these evils, which he is suffering here: and yet even this already was from the wrath of the Lord, because it was of the vengeance of the Lord. "Of what vengeance? That which He took upon Adam. For think not that punishment was not inflicted upon him, or that God had said to no purpose, "Thou shalt surely die; or that we suffer anything in this life, except from that death which we earned by the original sin. ...Whence then do His "arrows stick fast in" him? The very punishment, the very vengeance, and haply the pains both of mind and of body, which it is necessary for us to suffer here, these he describes by these self-same "arrows. For of these arrows holy Job also made mention, and said that the arrows of the Lord stuck fast in him, whilst he was labouring under those pains. We are used, however, to call God's words also arrows; but could he grieve that he should be struck by these? The words of God are arrows, as it were, that inflame love, not pain. ...We may then understand the "arrows sticking fast," thus: Thy words are fixed fast in my heart; and by those words themselves is it come to pass, that I "called the Sabbath to remembrance:

and that very remembrance of the Sabbath, and the non-possession of it at present, prevents me from rejoicing at present; and causes me to acknowledge that there "is neither health in my very flesh," neither ought it to be so called when I compare this sort of soundness to that soundness which I am to possess in the everlasting rest; where "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality," and see that in comparison with that soundness this present kind is but sickness. 5. "Neither is there any rest in my bones, from the face of my sin. It is commonly enquired, of what person this is the speech; and some understand it to be Christ's, on account of some things which are here said of the Passion of Christ; to which we shall shortly come; and which we ourselves shall acknowledge to be spoken of His Passion. But how could He who had no sin, say, "There is no rest in my bones, from the face of my sin."... For if we were to say that they are not the words of Christ, those words, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? will also not be the words of Christ. For there too you have, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? "The words of mine offences are far from my health. Just as here you have, "from the face of my sins," so there also you have, "the words of my offences. And if Christ is, for all that, without "sin," and without "offences," we begin to think those words in the

Psalm also not to be His. And it is exceedingly harsh and inconsistent that that Psalm should not relate to Christ, where we have His Passion as clearly laid open as if it were being read to us out of the Gospel. For there we have, "They parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.

Why should I mention that the first verse of that Psalm was pronounced by the Lord Himself while hanging on the Cross, with His own mouth, saying, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? What did He mean to be inferred from it, but that the whole of that Psalm relates to Him, seeing He Himself, the Head of His Body, pronounced it in His own Person? Now when it goes on to say, "the words of mine offences," it is beyond a doubt that they are the words of Christ. Whence then come "the sins," but from the Body, which is the Church? Because both the Head and the Body of Christ are speaking. Why do they speak as if one person only? Because "they twain," as He hath said, "shall be one flesh. "This" (says the Apostle) "is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."... For why should He not say, "my sins," who said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in. I was sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Assuredly the Lord was not in prison. Why should He not say this, to whom when it was said, "When saw we Thee a hungred, and athirst, or in prison; and did not minister unto Thee? He replied, that He spake thus in the person of His Body.

"Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of Mine, ye did it not unto Me. Why should He not say, "from the face of my sins," who said to Saul, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me," who, however, being in Heaven, now suffered from no persecutors? But just as, in that passage, the Head spake for the Body, so here too the Head speaks the words of the Body; whilst you hear at the same time the accents of the Head Itself also. Yet do not either, when you hear the voice of the Body, separate the Head from it; nor the Body, when you hear the voice of the Head: because "they are no more twain, but one flesh." 6. "There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of thine anger." But perhaps God is unjustly angry with thee, O Adam; unjustly angry with thee, O son of man; because now brought to acknowledge that thy punishment, now that thou art a man that hath been placed in Christ's Body, thou hast said, "There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger." Declare the justice of God's anger: lest thou shouldest seem to be excusing thyself, and accusing Him. Go on to tell whence the "anger" of the Lord

proceeds. "There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones." He repeats what he said before, "There is no soundness in my flesh;" for, "There is no rest in my bones," is equivalent to this. He does not however repeat "from the face of Thine anger;" but states the cause of the anger of God. "There is no rest in my bones from the face of my sins."

7. "For mine iniquities have lifted up my head; and are like a heavy burden too heavy for me to bear" (ver. 4). Here too he has placed the cause first, and the effect afterwards. What consequence followed, and from what cause, he has told us. "Mine iniquities have lift up mine head." For no one is proud but the unrighteous man, whose head is lifted up. He is "lifted up," whose "head is lifted up on high" against God. You heard when the lesson of the Book of Ecclesiasticus was read: "The beginning of pride is when a man departeth from God." He who was the first to refuse to listen to the Commandment, "his head iniquity lifted up" against God. And because his iniquities have lifted up his head, what hath God done unto him? They are "like a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear"! It is the part of levity to lift up the head, just as if he who lifts up his head had nothing to carry. Since therefore that which admits of being lifted up is light, it receives a weight by which it may be weighed down. For "his mischief returns upon his own head, and his violent dealing comes down upon his own pate." "They are like a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear."

8. "My wounds stink and are corrupt" (ver. 5). Now he who has wounds is not perfectly sound. Add to this, that the wounds "stink and are corrupt." Wherefore do they "stink"? Because they are "corrupt:" now in what way this is explained in reference to human life, who doth not understand? Let a man but have his soul's sense of smelling sound, he perceives how foully sins stink. The contrary to which stink of sin, is that savour of which the Apostle says, "We are the sweet savour of Christ unto God, in every place, unto them which be saved." But whence is this, except from hope? Whence is this, but from our "calling the Sabbath to remembrance"? For it is a different thing that we mourn over in this life, from that which we anticipate in the other. That which we mourn over is stench, that which we reckon upon is fragrance. Were there not therefore such a perfume as that to invite us, we should never call the Sabbath to remembrance. But since, by the Spirit, we have such a perfume, as to say to our Betrothed, "Because of the savour of Thy

good ointments we will run after Thee;" we turn our senses away from our own unsavourinesses, and turning ourselves to Him, we gain some little breathing-time. But indeed, unless our evil deeds also did smell rank in our nostrils, we should never confess with those groans, "My wounds stink and are corrupt." And wherefore? "from the face of my foolishness." From the same cause that he said before, "from the face of my sins;" from that same cause he now says, "from the face of my foolishness."

9. "I am troubled, I am bowed down even unto the end" (ver. 6). Wherefore was he "bowed down"? Because he had been "lifted up." If thou art "humble, thou shalt be exalted;" if thou exaltest thyself, thou shalt be "bowed down;" for God will be at no loss to find a weight wherewith to bow thee down. ...Let him groan on these things; that he may receive the other; let him "call the Sabbath to remembrance," that he may deserve to arrive at it. For that which the Jews used to celebrate was but a sign. Of what thing was it the sign? Of that which he calls to remembrance, who saith, "I am troubled, and am bowed down even unto the end." What is meant by even "unto the end"? Even to death. "I go mourning all the day long." "All day long," that is, "without intermission." By "all the day long," he means, "all my life long." But from what time hath he known it? From the time that he began to "call the Sabbath to remembrance." For so long as he "calls to remembrance" what he no longer possesses, wouldest thou not have him "go mourning"? "All the day long have I gone mourning."

10. "For my soul is filled with illusions, and there is no soundness in my flesh" (ver. 7). Where there is the whole man, there there is soul and flesh both. The "soul is filled with illusions; the flesh hath "no soundness. What does there remain that can give joy? Is it not meet that one should "go mourning"? "All the day long have I gone mourning. Let mourning be our portion, until our soul be divested of its illusions; and our body be clothed with soundness. For true soundness is no other than immortality. How great however are the soul's illusions, were I even to attempt to express, when would the time suffice me? For whose soul is not subject to them? There is a brief particular that I will remind you of, to show how our soul is filled with illusions. The presence of those illusions sometimes scarcely permits us to pray. We know not how to think of material objects without images, and such as we do not wish, rush in upon the mind; and we wish to go from this one to that, and to quit that for another. And sometimes you wish to return

to that which you were thinking of before, and to quit that which you are now thinking of; and a fresh one presents itself to you; you wish to call up again what you had forgotten; and it does not occur to you; and another comes instead which you would not have wished for.

Where meanwhile was the one that you had forgotten? For why did it afterwards occur to you, when it had ceased to be sought after; whereas, while it was being sought for, innumerable others, which were not desired, presented themselves instead of it? I have stated a fact briefly; I have thrown out a kind of hint or suggestion to you, brethren, taking up which, you may yourselves suggest the rest to yourselves, and discover what it is to mourn over the "illusions" of our "soul. He hath received therefore the punishment of illusion; he hath forfeited Truth. For just as illusion is the soul's punishment, so is Truth its reward. But when we were set in the midst of these illusions, the Truth Itself came to us, and found us overwhelmed by illusions, took upon Itself our flesh, or rather took flesh from us; that is, from the human race. He manifested himself to the eyes of the Flesh, that He might "by faith" heal those to whom He was going to reveal the Truth hereafter, that Truth might be manifested to the now healed eye. For He is Himself "the Truth," which He promised unto us at that time, when His Flesh was to be seen by the eye, that the foundation might be laid of that Faith, of which the Truth was to be the reward. For it was not Himself that Christ showed forth on earth; but it was His Flesh that He showed.

For had He showed Himself, the Jews would have seen and known Him; but had they "known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory. But perhaps His disciples saw Him, when they said unto Him, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us; and He, to show that it was not Himself that had been seen by them, added: "Have I been so long with you, and have ye not known Me, Philip? He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. If then they saw Christ, wherefore did they yet seek for the Father? For if it were Christ whom they saw, they would have seen the Father also. They did not therefore yet see Christ, who desired that the Father should be shown unto them. To prove that they did not yet see Him, hear that, in another place, He promised it by way of reward, saying, "He who loveth Me, keepeth My commandments; and whoso loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love Him and" (as if it were said to Him, "what wilt Thou give unto him, as Thou lovest him? He saith), "I will manifest Myself unto him. If then He

promises this by way of a reward unto them that love Him, it is manifest that the vision of the Truth, promised to us, is of such a nature, that, when we have seen it, we shall no longer say, "My soul is filled with illusions."

11. "I am become feeble, and am bowed down greatly" (ver. 8). He who calls to mind the transcendent height of the Sabbath, sees how "greatly" he is himself "bowed down. For he who cannot conceive what is that height of rest, sees not where he is at present. Therefore another Psalm hath said, "I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. For his mind being taken up thither, he beheld something sublime; and was not yet entirely there, where what he beheld was; and a kind of flash, as it were, if one may so speak, of the Eternal Light having glanced upon him, when he perceived that he was not yet arrived at this, which he was able after a sort to understand, he saw where he himself was, and how he was cramped and "bowed down" by human infirmities. And he says, "I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. Such is that certain something which I saw in my trance, that thence I perceive how far off I am, who am not already there. He was already there who said that he was "caught up into the third Heaven, and there heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. But he was recalled to us, in order that, as requiring to be made perfect, he might first mourn his infirmity, and afterwards be clothed with might.

Yet encouraged for the ministration of his office by having seen somewhat of those things, he goes on saying, "I heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Now then what use is it for you to ask, either of me or of any one, the "things which it is not lawful for man to utter. If it was not lawful for him to utter them, to whom is it lawful to hear them? Let us however lament and groan in Confession; let us own where we are; let us "call the Sabbath to remembrance," and wait with patience for what He has promised, who hath, in His own Person also, showed forth an example of patience to us. "I am become feeble, and bowed down greatly." 12. "I have roared with the groaning of my heart." You observe the servants of God generally interceding with groaning; and the reason of it is asked, and there is nothing apparent, but the groaning of some servant of God, if indeed it does find its way at all to the ears of a person placed near him. For there is a secret groaning, which is not heard by man: yet if the thought of some strong desire has taken so strong hold of the heart, that the wound of the inner man finds expression in some uttered exclamation, the reason of it

is asked; and a man says to himself, "Perhaps this is the cause of his groaning;" and, "Perhaps this or that hath befallen him." Who can determine, but He in whose Eyes and Ears he groaned? Therefore he says, "I roared with the groaning of mine heart;" because if men ever hear a man's groanings, they for the most part hear but the groaning of the flesh; they do not hear him who groans "with the groaning of his heart." Some one hath carried off his goods; he "roareth," but not "with the groaning of his heart:" another because he has buried his son, another his wife; another because his vineyard has been injured by a hailstorm; another because his cask has turned sour; another because some one hath stolen his beast; another because he has suffered some loss; another because he fears some man who is his enemy: all these "roar" with the "groaning of the flesh." The servant of God, however, because he "roareth" from the recollection of the Sabbath, where the Kingdom of God is, which flesh and blood shall not possess, says, "I have roared with the groaning of my heart."

13. And who observed and noticed the cause of his groaning? "All my desire is before Thee" (ver. 9). For it is not before men who cannot see the heart, but it is before Thee that all my desire is open! Let your desire be before Him; and "the Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee. For it is thy heart's desire that is thy prayer; and if thy desire continues uninterrupted, thy prayer continueth also. For not without a meaning did the Apostle say, "Pray without ceasing. Are we to be "without ceasing" bending the knee, prostrating the body, or lifting up our hands, that he says, "Pray without ceasing"? Or if it is in this sense that we say that we "pray," this, I believe, we cannot do "without ceasing. There is another inward kind of prayer without ceasing, which is the desire of the heart. Whatever else you are doing, if you do but long for that Sabbath, you do not cease to pray. If you would never cease to pray, never cease to long after it. The continuance of thy longing is the continuance of thy prayer. You will be ceasing to speak, if you cease to long for it. Who are those who have ceased to speak? They of whom it is said "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. The freezing of charity is the silence of the heart; the burning of charity is the cry of the heart.

If love continues still you are still lifting up your voice; if you are always lifting up your voice, you are always longing after something; if always longing for something absent, you are calling "the Sabbath rest to remembrance. And it is important you should understand too before whom the "roaring of

thine heart" is open. Now then consider what sort of desires those should be, that are before the eyes of God. Should it be the desire for the death of our enemy? a thing which men flatter themselves they lawfully wish for? For sometimes we pray for what we ought not. Let us consider what they flatter themselves they pray for lawfully! For they pray that some person may die, and his inheritance come to them. But let those too, who pray for the death of their enemies, hear the Lord saying, "Pray for your enemies. Let them not pray for this, that their enemies may die; but rather pray for this, that they may be reclaimed; then will their enemies be dead; for from the time that they are reclaimed, henceforth they will be enemies no longer. "And all my desire is before Thee. What if we suppose that our desire is before Him, and that yet that very "groaning" is not before Him? How can that be, since our desire itself finds its expression in "groaning"? Therefore follows, "And my groaning is not hid from Thee."

From Thee indeed it is not hid; but from many men it is hid. The servant of God sometimes seems to be saying in humility, "And my groaning is not hid from Thee." Sometimes also he seems to smile. Is then that longing dead in his heart? If however there is the desire within, there is the "groaning" also. It does not always find its way to the ears of man; but it never ceases to sound in the ears of God. 14. "My heart is troubled" (ver. 10). Wherefore is it troubled? "And my courage hath failed me." Generally something comes upon us on a sudden; the "heart is troubled;" the earth quakes; thunder is sent from Heaven; a formidable attack is made upon us, or a horrible sound heard. Perhaps a lion is seen on the road; the "heart is troubled." Perhaps robbers lie in wait for us; the "heart is troubled:" we are filled with a panic fear; from every quarter something excites anxiety. Wherefore? Because "my courage hath failed me." For what would be feared, did that courage still remain unmoved? Whatever bad tidings were brought, whatever threatened us, whatever sound was heard, whatever were to fall, whatever appeared horrible, would inspire no terror. But whence that trouble? "My courage faileth me." Wherefore hath my courage failed me? "The light of mine eyes also is gone from me." Thus Adam also could not see "the light of his eyes." For the "light of his eyes" was God Himself, whom when he had offended, he fled to the shade, and hid himself among the trees of Paradise. He shrunk in alarm from the face of God: and sought the shelter of the trees; thenceforth among

the trees he had no more "the light of his eyes," at which he had been wont to rejoice. ...

15. "My lovers;" why should I henceforth speak of my enemies? "My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh, and stood over against me" (ver. 11). Understand this that he saith, "Stood over against me." For if they stood over against me, they fell against themselves. "My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh and stood over against me." Let us now recognise the words of the Head speaking; now let our Head in His Passion begin to dawn upon us. Yet again when the Head begins to speak, do not sever the Body from it. If the Head would not separate itself from the words of the Body, should the Body dare to separate itself from the sufferings of the Head? Do thou suffer in Christ's suffering: for Christ, as it were, sinned in thy infirmity. For just now He spoke of thy sins, as if speaking in His own Person, and called them His own. ...To those who wished to be near His exaltation, yet thought not of His humility, He answered and said to them, "Can ye drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" Those sufferings of the Lord then are our sufferings also: and were each individual to serve God well, to keep faith truly, to render to each their dues, and to conduct himself honestly among men, I should like to see if he does not suffer even that which Christ here details in the account of His Passion. "My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh, and stood over against me."

16. "And my neighbours stood afar off" Who were the "neighbours" that drew nigh, and who were those who stood afar off? The Jews were "neighbours" because "near kinsmen," they drew near even when they crucified Him: the Apostles also were His "neighbours; and they also "stood afar off," that they might not have to suffer with Him. This may also be understood thus: "My friends," that is, those who feigned themselves "My friends: for they feigned themselves His friends, when they said, "We know that. Thou teachest the way of God in truth; when they wished to try Him, whether tribute ought to be paid to Caesar; when He convinced them out of their own mouth, they wished to seem to be His friends. "But He needed not that any should testify of man, for He Himself knew what was in man; so that when they spoke unto Him words of friendship, He answered them, "Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? "My friends and my neighbours" then "drew near and stood over against me, and my neighbours stood afar off. You understand what I said. I called those neighbours who "drew nigh," and at the same time "stood afar off. For they "drew nigh" in the body, but "stood afar

off" in their heart. Who were in the body so near to Him as those who lifted Him on the Cross? Who in heart so as those who blasphemed Him? Hear this sort of distance described by the Prophet Isaiah;

observe this nearness and distance at one and the same time. "This people honours Me with their lips: behold, with their body they draw near; "but their heart is far from Me. The same persons are at the same time "near" and "afar off" also: with their lips they are near, in heart afar off. However, because the Apostles also stood afar off, through fear, we understand it more simply and properly of them; so that we mean by it, that some drew near, and others stood afar off; since even Peter, who had followed more boldly than the rest, was still so far off, that being questioned and alarmed, he thrice denied the Lord, with whom he had promised to "be ready to die. Who afterwards that, from being afar off, he might be made to draw nigh, heard after the resurrection the question, "Lovest thou Me? and said, "I love Thee; and by so saying was brought "nigh," even as by denying Him, he had become "far off; till with the threefold confession of love, he had put away from him his threefold denial. "And my neighbours stood afar off."

17. "They also that sought after my soul were preparing violence against me" (ver. 12). It is now plain who "sought after His soul;" viz. those who had not His soul, in that they were not in His Body. They who were "seeking after His soul," were far removed from His soul; but they were "seeking it" to destroy it. For His soul may be "sought after" in a right way also. For in another passage He finds fault with some persons, saying, "There is no man to care for My soul." He finds fault with some for not seeking after His soul; and again, with others for seeking after it. Who is he that seeketh after His soul in the right way? He who imitates His sufferings. Who are they that sought after His soul in the wrong way? Even those who "prepared violence against Him," and crucified Him.

18. He goes on: "Those who sought after My faults had spoken vanity." What is, "sought after My faults"? They sought after many things, and found them not. Perhaps He may have meant this: "They sought for criminal charges against me." For they sought for somewhat to say against Him, and "they found not." For they were seeking to find evil things to say of "the Good;" crimes of the Innocent; When would they find such things in Him, who had no sin? But because they had to seek for sins in Him who had no sin, it remained for them to invent that which they could not find. There-

fore, "those who sought after My faults have spoken vanity," i.e., untruth, "and imagined deceit all the day long;" that is, they meditated treachery without intermission. You know how atrocious false-witness was borne against the Lord, before He suffered. You know how atrocious false-witness was borne against Him, even after His resurrection. For those soldiers who watched His sepulchre of whom Isaiah spake, "I will appoint the wicked for His burial" (for they were wicked men, and would not speak the truth, and being bribed they disseminated a lie), consider what "vanity" they spake. They also were examined, and they said, "While we slept, His disciples came and stole Him away." This it is, "to speak vanity." For if they were sleeping, how could they know what had been done?

19. He saith then, "But I as a deaf man heard not" (ver. 13). He who replied not to what He heard, did, as it were, not hear them. "But I as a deaf man heard not. And I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth." And he repeats the same things again. "And I became as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs" (ver. 14). As if He had nothing to say unto them, as if He had nothing wherewith to reproach them. Had He not already reproached them for many things? Had He not said many things, and also said, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees," and many things besides? Yet when He suffered, He said none of these things; not that He had not what to say, but He waited for them to fulfil all things, and that all the prophecies might be fulfilled of Him, of whom it had been said, "And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so openeth He not His mouth." It behoved Him to be silent in His Passion, though not hereafter to be silent in Judgment. For He had come to be judged, then, who was hereafter coming to judge; and who was for this reason to come with great power to judge, that He had been judged in great humility.

20. "For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou wilt hear, O Lord, my God" (ver. 15). As if it were said to Him, "Wherefore openedst thou not thy mouth? Wherefore didst Thou not say, 'Refrain'? Wherefore didst Thou not rebuke the unrighteous, while hanging on the Cross?" He goes on and says, "For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt hear." He warns you what to do, should tribulation haply befall. For you seek to defend yourself, and perhaps your defence is not listened to by any one. Then are you confounded, as if you had lost your cause; because you have none to defend or to bear testimony in your favour. "Keep" but your "innocence" within, where

no one can pervert thy cause. False-witness has prevailed against you before men. Will it then prevail before God, where your cause has to be pleaded? When God shall be Judge, there shall be no other witness than your own conscience. In the presence of a just judge, and of your own conscience, fear nothing but your own cause. If you have not a bad cause, you will have no accuser to dread; no false-witness to confute, nor witness to the truth to look for. Do but bring into court a good conscience, that you may say, "For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt hear."

21. "For I said, Let not mine enemies ever rejoice over me. And when my feet slip, they magnify themselves against me" (ver. 16). Again He returns to the infirmity of His Body: and again the Head takes heed of Its "feet." The Head is not in such a manner in Heaven, as to forsake what It has on earth; He evidently sees and observes us. For sometimes, as is the way of this life, our feet are "turned aside," and they slip by falling into some sin; there the tongues of the enemy rise up with the bitterest malignity. From this then we discern what they really had in view, even while they kept silence. Then they speak with an unsparing harshness; rejoicing to have discovered what they ought to have grieved for. "And I said, Lest at any time my adversaries should rejoice over me." I said this indeed; and yet it was perhaps for my correction that Thou hast caused them to "magnify themselves against me, when my feet slipped;" that is to say, when I stumbled, they were elated, and said many things. For pity, not insult, was due from them to the weak; even as the Apostle speaks: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness;" and he combines the reason why: "considering thyself also, lest thou also be tempted." Not such as these were the persons of whom He speaks: "And when my feet slipped, they rejoiced greatly against me;" but they were such as those of whom He says elsewhere: "They that hate me will rejoice if I fall."

22. "For I am prepared for the scourges" (ver. 17). Quite a magnificent expression; as if He were saying, "It was even for this that I was born; that I might suffer." For He was not to be born, but from Adam, to whom the scourge is due. But sinners are in this life sometimes not scourged at all, or are scourged less than their deserts: because the wickedness of their heart is given over as already desperate. Those, however, for whom eternal life is prepared, must needs be scourged in this life: for that sentence is true: "My son, faint not under the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary when thou art

rebuked of Him." "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Let not mine enemies therefore insult over me; let "them not magnify themselves;" and if my Father scourgeth me, "I am prepared for the scourge;" because there is an inheritance in store for me. Thou wilt not submit to the scourge: the inheritance is not bestowed upon thee. For "every son" must needs be scourged. So true it is that "every son" is scourged, that He spared not even Him who had no sin. For "I am prepared for the scourges."

23."And my sorrow is continually before me. What "sorrow" is that? Perhaps, a sorrow for my scourge. And, in good truth, my brethren, in good truth, let me say unto you, men do mourn for their scourges, not for the causes on account of which they are scourged. Not such was the person here. Listen, my brethren: If any person suffers any loss, he is more ready to say, "I did not deserve to suffer it," than to consider why he suffered it, mourning the loss of money, not mourning over that of righteousness. If thou hast sinned, mourn for the loss of thy inward treasure. Thou hast nothing in thy house, but perhaps thou art still more empty in heart; but if thine heart is full of its Good, even thy God, why dost thou not say, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord was it done. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Whence then was it that He was grieving? Was it for the "scourging" wherewith He was scourged? God forbid. "And my sorrow" (says He) "is continually before me. And as if we were to say, "What sorrow? whence comes that sorrow? he says: "For I declare mine iniquity; and I will have a care for my sin" (ver. 18). See here the reason for the sorrow! It is not a sorrow occasioned by the scourge; not one for the remedy, not for the wound. For the scourge is a remedy against sins. Hear, brethren;

We are Christians, and yet if any one's son dies, he mourns for him but does not mourn for him if he sins. It is then, when he sees him sinning, that he ought to make mourning for him, to lament over him. It is then he should restrain him, and give him a rule to live by; should impose a discipline upon him: or if he has done so, and the other has not taken heed, then was the time when he ought to have been mourned over; then he was more fatally dead whilst living in luxury, than when, by death, he brought his luxury to its close: at that time, when he was doing such things in thine house, he was not only "dead, but he stank also. These things were worthy to be lamented, the others were such as might well be endured; those, I say, were

tolerable, these worthy to be mourned over. They were to be mourned over in the same way that you have heard this person mourn over them: "For I declare mine iniquity. I will have a care for my sin. Be not free from anxiety when you have confessed your sin, as if always able to confess thy sin, and to commit it again. Do thou "declare thine iniquity in such a manner, as to have a care for thy sin. What is meant by "having a care of thy sin"? To have a care of thy wound.

If you were to say, "I will have a care of my wound," what would be meant by it, but I will do my endeavour to have it healed. For this is "to have a care for one's sin," to be ever struggling, ever endeavouring, ever exerting one's self, earnestly and zealously, to heal one's wound. Behold! thou art from day to day mourning over thy sins; but perhaps thy tears indeed flow, but thy hands are unemployed. Do alms, redeem thy sins, let the poor rejoice of thy bounty, that thou also mayest rejoice of the Grace of God. He is in want; so art thou in want also: he is in want at thy hands; so art thou also in want at God's hand. Dost thou despise one who needs thy aid; and shall God not despise thee when thou needest His? Do thou therefore supply the needs of him who is in want of thine aid; that God may supply thy needs within. This is the meaning of, "I will have a care for my sin. I will do all that ought to be done, to blot out and to heal my sin. "And I will have a care for my sin."

24. "But mine enemies live" (ver. 19). They are well of: they rejoice in worldly prosperity, while I am suffering, and "roaring with the groaning of my heart." In what way do His enemies "live," in that He hath said of them already, that they have "spoken vanity"? Hear in another Psalm also: "Whose sons are as young plants; firmly rooted." But above He had said, "Whose mouth speaketh vanity. Their daughters polished after the similitude of a temple: their garners full bursting forth more and more; their cattle fat, their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their streets; no hedge falling into ruin; no cry in their streets." "Mine enemies" then "live." This is their life; this life they praise; this they set their hearts upon: this they hold fast to their own ruin. For what follows? They pronounce "the people that is in such a case" blessed. But what sayest thou, who "hast a care for thy sin"? What sayest thou, who "confessest thine iniquity"? He says, "Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord."

"But mine enemies live, and are strengthened against me, and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied." What is "hate me wrongfully"? They

hate me, who wish their good, whereas were they simply requiting evil for evil, they would not be righteous; were they not to requite with good the good done to them, they would be ungrateful: they, however, who "hate wrongfully," actually return evil for good. Such were the Jews; Christ came unto them with good things; they requited Him evil for good. Beware, brethren, of this evil; it soon steals upon us. Let no one of you think himself to be far removed from the danger, because we said, "Such were the Jews." Should a brother, wishing your good, rebuke you, and you hate him, you are like them. And observe, how easily, how soon it is produced; and avoid an evil so great, a sin so easily committed.

25. "They also that render evil for good, were speaking evil of me, because I have pursued the thing that is just" (ver. 20). Therefore was it that I was requited evil for good. What is meant by "pursued after the thing that is just"? Not forsaken it. That you might not always understand persecutio in a bad sense, He means by persecutus pursued after, thoroughly followed. "Because I have followed the thing that is just. Hear also our Head crying with a lamentable voice in His Passion: "And they cast Me forth, Thy Darling, even as a dead man in abomination. Was it not enough that He was "dead"? wherefore "in abomination" also? Because He was crucified. For this death of the Cross was a great abomination in their eyes, as they did not perceive that it was spoken in prophecy, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. For He did not Himself bring death; but He found it here, propagated from the curse of the first man; and this same death of ours, which had originated in sin, He had taken upon Himself, and hung on the Tree. Lest therefore some persons should think (as some of the Heretics think), that our Lord Jesus Christ had only a false body of flesh; and that the death by which He made satisfaction on the Cross was not a real death, the Prophet notices this, and says, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

He shows then that the Son of God died a true death, the death which was due to mortal flesh: lest if He were not "accursed," you should think that He had not truly died. But since that death was not an illusion, but had descended from that original stock, which had been derived from the curse, when He said, "Ye shall surely die: and since a true death assuredly extended even to Him, that a true life might extend itself to us, the curse of death also did extend to Him, that the blessing of life might extend even unto us." And they cast Me forth, Thy Darling, even as a dead man in abomination." 26. "For-

sake me not, O Lord; O my God, depart not from me" (ver. 21). Let us speak in Him, let us speak through Him (for He Himself intercedeth for us), and let us say, "Forsake me not, O Lord my God." And yet He had said, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and He now says, "O My God, depart not from Me." If He does not forsake the body, did He forsake the Head? Whose words then are these but the First Man's? To show then that He carried about Him a true body of flesh derived from him, He says, "My God, My God why hast Thou forsaken Me?" God had not forsaken Him. If He does not forsake Thee, who believest in Him, could the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, One God, forsake Christ? But He had transferred to Himself the person of the First Man. We know by the words of an Apostle, that "our old man is crucified with Him." We should not, however, be divested of our old nature, had He not been crucified "in weakness." For it was to this end that He came that we may be renewed in Him, because it is by aspiration after Him, and by following the example of His suffering, that we are renewed. Therefore that was the cry of infirmity; that cry, I mean, in which it was said, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Thence was it said in that passage above, "the words of mine offences." As if He were saying, These words are transferred to My Person from that of the sinner.

27. "Depart not from me. Make haste to help me, Lord of my salvation" (ver. 22). This is that very "salvation," Brethren, concerning which, as the Apostle Peter saith, "Prophets have enquired diligently," and though they have enquired diligently, yet have not found it. But they searched into it, and foretold of it; while we have come and have found what they sought for. And see, we ourselves too have not as yet received it; and after us shall others also be born, and shall find, what they also shall not receive, and shall pass away, that we may, all of us together, receive the "penny of salvation in the end of the day," with the Prophets, the Patriarchs, and the Apostles. For you know that the hired servants, or labourers, were taken into the vineyard at different times; yet did they all receive their wages on an equal footing. Apostles, then, and Prophets, and Martyrs, and ourselves also, and those who will follow us to the end of the world, it is in the End itself that we are to receive everlasting salvation; that beholding the face of God, and contemplating His Glory, we may praise Him for ever, free from imperfection, free from any punishment of iniquity, free from every perversion of sin: praising Him; and

no longer longing after Him, but now clinging to Him for whom we used to long to the very end, and in whom we did rejoice, in hope.

For we shall be in that City, where God is our Bliss, God is our Light, God is our Bread, God is our Life; whatever good thing of ours there is, at being absent from which we now grieve, we shall find in Him. In Him will be that "rest," which when we "call to remembrance" now, we cannot choose but grieve. For that is the "Sabbath" which we "call to remembrance; in the recollection of which, so great things have been said already; and so great things ought to be said by us also, and ought never to cease being said by us, not with our lips indeed, but in our heart: for therefore do our lips cease to speak, that we may cry out with our hearts.

PSALM 39

1. The title of this Psalm, which we have just chanted and proposed to discuss, is, "On the end, for Idithun, a Psalm for David himself" Here then we must look for, and must attend to, the words of a certain person who is called Idithun; and if each one of ourselves may be Idithun, in that which he sings he recognises himself, and hears himself speak. For thou mayest see who was called Idithun, according to the ancient descent of man; let us, however, understand what this name is translated, and seek to comprehend the Truth in the translation of the word. According therefore to what we have been able to discover by enquiry in those names which have been translated from the Hebrew tongue into the Latin, by those who study the sacred writings, Idithun being translated is "over-leaping them." Who then is this person "over-leaping them"? or who those whom he hath "over-leaped"?... For there are some persons, yet clinging to the earth, yet bowed down to the ground, yet setting their hearts on what is below, yet placing their hopes in things that pass away, whom he who is called "over-leaping them" hath "over-leaped."

2. You know that some of the Psalms are entitled, "Songs of Degrees;" and in the Greek it is obvious enough what the word *anabqmwn* means. For *anabqmoi* are degrees (or steps) of them that ascend, not of them that descend. The Latin, not being able to express it strictly, expresses it by the general term; and in that it called them "steps," left it undetermined, whether they were "steps" of persons ascending or descending. But because there is no "speech or language where their voices are not heard among them," the earlier language explains the one which comes after it: and what was ambiguous

in one is made certain in another. Just then as there the singer is some one who is "ascending," so here is it some one who is "over-leaping."... Let this Idithun come still to us, let him "over-leap" those whose delight is in things below, and take delight in these things, and let him rejoice in the Word of the Lord; in the delight of the law of the Most High. ...

3. "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue" (ver. 1). ...For it is not without reason that the tongue is set in a moist place, but because it is so prone to slip. Perceiving therefore how hard it was for a man to be under the necessity of speaking, and not to say something that he will wish unsaid, and filled with disgust at these sins, he seeks to avoid the like. To this difficulty is he exposed who is seeking to "leap beyond."... Although I have "leaped beyond" the pleasures of earth, although the fleeting passions for things temporal ensnare me not, though now I despise these things below, and am rising up to better things than these, yet in these very better things the satisfaction of knowledge in the sight of God is enough for me. Of what use is it for me to speak what is to be laid hold of, and to give a handle to cavillers? Therefore, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I keep my mouth with a bridle. Wherefore is this? Is it on account of the religious, the thoughtful, the faithful, the holy ones? God forbid! These persons hear in such a manner, as to praise what they approve; but as for what they disapprove, perhaps, among much that they praise they rather excuse than cavil at it;

on account of what persons then dost thou "take heed to thy ways," and place a guard on thy lips "that thou mayest not sin with thy tongue"? Hear: it is, "While the wicked standeth over against me. It is not "by me" that he takes up his station, but "against me. Why?... Even the Lord Himself says, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. And the Apostle, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. Yet not as to persons to be despaired of, but as to those who still required to be nourished. For he goes on to say, "As babes in Christ, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able. Well, tell it unto us even now. "Neither yet now are ye able. Be not therefore impatient to hear that which as yet thou art not capable of; but grow that thou mayest be "able to bear it. It is thus we address the little one, who yet requires to be fed with kindly milk in the bosom of Mother Church, and to be rendered meet for the "strong meat" of the Lord's Table. But what can I say even of that kind to

the sinner, who "taketh his stand against me," who either thinks or pretends himself capable of what he "cannot bear;

so that when I say anything unto him, and he has failed to comprehend it, he should not suppose that it was not he that had failed to comprehend, but I who had broken down. Therefore because of this sinner, who "taketh up his stand against me, I keep my mouth as it were with a bridle." 4. "I became deaf, and was humbled, I held my peace from good" (ver. 2). For this person, who is "leaping beyond," suffers some difficulty in a certain stage to which he hath already attained; and he desires to advance beyond, even from thence, to avoid this difficulty. I was afraid of committing a sin; so that I spoke not; that I imposed on myself the necessity of silence: for I had spoken thus, "I will take heed to my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue." Whilst I was too much afraid of saying anything wrong, I kept silence from all that is good. For whence could I say good things, except that I heard them? "It is Thou that shalt make me to hear of joy and gladness." And the "friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth on account of the bridegroom's voice," not his own. That he may speak true things, he hears what he is to say. For it is he that "speaketh a lie," that "speaketh of his own." ... When therefore I had "put a bridle," as it were, "on my lips;" and constrained myself to silence, because I saw that everywhere speech was dangerous, then, says he, that came to pass upon me, which I did not wish, "I became deaf, and was humbled;" not humbled myself, but was humbled; "and I held my peace even from good." Whilst afraid of saying any evil, I began to refrain from speaking what is good: and I condemned my determination; for "I was holding my peace even from what is good."

"And my sorrow was stirred up again" (ver. 2). Inasmuch as I had found in silence a kind of respite from a certain "sorrow," that had been inflicted upon me by those who cavilled at my words, and found fault with me: and that sorrow that was caused by the cavillers, had ceased indeed; but when "I held my peace even from good, my sorrow was stirred up again." I began to be more grieved at having refrained from saying what I ought to have said, than I had before been grieved by having said what I ought not. "And my sorrow was stirred up again." 5. "And while I was musing, the fire burned" (ver. 3). ...I reflected on the words of my Lord, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou oughtest to have put My money to the exchangers, and I at My coming should receive it again with usury." And that which follows

may God avert from those who are His stewards! Bind him hand and foot, and let him be cast into outer darkness; the servant, who was not a waster of his master's goods, so as to destroy them, but was slothful in laying them out to improve them. What ought they to expect, who have wasted them in luxury, if they are condemned who through slothfulness have kept them? "As I was musing, the fire burned." And as he was in this state of wavering suspense, between speaking and holding his peace, between those who are prepared to cavil and those who are anxious to be instructed, ...in this state of suspense, he prays for a better place, a place different from this his present stewardship, in which man is in such difficulty and in such danger, and sighing after a certain "end," when he was not to be subject to these things, when the Lord is to say to the faithful dispenser, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," he says, "Then spake I with my tongue." In this fluctuation, in the midst of these dangers and these difficulties, because, that in consequence of the abundance of offences "the love of many is waxing cold," although the law of the Lord inspires delight, in this fluctuation then, (I say), "then spake I with my tongue." To whom? not to the hearer whom I would fain instruct; but to Him who heareth and taketh heed also, by whom I would fain be instructed myself. "I spake with my tongue" to Him, from whom I inwardly hear whatever I hear that is good or true.-What saidst thou?

"Lord, make me to know mine end" (ver. 4). For some things I have passed by already; and I have arrived at a certain point, and that to which I have arrived is better than that from which I have advanced to this; but yet there remains a point, which has to be left behind. For we are not to remain here, where there are trials, offences, where we have to bear with persons who listen to us and cavil at us. "Make me to know mine end;" the end, from which I am still removed, not the course which is already before me. 6. The "end" he speaks of, is that which the Apostle fixed his eye upon, in his course; and made confession of his own infirmity, perceiving in himself a different state of things from that which he looked for elsewhere. For he says, "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended." And that you might not say, "If the Apostle hath not apprehended, have I apprehended? If the Apostle is not perfect, am I perfect?"...

7. "And the number of my days, what it is. I ask of "the number of my days, what it is. I can speak of "number" without number, and understand

"number without number," in the same sense as "years without years" may be spoken of. For where there are years, there is a sort of "number" at all events, also. But yet, "Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. "Make me to know the number of my days; but "to know what it is. What then? that number in which thou art, think you that it "is" not? Assuredly, if I weigh the matter well, it has no being; if I linger behind, it has a sort of being; if I rise above it, it has none. If, shaking off the trammels of these things, I contemplate things above, if I compare things that pass away with those that endure, I see what has a true being, and what rather seems to be, than really is. Should I say that these days of mine "are; and shall I rashly apply this word so full of meaning to this course of things passing away? To such a degree have I my own self almost ceased to "be, failing" as I am in my weakness, that He escaped from my memory, who said, "I Am He that is. Hath then any number of days any existence? In truth it hath, and it is "number without end."...

Everything is swept on by a series of moments, fleeting by, one after the other; there is a torrent of existences ever flowing on and on; a "torrent," of which He "drank in the way," who hath now "lift up His Head. These days then have no true being; they are gone almost before they arrive; and when they are come, they cannot continue; they press upon one another, they follow the one the other, and cannot check themselves in their course. Of the past nothing is called back again; what is yet to be, is expected as something to pass away again: it is not as yet possessed, whilst as yet it is not arrived; it cannot be kept when once it has arrived. He asks then concerning "the number of his days, which is; not that which is "not: and (which confounds me by a still greater and more perplexing difficulty) at once "is," and "is not. We can neither say that "is," which does not continue; nor that it "is not," when it has come and is passing. It is that absolute "Is," that true "Is," that "Is" in the true sense of the word, that I long for; that "Is; which "is" in that "Jerusalem" which is "the Bride" of my Lord; where there will not be death, there will not be failing; there will be a day that passeth not away, but continueth: which has neither a yesterday to precede it, nor a to-morrow pressing, close upon it.

This "number of my days, which is," this (I say), "make Thou me to know." 8. "That I may know what is wanting to me." For while I am struggling here, "this" is wanting unto me: and so long as it is wanting unto me, I do not call myself perfect. So long as I have not received it, I say, "not that I have already attained, either am already perfect; but I am pressing towards

the prize of God's high calling." This let me receive as the prize of my running the race! There will be a certain resting-place, to terminate my course; and in that resting-place there will be a Country, and no pilgrimage, no dissension, no temptation. Make me then to know "this number of my days, which is, that I may know what is wanting unto me;" because I am not there yet; lest I should be made proud of what I already am, that "I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness." ...

9. "Behold, thou hast made my days old" (ver. 5). For these days are "waxing old. I long for new days "that never shall wax old," that I may say, "Old things have passed away; behold, things are become new. Already new in hope; then in reality. For though, in hope and in faith, made new already, how much do we even now do after our old nature! For we are not so completely "clothed upon" with Christ, as not to bear about with us anything derived from Adam. Observe that Adam is "waxing old" within us, and Christ is being "renewed" in us. "Though our outward man is perishing, yet is our inward man being renewed day by day. Therefore, while we fix our thoughts on sin, on mortality, on time, that is hastening by, on sorrow, and toil, and labour, on stages of life following each other in succession, and continuing not, passing on insensibly from infancy even to old age; whilst, I say, we fix our eyes on these things, let us see here "the old man," the "day that is waxing old; the Song that is out of date; the Old Testament; when however we turn to the inner man, to those things that are to be renewed in place of these which are to be changed, let us find the "new man," the "new day," the "new song," the "New Testament; and that "newness," let us so love, as to have no fears of its "waxing old." ...

This man, therefore, who is hasting forward to those things which are new, and "reaching forward to those things which are before," says, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the number of my days, which really is, that I may know what is wanting unto me. See he still drags with him Adam; and even so he is hasting unto Christ. "Behold," saith he, "thou hast made my days old. It is those days that are derived from Adam, those days, I say, that thou hast made old. They are waxing old day by day: and so waxing old, as to be at some day or other consumed also. "And my substance is as nothing before Thee. "Before Thee, O Lord, my substance is as nothing. "Before Thee; who seest this; and I too, when I see it, see it only when "before Thee." When "before men" I see it not. For what shall I say? What words shall I use to show,

that which I now am is nothing in comparison of That which truly "Is"? But it is within that it is said; it is within that it is felt, so far as it is felt. "Before Thee, O Lord," where Thine eyes are; and not where the eyes of men are. And where Thine eyes are, what is the state of things? "That which I am is as nothing." 10. "But, verily, every man living is altogether vanity." "But, verily." For what was he saying above? Behold, I have already "leaped beyond" all mortal things, and despised things below, have trampled under foot the things of earth, have soared upwards to the delights of the law of the Lord, I have been afloat in the dispensation of the Lord, have yearned for that "End" which Itself is to know no end, have yearned for the number of my days that truly "is," because the number of days like these hath no real being. Behold, I am already such a one as this; I have already overleaped so much; I am longing for those things which abide. "But verily," in the state in which I am here, so long as I am here, so long as I am in this world, so long as I bear mortal flesh, so long as the life of man on earth is a trial, so long as I sigh among causes of offence, as long as while I "stand" I am in "fear lest I fall," as long as both my good and my ill hangs in uncertainty, "every man living is altogether vanity."...

11. "Albeit man walketh in the Image" (ver. 6). In what "Image," save that of Him who said, "Let Us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness. "Albeit man walks in the Image. For the reason he says "albeit," is, that this is some great thing. And this "albeit" is followed by "nevertheless," that the "albeit" which you have already heard, should relate to what is beyond the sun; but this "nevertheless," which is to follow, to what is "under the sun," and that the one should relate to the Truth, the other to "vanity. "Albeit," then, "that man walketh in the Image, nevertheless he is disquieted in vain. Hear the cause of his "disquieting," and see if it be not a vain one; that thou mayest trample it under foot, that thou mayest "leap beyond it," and mayest dwell on high, where that "vanity" is not. What "vanity" is that? "He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not for whom he may be gathering them together. O infatuated vanity! "Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities, nor lying deceits. To you indeed, O covetous man, to you I seem to be out of my senses, these words appear to you to be "old wives' tales. For you, a man of great judgment, and of great prudence, to be sure, are daily devising methods of acquiring money, by traffic, by agri-

culture, by eloquence perhaps, by making yourself learned in the law, by warfare, perhaps you even add that of usury.

Like a shrewd man as you are, you leave nothing untried, whereby you may pile coin on coin; and may store it up more carefully in a place of secrecy. You plunder others; you guard against the plunderer; you are afraid lest you should yourself suffer the wrong, that you yourself do; and even what you do suffer, does not correct you. ...Examine your own heart, and that prudence of yours, which leads you to deride me, to think me out of my senses for saying these things: and tell me now, "You are heaping up treasures; for whom are you gathering them together? I see what you would tell me; as if what you would say had not occurred to the person described here; you will say, I am keeping them for my children? This is the voice of parental affection; the excuse of injustice. "I am keeping them" (you say) "for my children. So then you are keeping them for your children, are you? Did not Idithun then know this? Assuredly he did; but he reckoned it one of the things of the "old days," that have waxed old, and therefore he despised it: because he was hastening on to the new "days."...

12. For He, "by whom all things were made," hath built "mansions" for all of us: thither He would have that which we have go before us; that we may not lose it on earth. When, however, you have kept them on earth, tell me for whom you are to "gather them together"? You have children: add one more to their number; and give something to Christ also. "He is disquieted in vain." 13. "And now" (ver. 7). "And now," saith this Idithun, -looking back on a certain "vain" show, and looking up to a certain Truth, standing midway where he has something beyond him, and something also behind him, having below him the place from which he took his spring, having above him that toward which he has stretched forth;-"And now," when I have "over-leaped" some things, when I have trampled many things under foot, when I am no longer captivated by things temporal; even now, I am not perfect, "I have not yet apprehended." "For it is by hope that we are saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Therefore he says: "And now what wait I for? Is it not for the Lord?" He is my expectation, who hath given me all those things, that I might despise them. He will give unto me Himself also, even He who is above all, and "by whom all things were made," and by whom I was made amongst all; even He, the

Lord, is my Expectation! You see Idithun, brethren, you see in what way he waiteth for Him! Let no man therefore call himself perfect here; he deceives and imposes upon himself; he is beguiling himself, he cannot have perfection here, and what avails it that he should lose humility?...

"And my substance is ever before Thee." Already advancing, already tending towards Him, and to some extent already beginning to "be," still (he says) "my substance is ever before Thee." Now that other substance is also before men. You have gold, silver, slaves, estates, trees, cattle, servants. These things are visible even to men. There is a certain "substance that is ever before Thee." 14. "Deliver me from all my transgressions" (ver. 8). I have "over-leaped" a great deal of ground, a very great deal of ground already; but, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. I have "over-leaped" a great deal: but still do I "beat my breast," and say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Thou therefore art "my expectation! my "End. For "Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness, unto every man that believeth. From all mine offences: not only from those, that I may not relapse into those which I have already "over-leaped; but from all, without exception, of those on account of which I now beat my breast, and say, "Forgive us our debts. "Deliver me from all mine offences: me being thus minded, and holding fast what the Apostle said, "As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded. For at the time that he said that he was not "already perfect," he then immediately goes on and says, "As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded."... Art thou then, O Apostle, not perfect, and are we perfect? But hath it escaped you, that he did just now call himself "perfect"? For he does not say, "As many of you as are perfect, be ye thus minded; but "As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded; after having said a little before, "Not that I have already attained;

either am already perfect. In no other way then can you be perfect in this life, than by knowing that you cannot be perfect in this life. This then will be your perfection, so to have "over-leaped" some things, as to have still some point to which you are hastening on: so as to have something remaining, to which you will have to leap on, when everything else has been passed by. It is such faith as this that is secure; for whoever thinks that he has already attained, is "exalting himself," so as to be "abused" hereafter. ... 15. "Thou hast made me the reproach of the foolish." Thou hast so willed it, that I should live among those, and preach the Truth among those, who love vanity; and I

cannot but be a laughing-stock to them. "For we have been made a spectacle unto this world, and unto angels, and unto men:" to angels who praise, to men who censure, us; or rather to angels, some of whom praise, some of whom are censuring us: and to men also, some of whom are praising, and some censuring us. ...Both the one and the other are arms to us: the one "on the right hand," the other "on the left:" arms however they are both of them; both of these kinds of arms, both those "on the right hand," and those "on the left;" both those who praise, and those who censure; both those who pay us honour, and those who heap dishonour upon us; with both these kinds I contend against the devil; with both of these I smite him; I defeat him with prosperity, if I be not corrupted by it; by adversity, if I am not broken in spirit by it.

16. "I became dumb; and I opened not my mouth" (ver. 9). But it was to guard against "the foolish man," that "I became dumb, and opened not my mouth." For to whom should I tell what is going on within me? "For I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me; for He will speak peace unto His people." But "There is no peace," saith the Lord, "to the wicked." "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth; because it is Thou that madest me." Was this the reason that thou openedst not thy mouth, "because God made thee"? That is strange; for did not God make thy mouth, that thou shouldest speak? "He that planted the ear, doth He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth He not see?" God hath given thee a mouth to speak with; and dost thou say, "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because Thou madest me"? Or does the clause, "Because Thou madest me," belong to the verse that follows? "Remove Thy stroke away from me" (ver. 10). Because it is "Thou that hast made me," let it not be Thy pleasure to destroy me utterly; scourge, so that I may be made better, not so that I faint; beat me, so that I may be beaten out to a greater length and breadth, not so that I may be ground to powder. "By the heaviness of Thy hand I fainted in corrections." That is, I "fainted" while Thou wast correcting me. And what is meant by "correcting" me? except what follows.

17. "Thou with rebukes hast chastened man for iniquity; Thou hast made my life to consume away like a spider" (ver. 11). There is much that is discerned by this Idithun; by every one who discerns as he does; who overleaps as he does. For he says, that he has fainted in God's corrections; and would fain have the stroke removed away from him, "because it is He who made

him. Let Him renew me, who also made me; let Him who created me, create me anew. But yet, Brethren, do we suppose that there was no cause for his fainting, so that he wishes to be "renewed," to be "created anew"? It is "for iniquity," saith he, "that Thou hast chastened man. All this, my having fainted, my being weak, my "crying out of the deep," all of this is because of "iniquity; and in this Thou hast not condemned, but hast "chastened" me. "Thou hast chastened man for sin. Hear this more plainly from another Psalm: "It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me, that I might learn Thy righteousness. I have been "afflicted," and at the same time "it is good for me; it is at once a punishment, and an act of favour. What hath He in store for us after punishment is over, who inflicts punishment itself by way of favour? For He it is of whom it was said, "I was brought low, and He made me whole:

and, "It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me, that I might learn Thy righteousness. "Thou chastenest man for iniquity. And that which is written, "Thou formest my grief in teaching me," could only be said unto God by one who was "leaping beyond" his fellows; "Thou formest my grief in teaching me; Thou makest, that is to say, a lesson for me out of my sorrow. It is Thou that formest that very grief itself; Thou dost not leave it unformed, but formest it; and that grief, that has been inflicted by Thee, when formed, will be a lesson unto me, that I may be set free by Thee. For the word *finges* is used in the sense of "forming," as it were moulding, my grief; not in the sense of "feigning" it; in the same way that *fingit* is applied to the artist, in the same sense that *figulus* is derived from *figere*. Thou therefore "hast chastened man for iniquity. I see myself in afflictions; I see myself under punishment; and I see no unrighteousness in Thee. If I therefore am under punishment, and if there is no unrighteousness with Thee, it remains that Thou must have been "chastening man for iniquity."

18. And by what means hast Thou "chastened" him? Tell us, O Idithun, the manner of thy chastening; tell us in what way thou hast been "chastened. "And Thou hast made my life consume like a spider. This is the chastening! What consumes away sooner than the spider? I speak of the creature itself; though what can be more liable to "consume away" than the spider's webs? Observe too how liable to decay is the creature itself. Do but set your finger lightly upon it, and it is a ruin: there is nothing at all more easily destroyed. To such a state hast Thou brought my life, by chastening me "because of iniquity. When chastening makes us weak, there is a kind of strength that

would be a fault. ...It was by a kind of strength that man offended, so as to require to be corrected by weakness: for it was by a certain "pride" that he offended; so as to require to be chastened by humility. All proud persons call themselves strong men. Therefore have many "come from the East and the West," and have attained "to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven. Wherefore was it that they so attained? Because they would not be strong. What is meant by "would not be strong"? They were afraid to presume of their own merits. They did not "go about to establish their own righteousness," that they might "submit themselves to the righteousness of God." ... Behold! you are mortal;

and you bear about you a body of flesh that is corrupting away: "And ye shall fall like one of the princes. Ye shall die like men," and shall fall like the devil What good does the remedial discipline of mortality do you? The devil is proud, as not having a mortal body, as being an angel. But as for you, who have received a mortal body, and to whom even this does no good, so as to humble you by so great weakness, you shall "fall like one of the princes. This then is the first grace of God's gift, to bring us to the confession of our infirmity, that whatever good we can do, whatever ability we have, we may be that in Him; that "He that glorieth, may glory in the Lord. "When I am weak," saith he, "then am I strong." 19. "But surely every man living disquieteth himself in vain. He returns to what he mentioned a little before. Although he be improving here, yet for all that, "every man living disquieteth himself in vain; forasmuch as he lives in a state of uncertainty. For who has any assurance even of his own goodness? "He is disquieted in vain. Let him "cast upon the Lord the burden" of his care; let him cast upon Him whatever causes him anxiety. "Let Him sustain thee; let Him keep thee. For on this earth what is there that is certain, except death? Consider the whole sum of all the good or the ill of this life, either those belonging to righteousness, or those belonging to unrighteousness; what is there that is certain here, except death? Have you been advancing in goodness? You know what you are to-day; what you will be to-morrow, you know not! Are you a sinner? you know what you are to-day; what you will be to-morrow, you know not! You hope for wealth; it is uncertain whether it will fall to your lot. You hope to have a wife; it is uncertain whether you will obtain one, or what sort of one you will obtain. You hope for sons: it is uncertain whether they will be born to you. Are they born? it is uncertain whether they will live: if they live,

it is uncertain whether they will grow up in virtue, or whether they will fall away. Whichever way you turn, all is uncertain, death alone is certain.

Art thou poor? It is uncertain whether thou wilt grow rich. Art thou unlearned? It is uncertain whether thou wilt become learned. Art thou in feeble health, it is uncertain whether thou wilt regain thy strength. Art thou born? It is certain that thou wilt die: and in this certainty of death itself, the day of thy death is uncertain. Amidst these uncertainties, where death alone is certain, while even of that the hour is uncertain, and while it alone is studiously guarded against, though at the same time it is in no way to be escaped, "every man living disquieteth himself in vain."... 20. "Hear my prayer, O Lord" (ver. 12). Whereof shall I rejoice? Whereof should I groan? I rejoice on account of what is past, I groan longing for these which are not yet come. "Hear my prayer, and give ear unto my cry. Hold not Thy peace at my tears." For do I now no longer weep, because I have already "passed by," have "left behind" so great things as these? "Do I not weep much the more?" For, "He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow." The more I long for what is not here, do I not so much the more groan for it until it comes? do I not so much the more weep until it comes?...

21. "For I am a sojourner with Thee. But with whom am I a "sojourner"? When I was with the devil, I was a "sojourner; but then I had a bad host and entertainer; now, however, I am with Thee; but I am a "sojourner" still. What is meant by a sojourner? I am a "sojourner" in the place from which I am to remove; not in the place where I am to dwell for ever. The place where I am to abide for ever, should be rather called my home. In the place from which I am to remove I am a "sojourner; but yet it is with my God that I am a sojourner, with whom I am hereafter to abide, when I have reached my home. But what home is that to which you are to remove from this estate of a sojourner? Recognise that home, of which the Apostle speaks, "We have an habitation of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. If this house is eternal in the Heavens, when we have come to it, we shall not be sojourners any more. For how should you be a sojourner in an eternal home? But here, where the Master of the house is some day to say to you, "Remove," while you yourself know not when He will say it, be thou in readiness. And by longing for your eternal home, you will be keeping yourself in readiness for it.

And be not angry with Him, because He gives thee notice to remove, when He Himself pleases. For He made no covenant with thee, nor did He bind Himself by any engagement; nor didst thou enter upon the tenancy of this house on a certain stipulation for a definite term: thou art to quit, when it is its Master's pleasure. For therefore is it that you now dwell there free of charge. "For I am a sojourner with Thee, and a stranger. Therefore it is there is my country: it is there is my home. "I am a sojourner with Thee, and a stranger. Here too is understood "with Thee. For many are strangers with the devil: but they who have already believed and are faithful, are, it is true, "strangers" as yet, because they have not yet come to that country and to that home: but still they are strangers with God. For so long as we are in the body, we are strangers from the Lord, and we desire, whether we are strangers, or abiding here, "we may be accepted with Him. I am a "sojourner with Thee; and a stranger, as all my fathers were. If then I am as all my fathers were, shall I say that I will not remove, when they have removed? Am I to lodge here on other terms, than those on which they lodged here also?...

22. "Grant me some remission, that I may be refreshed before I go hence" (ver. 13). Consider well, Idithun, consider what knots those are which thou wouldest have "loosed" unto thee, that thou mightest be "refreshed before thou goest hence. For thou hast certain fever-heats from which thou wouldest fain be refreshed, and thou sayest, "that I may be refreshed," and "grant me a remission. What should He remit, or loosen unto thee, save that difficulty under which, and in consequence of which, thou sayest, "Forgive us our debts. Grant me a remission before I go hence, and be no more. Set me free from my sins, "before I go hence," that I may not go hence with my sins. Remit them unto me, that I may be set at rest in my conscience, that it may be disburthened of its feverish anxiety, the anxiety with which "I am sorry for my sin. Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed" (before everything else), "before I go hence, and be no more. For if thou grantest me not a "remission, that I may be refreshed," I shall "go and be no more. "Before I go" thither, where if I go, I shall thenceforth "be no more. Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed. A question has suggested itself, how he will be no more. ...What is meant then by "shall be no more," unless Idithun is alluding to what is true "being," and what is not true "being.

For he was beholding with the mind, with which he could do so, with the "mind's eye," by which he was able to behold it, that end, which he had de-

sired to have shown unto him, saying, "Lord, make me to know mine end. He was beholding "the number of his days, which truly is; and he observed that all that is below, in comparison of that true being, has no true being. For those things are permanent; these are subject to change; mortal, and frail, and the eternal suffering, though full of corruption, is for this very reason not to be ended, that it may ever be being ended without end. He alluded therefore to that realm of bliss, to the happy country, to the happy home, where the Saints are partakers of eternal Life, and of Truth unchangeable; and he feared to "go" where that is not, where there is no true being; longing to be there, where "Being" in the highest sense is! It is on account of this contrast then, while standing midway between them, he says, "Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed before I go hence and be no more. For if Thou "grantest me not a remission" of my sins, I shall go from Thee unto all eternity! And from whom shall I go to all eternity? From Him who said, I Am He that Am: from Him who said, "Say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.

He then who goes from Him, in the contrary direction, goes to non-existence. ...

PSALM 40

1. Of all those things which our Lord Jesus Christ has foretold, we know part to have been already accomplished, part we hope will be accomplished hereafter. All of them, however, will be fulfilled, because He is "the Truth" who speaks them, and requires of us to be as "faithful," as He Himself speaks them faithfully. ... 2. Let us say then what this Psalm says. "I waited patiently for the Lord" (ver. 1). I waited patiently for the promise of no mere mortal who can both deceive and be himself deceived: I waited for the consolation of no mere mortal, who may be consumed by sorrow of his own, before he gives me comfort. Should a brother mortal attempt to comfort me, when he himself is in sorrow likewise? Let us mourn in company; let us weep together, let us "wait patiently" together, let us join our prayers together also. Whom did I wait for but for the Lord? The Lord, who though He puts off the fulfilment of His promises, yet never recalls them? He will make it good; assuredly He will make it good, because He has made many of His promises good already: and of God's truth we ought to have no fears, even if as yet He had made none of them good. Lo! let us henceforth think thus, "He has promised us everything; He has not as yet given us possession of anything; He is a spons-

ible Promiser; a faithful Paymaster: do you but show yourself a dutiful exactor of what is promised; and if you be "weak," if you be one of the little ones, claim the promise of His mercy. Do you not see tender lambs striking their dams' teats with their heads, in order that they may get their fill of milk? ..." And He took heed unto me, and heard my cry.

He took heed to it, and He heard it. See thou hast not waited in vain. His eyes are over thee. His ears turned towards thee. For, "the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. What then? Did He not see thee, when thou usedst to do evil and to blaspheme Him? What then becomes of what is said in that very Psalm, "The face of the Lord is upon them that do evil"? But for what end? "that He may cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. Therefore, even when thou wert wicked, He "took heed of thee; but He "took no heed to thee. So then to him who "waited patiently for the Lord," it was not enough to say, "He took heed of me, He says, "He took heed to me; that is, He took heed by comforting me, that He might do me good. What was it that He took heed to? "and He heard my cry."

3. And what hath He accomplished for thee? What hath He done for thee? "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" (ver. 2). He hath given us great blessings already: and still He is our debtor; but let him who hath this part of the debt repaid already, believe that the rest will be also, seeing that he ought to have believed even before he received anything. Our Lord has employed facts themselves to persuade us, that He is a faithful promiser, a liberal giver. What then has He already done? "He has brought me out of a horrible pit. What horrible pit is that? It is the depth of iniquity, from the lusts of the flesh, for this is meant by "the miry clay. Whence hath He brought thee out? Out of a certain deep, out of which thou criedst out in another Psalm, "Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord. And those who are already "crying out of the deep," are not absolutely in the lowest deep: the very act of crying is already lifting them up. There are some deeper in the deep, who do not even perceive themselves to be in the deep. Such are those who are proud despisers, not pious entreaters for pardon; not tearful criers for mercy: but such as Scripture thus describes. "The sinner when he comes into the depth of evil despiseth.

For he is deeper in the deep, who is not satisfied with being a sinner, unless instead of confessing he even defends his sins. But he who has already "cried out of the deep," hath already lifted up his head in order that he might "cry out of the deep," has been heard already, and has been "brought out of the horrible pit, and out of the mire and clay. He already has faith, which he had not before; he has hope, which he was before without; he now walks in Christ, who before used to go astray in the devil. For on that account it is that he says, "He hath set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. Now "that Rock was Christ. Supposing that we are "upon the rock," and that our "goings are ordered," still it is necessary that we continue to walk; that we advance to something farther. For what did the Apostle Paul say when now upon the Rock, when his "goings had now been established"? "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. What then has been done for thee, if thou hast not apprehended? On what account dost thou return thanks, saying, "But I have obtained mercy"? Because his goings are now established, because he now walks on the Rock?...

Therefore, when he was saying, "I press forward toward the prize of my high calling," because "his feet were now set on the Rock," and "his goings were ordered," because he was now walking on the right way, he had something to return thanks for; something to ask for still; returning thanks for what he had received already, while he was claiming that which still remained due. For what things already received was he giving thanks? For the remission of sins, for the illumination of faith; for the strong support of hope, for the fire of charity. But in what respects had he still a claim of debt on the Lord? "Henceforth," he says, "there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. There is therefore something due me still. What is it that is due? "A crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. He was at first a loving Father to "bring him forth from the horrible pit; to forgive his sins, to rescue him from "the mire and clay; hereafter he will be a "righteous Judge," requiting to him walking rightly, what He promised; to him (I say), unto whom He had at the first granted that power to walk rightly. He then as a "righteous Judge" will repay; but whom will he repay? "He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved."

4. "And He hath put a new song in my mouth." What new song is this? "Even a hymn unto our God" (ver. 3). Perhaps you used to sing hymns to

strange gods; old hymns, because they were uttered by the "old man," not by the "new man;" let the "new man" be formed, and let him sing a "new song;" being himself made "new," let him love those "new" things by which he is himself made new. For what is more Ancient than God, who is before all things, and is without end and without beginning? He becomes "new" to thee, when thou returnest to Him; because it was by departing from Him, that thou hadst become old; and hadst said, "I have waxed old because of all mine enemies." We therefore utter "a hymn unto our God;" and the hymn itself sets us free. "For I will call upon the Lord to praise Him, and I will be safe from all mine enemies." For a hymn is a song of praise. Call on God to "praise" Him, not to find fault with Him. ...

5. If haply any one asks, what person is speaking in this Psalm? I would say briefly, "It is Christ." But as ye know, brethren, and as we must say frequently, Christ sometimes speaks in His own Person, in the Person of our Head. For He Himself is "the Saviour of the Body." He is our Head; the Son of God, who was born of the Virgin, suffered for us, "rose again for our justification," sitteth "at the right hand of God," to "make intercession for us:" who is also to recompense to the evil and to the good, in the judgment, all the evil and the good that they have done. He deigned to be come our Head; to become "the Head of the Body," by taking of us that flesh in which He should die for us; that flesh which He also raised up again for our sakes, that in that flesh He might place before us an instance of the resurrection; that we might learn to hope for that of which we heretofore despaired, and might henceforth have our feet upon the rock, and might walk in Christ. He then sometimes speaks in the name of our Head; sometimes also He speaks of us who are His members. For both when He said, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat," He spoke on behalf of His members, not of Himself: and when He said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" the Head was crying on behalf of its members: and yet He did not say, "Why dost thou persecute My members?" but, "Why persecutest thou Me?" If He suffers in us, then shall we also be crowned in Him. Such is the love of Christ. What is there can be compared to this? This is the thing on account of which "He hath put a hymn in our mouth," and this He speaks on behalf of His members.

6. "The just shall see, and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord. "The just shall see. Who are the just? The faithful; because it is "by faith that the just shall live. For there is in the Church this order, some go before, others fol-

low; and those who go before make themselves "an example" to those who follow; and those who follow imitate those who go before. But do those then follow no one, who exhibit themselves as an ensample to them that come after? If they follow no one at all, they will fall into error. These persons then must themselves also follow some one, that is, Christ Himself. ..."The just," therefore, "shall see, and shall fear. They see a narrow way on the one hand; on the other side, "a broad road: on this side they see few, on the other many. But thou art a just man; count them not, but weigh them; bring "a just balance," not a "deceitful" one: because thou art called just. "The just shall see, and fear," applies to thee. Count not therefore the multitudes of men that are filling the "broad ways," that are to fill the circus tomorrow; celebrating with shouts the City's Anniversary, while they defile the City itself by evil living. Look not at them; they are many in number; and who can count them? But there are a few travelling along the narrow road. Bring forth the balance, I say. Weigh them;

see what a quantity of chaff you lift up on the one side, against a few grains of corn on the other. Let this be done by "the just," the "believers," who are to follow. And what shall they who precede do? Let them not be proud, let them not "exalt themselves; let them not deceive those who follow them. How may they deceive those who follow them? By promising them salvation in themselves. What then ought those who follow to do? "The just shall see, and fear: and shall trust in the Lord; not in those who go before them. But indeed they fix their eyes on those who go before them, and follow and imitate them; but they do so, because they consider from Whom they have received the grace to go before them; and because they trust in Him. Although therefore they make these their models, they place their trust in Him from whom the others have received the grace whereby they are such as they are. "The just shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Just as in another Psalm, "I lift up mine eyes unto the hills," we understand by hills, all distinguished and great spiritual persons in the Church; great in solidity, not by swollen inflation. By these it is that all Scripture hath been dispensed unto us; they are the Prophets, they are the Evangelists; they are sound Doctors: to these "I lift up mine eyes, from whence shall come my help.

And lest you should think of mere human help, he goes on to say, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. The just shall see

it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." ... 7. "Blessed is that man that maketh the name of the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities or lying madneses" (ver. 4). Behold the way by which thou wouldest fain have gone. Behold the "multitude that fill the Broad way. It is not without reason "that" road leads to the amphitheatre. It is not without reason it leads to Death. The "broad way" leads unto death, its breadth delights for time: its end is straitness to all eternity. Aye; but the multitudes murmur; the multitudes are rejoicing together; the multitudes are hastening along; the multitudes are flocking together! Do not thou imitate them; do not turn aside after them: they are "vanities, and lying madneses. Let the Lord thy God be thy hope. Hope for nothing else from the Lord thy God; but let the Lord thy God Himself be thine hope. For many persons hope to obtain from God's hands riches, and many perishable and transitory honours; and, in short, anything else they hope to obtain at God's hands, except only God Himself. But do thou seek after thy God Himself: nay, indeed, despising all things else, make thy way unto Him! Forget other things, remember Him. Leave other things behind, and "press forward" unto Him. Surely it is He Himself, who set thee right, when turned away from the right path; who, now that thou art set in the right path, guides thee aright, who guides thee to thy destination. Let Him then be thy hope, who both guides thee, and guides thee to thy destination.

Whither does worldly covetousness lead thee? And to what point does it conduct thee at the last? Thou didst at first desire a farm; then thou wouldest possess an estate; thou wouldest shut out thy neighbours; having shut them out, thou didst set thy heart on the possessions of other neighbours; and didst extend thy covetous desires till thou hadst reached the shore: arriving at the shore, thou covetest the islands: having made the earth thine own, thou wouldest haply seize upon heaven. Leave thou all thy loves. He who made heaven and earth is more beautiful than all. 8. "Blessed is the man that maketh the name of the Lord his hope, and who hath not regarded vanities and lying madneses. For whence is it that "madness" is called "lying"? Insanity is a lying thing, even as it is sanity that sees the Truth. For what thou seest as good things, thou art deceived; thou art not in thy sound senses: a violent fever has driven thee to frenzy: that which thou art in love with is not a reality. Thou applaudest the charioteer; thou cheerest the charioteer; thou art madly in love with the charioteer. It is "vanity; it is "a lying madness. "It is

`not'" (he cries). "Nothing can be better; nothing more delightful. What can I do for one in a state of high fever? Pray ye for such persons, if you have any feelings of compassion in you. For the physician himself also in a desperate case generally turns to those in the house, who stand around weeping; who are hanging on his lips to hear his opinion of the patient who is sick and in danger. The physician stands in a state of doubt: he sees not any good to promise; he fears to pronounce evil, lest he should excite alarm. He devises a thoroughly modest sentence: "The good God can do all things. Pray ye for him. Which then of these madmen shall I check? Which of them will listen to me? Which of them would not call us miserable?"

Because they suppose us to have lost great and various pleasures, of which they are madly fond, in that we are not as madly in love with them as they are: and they do not see that they are "lying" pleasures. ..." And hath not respected vanities, and lying madnesses. "Such a one has won," he cries; "he harnessed such and such a horse," he proclaims aloud. He would fain be a kind of diviner; he aspires to the honours of divination by abandoning the fountain of Divinity; and he frequently pronounces an opinion, and is frequently mistaken. Why is this? Even because they are "lying madnesses. But why is it that what they say sometimes comes true? That they may lead astray the foolish ones; that by loving the semblance of truth there, they may fall into the snare of falsehood: let them be left behind, let them be "given over," let them be "cut off. If they were members of us, they must be mortified. "Mortify," he says, "your members which are upon the earth. Let our God be our hope. He who made all things, is better than all! He who made what is beautiful, is more beautiful than all that is such. He who made whatever is mighty, is Himself mightier. He who made whatever is great, is Himself greater. He will be unto you everything that you love. Learn in the creature to love the Creator; and in the work Him who made it.

Let not that which has been made by Him detain thine affections, so that thou shouldest lose Him by whom thou thyself wert made also. "Blessed," then, "is the man that maketh the Name of the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities and lying madnesses." ... 9. We will give him other sights in exchange for such sights as these. And what sights shall we present to the Christian, whom we would fain divert from those sights? I thank the Lord our God; He in the following verse of the Psalm hath shown us what sights we ought to present and offer to spectators who would fain have sights to see?

Let us now suppose him to be weaned from the circus, the theatre, the amphitheatre; let him be looking after, let him by all means be looking after, some sight to see; we do not leave him without a spectacle. What then shall we give in exchange for those? Hear what follows.

"Many, O Lord my God, are the wonderful works which Thou hast made" (ver. 5). He used to gaze at the "wonderful works" of man; let him now contemplate the wonderful works of God. "Many are the wonderful works" that God "has made." Why are they become vile in his eyes? He praises the charioteer guiding four horses; running all of them without fault and without stumbling. Perhaps the Lord has not made such "wonderful works" in things spiritual. Let him control lust, let him control cowardice, let him control injustice, let him control imprudence, I mean, the passions which falling into excess produce those vices; let him control these and bring them into subjection, and let him hold the reins, and not suffer himself to be carried away; let him guide them the way he himself would have them go; let him not be forced away whither he would not. He used to applaud the charioteer, he himself shall be applauded for his own charioteering; he used to call out that the charioteer should be invested with a dress of honour; he shall himself be clothed with immortality. These are the spectacles, these the sights that God exhibits to us. He cries out of heaven, "My eyes are upon you. Strive, and 'I will' assist you; triumph, and I will crown you."

"And in Thy thought there is none that is like unto Thee. Now then look at the actor! For the man hath by dint of great pains learnt to walk upon a rope; and hanging there he holds thee hanging in suspense. Turn to Him who exhibits spectacles far more wonderful. This man hath learned to walk upon the rope; but hath he caused another to walk on the sea? Forget now thy theatre; behold our Peter; not a walker on the rope, but, so to speak, a walker on the sea. And do thou also walk on other waters (though not on those on which Peter walked, to symbolize a certain truth), for this world is a sea. It hath a deleterious bitterness; it hath the waves of tribulations, the tempests of temptations; it hath men in it who, like fish, delight in their own ruin, and prey upon each other; walk thou here, set thou thy foot on this. Thou wouldest see sights; be thyself a "spectacle. That thy spirit may not sink, look on Him who goes before thee, and says, "We have been made a spectacle unto this world, and unto angels, and unto men. Tread thou on the waters; suffer not thyself to be drowned in the sea. Thou wilt not go there,

thou wilt not "tread it under foot," unless it be His bidding, who was Himself the first to walk upon the sea. For it was thus that Peter spoke. "If Thou art, bid me come unto Thee on the waters.

And because "He was," He heard him when praying; He granted his wish to him when expressing his desire; He raised him up when sinking. These are the "wonderful works" that the "Lord hath made," Look on them; let faith be the eye of him who would behold them. And do thou also likewise; for although the winds alarm thee, though the waves rage against thee, and though human frailty may have inspired thee with some doubt of thy salvation, thou hast it in thy power to "cry out," thou mayest say "Lord, I perish. He who bids thee walk there, suffers thee not to perish. For in that thou now walkest "on the Rock," thou fearest not even on the sea! If thou art without "the Rock," thou must sink in the sea; for the Rock on which thou must walk is such an one as is not sunk in the sea,

10. Observe then the "wonderful works" of God. "I have declared, and have spoken; they are multiplied beyond number. There is "a number," there are some over and above the number. There is a fixed number that belongs to that heavenly Jerusalem. For "the Lord knoweth them that are His; the Christians that fear Him, the Christians that believe, the Christians that keep the commandments, that walk in God's ways, that keep themselves from sins; that if they fall confess: they belong to "the number. But are they the only ones? There are also some "beyond the number. For even if they be but a few (a few in comparison of the numbers of the larger majority), with how great numbers are our Churches filled, crowded up to the very walls; to what a degree do they annoy each other by the pressure, and almost choke each other by their overflowing numbers. Again, out of these very same persons, when there is a public spectacle, there are numbers flocking to the amphitheatre; these are over and above "the number. But it is for this reason that we say this, that they may be in "the number. Not being present, they do not hear this from us; but when ye have gone from hence, let them hear it from you. "I have declared," he says, "and have spoken. It is Christ who speaks. "He hath declared it," in His own Person, as our Head. He hath Himself declared it by His members. He Himself hath sent those who should "declare" it;

He Himself hath sent the Apostles. "Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. How great the number of

believers that are gathered together; how great the multitudes that flock together; many of them truly converted, many but in appearance: and those who are truly converted are the minority; those who are so but in appearance are the majority: because "they are multiplied beyond the number."

11. ...These are the "wonderful works" of God; these are the "thoughts" of God, to which "no man's thoughts are like;" that the lover of sight-seeing may be weaned from curiosity: and with us may seek after those more excellent, those more profitable things, in which, when he shall have attained unto them, he will rejoice. ... 12. "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire" (ver. 6), saith the Psalm to God. For the men of old time, when as yet the true Sacrifice, which is known to the faithful, was foreshown in figures, used to celebrate rites that were figures of the reality that was to be hereafter; many of them understanding their meaning; but more of them in ignorance of it. For the Prophets and the holy Patriarchs understood what they were celebrating; but the rest of the "stiff-necked people" were so carnal, that what was done by them was but to symbolize the things that were to come afterwards; and it came to pass, when that first sacrifice was abolished; when the burnt-offerings of "rams, of goats, and of calves," and of other victims, had been abolished, "God did not desire them." Why did God not desire them? And why did He at the first desire them? Because all those things were, as it were, the words of a person making a promise; and the expressions conveying a promise, when the thing that they promise is come, are no longer uttered. ...Those sacrifices then, as being but expressions of a promise, have been abrogated. What is that which has been given as its fulfilment? That "Body;" which ye know; which ye do not all of you know; whFch, of you who do know it, I pray God all may not know it unto condemnation. Observe the time when it was said; for the person is Christ our Lord, speaking at one time for His members, at another in His own person. "Sacrifice and offering," said He, "Thou didst not desire." What then? Are we left at this present time without a sacrifice? God forbid!

"But a Body hast Thou perfected for me." It was for this reason that Thou didst not desire the others; that Thou mightest "perfect" this; before Thou "perfectedst" this, Thou didst desire the others. The fulfilment of the promise has done away with the words that express the promise. For if they still hold out a promise, that which was promised is not yet fulfilled. This was promised by certain signs; the signs that convey the promise are done away; be-

cause the Substance that was promised is come. We are in this "Body." We are partakers of this "Body." We know that which we ourselves receive; and ye who know it not yet, will know it bye and bye; and when ye come to know it, I pray ye may not receive it unto condemnation. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself." "A Body" hath been "perfected" for us; let us be made perfect in the Body.

13. "Burnt-offerings also for sin hast Thou not required." "Then said I, Lo, I come!" (ver. 7). It is time that what "was promised should come;" because the signs, by means of which they were promised, have been put away. And indeed, Brethren, observe these put away; those fulfilled. Let the Jewish nation at this time show me their priest, if they can! Where are their sacrifices? They are brought to an end; they are put away now. Should we at that time have rejected them? We do reject them now; because, if you chose to celebrate them now, it were unseasonable; unfitting at the time; incongruous. You are still making promises; I have already received! There has remained to them a certain thing for them to celebrate; that they might not remain altogether without a sign. ...In such a case then are they; like Cain with his mark. The sacrifices, however, which used to be performed there, have been put away; and that which remained unto them for a sign like that of Cain, hath by this time been fulfilled; and they know it not. They slay the Lamb; they eat the unleavened bread. "Christ has been sacrificed for us, as our Passover." Lo, in the sacrifice of Christ, I recognise the Lamb that was slain! What of the unleavened bread? "Therefore," says he, "let us keep the feast; not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of wickedness" (he shows what is meant by "old;" it is "stale" flour; it is sour), "but in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." They have continued in the shade; they cannot abide the Sun of Glory. We are already in the light of day. We have "the Body" of Christ, we have the Blood of Christ. If we have a new life, let us "sing a new song, even a hymn unto our God." "Burnt offerings for sin Thou didst not desire. Then said I, Lo, I come!"

14. "In the head of the Book it is written of me, that I should fulfil Thy will: O my God, I am willing, and Thy Law is within my heart" (ver. 8). Behold! He turns His regards to His members. Behold! He hath Himself "fulfilled the will" of the Father. But in what "beginning of a Book" is it written of Him? Perhaps in the beginning of this Book of Psalms. For why should we seek far for it, or examine into other books for it? Behold! It is written in the

beginning of this Book of Psalms! "His will is in the Law of the Lord;" that is, "'O my God, I am willing,' and 'Thy Law is within my heart;'" that is the same as, "And in His Law doth he meditate day and night." 15. "I have well declared Thy righteousness in the great congregation" (ver. 9). He now addresses His members. He is exhorting them to do what He has already done. He has "declared; let us declare also. He has suffered; let us "suffer with Him. He has been glorified; we shall be "glorified with Him. "I have declared Thy righteousness in the great congregation. How great an one is that? In all the world. How great is it? Even among all nations. Why among all nations? Because He is "the Seed of Abraham, in whom all nations shall be blessed. Why among all nations? "Because their sound hath gone forth into all lands. "Lo! I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, and that Thou knowest. My lips speak; I will not "refrain" them from speaking. My lips indeed sound audibly in the ears of men; but "Thou knowest" mine heart. "I will not refrain my lips, O Lord; that Thou knowest. It is one thing that man heareth; another that God "knoweth. That the "declaring" of it should not be confined to the lips alone, and that it might not be said of us, "Whatsoever things they say unto you, do; but do not after their works; or lest it should be said to the people, "praising God with their lips, but not with their heart," "This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me; do thou make audible confession with thy lips; draw nigh with thine heart also.

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. In case like unto which that thief was found, who, hanging on the Cross with the Lord, did on the Cross acknowledge the Lord. Others had refused to acknowledge Him while working miracles; this man acknowledged Him when hanging on the Cross. That thief had every other member pierced through; his hands were fastened by the nails; his feet were pierced also; his whole body was fastened to the tree; the body was not disengaged in its other members; the heart and the tongue were disengaged; "with the heart" he "believed; with the tongue" he made "confession. "Remember me, O Lord," he said, "when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. He hoped for the coming of his salvation at a time far remote; he was content to receive it after a long delay; his hope rested on an object far remote. The day, however, was not postponed! The answer was, "This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise. Paradise hath happy trees! This day hast

thou been with Me on "the Tree" of the Cross. This day shalt thou be with Me on "the Tree" of Salvation. ...

16. "I have not hid my righteousness within my heart" (ver. 10). What is meant by "my righteousness"? My faith. For, "the just shall live by faith." As suppose the persecutor under threat of punishment, as they were once allowed to do, puts you to the question, "What art thou? Pagan or Christian?" "A Christian." That is his "righteousness." He believeth; he "lives by faith." He doth not "hide his righteousness within his heart." He has not said in his heart, "I do indeed believe in Christ; but I will not tell what I believe to this persecutor, who is raging against me, and threatening me. My God knoweth that inwardly, within my heart, I do believe. He knoweth that I renounce Him not." Lo! you say that you have this inwardly within your heart! What have you upon your lips? "I am not a Christian." Your lips bear witness against your heart. "I have not hid my righteousness within my heart." ...

17. "I have declared Thy Truth and. Thy Salvation." I have declared Thy Christ. This is the meaning of, "I have declared Thy Truth and Thy Salvation." How is "Thy Truth" Christ? "I am the Truth." How is Christ "His Salvation"? Simeon recognised the infant in His Mother's hands in the Temple, and said, "For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation." The old man recognised the little child; the old man having himself "become a little child" in that infant, having been renewed by faith. For he had received an oracle from God; and it said this, "The Lord had said unto him, that he was not to depart out of this life, until he had seen the "Salvation of God." This "Salvation of God" it is a good thing to have shown unto men; but let them cry, "Show us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy Salvation." ...

18. "I have not concealed Thy mercy and Thy Truth from the great congregation." Let us be there; let us also be numbered among the members of this Body: let us not keep back "the mercy" of the Lord, and "the Truth" of the Lord. Wouldest thou hear what "the mercy of the Lord" is? Depart from thy sins; He will forgive thy sins. Wouldest thou hear what "the truth" of the Lord is? Hold fast righteousness. Thy righteousness shall receive a crown. For mercy is announced to you now; "Truth" is to be shown unto thee hereafter. For God is not merciful in such a way as not to be just, nor just in such a way as not to be merciful. Does that mercy seem to thee an inconsiderable one? He will not impute unto thee all thy former sins: thou hast lived ill up to this

present clay; thou art still living; this day live well; then thou wilt not "conceal" this "mercy." If this is meant by "mercy," what is meant by "truth"? ...

19. "Remove not Thou Thy mercies far from me, O Lord" (ver. 11). He is turning his attention to the wounded members. Because I have not "concealed Thy mercy and Thy Truth from the great congregation," from the Unity of the Universal Church, look Thou on Thy afflicted members, look on those who are guilty of sins of omission, and on those who are guilty of sins of commission: and withhold not Thou Thy mercies. "Thy mercy and Thy Truth have continually preserved me." I should not dare to turn from my evil way, were I not assured of remission; I could not endure so as to persevere, if I were not assured of the fulfilment of Thy promise. ... "Innumerable evils have compassed me about" (ver. 12). Who can number sins? Who can count his own sins, and those of others? A burden under which he was groaning, who said, "Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults; and from the faults of others, spare Thou Thy servant, O Lord." Our own are too little; those "of others" are added to the burden. I fear for myself; I fear for a virtuous brother, I have to bear with a wicked brother; and under such burthen what shall we be, if God's mercy were to fail? "But Thou, Lord, remove not afar off." Be Thou near unto us! To whom is the Lord near? "Even" unto them that "are of a broken heart." He is far from the proud: He is near to the humble. "For though the Lord is high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly." But let not those that are proud think themselves to be unobserved: for the things that are high, He "beholdeth afar off." He "beheld afar off" the Pharisee, who boasted himself; He was near at hand to succour the Publican, who made confession The one extolled his own merits, and concealed his wounds; the other boasted not of his merits, but laid bare his wounds. He came to the Physician; he knew that he was sick, and that he required to be made whole; he "dared not lift up his eyes to Heaven: he smote upon his breast." He spared not himself, that God might spare him; he acknowledged himself guilty, that God might "ignore" the charge against him. He punished himself, that God might free him from punishment. ...

20. "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I could not see." There is a something for us "to see;" what prevents us so that we see it not? Is it not iniquity? From beholding this light your eye is prevented perhaps by some humour penetrating into it; perhaps by smoke, or dust, or by something else that has been thrown into it: and you have not been able to raise

your wounded eye to contemplate this light of day. What then? Will you be able to lift up your wounded heart unto God? Must it not be first healed, in order that thou mayest see? Do you not show your pride, when you say, "First let me see, and then I will believe"? Who is there who says this? For who that would fain see, says, "Let me see, and then I will believe"? I am about to manifest the Light unto thee; or rather the Light Itself would fain manifest Itself to thee! To whom? It cannot manifest Itself to the blind. He does not see. Whence is it that he seeth not? It is that the eye is clogged by the multitude of sins. ...

21. "They are more than the hairs of my head." He subjects the number of the "hairs of his head" to calculation. Who is there can calculate the number of the hairs of his head? Much less can he tell the number of his sins, which exceed the number of the hairs of his head. They seem to be minute; but they are many in number. You have guarded against great ones; you do not now commit adultery, or murder; you do not plunder the property of others; you do not blaspheme; and do not bear false witness; those are the weightier kind of sins. You have guarded against great sins, what are you doing about your smaller ones? You have cast off the weight; beware lest the sand overwhelm you. "And my heart hath forsaken me." What wonder if thine heart is forsaken by thy God, when it is even "forsaken" by itself? What is meant by "faileth me," "forsaketh me"? Is not capable of knowing itself. He means this: "My heart hath forsaken me." I would fain see God with mine heart, and cannot from the multitude of my sins: that is not enough; mine heart does not even know itself. For no one thoroughly knows himself: let no one presume upon his own state. Was Peter able to comprehend with his own heart the state of his own heart, who said, "I will be with Thee even unto death"? There was a false presumption in the heart; there was lurking in that heart at the same time a real fear: and the heart was not able to comprehend the state of the heart. Its state was unknown to the sick heart itself: it was manifest to the physician. That which was foretold of him was fulfilled. God knew that in him which he knew not in himself: because his heart had forsaken him, his heart was unknown to his heart.

22. "Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me" (ver. 13). As if he were saying, "'If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.' Be pleased to deliver me. O Lord, look upon me to help me." Look, that is, on the penitent members, members that lie in pain, members that are writhing under the instruments of

the surgeon; but still in hope. 23. "Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it" (ver. 14). For in a certain passage he makes an accusation, and says, "I looked upon my right hand, and beheld; and there was no man who sought after my soul;" that is, there was no man to imitate Mine example. Christ in His Passion is the Speaker. "I looked on my right hand," that is, not on the ungodly Jews, but on Mine own right hand, the Apostles,-"and there was no man who sought after My soul." So thoroughly was there no man to "seek after My soul," that he who had presumed on his own strength, "denied My soul." But because a man's soul is sought after in two ways, either in order that you may enjoy his society; or that you may persecute him; therefore he here speaks of others, whom he would have "confounded and ashamed," who are "seeking after his soul." But lest you should understand it in the same way as when he complains of some who did not "seek after his soul," He adds, "to destroy it;" that is, they seek after my soul in order to my death. ...

24. "Let them be turned backward and put to shame that wish me evil." "Turned backwards." Let us not take this in a bad sense. He wishes them well; and it is His voice, who said from the Cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Wherefore then cloth he, say to them, that they should return "backwards"? Because they who before were proud, so that they fell, are now become humble, so that they may rise again. For when they are before, they are wishing to take precedence of their Lord; to be better than He; but if they go behind Him, they acknowledge Him to be better than they; they acknowledge that He ought to go before; that He should precede they follow. Thence He thus rebukes Peter giving Him evil counsel. For the Lord, when about to suffer for our salvation, also foretold what was to happen concerning that Passion itself; and Peter says, "Be it far from Thee," "God forbid it!" "This shall not be!" He would fain have gone before his Lord; would have given counsel to his Master! But the Lord, that He might make him not go before Him, but follow after Him, says, "Get thee behind, Satan!" It is for this reason He said "Satan," because thou art seeking to go before Him, whom thou oughtest to follow; but if thou art behind, if thou follow Him, thou wilt henceforth not be "Satan." What then? "Upon this Rock I will build My Church." ...

25. "Let them speedily bear away their own confusion, that say unto me, Well done! Well done!" (ver. 15). They praise you without reason. "A great

man! A good man! A man of education and of learning; but why a Christian?" They praise those things in you which you should wish not to be praised; they find fault with that at which you rejoice. But if perhaps you say, "What is it you praise in me, O man? That I am a virtuous man? A just man? If you think this, Christ made me this; praise Him." But the other says, "Be it far from you. Do yourself no wrong! You yourself made yourself such." "Let them be confounded who say unto me, Well done! Well done!" And what follows? "Let all those that seek Thee, O Lord, rejoice and be glad" (ver. 16). Those who "seek" not me, but "Thee;" who say not to me, "Well done! Well done!" but see me "glory in Thee," if I have anything whereof to glory; for "he who glories, let him glory in the Lord." "Let all those who seek Thee, Lord, rejoice and be glad."

"And say continually, the Lord be magnified." For even if the sinner becometh righteous, thou shouldest give the glory to "Him who justifieth the ungodly." Whether therefore it be a sinner, let Him be praised who calls him to forgiveness; or one already walking in the way of righteousness, let Him be praised who callus him to receive the crown! Let the Name of the Lord be magnified continually by "such as love Thy salvation." "But I" (ver. 17). I for whom they were seeking evil, I whose "life they were seeking, that they might take it away." But turn thee to another description of persons. But I to whom they said, "Well done! Well done!" "I am poor and needy." There is nothing in me that may be praised as mine own. Let Him rend my sackcloth in sunder, and cover me with His robe, For, "Now I live, not I myself; but Christ liveth in me." If it is Christ that "liveth in thee," and all that thou hast is Christ's, and all that thou art to have hereafter is Christ's also; what art thou in thyself? "I am poor and needy." Now I am not rich, because I am not proud. He was rich who said, "Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are;" but the publican was poor, who said, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!" The one was belching from his fulness; the other from want was crying piteously, "I am poor and needy!" And what wouldest thou do, O poor and needy man? Beg at God's door; "Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee." - "As for me, I am poor and needy. Yet the Lord careth for me." - "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass." What canst thou effect for thyself by taking care what canst thou provide for thyself? Let Him who made thee "care for thee." He who cared for thee before thou wert, how shall He fail to have a care of thee, now that thou art what He would have thee be?

For now thou art a believer, now thou art walking in the "way of righteousness." Shall not He have a care for thee, who "maketh His sun rise on the good and on the evil, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust"? ...

"Thou art my Help, and my Deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God" (ver. 17). He is calling upon God, imploring Him, fearing lest he should fall away: "Make no tarrying." What is meant by "make no tarrying"? We lately read concerning the days of tribulation: "Unless those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." The members of Christ-the Body of Christ extended everywhere-are asking of God, as one single person, one single poor man, and beggar! For He too was poor, who "though He was rich, yet became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich." It is He that maketh rich those who are the true poor; and maketh poor those who are falsely rich. He crieth unto Him; "From the end of the earth I cried unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness." There will come days of tribulations, and of greater tribulations; they will come even as the Scripture speaks: and as days advance, so are tribulations increased also. Let no one promise himself what the Gospel doth not promise. ...

PSALM 41

TO The People, ON The Feast OF The Martyrs. 1. The solemn day of the Martyrs hath dawned; therefore to the glory of the Passion of Christ, the Captain of Martyrs, who spared not Himself, ordering His soldiers to the fight; but first fought, first conquered, that their fighting He might encourage by His example, and aid with His majesty, and crown with His promise: let us hear somewhat from this Psalm pertaining to His Passion. I commend unto you oftentimes, nor grieve I to repeat, what for you is useful to retain, that our Lord Jesus Christ speaketh often Of Himself, that is, in His own Person, which is our Head; often in the person of His Body, which are we and His Church; but so that the words sound as from the mouth of one, that we may understand the Head and the Body to consist together in the unity of integrity, and not be separated the one from the other; as in that marriage whereof it is said, "They two shall be one flesh." If then we acknowledge two in one flesh, let us acknowledge two in one voice. First, that which responding to the reader we have sung, though it be from the middle of the Psalm, from that I will take the beginning of this Sermon.

"Mine enemies speak evil of Me, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish" (ver. 5). This is the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ: but see if herein

are not understood the members also. This was spoken also when our Lord Himself walked in the flesh here on earth. ...When they saw the people go after Him, they said, "When He shall die, then shall His Name perish; that is, when we have slain Him, then shall His Name be no more in the earth, nor shall He seduce any, being dead; but by that very slaying of Him shall men understand, that He was but a man whom they followed, that there was in Him no hope of salvation, and shall desert His Name, and it shall no more be. He died, and His Name perished not, but His Name was sown as seed: He died, but He was a grain, which dying, the corn immediately sprang up. When glorified then was our Lord Jesus Christ, began they much more, and much more numerously to trust in Him; then began His members to hear what the Head had heard. Now then our Lord Jesus Christ being in heaven set down, and Himself in us labouring on earth, still spake His enemies, "When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. For hence stirred up the devil persecutions in the Church to destroy the Name of Christ.

Unless haply ye think, brethren, that those Pagans, when they raged against Christians, said not this among themselves, "to blot out the Name of Christ from the earth. That Christ might die again, not in the Head, but in His Body, were slain also the Martyrs. To the multiplying of the Church availed the Holy Blood poured forth, to help Its seminating came also the death of the Martyrs. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. More and more were the Christians multiplied, nor was it fulfilled which spake the enemies, "When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Even now also is it spoken. Down sit the Pagans, and compute them the years, they hear their fanatics saying, A time shall come when Christians shall be none, and those idols must be worshipped as before they were worshipped: still say they, "When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Twice conquered, now the third time be wise! Christ died, His Name has not perished: the Martyrs died, multiplied more is the Church, groweth through all nations the Name of Christ. He who foretold of His own Death, and of His Resurrection, He who foretold of His Martyrs' death, and of their crown, He Himself foretold of His Church things yet to come, if truth He spake twice, has He the third time lied? Vain then is what ye believe against Him; better is it that ye believe in Him, that ye may "understand upon the needy and poor One;

that "though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." ... 2. "Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One: in the evil day shall the Lord deliver him" (ver. 1). For the evil day will come: will thou, hill thou, come it will: the Day of Judgment will come upon thee, an evil day if thou "understand not the needy and poor. For what now thou wilt not believe, shall be made manifest in the end. But neither shalt thou escape, when it shall be made manifest, because thou believest not, when it is kept secret. Invited art thou, what thou seest not to believe, lest when thou see, thou be put to the blush. "Understand then upon the needy and poor One," that is, Christ: understand in Him the hidden riches, whom poor thou seest. "In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. For thereby in the evil day shall He deliver thee, in that He is God: but in that He is man, and that which in Him is human hath raised to life, and changed for the better, He hath lifted (thee) to heaven. But He who is God, who would have one person in man and with man, could neither decrease nor increase, neither die nor rise again. He died out of man's infirmity, but God dieth not. ... But as we rightly say, Such a man died, though his soul dieth not; so we rightly say, Christ died, though His Divinity dieth not. Wherefore died? Because needy and poor.

Let not His death offend thee, and avert thee from beholding His Divinity. "Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One. Consider also the poor, the needy, the hungry and thirsty, the naked, the sick, the prisoners; understand also upon such poor, for if upon such thou understand, thou understandest upon Him who said, "I was an hungred, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, naked, sick, in prison; so in the evil day shall the Lord deliver thee. ... 3. "And deliver him not into the hand of his enemy" (ver. 2). The enemy is the devil. Let none think of a man his enemy, when he hears these words. Haply one thought of his neighbour, of him who had a suit with him in court, of him who would take from him his own possession, of him who would force him to sell to him his house. Think not this; but that enemy think of, of whom said the Lord, "an enemy hath done this. For He it is who suggests that for things earthly he be worshipped, for overthrow the Christian Name this enemy cannot. For he hath seen himself conquered by the fame and praises of Christ, he hath seen, whereas he slew Christ's Martyrs, that they are crowned, he triumphed over. He hath begun to be unable to persuade men that Christ is nought; and because by reviling Christ, he now

with difficulty deceives, by lauding Christ, he endeavours to deceive. Before this what said he? Whom worship ye? A Jew, dead, crucified, a man of no moment, who could not even from himself drive away death. When after His Name he saw running the whole human race, saw that in the Name of the Crucified temples are thrown down, idols are broken, sacrifices abolished; and that all these things predicted in the Prophets are considered by men, by men with wonder astonished, and closing now their hearts against the reviling of Christ;

he clothes himself with praise of Christ, and begins to deter from the faith in another manner. Great is the law of Christ, powerful is that law, divine, ineffable! but who fulfilleth it? In the name of our Saviour, "tread upon the lion and the dragon. By reviling openly roared the lion; by lauding craftily lurks the dragon. Let them come to the faith, who doubted; and not say, Who fulfilleth it? If on their own strength they presume, they will not fulfil it. Presuming on the grace of God let them believe, presuming (on it) let them come; to be aided come, not to be judged. So live all the faithful in the Name of Christ, each one in his degree fulfilling the commands of Christ, whether married, or celibates and virgins, they live as much as God granteth them to live; neither presume they in their own strength, but know that in Him they ought to glory. ...

4. "The Lord help him" (ver. 3). But when? Haply in heaven, haply in the life eternal, that so it remain to worship the devil for earthly needs, for the necessities of this life. Far be it! Thou hast "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. He came unto thee on earth, by Whom were made heaven and earth. Consider then what He saith, "The Lord help him, on his bed of pain. The bed of pain is the infirmity of the flesh; lest thou shouldest say, I cannot hold, and carry, and tie up my flesh; thou art aided that thou mayest. The Lord help thee on thy bed of pain. Thy bed did carry thee, thou carriedst not thy bed, but wast a paralytic inwardly; He cometh who saith to thee, "Take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house. "The Lord help him on his bed of pain. Then to the Lord Himself He turneth, as though it were asked, Why then, since the Lord helpeth us, suffer we such great ills in this life, such great scandals, such great labours, such disquiet from the flesh and the world? He turneth to God, and as though explaining to us the counsel of His healing, He saith, "Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. By the bed is understood anything earthly.

Every soul that is infirm in this life seeketh for itself somewhat whereon to rest, because intensity of labour, and of the soul extended toward God, it can hardly endure perpetually, somewhat it seeketh on earth whereon to rest, and in a manner with a kind of pausing to recline, as are those things which innocent ones love. ...The innocent man resteth in his house, his family, his wife, his children; in his poverty, his little farm, his orchard planted with his own hand, in some building fabricated with his own study; in these rest the innocent. But yet God willing us not to have love but of life eternal, even with these, though innocent delights, mixeth bitterness, that even in these we may suffer tribulation, and so He turneth all our bed in our infirmity. "Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. Let him not then complain, when in these things which he hath innocently, he suffereth some tribulations. He is taught to love the better, by the bitterness of the worse; lest going a traveller to his country, he choose the inn instead of his own home.

5. But why this? Because He "scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Why this? Because to men sinning was it said, "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread." Therefore because all these chastisements, in which all our bed is turned in our infirmity, man ought to acknowledge that he suffers for sin; let him turn himself, and say what follows: "I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee" (ver. 4). O Lord, by tribulations do Thou exercise me; to be scourged Thou judgest every son whom Thou wilt receive, who sparedst not even the Only-Begotten. He indeed without sin was scourged; but I say, "I have sinned against Thee." ... 6. "Mine enemies speak evil of Me, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish" (ver. 5). Of this we have already spoken, and from this began. 7. "And entered in to see" (ver. 6). What Christ suffered, that suffereth also the Church; what the Head suffered, that suffer also the Members. "For the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord." ...

If to Christ's Members thou belongest, come within, cling to the Head. Endure the tares if thou art wheat, endure the chaff if thou art grain. Endure the bad fish within the net if thou art a good fish. Wherefore before the time of winnowing dost thou fly away? Wherefore before the time of harvest, dost thou root up the corn also with thyself? Wherefore before thou art come to the shore, hast thou broken the nets? "They go abroad, and tell it." 8. "All mine enemies whisper against Me unto the same thing" (ver. 7). Against Me all unto the same thing. How much better with me unto the same thing,

than against me "unto the same thing." What is, "Against me unto the same thing"? With one counsel, with one conspiring. Christ then speaketh unto thee, Ye consent against Me, consent ye to Me: why against Me? wherefore not with Me? That same thing if ye had always had, ye had not divided you into schisms. For, saith the Apostle, "I beseech you, brethren, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you." "All mine enemies whisper against Me unto the same thing:" against Me do they "devise evil to Me." To themselves rather, for "they have gathered iniquity to themselves;" but therefore to Me, because by their intention they are to be weighed: for not because to do nothing was in their power, to do nothing was in their will. For the devil lusted to extinguish Christ, and Judas would slay Christ; yet Christ slain and rising again, we are made alive, but to the devil and to Judas is rendered the reward of their evil will, not of our salvation. ...The intention wherewith they spake, not what they spake, did He consider, who related that they spake evil of Him, "Against Me they devised evil to Me." And what evil to Christ, to the Martyrs what evil? All hath God turned to good.

9. "An ungodly word do they set forth against Me" (ver. 8). What sort of ungodly word? Listen to the Head Itself. "Come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Fools! How shall the inheritance be yours? Because ye killed Him? Lo! ye even killed Him; yet shall not the inheritance be yours. "Shall not He that sleepeth add this also, that He rise again"? When ye exulted that ye had slain Him, He slept; for He saith in another Psalm, "I slept." They raged and would slay Me; "I slept." If I had not willed, I had not even slept. "I slept," because "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again." "I laid Me down and slept, and rose up again." Rage then the Jews; be "the earth given into the hands of the wicked," be the flesh left to the hands of persecutors, let them on wood suspend it, with nails transfix it, with a spear pierce it. "Shall He that sleepeth, not add this, that He rise up again?" Wherefore slept He? Because "Adam is the figure of Him that was to come." And Adam slept, when out of his side was made Eve. Adam in the figure of Christ, Eve in the figure of the Church; whence she was called "the mother of all living." When was Eve created? While Adam slept. When out of Christ's side flowed the Sacraments of the Church? While He slept upon the Cross. ...

10. "The man of My peace, in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread, hath enlarged his heel against Me" (ver. 9): hath raised up his foot against Me: would trample upon Me. Who is this man of His peace? Judas. And in him did Christ trust, that He said, "in whom I trusted"? Did He not know: him from the beginning? Did He not before he was born know that he would be? Had He not said to all His disciples, "I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil"? How then trusted He in him, but that He is in His Members, and that because many faithful trusted in Judas, the Lord transferred this to Himself? ... "The man of My peace, in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread." How showed He him in His Passion? By the words of His prophecy: by the sop He marked Him out, that it might appear said of him, "Which did eat of My bread." Again, when he came to betray Him, He granted him a kiss, that it might appear said of him, "The man of My peace."

11. "But Thou, O Lord, be merciful unto Me" (ver. 10). This is the person of a servant, this is the person of the needy and poor for, "Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One." See, as it was spoken, "Be merciful unto Me, and raise Me up, and I will requite them," so is it done. For the Jews slew Christ, lest they should lose their place. Christ slain, they lost their place. Rooted out of the kingdom were they, dispersed were they. He, raised up, requited them tribulation, He requited them unto admonition, not yet unto condemnation. For the city wherein the people raged, as a ramping and a roaring lion, crying out, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," the Jews rooted out therefrom, hath now Christians, by not one Jew is inhabited. There is planted the Church of Christ, whence were rooted out the thorns of the synagogue. For truly this fire blazed "as the fire of thorns." But the Lord was as a green tree. This said Himself, when certain women mourned Christ as dying. ... "For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry?" When can a green tree be consumed by the fire of thorns? For they blazed as fire among thorns. Fire consumeth thorns, but whatsoever green tree it is applied to, is not easily kindled. ... Yet lest ye think that God the Father of Christ could raise up Christ, that is, the Flesh of His Son, and that Christ Himself, though He be the Word equal with the Father, could not raise up His own Flesh; hear out of the Gospel, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "But," said the Evangelist (lest even after this we should doubt), "He spake of the temple of His Body. Raise Me up, and I will requite them."

12. "By this I know that Thou favourest Me, that Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me" (ver. 11.) Because the Jews did triumph, when they saw Christ crucified; they thought that they had fulfilled their will to do Him hurt: the fruits of their cruelty they saw in effect, Christ hanging on the Cross: they shook their heads, saying, "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross." He came not down, who could; His Potency He showed not, but patience taught. For if, on their saying these things, He had come down from the Cross, He would have seemed as it were to yield to them insulting, and not being able to endure reproach, would have been believed conquered: more firm remained He upon the Cross, than they insulting; fixed was He, they wavering. For therefore shook they their heads, because to the true Head they adhered not. He taught us plainly patience. For mightier is that which He did, who would not do what the Jews challenged. For much mightier is it to rise from the sepulchre, than to come down from the Cross. "That Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me." They triumphed then at that time. Christ rose again, Christ was glorified. Now see they in His Name the human race converted: now let them insult, now shake the head: rather now let them fix the head, or if they shake the head, in wonder and admiration let them shake. ...

13. "But as for Me, Thou upholdest Me, because of Mine innocence" (ver. 12). Truly innocence; integrity without sin, requiting without debt, scourging without desert. "Thou upholdest Me because of Mine innocence, and hast made Me strong in Thy sight for ever. Thou hast made Me strong for ever, Thou madest Me weak for a time: Thou hast made Me strong in Thy sight, Thou madest Me weak in sight of men. What then? Praise to Him, glory to Him. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He is the God of Israel, our God, the God of Jacob, the God of the younger son, the God of the younger people. Let none say, Of the Jews said He this, I am not Israel; rather the Jews are not Israel. For the elder son, he is the elder people reprobated; the younger, the people beloved. "The elder shall serve the younger: now is it fulfilled: now, brethren, the Jews serve us, they are as our satchellers, we studying, they carry our books. Hear wherein the Jews serve us, and not without reason. ...With them are the Law and the Prophets, in which. Law, and in which Prophets, Christ is preached.

When we have to do with Pagans, and show this coming to pass in the Church of Christ, which before was predicted of the Name of Christ, of the

Head and Body of Christ, lest they think that we have forged these predictions, and from things which have happened, as though they were future, had made them up, we bring forth the books of the Jews. The Jews forsooth are our enemies, from an enemy's books convince we the adversary. ...If any enemy clamour and say, "Ye for yourselves have forged prophecies; be the books of the Jews brought forth, because the elder shall serve the younger. Therein let them read those predictions, which now we see fulfilled; and let us all say, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting, and all the people shall say, So be it, So be it."

PSALM 42

1. We have undertaken the exposition of a Psalm corresponding to your own "longings," on which we propose to speak to you. For the Psalm itself begins with a certain pious "longing;" and he who sings so, says, "Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God" (ver. 1). Who is it then that saith this? It is ourselves, if we be but willing! And why ask, who it is other than thyself, when it is in thy power to be the thing which thou art asking about? It is not however one individual, but it is "One Body;" but "Christ's Body is the Church." Such "longing" indeed is not found in all who enter the Church: let all however who have "tasted" the sweetness "of the Lord," and who own in Christ that for which they have a relish, think that they are not the only ones; but that there are such seeds scattered throughout "the field" of the Lord, this whole earth: and that there is a certain Christian unity, whose voice thus speaks, "Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God." And indeed it is not ill understood as the cry of those, who being as yet Catechumens, are hastening to the grace of the holy Font. On which account too this Psalm is ordinarily chanted on those occasions, that they may long for the Fountain of remission of sins, even "as the hart for the water-brooks." Let this be allowed; and this meaning retain its place in the Church; a place both truthful and sanctioned by usage. Nevertheless, it appears to me, my brethren, that such "a longing" is not fully satisfied even in the faithful in Baptism: but that haply, if they know where they are sojourning, and whither they have to remove from hence, their "longing" is kindled in even greater intensity.

2. The title then of it is, "On the end: a Psalm for understanding for the sons of Korah. We have met with the sons of Korah in other titles of Psalms: and remember to have discussed and stated already the meaning of this

name. Yet we must even now take notice of this title in such a way, that what we have said already should be no prejudice against our saying it again: for all were not present in every place where we said it. Now Korah may have been, as indeed he was, a certain definite person; and have had sons, who might be called "the sons of Korah; let us however search for the secret of which this is the sacrament, that this name may bring to light the mystery with which it is pregnant. For there is some great mystery in the matter that the name "sons of Korah" is given to Christians. Why "sons of Korah"? They are "sons of the bridegroom, sons of Christ," Why then does "Korah" stand for Christ? Because "Korah" is equivalent to "Calvaria." ...Therefore, the "sons of the bridegroom," the sons of His Passion, the sons redeemed by His Blood, the sons of His Cross, who bear on their forehead that which His enemies erected on Calvary, are called "the sons of Korah; to them is this Psalm sung as a Psalm for "understanding. Let then our understanding be roused: and if the Psalm be sung to us, let us follow it with our "understanding." ...Run to the brooks;

long after the water-brooks. "With God is the fountain of Life; a "fountain" that shall never be dried up: in His "Light" is a Light that shall never be darkened. Long thou for this light: for a certain fountain, a certain light, such as thy bodily eyes know not; a light to see which the inward eye must be prepared; a fountain, to drink of which the inward thirst is to be kindled. Run to the fountain; long for the fountain; but do it not anyhow, be not satisfied with running like any ordinary animal; run thou "like the hart. What is meant by "like the hart"? Let there be no sloth in thy running; run with all thy might: long for the fountain with all thy might. For we find in "the hart" an emblem of swiftness. 3. But perhaps Scripture meant us to consider in the stag not this point only, but another also. Hear what else there is in the hart. It destroys serpents, and after the killing of serpents, it is inflamed with thirst yet more violent; having destroyed serpents, it runs to "the water-brooks," with thirst more keen than before. The serpents are thy vices, destroy the serpents of iniquity; then wilt thou long yet more for "the Fountain of Truth." Perhaps avarice whispers in thine ear some dark counsel, hisses against the word of God, hisses against the commandment of God. And since it is said to thee, "Disregard this or that thing," if thou prefer working iniquity to despising some temporal good, thou chooseth to be bitten by a serpent, rather than destroy it. Whilst, therefore, thou art yet indulgent to

thy vice, thy covetousness or thy appetite, when am I to find in thee "a longing" such as this, that might make thee run to the water-brooks? ...

4. There is another point to be observed in the hart. It is reported of stags ...that when they either wander in the herds, or when they are swimming to reach some other parts of the earth, that they support the burdens of their heads on each other, in such a manner as that one takes the lead, and others follow, resting their heads upon him, as again others who follow do upon them, and others in succession to the very end of the herd; but the one who took the lead in bearing the burden of their heads, when tired, returns to the rear, and rests himself after his fatigue by supporting his head just as did the others; by thus supporting what is burdensome, each in turn, they both accomplish their journey, and do not abandon each other. Are they not a kind of "harts" that the Apostle addresses, saying, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ"? ...

5. "My soul is athirst for the living God" (ver. 2). What I am saying, that "as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so longs my soul after Thee, O God," means this, "My soul is athirst for the living God." For what is it athirst? "When shall I come and appear before God?" This it is for which I am athirst, to "come and to appear before Him." I am athirst in my pilgrimage, in my running; I shall be filled on my arrival. But "When shall I come?" And this, which is soon in the sight of God, is late to our "longing." "When shall I come and appear before God?" This too proceeds from that "longing," of which in another place comes that cry, "One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." Wherefore so? "That I may behold" (he saith) "the beauty of the Lord." "When shall I come and appear before the Lord?" ...

6. "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they daily say unto me, Where is thy God?" (ver. 3). My tears (he saith) have been not bitterness, but "my bread." Those very tears were sweet unto me: being athirst for that fountain, inasmuch as I was not as yet able to drink of it, I have eagerly made my tears my meat. For he said not, "My tears became my drink," lest he should seem to have longed for them, as for "the water-brooks:" but, still retaining that thirst wherewith I burn, and by which I am hurried away towards the water-brooks, "My tears became my meat," whilst I am not yet there. And assuredly he does but the more thirst for the water-brooks from making his tears his meat. ..."And they daily say unto me, Where is thy God?"

For if a Pagan should say this to me, I cannot retort it upon him, saying, "Where is thine?" inasmuch as he points with his finger to some stone, and says, "Lo, there is my God!" When I have laughed at the stone, and he who pointed to it has been put to the blush, he raises his eyes from the stone, looks up to heaven, and perhaps says, pointing his finger to the Sun, "Behold there my God! Where, I pray, is your God?" He has found something to point out to the eyes of the flesh; whereas I, on my part, not that I have not a God to show to him, cannot show him what he has no eyes to see. For he indeed could point out to my bodily eyes his God, the Sun; but what eyes hath he to which I might point out the Creator of the Sun? ...

7. "I thought on these things, and poured out my soul above myself" (ver. 4). When would my soul attain to that object of its search, which is "above my soul," if my soul were not to "pour itself out above itself"? For were it to rest in itself, it would not see anything else beyond itself; and in seeing itself, would not, for all that, see God. Let then my insulting enemies now say, "Where is thy God?" aye, let them say it! I, so long as I do not "see," so long as my happiness is postponed, make my tears my "bread day and night." Let them still say, "Where is thy God?" I seek my God in every corporeal nature, terrestrial or celestial, and find Him not: I seek His Substance in my own soul, and I find it not, yet still I have thought on these things, and wishing to "see the invisible things of my God, being understood by the things made," I have poured forth my soul above myself, and there remains no longer any being for me to attain to, save my God. For it is "there" is the "house of my God." His dwelling-place is above my soul; from thence He beholds me; from thence He created me; from thence He directs me and provides for me; from thence he appeals to me, and calls me, and directs me; leads me in the way, and to the end of my way. ...

8. For when I was "pouring out my soul above myself," in order to reach my God, why did I do so? "For I will go into the place of Thy Tabernacle." For I should be in error were I to seek for my God without "the place of His tabernacle." "For I will go into the place of Thy wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God." "I will go," he says, "into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God! For there are already many things that I admire in "the tabernacle. See how great wonders I admire in the tabernacle! For God's tabernacle on earth is the faithful; I admire in them the obedience of even their bodily members: that in them "Sin does not reign so

that they should obey its lusts; neither do they yield their members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but unto the living God in good works. I admire the sight of the bodily members warring in the service of the soul that serves God. ...And wonderful though the tabernacle be, yet when I come to "the house of God," I am even struck dumb with astonishment. Of that "house" he speaks in another Psalm, after he had put a certain abstruse and difficult question to himself (viz., why is it that it generally goes well with the wicked on earth, and ill with the good?), saying, "I thought to know this; it is too painful for me, until I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand of the last things. For it is there, in the sanctuary of God, in the house of God, is the fountain of "understanding. There he "understood of the last things; and solved the question concerning the prosperity of the unrighteous, and the sufferings of the righteous. How does he solve it? Why, that the wicked, when reprieved here, are reserved for punishments without end;

and the good when they suffer here, are being tried in order that they may in the end obtain the inheritance. And it was in the sanctuary of God that he understood this, and "understood of the last things." ...For he tells us of his progress, and of his guidance thither; as if we had been saying, "You are admiring the tabernacle here on earth; how came you to the sanctuary of the house of God? he says, "In the voice of joy and praise; the sound of keeping holiday. Here, when men keep festival simply for their own indulgence, it is their custom to place musical instruments, or to station a chorus of singers, before their houses, or any kind of music that serves and allures to wantonness. And when these are heard, what do we passers by say? "What is going on here? And we are told in answer, that it is some festival. "It is a birthday that is being celebrated" (say they), "there is a marriage here; that those songs may not appear out of place, but the luxurious indulgence may be excused by the festive occasion. In the "house of God" there is a never-ending festival: for there it is not an occasion celebrated once, and then to pass away. The angelic choir makes an eternal "holiday: the presence of God's face, joy that never fails. This is a "holiday" of such a kind, as neither to be opened by any dawn, nor terminated by any evening.

From that everlasting perpetual festivity, a certain sweet and melodious strain strikes on the ears of the heart, provided only the world do not drown the sounds. As he walks in this tabernacle, and contemplates God's wonderful works for the redemption of the faithful, the sound of that festivity

charms his ears, and bears the "hart" away to "the water-brooks." 9. But seeing, brethren, so long as "we are at home in this body, we are absent from the Lord;" and "the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things;" even though we have some way or other dispersed the clouds, by walking as "longing" leads us on, and for a brief while have come within reach of that sound, so that by an effort we may catch something from that "house of God," yet through the burden, so to speak, of our infirmity, we sink back to our usual level, and relapse to our ordinary state. And just as there we found cause for rejoicing, so here there will not be wanting an occasion for sorrow. For that hart that made "tears" its "bread day and night," borne along by "longing to the water-brooks" (that is, to the spiritual delights of God), "pouring forth his soul above himself," that he may attain to what is "above" his own soul, walking towards "the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God," and led on by the sweetness of that inward spiritual sound to feel contempt for all outward things, and be borne on to things spiritual, is but a mortal man still; is still groaning here, still bearing about the frailty of flesh, still in peril in the midst of the "offences" of this world. He therefore glances back to himself, as if he were coming from that world; and says to himself, now placed in the midst of these sorrows, comparing these with the things, to see which he had entered in there, and after seeing which he had come forth from thence;

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?" (ver. 5). Lo, we have just now been gladdened by certain inward delights: with the mind's eye we have been able to behold, though but with a momentary glance, something not susceptible of change: why dost thou still "disquiet me, why art thou" still "cast down"? For thou dost not doubt of thy God. For now thou art not without somewhat to say to thyself, in answer to those who say, "Where is thy God?" I have now had the perception of something that is unchangeable; why dost thou disquiet me still? "Hope in God." Just as if his soul was silently replying to him, "Why do I disquiet thee, but because I am not yet there, where that delight is, to which I was, as it were, rapt for a moment? Am I already 'drinking' from this 'fountain' with nothing to fear?" ...Still "Hope in God," is his answer to the soul that disquiets him, and would fain account for her disquiet from the evils with which this world abounds. In the mean while dwell in hope: for "hope that is seen is not

hope; but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

10. "Hope in God." Why "hope"? "For I will confess unto Him." What wilt thou "confess"? "My God is the saving health of my countenance." My "health" (my salvation) cannot be from myself; this it is that I will say, that I will "confess." It is my God that is "the saving health of my countenance." For to account for his fears, in the midst of those things, which he now knows, having come after a sort to the "understanding" of them, he has been looking behind him again in anxiety, lest the enemy be stealing upon him: he cannot yet say, "I am made whole every whirl." For having but "the first-fruits of the Spirit, we groan within ourselves; waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." When that "health" (that salvation) is perfected in us, then shall we be living in the house of God for ever, and praising for ever Him to whom it was said, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will be praising Thee world without end." This is not so yet, because the salvation which is promised, is not as yet in being; but it is "in hope" that I confess unto God, and say, "My God is the saving health of my countenance." For it is "in hope" that "we are saved; but hope that is seen, is not hope." ...

11. "My soul is disquieted on account of myself" (ver. 6). Is it disquieted on account of God? It is on my own account it is disquieted. By the Unchangeable it was revived; it is by the changeable it is disquieted. I know that the righteousness of God remaineth; whether my own will remain steadfast, I know not. For I am alarmed by the Apostle's saying, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. Therefore since "there is no soundness in me for myself," there is no hope either for me of myself. "My soul is disquieted on account of myself." ... "Therefore I remember Thee, O Lord, from the land of Jordan, and from the little hill of Hermon. From whence did I remember thee? From the "little hill," and from the "land of Jordan. Perhaps from Baptism, where the remission of sins is given. For no one runs to the remission of sins, except he who is dissatisfied with himself; no one runs to the remission of sins, but he who confesses himself a sinner; no one confesses himself a sinner, except by humbling himself before God. Therefore it is from "the land of Jordan I have remembered thee, and from the hill; observe, not "of the great hill," that thou mayest make of the "little hill" a great one: for "whoso exalteth himself shall be abased, and whoso humbleth him-

self shall be exalted. If you would also ask the meanings of the names, Jordan means "their descent. Descend then, that thou mayest be "lifted up:

be not lifted up, lest thou be cast down. "And the little hill of Hermon. Hermon means "anathematizing. Anathematize thyself, by being displeased with thyself; for if thou art pleased with thyself, God will be displeased with thee. Because then God gives us all good things, because He Himself is good, not because we are worthy of it; because He is merciful, not because we have in anything deserved it; it is from "the land of Jordan, and from Hermon," that I remember thee. And because he so remembers with humility, he shall earn his exaltation to fruition, for he is not "exalted" in himself, who "glories in the Lord." 12. "Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of thy water-spouts" (ver. 7). I may perhaps finish the Psalm, aided as I am by your attention, whose fervour I perceive. As for your fatigue in hearing, I am not greatly solicitous, since you see me also, who speak, toiling in the heat of these exertions. Assuredly it is from your seeing me labouring, that you labour with me: for I am labouring not for myself, but for you. "Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of thy water-spouts. It was God whom he addressed, who "remembered him from the land of Jordan and Hermon. It was in wonder and admiration he spake this: "Abyss calleth unto abyss with the voice of Thy water-spouts. What abyss is this that calls, and to what other abyss? Justly, because the "understanding" spoken of is an "abyss. For an "abyss" is a depth that cannot be reached or comprehended; and it is principally applied to a great body of water. For there is a "depth," a "profound," the bottom of which cannot be reached by sounding. Furthermore, it is said in a certain passage. "Thy judgments are a mighty abyss," Scripture meaning to suggest that the judgments of God are incomprehensible. What then is the "abyss" that calls, and to what other "abyss" does it call? If by "abyss" we understand a great depth, is not man's heart, do you not suppose, "an abyss"? For what is there more profound than that "abyss"?

Men may speak, may be seen by the operations of their members, may be heard speaking in conversation: but whose thought is penetrated, whose heart seen into? What he is inwardly engaged on, what he is inwardly capable of, what he is inwardly doing or what purposing, what he is inwardly wishing to happen, or not to happen, who shall comprehend? I think an "abyss" may not unreasonably be understood of man, of whom it is said elsewhere, "Man shall come to a deep heart, and God shall be exalted. If man then is an

"abyss," in what way doth "abyss" call on "abyss"? Does man "call on" man as God is called upon? No, but "calls on" is equivalent to "calls to him. For it was said of a certain person, he calls on death; that is, lives in such a way as to be inviting death; for there is no man at all who puts up a prayer, and calls expressly on death: but men by evil-living invite death. "Deep calls on deep," then, is, "man calls to man. Thus is it wisdom is learnt, and thus faith, when "man calls to man. The holy preachers of God's word call on the "deep: are they not themselves "a deep" also? ...

13. "Deep calleth to deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts" I, who tremble all over, when my soul was disquieted on account of myself, feared greatly on account of Thy "judgments." ...Are those judgments slight ones? They are great ones, severe, hard to bear; but would they were all. "Deep calls to deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts," in that Thou threatenest, Thou sayest, that there is another condemnation in store even after those sufferings. "Deep calls on deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts." "Whither then shall I go from Thy presence? And whither shall I flee from Thy Spirit?" seeing that deep calls to deep, and after those sufferings severer ones are to be dreaded. 14. "All Thy overhangings and Thy waves are come upon me." The "waves" in what I already feel, the "overhangings" in that Thou denouncest. All my sufferings are Thy waves; all Thy denouncements of judgments are Thy "overhangings." In the "waves" that deep "calleth;" in the "overhangings" is the other "deep" which it "calls to." In this that I suffer are all Thy waves; in the severer punishment that Thou threatenest, all Thy "overhangings" are come unto me. For He who threatens does not let His judgments fall upon us, but keeps them suspended over us. But inasmuch as Thou sittest at liberty, I have thus spoken unto my soul. "Hope in God: for I will confess unto Him. My God is the saving health of my countenance." The more numerous my sufferings, the sweeter will be Thy mercy.

15. Therefore follows: "The Lord will commend His loving-kindness in the day-time; and in the night-time will He declare it" (ver. 8). In tribulation no man has leisure to hear: attend, when it is well with you; hear, when it is well with you; learn, when you are in tranquillity, the discipline of wisdom, and store up the word of God as you do food. For in tribulation every one must be profited by what he heard in the time of security. For in prosperity God "commends to thee His mercy," in case thou serve Him faithfully, for He frees thee from tribulation; but it is "in the night" only that He "de-

clares" His mercy to thee, which He "commended" to thee by day. When tribulation shall actually come, He will not leave thee destitute of His help; He will show thee that which He commended to thee in the daytime is true. For it is written in a certain passage, "The mercy of the Lord is seasonable in the time of affliction, as clouds of rain in the time of drought. "The Lord hath commended His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night will He declare it. He does not showy that He is thine Helper, unless tribulation come, from whence thou must be rescued by Him who promised it to thee "in the day-time. Therefore we are warned to be like "the ant.

For just as worldly prosperity is signified by "the day," adversity by the night, so again in another way worldly prosperity is expressed by "the summer," adversity by the winter. And what is it that the ant does? She lays up in summer what will be useful to her in winter. Whilst therefore it is summer, whilst it is well with you, whilst you are in tranquillity, hear the word of the Lord. For how can it be that in the midst of these tempests of the world, you should pass through the whole of that sea, without suffering? How could it happen? To what mortal's lot has it fallen? If even it has been the lot of any, that very calm is more to be dreaded. "The Lord hath commended His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night-time will He declare it." ... "There is with me prayer unto the God of my life. This I make my business here; I who am the "hart thirsting and longing for the water-brooks," calling to mind the sweetness of that strain, by which I was led on through the tabernacle even to the house of God; whilst this "corruptible body presseth down the soul," there is yet with me "prayer unto the God of my life. For in order to making supplication unto God, I have not to buy aught from places beyond the sea;

or in order that He may hear me, have I to sail to bring from a distance frankincense and perfumes, or have I to bring "calf or ram from the flock. There is "with me prayer to the God of my life. I have within a victim to sacrifice; I have within an incense to place on the altar; I have within a sacrifice wherewith to propitiate my God. "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit. What sacrifice of a "troubled spirit" I have within, hear. 16. "I will say unto God, Thou art my lifter up. Why hast Thou forgotten me?" (ver. 9). For I am suffering here, even as if Thou hadst forgotten me. But Thou art trying me, and I know that Thou dost but put off, not take utterly from me, what Thou hast promised me. But yet, "Why hast Thou forgotten me?" So cried our Head

also, as if speaking in our name. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" I will say unto God, "Thou art my lifter up; why hast Thou forgotten me?"

17. "Why hast Thou rejected me?" "Rejected" me, that is to say, from that height of the apprehension of the unchangeable Truth. "Why hast Thou rejected me?" Why, when already longing for those things, have I been cast down to these, by the weight and burden of my iniquity? This same voice in another passage said, "I said in my trance" (i.e., in my rapture, when he had seen some great thing or other), "I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes." For he compared these things in which he found himself, to those toward which he had been raised; and saw himself cast out far "from the sight of God's eyes," as he speaks even here, "Why hast Thou rejected me? Why go I mourning, while mine enemy troubleth me, while he breaketh my bones?" Even he, my tempter, the devil; while offences are everywhere on the increase, because of the abundance of which "the love of many is waxing cold." When we see the strong members of the Church generally giving way to the causes of offence, does not Christ's body say, "The enemy breaketh my bones"? For it is the strong members that are "the bones;" and sometimes even those that are strong sink under their temptations. For whosoever of the body of Christ considers this, does he not exclaim, with the voice of Christ's Body, "Why hast Thou rejected me? Why go I mourning, while mine enemy troubleth me, while he breaketh my bones?"

You may see not my flesh merely, but even my "bones." To see those who were thought to have some stability, giving way under temptations, so that the rest of the weak brethren despair when they see those who are strong succumbing; how great, my brethren, are the dangers: 18. "They who trouble me cast me in the teeth." Again that voice! "While they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" (ver. 10). And it is principally in the temptations of the Church they say this, "Where is thy God?" How much was this cast in the teeth of the Martyrs! Those men so patient and courageous for the name of Christ, how often was it said to them, "Where is your God?" "Let Him deliver you, if He can." For men saw their torments outwardly; they did not inwardly behold their crowns! "They who trouble me cast me in the teeth, while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" And on this account, seeing "my soul is disquieted on account of myself," what else should I say unto it than those words:

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why dost thou disquiet me?" (ver. 11). And, as it seems to answer, "Wouldest thou not have me disquiet thee, placed as I am here in so great evils? Wouldest thou have me not disquiet thee, panting as I am after what is good, thirsting and labouring as I am for it?" What should I say, but, "Hope thou in God; for I will yet confess unto Him" (ver. 11). He states the very words of that confession; he repeats the grounds on which he fortifies his hope. "He is the health of my countenance, and my God."

PSALM 43

1. This Psalm is a short one; it satisfies the mental cravings of the hearers, without imposing too severe a trial on the hunger of those fasting. Let our soul feed upon it; our soul, which he who sings in this Psalm, speaks of as "cast down;" cast down, I suppose, either in consequence of some fist, or rather in consequence of some hunger he was in. For fasting is a voluntary act; being an-hungered is an involuntary thing. That which is an-hungered, is the Church, is the Body of Christ: and that "Man" who is extended throughout the whole world, of which the Head is above, the limbs below: it is His voice which ought by this time to be perfectly known, and perfectly familiar, to us, in all the Psalms; now chanting joyously, now sorrowing; now rejoicing in hope, now sighing at its actual state, even as if it were our own. We need not then dwell long on pointing out to you, who is the speaker here: let each one of us be a member of Christ's Body; and he will be speaker here. ...

2. "Judge me, O Lord, and separate my cause from the ungodly nation" (ver. 1). I do not dread Thy judgment, because I know Thy mercy. "Judge me, O God," he cries. Now, meanwhile, in this state of pilgrimage, Thou dost not yet separate my place, because I am to live together with the "tares" even to the time of the "harvest:" Thou dost not as yet separate my rain from theirs; my light from theirs: "separate my cause." Let a difference be made between him who believes in Thee, and him who believes not in Thee. Our infirmity is the same; but our consciences not the same: our sufferings the same; but our longings not the same. "The desire of the ungodly shall perish," but as to the desire of the righteous, we might well doubt, if He were not "sure" who promised. The object of our desires is He Himself, who promiseth: He will give us Himself, because He has already given Himself to

us; He will give Himself in His immortality to us then immortal, even because He gave Himself in His mortality to us when mortal. ...

3. And since patience is needful in order to endure, until the harvest, a certain distinction without separation, if we may so speak (for they are together with us, and therefore not yet separated; the tares however being still tares, and the corn still corn, and therefore they are already distinct); since then a kind of strength is needful, which must be implored of Him who bids us to be strong, and without whose making us strong, we should not be what He bids us to be; of Him who said, "He that endures unto the end shall be saved," lest the soul's powers should be impaired in consequence of her ascribing any strength to herself, he subjoins immediately, "For Thou, O God, art my strength: why hast Thou cast me off, and why go I mourning, while the enemy harasseth me?" (ver. 2). I go mourning: the enemy is harassing me with daily temptations: inspiring either some unlawful love, or some ungrounded cause of fear; and the soul that fights against both of them, though not taken prisoner by them, yet being in danger from them, is contracted with sorrow, and says unto God, "Why?"

Let her then ask of Him, and hear "Why?" For she is in the Psalm enquiring the cause of her dejection; saying, "Why hast Thou cast me off? and why go I mourning?" Let her hear from Isaiah; let the lesson which has just been read, suggest itself to her. "The spirit shall go forth from me, and every breath have I made. For iniquity have I a little afflicted him; I hid my face from him, and he departed from me sorrowful in the ways of his heart." Why then didst thou ask, "Why hast Thou cast me off, and why go I mourning?" Thou hast heard, it was "for iniquity." "Iniquity" is the cause of thy mourning; let "Righteousness" be the cause of thy rejoicing! Thou wouldest sin; and yet thou wouldest fain not suffer; so that it was too little for thee to be thyself unrighteous, without also wishing Him to be unrighteous, in that thou wouldest fain not be punished by Him. Consider a speech of a better kind in another Psalm. "It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I might learn Thy righteousnesses." By being lifted up, I had learned my own iniquities; let me by being "humbled," learn "Thy righteousnesses." "Why go I mourning, while the enemy harasses me?" Thou complainest of the enemy. It is true he does harass thee; but it was thou didst "give place" to him. And even now there is a course open to thee; choose the course of prudence; admit thy King, shut the tyrant out.

4. But in order that she may do this, hear what she says, what she supplicates, what she prays for. Pray thou for what thou hearest; pray for it when thou hearest it; let these words be the voice of us all: "O send out Thy Light and Thy Truth. They have led me, and brought me on unto Thy holy hill, and into Thy Tabernacles" (ver. 3). For that very "Light" and "Truth" are indeed two in name; the reality expressed is but One. For what else is the "Light" of God, except the "Truth" of God? Or what else is the "Truth" of God, except the "Light" of God? And the one Person of Christ is both of these. "I am the Light of the world: he that believeth on Me, shall not walk in darkness. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is Himself "the Light: He is Himself "the Truth. Let Him come then and rescue us, and "separate at once our cause from the ungodly nation; let Him deliver us from the deceitful and unjust man," let him separate the wheat from the tares, for at the time of harvest He will Himself send His Angels, that they may "gather out of His kingdom all things that offend," and cast them into flaming fire, while they gather together the corn into the garner. He will send out His "Light," and His "Truth; for that they have already "brought us and led us to His holy hill, and into His Tabernacles.

We possess the "earnest; we hope for the prize. "His holy Hill" is His holy Church. It is that mountain which, according to Daniel's vision, grew from a very small "stone," till it crushed the kingdoms of the earth; and grew to such a size, that it "filled the face of the earth. This is the "hill," from which he tells us that his prayer was heard, who says, "I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. Let no one of those that are without that mountain, hope to be heard unto eternal life. For many are heard in their prayers for many things. Let them not congratulate themselves on being heard; the devils were heard in their prayer, that they might be sent into the swine. Let us desire to be heard unto eternal life, by reason of our longing, through which we say, "Send out Thy Light and Thy Truth. That is a "Light" which requires the eye of the heart. For "Blessed" (He saith) "are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. We are now on His Hill, that is, in His Church, and in His Tabernacle. The "tabernacle" is for persons sojourning; the house, for those dwelling in one community. The tabernacle is also for those who are both from home, and also in a state of warfare. When thou hearest of a tabernacle, form a notion of a war; guard against an enemy. But what shall the house be?

"Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house: they will be alway praising Thee." 5. Now then that we have been led on even to "the Tabernacle," and are placed on "His holy Hill," what hope do we carry with us? "Then will I go in unto the Altar of God" (ver. 4). For there is a certain invisible Altar on high, which the unrighteous man approaches not. To that Altar he alone draws nigh, who draws nigh to this one without cause to fear. There he shall find his Life, who in this one "separates his cause." "And I will go in unto the Altar of God." From His holy Hill, and from His Tabernacle, from His Holy Church, I will go in unto the Altar of God on High. What manner of Sacrifice is there? He himself who goeth in is taken for a burnt-offering. "I will go in unto the Altar of God." What is the meaning of what he says, "The Altar of my God"?

"Unto God, who makes glad my youth." Youth signifies newness: just as if he said, "Unto God, who makes glad my newness." It is He who makes glad my newness, who hath filled my old estate with mourning. For now "I go mourning" in oldness, then shall "I stand," exulting in newness! "Yea, upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God." What is the meaning of "praising on the harp," and praising on the psaltery? For he does not always do so with the harp, nor always with the psaltery. These two instruments of the musicians have each a distinct meaning of their own, worthy of our consideration and notice. They are both borne in the hands, and played by the touch; and they stand for certain bodily works of ours. Both are good, if one knows how to play the psaltery, or to play the harp. But since the psaltery is that instrument which has the shell (i.e. that drum, that hollow piece of wood, by straining on which the chords resound) on the upper part of it, whereas the harp has that same concave sounding-board on the lower part, there is to be a distinction made between our works, when they are "upon the harp," when "on the psaltery:" both however are acceptable to God, and grateful to His ear. When we do anything according to God's Commandments, obeying His commands and hearkening to Him, that we may fulfil His injunctions, when we are active and not passive, it is the psaltery that is playing. For so also do the Angels: for they have nothing to suffer. But when we suffer anything of tribulation, of trials, of offences on this earth (as we suffer only from the inferior part of ourselves; i.e. from the fact that we are mortal, that we owe somewhat of tribulation to our original cause, and also from the fact of our suffering much from those who are not "above"); this is

"the harp." For there rises a sweet strain from that part of us which is "below:" we "suffer," and we strike the psaltery, or shall I rather say we sing and we strike the harp. ...

6. And again, in order that he may draw the sound from that sounding-board below, he addresses his soul: he says, "Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?" (ver. 5). I am in tribulations, in weariness, in mourning, "Why dost thou disquiet me, O my soul?" Who is the speaker, to whom is he speaking? That it is the soul to which he is speaking, everybody knows: for it is obvious: the appeal is addressed to it directly: "Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?" The question is as to the speaker. It is not the flesh addressing the soul, surely, since the flesh cannot speak without the soul. For it is more appropriate for the soul to address the flesh, than for the flesh to address the soul. ...We perceive then that we have a certain part, in which is "the image of God;" viz. the mind and reason. It was that same mind that prayed for "God's Light" and "God's Truth." It is the same mind by which we apprehend right and wrong: it is by the same that we discern truth from falsehood. It is this same that we call "understanding;" which "understanding," indeed, is wanting to the brutes. And this "understanding" whoever neglects in himself, and holds it in less account than the other parts of his nature, and casts it off, just as if he had it not, is addressed in the Psalm, "Be ye not as the horse and the mule, which have no understanding." It is our "understanding" then that is addressing our soul. The latter is withered away from tribulations, worn out in anguish, made "sorrowful" in temptations, fainting in toils. The mind, catching a glimpse of Truth above, would fain rouse her spirits, and she says, "Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul?" ...

7. These expressions, brethren, are safe ones: but yet be watchful in good works. Touch "the psaltery," by obeying the Commandments; touch the harp, by patiently enduring your sufferings. You have heard from Isaiah, "Break thy bread to the hungry;" think not that fasting by itself is sufficient. Fasting chasteneth thine own self: it does not refresh others. Thy distress will profit thee, if thou affordest comfort to others. See, thou hast denied thyself; to whom wilt thou give that of which thou hast deprived thyself? Where wilt thou bestow what thou hast denied thyself? How many poor may be filled by the breakfast we have this day given up? Fast in such a way that thou mayest rejoice, that thou hast breakfasted, while another has been eating; fast on ac-

count of thy prayers, that thou mayest be heard in them. For He says in that passage, "Whilst thou art yet speaking I will say, Here I am," provided thou wilt with cheerful mind "break thy bread to the hungry." For generally this is done by men reluctantly and with murmurs, to rid themselves of the wearisome importunity of the beggar, not to refresh the bowels of him that is needy. But it is "a cheerful giver" that "God loves." If thou givest thy bread reluctantly, thou hast lost both the bread, and the merit of the action. Do it then from the heart: that He "who seeth in secret," may say, "whilst thou art yet speaking, Here I am." How speedily are the prayers of those received, who work righteousness! And this is man's righteousness in this life, fasting, alms, and prayer. Wouldest thou have thy prayer fly upward to God? Make for it those two wings of alms and fasting. Such may God's "Light" and God's "Truth" find us, that He may find us without cause for fear, when He comes to free us from death, who has already come to undergo death for us. Amen.

PSALM 44

1. This Psalm is addressed "to the sons of Korah," as its title shows. Now Korah is equivalent to the word baldness; and we find in the Gospel that our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified in "the place of a skull." It is clear then that this Psalm is sung to the "sons of His `Passion.'" Now we have on this point a most certain and most evident testimony from the Apostle Paul; because that at the time when the Church was suffering under the persecutions of the Gentiles, he quoted from hence a verse, to insert by way of consolation, and encouragement to patience. For that which he inserted in his Epistle, is said here: "For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." Let us then hear in this Psalm the voice of the Martyrs; and see how good is the cause which the voice of the Martyrs pleads, saying, For Thy sake, etc. ...

2. The title then is not simply "To the sons of Korah," but, "For understanding, to the sons of Korah." This is the case also with that Psalm, the first verse of which the Lord Himself uttered on the Cross: "My God, My God, look upon Me; why hast Thou forsaken Me?" For "transferring us in a figure" to what He was saying, and to His own Body (for we are also "His Body," and He is our "Head"), He uttered from the Cross not His own cry, but ours. For God never "forsook" Him: nor did He Himself ever depart from the Father; but it was in behalf of us that He spake this: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" For there follows, "Far from My health are the words of

My offences:" and it shows in whose person He said this; for sin could not be found in Him. ...

3. "O God, we have heard with our ears; our fathers have told us the work that Thou didst in their days, and in the days of old" (ver. 1). Wondering wherefore, in these days, He has seemingly forsaken those whom it was His will to exercise in sufferings, they recall the past events which they have heard of from their fathers; as if they said, It is not of these things that we suffer, that our fathers told us! For in that other Psalm also, He said this, "Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them. But I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and the outcast of the people." They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them; have I then hoped, and hast Thou forsaken me? And have I believed upon Thee in vain? And is it in vain that my name has been written in Thy Book, and Thy name has been inscribed on me? What our fathers told us was this:

"Thy hand destroyed the nations; and Thou plantedst them: Thou didst weaken the peoples, and cast them out" (ver. 2). That is to say: "Thou didst drive out 'the peoples' from their own land, that Thou mightest bring 'them' in, and plant them; and mightest by Thy mercy stablish their kingdom." These are the things that we heard from our fathers. But perhaps it was because they were brave, were men of battle, were invincible, were well-disciplined, and warlike, that they could do these things. Far from it. This is not what our fathers told us; this is not what is contained in Scripture. But what does it say, but what follows? "For they gat not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance" (ver. 3). Thy "right hand" is Thy Power: Thine "arm" is Thy Son Himself. And "the light of Thy countenance." What means this, but that Thou wert present with them, in miracles of such a sort that Thy presence was perceived. For when God's presence with us appears by any miracle, do we see His face with our own eyes? No. It is by the effect of the miracle He intimates to man His presence. In fact, what do all persons say, who express wonder at facts of this description? "I saw God present." "But Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance; because Thou pleasedst in them:" i.e. didst so deal with them, that Thou wert well-pleasing in them: that whoso considered how they were being dealt with, might say, that "God is with them of a truth;" and it is God that moves them.

4. "What? Was He then other than now He is?" Away with the supposition. For what follows? "Thou art Thyself my King and my God. (ver. 4). "Thou art Thyself; for Thou art not changed. I see that the times are changed; but the Creator of times is unchanged. "Thou art Thyself my King and my God. Thou art wont to guide me: to govern me, to save me. "Thou who commandest salvation unto Jacob. What is, "Thou who commandest"? Even though in Thine own proper Substance and Nature, in which Thou art whatsoever Thou art, Thou wast hid from them; and though Thou didst not converse with the fathers in that which Thou art in Thyself, so that they could see Thee "face to face," yet by any created being whatsoever "Thou commandest salvation unto Israel. For that sight of Thee "face to face" is reserved for those set free in the Resurrection. And the very "fathers" of the New Testament too, although they saw Thy mysteries revealed, although they preached the secret things so revealed to them, nevertheless said that they themselves saw but "in a glass, darkly," but that "seeing face to face" is reserved to a future time, when what the Apostle himself speaks of shall have come. "When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. It is against that time then that vision "face to face" is reserved for you, of which John also speaks: "Beloved, we are now the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him;

for we shall see Him as He is. Although then at that time our fathers saw Thee not as Thou art, "face to face," although that vision is reserved against the resurrection, yet, even though they were Angels who presented themselves, it is Thou, "Who commandest salvation unto Jacob. Thou art not only present by Thine own Self; but by whatsoever created being Thou didst appear, it is Thou that dost "command" by them, that which Thou doest by Thine own Self in order to the salvation of Thy servants: but that which they do whom Thou "commandest" it, is done to procure the salvation of Thy servants. Since then Thou art Thyself "my King and my God, and Thou commandest salvation unto Jacob," wherefore are we suffering these things? 5. But perhaps it is only what is past that has been described to us: but nothing of the kind is to be hoped for by us for the future. Nay indeed, it is still to be hoped for. "Through Thee will we winnow away our enemies" (ver. 5). Our fathers then have declared to us a work that Thou didst "in their days, and in the days of old," that Thy hand destroyed the Gentiles: that Thou "didst cast

out the peoples; and didst plant them." Such was the past; but what is to be hereafter? "Through Thee we shall winnow away our enemies." A time will come, when all the enemies of Christians will be winnowed away like chaff, be blown like dust, and be cast off from the earth. ...Thus much of the future. "I will not trust in my bow," even as our fathers did not in "their sword. Neither shall my sword help me" (ver. 6).

6. "For Thou hast saved us from our enemies" (ver. 7). This too is spoken of the future under the figure of the past. But this is the reason that it is spoken of as if it were past, that it is as certain as if it were past. Give heed, wherefore many things are expressed by the Prophets as if they were past; whereas it is things future, not past facts that are the subject of prophecy. For the future Passion of our Lord Himself was foretold: and yet it says, "They pierced My hands and My feet. They told all My bones;" not, "They shall pierce," and "shall tell." "They looked and stared upon Me;" not "They shall look and stare upon Me." "They parted My garments among them." It does not say, "They shall part" them. All these things are expressed as if they were past, although they were yet to come: because to God things to come also are as certain as if they were past. ...It is for this reason, in consequence of their certainty, that those things which are yet future, are spoken of as if past. This it is then that we hope. For it is, "Thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us."

7. "In God will we boast all the day long" (ver. 8). Observe how he intermingles words expressive of a future time, that you may perceive that what was spoken of before as in past time was foretold of future times. "In God will we boast all day long; and in Thy name will we confess for ever." What is, "We shall boast"? What, "We shall confess"? That Thou hast "saved us from our enemies;" that Thou art to give us an everlasting kingdom: that in us are to be fulfilled the words, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house: they will be always praising Thee." 8. Since then we have the certainty that these things are to be hereafter, and since we have heard from our fathers that those we spoke of were in time past, what is our state at present? "But now Thou hast cast us off, and put us to shame" (ver. 9). Thou hast "put us to shame" not before our own consciences, but in the sight of men. For there was a time when Christians were persecuted; when in every place they were outcasts, when in every place it used to be said, "He is a Christian!" as if it conveyed an insult and reproach. Where then is He, "our God, our King,"

who "commands salvation unto Jacob"? Where is He who did all those works, which "our fathers have told us"? Where is He who is hereafter to do all those things which He revealed unto us by His Spirit? Is He changed? No. These things are done in order to "understanding, for the sons of Korah." For we ought to "understand" something of the reason, why He has willed we should suffer all these things in the mean time. What "all things"? "But now Thou hast cast us off and put us to shame: and goest not forth, O God, in our powers." We go forth to meet our enemies, and Thou goest not forth with us. We see them: they are very strong, and we are without strength. Where is that might of Thine? Where Thy "right hand," and Thy power? Where the sea dried up, and the Egyptian pursuers overwhelmed with the waves? Where Amalek's resistance subdued by the sign of the Cross? "And Thou, O God, goest not forth in our powers."

9. "Thou hast turned us away backward in presence of our enemies" (ver. 10), so that they are, as it were, before; we, behind; they are counted as conquerors, we as conquered. "And they which hate us spoiled for themselves." What did they "spoil" but ourselves? 10. "Thou has given us like sheep appointed for meat, and hast scattered us among the nations" (ver. 11). We have been "devoured" by "the nations." Those persons are meant, who, through their sufferings, have by process of assimilation, becomes part of the "body" of the Gentile world. For the Church mourns over them, as over members of her body, that have been devoured. 11. "Thou hast sold Thy people for no price" (ver. 12). For we see whom Thou hast made over; what Thou hast received, we have not seen. "And there was no multitude in their jubilees." For when the Christians were flying before the pursuit of enemies, who were idolaters, were there then held any congregations and "jubilees" to the honour of God? Were those Hymns chanted in concert from the Churches of God, that are wont to be sung in concert in time of peace, and to be sounded in a sweet accord of the brotherhood in the ears of God?

12. "Thou madest us a reproach to our neighbours; a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us" (ver. 13). "Thou madest us a similitude among the heathen" (ver. 14). What is meant by a "similitude"? It is when men in imprecating a curse make a "similitude" of his name whom they detest. "So mayest thou die;" "So mayest thou be punished!" What a number of such reproaches were then uttered! "So mayest thou be crucified!" Even in the present day there are not wanting enemies of Christ (those very Jews them-

selves), against whom whensoever we defend Christ, they say unto us, "So mayest thou die as He did." For they would not have inflicted that kind of death had they not an intense horror of dying by such a death: or had they been able to comprehend what mystery was contained in it. When the ointment is applied to the eyes of the blind man, he does not see the eye-salve in the physician's hand. For the very Cross was made for the benefit even of the persecutors themselves. Hereby they were healed afterwards; and they believed in Him whom they themselves had slain. "Thou madest us a similitude among the heathen; a shaking of the head among the peoples," a "shaking of the head" by way of insult. "They spake with their lips, they shook the head." This they did to the Lord: this to all His Saints also, whom they were able to pursue, to lay hold of, to mock, to betray, to afflict, and to slay.

13. "My shame is continually before me; and the confusion of my face has covered me" (ver. 15). "For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth" (ver. 16): that is to say, from the voice of them that insult over me, and who make it a charge against me that I worship Thee, that I confess Thee! and who make it a charge against me that I bear that name by which all charges against me shall be blotted out. "For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth," that is, of him that speaketh against me. "By reason of the enemy and the persecutor. And what is the "understanding" conveyed here? Those things which are told us of the time past, will not be done in our case: those which are hoped for, as to be hereafter, are not as yet manifest. Those which are past, as the leading out of Thy people with great glory from Egypt; its deliverance from its persecutors; the guiding of it through the nations, the placing of it in the kingdom, whence the nations had been expelled. What are those to be hereafter? The leading of the people out of this Egypt of the world, when Christ, our "leader" shall appear in His glory: the placing of the Saints at His right hand; of the wicked at His left; the condemnation of the wicked with the devil to eternal punishment; the receiving of a kingdom from Christ with the Saints to last for ever.

These are the things that are yet to be: the former are what are past. In the interval, what is to be our lot? Tribulations! "Why so? That it may be seen with respect to the soul that worships God, to what extent it worships God; that it may be seen whether it worships Him "freely" from whom it received salvation "freely." ...What hast thou given unto God? Thou wert wicked, and thou wert redeemed! What hast thou given unto God? What is there that

thou hast not "received" from Him "freely"? With reason is it named "grace," because it is bestowed (*gratis*, i.e. freely. What is required of thee then is this, "that thou too shouldest worship "Him freely; not because He gives thee things temporal, but because He holds out to thee things eternal. ... 14. "All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten Thee" (ver. 17). What is meant by, "have not forgotten Thee"? "Neither have we behaved ourselves frowardly in Thy covenant."

"Our heart has not turned back; and Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way" (ver. 18). See here is "understanding," in that "our heart has not gone back;" that we have not "forgotten Thee, have not behaved frowardly in Thy covenant;" placed as we are in great tribulations, and persecutions of the Gentiles. "Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way." Our "goings" were in the pleasures of the world; our "goings" were in the midst of temporal prosperities. Thou hast taken "our goings out of Thy way;" and hast shown us how "strait and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life." What is meant by, "hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way"? It is as if He said, "Ye are placed in the midst of tribulation; ye are suffering many things; ye have already lost many things that ye loved in this life: but I have not abandoned you on the way, the narrow way that I am teaching you. Ye were seeking "broad ways." What do I tell you? This is the way we go to everlasting life; by the way ye wish to walk, ye are going to death. How "broad and wide is the road that leads to destruction: and" how "many there be that find it! How strait and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and" how "few there be" that walk therein! Who are the few? They who patiently endure tribulations, patiently endure temptations; who in all these troubles do not "fall away:" who do not rejoice in the word "for a season" only; and in the time of tribulation fade away, as on the sun's arising; but who have the "root" of "love," according to what we have lately heard read in the Gospel. ...

15. "For Thou hast brought us low in the place of infirmity" (ver. 18): therefore Thou wilt exalt us in the place of strength. "And the shadow of death has covered us" (ver. 19). For this mortality of ours is but the "shadow" of death. The true death is condemnation with the devil. 16. "If we have forgotten the Name of our God. Here is the "understanding" of the "sons of Korah. "And stretched out our hands to a strange God" (ver. 20). "Shall not God search this out? For He knoweth the secrets of the heart" (ver. 21). He "knows," and yet He "searches them out"? If He knows the secrets of the

heart, what do the words, "Shall not God search it out," do there? He "knows" it in Himself; He "searches it out" for our sakes. For it is for this reason God sometimes "searches a thing out; and speaks of that becoming known to Himself, which He is Himself making known to thee. He is speaking of His own work, not of His knowledge. We commonly say, "A gladsome day," when it is fine. Yet is it the day itself that experiences delight? No: we speak of the day as gladsome, because it fills us with delight. And we speak of a "sullen sky. Not that there is any such feeling in the clouds, but because men are affected with sullenness at the sight of such an appearance of the skies, it is called sullen for this reason, that it makes us sullen. So also God is said to "know" when He causes us to know. God says to Abraham, "Now I know that thou fearest God. Did He then not know it before then? But Abraham did not know himself till then:

for it was in that very trial he came to know himself. ...And God is said to "know" that which He had caused him to know. Did Peter know himself, when he said to the Physician, "I will be with Thee even unto death? The Physician had felt his pulse, and knew what was going on within His patient's soul: the patient knew it not. The crisis of trial came; and the Physician approved the correctness of His opinion: the sick man gave up his presumption. Thus God at once "knows" it and "searches it out. "He knows it already. Why does He 'search it out'? For thy sake: that thou mayest come to know thine own self, and mayest return thanks to Him that made thee. "Shall not God search it out?" 17. "For, for Thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter" (ver. 22). For you may see a man being put to death; you do not know why he is being put to death. God knoweth this. The thing in itself is hid. But some one will say to me, "See, he is detained in prison for the name of Christ, he is a confessor for the name of Christ." Why do not heretics also confess the name of Christ, and yet they do not die for His sake? Nay more; let me say it, in the Catholic Church itself, do you think there either are, or have been wanting persons such as would suffer for the sake of glory among men? Were there no such persons, the Apostle would not say, "Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." He knew therefore that there might be some persons, who did this not from "charity," but out of vainglory. It is therefore hid from us; God alone sees this; we cannot see it. He alone can judge of this, who "knoweth the secrets of the heart." "For," for Thy sake "are

we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." I have already mentioned that from hence the Apostle Paul had borrowed a text for the encouragement of the Martyrs: that they might not "faint in the tribulations" undergone by them for the name of Christ.

18. "Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord?" (ver. 23). Who is addressed, and who is the speaker? Would not he be more correctly said to sleep and slumber, who speaks such words as these? He replies to you, I know what I am saying: I know that "He that keepeth Israel doth not sleep:" but yet the Martyrs cry, "Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord?" O Lord Jesus, Thou wast slain; Thou didst "sleep" in Thy Passion; to us Thou hast now "awaked" from sleep. For "we" know that Thou hast now "awaked" again. To what purpose hast Thou awaked and risen again? The Gentiles that persecute us, think Thee to be dead; do not believe Thee to have risen again. "Arise Thou" then to them also! "Why sleepest Thou," though not to us, yet to them? For if they already believed Thee to have risen again, could they persecute us who believe in Thee? But why do they persecute? "Destroy, slay so and so, whoever have believed in Thee, such an one, who died an ill death!" As yet to them "Thou sleepest;" arise to them, that they may perceive that Thou hast "awaked" again; and may be at rest. Lastly, it has come to pass, while the Martyrs die, and say these things; while they sleep, and "awaken" Christ, truly dead in their sleepings, Christ has, in a certain sense, risen again in the Gentiles; i.e. it becomes believed, that He has risen again; so by degrees they themselves, becoming converted to Christ by believing, collected a numerous body: such as the persecutors dreaded; and the persecutions have come to an end. Why? Because Christ, who before was asleep to them, as not believing, hath risen in the Gentiles. "Arise, and cast us not off for ever!"

19. "Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face:" as if Thou wert not present; as if thou hadst forgotten us? "And forgettest our misery and trouble?" (ver. 24). 20. "For our soul is bowed down to the dust" (ver. 25). Where is it bowed down? "To the dust:" i.e. dust persecutes us. They persecute us, of whom Thou hast said, "The ungodly are not so; but are like the dust, which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth." "Our belly hath cleaved to the earth." He seems to me to have expressed the punishment of the extreme of humiliation, in which, when any one prostrates himself, "his belly cleaveth to the earth." For whosoever is humbled so as to be on his knees, has yet a lower degree of humiliation to which he can come: but he who is so

humbled, that his "belly cleaveth to the ground," there is no farther humiliation for him. Should one wish to do still farther, it will, after that point, be not bowing him down, but crushing him. Perhaps then he may have meant this We are "bowed down very low" in this dust; there is no farther point to which humiliation can go. Humiliation has now reached its highest point: let mercy then come also. ...

21. "Arise, O Lord, help us" (ver. 26). And indeed, dearly beloved, He has arisen and helped us. For when he awaked (i.e. when He arose again, and became known to the Gentiles) on the cessation of persecutions, even those who had cleaved to the earth were raised up from the earth, and on performing penance, have been restored to Christ's body, feeble and imperfect though they were: so that in them was fulfilled the text, "Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect; and in Thy book shall they all be written." "Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for Thy Name's sake;" that is to say, freely; for Thy Name's sake, not for the sake of my merits: because Thou hast vouchsafed to do it, not because I am worthy that Thou shouldst do it unto me. For this very thing, that "we have not forgotten Thee;" that "our heart hath not gone back;" that we "have not stretched out our hands to any strange god;" how should we have been able to achieve, except with Thy help? How should we have strength for it, except through Thy appealing to us within, exhorting us, and not forsaking us? Whether then we suffer in tribulations, or rejoice in prosperities, redeem Thou us, not for our merits, but for Thy Name's sake.

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