Answer to Eunomius' Second Book

Gregory of Nyssa (c. AD 335–395)

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The first part of my contentions against Eunomius has with God's help been sufficiently established in the preceding work, as all who will may see from what I have worked out, how in that former part his fallacy has been completely exposed, and its falsehood has no further force against the truth, except in the case of those who show a very shameless animus against her. But since, like some robber's ambuscade, he has got together a second work against orthodoxy, again with God's help the truth takes up arms through me against the array of her enemies, commanding my arguments like a general and directing them at her pleasure against the foe; following whose steps I shall boldly venture on the second part of my contentions, nothing daunted by the array of falsehood, notwithstanding its display of numerous arguments. For faithful is He who has promised that "a thousand shall be chased by one," and that "ten thousand shall be put to flight by two" , victory in battle being due not to numbers, but to righteousness.

For even as bulky Goliath, when he shook against the Israelites that ponderous spear we read of, inspired no fear in his opponent, though a shepherd and unskilled in the tactics of war, but having met him in fight loses his own head by a direct reversal of his expectations, so our Goliath, the champion of this alien system, stretching forth his blasphemy against his opponents as though his hand were on a naked sword, and flashing the while with sophisms fresh from his whetstone, has failed to inspire us, though no soldiers, with any fear of his prowess, or to find himself free to exult in the dearth of adversaries; on the contrary, he has found us warriors improvised from the Lord's sheepfold, untaught in logical warfare, and thinking it no detriment to be so, but simply slinging our plain, rude argument of truth against him. Since then, that shepherd who is in the record, when he had cast down the alien with his sling, and broken his helmet with the stone, so that it gaped under the violence of the blow, did not confine his valour to gazing on his fallen foe, but running in upon him, and depriving him of his head, returns bearing it as a trophy to his people, parading that braggart head through the host of his countrymen;

looking to this example it becomes us also to advance nothing daunted to the second part of our labours, but as far as possible to imitate David's valour, and, like him, after the first blow to plant our foot upon the fallen foe, so that enemy of the truth may be exhibited as much as possible as a headless trunk. For separated as he is from the true faith he is far

more truly beheaded than that Philistine. For since Christ is the head of every man, as saith the Apostle , and it is only reasonable that the believer alone should be so termed (for Christ, I take it, cannot be the head of the unbelieving also), it follows that he who is severed from the saving faith must be headless like Goliath, being severed from the true head by his own sword which he had whetted against the truth; which head it shall be our task not to cut off, but to show that it is cut off.

And let no one suppose that it is through pride or desire of human reputation that I go down to this truceless and implacable warfare to engage with the foe. For if it were allowed me to pass a peaceful life meddling with no one, it would be far enough from my disposition to wantonly disturb my tranquillity, by voluntarily provoking and stirring up a war against myself. But now that God's city, the Church, is besieged, and the great wall of the faith is shaken, battered by the encircling engines of heresy, and there is no small risk of the word of the Lord being swept into captivity through their devilish onslaught, deeming it a dreadful thing to decline taking part in the Christian conflict, I have not turned aside to repose, but have looked on the sweat of toil as more honourable than the relaxation of repose, knowing well that just as every man, as saith the Apostle, shall receive his own reward according to his own labour, so as a matter of course he shall receive punishment for neglect of labour proportioned to his strength. Accordingly I supported the first encounter in the discussion with good courage, discharging from my shepherd's scrip, i. e. from the teaching of the Church, my natural and unpremeditated arguments for the subversion of this blasphemy, needing not at all the equipment of arguments from profane sources to qualify me for the contest;

and now also I do not hang back from the second part of the encounter, fixing my hope like great David on Him "Who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight," if haply the hand of the writer may in my case also be guided by Divine power to the overthrow of these heretical opinions, and my fingers may serve for the overthrow of their malignant array by directing my argument with skill and precision against the foe.

But as in human conflicts those who excel in valour and might, secured by their armour and having previously acquired military skill by their training for facing danger, station themselves at the head of their column, encountering danger for those ranged behind them, while the rest of the company, though serving only to give an appearance of numbers, seem nevertheless, if only by their serried shields, to conduce to the common good, so in these our conflicts that noble soldier of Christ and vehement champion against the aliens, the mighty spiritual warrior Basil-equipped as he is with the whole armour described by the Apostle, and secured by the shield of faith, and ever holding before him that weapon of defence, the sword of the spirit-fights in the van of the Lord's host by his elaborated argument against this heresy, alive and resisting and prevailing over the foe, while we the common herd, sheltering ourselves beneath the shield of that champion of the faith, shall not hold back from any conflicts within the compass of our power, according as our captain may lead us on against the foe.

As he, then, in his refutation of the false and untenable opinion maintained by this heresy, affirms that "ungenerate" cannot be predicated of God except as a mere notion or conception, whereof he has adduced proofs supported by common sense and the evidence of Scripture, while Eunomius, the author of the heresy, neither falls in with his statements nor is able to overturn them, but in his conflict with the truth, the more clearly the light of true doctrine shines forth, the more, like nocturnal creatures, does he shun the light, and, no longer able to find the sophistical hiding-places to which he is accustomed, he wanders about at random, and getting into the labyrinth of falsehood goes round and round in the same place, almost the whole of his second treatise being taken up with this empty trifling-it is well accordingly that our battle with those opposed to us should take place on the same ground whereon our champion by his own treatise has been our leader.

First of all, however, I think it advisable to run briefly over our own doctrinal views and our opponent's disagreement with them, so that our review of the propositions in question may proceed methodically. Now the main point of Christian orthodoxy is to believe that the Only-begotten God, Who is the truth and the true light, and the power of God and the life, is truly all that He is said to be, both in other respects and especially in this, that He is God and the truth, that is to say, God in truth, ever being what He is conceived to be and what He is called, Who never at any time was not, nor ever will cease to be, Whose being, such as it is essentially, is beyond the reach of the curiosity that would try to comprehend it. But to us, as saith the word of Wisdom, He makes Himself known that He is "by the greatness and beauty of His creatures proportionately" to the things that are known, vouchsafing to us the gift of faith by the operations of His hands, but not the comprehension of what He is.

Whereas, then, such is the opinion prevailing among all Christians, (such at least as are truly worthy of the appellation, those, I mean, who have been taught by the law to worship nothing that is not very God, and by that very act of worship confess that the Only-begotten is God in truth, and not a God falsely so called,) there arose this deadly blight of the Church, bringing barrenness on the holy seeds of the faith, advocating as it does the errors of Judaism, and partaking to a certain extent in the impiety of the Greeks. For in its figment of a created God it advocates the error of the Greeks, and in not accepting the Son it supports that of the Jews. This school, then, which would do away with the very Godhead of the Lord and teach men to conceive of Him as a created being, and not that which the Father is in essence and power and dignity, since these misty ideas find no support when exposed on all sides to the light of truth, have overlooked all those names supplied by Scripture for the glorification of God, and predicated in like manner of the Father and of the Son, and have betaken themselves to the word "ungenerate," a term fabricated by themselves to throw contempt on the greatness of the Only-begotten God.

For whereas an orthodox confession teaches us to believe in the Only-begotten God so that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father, these men, rejecting the orthodox terms whereby the greatness of the Son is signified as on a par with the dignity of the Father, draw from thence the beginnings and foundations of their heresy in regard

to His Divinity. For as the Only-begotten God, as the voice of the Gospel teaches, came forth from the Father and is of Him, misrepresenting this doctrine by a change of terms, they make use of them to rend the true faith in pieces. For whereas the truth teaches that the Father is from no pre-existing cause, these men have given to such a view the name of "ungeneracy," and signify the substance of the Only-begotten from the Father by the term "generation,"-then comparing the two terms "ungenerate" and "generate" as contradictories to each other, they make use of the opposition to mislead their senseless followers. For, to make the matter clearer by an illustration, the expressions, He was generated and He was not generated, are much the same as, He is seated and He is not seated, and all such-like expressions. But they, forcing these expressions away from the natural significance of the terms, are eager to put another meaning upon them with a view to the subversion of orthodoxy.

For whereas, as has been said, the words "is seated" and "is not seated" are not equivalent in meaning (the one expression being contradictory of the other), they pretend that this formal contradiction in expression indicates an essential difference, ascribing generation to the Son and non-generation to the Father as their essential attributes. Yet, as it is impossible to regard a man's sitting down or not as the essence of the man (for one would not use the same definition for a man's sitting as for the man himself), so, by the analogy of the above example, the non-generated essence is in its inherent idea something wholly different from the thing expressed by "not having been generated. But our opponents, with an eye to their evil object, that of establishing their denial of the Godhead of the Only-begotten, do not say that the essence of the Father is ungenerate, but, conversely, they declare ungeneracy to be His essence, in order that by this distinction in regard to generation they may establish, by the verbal opposition, a diversity of natures. In the direction of impiety they look with ten thousand eyes, but with regard to the impracticability of their own contention they are as incapable of vision as men who deliberately close their eyes. For who but one whose mental optics are utterly purblind can fail to discern the loose and unsubstantial character of the principle of their doctrine, and that their argument in support of ungeneracy as an essence has nothing to stand upon?

For this is the way in which their error would establish itself.

But to the best of my ability I will raise my voice to rebut our enemies' argument. They say that God is declared to be without generation, that the Godhead is by nature simple, and that which is simple admits of no composition. If, then, God Who is declared to be without generation is by His nature without composition, His title of Ungenerate must belong to His very nature, and that nature is identical with ungeneracy. To whom we reply that the terms incomposite and ungenerate are not the same thing, for the former represents the simplicity of the subject, the other its being without origin, and these expressions are not convertible in meaning, though both are predicated of one subject. But from the appellation of Ungenerate we have been taught that He Who is so named is without origin, and from the appellation of simple that He is free from all admixture (or composition), and these

terms cannot be substituted for each other. There is therefore no necessity that, because the Godhead is by its nature simple, that nature should be termed ungeneracy; but in that He is indivisible and without composition, He is spoken of as simple, while in that He was not generated, He is spoken of as ungenerate.

Now if the term ungenerate did not signify the being without origin, but the idea of simplicity entered into the meaning of such a term, and He were called ungenerate in their heretical sense, merely because He is simple and incomposite, and if the terms simple and ungenerate are the same in meaning, then too must the simplicity of the Son be equivalent with ungeneracy. For they will not deny that God the Only-begotten is by His nature simple, unless they are prepared to deny that He is God. Accordingly the term simplicity will in its meaning have no such connection with being ungenerate as that, by reason of its incomposite character, His nature should be termed ungeneracy; or they draw upon themselves one of two absurd alternatives, either denying the Godhead of the Only-begotten, or attributing ungeneracy to Him also. For if God is simple, and the term simplicity is, according to them, identical with ungenerate, they must either make out the Son to be of composite nature, by which term it is implied that neither is He God, or if they allow His Godhead, and God (as I have said) is simple, then they make Him out at the same time to be ungenerate, if the terms simple and ungenerate are convertible. But to make my meaning clearer I will recapitulate. We affirm that each of these terms has its own peculiar meaning, and that the term indivisible cannot be rendered by ungenerate, nor ungenerate by simple;

but by simple we understand uncompounded, and by ungenerate we are taught to understand what is without origin. Furthermore we hold that we are bound to believe that the Son of God, being Himself God, is Himself also simple, because God is free from all compositeness; and in like manner in speaking of Him also by the appellation of Son we neither denote simplicity of substance, nor in simplicity do we include the notion of Son, but the term Son we hold to indicate that He is of the substance of the Father, and the term simple we hold to mean what the word bears upon its face. Since, then, the meaning of the term simple in regard to essence is one and the same whether spoken of the Father or of the Son, differing in no degree, while there is a wide difference between generate and ungenerate (the one containing a notion not contained in the other), for this reason we assert that there is no necessity that, the Father being ungenerate, His essence should, because that essence is simple, be defined by the term ungenerate. For neither of the Son, Who is simple, and Whom also we believe to be generated, do we say that His essence is simplicity. But as the essence is simple and not simplicity, so also the essence is ungenerate and not ungeneracy. In like manner also the Son being generated, our reason is freed from any necessity that, because His essence is simple, we should define that essence as generateness;

but here again each expression has its peculiar force. For the term generated suggests to you a source whence, and the term simple implies freedom from composition. But this does not approve itself to them. For they maintain that since the essence of the Father is simple, it cannot be considered as other than ungeneracy; on which account also He is said to be

ungenerate. In answer to whom we may also observe that, since they call the Father both Creator and Maker, whereas He Who is so called is simple in regard to His essence, it is high time for such sophists to declare the essence of the Father to be creation and making, since the argument about simplicity introduces into His essence any signification of any name we give Him. Either, then, let them separate ungeneracy from the definition of the Divine essence, allowing the term no more than its proper signification, or, if by reason of the simplicity of the subject they define His essence by the term ungeneracy, by a parity of reasoning let them likewise see creation and making in the essence of the Father, not as though the power residing in the essence created and made, but as though the power itself meant creation and making. But if they reject this as bad and absurd, let them be persuaded by what logically follows to reject the other proposition as well. For as the essence of the builder is not the thing built, no more is ungeneracy the essence of the Ungenerate.

But for the sake of clearness and conciseness I will restate my arguments. If the Father is called ungenerate, not by reason of His having never been generated, but because His essence is simple and incomposite, by a parity of reasoning the Son also must be called ungenerate, for He too is a simple and incomposite essence. But if we are compelled to confess the Son to be generated because He was generated, it is manifest that we must address the Father as ungenerate, because He was not generated. But if we are compelled to this conclusion by truth and the force of our premises, it is clear that the term ungenerate is no part of the essence, but is indicative of a difference of conceptions, distinguishing that which is generated from that which is ungenerate. But let us discuss this point also in addition to what I have said. If they affirm that the term ungenerate signifies the essence (of the Father), and not that He has His substance without origin, what term will they use to denote the Father's being without origin, when they have set aside the term ungenerate to indicate His essence?

For if we are not taught the distinguishing difference of the Persons by the term ungenerate, but are to regard it as indicating His very nature as flowing in a manner from the subject-matter, and disclosing what we seek in articulate syllables, it must follow that God is not, or is not to be called, ungenerate, there being no word left to express such peculiar significance in regard to Him. For inasmuch as according to them the term ungenerate does not mean without origin, but indicates the Divine nature, their argument will be found to exclude it altogether, and the term ungenerate slips out of their teaching in respect to God. For there being no other word or term to represent that the Father is ungenerate, and that term signifying, according to their fallacious argument, something else, and not that He was not generated, their whole argument falls and collapses into Sabellianism. For by this reasoning we must hold the Father to be identical with the Son, the distinction between generated and ungenerate having been got rid of from their teaching, so that they are driven to one of two alternatives: either they must again adopt the view of the term as denoting a difference in the attributes proper to either Person, and not as denoting the nature, or, abiding by their conclusions as to the word, they must side with Sabellius. For it is impossible that the

difference of the persons should be without confusion, unless there be a distinction between generated and ungenerate.

Accordingly if the term denotes difference, essence will in no way be denoted by the appellation. For the definitions of difference and essence are by no means the same. But if they divert the meaning of the word so as to signify nature, they must be drawn into the heresy of those who are called "Son-Fathers ," all accuracy of definition in regard to the Persons being rejected from their account. But if they say that there is nothing to hinder the distinction between generated and ungenerate from being rendered by the term ungenerate, and that term represents the essence too, let them distinguish for us the kindred meanings of the word, so that the notion of ungenerate may properly apply to either of them taken by itself. For the expression of the difference by means of this term involves no ambiguity, consisting as it does of a verbal opposition. For as an equivalent to saying "The Son has, and the Father has not, been generated," we too assent to the statement that the latter is ungenerate and the former generated, by a sort of verbal correlation. But from what point of view a clear manifestation of essence can be made by this appellation, this they are unable to say. But keeping silence on this head, our novel theologian weaves us a web of trifling subtleties in his former treatise. Because God, saith he, being simple, is called ungenerate, therefore God is ungeneracy. What has the notion of simplicity to do with the idea of ungenerate?

For not only is the Only-begotten generated, but, without controversy, He is simple also. But, saith he, He is without parts also, and incomposite. But what is this to the point? For neither is the Son multiform and composite: and yet He is not on that account ungenerate.

But, saith he, He is without both quantity and magnitude. Granted: for the Son also is unlimited by quantity and magnitude, and yet is He the Son. But this is not the point. For the task set before us is this: in what signification of ungenerate is essence declared? For as this word marks the difference of the properties, so they maintain that the essence also is indicated without ambiguity by one of the things signified by the appellation.

But this thing he leaves untold, and only says that ungeneracy should not be predicated of God as a mere conception. For what is so spoken, saith he, is dissolved, and passes away with its utterance. But what is there that is uttered but is so dissolved? For we do not keep undissolved, like those who make pots or bricks, what we utter with our voice in the mould of the speech which we form once for all with our lips, but as soon as one speech has been sent forth by our voice, what we have said ceases to exist. For the breath of our voice being dispersed again into the air, no trace of our words is impressed upon the spot in which such dispersion of our voice has taken place: so that if he makes this the distinguishing characteristic of a term that expresses a mere conception, that it does not remain, but vanishes with the voice that gives it utterance, he may as well at once call every term a mere conception, inasmuch as no substance remains in any term subsequent to its utterance. No, nor will he be able to show that ungeneracy itself, which he excepts from the products of conception, is indissoluble and fixed when it has been uttered, for this

expression of the voice through the lips does not abide in the air. And from this we may see the unsubstantial character of his assertions;

because, even if without speech we describe in writing our mental conceptions, it is not as though the substantial objects of our thoughts will acquire their significance from the letters, while the non-substantial will have no part in what the letters express. For whatever comes into our mind, whether intellectually existing, or otherwise, it is possible for us at our discretion to store away in writing. And the voice and letters are of equal value for the expression of thought, for we communicate what we think by the latter as well as by the former. What he sees, then, to justify his making the mental conception perish with the voice only, I fail to comprehend. For in the case of all speech uttered by means of sound, the passage of the breath indeed which conveys the voice is towards its kindred element, but the sense of the words spoken is engraved by hearing on the memory of the hearer's soul, whether it be true or false. Is not this, then, a weak interpretation of this "conception" of his that our writer offers, when he characterizes and defines it by the dissolution of the voice? And for this reason the understanding hearer, as saith Isaiah, objects to this inconceivable account of mental conception, showing it, to use the man's own words, to be a veritably dissoluble and unsubstantial one, and he discusses scientifically the force inherent in the term, advancing his argument by familiar examples to the contemplation of doctrine.

Against whom Eunomius exalting himself with this pompous writing, endeavours to overthrow the true account of mental conception, after this manner.

But before we examine what he has written, it may be better to enquire with what purpose it is that he refuses to admit that ungenerate can be predicated of God by way of conception. Now the tenet which has been held in common by all who have received the word of our religion is, that all hope of salvation should be placed in Christ, it being impossible for any to be found among the righteous, unless faith in Christ supply what is desired. And this conviction being firmly established in the souls of the faithful, and all honour and glory and worship being due to the Only-begotten God as the Author of life, Who doeth the works of the Father, as the Lord Himself saith in the Gospel , and Who falls short of no excellence in all knowledge of that which is good, I know not how they have been so perverted by malignity and jealousy of the Lord's honour, that, as though they judged the worship paid by the faithful to the Only-begotten God to be a detriment to themselves, they oppose His Divine honours, and try to persuade us that nothing that is said of them is true. For with them neither is He very God, though called so, it would seem, by Scripture, nor, though called Son, has He a nature that makes good the appellation, nor has He a community of dignity or of nature with the Father.

For, say they, it is not possible for Him that is begotten to be of equal honour with Him Who made Him, either in dignity, or in power, or in nature, because the life of the latter is infinite, and His existence from eternity, while the life of the Son is in a manner circumscribed, the beginning of His being begotten limiting His life at the commencement, and preventing it from being coextensive with the eternity of the Father, so that His life also is to be regarded

as defective; and the Father was not always what He now is and is said to be, but, having been something else before, He afterwards determined that He would be a Father, or rather that He would be so called. For not even of the Son was He rightly called Father, but of a creature supposititiously invested with the title of son. And every way, say they, the younger is of necessity inferior to the elder, the finite to the eternal, that which is begotten by the will of the begetter, to the begetter himself, both in power, and dignity, and nature, and precedence due to age, and all other prerogatives of respect. But how can we justly dignify with the honours due to the true God that which is wanting in the perfection of the diviner attributes?

Thus they would establish the doctrine that one who is limited in power, and wanting in the perfection of life, and subject to a superior, and doing nothing of himself but what is sanctioned by the authority of the more powerful, is in no divine honour and consideration, but that, while we call him God, we are employing a term empty of all grandeur in its significance. And since such statements as these, when stripped of their plausible dress, move indignation and make the hearer shudder at their strangeness (for who can tolerate an evil counsellor nakedly and unadvisably urging the overthrow of the majesty of Christ?), they therefore try to pervert foolish hearers with these foreign notions by enveloping their malignant and insidious arguments in a number of seductive fallacies. For after laying down such premises as might naturally lead the mind of the hearers in the desired direction, they leave the hearer to draw his conclusion for himself.

For after saying that the Only-begotten God is not the same in essence with the true Father, and after sophistically inferring this from the opposition between generate and ungenerate, they work in silence to the conclusion, their impiety prevailing by the natural course of inference. And as the poisoner makes his drug acceptable to his victim by sweetening its deadliness with honey, and, as for himself, has only to offer it, while the drug insinuating itself into the vitals without further action on the part of the poisoner does its deadly work,-so, too, do our opponents act. For qualifying their pernicious teaching with their sophistical refinements, as with honey, when they have infused into the mind of the hearer the venomous fallacy that God the Only-begotten is not very God, they cause all the rest to be inferred without saying a word. For when they are persuaded that He is not truly God, it follows as a matter of course that no other Divine attribute is truly applicable. For if He is truly neither Son nor God, except by an abuse of terms, then the other names which are given to Him in Holy Scripture are a divergence from the truth. For the one thing cannot be predicated of Him with truth, and the other be destitute of it;

but they must needs follow one another, so that, if He be truly God, it follows that He is Judge and King, and that His several attributes are such as they are described, while, if His godhead be falsely asserted, neither will the truth hold respecting any of His other attributes. They, then, having been deceived into the persuasion that the attribute of Godhead is falsely applied to the Only-begotten, it follows that He is not rightly the object of worship and adoration, or, in fact, of any of the honours that are paid to God. In order,

then, to render their attack upon the Saviour efficacious, this is the blasphemous method that they have adopted. There is no need, they urge, of looking at the collective attributes by which the Son's equality in honour and dignity with the Father is signified, but from the opposition between generate and ungenerate we must argue a distinctive difference of nature; for the Divine nature is that which is denoted by the term ungenerate.

Again, since all men of sense regard it as impracticable to indicate the ineffable Being by any force of words, because neither does our knowledge extend to the comprehension of what transcends knowledge, nor does the ministry of words have such power in us as to avail for the full enunciation of our thought, where the mind is engaged on anything eminently lofty and divine,-these wise folk, on the contrary, convicting men in general of want of sense and ignorance of logic, assert their own knowledge of such matters, and their ability to impart it to whomsoever they will; and accordingly they maintain that the divine nature is simply ungeneracy per se, and declaring this to be sovereign and supreme, they make this word comprehend the whole greatness of Godhead, so as to necessitate the inference that if ungeneracy is the main point of the essence, and the other divine attributes are bound up with it, viz. Godhead, power, imperishableness and so on-if (I say) ungeneracy mean these, then, if this ungeneracy cannot be predicated of something, neither can the rest. For as reason, and risibility, and capacity of knowledge are proper to man, and what is not humanity may not be classed among the properties of his nature, so, if true Godhead consists in ungeneracy, then, to whatsoever thing the latter name does not properly belong, no one at all of the other distinguishing attributes of Godhead will be found in it.

If, then, ungeneracy is not predicable of the Son, it follows that no other of His sublime and godlike attributes are properly ascribed to Him. This, then, they define as a right comprehension of the divine mysteries-the rejection of the Son's Godhead-all but shouting in the ear of those who would listen to them; "To you it is given to be perfect in knowledge , if only you believe not in God the Only-begotten as being very God, and honour not the Son as the Father is honoured, but regard Him as by nature a created being, not Lord and Master, but slave and subject. For this is the aim and object of their design, though the blasphemy is cloaked in different terms.

Accordingly, enveloping his former special-pleading in the mazy evolutions of his sophistries, and dealing subtly with the term ungenerate, he steals away the intelligence of his dupes, saying to them, "Well, then, if neither by way of conception it is so, nor by deprivation, nor by division (for He is without parts), nor as being another in Himself (for He is the one only ungenerate), He Himself must be, in essence, ungenerate. Seeing, then, the mischief resulting to the dupes of this fallacious reasoning-that to assent to His not being very God is a departure from our confession of Him as our Lord, to which conclusion indeed his words would bring his teaching-our master does not indeed deny that ungenerate is no partial predicate of God, himself also admitting that God is without quantity, or magnitude, or parts; but the statement that this term ought not to be applied to Him by way of mental conception he impugns, and gives his proofs. But again, shifting from this position, our writer in the

second of his treatises meets us with his sophistry, combating his own statements in regard to mental conception.

It will presently be time to bring to their own recollection the method of this argument. Suffice it first to say this. There is no faculty in human nature adequate to the full comprehension of the divine essence. It may be that it is easy to show this in the case of human capacity alone, and to say that the incorporeal creation is incapable of taking in and comprehending that nature which is infinite will not be far short of the truth, as we may see by familiar examples; for as there are many and various things that have fleshly life, winged things, and things of the earth, some that mount above the clouds by virtue of their wings, others that dwell in hollows or burrow in the ground, on comparing which it would appear that there was no small difference between the inhabitants of air and of land; while, if the comparison be extended to the stars and the fixed circumference, it will be seen that what soars aloft on wings is not less widely removed from heaven than from the animals that are on the earth; so, too, the strength of angels compared with our own seems preeminently great, because, undisturbed by sensation, it pursues its lofty themes with pure naked intelligence.

Yet, if we weigh even their comprehension with the majesty of Him Who really is, it may be that if any one should venture to say that even their power of understanding is not far superior to our own weakness, his conjecture would fall within the limits of probability, for wide and insurmountable is the interval that divides and fences off untreated from created nature. The latter is limited, the former not. The latter is confined within its own boundaries according to the pleasure of its Maker. The former is bounded only by infinity. The latter stretches itself out within certain degrees of extension, limited by time and space: the former transcends all notion of degree, baffling curiosity from every point of view. In this life we can apprehend the beginning and the end of all things that exist, but the beatitude that is above the creature admits neither end nor beginning, but is above all that is connoted by either, being ever the same, self-dependent, not travelling on by degrees from one point to another in its life; for there is no participation of other life in its life, such that we might infer end and beginning; but, be it what it may, it is life energizing in itself, not becoming greater or less by addition or diminution. For increase has no place in the infinite, and that which is by its nature passionless excludes all notion of decrease.

And as, when looking up to heaven, and in a measure apprehending by the visual organs the beauty that is in the height, we doubt not the existence of what we see, but if asked what it is, we are unable to define its nature, but we simply admire as we contemplate the overarching vault, the reverse planetary motion , the so-called Zodiac graven obliquely on the pole, whereby astronomers observe the motion of bodies revolving in an opposite direction, the differences of luminaries according to their magnitude, and the specialities of their rays, their risings and settings that take place according to the circling year ever at the same seasons undeviatingly, the conjunctions of planets, the courses of those that pass below, the eclipses of those that are above, the obumbrations of the earth, the reappearance

of eclipsed bodies, the moon's multiform changes, the motion of the sun midway within the poles, and how, filled with his own light, and crowned with his encircling beams, and embracing all things in his sovereign light, he himself also at times suffers eclipse (the disc of the moon, as they say, passing before him), and how, by the will of Him Who has so ordained, ever running his own particular course, he accomplishes his appointed orbit and progress, opening out the four seasons of the year in succession;

we, as I say, when we contemplate these phenomena by the aid of sight, are in no doubt of their existence, though we are as far from comprehending their essential nature as if sight had not given us any glimpse whatever of what we have seen; and even so, with regard to the Creator of the world, we know that He exists, but of His essential nature we cannot deny that we are ignorant. But, boasting as they do that they know these things, let them first tell us about the things of inferior nature; what they think of the body of the heavens, of the machinery which conveys the stars in their eternal courses, or of the sphere in which they move; for, however far speculation may proceed, when it comes to the uncertain and incomprehensible it must stop. For though any one say that another body, like in fashion (to that body of the heavens), fitting to its circular shape, checks its velocity, so that, ever turning in its course, it revolves conformably to that other upon itself, being retained by the force that embraces it from flying off at a tangent, yet how can he assert that these bodies will remain unspent by their constant friction with each other? And how, again, is motion produced in the case of two coeval bodies mutually conformed, when the one remains motionless (for the inner body, one would have thought, being held as in a vice by the motionlessness of that which embraces it, will be quite unable to act);

and what is it that maintains the embracing body in its fixedness, so that it remains unshaken and unaffected by the motion of that which fits into it? And if in restless curiosity of thought we should conceive of some position for it that should keep it stationary, we must go on in logical consistency to search for the base of that base, and of the next, and of the next, and so on, and so the inquiry, proceeding from like to like, will go on to infinity, and end in helpless perplexity, still, even when some body has been put for the farthest foundation of the system of the universe, reaching after what is beyond, so that there is no stopping in our inquiry after the limit of the embracing circles. But not so, say others: but (according to the vain theory of those who have speculated on these matters) there is an empty space spread over the back of the heavens, working in which vacuum the motion of the universe revolves upon itself, meeting with no resistance from any solid body capable of retarding it by opposition and of checking its course of revolution. What, then, is that vacuum, which they say is neither a body nor an idea? How far does it extend, and what succeeds it, and what relation exists between the firm, resisting body, and that void and unsubstantial one? What is there to unite things so contrary by nature? and how can the harmony of the universe consist out of elements so incongruous;

and what can any one say of Heaven itself? That it is a mixture of the elements which it contains, or one of them, or something else beside them? What, again, of the stars them-

selves? whence comes their radiance? what is it and how is it composed? and what is the reason of their difference in beauty and magnitude? and the seven inner orbs revolving in an opposite direction to the motion of the universe, what are they, and by what influence are they propelled? Then, too, what is that immaterial and ethereal empyrean, and the intermediate air which forms a wall of partition between that element in nature which gives heat and consumes, and that which is moist and combustible? And how does earth below form the foundation of the whole, and what is it that keeps it firmly in its place? what is it that controls its downward tendency? If any one should interrogate us on these and such-like points, will any of us be found so presumptuous as to promise an explanation of them? No! the only reply that can be given by men of sense is this:-that He Who made all things in wisdom can alone furnish an account of His creation. For ourselves, "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God," as saith the Apostle .

If, then, the lower creation which comes under our organs of sense transcends human knowledge, how can He, Who by His mere will made the worlds, be within the range of our apprehension? Surely this is vanity, and lying madness, as saith the Prophet , to think it possible to comprehend the things which are incomprehensible. So may we see tiny children busying themselves in their play. For oft-times, when a sunbeam streams down upon them through a window, delighted with its beauty they throw themselves on what they see, and are eager to catch the sunbeam in their hands, and struggle with one another, and grasp the light in the clutch of their fingers, and fancy they have imprisoned the ray in them, but presently when they unclasp their hands and find that the sunbeam which they held has slipped through their fingers, they laugh and clap their hands. In like manner the children of our generation, as saith the parable, sit playing in the market-places; for, seeing the power of God shining in upon their souls through the dispensations of His providence, and the wonders of His creation like a warm ray emanating from the natural sun, they marvel not at the Divine gift, nor adore Him Whom such things reveal, but passing beyond the limits of the soul's capabilities, they seek with their sophistical understanding to grasp that which is intangible, and think by their reasonings to lay hold of what they are persuaded of;

but when their argument unfolds itself and discloses the tangled web of their sophistries, men of discernment see at once that what they have apprehended is nothing at all; so pettily and so childishly labouring in vain at impossibilities do they set themselves to include the inconceivable nature of God in the few syllables of the term "ungenerate," and applaud their own folly, and imagine God to be such that human reasoning can include Him under one single term: and while they pretend to follow the teaching of the sacred writers, they are not afraid of raising themselves above them. For what cannot be shown to have been said by any of those blessed ones, any words of whose are recorded in the sacred books, these things, as saith the Apostle, "understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm ," they nevertheless say they know, and boast of guiding others to such knowledge. And on this account they declare that they have apprehended that God the Only-begotten is not what He is called. For to this conclusion they are compelled by their premises.

How pitiable are they for their cleverness! how wretched, how fatal is their over-wise philosophy! Who is there who goes of his own accord to the pit so eagerly as these men labour and bestir themselves to dig out their lake of blasphemy? How far have they separated themselves from the hope of the Christian! What a gulf have they fixed between themselves and the faith which saves! How far have they withdrawn themselves from Abraham the father of the faith! He indeed, if in the lofty spirit of the Apostle we may take the words allegorically, and so penetrate to the inner sense of the history, without losing sight of the truth of its facts-he, I say, went out by Divine command from his own country and kindred on a journey worthy of a prophet eager for the knowledge of God . For no local migration seems to me to satisfy the idea of the blessings which it is signified that he found.

For going out from himself and from his country, by which I understand his earthly and carnal mind, and raising his thoughts as far as possible above the common boundaries of nature, and forsaking the soul's kinship with the senses,-so that untroubled by any of the objects of sense his eyes might be open to the things which are invisible, there being neither sight nor sound to distract the mind in its work,-"walking," as saith the Apostle, "by faith, not by sight," he was raised so high by the sublimity of his knowledge that he came to be regarded as the acme of human perfection, knowing as much of God as it was possible for finite human capacity at its full stretch to attain. Therefore also the Lord of all creation, as though He were a discovery of Abraham, is called specially the God of Abraham. Yet what saith the Scripture respecting him? That he went out not knowing whither he went, no, nor even being capable of learning the name of Him whom he loved, yet in no wise impatient or ashamed on account of such ignorance.

This, then, was the meaning of his safe guidance on the way to what he sought-that he was not blindly led by any of the means ready to hand for his instruction in the things of God, and that his mind, unimpeded by any object of sense, was never hindered from its journeying in quest of what lies beyond all that is known, but having gone by reasoning far beyond the wisdom of his countrymen, (I mean the philosophy of the Chaldees, limited as it was to the things which do appear,) and soaring above the things which are cognizable by sense, from the beauty of the objects of contemplation, and the harmony of the heavenly wonders, he desired to behold the archetype of all beauty.

And so, too, all the other things which in the course of his reasoning he was led to apprehend as he advanced, whether the power of God, or His goodness, or His being without beginning, or His infinity, or whatever else is conceivable in respect to the divine nature, using them all as supplies and appliances for his onward journey, ever making one discovery a stepping-stone to another, ever reaching forth unto those things which were before, and setting in his heart, as saith the Prophet, each fair stage of his advance , and passing by all knowledge acquired by his own ability as falling short of that of which be was in quest, when he had gone beyond every conjecture respecting the divine nature which is suggested by any name amongst all our conceptions of God, having purged his reason of all such fancies, and arrived at a faith unalloyed and free from all prejudice, he made this a sure and manifest token of

the knowledge of God, viz. the belief that He is greater and more sublime than any token by which He may be known. On this account, indeed, after the ecstasy which fell upon him, and after his sublime meditations, falling back on his human weakness, "I am," saith he, "but dust and ashes ," that is to say, without voice or power to interpret that good which his mind had conceived. For dust and ashes seem to denote what is lifeless and barren;

and so there arises a law of faith for the life to come, teaching those who would come to God, by this history of Abraham, that it is impossible to draw near to God, unless faith mediate, and bring the seeking soul into union with the incomprehensible nature of God. For leaving behind him the curiosity that arises from knowledge, Abraham, says the Apostle, "believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness . "Now it was not written for his sake," the Apostle says, "but for us," that God counts to men for righteousness their faith, not their knowledge. For knowledge acts, as it were, in a commercial spirit, dealing only with what is known. But the faith of Christians acts otherwise. For it is the substance, not of things known, but of things hoped for. Now that which we have already we no longer hope for. "For what a man hath," says the Apostle, "why doth he yet hope for "? But faith makes our own that which we see not, assuring us by its own certainty of that which does not appear. For so speaks the Apostle of the believer, that "he endured as seeing Him Who is invisible . Vain, therefore, is he who maintains that it is possible to take knowledge of the divine essence, by the knowledge which puffeth up to no purpose.

For neither is there any man so great that he can claim equality in understanding with the Lord, for, as saith David, "Who is he among the clouds that shall be compared unto the Lord? " nor is that which is sought so small that it can be compassed by the reasonings of human shallowness. Listen to the preacher exhorting not to be hasty to utter anything before God, "for God," (saith he,) "is in heaven above, and thou upon earth beneath ."

He shows, I think, by the relation of these elements to each other, or rather by their distance, how far the divine nature is above the speculations of human reason. For that nature which transcends all intelligence is as high above earthly calculation as the stars are above the touch of our fingers; or rather, many times more than that. Knowing, then, how widely the Divine nature differs from our own, let us quietly remain within our proper limits. For it is both safer and more reverent to believe the majesty of God to be greater than we can understand, than, after circumscribing His glory by our misconceptions, to suppose there is nothing beyond our conception of it.

And on other accounts also it may be called safe to let alone the Divine essence, as unspeakable, and beyond the scope of human reasoning. For the desire of investigating what is obscure and tracing out hidden things by the operation of human reasoning gives an entrance to false no less than to true notions, inasmuch as he who aspires to know the unknown will not always arrive at truth, but may also conceive of falsehood itself as truth. But the disciple of the Gospels and of Prophecy believes that He Who is, is; both from what he has learnt from the sacred writers, and from the harmony of things which do appear, and from the works of Providence. But what He is and how-leaving this as a useless and unprofitable

speculation, such a disciple will open no door to falsehood against truth. For in speculative enquiry fallacies readily find place. But where speculation is entirely at rest, the necessity of error is precluded. And that this is a true account of the case, may be seen if we consider how it is that heresies in the churches have wandered off into many and various opinions in regard to God, men deceiving themselves as they are swayed by one mental impulse or another; and how these very men with whom our treatise is concerned have slipped into such a pit of profanity.

Would it not have been safer for all, following the counsel of wisdom, to abstain from searching into such deep matters, and in peace and quietness to keep inviolate the pure deposit of the faith? But since, in fact, human nothingness has commenced intruding recklessly into matters that are above comprehension, and supporting by dogmatic teaching the figments of their vain imagination, there has sprung up in consequence a whole host of enemies to the truth, and among them these very men who are the subject of this treatise; dogmatizers of deceit who seek to limit the Divine Being, and all but openly idolize their own imagination, in that they deify the idea expressed by this "ungeneracy" of theirs, as not being only in a certain relation discernible in the Divine nature, but as being itself God, or the essence of God. Yet perchance they would have done better to look to the sacred company of the Prophets and Patriarchs, to whom "at sundry times, and in divers manners ," the Word of truth spake, and, next in order, those who were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, that they might give honour due to the claims on their belief of the things attested by the Holy Spirit Himself, and abide within the limits of their teaching and knowledge, and not venture on themes which are not comprehended in the canon of the sacred writers.

For those writers, by revealing God, so long unknown to human life by reason of the prevalence of idolatry, and making Him known to men, both from the wonders which manifest themselves in His works, and from the names which express the manifold variety of His power, lead men, as by the hand, to the understanding of the Divine nature, making known to them the bare grandeur of the thought of God; while the question of His essence, as one which it is impossible to grasp, and which bears no fruit to the curious enquirer, they dismiss without any attempt at its solution. For whereas they have set forth respecting all other things, that they were created, the heaven, the earth, the sea, times, ages, and the creatures that are therein, but what each is in itself, and how and whence, on these points they are silent; so, too, concerning God Himself, they exhort men to "believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him ," but in regard to His nature, as being above every name, they neither name it nor concern themselves about it. For if we have learned any names expressive of the knowledge of God, all these are related and have analogy to such names as denote human characteristics.

For as they who would indicate some person unknown by marks of recognition speak of him as of good parentage and descent, if such happen to be the case, or as distinguished for his riches or his worth, or as in the prime of life, or of such or such stature, and in so speaking they do not set forth the nature of the person indicated, but give certain notes

of recognition (for neither advantages of birth, nor of wealth, nor of reputation, nor of age, constitute the man; they are considered, simply as being observable in the man), thus too the expressions of Holy Scripture devised for the glory of God set forth one or another of the things which are declared concerning Him, each inculcating some special teaching. For by these expressions we are taught either His power, or that He admits not of deterioration, or that He is without cause and without limit, or that He is supreme above all things, or, in short, something, be it what it may, respecting Him. But His very essence, as not to be conceived by the human intellect or expressed in words, this it has left untouched as a thing not to be made the subject of curious enquiry, ruling that it be revered in silence, in that it forbids the investigation of things too deep for us, while it enjoins the duty of being slow to utter any word before God.

And therefore, whosoever searches the whole of Revelation will find therein no doctrine of the Divine nature, nor indeed of anything else that has a substantial existence, so that we pass our lives in ignorance of much, being ignorant first of all of ourselves, as men, and then of all things besides. For who is there who has arrived at a comprehension of his own soul? Who is acquainted with its very essence, whether it is material or immaterial, whether it is purely incorporeal, or whether it exhibits anything of a corporeal character; how it comes into being, how it is composed, whence it enters into the body, how it departs from it, or what means it possesses to unite it to the nature of the body; how, being intangible and without form, it is kept within its own sphere, what difference exists among its powers, how one and the same soul, in its eager curiosity to know the things which are unseen, soars above the highest heavens, and again, dragged down by the weight of the body, falls back on material passions, anger and fear, pain and pleasure, pity and cruelty, hope and memory, cowardice and audacity, friendship and hatred, and all the contraries that are produced in the faculties of the soul?

Observing which things, who has not fancied that he has a sort of populace of souls crowded together in himself, each of the aforesaid passions differing widely from the rest, and, where it prevails, holding lordship over them all, so that even the rational faculty falls under and is subject to the predominating power of such forces, and contributes its own co-operation to such impulses, as to a despotic lord? What word, then, of the inspired Scripture has taught us the manifold and multiform character of what we understand in speaking of the soul? Is it a unity composed of them all, and, if so, what is it that blends and harmonizes things mutually opposed, so that many things become one, while each element, taken by itself, is shut up in the soul as in some ample vessel? And how is it that we have not the perception of them all as being involved in it, being at one and the same time confident and afraid, at once hating and loving and feeling in ourselves the working as well of all other emotions confused and intermingled; but, on the contrary, take knowledge only of their alternate control, when one of them prevails, the rest remaining quiescent? What in short is this composition and arrangement, and this capacious void within us, such that to each is assigned its own post, as though hindered by middle walls of partition from holding intercourse with its neighbour?

And then again what account has explained whether passion is the fundamental essence of the soul, or fear, or any of the other elements which I have mentioned; and what emotions are unsubstantial? For if these have an independent subsistence, then, as I have said, there is comprehended in ourselves not one soul, but a collection of souls, each of them occupying its distinct position as a particular and individual soul. But if we must suppose these to be a kind of emotion without subsistence, how can that which has no essential existence exercise lordship over us, having reduced us as it were to slave under whichsoever of these things may have happened to prevail? And if the soul is something that thought only can grasp, how can that which is manifold and composite be contemplated as such, when such an object ought to be contemplated by itself, independently of these bodily qualities? Then, as to the soul's power of growth, of desire, of nutrition, of change, and the fact that all the bodily powers are nourished, while feeling does not extend through all, but, as in things without life, some of our members are destitute of feeling, the bones for example, the cartilages, the nails, the hair, all of which take nourishment, but do not feel,-tell me who is there that understands this only half-complete operation of the soul as to these? And why do I speak of the soul?

Even the inquiry as to that thing in the flesh itself which assumes all the corporeal qualities has not been pursued to any definite result. For if any one has made a mental analysis of that which is seen into its component parts, and, having stripped the object of its qualities, has attempted to consider it by itself, I fail to see what will have been left for investigation. For when you take from a body its colour, its shape, its degree of resistance, its weight, its quantity, its position, its forces active or passive, its relation to other objects, what remains, that can still be called a body, we can neither see of ourselves, nor are we taught it by Scripture. But how can he who is ignorant of himself take knowledge of anything that is above himself? And if a man is familiarized with such ignorance of himself, is he not plainly taught by the very fact not to be astonished at any of the mysteries that are without? Wherefore also, of the elements of the world, we know only so much by our senses as to enable us to receive what they severally supply for our living. But we possess no knowledge of their substance, nor do we count it loss to be ignorant of it.

For what does it profit me to inquire curiously into the nature of fire, how it is struck out, how it is kindled, how, when it has caught hold of the fuel supplied to it, it does not let it go till it has devoured and consumed its prey; how the spark is latent in the flint, how steel, cold as it is to the touch, generates fire, how sticks rubbed together kindle flame how water shining in the sun causes a flash; and then again the cause of its upward tendency, its power of incessant motion?-Putting aside all which curious questions and investigations, we give heed only to the subservience of this fire to life, seeing that he who avails himself of its service fares no worse than he who busies himself with inquiries into its nature.

Wherefore Holy Scripture omits all idle inquiry into substance as superfluous and unnecessary. And methinks it was for this that John, the Son of Thunder, who with the loud voice of the doctrines contained in his Gospel rose above that of the preaching which heralded

them, said at the close of his Gospel, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written . He certainly does not mean by these the miracles of healing, for of these the narrative leaves none unrecorded, even though it does not mention the names of all who were healed. For when he tells us that the dead were raised, that the blind received their sight, that the deaf heard, that the lame walked, and that He healed all manner of sickness and all manner of disease, he does not in this leave any miracle unrecorded, but embraces each and all in these general terms. But it may be that the Evangelist means this in his profound wisdom: that we are to learn the majesty of the Son of God not by the miracles alone which He did in the flesh. For these are little compared with the greatness of His other work. "But look thou up to Heaven! Behold its glories! Transfer your thought to the wide compass of the earth, and the watery depths!

Embrace with your mind the whole world, and when you have come to the knowledge of supramundane nature, learn that these are the true works of Him Who sojourned for thee in the flesh," which (saith he), "if each were written"-and the essence, manner, origin, and extent of each given-the world itself could not contain the fulness of Christ's teaching about the world itself. For since God hath made all things in wisdom, and to His wisdom there is no limit (for "His understanding," saith the Scripture, "is infinite"), the world, that is bounded by limits of its own, cannot contain within itself the account of infinite wisdom. If, then, the whole world is too little to contain the teaching of the works of God, how many worlds could contain an account of the Lord of them all? For perhaps it will not be denied even by the tongue of the blasphemer that the Maker of all things, which have been created by the mere fiat of His will, is infinitely greater than all. If, then, the whole creation cannot contain what might be said respecting itself (for so, according to our explanation, the great Evangelist testifies), how should human shallowness contain all that might be said of the Lord of Creation?

Let those grand talkers inform us what man is, in comparison with the universe, what geometrical point is so without magnitude, which of the atoms of Epicurus is capable of such infinitesimal reduction in the vain fancy of those who make such problems the object of their study, which of them falls so little short of non-existence, as human shallowness, when compared with the universe. As saith also great David, with a true insight into human weakness, "Mine age is as nothing unto Thee ," not saying that it is absolutely nothing, but signifying, by this comparison to the non-existent, that what is so exceedingly brief is next to nothing at all.

But, nevertheless, with only such a nature for their base of operations, they open their mouths wide against the unspeakable Power, and encompass by one appellation the infinite nature, confining the Divine essence within the narrow limits of the term ungeneracy, that they may thereby pave a way for their blasphemy against the Only-begotten; but although the great Basil had corrected this false opinion, and pointed out, in regard to the terms, that they have no existence in nature, but are attached as conceptions to the things signified, so

far are they from returning to the truth, that they stick to what they have once advanced, as to birdlime, and will not loose their hold of their fallacious mode of argument, nor do they allow the term "ungeneracy" to be used in the way of a mental conception, but make it represent the Divine nature itself. Now to go through their whole argument, and to attempt to overthrow it by discussing word by word their frivolous and long-winded nonsense, would be a task requiring much leisure, and time, and freedom from calls of business.

Just as I hear that Eunomius, after applying himself at his leisure, and laboriously, for a number of years exceeding those of the Trojan war, has fabricated this dream for himself in his deep slumbers studiously seeking, not how to interpret any of the ideas which he has arrived at, but how to drag and force them into keeping with his phrases, and going round and collecting out of certain books the words in them that sound grandest. And as beggars in lack of clothing pin and tack together tunics for themselves out of rags, so he, cropping here a phrase and there a phrase, has woven together for himself the patchwork of his treatise, glueing in and fixing together the joinings of his diction with much labour and pains, displaying therein a petty and juvenile ambition for combat, which any man who has an eye to actuality would disdain, just as a steadfast wrestler, no longer in the prime of life, would disdain to play the woman by over-niceness in dress. But to me it seems that, when the scope of the whole question has been briefly run through, his roundabout flourishes may well be let alone.

I have said, then (for I make my master's words my own), that reason supplies us with but a dim and imperfect comprehension of the Divine nature; nevertheless, the knowledge that: we gather from the terms which piety allows us to apply to it is sufficient for our limited capacity. Now we do not say that all these terms have a uniform significance; for some of them express qualities inherent in God, and others qualities that are not, as when we say that He is just or incorruptible, by the term "just" signifying that justice is found in Him, and by "incorruptible" that corruption is not. Again, by a change of meaning, we may apply terms to God in the way of accommodation, so that what is proper to God may be represented by a term which in no wise belongs to Him, and what is foreign to His nature may be represented by what belongs to Him. For whereas justice is the contradictory of injustice, and everlastingness the contrary of destruction, we may filly and without impropriety employ contraries in speaking of God, as when we say that He is ever existent, or that He is not unjust, which is equivalent to saying that He is just, and that He admits not of corruption. So, too, we may say that other names of God, by a certain change of signification, may be suitably employed to express either meaning, for example "good," and "immortal," and all expressions of like formation;

for each of these terms, according as it is taken, is capable of indicating what does or what does not appertain to the Divine nature, so that, notwithstanding the formal change, our orthodox opinion in regard to the object remains immovably fixed. For it amounts to the same, whether we speak of God as unsusceptible of evil, or whether we call Him good; whether we confess that He is immortal, or say that He ever liveth. For we understand no difference in

the sense of these terms, but we signify one and the same thing by both, though the one may seem to convey the notion of affirmation, and the other of negation. And so again, when we speak of God as the First Cause of all things, or again, when we speak of Him as without cause, we are guilty of no contradiction in sense, declaring as we do by either name that God is the prime Ruler and First Cause of all. Accordingly when we speak of Him as without cause, and as Lord of all, in the former case we signify what does not attach to Him, in the latter case what does; it being possible, as I have said, by a change of the things signified, to give an opposite sense to the words that express them, and to signify a property by a word which for the time takes a negative form, and vice versa.

For it is allowable, instead of saying that He Himself has no primal cause, to describe Him as the First Cause of all, and again, instead of this, to hold that He alone exists ungenerately, so that while the words seem by the formal change to be at variance with each other, the sense remains one and the same. For the object to be aimed at, in questions respecting God, is not to produce a dulcet and melodious harmony of words, but to work out an orthodox formula of thought, whereby a worthy conception of God may be ensured. Since, then, it is only orthodox to infer that He Who is the First Cause of all is Himself without cause, if this opinion is established, what further contention of words remains for men of sense and judgment, when every word whereby such a notion is conveyed to us has the same signification? For whether you say that He is the First Cause and Principle of all, or speak of Him as without origin, whether you speak of Him as of ungenerate or eternal subsistence, as the Cause of all or as alone without cause, all these words are, in a manner, of like force, and equivalent to one another, as far as the meaning of the things signified is concerned; and it is mere folly to contend for this or that vocal intonation, as if orthodoxy were a thing of sounds and syllables rather than of the mind.

This view, then, has been carefully enunciated by our great master, whereby all whose eyes are not blindfolded by the veil of heresy may clearly see that, whatever be the nature of God, He is not to be apprehended by sense, and that He transcends reason, though human thought, busying itself with curious inquiry, with such help of reason as it can command, stretches out its hand and just touches His unapproachable and sublime nature, being neither keen-sighted enough to see clearly what is invisible, nor yet so far withheld from approach as to be unable to catch some faint glimpse of what it seeks to know. For such knowledge it attains in part by the touch of reason, in part from its very inability to discern it, finding that it is a sort of knowledge to know that what is sought transcends knowledge (for it has learned what is contrary to the Divine nature, as well as all that may fittingly be conjectured respecting it). Not that it has been able to gain full knowledge of that nature itself about which it reasons, but from the knowledge of those properties which are, or are not, inherent in it, this mind of man sees what alone can be seen, that that which is far removed from all evil, and is understood in all good, is altogether such as I should pronounce ineffable and incomprehensible by human reason.

But although our great master has thus cleared away all unworthy notions respecting the Divine nature, and has urged and taught all that may be reverently and fittingly held concerning it, viz. that the First Cause is neither a corruptible thing, nor one brought into being by any birth, but that it is outside the range of every conception of the kind; and that from the negation of what is not inherent, and the affirmation of what may be with reverence conceived to be inherent therein, we may best apprehend what He is-nevertheless this vehement adversary of the truth opposes these teachings, and hopes with the sounding word "ungeneracy" to supply a clear definition of the essence of God.

And yet it is plain to every one who has given any attention to the uses of words, that the word incorruption denotes by the privative particle that neither corruption nor birth appertains to God: just as many other words of like formation denote the absence of what is not inherent rather than the presence of what is; e. g. harmless, painless, guileless, undisturbed, passionless, sleepless, undiseased , impossible, unblamable, and the like. For all these terms are truly applicable to God, and furnish a sort of catalogue and muster of evil qualities from which God is separate. Yet the terms employed give no positive account of that to which they are applied. We learn from them what it is not; but what it is, the force of the words does not indicate. For if some one, wishing to describe the nature of man, were to say that it is not lifeless, not insentient, not winged, not four-fooled, not amphibious, he would not indicate what it is: he would simply declare what it is not, and he would be no more making untrue statements respecting man than he would be positively defining his subject. In the same way, from the many things which are predicated of the Divine nature, we learn under what conditions we may conceive God as existing, but what He is essentially, such statements do not inform us.

While, however, we strenuously avoid all concurrence with absurd notions in our thoughts of God, we allow ourselves in the use of many diverse appellations in regard to Him, adapting them to our point of view. For whereas no suitable word has been found to express the Divine nature, we address God by many names, each by some distinctive touch adding something fresh to our notions respecting Him,-thus seeking by variety of nomenclature to gain some glimmerings for the comprehension of what we seek. For when we question and examine ourselves as to what God is, we express our conclusions variously, as that He is that which presides over the system and working of the things that are, that His existence is without cause, while to all else He is the Cause of being; that He is that which has no generation or beginning, no corruption, no turning backward, no diminution of supremacy; that He is that in which evil finds no place, and from which no good is absent.

And if any one would distinguish such notions by words, he would find it absolutely necessary to call that which admits of no changing to the worse unchanging and invariable, and to call the First Cause of all ungenerate, and that which admits not of corruption incorruptible; and that which ceases at no limit immortal and never failing; and that which presides over all Almighty. And so, framing names for all other Divine attributes in accordance with reverent conceptions of Him, we designate them now by one name, now by another, accord-

ing to our varying lines of thought, as power, or strength, or goodness, or ungeneracy, or perpetuity. I say, then, that men have a right to such word-building, adapting their appellations to their subject, each man according to his judgment; and that there is no absurdity in this, such as our controversialist makes a pretence of, shuddering at it as at some gruesome hobgoblin, and that we are fully justified in allowing the use of such fresh applications of words in respect to all things that can be named, and to God Himself.

For God is not an expression, neither hath He His essence in voice or utterance. But God is of Himself what also He is believed to be, but He is named, by those who call upon Him, not what He is essentially (for the nature of Him Who alone is is unspeakable), but He receives His appellations from what are believed to be His operations in regard to our life. To take an instance ready to our hand; when we speak of Him as God, we so call Him from regarding Him as overlooking and surveying all things, and seeing through the things that are hidden. But if His essence is prior to His works, and we understand His works by our senses, and express them in words as we are best able, why should we be afraid of calling things by words of later origin than themselves? For if we stay to interpret any of the attributes of God till we understand them, and we understand them only by what His works teach us, and if His power precedes its exercise, and depends on the will of God, while His will resides in the spontaneity of the Divine nature, are we not clearly taught that the words which represent things are of later origin than the things themselves, and that the words which are framed to express the operations of things are reflections of the things themselves?

And that this is so, we are clearly taught by Holy Scripture, by the mouth of great David, when, as by certain peculiar and appropriate names, derived from his contemplation of the works of God, he thus speaks of the Divine nature: "The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, long-suffering, and of great goodness . Now what do these words tell us? Do they indicate His operations, or His nature? No one will say that they indicate aught but His operations. At what time, then, after showing mercy and pity, did God acquire His name from their display? Was it before man's life began? But who was there to be the object of pity? Was it, then, after sin entered into the world? But sin entered after man. The exercise, therefore, of pity, and the name itself, came after man. What then? will our adversary, wise as he is above the Prophets, convict David of error in applying names to God derived from his opportunities of knowing Him? or, in contending with him, will he use against him the pretence in his stately passage as out of a tragedy, saying that "he glories in the most blessed life of God with names drown from human imagination, whereas it gloried in itself alone, long before men were born to imagine them"?

The Psalmist's advocate will readily admit that the Divine nature gloried in itself alone even before the existence of human imagination, but will contend that the human mind can speak only so much in respect of God as its capacity, instructed by His works, will allow. "For," as saith the Wisdom of Solomon, "by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the Maker of them is seen ."

But in applying such appellations to the Divine essence, "which passeth all understanding," we do not seek to glory in it by the names we employ, but to guide our own selves by the aid of such terms towards the comprehension of the things which are hidden. "I said unto the Lord," saith the Prophet, "Thou art my God, my goods are nothing unto Thee . How then are we glorifying the most blessed life of God, as this man affirms, when (as saith the Prophet) "our goods are nothing unto Him"? Is it that he takes "call" to mean "glory in"? Yet those who employ the latter word rightly, and who have been trained to use words with propriety, tell us that the word "glory in" is never used of mere indication, but that that idea is expressed by such words as "to make known," "to show," "to indicate," or some other of the kind, whereas the word for "glory in" means to be proud of, or delight in a thing, and the like. But he affirms that by employing names drawn from human imagination we "glory in" the blessed life. We hold, however, that to add any honour to the Divine nature, which is above all honour, is more than human infirmity can do. At the same time we do not deny that we endeavour, by words and names devised with due reverence, to give some notion of its attributes.

And so, following studiously in the path of due reverence, we apprehend that the first cause is that which has its subsistence not from any cause superior to itself. Which view, if so be one accepts it as true, is praiseworthy for its truth alone. But if one should judge it to be superior to other aspects of the Divine nature, and so should say that God, exulting and rejoicing in this alone, glories in it, as of paramount excellence, one would find support only from the Muse by whom Eunomius is inspired, when he says, that "ungeneracy" glories in itself, that which, mark you, he calls God's essence, and styles the blessed and Divine life.

But let us hear how, "in the way most needed, and the form that preceded" (for with such rhymes he again gives us a taste of the flowers of style), let us hear, I say, how by such means he proposes to refute the opinion formed of him, and to keep in the dark the ignorance of those whom he has deluded. For I will use our dithyrambist's own verbal inflections and phraseology. When, says he, we assert that words by which thought is expressed die as soon as they are uttered, we add that whether words are uttered or not, whether they are yet in existence or not, God was and is ungenerate. Let us learn, then, what connection there is between the conception or the formation of words, and the things which we signify by this or that mode of utterance. Accordingly, if God is ungenerate before the creation of man, we must esteem as of no account the words which indicate that thought, inasmuch as they are dispersed along with the sounds that express them, if such thought happen to be named after human notion. For to be, and to be called, are not convertible terms. But God is by His nature what He is, but He is called by us by such names as the poverty of our nature will allow us to make use of, which is incapable of enunciating thought except by means of voice and words. Accordingly, understanding Him to be without origin, we enunciate that thought by the term ungenerate.

And what harm is it to Him Who indeed is, that He should be named by us as we conceive Him to be? For His ungenerate existence is not the result of His being called ungenerate,

but the name is the result of the existence. But this our acute friend fails to see, nor does he take a clear view of his own positions. For if he did, he would certainly have left off reviling those who flamed the word ungeneracy to express the idea in their minds. For look at what he says, "Words so spoken perish as soon as they are spoken; but God both is and was ungenerate, both after the words were spoken and before. You see that the Supreme Being is what He is, before the creation of all things, whether silent or not, being what He is neither in greater nor in less degree; while the use of words and names was not devised till after the creation of man, endowed by God with the faculty of reason and speech."

If, then, the creation is of later date than its Creator, and man is the latest in the scale of creation, and if speech is a distinctive characteristic of man, and verbs and nouns are the component elements of speech, and ungeneracy is a noun, how is it that he does not understand that he is combating his own arguments?For we, on our side, say that by human thought and intelligence words have been devised expressive of things which they represent, and he, on his side, allows that those who employ speech are demonstrably later in point of time than the Divine life, and that the Divine nature is now, and ever has been, without generation. If, then, he allows the blessed life to be anterior to man (for to that point I return), and we do not deny man's later creation, but contend that we have used forms of speech ever since we came into being and received the faculty of reason from our Maker, and if ungeneracy is a word expressive of a special idea, and every word is a part of human speech,-it follows that he who admits that the Divine nature was anterior to man must at the same time admit that the name invented by man to express that nature was itself later in being. For it was not likely that the use of speech should be exercised before the existence of creatures to use it, any more than that farming should be exercised before the existence of farmers, or navigation before that of navigators, or in fact any of the occupations of life before that of life itself. Why, then, does he contend with us, instead of following his premises to their legitimate conclusion?

He says that God was what He is, before the creation of man. Nor do we deny it. For whatsoever we conceive of God existed before the creation of the world. But we maintain that it received its name after the namer came into being. For if we use words for this purpose, that they may supply us with teaching about the things which they signify, and it is ignorance alone that requires teaching, while the Divine Nature, as comprehending all knowledge, is above all teaching, it follows that names were invented to denote the Supreme Being, not for His sake, but for our own. For He did not attach the term ungeneracy to His nature in order that He Himself might be instructed. For He Who knoweth all things has no need of syllables and words to instruct Him as to His own nature and majesty.

But that we might gain some sort of comprehension of what with reverence may be thought respecting Him, we have stamped our different ideas with certain words and syllables, labelling, as it were, our mental processes with verbal formulae to serve as characteristic notes and indications, with the object of giving a clear and simple declaration of our mental processes by means of words attached to, and expressive of, our ideas. Why, then, does he

find fault with our contention that the term ungeneracy was devised to indicate the existence of God without origin or beginning, and that, independently of all exercise of speech, or silence, or thought, and before the very idea of creation, God was and remains ungenerate? If, indeed, any one Should argue that God was not ungenerate till the name ungeneracy had been found, the man might be pardonable for writing as he has written, in contravention of such an absurdity. But if no one denies that He existed before speech and reason, whereas, while the form of words by which the meaning is expressed is said by us to have been devised by mental conception, the end and aim of his controversy with us is to show that the name is not of man's device, but that it existed before our creation, though by whom it was spoken I do not know , what has the assertion that God existed ungenerately before all things, and the contention that mental conception is posterior to God, got to do with this aim of his?

For that God is not a conception has been fully demonstrated, so that we may press him with the same sort of argument, and reply, so to say, in his own words, e. g. "It is utter folly to regard understanding as of earlier birth than those who exercise it"; or again, as he proceeds a little below, "Nor as though we intended this, i. e. to make men, the latest of God's works of creation, anterior to the conceptions of their own understanding. Great indeed would be the force of the argument, if any one of us, out of sheer folly and madness, should argue that God was a conception of the mind. But if this is not so, nor ever has been, (for who would go to such a pitch of folly as to assert that He Who alone is, and Who brought all else whatsoever into being, has no substantial existence of His own, and to make Him out to be a mere conception of a name? why does he fight with shadows, contending with imaginary propositions?

Is not the cause of this unreasonable litigiousness clear, that, feeling ashamed of the fallacy respecting ungeneracy with which his dupes have been deluded (since it has been proved that the word is very far removed from the Divine essence), he is deliberately shuffling up his arguments, shifting the controversy from words to things, so that by throwing all into confusion the unwary may more easily be seduced, by imagining that God has been described by us either as a conception, or as posterior in existence to the invention of human terminology; and thus, leaving our argument unrefuted, he is shifting his position to another quarter of the field? For our conclusion was, as I have said, that the term ungeneracy does not indicate the Divine nature, but is applicable to it as the result of a conception by which the fact that God subsists without prior cause is pointed at. But what they were for establishing was this: that the word was indicative of the Divine essence itself. Yet how has it been established that the word has this force? I suppose the handling of this question is in reserve in some other of his writings. But here he makes it his main object to show that God exists ungenerately, just as though some one were simply questioning him on such points as these-what view he held as to the term ungenerate, whether he thought it invented to show that the First Cause was without beginning and origin, or as declaring the Divine essence itself;

and he, with much assumption of gravity and wisdom, were replying that he, for his part, had no doubt that God was the Maker of heaven and earth. How widely this method of proceeding differs from, and is unconnected with, his first contention, you may see, in the same way as you may see how little his fine description of his controversy with us is connected with the question at issue. For let us look at the matter in this wise.

They say that God is ungenerate, and in this we agree. But that ungeneracy itself constitutes the Divine essence, here we take exception. For we maintain that this term is declarative of God's ungenerate subsistence, but not that ungeneracy is God. But of what nature is his refutation? It is this: that before man's creation God existed ungenerately. But what has this to do with the point which he promises to establish, that the term and its Subject are identical? For he lays it down that ungeneracy is the Divine essence. But what sort of a fulfilment of his promise is it, to show that God existed before beings capable of speech? What a wonderful, what an irresistible demonstration! what perfection of logical refinement! Who that has not been initiated in the mysteries of the awful craft may venture to look it in the face? Yet in particularizing the meanings of the term "conception," he makes a solemn travesty of it. For, saith he, of words used to express a conception of the mind, some exist only in pronunciation, as for instance those which signify nonentity, while others have their peculiar meaning; and of these some have an amplifying force, as in the case of things colossal, others a diminishing, as in that of pigmies, others a multiplying, as in that of many-headed monsters, others a combinative, as in that of centaurs. After thus reducing the force of the term "conception" to its lowest value, our clever friend will allow it, you see, no further extension. He says that it is without sense and meaning, that it fancies the unnatural, either contracting or extending the limits of nature, or putting heterogeneous notions together, or juggling with strange and monstrous combinations.

With such gibes at the term "conception," he shows, to the best of his ability, that it is useless and unprofitable for the life of man. What, then, was the origin of our higher branches of learning, of geometry, arithmetic, the logical and physical sciences, of the inventions of mechanical art, of the marvels of measuring time by the brazen dial and the water-clock? What, again, of ontology, of the science of ideas, in short of all intellectual speculation as applied to great and sublime objects? What of agriculture, of navigation, and of the other pursuits of human life? how comes the sea to be a highway for man? how are things of the air brought into the service of things of the earth, wild things tamed, objects of terror brought into subjection, animals stronger than ourselves made obedient to the rein? Have not all these benefits to human life been achieved by conception? For, according to my account of it, conception is the method by which we discover things that are unknown, going on to further discoveries by means of what adjoins to and follows from our first perception with regard to the thing studied. For when we have formed some idea of what we seek to know, by adapting what follows to the first result of our discoveries we gradually conduct our inquiry to the end of our proposed research.

But why enumerate the greater and more splendid results of this faculty? For every one who is not unfriendly to truth can see for himself that all else that Time has discovered for the service and benefit of human life, has been discovered by no other instrumentality than that of conception. And it seems to me, that any one who should judge this faculty more precious than any other with the exercise of which we are gifted in this life by Divine Providence would not be far mistaken in his judgment. And in saying this I am supported by Job's teaching, where he represents God as answering His servant by the tempest and the clouds, saying both other things meet for Him to say, and that it is He Who hath set man over the arts, and given to woman her skill in weaving and embroidery .

Now that He did not teach us such things by some visible operation, Himself presiding over the work, as we may see in matters of bodily teaching, no one would gainsay whose nature is not altogether animal and brutish. But still it has been said that our first knowledge of such arts is from Him, and, if such is the case, surely He Who endowed our nature with such a faculty of conceiving and finding out the objects of our investigation was Himself our Guide to the arts. And by the law of causation, whatever is discovered and established by conception must be ascribed to Him Who is the Author of that faculty. Thus human life invented the Art of Healing, but nevertheless he would be right who should assert that Art to be a gift from God. And whatever discovery has been made in human life, conducive to any useful purposes of peace or war, came to us from no other quarter but from an intelligence conceiving and discovering according to our several requirements; and that intelligence is a gift of God. It is to God, then, that we owe all that intelligence supplies to us. Nor do I deny the objection made by our adversaries, that lying wonders also are fabricated by this faculty. For their contention as to this makes for our own side in the argument. For we too assert that the science of opposites is the same, whether beneficial or the reverse; e. g.

in the case of the arts of healing and navigation, and so on. For he who knows how to relieve the sick by drugs will also know, if indeed he were to turn his art to an evil purpose, how to mix some deleterious ingredient in the food of the healthy. And he who can steer a boat with its rudder into port can also steer it for the reef or the rock, if minded to destroy those on board. And the painter, with the same art by which he depicts the fairest form on his canvas, could give us an exact representation of the ugliest. So, too, the wrestling-master, by the experience which he has gained in anointing, can set a dislocated limb, or, should he wish to do so, dislocate a sound one. But why encumber our argument by multiplying instances? As in the above-mentioned cases no one would deny that he who has learned to practise an art for right purposes can also abuse it for wrong ones, so we say that the faculty of thought and conception was implanted by God in human nature for good, but, with those who abuse it as an instrument of discovery, it frequently becomes the handmaid of pernicious inventions.

But although it is thus possible for this faculty to give a plausible shape to what is false and unreal, it is none the less competent to investigate what actually and in very truth subsists,

and its ability for the one must in fairness be regarded as an evidence of its ability for the other.

For that one who proposes to himself to terrify or charm an audience should have plenty of conception to effect such a purpose, and should display to the spectators many-handed, many-headed, or fire-breathing monsters, or men enfolded in the coils of serpents, or that he should seem to increase their stature, or enlarge their natural proportions to a ridiculous extent, or that he should describe men metamorphosed into fountains and trees and birds, a kind of narrative which is not without its attraction for such as take pleasure in things of that sort;-all this, I say, is the clearest of demonstrations that it is possible to arrive at higher knowledge also by means of this inventive faculty.

For it is not the case that, while the intelligence implanted in us by the Giver is fully competent to conjure up non-realities, it is endowed with no faculty at all for providing us with things that may profit us. But as the impulsive and elective faculty of the soul is established in our nature, to incite us to what is good and noble, though a man may also abuse it for what is evil, and no one can call the fact that the elective faculty sometimes inclines to evil a proof that it never inclines to what is good-so the bias of conception towards what is vain and unprofitable does not prove its inability for what is profitable, but, on the contrary, is a demonstration of its not being unserviceable for what is beneficial and necessary to the mind. For as, in the one case, it discovers means to produce pleasure or terror, so, in the other, it does not fail to find ways for getting at truth. Now one of the objects of inquiry was whether the First Cause, viz. God, exists without beginning, or whether His existence is dependent on some beginning. But perceiving, by the aid of thought, that that cannot be a First Cause which we conceive of as the consequence of another, we devised a word expressive of such a notion, and we say that He who is without anterior cause exists without origin, or, so to say, ungenerately. And Him Who so exists we call ungenerate and without origin, indicating, by that appellation, not what He is, but what He is not.

But as far as possible to elucidate the idea, I will endeavour to illustrate it by a still plainer example. Let us suppose the inquiry to be about some tree, whether it is cultivated or wild. If the former, we call it planted, if the latter, not planted. And such a term exactly hits the truth, for the tree must needs be after this manner or that. And yet the word does not indicate the peculiar nature of the plant. From the term "not-planted" we learn that it is of spontaneous growth; but whether what is thus signified is a plane, or a vine, or some other such plant, the name applied to it does not inform us.

This example being understood, it is time to go on to the thing which it illustrates. This much we comprehend, that the First Cause has His existence from no antecedent one. Accordingly, we call God ungenerate as existing ungenerately, reducing this notion of ungeneracy into verbal form. That He is without origin or beginning we show by the force of the term. But what that Being is which exists ungenerately, this appellation does not lead us to discern. Nor was it to be supposed that the processes of conception could avail to raise us above the limits of our nature, and open up the incomprehensible to our view, and enable

us to compass the knowledge of that which no knowledge can approach . Nevertheless, our adversary storms at our Master, and tries to tear to pieces his teaching respecting the faculty of thought and conception, and derides what has been said, revelling as usual in the rattle of his jingling phraseology, and saying that he (Basil) shrinks from adducing evidence respecting those things of which he presumes to be the interpreter.

For, quoting certain of the Master's speculations on the faculty of conception, in which he shows that its exercise finds place, not only in reference to vain and trivial objects, but that it is competent to deal also with weightier matters, he, by means of his speculation about the corn, and seed, and other food (in Genesis), brings Basil into court with the charge, that his language is a following of pagan philosophy , and that he is circumscribing Divine Providence, as not allowing that words were given to things by God, and that he is fighting in the ranks of the Atheists, and taking arms against Providence, and that he admires the doctrines of the profane rather than the laws of God, and ascribes to them the palm of wisdom, not having observed in the earliest of the sacred records, that before the creation of man, the naming of fruit and seed are mentioned in Holy Writ.

Such are his charges against us; not indeed his notions as expressed in his own phraseology, for we have made such alterations as were required to correct the ruggedness and harshness of his style. What, then, is our answer to this careful guardian of Divine Providence? He asserts that we are in error, because, while we do not deny man's having been created a rational being by God, we ascribe the invention of words to the logical faculty implanted by God in man's nature. And this is the bitterest of his accusations, whereby our teacher of righteousness is charged with deserting to the tenets of the Atheists, and is denounced as partaking with and supporting their lawless company, and indeed as guilty of all the most atrocious offences. Well, then, let this corrector of our blunders tell us, did God give names to the things which He created? For so says our new interpreter of the mysteries: "Before the creation of man God named germ, and herb, and grass, and seed, and tree, and the like, when by the word of His power He brought them severally into being.

If, then, he abides by the bare letter, and so far Judaizes, and has yet to learn that the Christian is a disciple not of the letter but of the Spirit (for the letter killeth, says the Apostle, but the Spirit giveth life), and quotes to us the bare literal reading of the words as though God Himself pronounced them-if, I say, he believes this, that, after the similitude of men, God made use of fluency of speech, expressing His thoughts by voice and accent-if, I repeat, he believes this, he cannot reasonably deny what follows as its logical consequence. For our speech is uttered by the organs of speech, the windpipe, the tongue, the teeth, and the mouth, the inhalation of air from without and the breath from within working together to produce the utterance. For the windpipe, fitting into the throat like a flute, emits a sound from below; and the roof of the mouth, by reason of the void space above extending to the nostrils, like some musical instrument, gives volume from above to the voice. And the checks, too, are aids to speech, contracting and expanding in accordance with their structural arrangement, or propelling the voice through a narrow passage by various movements of the

tongue, which it effects now with one part of itself now with another, giving hardness or softness to the sound which passes over it by contact with the teeth or with the palate.

Again, the service of the lips contributes not a little to the result, affecting the voice by the variety of their distinctive movements, and helping to shape the words as they are uttered.

If, then, God gives things their names as our new expositor of the Divine record assures us, naming germ, and grass, and tree, and fruit, He must of necessity have pronounced each of these words not otherwise than as it is pronounced; i. e. according to the composition of the syllables, some of which are sounded by the lips, others by the tongue, others by both. But if none of these words could be uttered, except by the operation of vocal organs producing each syllable and sound by some appropriate movement, he must of necessity ascribe the possession of such organs to God, and fashion the Divine Being according to the exigencies of speech. For each adaptation of the vocal organs must be in some form or other, and form is a bodily limitation. Further, we know very well that all bodies are composite, but where you see composition you see also dissolution, and dissolution, as the notion implies, is the same thing as destruction. This, then, is the upshot of our controversialist's victory over us; to show us the God of his imagining whom he has fashioned by the name ungeneracy-speaking, indeed, that He may not lose His share in the invention of names, but provided with vocal organs with which to utter them, and not without bodily nature to enable Him to employ them (for you cannot conceive of formal utterance in the abstract apart from a body), and gradually going on to the congenital affections of the body-through the composite to dissolution, and so finding His end in destruction.

Such is the nature of this new-fangled Deity, as deducible from the words of our new God-maker. But he takes his stand on the Scriptures, and maintains that Moses explicitly declares this, when he says, "God said," adding His words, "Let there be light," and, "Let there be a firmament. and, "Let the waters be gathered together ...and let the dry land appear," and, "Let the earth bring forth," and, "Let the waters bring forth," and, whatsoever else is written in its order. Let us, then, examine the meaning of what is said. Who does not know, even if he be the merest simpleton, that there is a natural correlation between hearing and speech, and that, as it is impossible for hearing to discharge its function when no one is speaking, so speech is ineffectual unless directed to hearing? If, then, he means literally that "God said," let him tell us also to what hearing His words were addressed. Does he mean that He said them to Himself? If so, the commands which He issues, He issues to Himself. Yet who will accept this interpretation, that God sits upon His throne prescribing what He Himself must do, and employing Himself as His minister to do His bidding? But even supposing one were to allow that it was not blasphemy to say this, who has any need of words and speech for himself, even though a man? For every one's own mental action suffices him to produce choice and volition.

But he will doubtless say that the Father held converse with the Son. But what need of vocal utterance for that? For it is a property of bodily nature to signify the thoughts of the heart by means of words, whence also written characters equivalent to speech were invented for the

expression of thought. For we declare thought equally by speaking and by writing, but in the case of those who are not too far distant we reach their hearing by voice, but declare our mind to those who are at a distance by written characters; and in the case of those present with us, in proportion to their distance from us, we raise or lower the tones of our voice, and to those close by us we sometimes point out what they are to do simply by a nod; and such or such an expression of the eye is sufficient to convey our determination, or a movement of the hand is sufficient to signify our approval or disapproval of something going on.

If, then, those who are encompassed by the body are able to make known the hidden working of their minds to their neighbours, even without voice, or speech, or correspondence by means of letters, and silence causes no hindrance to the despatch of business, can it be that in the case of the immaterial, and intangible, and, as Eunomius says, the Supreme and first Being, there is any need of words to indicate the thought of the Father and to make known His will to the Only-Begotten Son-words, which, as he himself says, are wont to perish as soon as they are uttered? No one, methinks, who has common sense will accept this as the truth, especially as all sound is poured forth into the air. For voice cannot be produced unless it takes consistence in air. Now, even they themselves must suppose some medium of communication between the speaker and him to whom he speaks. For if there were no such medium, how could the voice travel from the speaker to the hearer? What, then, will they say is the medium or interval by which they divide the Father from the Son? Between bodies, indeed, there is an interval of atmospheric space, differing in its nature from the nature of human bodies.

But God, Who is intangible, and without form, and pure from all composition, in communicating His counsels with the Only-Begotten Son, Who is similarly, or rather in the same manner, immaterial and without body-if He made His communication by voice, what medium would He have had through which the word, transmitted as in a current, might reach the ears of the Only-Begotten? For we need hardly stop to consider that God is not separable into apprehensive faculties, as we are, whose perceptions separately apprehend their corresponding objects; e. g. sight apprehends what may be seen, hearing what may be heard, so that touch does not taste, and hearing has no perception of odours and flavours, but each confines itself to that function to which it was appointed by nature, holding itself insensible, as it were, to those with which it has no natural correspondence, and incapable of tasting the pleasure enjoyed by its neighbour sense. But with God it is otherwise. All in all, He is at once sight, and hearing, and knowledge; and there we stop, for it is not permitted us to ascribe the more animal perceptions to that refined nature. Still we take a very low view of God, and drag down the Divine to our own grovelling standard, if we suppose the Father speaking with His mouth, and the Son's ear listening to His words. What, then, are we to suppose is the medium which conveys the Father's voice to the hearing of the Son? It must be created or uncreate.

But we may not call it created; for the Word was before the creation of the world: and beside the Divine nature there is nothing uncreate. If, therefore, there was no creation then, and

the Word spoken of in the cosmogony was older than creation, will he, who maintains that speech and a voice are meant by "the Word," suggest what medium existed between the Father and the Son, whereby those words and sounds were expressed? For if a medium exist, it must needs exist in a nature of its own, so as to differ in nature both from the Father and the Son. Being, then, something of necessity different, it divides the Father and the Son from each other, as though inserted between the two. What, then, could it be? Not created, for creation is younger than the Word. Generated we have learnt the Only-begotten (and Him alone) to be. Except the Father, none is ungenerate. Truth, therefore, obliges us to the conclusion that there is no medium between the Father and the Son. But where separation is not conceived of the closest connection is naturally implied. And what is so connected needs no medium for voice or speech. Now by "connected," I mean here what is in all respects inseparable. For in the case of a spiritual nature the term connection does not mean corporeal connection, but the union and blending of spiritual with spiritual through identity of will.

Accordingly, there is no divergence of will between the Father and the Son, but the image of goodness is after the Archetype of all goodness and beauty, and as, if a man should look at himself in a glass (for it is perfectly allowable to explain the idea by corporeal illustrations), the copy will in all respects be conformed to the original, the shape of the man who is reflected being the cause of the shape on the glass, and the reflection making no spontaneous movement or inclination unless commenced by the original, but, if it move, moving along with it,-in like manner we maintain that our Lord, the Image of the invisible God, is immediately and inseparably one with the Father in every movement of His Will. If the Father will anything, the Son Who is in the Father knows the Father's will, or rather He is Himself the Father's will. For, if He has in Himself all that is the Father's, there is nothing of the Father's that He cannot have. If, then, He has all things that are the Father's in Himself, or, say we rather, if He has the Father Himself, then, along with the Father and the things that are the Father's, He must needs have in Himself the whole of the Father's will. He needs not, therefore, to know the Father's will by word, being Himself the Word of the Father, in the highest acceptation of the term. What, then, is the word that can be addressed to Him who is the Word indeed?

And how can He Who is the Word indeed require a second word for instruction?

But it may be said that the voice of the Father was addressed to the Holy Spirit. But neither does the Holy Spirit require instruction by speech, for being God, as saith the Apostle, He "searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God ." If, then, God utters any word, and all speech is directed to the ear, let those who maintain that God expresses Himself in the language of continuous discourse, inform us what audience He addressed. Himself He needs not address. The Son has no need of instruction by words. The Holy Ghost searcheth even the deep things of God. Creation did not yet exist. To whom, then, was God's word addressed?

But, says he, the record of Moses does not lie, and from it we learn that God spake. No! nor is great David of the number of those who lie, and he expressly says; "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge;" and after saying that the heavens and the firmament declare, and that day and that night showeth knowledge and speech, he adds to what he has said, that "there is neither speech nor language, and that their voices are not heard ." Yet how can such declaring and showing forth be other than words, and how is it that no voice addresses itself to the ear? Is the prophet contradicting himself, or is he stating an impossibility, when he speaks of words without sound, and declaration without language, and announcement without voice? or, is there not rather the very perfection of truth in his teaching, which tells us, in the words which I have quoted, that the declaration of the heavens, and the word shouted forth by the day, is no articulate voice nor language of the lips, but is a revelation of the power of God to those who are capable of hearing it, even though no voice be heard?

What, then, do we think of this passage? For it may be that, if we understand it, we shall also understand the meaning of Moses. It often happens that Holy Scripture, to enable us more clearly to comprehend a matter to be revealed, makes use of a bodily illustration, as would seem to be the case in this passage from David, who teaches us by what he says that none of the things which are have their being from chance or accident, as some have imagined that our world and all that is therein was framed by fortuitous and undesigned combinations of first elements, and that no Providence penetrated the world. But we are taught that there is a cause of the system and government of the Universe, on Whom all nature depends, to Whom it owes its origin and cause, towards Whom it inclines and moves, and in Whom it abides. And since, as saith the Apostle, His eternal power and godhead are understood, being clearly seen through the creation of the world , therefore all creation and, before all, as saith the Scripture, the system of the heavens, declare the wisdom of the Creator in the skill displayed by His works. And this is. what it seems to me that he is desirous to set forth, viz. the testimony of the things which do appear to the fact that the worlds were framed with wisdom and skill, and abide for ever by the power of Him who is the Ruler over all.

The very heavens, he says, in displaying the wisdom of Him Who made them, all but shout aloud with a voice, and, though without voice, proclaim the wisdom of their Creator. For we can hear as it were words teaching us: "O men, when ye gaze upon us and behold our beauty and magnitude, and this ceaseless revolution, with its well-ordered and harmonious motion, working in the same direction and in the same manner, turn your thoughts to Him Who presides over our system, and, by aid of the beauty which you see, imagine to yourselves the beauty of the invisible Archetype. For in us there is nothing without its Lord, nothing that moves of its own proper motion: but all that appears, or that is conceivable in respect to us, depends on a Power Who is inscrutable and sublime. This is not given in articulate speech, but by the things which are seen, and it instils into our minds the knowledge of Divine power more than if speech proclaimed it with a voice.

As, then, the heavens declare, though they do not speak, and the firmament shows God's handy-work, yet requires no voice for the purpose, and the day uttereth speech, though there is no speaking, and no one can say that Holy Scripture is in error-in like manner, since both Moses and David have one and the same Teacher, I mean the Holy Spirit, Who says that the fiat went before the creation, we are not told that God is the Creator of words, but of things made known to us by the signification of our words. For, lest we should suppose the creation to be without its Lord, and spontaneously originated, He says that it was created by the Divine Being, and that it is established in an orderly and connected system by Him. Now it would be a work of time to discuss the order of what Moses didactically records in his historical summary respecting the creation of the world. Or (if we did) each second passage would serve to prove more clearly the erroneous and futile character of our adversaries' opinion. But whoever cares to do so may read what we have written on Genesis, and judge whether our teaching or theirs is the more reasonable.

But to return to the matter in question. We assert that the words "He said" do not imply voice and words on the part of God; but the writer, in showing the power of God to be concurrent with His will, renders the idea more easy of apprehension. For since by the will of God all things were created, and it is the ordinary way of men to signify their will first of all by speech, and so to bring their work into harmony with their will, and the scriptural account of the Creation is the learner's introduction, as it were, to the knowledge of God, representing to our minds the power of the Divine Being by objects more ready to our comprehension (for sensible apprehension is an aid to intellectual knowledge), on this account, Moses, by saying that God commanded all things to be, signifies to us the inciting power of His will, and by adding, "and it was so," he shows that in the case of God there is no difference between will and performance; but, on the contrary, that though the purposing initiates God's activity, the accomplishment keeps pace with the purpose, and that the two are to be considered together and at once, viz. the deliberate motion of the mind, and the power that effects its purpose. For the idea of the Divine purpose and action leaves no conceivable interval between them, but as light is produced along with the kindling of fire, at once coming out from it and shining forth along with it-in the same manner the existence of things created is an effect of the Divine will, but not posterior to it in time.

For the case is different from that of men endowed by nature with practical ability, where you may look at capability and execution apart from each other. For example, we say of a man who possesses the art of shipbuilding, that he is always a shipbuilder in respect of his ability to build ships, but that he operates only when he displays his skill in working. It is otherwise with God; for all that we can conceive as in Him is entirely work and action, His will passing over immediately to its object. As, then, the mechanism of the heavens testifies to the glory of their Creator and confesses Him Who made them, and needs no voice for the purpose, so on the other hand any one who is acquainted with the Mosaic Scripture will see that God speaks of the world as His creation, having brought the whole into being by the fiat of His will, and that He needs no words to make known His mind.

As, then, he who heard the heavens declaring the glory of God looked not for set speech on the occasion (for, to those who can understand it, the universe speaks through the things which are being done, without regard or care for verbal explanation), so, even if any one hears Moses telling how God gave order and arrangement to each several part of Creation by name, let him not suppose the prophet to speak falsely, nor degrade the contemplation of sublime verities by mean and grovelling notions, thus, as it were, reducing God to a mere human standard, and supposing that after the manner of men he directs His operations by the instrumentality of speech; but let His fiat mean His will only, and let the names of those created things denote the mere reality of their coming into being. And thus he will learn these two things from what is recorded: (1) That God made all things by His will, and (2) that without any trouble or difficulty the Divine Will became nature.

But if any one would give a more sensuous interpretation to the words "God said," as proving that articulate speech was His creation, by a parity of reason he must understand by the words "God saw," that He did so by faculties of perception like our own, through the organs of vision; and so again by the words "The Lord heard me and had mercy upon me," and again, "He smelled a sweet savour ," and whatever other sensuous expressions are employed by Scripture in reference to head, or foot, or hand, or eyes, or fingers, or sandals, as appertaining to God, taking them, I say, in their plain literal acceptation, he will present to us an anthropomorphous deity, after the similitude of what is seen among ourselves. But if any one hearing that the heavens are the work of His fingers, that He has a strong hand, and a mighty arm, and eyes, and feet, and sandals, deduces from such words ideas worthy of God, and does not degrade the idea of His pure nature by carnal and sensuous imaginations, it will follow that on the one hand he will regard the verbal utterances as indications of the Divine will, but on the other He will not conceive of them as articulate sounds, but will reason thus; that the Creator of human reason has gifted us with speech proportionally to the capacity of our nature, so that we might be able thereby to signify the thoughts of our minds;

but that, so far as the Divine nature differs from ours, so great will be the degree of difference between our notions respecting it and its own inherent majesty and godhead. And as our power compared with God's, and our life with His life, is as nothing, and all else that is ours, compared with what is in Him, is "as nothing in comparison " with Him, as saith the inspired Teaching, so also our word as compared with Him, Who is the Word indeed, is as nothing . For this word of yours was not in the beginning, but was created along with our nature, nor is it to be regarded as having any reality of its own, but, as our master (Basil) somewhere has said, it vanishes along with the sound of the voice, nor is any operation of the word discernible, but it has its subsistence in voice only, or in written characters. But the word of God is God Himself, the Word that was in the beginning and that abideth for ever, through Whom all things were and are, Who ruleth over all, and hath all power over the things in heaven and the things on earth, being Life, and Truth, and Righteousness, and Light, and all that is good, and upholding all things in being.

Such, then, and so great being the word, as we understand it, of God, our opponent allows God, as some great thing, the power of language, made up of nouns, verbs, and conjunctions, not perceiving that, as He Who conferred practical powers on our nature is not spoken of as fabricating each of their several results, but, while He gave our nature its ability, it is by us that a house is constructed, or a bench, or a sword, or a plough, and whatsoever thing our life happens to be in need of, each of which things is our own work, although it may be ascribed to Him Who is the author of our being, and Who created our nature capable of every science,-so also our power of speech is the work of Him Who made our nature what it is, but the invention of each several term required to denote objects in hand is of our own devising. And this is proved by the fact that many terms in use are of a base and unseemly character, of which no man of sense would conceive God the inventor: so that, if certain of our familiar expressions are ascribed by Holy Scripture to God as the speaker, we should remember that the Holy Spirit is addressing us in language of our own, as e.g.

in the history of the Acts we are told that each man received the teaching of the disciples in his own language wherein he was born, understanding the sense of the words by the language which he knew. And, that this is true, may be seen yet more clearly by a careful examination of the enactments of the Levitical law. For they make mention of pans, and cakes, and fine flours, and the like, in the mystic sacrifices, instilling wholesome doctrine under the veil of symbol and enigma. Mention, too, is made of certain measures then in use, such as ephah, and nebel , and hin, and the like. Are we, then, to suppose that God made these names and appellations, or that in the beginning He commanded them to be such, and to be so named, calling one kind of grain wheat, and its pith flour, and flat sweetmeats, whether heavy or light, cakes; and that He commanded a vessel of the kind in which a moist lump is boiled or baked to be called a pan, or that He spoke of a certain liquid measure by the name of hin or nebel, and measured dry produce by the homer?

surely it is trifling and mere Jewish folly, far removed from the grandeur of Christian simplicity, to think that God, Who is the Most High and above every name and thought, Who by sole virtue of His will governs the world, which He brought into existence, and upholds it in being, should set Himself like some schoolmaster to settle the niceties of terminology. Rather let us say, that as we indicate to the deaf what we want them to do, by gestures and signs, not because we have no voice of our own, but because a verbal communication would be utterly useless to those who cannot hear, so, in as much as human nature is in a sense deaf and insensible to higher truths, we maintain that the grace of God at sundry times and in divers manners spake by the Prophets, ordering their voices conformably to our capacity and the modes of expression with which we are familiar, and that by such means it leads us, as with a guiding hand, to the knowledge of higher truths, not teaching us in terms proportioned to their inherent sublimity, (for how can the great be contained by the little? but descending to the lower level of our limited comprehension.

And as God, after giving animals their power of motion, no longer prescribes each step they take, for their nature, having once for all taken its beginning from the Creator, moves of

itself, and makes its way, adapting its power of motion to its object from time to time (except in so far as it is said that a man's steps are directed by the Lord), so our nature, having received from God the power of speech and utterance and of expressing the will by the voice, proceeds on its way through things, giving them distinctive names by varying inflections of sound; and these signs are the verbs and nouns which we use, and through which we signify the meaning of the things. And though the word "fruit" is made use of by Moses before the creation of fruit, and "seed" before that of seed, this does not disprove our assertion, nor is the sense of the lawgiver opposed to what we have said in respect to thought and conception. For that end of past husbandry which we speak of as fruit, and that beginning of future husbandry which we speak of as seed, this thing, I mean, underlying these names,-whether wheat or some other produce which is increased and multiplied by sowing-does not, he teaches us, grow spontaneously, but by the will of Him Who created them to grow with their peculiar power, so as to be the same fruit and to reproduce themselves as seed, and to support mankind with their increase.

And by the Divine will the thing is produced, not the name, so that the substantial thing is the work of the Creator, but the distinguishing names of things, by which speech furnishes us with a clear and accurate description of them, are the work and the invention of man's reasoning faculty, though the reasoning faculty itself and its nature are a work of God. And since all men are endowed with reason, differences of language will of necessity be found according to differences of country. But if any one maintain that light, or heaven, or earth, or seed were named after human fashion by God, he will certainly conclude that they were named in some special language. What that was, let him show. For he who knows the one thing will not, in all probability, be ignorant of the other. For at the river Jordan, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, and again in the hearing of the Jews, and at the Transfiguration, there came a voice from heaven, teaching men not only to regard the phenomenon as something more than a figure, but also to believe the beloved Son of God to be truly God.

Now that voice was fashioned by God, suitably to the understanding of the hearers, in airy substance, and adapted to the language of the day, God, "who willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth ," having so articulated His words in the air with a view to the salvation of the hearers, as our Lord also saith to the Jews, when they thought it thundered because the sound took place in the air. "This voice came not because of Me, but for your sakes . But before the creation of the world, inasmuch as there was no one to hear the word, and no bodily element capable of accentuating the articulate voice, how can he who says that God used words give any air of probability to his assertion? God Himself is without body, creation did not yet exist. Reason does not suffer us to conceive of anything material in respect to Him. They who might have been benefited by the hearing were not yet created. And if men were not yet in being, neither had any form of language been struck out in accordance with national peculiarities, by what arguments, then, can he who looks to the bare letter make good his assertion, that God spoke thus using human parts of speech?

And the futility of such assertions may be seen also by this. For as the natures of the elements, which are the work of the Creator, appear alike to all, and there is no difference to human sense in men's experience of fire, or air, or water, but the nature of each is one and unchanging, working in the same way, and suffering no modification from the differences of those who partake of it, so also the imposition of names, if applied to things by God, would have been the same for all. But, in point of fact, while the nature of things as constituted by God remains the same, the names which denote them are divided by so many differences of language, that it were no easy task even to calculate their number.

And if any one cites the confusion of tongues that took place at the building of the tower, as contradicting what I have said, not even there is God spoken of as creating men's languages, but as confounding the existing one , that all might not hear all. For when all lived together and were not as yet divided by various differences of race, the aggregate of men dwelt together with one language among them; but when by the Divine will it was decreed that all the earth should be replenished by mankind, then, their community of tongue being broken up, men were dispersed in various directions and adopted this and that form of speech and language, possessing a certain bond of union in similarity of tongue, not indeed disagreeing from others in their knowledge of things, but differing in the character of their names. For a stone or a stick does not seem one thing to one man and another to another, but the different peoples call them by different names. So that our position remains unshaken, that human language is the invention of the human mind or understanding. For from the beginning, as long as all men had the same language, we see from Holy Scripture that men received no teaching of God's words, nor, when men were separated into various differences of language, did a Divine enactment prescribe how each man should talk.

But God, willing that men should speak different languages, gave human nature full liberty to formulate arbitrary sounds, so as to render their meaning more intelligible. Accordingly, Moses, who lived many generations after the building of the tower, uses one of the subsequent languages in his historical narrative of the creation, and attributes certain words to God, relating these things in his own tongue in which he had been brought up, and with which he was familiar, not changing the names for God by foreign peculiarities and turns of speech, in order by the strangeness and novelty of the expressions to prove them the words of God Himself .

But some who have carefully studied the Scriptures tell us that the Hebrew tongue is not even ancient like the others, but that along with other miracles this miracle was wrought in behalf of the Israelites, that after the Exodus from Egypt, the language was hastily improvised for the use of the nation. And there is a passage in the Prophet which confirms this. For he says, "when he came out of the land of Egypt he heard a strange language ." If, then, Moses was a Hebrew, and the language of the Hebrews was subsequent to the others, Moses, I say, who was born some thousands of years after the Creation of the world, and who relates the words of God in his own language-does he not clearly teach us that he does not attribute to God such a language of human fashion, but that he speaks as he does be-

cause it was impossible otherwise than in human language to express his meaning, though the words he uses have some Divine and profound significance?

For to suppose that God used the Hebrew tongue, when there was no one to hear and understand such a language, methinks no reasonable being will consent. We read in the Acts that the Divine power divided itself into many languages for this purpose, that no one of alien tongue might lose his share of the benefit. But if God spoke in human language before the Creation, whom was He to benefit by using it? For that His speech should have some adaptation to the capacity of the hearers, with a view to their profit, no one would conceive to be unworthy of God's love to man, for Paul the follower of Christ knew how to adapt his words suitably to the habits and disposition of his hearers, making himself milk for babes and strong meat for grown men . But where no object was to be gained by such use of language, to argue that God, as it were, declaimed such words by Himself, when there was no one in need of the information they would convey-such an idea, methinks, is at once both blasphemous and absurd. Neither, then, did God speak in the Hebrew language, nor did He express Himself according to any form in use among the Gentiles. But whatsoever of God's words are recorded by Moses or the Prophets, are indications of the Divine will, flashing forth, now in one way, now in another, on the pure intellect of those holy men, according to the measure of the grace of which they were partakers. Moses, then, spoke his mother-tongue, and that in which he was educated. But he attributed these words to God, as I have said, repeatedly, on account of the childishness of those who were being brought to the knowledge of God, in order to give a clear representation of the Divine will, and to render his hearers more obedient, as being awed by the authority of the speaker.

But this is denied by Eunomius, the author of all this contumely with which we are assailed, and the companion and adviser of this impious band. For, changing insolence into courtesy, I will present him with his own words. He maintains, in so many words, that he has the testimony of Moses himself to his assertion that men were endowed with the use of the things named, and of their names, by the Creator of nature, and that the naming of the things given was prior in time to the creation of those who should use them. Now, if he is in possession of some Moses of his own, from whom he has learned this wisdom, and, making this his base of operations, relies on such statements as these, viz. that God, as he himself says, lays down the laws of human speech, enacting that things shall be called in one way and not in another, let him trifle as much as he pleases, with his Moses in the background to support his assertions. But if there is only one Moses whose writings are the common source of instruction to those who are learned in the Divine Word, we will freely accept our condemnation if we find ourselves refuted by the law of that Moses. But where did he find this law respecting verbs and nouns? Let him produce it in the very words of the text.

The account of the Creation, and the genealogy of the successive generations, and the history of certain events, and the complex system of legislation, and various regulations in regard to religious service and daily life, these are the chief heads of the writings of Moses. But, if he says that there was any legislative enactment in regard to words, let him point it out, and I

will hold my tongue. But he cannot; for, if he could, he would not abandon the more striking evidences of the Deity, for such as can only procure him ridicule, and not credit, from men of sense. For to think it the essential point in piety to attribute the invention of words to God, Whose praise the whole world and the wonders that are therein are incompetent to celebrate-must it not be a proceeding of extreme folly so to neglect higher grounds of praise, and to magnify God on such as are purely human? His fiat preluded Creation, but it was recorded by Moses after human fashion, though Divinely issued. That will of God, then, which brought about the creation of the world by His Divine power, consisted, says our careful student of the Scriptures, in the teaching of words. And as though God had said, "Let there be a word," or, "Let speech be created," or, "Let this or that have such or such an appellation," so, in advocacy of his trifling, he brings forward the fact that it was by the impulse of the Divine will that Creation took place.

For with all his study and experience in the Scriptures he knows not even this, that the impulse of the mind is frequently spoken of in Scripture as a voice. And for this we have the evidence of Moses himself, whose meaning he frequently perverts, but whom on this point he simply ignores. For who is there, however slightly acquainted with the holy volume, who does not know this, that the people of Israel who had just escaped from Egypt were suddenly affrighted in the wilderness by the pursuit of the Egyptians, and when dangers encompassed them on all sides, and on one side the sea cut off their passage as by a wall, while the enemy barred their flight in the rear, the people coming together to the Prophet charged him with being the cause of their helpless condition? And when he comforted them in their abject terror, and roused them to courage, a voice came from God, addressing the Prophet by name, "Wherefore criest thou unto Me? " And yet before this the narrative makes no mention of any utterance on the part of Moses. But the thought which the Prophet had lifted up to God is called a cry, though uttered in silence in the hidden thought of his heart.

If, then, Moses cries, though without speaking, as witnessed by Him Who hears, those "groanings which cannot be uttered ," is it strange that the Prophet, knowing the Divine will, so far as it was lawful for him to tell it and for us to hear it, revealed it by known and familiar words, describing God's discourse after human fashion, not indeed expressed in words, but signified by the effects themselves? "In the beginning," he says, "God created," not the names of heaven and earth, but, "the heaven and the earth . And again, "God said, Let there be light," not the name Light: and having divided the light from the darkness, "God called," he says, "the light Day, and the darkness He called Night."

On these passages it is probable that our opponents will take their stand. And I will agree for them with what is said, and will myself take advantage of their positions further on in our inquiry, in order that what we teach may be more firmly established, no point in controversy being left without due examination. "God called," he says, "the firmament Heaven, and He called the dry land Earth, and the light Day, and the darkness He called Night." How comes it, then, they will ask, when the Scripture admits that their appellations were given them by God, that you say that their names are the work of human invention? What, then,

is our reply? We return to our plain statement, and we assert, that He Who brought all creation into being out of nothing is the Creator of things seen in substantial existence, not of unsubstantial words having no existence but in the sound of the voice and the lisp of the tongue. But things are named by the indication of the voice in conformity with the nature and qualities inherent in each, the names being adapted to the things according to the vernacular language of each several race.

But since the nature of most things that are seen in Creation is not simple, so as to allow of all that they connote being comprehended in one word, as, for instance, in the case of fire, the element itself is one thing in its nature, while the word which denotes it is another (for fire itself possesses the qualities of shining, of burning, of drying and heating, and consuming whatever fuel it lays hold of, but the name is but a brief word of one syllable), on this account speech, which distinguishes the powers and qualities seen in fire, gives each of them a name of its own, as I have said before. And one cannot say that only a name has been given to fire when it is spoken of as bright, or consuming, or anything else that we observe it to be. For such words denote qualities physically inherent in it. So likewise, in the case of heaven and the firmament, though one nature is signified by each of these words, their difference represents one or other of its peculiar characteristics, in looking at which we learn one thing by the appellation ”heaven,” and another by ”firmament. For when speech would define the limit of sensible creation, beyond which it is succeeded by the transmundane void apprehended by the mind alone, in contrast with the intangible and incorporeal and invisible, the beginning and the end of all material subsistences is called the firmament.

And when we survey the environment of terrestrial things, we call that which encompasses all material nature, and which forms the boundary of all things visible, by the name of heaven. In the same manner with regard to earth and dry land, since all heavy and downward-tending nature was divided into these two elements, earth and water, the appellation ”dry” defines to a certain extent its opposite, for earth is called dry in opposition to moist, since having thrown off, by Divine command, the water that overspread it, it appeared in its own character. But the name ”earth” does not continue to express the signification of some one only of its qualities, but, by virtue of its meaning, it embraces all that the word connotes, e.g. hardness, density, weight, resistance, capability of supporting animal and vegetable life. Accordingly, the word ”dry” was not changed by speech to the last name put upon it (for its new name did not make it cease to be called so), but while both the appellations remained, a peculiar signification attached itself to each, the one distinguishing it in nature and property from its opposite, the other embracing all its attributes collectively. And so in light and day, and again in night and darkness, we do not find a pronunciation of syllables created to suit them by the Maker of all things, but rather through these appellations we note the substance of the things which they signify.

At the entrance of light, by the will of God the darkness that prevailed over the earliest creation is scattered. But the earth lying in the midst, and being upheld on all sides by its

surrounding of different elements, as Job saith, "He hangeth the earth upon nothing ," it was necessary when light travelled over one side and the earth obstructed it on the opposite by its own bulk, that a side of darkness should be left by the obscuration, and so, as the perpetual motion of the heavens cannot but carry along with it the darkness resulting from the obscuration, God ordained this revolution for a measure of duration of time. And that measure is day and night. For this reason Moses, according to his wisdom, in his historical elucidation of these matters, named the shadow resulting from the earth's obstruction, a dividing of the light from the darkness, and the constant and measured alternation of light and darkness over the surface of the earth he called day and night. So that what was called light was not named day, but as "there was light," and not the bare name of light, so the measure of time also was created and the name followed, not created by God in a sound of words, but because the very nature of the thing assumed this vocal notation.

And as, if it had been plainly said by the Lawgiver that nothing that is seen or named is of spontaneous generation or unfashioned, but that it has its subsistence from God, we might have concluded of ourselves that God made the world and all its parts, and the order which is seen in them, and the faculty of distinguishing them, so also by what he says he leads us on to understand and believe that nothing which exists is without beginning. And with this view he describes the successive events of Creation in orderly method, enumerating them one after another. But it was impossible to represent them in language, except by expressing their signification by words that should indicate it. Since, then, it is written that God called the light day, it must be understood that God made the day from light, being something different, by the force of the term. For you cannot apply the same definition to "light" and "day," but light is what we understand by the opposite of darkness, and day is the extent of the measure of the interval of light. In the same way you may regard night and darkness by the same difference of description, defining darkness as the negation of light, and calling night the extent of the encompassing darkness. Thus in every way our argument is confirmed, though not, perhaps, drawn out in strict logical form-showing that God is the Maker of things, not of empty words. For things have their names not for His sake but for ours.

For as we cannot always have all things before our eyes, we take knowledge of some of the things that are present with us from time to time, and others we register in our memories. But it would be impossible to keep memory unconfused unless we had the notation of words to distinguish the things that are stored up in our minds from one another. But to God all things are present, nor does He need memory, all things being within the range of His penetrating vision. What need, then, in His case, of parts of speech, when His own wisdom and power embraces and holds the nature of all things distinct and unconfused? Wherefore all things that exist substantially are from God; but, for our guidance, all things that exist are provided with names to indicate them. And if any one say that such names were imposed by the arbitrary usage of mankind, he will be guilty of no offence against the scheme of Divine Providence. For we do not say that the nature of things was of human invention, but only their names. The Hebrew calls Heaven by one name, the Canaanite by another,

but both of them understand it alike, being in no way led into error by the difference of the sounds that convey the idea of the object.

But the over-cautious and timid will-worship of these clever folk, on whose authority he asserts that, if it were granted that words were given to things by men, men would be of higher authority than God, is proved to be unsubstantial even by the example which we find recorded of Moses. For who gave Moses his name? Was it not Pharaoh's daughter who named him from what had happened ? For water is called Moses in the language of the Egyptians. Since, then, in consequence of the tyrant's order, his parents had placed the babe in an ark and consigned it to the stream (for so some related concerning him), but by the will of God the ark was floated by the current and carried to the bank, and found by the princess, who happened just then to be taking the refreshment of the bath, as the child had been gained "from the water," she is said to have given him his name as a memorial of the occurrence,-a name by which God Himself did not disdain to address His servant, nor did He deem it beneath Him to allow the name given by the foreign woman to remain the Prophet's proper appellation.

In like manner before him Jacob, having taken hold of his brother's heel, was called a supplanter , from the attitude in which he came to the birth. For those who are learned in such matters tell us that such is the interpretation of the word "Jacob," as translated into Greek. So, too, Pharez was so named by his nurse from the incident at his birth , yet no one on that account, like Eunomius, displayed any jealousy of his assuming an authority above that of God. Moreover the mothers of the patriarchs gave them their names, as Reuben, and Simeon, and Levi , and all those who came after them. And no one started up, like our new author, as patron of Divine providence, to forbid women to usurp Divine authority by the imposition of names. And what shall we say of other particulars in the sacred record, such as the "waters of strife," and the "place of mourning," and the "hill of the foreskins," and the "valley of the cluster," and the "field of blood," and such-like names, of human imposing, but oftentimes recorded to have been uttered by the Person of God, from which we may learn that men may notify the meaning of things by words without presumption, and that the Divine nature does not depend on words for its evidence to itself?

But I will pass over his other babblings against the truth, possessing as they do no force against our doctrines, for I deem it superfluous to linger any longer over such absurdities. For who can be so wanting in the more important subjects of thought as to waste energy on silly arguments, and to contend with men who speak of us as asserting that "man's forethought is of superior weight and authority to God's guardianship," and that we "ascribe the carelessness which confuses the feebler minds to the providence of God"? These are the exact words of our calumniator. But I, for my part, think it equally as absurd to pay attention to remarks like that, as to occupy myself with old wives' dreams. For to think of securing the dignity of rule and sovereignty to the Divine Being by a form of words, and to show the great power of God to be dependent upon this, and on the other hand to neglect Him and disregard the providence which belongs to Him, and to lay it to our reproach that men,

having received from God the faculty of reason, make an arbitrary use of words to signify things-what is this but an old wife's fable, or a drunkard's dream? For the true power, and authority, and dominion, and sovereignty of God do not, we think, consist in syllables. Were it so, any and every inventor of words might claim equal honour with God.

But the infinite ages, and the beauties of the universe, and the beams of the heavenly luminaries, and all the wonders of land and sea, and the angelic hosts and supra-mundane powers, and whatever else there is whose existence in the realm above is revealed to us under various figures by Holy Scripture-these are the things that bear witness to God's power over all. Whereas, to attribute the invention of vocal sound to those who are naturally endowed with the faculty of speech, this involves no impiety towards Him Who gave them their voice. Nor indeed do we hold it to be a great thing to invent words significative of things. For the being to whom Holy Scripture in the history of the creation gave the name of "man " (anqrwpoj), a word of human devising, that same being Job calls "mortal " (brotoj), while of profane writers, some call him "human being" (fwj), and others "articulate speaker" (me/roy)-to say nothing of other varieties of the name. Do we, then, elevate them to equal honour with God, because they also invented names equivalent to that of "man," alike signifying their subject. But, as I have said before, let us leave this idle talk, and make no account of his string of revilings, in which he charges us with lying against the Divine oracles, and uttering slanders with effrontery even against God.

To pass on, then, to what remains. He brings forward once more some of the Master's words, to this effect: "And it is in precisely the same manner that we are taught by Holy Scripture the employment of a conception. Our Lord Jesus Christ, when declaring to men the nature of His Godhead, explains it by certain special characteristics, calling Himself the Door, the Bread, the Way, the Vine, the Shepherd, the Light. Now I think it seemly to pass over his insolent remarks on these words (for it is thus that his rhetorical training has taught him to contend with his opponents), nor will I suffer myself to be disturbed by his ebullitions of childish folly. Let us, however, examine one pungent and "irresistible" argument which he puts forward for our refutation. Which of the sacred writers, he asks, gives evidence that these names were attributed to our Lord by a conception? But which of them, I reply, forbids it, deeming it a blasphemy to regard such names as the result of a conception? For if he maintains that its not being mentioned is a proof that it is forbidden, by a parity of reasoning he must admit that its not being forbidden is an argument that it is permitted. Is our Lord called by these names, or does Eunomius deny this also? If he does deny that these names are spoken of Christ, we have conquered without a battle.

For what more signal victory could there be, than to prove our adversary to be fighting against God, by robbing the sacred words of the Gospel of their meaning? But if he admits that it is true that Christ is named by these names, let him say in what manner they may be applied without irreverence to the Only-begotten Son of God. Does he take "the stone" as indicative of His nature? Does he understand His essence under the figure of the Axe (not to encumber our argument by enumerating the rest)? None of these names represents

the nature of the Only-begotten, or His Godhead, or the peculiar character of His essence. Nevertheless He is called by these names, and each appellation has its own special fitness. For we cannot, without irreverence, suppose anything in the words of God to be idle and unmeaning. Let him say, then, if he disallows these names as the result of a conception, how do they apply to Christ? For we on our part say this, that as our Lord provided for human life in various forms, each variety of His beneficence is suitably distinguished by His several names, His provident care and working on our behalf passing over into the mould of a name. And such a name is said by us to be arrived at by a conception. But if this is not agreeable to our opponents, let it be as each of them pleases. In his ignorance, however, of the figures of Scripture, our opponent contradicts what is said.

For if he had learned the Divine names, he must have known that our Lord is called a Curse and Sin , and a Heifer , and a lion's Whelp , and a Bear bereaved of her whelps , and a Leopard and such-like names, according to various modes of conception, by Holy Scripture, the sacred and inspired writers by such names, as by well-directed shafts, indicating the central point of the idea they had in view; even though these words, when taken in their literal and obvious signification, seem not above suspicion, but each single one of them, unless we allow it to be predicated of God by some process of conception, will not escape the taint of a blasphemous suggestion. But it would be a lengthy task to bring them forward, and elucidate in every case how, in the general idea, these words have been perverted out of their obvious meanings, and how it is only in connection with the conceptive faculty that the names of God can be reconciled with that reverence which is His due.

But to return. Such names are used of our Lord, and no one familiar with the inspired Scriptures can deny the fact. What then? Does Eunomius affirm that the words are indicative of His nature itself? If so, he asserts that the Divine nature is multiform, and that the variety which it displays in what is signified by the names is very complex. For the meanings of the words Bread and Lion are not the same, nor those of Axe and Water , but to each of them we can assign a definition of its own, of which the others do not partake. They do not, therefore, signify nature or essence, yet no one will presume to say that this nomenclature is quite inappropriate and unmeaning. If, then, these words are given us, but not as indicative of essence, and every word given in Scripture is just and appropriate, how else can these appellations be fitly applied to the Only-begotten Son of God, except in connection with the faculty of conception? For it is clear that the Divine Being is spoken of under various names, according to the variety of His operations, so that we may think of Him in the aspect so named. What harm, then, is done to our reverential ideas of God by this mental operation, instituted with a view to our thinking upon the things done, and which we call conception, though if any one choose to call it by some other name, we shall make no objection.

But, like a mighty wrestler, he will not relinquish his irresistible hold on us, and affirms in so many words, that "these names are the work of human thought and conception, and that, by the exercise of this operation of the mind by some, results are arrived at which no Apostle

or Evangelist has taught. And after this doughty onslaught he raises that sanctimonious voice of his, spitting out his foul abuse at us with a tongue well schooled to such language. "For," says he, "to ascribe homonyms, drawn from analogy, to human thought and conception is the work of a mind that has lost all judicial sense, and that studies the words of the Lord with an enfeebled understanding and dishonest habit of thought. Mercy on us! what a logical argument! how scientifically it proceeds to its conclusion! Who after this will dare to speak up for the cause of conception, when such a stench is poured forth from his mouth upon those who attempt speaking? I suppose, then, that we, who do attempt speaking, must forbear to examine his argument, for fear of his stirring up against us the cesspool of his abuse. And verily it is weak-minded to let ourselves be irritated by childish absurdities. We will therefore allow our insolent adversary full liberty to indulge in his method as he will. But we will return to the Master's argument, that thence too we may muster reinforcements for the truth. Eunomius has been reminded of "analogy" and has perceived "the homonyms to be derived from it.

Now where or from whom did he learn these terms? Not from Moses, not from the Prophets and Apostles, not from the Evangelists. It is impossible that he should have learned them from the teaching of any Scripture. How came he, then, to use them? The very word which describes this or that signification of a thought as analogy, is it not the invention of the thinking faculty of him who utters it ? How is it, then, that he fails to perceive that he is using the views he fights against as his allies in the war? For he makes war against our principle of words being formed by the operation of conception, and would endeavour to establish, by the aid of words formed on that very principle, that it is unlawful to use them. "It is not," says he, "the teaching of any of the sacred writers. To whom, then, of the ancients do you yourself ascribe the term "ungenerate," and its being predicated of the essence of God? or is it allowable for you, when you want to establish some of your impious conclusions, to coin and invent terms to your own liking; but if anything is said by some one else in contravention of your impiety, to deprive your adversary of similar licence?

Great indeed would be the power you would assume if you could make good your claim to such authority as this, that what you refuse to others should be allowable to you alone, and that what you yourself presume to do by virtue of it, you should prevent others from doing. You condemn, as by an edict, the doctrine that these names were applied to Christ as a result of conception, because none of the sacred writers have declared that they ought so to be applied. How, then, can you lay down the law that the Divine essence should be denoted by the word "ungenerate"-a term which none of the sacred writers can be shown to have handed down to us? For if this is the test of the right use of words, that only such shall be employed as the inspired word of Scripture shall authorize, the word "ungenerate" must be erased from your own writings, since none of the sacred writers has sanctioned the expression. But perhaps you accept it by reason of the sense that resides in it. Well, we ourselves in the same way accept the term "conception" by reason of the sense that resides in it. Accordingly we will either exclude both from use, or neither, and whichever alternative be adopted, we are equally masters of the field.

For if the term "ungenerate" be altogether suppressed, all our adversaries' clamour against the truth is suppressed along with it, and a doctrine worthy of the Only-begotten Son of God will shine forth, inasmuch as logical opposition can furnish no name to detract from the majesty of the Lord. But if both be retained, in that case also the truth will prevail, and we along with it, when we have altered the word "ungeneracy" from the substance, into a conception, of the Deity. But so long as he does not exclude the term "ungenerate" from his own writings, let our modern Pharisee admonish himself not to behold the mote that is in our eye, before he has cast out the beam that is in his own.

"But God," he says, "gave the weakest of terrestrial things a share in the most honourable names, though not giving them an equal share of dignity, and to the highest He imparted the names of the lowest, though the natural inferiority of the latter was not transferred to the former along with their names. We quote this in his very words. If they contain some deep and recondite meaning which has escaped us, let those inform us who see what is beyond our range of vision-initiated as they are by him in his esoteric and unspeakable mysteries. But if they admit of no interpretation beyond what is obvious, I scarcely know which of the two are more to be pitied, those who say such things or those who listen to them. To the weakest of terrestrial things, he says, God has given names in common with the most honourable, though not giving them an equal share of dignity. Let us examine what is meant by this. The weakest things, he says, are dignified with the bare name belonging to the honourable, their nature not corresponding with their name. And this he states to be the work of the God of truth-to dignify the worse nature with the worthier appellation! On the other hand, he says that God applies the less honourable names to things superior in their nature, the nature of the latter not being carried over to the former along with the appellation.

But that the matter may be made plainer still, the absurdity shall be shown by actual instances. If any one should call a man who is esteemed for every virtue, intemperate; or, on the other hand, a man equally in disrepute for his vices, good and moral, would sensible people think him of sound mind, or one who had any regard for truth, reversing, as would be the case, the meanings of words, and giving them a non-natural signification? I for my part think not. He speaks, then, of things relating to God, out of all keeping with our common ideas and with the holy Scriptures. For in matters of ordinary life it is only those who are unsettled by drink or madness that go wrong in names, and use them out of their proper meaning, calling, it may be, a man a dog, or vice versa. But Holy Scripture is so far from sanctioning such confusion, that we may clearly hear the voice of prophecy lamenting it. "Woe unto him," says Isaiah, "that calls darkness light, and light darkness, that calls bitter sweet, and sweet bitter . Now what induces Eunomius to apply this absurdity to his God? Let those who are initiated in his mysteries say what they judge those weakest of terrestrial things to be, which God has dignified with most honourable appellations.

The weakest of existing things are those animals whose generation takes place from the corruption of moist elements, as the most honourable are virtue, and holiness, and whatever else is pleasing in the sight of God. Are flies, then, and midges, and frogs, and whatever

insects are generated from dung, dignified with the names of holiness and virtue, so as to be consecrated with honourable names, though not sharing in such high qualities, as saith Eunomius? But never as yet have we heard anything like this, that these weak things are called by high-sounding titles, or that what is great and honourable by nature is degraded by the name of any one of them. Noah was a righteous man, saith the Scripture, Abraham was faithful, Moses meek, Daniel wise, Joseph chaste, Job blameless, David perfect in patience. Let them say, then, whether all these had their names by contraries; or, to take the case of those who are unfavourably spoken of, as Nabal the Carmelite, and Pharaoh the Egyptian, and Abimelech the alien, and all those who are mentioned for their vices, whether they were dignified with honourable names by the voice of God. Not so! But God judges and distinguishes His creatures as they are in nature and truth, not by names contrary to them, but by such appropriate appellations as may give the clearest idea of their meaning.

This it is that our strong-minded opponent, who accuses us of dishonesty, and charges us with being irrational in judgment,-this it is that he pretends to know of the Divine nature. These are the opinions that he puts forth respecting God, as though He mocked His creatures with names untrue to their meaning, bestowing on the weakest the most honourable appellations, and pouring contempt on the honourable by making them synonymous with the base. Now a virtuous man, if carried, even involuntarily, beyond the limits of truth, is overwhelmed with shame. Yet Eunomius thinks it no shame to God that He should seem to give a false colour to things by their appellations. Not such is the testimony of the Scriptures to the Divine nature. "God is long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth," says David . But how can He be a God of truth Who gives false names to things, and Who perverts the truth in the meanings of their names? Again, He is called by him a righteous Lord . Is it, then, a righteous thing to dignify things without honour by honourable names, and, while giving the bare name, to grudge the honour that it denotes? Such is the testimony of these Theologians to their new-fangled God. This is the end of their boasted dialectic cleverness, to display God Himself delighting in deceit, and not superior to the passion of jealousy.

For surely it is no better than deceit not to name weak things, as they are in their true nature and worth, but to invest them with empty names, derived from superior things, not proportioning their value to their name; and it is no better than jealousy if, having it in His power to bestow the more honourable appellation on things to be named for some superiority, He grudged them the honour itself, as deeming the happiness of the weak a loss to Himself personally. But I should recommend all who are wise, even if the God of these Gnostics is by stress of logic shown to be of such a character, not to think thus of the true God, the Only-begotten, but to look at the truth of facts, giving each of them their due, and thence to deduce His name. "Come, ye blessed," saith our Lord; and again, "Depart, ye cursed ," not honouring him who deserves cursing with the name of "blessed," nor, on the other hand, dismissing him who has treasured up for himself the blessing, along with the wicked.

But what is our author's meaning, and what is the object of this argument of his? For no one need imagine that, for lack of something to say, in order that he may seem to extend his

discourse to the utmost, he has indulged in all this senseless twaddle. Its very senselessness is not without a meaning, and smacks of heresy. For to say that the most honourable names are applied to the weakest things, though not having by nature an equal apportionment of dignity, secretly paves the way, as it were, for the blasphemy to follow, that he may teach his disciples this; that although the Only-begotten is called God, and Wisdom, and Power, and Light, and the Truth, and the Judge, and the King, and God over all, and the great God, and the Prince of peace, and the Father of the world to come, and so forth, His honour is limited to the name.

He does not, in fact, partake of that dignity which the meaning of those names indicates; and whereas wise Daniel, in setting right the Babylonians' error of idolatry, that they should not worship the brazen image or the dragon, but reverence the name of God, which men in their folly had ascribed to them, clearly showed by what he did that the high and lofty name of God had no likeness to the reptile, or to the image of molten brass-this enemy of God exerts himself in his teaching to prove the very opposite of this in regard to the Only-begotten Son of God, exclaiming in the style which he affects, "Do not regard the names of which our Lord is a partaker, so as to infer His unspeakable and sublime nature. For many of the weakest things are likewise invested with names of honour, lofty indeed in sound, though their nature is not transformed so as to come up to the grandeur of their appellations." Accordingly he says that inferior things receive their honour from God only so far as their names go, no equality of dignity accompanying their appellations. When, therefore, we have learned all the names of the Son that are of lofty signification, we must bear in mind that the honour which they imply is ascribed to Him only so far as the words go, but that, according to the system of nomenclature which they adopt, He does not partake of the dignity implied by the words.

But in dwelling on such nonsense I fear that I am secretly gratifying our adversaries. For in setting the truth against their vain and empty words, I seem to myself to be wearing out the patience of my audience before we come to the brunt of the battle. These points, then, I will leave it to my more learned hearers to dispose of, and proceed with my task. Nor will I now notice a thing he has said, which, however, is closely connected with our inquiry; viz. that these things have been so arranged that human thought and conception can claim no authority over names. But who is there that maintains that what is not seen in its own subsistence has authority over anything? For only those creatures that are governed by their own deliberate will are capable of acting with authority. But thought and conception are an operation of the mind, which depends on the deliberate choice of those who speak, having no independent subsistence, but subsisting only in the force of the things said. But this, he says, belongs to God, the Creator of all things, who, by limitations and rules of relation, operation, and proportion, applies suitable appellations to each of the things named. But this either is sheer nonsense, or contradicts his previous assertions.

For if he now professes that God affixes names suitable to their subjects, why does he argue, as we have seen that God bestows lofty names on things without honour, not allowing them

a share in the dignity which their names indicate, and again, that He degrades things of a lofty nature by names without honour, their nature not being affected by the meanness of their appellations? But perhaps we are unfair to him in subjecting his senseless collocation of phrases to such accusations as these. For they are altogether alien to any sense (I do not mean only to a sense in keeping with reverence), and they will be found to be utterly devoid of reason by all who understand how to form an accurate judgment in such matters. Since, then, like the fish called the sea-lung, what we see appears to have bulk and volume, which turns out, however, to be only viscous matter disgusting to look at, and still more disgusting to handle, I shall pass over his remarks in silence, deeming that the best answer to his idle effusions. For it would be better that we should not inquire what law governs "operation," and "proportion," and "relation," and who it is that prescribes laws to God in respect to rules and modes of proportion and relation, than that, by busying ourselves in such matters, we should nauseate our hearers, and digress from more important matters of inquiry.

But I fear that all we shall find in the discourse of Eunomius will turn out to be mere tumours and sea lungs, so that what has been said must necessarily close our argument, as his writings will supply no material to work on. For as a smoke or a mist makes the air in which it resides heavy and thick, and incapacitates the eye for the discharge of its natural function, yet does not form itself into so dense a body that he who will may grasp and hold it in his palms, and offer resistance to its stroke, so if one should say the same of his pompous piece of writing, the comparison would not be untrue. Much nonsense is worked up in his tumid and viscous discourse, and to one not gifted with over-much discernment, like a mist to one viewing it from afar, it seems to have some substance and shape, but if you come up to it and scrutinize what is said, the theories slip from your hold like smoke, and vanish into nothing, nor have they any solidity or resistance to oppose to the stroke of your argument. It is difficult, therefore, to know what to do. For to those who like to complain either alternative will seem objectionable;

whether, leaping over his empty wordiness, as over a ravine, we direct the course of our argument to the level and open country, against those points which seem to have any strength against the truth, or form our absurd battle along the whole line of his inanities. For in the latter case, to those who do not love hard work, our labour, extending over some thousands of lines to no useful purpose, will be wearisome and unprofitable. But if we attack those points only which seem to have some force against the truth, we shall give occasion to our adversaries to accuse us of passing over arguments of theirs which we are unable to refute. Since, then, two courses are open to us, either to take all their arguments seriatim, or to run through those only which are more important-the one course tedious to our hearers, the other liable to be suspected by our assailants-I think it best to take a middle course, and so, as far as possible, to avoid censure on either hand. What, then, is our method? After clearing his vain productions, as well as we can, of the rubbish they have accumulated, we will summarily run through the main points of his argument in such a way as neither to plunge needlessly into the profundities of his nonsense, nor to leave any of his statements unexamined.

Now his whole treatise is an ambitious attempt to show that God speaks after the manner of men, and that the Creator of all things gives them suitable names, indicative of the things themselves. And, therefore, opposing himself to him who contended that such names are given by that rational nature which we have received from God, he accuses him of error, and of desertion from his fundamental proposition: and having brought this charge against him, he uses the following arguments in support of his position.

Basil, he says, asserts that after we have obtained our first idea of a thing, the more minute and accurate investigation of the thing under consideration is called conception. And Eunomius disproves this, as he thinks, by the following argument, that where this first, and this second notion, i.e. one more minute and accurate than the other, are not found, the operation which we call thought and conception does not find place. Here, however, he will be convicted of dishonesty by all who have ears to hear. For it was not of all thought and conception that our master (Basil) laid down this definition, but, after making a special subdivision of the objects of thought and conception (not to encumber the question with too many words), and having made this part clear, he left men of sense to reason out the whole from the part for themselves.

And as, if any one should say that we get our definition of an animal from considering a number of animals of different species, he could not be convicted of missing the truth in making man an instance in point, nor would there be any need to correct him as deviating from the fact, unless he should give the same definition of a winged, or four-footed, or aquatic animal as of a man, so, when the points of view from which we may consider this conception are so many and various, it is no refutation of Basil's statement to say that it is improperly so called in one case because there is another species. Accordingly, even if another species come under consideration, it by no means follows that the one previously given is erroneously so called. Now if, says he, one of the Apostles or Prophets could be shown to have used these names of Christ, the falsehood would have something for its encouragement. To what industrious study of the word of God on the part of our opponent do not these words bear testimony! None of the Prophets or Apostles has spoken of our Lord as Bread, or a Stone, or a Fountain, or an Axe, or Light, or a Shepherd! What, then, saith David, and of whom? "The Lord shepherds me. "Thou Who shepherdest Israel, give ear . What difference does it make whether He is spoken of as shepherding, or as a Shepherd? And again, "With Thee is the Well of life .

Does he deny that our Lord is called a "Well"? And again, "The Stone which the builders rejected . And John, too,-where, representing our Lord's power to uproot evil under the name of an axe, he says, "And now also the Axe is laid to the root of the trees "-is he not a weighty and credible witness to the truth of our words?

And Moses, seeing God in the light, and John calling Him the true Light , and in the same way Paul, when our Lord first appeared to him, and a Light shone round about him, and afterwards when he heard the words of the Light saying, "I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest ,"-is he not a competent witness? And as regards the name "Bread," let him read the Gospel

and see how the bread given by Moses, and supplied to Israel from heaven, was taken by our Lord as a type of Himself: "For Moses gave you not that Bread, but My Father giveth you the true Bread (meaning Himself) which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world ." But this genuine hearer of the law says that none of the Prophets or Apostles has applied these names to Christ. What shall we say, then, of what follows? "Even if our Lord Himself adopts them, yet, since in the Saviour's names there is no first or second, none more minute or accurate than another, for He knows them all at once with equal accuracy, it is not possible to accommodate his (Basil's) account of the operation of conception to any of His names."

I have deluged my discourse with much nonsense of his, but I trust my hearers will pardon me for not leaving unnoticed even the most glaring of his inanities; not that we take pleasure in our author's indecorum, (for what advantage can we derive from the refutation of our adversaries' folly? but that truth may be advanced by confirmation from whatever quarter. "Since," says he, "our Lord applies these appellations to Himself, not deeming any one of them first, or second, or more minute and accurate than the rest, you cannot say that these names are the result of conception. Why, he has forgotten his own object! How comes he by the knowledge of the words against which he declares war? Our master and guide had made mention of an example familiar to all, in illustration of the doctrine of conception, and having explained his meaning by lower illustrations, he lifts the consideration of the question to higher things. He had said that the word "corn," regarded by itself, is one thing only as to substance, but that, as to the various properties we see in it, it varies its appellations, being called seed, and fruit, and food, and the like. Similarly, says he, our Lord is in respect to Himself what He is essentially, but when named according to the differences of His operations, He has not one appellation in all cases, but takes a different name according to each notion produced in us from the operation.

How, then, does what he says disprove our theory that it is possible for many appellations to be attached with propriety, according to the diversity of His operations, and His relation to their effects, to the Son of God, though one in respect of the underlying force, even as corn, though one, has various names apportioned to it, according to the point of view from which we regard it? How, then, can what is said be overthrown by our saying that Christ used all these names of Himself? For the question was not, who ascribed them, but about the meaning of the names, whether they denote essence, or whether they are derived from His operations by the process of conception. But our shrewd and strong-minded opponent, overturning our theory of conception, which declares that it is possible to find many appellations for one and the same subject, according to the significances of its operations, attacks us vigorously, asserting that such names were not given to our Lord by another. But what has this to do with the case in point? Since these names are used by our Lord, will he not allow that they are names, or appellations, or words expressive of ideas? For if he will not admit them to be names, then, in doing away with the appellations, he does away at the same time with the conception.

But if he does not deny that these words are names, what harm can he do to our doctrine of conception by showing that such titles were given to our Lord, not by some one else, but by Himself? For what was said was this, that, as in the instance of corn, our Lord, though substantively One, bears epithets suitable to His operations. And as it is admitted that corn has its names by virtue of our conception of its associations, it was shown that these terms significative of our Lord are not of His essence, but are formed by the method of conception in our minds respecting Him. But our antagonist studiously avoids attacking these positions, and maintains that our Lord received these names from Himself, in the same way as, if one sought for the true interpretation of the name "Isaac," whether it means laughter , as some say, or something else, one of Eunomius' way of thinking should confidently reply that the name was given to him as a child by his mother: but that, one might say, was not the question, i.e. by whom the name was given, but what does it mean when translated into our language?

And this being the point of the inquiry, whether our Lord's various appellations were the result of conception, instead of being indicative of His essence, he who thus seeks to demonstrate that they are not so derived because they are used by our Lord Himself,-how can he be numbered among men of sense, warring as he does against the truth, and equipping himself with such alliances for the war as serve to show the superior strength of his enemy?

Then going farther, as if his object were thus far attained, he takes up other charges against us, more difficult, as he thinks, to deal with than the former, and with many preliminary groans and attempts to prejudice his hearers against us, and to whet their appetite for his address, accusing us withal of seeking to establish doctrines savouring of blasphemy, and of ascribing to our own conception names assigned by God (though he nowhere mentions what assignment he refers to, nor when and where it took place), and, further, of throwing everything into confusion, and identifying the essence of the Only-begotten with his operation, without arguing the matter, or showing how we prove the identity of the essence and the operation, he winds up with the same list of charges, as follows: "And now, passing beyond this, he (Basil) asperses even the Most High with the vilest blasphemies, using at the same time broken language, and illustrations wide of the mark." Now prior to inquiry, I should like to be told what our language is "broken" from, and what mark it is "wide of"; not that I want to know, except to show the confusion and obscurity of his address, which he dins into the ears of the old wives among our men, pluming himself on his nice phrases, which he mouths out to the admirers of such things, ignorant, as it would seem, that in the judgment of educated men this address of his will serve only as a memorial of his own infamy.

But all this is beside our purpose. Would that our charges against him were limited to this, and that he could be thought to err only in his delivery, and not in matters of faith; since it would have been of comparatively little importance to him to be praised or blamed for expressing himself in one style or another. But however that may be, the sequel of his charges against us contains this in addition: "Considering the case of corn (he says), and of our Lord, after exercising his conceptions in various ways upon them, he declares that even

in like manner the most holy essence of God admits of the same variety of conception. This is the gravest of his accusations, and it is in prosecuting this that he rehearses those heavy invectives of his, charging what we have said with blasphemy, absurdity, and so forth. What, then, is the proof of our blasphemy? "He has mentioned" (says Eunomius) "certain well-known facts about corn,-perceiving how it grows, and how when ripe it affords food, growing, multiplying, and being dispensed by certain forces of nature-and, having mentioned these, he adds that it is only reasonable to suppose that the Only-begotten Son also admits of different modes of being conceived of , by reason of certain differences of operation, certain analogies, proportions, and relations. For he uses these terms respecting Him to satiety. And is it not absurd, or rather blasphemous, to compare the Ungenerate with such objects as these?"-What objects? Why, corn, and God the Only-begotten! You see his artfulness.

He would show that insignificant corn and God the Only-begotten are equally removed from the dignity of the Ungenerate. And to show that we are not treating his words unfairly, we may learn his meaning from the very words he has written. "For," he asks, "is it not absurd, or rather blasphemous, to compare theUngenerate with these? And in thus speaking, he instances the case of corn and of our Lord as on a level in point of dignity, thinking it equally absurd to compare God with either. Now every one knows that things equally distant from a given object are possessed of equality as regards each other, so that according to our wise theologian the Maker of the worlds, Who holds all nature in His hand, is shown to be on a par with the most insignificant seed, since He and corn to the same degree fall short of comparison with God. To such a pitch of blasphemy has he come!

But it is time to examine the argument that leads to this profanity, and see how, as regards itself, it is logically connected with his whole discourse. For after saying that it is absurd to compare God with corn and with Christ, he says of God that He is not, like them, subject to change; but in respect to the Only-begotten, keeping silence on the question whether He too is not subject to change, and thereby clearly suggesting that He is of lower dignity, in that we cannot compare Him, any more than we can compare corn, with God, he breaks off his discourse without using any argument to prove that the Son of God cannot be compared with the Father, as though our knowledge of the grain were sufficient to establish the inferiority of the Son in comparison with the Father. But he discourses of the indestructibility of the Father, as not in actuality attaching to the Son. But if the True Life is an actuality, actuating itself, and if to live everlastingly means the same thing as never to be dissolved in destruction, I for myself do not as yet assent to his argument, but will reserve myself for a more proper occasion.

That, however, there is but one single notion in indestructibility , considered in reference to the Father and to the Son alike, and that the indestructibility of the Father differs in no respect from that of the Son, no difference as to indestructibility being observable either in remission and intension, or in any other phase of the process of destruction, this, I say, it is seasonable both now and at all times to assert, so as to preclude the doctrine that in respect of indestructibility the Son has no communion with the Father. For as this indestructibility

is understood in respect of the Father, so also it is not to be disputed in respect of the Son. For to be incapable of dissolution means nearly, or rather precisely, the same thing in regard to whatever subject it is attributed to. What, then, induces him to assert, that only to the Ungenerate Deity does it belong to have this indestructibility not attaching to Him by reason of any energy, as though he would thereby show a difference between the Father and the Son? For if he supposes his own created God destructible, he well shows the essential divergence of natures by the difference between the destructible and the indestructible. But if neither is subject to destruction,-and no degrees are to be found in pure indestructibility,- how does he show that the Father cannot be compared with the Only-begotten Son, or what is meant by saying that indestructibility is not witnessed in the Father by reason of any energy?

But he reveals his purpose in what follows. It is not because of His operations or energies, he says, that He is ungenerate and indestructible, but because He is Father and Creator. And here I must ask my hearers to give me their closest attention. How can he think the creative power of God and His Fatherhood identical in meaning? For he defines each alike as an energy, plainly and expressly affirming, "God is not indestructible by reason of His energy, though He is called Father and Creator by reason of energies. If, then, it is the same thing to call Him Father and Creator of the world because either name is due to an energy as its cause, the results of His energies must be homogeneous, inasmuch as it is through an energy, that they both exist. But to what blasphemy this logically tends is clear to every one who can draw a conclusion. For myself, I should like to add my own deductions to my disquisition. It is impossible that an energy or operation productive of a result should subsist of itself without there being something to set the energy in motion; as we say that a smith operates or works, but that the material on which his art is exercised is operated upon, or wrought. These faculties, therefore, that of operating, and that of being operated upon, must needs stand in a certain relation to each other, so that if one be removed, the remaining one cannot subsist of itself.

For where there is nothing operated upon there can be nothing operating. What, then, does this prove? If the energy which is productive of anything does not subsist of itself, there being nothing for it to operate upon, and if the Father, as they affirm, is nothing but an energy, the Only-begotten Son is thereby shown to be capable of being acted upon, in other words, moulded in accordance with the motive energy that gives Him His subsistence. For as we say that the Creator of the world, by laying down some yielding material, capable of being acted upon, gave His creative being a field for its exercise, in the case of things sensible skilfully investing the subject with various and multiform qualities for production, but in the case of intellectual essences giving shape to the subject in another way, not by qualities, but by impulses of choice, so, if any one define the Fatherhood of God as an energy, he cannot otherwise indicate the subsistence of the Son than by comparing it with some material acted upon and wrought to completion. For if it could not be operated upon, it would of necessity offer resistance to the operator: whose energy being thus hindered, no result would be produced. Either, then, they must make the essence of the Only-begotten

subject to be acted upon, that the energy may have something to work upon, or, if they shrink from this conclusion, on account of its manifest impiety, they are driven to the conclusion that it has no existence at all.

For what is naturally incapable of being acted upon, cannot itself admit the creative energy. He, then, who defines the Son as the effect of an energy, defines Him as one of those things which are subject to be acted upon, and which are produced by an energy. Or, if he deny such susceptibility, he must at the same time deny His existence. But since impiety is involved in either alternative of the dilemma, that of asserting His non-existence, and that of regarding Him as capable of being acted upon, the truth is made manifest, being brought to light by the removal of these absurdities. For if He verily exists, and is not subject to be acted upon, it is plain that He is not the result of an energy, but is proved to be very God of very God the Father, without liability to be acted upon, beaming from Him and shining forth from everlasting.

But in His very essence, he says, God is indestructible. Well, what other conceivable attribute of God does not attach to the very essence of the Son, as justice, goodness, eternity, incapacity for evil, infinite perfection in all conceivable goodness? Is there one who will venture to say that any of the virtues in the Divine nature are acquired, or to deny that all good whatsoever springs from and is seen in it? "For whatsoever is good is from Him, and whatsoever is lovely is from Him ." But he appends to this, that He is in His very essence ungenerate too. Well, if he means by this that the Father's essence is ungenerate, I agree with what is said, and do not oppose his doctrine: for not one of the orthodox maintains that the Father of the Only-begotten is Himself begotten. But if, while the form of his expression indicates only this, he maintains that the ungeneracy itself is the essence, I say that we ought not to leave such a position unexamined, but expose his attempt to gain the assent of the unwary to his blasphemy.

Now that the idea of ungeneracy and the belief in the Divine essence are quite different things may be seen by what he himself has put forward. God, he says, is indestructible and ungenerate by His very essence, as being unmixed and pure from all diversity and difference. This he says of God, Whose essence he declares to he indestructibility and ungeneracy. There are three names, then, that he applies to God, being, indestructibility, ungeneracy. If the idea of these three words in respect of God is one, it follows that the Godhead and these three are identical. Just as if any one, wanting to describe a man, should say that he was a rational, risible, and broad-nailed creature; whereupon, because there is no essential variation from these in the individuals, we say that the terms are equivalent to each other, and that the three things seen in the subject are one thing, viz. the humanity described by these names. If, then, Godhead means this, ungeneracy, indestructibility, being, by doing away with one of these he necessarily does away with the Godhead. For just as we should say that a creature which was neither rational nor risible was not man either, so in the case of these three terms (ungeneracy, indestructibility, being), if the Godhead is described by these, should one of the three be absent, its absence destroys the definition of Godhead. Let

him tell us, then, in reply, what opinion he holds of God the Only-begotten. Does he think Him generate or ungenerate?

Of course he must say generate, unless he is to contradict himself. If, then, being and indestructibility are equivalent to ungeneracy, and by all of these Godhead is denoted, to Whom ungeneracy is wanting, to Him being and indestructibility must needs be wanting also, and in that case the Godhead also must necessarily be taken away. And thus his blasphemous logic brings him to a twofold conclusion. For if being, and indestructibility, and ungeneracy are applied to God in the same sense, our new God-maker is clearly convicted of regarding the Son created by Him as destructible, by his not regarding Him as ungenerate, and not only so, but altogether without being, through his inability to see Him in the Godhead, as one in whom ungeneracy and indestructibility are not found, since he takes the ungeneracy and indestructibility to be identical with the being. But since in this there is manifest perdition, let some one counsel these unhappy folk to turn to the only course which is left them, and, instead of setting themselves in open opposition to the truth, to allow that each of these terms has its own proper signification, such as may be seen still better from their contraries. For we find ungenerate set against generate, and we understand the indestructible by its opposition to the destructible, and being by contrast with that which has no subsistence.

For as that which was not generated is called ungenerate, and that which is not destructible is called indestructible, so that which is not non-existent we call being, and, conversely, as we do not call the generate ungenerate, nor the destructible indestructible, so that which is non-existent we do not call being. Being, then, is discernible in the being this or that, goodness or indestructibility in the being of this or of that kind, generacy or ungeneracy in the manner of the being. And thus the ideas of being, manner, and quality are distinct from each other.

But it will be well, I think, to pass over his nauseating observations (for such we must term his senseless attacks on the method of conception), and dwell more pleasurably on the subject matter of our thought. For all the venom that our disputant has disgorged with the view of overthrowing our Master's speculations in regard to conception, is not of such a kind as to be dangerous to those who come in its way, however stupid they may be and liable to be imposed on. For who is so devoid of understanding as to think that there is anything in what Eunomius says, or to see any ingenuity in his artifices against the truth when he takes our Master's reference to corn (which he meant simply by way of illustration, thereby providing his hearers with a sort of method and introduction to the study of higher instances), and applies it literally to the Lord of all? To think of his assertion that the most becoming cause for God's begetting the Son was His sovereign authority and power, which may be said not only in regard to the universe and its elements, but in regard to beasts and creeping things;

and of our reverend theologian teaching that the same is becoming in our conception of God the Only-begotten-or again, of his saying that God was called ungenerate, or Father, or any other name, even before the existence of creatures to call Him such, as being afraid lest, His

name not being uttered among creatures as yet unborn, He should be ignorant or forgetful of Himself, through ignorance of His own nature because of His name being unspoken! To think, again, of the insolence of his attack upon our teaching; what acrimony, what subtlety does he display, while attempting to establish the absurdity of what he (Basil) said, namely that He Who was in a manner the Father before all worlds and time, and all sensitive and intellectual nature, must somehow wait for man's creation in order to be named by means of man's conception, not having been so named, either by the Son or by any of the intelligent beings of His creation! Why no one, I imagine, can be so densely stupid as to be ignorant that God the Only-begotten, Who is in the Father , and Who seeth the Father in Himself, is in no need of any name or title to make Him known, nor is the mystery of the Holy Spirit, Who searcheth out the deep things of God , brought to our knowledge by a nominal appellation, nor can the incorporeal nature of supramundane powers name God by voice and tongue.

For, in the case of immaterial intellectual nature, the mental energy is speech which has no need of material instruments of communication. For even in the case of human beings, we should have no need of using words and names if we could otherwise inform each other of our pure mental feelings and impulses. But (as things are), inasmuch as the thoughts which arise in us are incapable of being so revealed, because our nature is encumbered with its fleshly surrounding, we are obliged to express to each other what goes on in our minds by giving things their respective names, as signs of their meaning.

But if it were in any way possible by some other means to lay bare the movements of thought, abandoning the formal instrumentality of words, we should converse with one another more lucidly and clearly, revealing by the mere action of thought the essential nature of the things which are under consideration. But now, by reason of our inability to do so, we have given things their special names, calling one Heaven, another Earth, and so on, and as each is related to each, and acts or suffers, we have marked them by distinctive names, so that our thoughts in regard to them may not remain uncommunicated and unknown. But supramundane and immaterial nature being free and independent of bodily envelopment, requires no words or names either for itself or for that which is above it, but whatever utterance on the part of such intellectual nature is recorded in Holy Writ is given for the sake of the hearers, who would be unable otherwise to learn what is to be set forth, if it were not communicated to them by voice and word. And if David in the spirit speaks of something being said by the Lord to the Lord , it is David himself who is the speaker, being unable otherwise to make known to us the teaching of what is meant except by interpreting by voice and word his own knowledge of the mysteries given him by Divine inspiration.

All his argument, then, in opposition to the doctrine of conception I think it best to pass over, though he charge with madness those who think that the name of God, as used by mankind to indicate the Supreme Being, is the result of this conception. For what he is thinking of when he considers himself bound to revile that doctrine, all who will may learn from his own words. What opinion we ourselves hold on the use of words we have already stated, viz. that, things being as they are in regard to their nature, the rational faculty implanted in

our nature by God invented words indicative of those actual things. And if any one ascribe their origin to the Giver of the faculty, we would not contradict him, for we too maintain mat motion, and sight, and the rest of the operations carried on by the senses are effected by Him Who endowed us with such faculties. So, then, the cause of our naming God, Who is by His nature what He is, is referable by common consent to Himself, but the liberty of naming all things that we conceive of in one way or another lies in that thing in our nature, which, whether a man wish to call it conception or something else, we are quite indifferent. And there is this one sure evidence in our favour, that the Divine Being is not named alike by all, but that each interprets his idea as he thinks best.

Passing over, then, in silence his rubbishy twaddle about conception, let us hold to our tenets, and simply note by the way some of the observations that occur in the midst of his empty speeches, where he pretends that God, seating Himself by our first parents, like some pedagogue or grammarian, gave them a lesson in words and names; wherein he says that they who were first formed by God, or those who were born from them in continuous succession, unless they had been taught how each several thing should be called and named, would have lived together in dumbness and silence, and would have been unequal to the discharge of any of the serviceable functions of life, the meaning of each being uncertain through lack of interpreters,-verbs forsooth, and nouns. Such is the infatuation of this writer; he thinks the faculty implanted in our nature by God insufficient for any method of reasoning, and that unless it be taught each thing severally, like those who are taught Hebrew or Latin word by word, one must be ignorant of the nature of the things, having no discernment of fire, or water, or air, or anything else, unless one have acquired the knowledge of them by the names that they bear. But we maintain that He Who made all things in His wisdom, and Who moulded this living rational creature, by the simple fact of His implanting reason in his nature, endowed him with all his rational faculties.

And as naturally possessing our faculties of perception by the gift of Him Who fashioned the eye and planted the ear, we can of ourselves employ them for their natural objects, and have no need of any one to name the colours, for instance, of which the eye takes cognizance, for the eye is competent to inform itself in such matters; nor do we need another to make us acquainted with the things which we perceive by hearing, or taste, or touch, possessing as we do in ourselves the means of discerning all of which our perception informs us. And so, again, we maintain that the intellectual faculty, made as it was originally by God, acts thenceforward by itself when it looks out upon realities, and that there be no confusion in its knowledge, affixes some verbal note to each several thing as a stamp to indicate its meaning. Great Moses himself confirms this doctrine when he says that names were assigned by Adam to the brute creation, recording the fact in these words: "And out of the ground God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to an the beasts of the field."

But, like some viscous and sticky clay, the nonsense he has concocted in contravention of our teaching of conception seems to hold us back, and prevent us from applying ourselves to more important matters. For how can one pass over his solemn and profound philosophy, as when he says that God's greatness is seen not only in the works of His hands, but that His wisdom is displayed in their names also, adapted as they are with such peculiar fitness to the nature of each work of His creation ? Having perchance fallen in with Plato's Cratylus, or hearing from some one who had met with it, by reason, I suppose, of his own poverty of ideas, he attached that nonsense patchwise to his own, acting like those who get their bread by begging. For just as they, receiving some trifle from each who bestows it on them, collect their bread from many and various sources, so the discourse of Eunomius, by reason of his scanty store of the true bread, assiduously collects scraps of phrases and notions from all quarters. And thus, being struck by the beauty of the Platonic style, he thinks it not unseemly to make Plato's theory a doctrine of the Church. For by how many appellations, say, is the created firmament called according to the varieties of language? For we call it Heaven, the Hebrew calls it Samaim, the Roman coelum, other names are given to it by the Syrian, the Mede, the Cappadocian, the African, the Scythian, the Thracian the Egyptian:

nor would it be easy to enumerate the multiplicity of names which are applied to Heaven and other objects by the different nations that employ them. Which of these, then, tell me, is the appropriate word wherein the great wisdom of God is manifested? If you prefer the Greek to the rest, the Egyptian haply will confront you with his own. And if you give the first place to the Hebrew, there is the Syrian to claim precedence for his own word, nor will the Roman yield the supremacy, nor the Mede allow himself to be outdone; while of the other nations each will claim the prize. What, then, will be the fate of his dogma when torn to pieces by the claimants for so many different languages? But by these, says he, as by laws publicly promulgated, it is shown that God made names exactly suited to the nature of the things which they represent. What a grand doctrine! What grand views our theologian allows to the Divine teachings, such indeed as men do not grudge even to bathing-attendants! For we allow them to give names to the operations they engage in, and yet no one invests them with Divine honours for the invention of such names as foot-baths, depilatories, towels, and the like-words which appropriately designate the articles in question.

But I will pass over both this and their reading of Epicurus' nature-system, which he says is equivalent to our conception, maintaining that the doctrine of atoms and empty space, and the fortuitous generation of things, is akin to what we mean by conception. What an understanding of Epicurus! If we ascribe words expressive of things to the logical faculty in our nature, we thereby stand convicted of holding the Epicurean doctrine of indivisible bodies, and combinations of atoms, and the collision and rebound of particles, and so on. I say nothing of Aristotle, whom he takes as his own patron, and the ally of his system, whose opinion, he says, in his subsequent remarks, coincides with our views about conception. For he says that that philosopher taught that Providence does not extend through all nature, nor penetrate into the region of terrestrial things, and this, Eunomius contends, corresponds to our discoveries in the field of conception. Such is his idea of determining a doctrine with

accuracy! But he goes on to say that we must either deny the creation of things to God, or, if we concede it, we must not deprive Him of the imposition of names.

And yet even in respect to the brute creation, as we have said already, we are taught the very opposite (of both these alternatives) by Holy Scripture-that neither did Adam make the animals, nor did God name them, but the creation was the work of God, and the naming of the things created was the work of man, as Moses has recorded. Then in his own speech he gives us an encomium of speech in general (as though some one wished to disparage it), and after his eminently abusive and bombastic conglomeration of words, he says that, by a law and rule of His providence, God has combined the transmission of words with our knowledge and use of things necessary for our service; and after pouring forth twaddle of this kind in the profundity of his slumbers, he passes on in his discourse to his irresistible and unanswerable argument. I will not state it in so many words, but simply give the drift of it. We are not, he says, to ascribe the invention of words to poets, who are much mistaken in their notions of God.

What a generous concession does he make to God in investing Him with the inventions of the poetic faculty, so that God may thereby seem to men more sublime and august, when the disciples of Eunomius believe that such expressions as those used by Homer for "side-ways," "rang out," "aside," "mix ," "clung to his hand," "hissed," "thumped," "rattled," "clashed," "rang terribly," "twanged," "shouted," "pondered," and many others, are not used by poets by a certain arbitrary licence, but that they introduce them into their poems by some mysterious initiation from God! Let this, too, be passed over, and withal that clever and irresistible attempt, that it is not in our power to quote Scriptural instances of holy men who have invented new terms. Now if human nature had been imperfect up to the time of such men's appearance, and not as yet completed by the gift of reason, it would have been well for them to seek that the deficiency might be supplied. But if from the very first man's nature existed self-sufficing and complete for all purposes of reason and thought, why should any one, in order to establish this doctrine of conception, humour them so far as to seek for instances where holy men initiated sounds or names? Or, if we cannot adduce any instances, why should any one regard it as a sufficient proof that such and such syllables and words were appointed by God Himself?

But, says he, since God condescends to commune with His servants, we may consequently suppose that from the very beginning He enacted words appropriate to things. What, then, is our answer? We account for God's willingness to admit men to communion with Himself by His love towards mankind. But since that which is by nature finite cannot rise above its prescribed limits, or lay hold of the superior nature of the Most High, on this account He, bringing His power, so full of love for humanity, down to the level of human weakness, so far as it was possible for us to receive it, bestowed on us this helpful gift of grace. For as by Divine dispensation the sun, tempering the intensity of his full beams with the intervening air, pours down light as well as heat on those who receive his rays, being himself unapproachable by reason of the weakness of our nature, so the Divine power, after the manner

of the illustration I have used, though exalted far above our nature and inaccessible to all approach, like a tender mother who joins in the inarticulate utterances of her babe, gives to our human nature what it is capable of receiving;

and thus in the various manifestations of God to man He both adapts Himself to man and speaks in human language, and assumes wrath, and pity, and such-like emotions, so that through feelings corresponding to our own our infantile life might be led as by hand, and lay hold of the Divine nature by means of the words which His foresight has given. For that it is irreverent to imagine that God is subject to any passion such as we see in respect to pleasure, or pity, or anger, no one will deny who has thought at all about the truth of things. And yet the Lord is said to take pleasure in His servants, and to be angry with the backsliding people, and, again, to have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and to show compassion-the word teaching us in each of these expressions that God's providence helps our infirmity by using our own idioms of speech, so that such as are inclined to sin may be restrained from committing it by fear of punishment, and that those who are overtaken by it may not despair of return by the way of repentance when they see God's mercy, while those who are walking uprightly and strictly may yet more adorn their life with virtue, as knowing that by their own life they rejoice Him Whose eyes are over the righteous.

But just as we cannot call a man deaf who converses with a deaf man by means of signs,-his only way of hearing,-so we must not suppose speech in God because of His employing it by way of accommodation in addressing man. For we ourselves are accustomed to direct brute beasts by clucking and whistling and the like, and yet this, by which we reach their ears, is not our language, but we use our natural speech in talking to one another, while, in regard to cattle, some suitable noise or sound accompanied with gesture is sufficient for all purposes of communication.

But our pious opponent will not allow of God's using our language, because of our proneness to evil, shutting his eyes (good man! to the fact that for our sakes He did not refuse to be made sin and a curse. Such is the superabundance of His love for man, that He voluntarily came to prove not only our good, but our evil. And if He was partaker in our evil, why should He refuse to be partaker in speech, the noblest of our gifts? But he advances David in his support, and declares that he said that names were imposed on things by God, because it is thus written, "He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names . But I think it must be obvious to every man of sense that what is thus said of the stars has nothing whatever to do with the subject. Since, however, it is not improbable that some may unwarily give their assent to his statement, I will briefly discuss the point. Holy Scripture often- times is wont to attribute expressions to God such that they seem quite accordant with our own, e.g. "The Lord was wroth, and it repented Him because of their sins "; and again, "He repented that He had anointed Saul king "; and again, "The Lord awaked as one out of sleep ";

and besides this, it makes mention of His sitting, and standing, and moving, and the like, which are not as a fact connected with God, but are not without their use as an accommoda-

tion to those who are under teaching. For in the case of the too unbridled, a show of anger restrains them by fear. And to those who need the medicine of repentance, it says that the Lord repenteth along with them of the evil, and those who grow insolent through prosperity it warns, by God's repentance in respect to Saul, that their good fortune is no certain possession, though it seem to come from God. To those who are not engulfed by their sinful fall, but who have risen from a life of vanity as from sleep, it says that God arises out of sleep. To those who steadfastly take their stand upon righteousness,-that He stands. To those who are seated in righteousness,-that He sits. And again, in the case of those who have moved from their steadfastness in righteousness,-that He moves or walks; as, in the case of Adam, the sacred history records God's walking in the garden in the cool of the day , signifying thereby the fall of the first man into darkness, and, by the moving, his weakness and instability in regard to righteousness.

But most people, perhaps, will think this too far removed from the scope of our present inquiry. This, however, no one will regard as out of keeping with our subject; the fact that many think that what is incomprehensible to themselves is equally incomprehensible to God, and that whatever escapes their own cognizance is also beyond the power of His. Now since we make number the measure of quantity, and number is nothing else than a combination of units growing into multitude in a complex way (for the decad is a unit brought to that value by the composition of units, and again the hundred is a unit composed of decads, and in like manner the thousand is another unit, and so in due proportion the myriad is another by a multiplication, the one being made up to its value by thousands, the other by hundreds, by assigning all which to their underlying class we make signs of the quantity of the things numbered), accordingly, in order that we may be taught by Holy Scripture that nothing is unknown to God, it tells us that the multitude of the stars is numbered by Him, not that their numbering takes place as I have described, (for who is so simple as to think that God takes knowledge of things by odd and even, and that by putting units together He makes up the total of the collective quantity?

but, since in our own case the exact knowledge of quantity is obtained by number, in order, I say, that we might be taught in respect to God that all things are comprehended by the knowledge of His wisdom, and that nothing escapes His minute cognizance, on this account it represents God as "numbering the stars," counselling us by these words to understand this, viz. that we must not imagine God to take note of things by the measure of human knowledge, but that all things, however incomprehensible and above human understanding, are embraced by the knowledge of the wisdom of God. For as the stars on account of their multitude escape numbering, as far as our human conception is concerned, Holy Scripture, teaching the whole from the part, in saying that they are numbered by God attests that not one of the things unknown to us escapes the knowledge of God. And therefore it says, "Who telleth the multitude of the stars," of course not meaning that He did not know their number beforehand; for how should He be ignorant of what He Himself created, seeing that the Ruler of the Universe could not be ignorant of that which is comprehended in His power; which includes the worlds in its embrace? Why, then, should He number what He knows?

For to measure quantity by number is the part of those who want information. But He Who knew all things before they were created needs not number as His informant.

But when David says that He "numbers the stars," it is evident that the Scripture descends to such language in accordance with our understanding, to teach us emblematically that the things which we know not are accurately known to God. As, then, He is said to number, though needing no arithmetical process to arrive at the knowledge of things created, so also the Prophet tells us that He calleth them all by their names, not meaning, I imagine, that He does so by any vocal utterance. For verily such language would result in a conception strangely unworthy of God, if it meant that these names in common use among ourselves were applied to the stars by God. For, should any one allow that these were so applied by God, it must follow that the names of the idol gods of Greece were applied by Him also to the stars, and we must regard as true all the tales from mythological history that are told about those starry names, as though God Himself sanctioned their utterance. Thus the distribution among the Greek idols of the seven planets contained in the heavens will exempt from blame those who have erred in respect to them, if men be persuaded that such an arrangement was God's. Thus the fables of Orion and the Scorpion will be believed, and the legends respecting the ship Argo, and the Swan, and the Eagle, and the Dog, and the mythical story of Ariadne's crown.

Moreover it will pave the way for supposing God to be the inventor of the names in the zodiacal circle, devised after some fancied resemblance in the constellations, if Eunomius is right in supposing that David said that these names were given them by God.

Since, then, it is monstrous to regard God as the inventor of such names, lest the names even of these idol gods should seem to have had their origin from God, it will be well not to receive what has been said without inquiry, but to get to the meaning in this case also after the analogy of those things of which number informs us. Well, since it attests the accuracy of our knowledge, when we call one familiar to us by his name, we are here taught that He Who embraces the Universe in His knowledge not only comprehends the total of the aggregate quantity, but has an exact knowledge of the units also that compose it. And therefore the Scripture says not only that He "telleth the number of the stars," but that "He calleth them all by their names," which means that His accurate knowledge extends to the minutest of them, and that He knows each particular respecting them, just as a man knows one who is familiar to him by name. And if any one say that the names given to the stars by God are different ones, unknown to human language, he wanders far away from the truth. For if there were other names of stars, Holy Scripture would not have made mention of those which are in common use among the Greeks, Esaias saying , "Which maketh the Pleiads, and Hesperus, and Arcturus, and the Chambers of the South," and Job making mention of Orion and Aseroth ;

so that from this it is clear that Holy Scripture employs for our instruction such words as are in common use. Thus we hear in Job of Amalthea's horn , and in Esaias of the Sirens , the former thus naming plenty after the conceit of the Greeks, the latter representing

the pleasure derived from hearing, by the figure of the Sirens. As, then, in these cases the inspired word has made use of names drawn from mythological fables, with a view to the advantage of the hearers, so here it freely makes use of the appellations given to the stars by human fancy, teaching us that all things whatsoever that are named among men have their origin from God-the things, not their names. For it does not say Who nameth, but "Who maketh Pleiad, and Hesperus, and Arcturus. I think, then, it has been sufficiently shown in what I have said that David supports our opinion, in teaching us by this utterance, not that God gives the stars their names, but that He has an exact knowledge of them, after the fashion of men, who have the most certain knowledge of those whom they are able, through long familiarity, to call by their names.

And if we set forth the opinion of most commentators on these words of the Psalmist, that of Eunomius regarding them will be still more convicted of foolishness. For those who have most carefully searched out the sense of the inspired Scripture, declare that not all the works of creation are worthy of the Divine reckoning. For in the Gospel narratives of feeding the multitudes in the wilderness, women and children are not thought worthy of enumeration. And in the account of the Exodus of the children of Israel, those only are enumerated in the roll who were of age to bear arms against their enemies, and to do deeds of valour. For not all names of things are fit to be pronounced by the Divine lips, but the enumeration is only for that which is pure and heavenly, which, by the loftiness of its state remaining pure from all admixture with darkness, is called a star, and the naming is only for that which, for the same reason, is worthy to be registered in the Divine tablets. For of His adversaries He says, "I will not take up their names into my lips ."

But the names which the Lord gives to such stars we may plainly learn from the prophecy of Esaias, which says, "I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine . So that if a man makes himself God's possession, his act becomes his name. But be this as the reader pleases. Eunomius, however, adds to his previous statement that the beginnings of creation testify to the fact, that names were given by God to the things which He created; but I think that it would be superfluous to repeat what I have already sufficiently set forth as the result of my investigations; and he may put his own arbitrary interpretation on the word Adam, which, the Apostle tells us, points prophetically to Christ . For no one can be so infatuated, when Paul, by the power of the Spirit, has revealed to us the hidden mysteries, as to count Eunomius a more trustworthy interpreter of Divine things-a man who openly impugns the words of the inspired testimony, and who by his false interpretation of the word would fain prove that the various kinds of animals were not named by Adam. We shall do well, also, to pass over his insolent expressions, and tasteless vulgarity, and foul and disgusting tongue, with its accustomed fluency going on about our Master as "a sower of tares," and about "a deceptive show of grain, and the blight of Valentinus, and his grain piled in our Master's mind":

and we will veil in silence the rest of his unsavoury talk as we veil putrefying corpses in the ground, that the stench may not prove injurious to many. Rather let us proceed to what

remains for us to say. For once more he adduces a dictum of our Master , to this effect. "We call God indestructible and ungenerate, applying these words from different points of view. For when we look to the ages that are past, finding the life of God transcending all limitation, we call Him ungenerate. But when we turn our thoughts to the ages that are yet to come, Him Who is infinite, illimitable, and without end, we call indestructible. As, then, that which has no end of life is indestructible, so that which has no beginning we call ungenerate, representing things so by the faculty of conception."

I will pass over, then, the abuse with which he has prefaced his discussion of these matters, as when he uses such terms as "alteration of seed," and "teacher of sowing," and "illogical censure," and whatever other aspersions he ventures on with his foul tongue. Let us rather turn to the point which he tries to establish by his calumnious accusation. He promises to convict us of saying that God is not by His nature indestructible. But we hold only such things foreign to His nature as may be added to or subtracted from it. But, in the case of things without which the subject is incapable of being conceived by the mind, how can any one be open to the charge of separating His nature from itself? If, then, the indestructibility which we ascribe to God were adventitious, and did not always belong to Him, or might cease to belong to Him, he might be justified in his calumnious attack. But if it is always the same, and our contention is, that God is always what He is, and that He receives nothing by way of increase or addition of properties, but continues always in whatsoever is conceived and called good, why should we be slanderously accused of not ascribing indestructibility to Him as of His essential nature? But he pretends that he grounds his accusation on the words of Basil which I have already quoted, as though we bestowed indestructibility on God by reference to the ages.

Now if our statement were put forward by ourselves, our defence might perhaps seem open to suspicion, as if we now wanted to amend or justify any questionable expressions of ours. But since our statements are taken from the lips of an adversary, what stronger demonstration could we have of their truth than the evidence of our opponents themselves? How is it, then, with the statement which Eunomius lays hold of with a view to our prejudice? When, he says, we turn our thoughts to the ages that are yet to be, we speak of the infinite, and illimitable, and unending, as indestructible. Does Eunomius count such ascription as identical with bestowing? Yet who is such a stranger to existing usage as to be ignorant of the proper meaning of these expressions? For that man bestows who possesses something which another has not, while that man ascribes who designates with a name what another has. How is it, then, that our instructor in truth is not ashamed of his plainly calumnious impeachment? But as those who, from some disease, are bereft of sight, are unseemly in their behaviour before the eyes of the seeing, supposing that what is not seen by themselves is a thing unobserved also by those whose sight is unimpaired, just such is the case of our sharp-sighted and quick-witted opponent, who supposes his hearers to be afflicted with the same blindness to the truth as himself.

And who is so foolish as not to compare the words which he calumniously assails with his charge itself, and by reading them side by side to detect the malice of the writer? Our statement ascribes indestructibility; he charges it with bestowing indestructibility. What has this to do with our statement? Every man has a right to be judged by his own deeds, not to be blamed for those of others; and in this present case, while he accuses us, and points his bitterness at us, in truth he is condemning no one but himself. For if it is reprehensible to bestow indestructibility on God, and this is done by no one but himself, is not our slanderer his own accuser, assailing his own statements and not ours? And with regard to the term indestructibility, we assert that as the life which is endless is rightly called indestructible, so that which is without beginning is rightly called ungenerate. And yet Eunomius says that we lend Him the primacy over all created things simply by reference to the ages.

I pass in silence his blasphemy in reducing God the Only-begotten to a level with all created things, and, in a word, allowing to the Son of God no higher honour than theirs. Still, for the sake of my more intelligent hearers, I will here give an instance of his insensate malice. Basil, he says, lends God the primacy over all things by reference to the ages. What unintelligible nonsense is this! Man is made God's patron, and gives to God a primacy owing to the ages! What is this vain flourish of baseless expressions, seeing that our Master simply says that whatever in the Divine essence transcends the measurable distances of the ages in either direction is called by certain distinctive names, in the case of Him Who, as saith the Apostle, hath neither beginning of days nor end of life , in order that the distinction of the conception might be marked by distinction in the names. And yet on this account Eunomius has the effrontery to write, that to call that which is anterior to all beginning ungenerate, and again that which is circumscribed by no limit, immortal and indestructible, is a bestowing or lending on our part, and other nonsense of the kind. Moreover, he says that we divide the ages into two parts, as if he had not read the words he quoted, or as if he were addressing those who had forgotten his own previous statements. For what says our Master?

"If we look at the time before the Creation, and if passing in thought through the ages we reflect on the infinitude of the Eternal Life, we signify the thought by the term ungenerate. And if we turn our thoughts to what follows, and consider the being of God as extending beyond all ages, we interpret the thought by the word endless or indestructible. Well, how does such an account sever the ages in twain, if by such possible words and names we signify that eternity of God which is equally observable from every point of view, in all things the same, unbroken in continuity? For seeing that human life, moving from stage to stage, advances in its progress from a beginning to an end, and our life here is divided between that which is past and that which is expected, so that the one is the subject of hope, the other of memory; on this account, as, in relation to ourselves, we apprehend a past and a future in this measurable extent, so also we apply the thought, though incorrectly, to the transcendent nature of God; not of course that God in His own existence leaves any interval behind, or passes on afresh to something that lies before, but because our intellect can only conceive things according to our nature, and measures the eternal by a past and a future,

where neither the past precludes the march of thought to the illimitable and infinite, nor the future tells us of any pause or limit of His endless life.

If, then, it is thus that we think and speak, why does he keep taunting us with dividing the ages? Unless, indeed, Eunomius would maintain that Holy Scripture does so too, signifying as it does by the same idea the infinity of the Divine existence; David, for example, making mention of the "kingdom from everlasting," and Moses, speaking of the kingdom of God as "extending beyond all ages," so that we are taught by both that every duration conceivable is environed by the Divine nature, bounded on all sides by the infinity of Him Who holds the universe in His embrace. For Moses, looking to the future, says that "He reigneth from generation to generation for evermore. And great David, turning his thought backward to the past, says, "God is our King before the ages ," and again, "God, Who was before the ages, shall hear us. But Eunomius, in his cleverness taking leave of such guides as these, says that we talk of the life that is without beginning as one, and of that which is without end as quite another, and again, of diversities of sundry ages, effecting by their own diversity a separation in our idea of God. But that our controversy may not grow to a tedious length, we will add, without criticism or comment, the outcome of Eunomius' labours on the subject, well fitted as they are by his industry displayed in the cause of error to render the truth yet more evident to the eyes of the discerning.

For, proceeding with his discourse, he asks us what we mean by the ages. And yet we ourselves might more reasonably put such questions to him. For it is he who professes to know the essence of God, defining on his own authority what is unapproachable and incomprehensible by man. Let him, then, give us a scientific lecture on the nature of the ages, boasting as he does of his familiarity with transcendental things, and let him not so fiercely brandish over us, poor ignorant individuals, the double danger of the dilemma involved in our reply, telling us that, whether we hold this or that view of the ages, the result must be in either case an absurdity. For if (says he) you say that they are eternal, you will be Greeks, and Valentinians , and uninstructed : and if you say that they are generate, you will no longer be able to ascribe ungeneracy to God. What a terribly unanswerable attack! If, O Eunomius, something is held to be generate, we no longer hold the doctrine of the Divine ungeneracy! And pray what has become of your subtle distinctions between generacy and ungeneracy, by which you sought to establish the dissimilarity of the essence of the Son from that of the Father? For it seems from what we are now being taught that the Father is not dissimilar in essence when contemplated in respect of generacy, but that, in fact, if we hold His ungeneracy, we reduce Him to non-existence;

since "if we speak of the ages as generate, we are driven to relinquish the Ungenerate. But let us examine the force of the argument, by which he would compel us to allow this absurdity. When, says he, those things by comparison with which God is without beginning are non-existent, He Who is compared with them must be non-existent also. What a sturdy and overpowering grip is this! How tightly has this wrestler got us by the waist in his inextricable grasp! He says that God's ungeneracy is added to Him through comparison with the

ages. By whom is it so added? Who is there that says that to Him Who hath no beginning ungeneracy is added as an acquisition through comparison with something else? Neither such a word nor such a sense will be found in any writings of ours. Our words indeed carry their own justification, and contain nothing like what is alleged against us; and of the meaning of what is said, who can be a more trustworthy interpreter than he who said it? Have not we, then, the better title to say what we mean when we speak of the life of God as extending beyond the ages? And what we say is what we have said already in our previous writings. But, says he, comparison with the ages being impossible, it is impossible that any addition should accrue from it to God, meaning of course that ungeneracy is an addition. Let him tell us by whom such an addition has been made.

If by himself, he becomes simply ridiculous in laying his own folly to our charge: if by us, let him quote our words, and then we will admit the force of his accusation.

But I think we must pass over this and all that follows. For it is the mere trifling of children who amuse themselves with beginning to build houses in sand. For having composed a portion of a paragraph, and not yet brought it to a conclusion, he shows that the same life is without beginning and without end, thus in his eagerness working out our own conclusion. For this is just what we say; that the Divine life is one and continuous in itself, infinite and eternal, in no wise bounded by any limit to its infinity. Thus far our opponent devotes his labours and exertions to the truth as we represent it, showing that the same life is on no side limited, whether we look at that part of it which was before the ages, or at that which succeeds them. But in his next remarks he returns to his old confusion. For after saying that the same life is without beginning and without end, leaving the subject of life, and ranging all the ideas we entertain about the Divine life under one head, he unifies everything. If, says he, the life is without beginning and without end, ungenerate and indestructible, then indestructibility and ungeneracy will be the same thing, as will also the being without beginning and without end. And to this he adds the aid of arguments. It is not possible, he says, for the life to be one, unless indestructibility and ungeneracy are identical terms. An admirable "addition" on the part of our friend.

It would seem, then, that we may hold the same language in regard to righteousness, wisdom, power, goodness, and all such attributes of God. Let, then, no word have a meaning peculiar to itself, but let one signification underlie every word in a list, and one form of description serve for the definition of all. If you are asked to define the word judge, answer with the interpretation of "ungeneracy"; if to define justice, be ready with "the incorporeal" as your answer. If asked to define incorruptibility, say that it has the same meaning as mercy or judgment. Thus let all God's attributes be convertible terms, there being no special signification to distinguish one from another. But if Eunomius thus prescribes, why do the Scriptures vainly assign various names to the Divine nature, calling God a Judge, righteous, powerful, long-suffering, true, merciful and so on? For if none of these titles is to be understood in any special or peculiar sense, but, owing to this confusion in their meaning,

they are all mixed up together, it would be useless to employ so many words for the same thing, there being no difference of meaning to distinguish them from one another.

But who is so much out of his wits as not to know that, while the Divine nature, whatever it is in its essence, is simple, uniform, and incomposite, and that it cannot be viewed under any form of complex formation, the human mind, grovelling on earth, and buried in this life on earth, in its inability to behold clearly the object of its search, feels after the unutterable Being in divers and many-sided ways, and never chases the mystery in the light of one idea alone. Our grasping of Him would indeed be easy, if there lay before us one single assigned path to the knowledge of God: but as it is, from the skill apparent in the Universe, we get the idea of skill in the Ruler of that Universe, from the large scale of the wonders worked we get the impression of His Power; and from our belief that this Universe depends on Him, we get an indication that there is no cause whatever of His existence; and again, when we see the execrable character of evil, we grasp His own unalterable pureness as regards this: when we consider death's dissolution to be the worst of ills, we give the name of Immortal and Indissoluble at once to Him Who is removed from every conception of that kind:

not that we split up the subject of such attributes along with them, but believing that this thing we think of, whatever it be in substance, is One, we still conceive that it has something in common with all these ideas. For these terms are not set against each other in the way of opposites, as if, the one existing there, the other could not co-exist in the same subject (as, for instance, it is impossible that life and death should be thought of in the same subject); but the force of each of the terms used in connection with the Divine Being is such that, even though it has a peculiar significance of its own, it implies no opposition to the term associated with it. What opposition, for instance, is there between "incorporeal" and "just," even though the words do not coincide in meaning: and what hostility is there between goodness and invisibility? So, too, the eternity of the Divine Life, though represented under the double name and idea of "the unending" and "the unbeginning," is not cut in two by this difference of name; nor yet is the one name the same in meaning as the other; the one points to the absence of beginning, the other to the absence of end, and yet there is no division produced in the subject by this difference in the actual terms applied to it.

Such is our position; our adversary's, with regard to the precise meaning of this term , is such as can derive no help from any reasonings; he only spits forth at random about it these strangely unmeaning and bombastic expressions , in the framework of his sentences and periods. But the upshot of all he says is this; that there is no difference in the meaning of the most varied names. But we must most certainly, as it seems to me, quote this passage of his word for word, lest we be thought to be calumniously charging him with something that does not belong to him. "True expressions," he says, "derive their precision from the subject realities which they indicate; different expressions are applied to different realities, the same to the same: and so one or other of these two things must of necessity be held: either that the reality indicated is different (if the expressions are), or else that the indicating expressions are not different. With these and many other such-like words, he proceeds to

effect the object he has before him, excluding from the expression certain relations and affinities , such as species, proportion, part, time, manner: in order that by the withdrawal of all these "Ungeneracy" may become indicative of the substance of God. His process of proof is in the following manner (I will express his idea in my own words). The life, he says, is not a different thing from the substance;

no addition may be thought of in connection with a simple being, by dividing our conception of him into a communicating and communicated side; but whatever the life may be, that very thing, he insists, is the substance. Here his philosophy is excellent; no thinking person would gainsay this. But how does he arrive at his contemplated conclusion, when he says, "when we mean the unbeginning, we mean the life, and truth compels us by this last to mean the substance"? The ungenerate, then, according to him is expressive of the very substance of God. We, on the other hand, while we agree that the life of God was not given by another, which is the meaning of "unbeginning," think that the belief that the idea expressed by the words "not generated" is the substance of God is a madman's only. Who indeed can be so beside himself as to declare the absence of any generation to be the definition of that substance (for as generation is involved in the generate, so is the absence of generation in the ungenerate)? Ungeneracy indicates that which is not in the Father; so how shall we allow the indication of that which is absent to be His substance? Helping himself to that which neither we nor any logical conclusion from the premises allows him, he lays it down that God's Ungeneracy is expressive of God's life. But to make quite plain his delusion upon this subject, let us look at it in the following way;

I mean, let us examine whether, by employing the same method by which he, in the case of the Father, has brought the definition of the substance to ungeneracy, we may not equally bring the substance of the Son to ungeneracy.

He says, "The Life that is the same, and thoroughly single, must have one and the same outward expression for it, even though in mere names, and manner, and order it may seem to vary. For true expressions derive their precision from the subject realities which they indicate; different expressions are applied to different realities, the same to the same; and so one or other of these two things must of necessity be held; either that the reality indicated is quite different (if the expressions are), or else that the indicating expressions are not different; and there is in this case no other subject reality besides the life of the Son, "for one either to rest an idea upon, or to cast a different expression upon. Is there, I may ask, any unfitness in the words quoted, which would prevent them being rightly spoken or written about the Only-begotten? Is not the Son Himself also a "Life thoroughly single"? Is there not for Him also "one and the same" befitting "expression," "though in mere names, and manner, and order He may seem to vary"? Must not, for Him also, "one or other of these two things be held" fixed, "either that the reality indicated is quite different, or else that the indicating expressions are not different," there being no other subject reality, besides his life, "for one either to rest an idea upon, or to cast a different expression upon"? We mix up nothing here with what Eunomius has said about the Father;

we have only passed from the same accepted premise to the same conclusion as he did, merely inserting the Son's name instead. If, then, the Son too is a single life, unadulterated, removed from every sort of compositeness or complication, and there is no subject reality besides this life of the Son (for how in that which is simple can the mixture of anything foreign be suspected? what we have to think of along with something else is no longer simple), and if the Father's substance also is a single life, and of this single life, by virtue of its very life and its very singleness, there are no differences, no increase or decrease in quantity or quality in it creating any variation, it needs must be that things thus coinciding in idea should be called by the same appellation also. If, that is, the thing that is detected both in the Father and the Son, I mean the singleness of life, is one, the very idea of singleness excluding, as we have said, any variation, it needs must be that the name befitting the one should be attached to the other also.

For as that which reasons, and is mortal, and is capable of thought and knowledge, is called "man" equally in the case of Adam and of Abel, and this name of the nature is not altered either by the fact that Abel passed into existence by generation, or by the fact that Adam did so without generation, so, if the simplicity and incompositeness of the Father's life has ungeneracy for its name, in like manner for the Son's life the same idea will necessarily have to be attached to the same utterance, if, as Eunomius says, "one or other of these two things must of necessity be held; either that the reality indicated is quite different, or else that the indicating expressions are not different."

But why do we linger over these follies, when we ought rather to put Eunomius' book itself into the hands of the studious, and so, apart from any examination of it, to prove at once to the discerning, not only the blasphemy of his opinion, but also the nervelessness of his style ? While in various ways, not going upon our apprehension of it, but following his own fancy, he misinterprets the word Conception, just as in a night-battle nobody can distinguish friend and foe, he does not understand that he is stabbing his own doctrine with the very weapons he thinks he is turning upon us. For the point in which he thinks he is most removed from the church of the orthodox is this; that he attempts to prove that God became Father at some later time, and that the appellation of Fatherhood is later than all those other names which attach to Him; for that He was called Father from that moment in which He purposed in Himself to become, and did become, Father.

Well, then, since in this treatise he is for proving that all the names applied to the Divine Nature coincide with each other, and that there is no difference whatever between them, and since one amongst these applied names is Father (for as God is indestructible and eternal, so also He is Father), we must either sanction, in the case of this term also, the opinion he holds about the rest, and so contravene his former position, seeing that the idea of Fatherhood is found to be involved in any of these other terms (for it is plain that if the meaning of indestructible and Father is exactly the same, He will be believed to be, just as He is always indestructible, so likewise always Father, there being one single signification, he says, in all these names): or else, if he fears thus to testify to the eternal Fatherhood

of God, he must perforce abandon his whole argument, and own that each of these names has a meaning peculiar to itself; and thus all this nonsense of his about the Divine names bursts like a bubble, and vanishes like smoke.

But if he should still answer with regard to this opposition (of the Divine names), that it is only the term Father, and the term Creator, that are applied to God as expressing production, both words being so applied, as he says, because of an operation, then he will cut short our long discussion of this subject, by thus conceding what it would have required a laborious argument on our part to prove. For if the word Father and the word Creator have the same meaning (for both arise from an operation), one of the things signified is exactly equivalent to the other, since if the signification is the same, the subjects cannot be different. If, then, He is called both Father and Creator because of an operation, it is quite allowable to interchange the names, and to turn one into the other and say that God is Creator of the Son, and Father of a stone, seeing that the term Father is to be devoid of any meaning of essential relation . Well, the monstrous conclusion that is hereby proved cannot remain doubtful to those who reflect. For as it is absurd to deem a stone, or anything else that exists by creation, Divine, it must be agreed that there is no Divinity to be recognized in the Only-begotten either, when that one identical meaning of an operation, by which God is called both Father and Creator, assigns, according to Eunomius, both these terms to Him. But let us hold to the question before us.

He abuses our assertion that our knowledge of God is formed by contributions of terms applied to different ideas, and says that the proof of His simplicity is destroyed by us so, since He must partake of the elements signified by each term, and only by virtue of a share in them can completely fill out His essence. Here I write in my own language, curtailing his wearisome prolixity; and in answer to his foolish and nerveless redundancy no sensible person, I think, would make any reply, except as regards his charging us with "senselessness. Now if anything of that description had been said by us, we ought of course to retract it if it was foolishly worded, or, if there was any doubt as to its meaning, to put an irreproachable interpretation upon it. But we have not said anything of the kind, any more than the consequences of our words lead the mind to any such necessity. Why, then, linger on that to which all assent, and weary the reader by prolonging the argument? Who is really so devoid of reflection as to imagine, when he hears that our orthodox conceptions of the Deity are gathered from various ways of thinking of Him, that the Deity is composed of these various elements, or completes His actual fulness by participating in anything at all? A man, say, has made discoveries in geometry, and this same man, let us suppose, has made discoveries also in astronomy, and in medicine as well, and grammar, and agriculture, and sciences of that kind.

Will it follow, because there are these various names of sciences viewed in connection with one single soul, that that single soul is to be considered a composite soul? Yet there is a very great difference in meaning between medicine and astronomy; and grammar means nothing in common with geometry, or seamanship with agriculture. Nevertheless it is within the

bounds of possibility that the idea of each of these sciences should be associated with one soul, without that soul thereby becoming composite, or, on the other hand, without all those terms for sciences blending into one meaning. If, then, the human mind, with all such terms applied to it, is not injured as regards its simplicity, how can any one imagine that the Deity, when He is called wise, and just, and good, and eternal, and all the other Divine names, must, unless all these names are made to mean one thing, become of many parts, or take a share of all these to make up the perfection of His nature?

But let us examine a still more vehement charge of his against us; it is this: "If one must proceed to say something harsher still, he does not even keep the Divine substance pure and unadulterated from inferior and contradictory elements. This is the charge, but the proof of it is,-what? Observe the strong professional attack! "If He is imperishable only by reason of the unending in His Life, and ungenerate only by reason of the unbeginning, then wherein He is not imperishable He is perishable, and wherein He is not ungenerate He is generated. Then returning to the charge, he repeats, "He will then be, as unbeginning, at once ungenerate and perishable, and, as unending, at once imperishable and generated. Such is his "harsher" statement, which, according to his threat, he has discharged against us, to prove that we say that the Divine substance is mingled with contradictory and even inferior elements. However, I think it is plain to all who keep unimpaired within themselves the power of judging the truth, that our Master has given no handle at all, in what he has said, to this calumniator, but that the latter has garbled it at will, and then, playing at arguing, has drawn out this childish sophistry. But that it may be plainer still to all my readers, I will repeat that statement of the Master word for word, and then confront Eunomius' words with it. "We call the Universal Deity" (he says) "imperishable and ungenerate, using these words with different applications of thought;

for when we concentrate our view upon the ages behind us, we find the life of the Deity transcending every limit, and so name Him 'ungenerate'; but when we turn our thoughts upon the ages to come, we call the infinite in Him, the boundless, the absence of all end to His living, 'imperishability.' As, then, this endlessness is called imperishable, so too this beginninglessness is called ungenerate; and we arrive at these names by Conception. Such are the Master's words, and by them he teaches us this: that the Divine Life is essentially single and continuous with Itself, starting from no beginning, circumscribed by no end; and that the intuitions which we possess regarding this Life it is possible to make clear by words. That is, we express the never having come from any cause by the term unbeginning or ungenerate; and we express the not being circumscribed by any limit, and not being destroyed by any death, by the term imperishable, or unending; and this absence of cause, he defines, makes it right for us to speak of the Divine life as existing ungenerately; and this being without end we are to denote as imperishable, since anything that has ceased to exist is necessarily in a state of annihilation, and when we hear of anything annihilated, we at once think of the destruction of its substance. He says then, that One Who never ceases to exist, and is a stranger to all destruction and dissolution, is to be called imperishable.

What, then, does Eunomius say to this? "If He is imperishable only by reason of the unending in His Life, and ungenerate only by reason of the unbeginning, then wherein He is not imperishable He is perishable, and wherein He is not ungenerate He is generated. Who conceded to you this, Eunomius, that the imperishability is not to be associated with the whole life of God? Who ever divided that Life into two parts, and then put particular names to each half of the Life, so that to the division which the one name fitted the other could not be said to apply? This is the result of your dialectic sharpness; to say that the Life which has no beginning is perishable, and that what is imperishable cannot be associated with what is unbeginning! It is just as if, when one had said that man was rational, as well as capable of speculation and knowledge, attaching each phrase to the subject of them according to a different application and idea, some one was to jeer, and to go on in the same strain, "If man is capable of speculation and knowledge, he cannot, as regards this, be rational, but wherein he is capable of such knowledge, he is this and this only, and his nature does not admit of his being the other"; and reversely, if rational were made the definition of man, he were to deny in this case his being capable of this speculation and knowledge; for "wherein he is rational, he is proved devoid of mind.

But if the ridiculousness and absurdity in this case is plain to any one, neither in that former case is it at all doubtful. When you have read the passage from the Master, you will find that his childish sophistry will vanish like a shadow. In our case of the definition of man, the capability of knowledge is not hindered by the possession of reason, nor the reason by the capability of knowledge: no more is the eternity of the Divine Life deprived of imperishability, if it be unbeginning, or of beginninglessness, if we recognize its imperishability. This would-be seeker after truth, with the artifices of his dialectic shrewdness, inserts in our argument what comes from his own repertoire; and so he fights with himself and overthrows himself, without ever touching anything of ours. For our position was nothing but this; that the Life as existing without beginning is styled, by means of a fresh Conception, as ungenerate: is styled, I say, not, is made such; and that we mark the Life as going on into infinity with the appellation of imperishable; mark it, I say, as such, not, make it such; and that the result is, that while it is a property of the Divine Life, inherent in the subject, to be infinite in both views, the thoughts associated with that subject are expressed in this way or in that only as regards that particular term which indicates the thought expressed. One thought associated withthat life is, that it does not exist from any cause;

this is indicated by the term "ungenerate. Another thought about it is, that it is limitless and endless; this is represented by the word imperishable. Thus, while the subject remains what it is, above everything, whether name or thought, the not being from any cause, and the not changing into the non-existent, are signified by means of the Conception implied in the aforesaid words.

What, then, out of all that we have said, has stirred him up to this piece of childish folly, in which he returns to the charge and repeats himself in these words: "He will, then, be, as unbeginning, at once ungenerate and perishable, and, as unending, at once imperishable

and generated. It is plain to any possessing the least reflection, without our testing this logically, how absurdly foolish it is, or rather, how con- demnably blasphemous. By the same argument as that whereby he establishes this union of the perishable and the unbeginning, he can make sport of any proper and worthily conceived name for the Deity. For it is not these two ideas only that we associate with the Divine Life, I mean, the being without beginning, and the not admitting of dissolution; but It is called as well immaterial and without anger, immutable and incorporeal, invisible and formless, true and just; and there are numberless other ways of thinking about the Divine Life, each one of which is announced by an expressive sound with a peculiar meaning of its own. Well, to any name-any name, I mean, expressive of some proper conception of the Deity-it is open for us to apply this method of unnatural union devised by Eunomius. For instance, immateriality and absence of anger are both predicated of the Divine Life; but not with the same thought in both cases;

for by the term immaterial we convey the idea of purity from any mixture with matter, and by the term "without anger" the strangeness to any emotion of anger. Now in all probability Eunomius will run trippingly over all this, and have his dance, just as before, upon our words. Stringing together his absurdities in the same way, he will say: "If wherein He is separated from all mixture with matter He is called immaterial, in this respect He will not be without anger; and if by reason of His not indulging in anger He is without anger, it is impossible to attribute to him immateriality, but logic will compel us to admit that, in so far as He is exempt from matter, He is both immaterial and wrathful; and so you will find the same to be the case in respect to his other attributes. And if you like we will propound another pairing of the same, i.e. His immutability and His incorporeality. For both these terms being used of the Divine Life in a distinct sense, in their case also Eunomius' skill will embellish the same absurdity. For if His being always as He is is signified by the term immutable, and if the term incorporeal represents the spirituality of His essence, Eunomius will certainly say the same here also, that the terms are irreconcilable, and alien to each other, and that the notions which our minds attach to them haveno point of contact one with the other;

for inso far as God is always the same He is immutable, but not incorporeal; and in regard to the spirituality and formlessness of His essence, while He possesses attributes of incorporeality, He is not immutable; so that it happens that when immutability is considered with respect to the Divine Life, along with that immutability it is established that It is corporeal; but if spirituality is the object of search, you prove that It is at once incorporeal and mutable.

Such are the clever discoveries of Eunomius against the truth. For what need is there to go through all his argument with trifling prolixity? For in every instance you may see an attempt to establish the same futility. For instance, by an implication such as that above, what is true and what is just will be found opposed to each other; for there is a difference in meaning between truth and justice. So that by a parity of reasoning Eunomius will say about these also, that truth is not injustice, and that justice is absent from truth; and it

will happen that, when in respect of God we think of His being alien to injustice, the Divine Being will be shown to be at once just and untrue, while if we regard His being alien to untruth, we prove Him to be at once true and unjust. So, too, of His being invisible and formless. For according to a wise reasoning similar to that which we have adduced, it will not be permissible to say either that the invisible exists in that which is formless, or to say that that which is formless exists in that which is invisible;

but he will comprise form in that which is invisible, and so again, conversely, he will prove that that which is formless is visible, using the same language in respect of these as he devised in respect to that which is imperishable and unbeginning, to the effect that when we regard the incomposite nature of the Divine Life, we confess that it is formless, yet not invisible; and that when we reflect that we cannot see God with our bodily eyes, while thus admitting His invisibility, we cannot admit His being formless. Now if these instances seem ridiculous and foolish, much more will every sensible man condemn the absurdity of the statements, starting from which his argument has logically brought him to such a pitch of absurdity. Yet he carps at the Master's words, as wrong in seeing that which is imperishable in that which is unending, and that which is unending in that which is imperishable. Well, then, let us also have our sport, in a manner something like this cleverness of Eunomius. Let us examine his opinion about these two names aforesaid, and see what it is.

Either, he says, that which is endless is distinct. in meaning from that which is imperishable, or else the two must make one. But if he call both one, he will be supporting our argument. But if he say that the meaning of the imperishable is one thing, and that that of being unending is another, then of necessity, in the case of things differing from each other, the force of the one cannot be equivalent to the force of the other. If, then, the idea of the imperishable is one, and that of being endless is another, and each of these is what the other is not, neither will he grant that the imperishable is unending, nor that the unending is imperishable, but the unending will be perishable, and the imperishable will be terminable. But I must beg my readers not to turn a ridiculous method of condemnation against us. We have been compelled to adopt such a sportive vein against the mockeries of our opponent, that we might thereby break through the puerile toil of his sophistries. But if it would not be too wearisome to my readers, it would not be out of place again to set forth what Eunomius says in his own words. "If," says he, "God is imperishable only by reason of the unending in His Life, and ungenerate only by reason of the unbeginning, then wherein He is not imperishable He is perishable, and wherein He is not ungenerate He is generated.

Then returning to the charge, he repeats, "He will then be, as unbeginning, at once ungenerate and perishable: and, as unending, at once imperishable and generated; for I pass over the superfluous and unseasonable remarks which he has interspersed here, as in no way contributing to the proving of his point. Now I think it is easy for any one to see, by his own words, that the drift of our argument has no connection whatever with the accusation which he lays against us. "For we call the God of the universe imperishable and ungenerate," says the Master, "using these words with different applications. "His transcending,"

he continues, "every limit of the ages, and every distance in temporal extension, whether we consider the previous or the subsequent, this absence of limit or circumscription on either hand in the Eternal Life we mark in the one case with the name of imperishability, and in the other case with the name of ungeneracy. But Eunomius would make out that we say that the being without beginning is His essence, and again that the being without end is His essence, as though we brought forward two contradictory segments of essence; and in this way he establishes an absurdity, and while laying down, and then fighting against, positions of his own, and reducing notions of his own concoction to an absurdity, he lays no hold on our argument in any single point. For that God is imperishable only wherein His Life is unending, is his statement, not ours.

In like manner, that the imperishable is not without beginning, is an invention of that same subtle cleverness which would constitute a negative attribute an essence; whereas we do not define any such negative attribute as an essence. Now it is a negative attribute of God, that neither does the Life cease in dissolution, nor did It have a commencement in generation; and this we express by these two words, imperishability and ungeneracy. But Eunomius, mixing up his own folly with our teaching, does not seem to understand that he is publishing his own disgrace by his calumnious accusations. For, in defining ungeneracy as an essence, he will logically arrive at the same pitch of absurdity which he ascribes to our teaching. For as beginning means one thing, and end means another, by virtue of an intervening extension, if any one allow the privation of the first of these to be essence, he must suppose His Life to be only half subsisting in this being without beginning, and not to extend further, by virtue of His nature, to the being without end, if ungeneracy be regarded as itself His nature. But if any one insist that both are essence, then, according to the definition put forward by Eunomius, each of these terms must necessarily, by virtue of its inherent meaning, be counted as essence, being just as much as, and no more than, is indicated by the meaning of the term;

and thus the argument of Eunomius will not be without force, inasmuch as that which is without beginning does not involve the notion of being without end, and vice versa, since according to his account each of the things mentioned is an essence, and there is no confusion between the two in their relation to each other, the notion of beginning being different to that of ending, while the words which express privation of these also differ in their significations.

But that he himself also may be brought to the knowledge of his own trifling, we will convict him from his own statements. For in the course of his argument he says that God, in that He is without end, is ungenerate, and that, in that He is ungenerate, He is without end, as if the meanings of the two terms were identical. If, then, by reason of His being without end He is ungenerate, and the being without end and ungenerate are convertible terms, and he admits that the Son also is without end, by a parity of reasoning he must necessarily admit that the Son is ungenerate, if (as he has said) His being without end and His being without beginning are identical in meaning. For just as in the ungenerate he sees that which is

without beginning, so he allows that in that which is without end also he sees that which is without beginning. For otherwise he would not have made the terms wholly convertible. But God, he says, is ungenerate by nature, and not by contrast with the ages. Well, who is there that contends that God is not by nature all that He is said to be? For we do not say that God is just, and almighty, and Father, and imperishable, by contrast with the ages, nor by His relation to any other thing that exists. But in connection with the subject itself, whatever He may be in His nature, we entertain every idea that is a reverent idea;

so that supposing neither ages, nor any other created thing, had been made, God would no less be what we believe Him to be, being in no need of the ages to constitute Him what He is. "But," says Eunomius, "He has a Life that is not extraneous, nor composite, nor admitting of differences; for He Himself is Life eternal by virtue of that Life itself immortal, by virtue of that immortality imperishable. This we are taught respecting the Only-begotten as well; nor can any one impugn this teaching without openly opposing the declaration of S. John. For life was not brought in from without upon the Son either (for He says, "I am the Life "), nor is His Life either composite, nor does it admit difference, but by virtue of that life itself He is immortal (for in what else but in life can we see immortality?), and by virtue of that immortality He is imperishable. For that which is stronger than death must naturally be incapable of corruption.

Thus far our argument goes with him. But the riddle with which he accompanies his words we must leave to those trained in the wisdom of Prunicus to interpret: for he seems to have produced what he has said from that system. "Being incorruptible without beginning, He is ungenerate without end, being so called absolutely, and independently of aught beside Himself. Now whoever has purged ears and an enlightened understanding knows, even without my saying it, that beyond the jingle of words produced by their extraordinary combination, there is no trace of sense in what he says; and if any shadow of an idea could be found in such a din of words, it would prove to be either profane or ridiculous. For what do you mean when you say that He is without beginning as being without end, and without end as being without beginning? Do you think beginning identical with end, and that the two words are employed in the same sense, just as the appellations Simon and Peter represent one and the same subject, and on this account, in accordance with your thinking beginning and end the same, did you, combining under one signification these two words which denote privation of each other,-end, I mean, and beginning,-and taking the being without end as convertible with the being without end, blend and confound one word with the other;

and is this the meaning of such a mixing up of words, when you say that He is ungenerate as being without end, and that He is without end as being ungenerate? Yet how is it that you did not see the profanity as well as the ridiculous folly of your words? For if by this novel confusion of the words they are made convertible, so that ungenerate means ungenerate without end, and that which is without end is such ungenerately, it follows by necessity that that which is without end must needs be so as being ungenerate: and thus it comes to pass, my good friend, that your much-talked-of ungeneracy, which you say is the only

characteristic of the Father's essence, will be found to be shared with whatever is immortal, and to be making all things con-substantial with the Father, because it is alike apparent in all things whose life, by reason of their immortality, goes on to infinity, archangels, that is, angels, human souls, and, it may be also, in the Apostate host, the Devil and his daemons. For if that which is without end, and imperishable, must also by your argument be ungenerately imperishable, then in whatsoever is without end and imperishable there must be connoted ungeneracy. These are the absurdities into which those men fall who, before they have learnt what it is fitting for them to learn, only publish their own ignorance by what they attempt to teach.

For if he had any faculty of discernment, he would not be ignorant of the peculiar sense inherent in his terms, "without beginning," and "without end," and that the term without end is common to all things whose life we believe capable of extension to infinity, while the term without beginning belongs to Him alone Who is without originating cause, How, then, is it possible for us to regard that which is common to them all, as equivalent to that which is believed by all to be a special attribute of the Deity alone, so that we thereby either extend ungeneracy to everything that shares in immortality, or else must not allow immortality to any one of them, seeing that the being without end is to belong only to the ungenerate, and vice versa, the being ungenerate is to belong only to that which is without end? Thus everything without end would have to be regarded as ungenerate.

But let us leave this, and along with it the usual foul deluge of calumny in his words; and let us go on to his subsequent quotations (of Basil). But I think it would perhaps be well to pass without examination over most of these subsequent words. For in all of them he shows himself the same, not grappling with that which we have really said, but only inventing for himself points for refutation which he pretends are taken from our statement. To go carefully through these would be pronounced useless by any one possessed of judgment; for any understanding reader of his book can from his very words perceive his scurrility. He says that God's Glory is prior to our leader's "conception. We too do not deny that. For God's glory, whatever we are to think of it, is prior not only to this present generation of ours, but to all creation; it transcends the ages. What, then, is gained for his argument from this fact, that God's glory is conceded to be superior not only to Basil, but to all the ages? "Yes, but this name is His glory," he says. But pray tell us, in order that we may assent to this statement, who has proved that the appellation is identical with the glory? "A law of our nature," he replies, "teaches us that, in naming realities, the dignity of the names does not depend on the will of those who give them. What is this law of nature?

And how is it that it is not in force amongst all? If nature had really enacted such a law, it ought to have authority amongst all who share the common nature, just as the other things peculiar to that nature have. If, in fine, it was the law of nature that caused the appellations to spring up for us from the objects, just as her plants spring up from seeds and roots, and she did not entrust the significant naming of each of the subjects to the choice of those who had to indicate the objects, then all mankind would be of one tongue. For if

the names imposed upon these objects did not vary, we should not differ from one another in the department of speech. He says it is "a holy thing, and most closely connected with the designs of Providence, that their sounds should be imposed upon realities from a source above us. How, is it, then, that the Prophets were ignorant of this holy thing, and were not instructed in this design of Providence, who according to your account did not make God at all of this Ungeneracy? How, too, is it that the Deity Himself never knew of this kind of holiness, when He did not give names from above to the animals which He had formed, but gave away this power of name-giving to Adam?

If it is closely connected with the designs of Providence, as Eunomius says, and a holy thing, that their sounds should be imposed from above upon realities, it is certainly an unholy thing, and an unfitting thing, that these names should have been fitted to the things that are by any here below. "But the universal Guardian," he says, "thought it right to engraft these names in our minds by a law of His creation. And how was it, then, if these were engrafted in the minds of men, that from Adam onward to your transgression no fruits of this folly were produced, grafted as they were, according to you, in those minds, so that ungeneracy should be the name of the Father's essence? Adam and all in succession after him would have pronounced this word, if such had been grafted by God in his nature. For as all that now grows upon the earth continues always, owing to a transmission of its seed from the first creation, and not one single seed at the present time innovates upon the natural form, so this word, if it had been, as you say, grafted by God in our nature, would have sprung up along with the first utterances of the first-formed human beings, and would have accompanied the line of their posterity.

But seeing that this word did not exist at the first (for no one in former generations and up to the present ever uttered such a word, except this man), it is plain that it is a bastard invention, that has sprung up from the seed of tares, not from that good seed which God has sown, to use evangelic words, in the field of our nature. For all the things that characterize our common nature do not have their beginning now, but appeared with that nature at its first formation; such, for instance, as the operation of the senses, the appetitive, or contrary, instinct of the man with regard to anything, and other generally acknowledged accompaniments of his nature, none of which a particular epoch has introduced amongst those born in it; but our humanity is preserved continually, from first to last, within the same circle of qualities, losing none which it had at the beginning, any more than it acquires any which it had not then.

But just as, while sight is a faculty common to our nature, scientific observation comes by training to those who have devoted themselves to some science (it is not every one, for instance, who can observe with the theodolite, or prove a theorem by means of lines in geometry, or do anything else, where art has introduced, not mere sight, but a special use of sight), so too, while one might pronounce the possession of reason to be a common property of humanity united to the very essence of our nature from above, the invention of terms significative of realities is the work of men who, possessing from above the power of reason,

are continually finding out, according as they wish for them towards the elucidation of that which they plainly see, certain words expressive of these things. "But if these views are to prevail," says he, "one of two things is proved; either that conception is anterior to those who conceive, or that the names naturally befitting the Deity, and pre-existent to everything, are posterior to the beginning of man. Ought we to continue the fight against such assertions, and join issue with such manifest absurdity?

But who, pray, is so simple as to be harmed by such arguments, and to imagine that if names are once believed to be an outcome of the reasoning faculty, he must allow that the utterance of names is anterior to those who utter them, or else that he must think he is sinning against the Deity, in that every man continues to name the Deity, according as each after birth is capable of conceiving Him? As to this last supposition, it has been already explained that the Supreme Being has no need Himself of words as delivered by a voice and a tongue; and it would be superfluous to repeat what would only encumber the argument. In fine, a Being Whose nature is neither lacking nor redundant, but simply perfect, neither fails to possess anything that is necessary, nor possesses what is not necessary. Since, then, we have proved previously, and all thinking men unanimously agree, that the calling by names is not a necessity of the Deity, no one can deny the extreme profanity of thus assigning to Him what is not a necessity.

But I do not think that we need linger on this, nor minutely examine that which follows. To the more attentive reader, the argument elaborated by our opponent will itself appear in the light of a special pleader on the side of orthodoxy. He says, for instance, that imperishability and immortality are the very essence of the Deity. For my part I see no need to contend with him, no matter whether these qualities aforesaid only accrue to the Deity, or whether they are, by virtue of their signification, His essence; whichever of these two views is adopted, it will completely support our argument. For if the being imperishable only accrues to the essence, the not being generated will also most certainly only accrue to it; and so the idea of ungeneracy will be ejected from being the mark of the essence. If, on the other hand, because God is not subject to destruction, one affirms imperishability to be His essence, and, because He is stronger than death, one therefore defines immortality to be His very essence, and if the Son is imperishable and immortal (as He is), imperishability and immortality will also be the essence of the Only-begotten. If, then, the Father is imperishability, and the Son imperishability, and each of these imperishabilities is the essence, and no difference exists between them as regards the idea of imperishability, one essence will differ from the other essence in no way at all, seeing that in both equally the nature is a stranger to any corruption.

Even if he should resume the same method as before, and place us on the horns of his dilemma from which, as he thinks, there is no escape, saying that, if we distinguish that which accrues from that which is, we make the Deity composite, whereas if we acknowledge His simplicity, then the imperishability and the ungeneracy are seen at once to be significative of His very essence-even then again we can show that he is fighting for our side. For

if he will have it that God is made composite by our saying that anything accrues to Him, then he certainly cannot eject the Fatherhood either from the essence, but must confess that He is Father by His nature as much as He is imperishable and immortal; and so without intending it he must admit the Son also to partake of that intimate nature; for it will not be possible, if God is essentially Father, to exclude the Son from a relationship to Him thus essential. But if he says that the Fatherhood accrues to God, but is outside the circle of the substance, then he must concede to us that we may say anything we like accrues to the Deity, since the Divine simplicity is in no way marred, if His quality of ungeneracy is made to mean something outside the essence.

If, however, he declares that the imperishability and the ungeneracy do mean the essence, and if he insists that these two words are equivalent, since, by reason of the same meaning lying in each, there is no difference between them, and if he thus assert that the very idea of imperishability and ungeneracy is one and the same, the One who is the first of these must necessarily be the second too. But that the Son is imperishable, let us observe, even these men entertain no doubt; therefore, by Eunomius' argument, the Son also is ungenerate, if imperishability and ungeneracy are to mean the same thing. So that he must accept one of two alternatives; either he must agree with us that ungeneracy is other than imperishability, or, if he abides by his assertions, he must in various ways speak blasphemy about the Only-begotten, making Him, for instance, perishable, in order that he may not have to say that He is ungenerate; or ungenerate, in order that he may not prove Him perishable.

But now I do not know which it is best to do; to pursue step by step this subject, or to put an end here to our contest with such folly. Well, as in the case of those who are selling destructive drugs, a very slight experiment guarantees to the purchasers the destructive power latent in all the drug, and no one doubts, after he has found out by an experiment its partial deadliness, that the drug sold is entirely of this deadly character, so I think it can be no longer doubtful to reflecting persons that this poisonous dose of argument, of which a specimen has been shown in what we have already examined, will continue throughout to be such as that which we have just refuted. For this reason I think it better not to prolong this detailed dwelling upon his absurdities. Nevertheless, seeing that the champions of this error discover plausibility for it from many quarters, and there is reason to fear lest to have overlooked any of their efforts will be made a specious pretext for misrepresenting us as having shirked their strongest point, I beg for this reason those who follow us out in this work to accompany our argument still, without charging us with prolixity, while it expands itself to meet the attacks of error along the whole line.

Observe, then, that he has scarcely ceased weaving in the depths of his slumber this dream about conception before he arms himself again from his storehouse with those monstrous and senseless methods, and turns his argument into another dream much more meaningless than his previous illusion. But we may best know how absurd his efforts are by observing his treatment of "privation"; though to grapple with his nonsense in all its range would require a Eunomius, or one of his school, men who have never spent a thought on serious

realities. We will, however, in a concise way run over the heads of it, that while none of his charges is omitted, no meaningless item may help to prolong the discussion to an absurd length.

When, then, he is on the point of introducing this treatment of terms of "privation," he takes upon himself to show "the incurable absurdity," as he calls it, of our teaching, and its "simulated and culpable caution . Such is his promise; but the proof of these accusations is, what? "Some have said that the Deity is ungenerate by virtue only of the privation of generation; but we say, in refutation of these, that neither this word nor this idea is in any way whatever applicable to the Deity. Let him point out the maintainer of such a statement, if any from the first creation of man to the present day, whether in foreign or in Greek lands, has ever committed himself to such an utterance; and we will be silent. But no one in the whole history of mankind will be found to have said such a thing, except some madman. For who was ever so reeling from intoxication, who was ever so beside himself with madness or delirium, as to say, in so many words, that generation belongs naturally to the ungenerate God, but that, deprived of this natural condition, He becomes ungenerate instead of generated? But these are the shifts of rhetoric; namely, to escape when they are refuted from the shame of their refutation by means of some supposititious characters.

It was in this way that he has apologized for that celebrated "Apology" of his, transferring as he did the blame for that title to jurymen and accusers , though unable to show that there were any accusers, any trial, or any court at all. Now, too, with the air of one who would correct another's folly, he pretends that he is driven by necessity to speak in this way. This is what his proof of our "incurable absurdity," and our "simulated and culpable caution," amounts to. But he goes on to say that we do not know what to do in our present position, and that to cover our perplexity we take to abusing him for his worldly learning, while we ourselves claim a monopoly of the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Here is his other dream, namely, that he has got so much of the heathen learning, that he appears by means of it a formidable antagonist to Basil. Just so there have been some men who have imagined themselves enthroned with basilicals, and of an exalted rank, because the deluded vision of their dreams, born of their waking longings, puts such fancies into their hearts. He says that Basil, not knowing what to do after what has been said, abuses him for his worldly learning.

He would indeed have set a high value on such abuse, that is, on being thought formidable because of the abundance of his words even by any ordinary hearer, not to mention by Basil, and by men like him (if any are entirely like him, or ever have been). But, as for his intervening argument, if such low scurrility, and such tasteless buffoonery, can be called argument, by which he thinks he impugns our cause, I pass it all over, for I deem it an abominable and ungracious thing to soil our treatise with such pollutions; and I loathe them as men loathe some swollen and noisome ulcer, or turn from the spectacle presented by those whose skin is bloated by excess of humours, and disfigured with tuberous warts. And for a while our

argument shall be allowed to expand itself freely, without having to turn to defend itself against men who are ready to scoff at and to tear to pieces everything that is said.

Every term-every term, that is, which is really such-is an utterance expressing some movement of thought. But every operation and movement of sound thinking is directed as far as it is possible to the knowledge and the contemplation of some reality. But then the whole world of realities is divided into two parts; that is, into the intelligible and the sensible. With regard to sensible phaenomena, knowledge, on account of the perception of them being so near at hand, is open for all to acquire; the judgment of the senses gives occasion to no doubt about the subject before them. The differences in colour, and the differences in all the other qualities which we judge of by means of the sense of hearing, or smell, or touch, or taste, can be known and named by all possessing our common humanity; and so it is with all the other things which appear to be more obvious to our apprehension, the things, that is, pertaining to the age in which we live, designed for political and moral ends. But in the contemplation of the intelligible world, on account of that world transcending the grasp of the senses, we move, some in one way, some in another, around the object of our search; and then, according to the idea arising in each of us about it, we announce the result as best we can, striving to get as near as possible to the full meaning of the thing thought about through the medium of expressive phrases.

In this, though it is often possible to have achieved the task in both ways, when thought does not fail to hit the mark, and utterance interprets the notion with the appropriate word, yet it may happen that we may fail even in both, or in one, at least, of the two, when either the comprehending faculty or the interpreting capacity is carried beside the proper mark. There being, then, two factors by which every term is made a correct term, the mental exactitude and the verbal utterance, the result which commands approval in both ways, will certainly be the preferable; but it will not be a lesser gain, not to have missed the right conception, even though the word itself may happen to be inadequate to that thought. Whenever then, our thought is intent upon those high and unseen things which sense cannot reach (I mean, upon that divine and unspeakable world with regard to which it is an audacious thing to grasp in thought anything in it at random and more audacious still to trust to any chance word the representing of the conception arising from it), then, I say, turning from the mere sound of phrases, uttered well or ill according to the mental faculty of the speaker, we search for the thought, and that alone, which is found within the phrases, to see whether that itself be sound, or otherwise; and we leave the minutiae of phrase and name to be dealt with by the artificialities of grammarians.

Now, seeing that we mark with an appellation only those things which we know, and those things which are above our knowledge it is not possible to seize by any distinctive terms (for how can one put a mark upon a thing we know nothing about?), therefore, because in such cases there is no appropriate term to be found to mark the subject adequately, we are compelled by many and differing names, as there may be opportunity, to divulge our surmises as they arise within us with regard to the Deity. But, on the other hand, all that

actually comes within our comprehension is such that it must be of one of these four kinds: either contemplated as existing in an extension of distance, or suggesting the idea of a capacity in space within which its details are detected, or it comes within our field of vision by being circumscribed by a beginning or an end where the non-existent bounds it in each direction (for everything that has a beginning and an end of its existence, begins from the non-existent, and ends in the non-existent), or, lastly, we grasp the phaenomenon by means of an association of qualities wherein dying, and sufferance, and change, and alteration, and such-like are combined. Considering this, in order that the Supreme Being may not appear to have any connection whatever with things below, we use, with regard to His nature, ideas and phrases expressive of separation from all such conditions;

we call, for instance, that which is above all times pre-temporal, that which is above beginning unbeginning, that which is not brought to an end unending, that which has a personality removed from body incorporeal, that which is never destroyed imperishable, that which is unreceptive of change, or sufferance, or alteration, passionless, changeless, and unalterable. Such a class of appellations can be reduced to any system that they like by those who wish for one; and they can fix on these actual appellations other appellations "privative," for instance, or "negative," or whatever they like. We yield the teaching and the learning of such things to those who are ambitious for it; and we will investigate the thoughts alone, whether they are within or beyond the circle of a religious and adequate conception of the Deity.

Well, then, if God did not exist formerly, or if there be a time when He will not exist, He cannot be called either unending or without beginning; and so also neither inalterable, nor incorporeal, nor imperishable, if there is any suspicion of body, or destruction, or alteration with regard to Him. But if it be part of our religion to attribute to Him none of these things, then it is a sacred duty to use of Him names privative of the things abhorrent to His Nature, and to say all that we have so often enumerated already, viz. that He is imperishable, and unending, and ungenerate, and the other terms of that class, where the sense inherent in each only informs us of the privation of that which is obvious to our perception, but does not interpret the actual nature of that which is thus removed from those abhorrent conditions. What the Deity is not, the signification of these names does point out; but what that further thing, which is not these things, is essentially, remains undivulged. Moreover, even the rest of these names, the sense of which does indicate some position or some state, do not afford that indication of the Divine nature itself, but only of the results of our reverent speculations about it.

For when we have concluded generally that no single thing existing, whether an object of sense or of thought, is formed spontaneously or fortuitously, but that everything discoverable in the world is linked to the Being Who transcends all existences, and possesses there the source of its continuance, and we then perceive the beauty and the majesty of the wonderful sights in creation, we thus get from these and such-like marks a new range of thoughts about the Deity, and interpret each one of the thoughts thus arising within us by

a special name, following the advice of Wisdom, who says that "by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionately the Maker of them is seen . We address therefore as Creator Him Who has made all mortal things, and as Almighty Him Who has compassed so vast a creation, Whose might has been able to realize His wish. When too we perceive the good that is in our own life, we give in accordance with this the name of Good to Him Who is our life's first cause. Then also having learnt from the Divine writings the incorruptibility of the judgment to come, we therefore call Him Judge and Just, and to sum up in one word, we transfer the thoughts that arise within us about the Divine Being into the mould of a corresponding name; so that there is no appellation given to the Divine Being apart from some distinct intuition about Him.

Even the word God (Qeoj) we understand to have come into usage from the activity of His seeing; for our faith tells us that the Deity is everywhere, and sees (qeasqai) all things, and penetrates all things, and then we stamp this thought with this name (Qeoj), guided to it by the Holy Voice. For he who says, "O God, attend unto me ," and, "Look, O God ," and, "God knoweth the secrets of the heart plainly ," reveals the latent meaning of this word, viz. that Qeoj is so called from qeasqai. For there is no difference between saying "Attend unto," "Look," and "See. Since, then, the seer must look towards some sight, God is rightly called the Seer of that which is to be seen. We are taught, then, by this word one sectional operation of the Divine Being, though we do not grasp in thought by means of it His substance itself, believing nevertheless that the Divine glory suffers no loss because of our being at a loss for a naturally appropriate name. For this inability to give expression to such unutterable things, while it reflects upon the poverty of our own nature, affords an evidence of God's glory, teaching us as it does, in the words of the Apostle, that the only name naturally appropriate to God is to believe Him to be "above every name . That he transcends every effort of thought, and is far beyond any circumscribing by a name, constitutes a proof to man of His ineffable majesty .

Thus much, then, is known to us about the names uttered in any form whatever in reference to the Deity. We have given a simple explanation of them, unencumbered with argument, for the benefit of our candid hearers; as for Eunomius' nerveless contentions about these names, we judge it a thing disgraceful and unbecoming to us seriously to confute them. For what could one say in answer to a man who declares that we "attach more weight to the outward form of the name than to the value of the thing named, giving to names the prerogative over realities, and equality to things unequal"? Such are the words that he gives utterance to. Well, let any one who can do so considerately, judge whether this calumnious charge of his against us has anything in it dangerous enough to make it worth our while to defend ourselves as to our "giving to names the prerogative over realities"; for it is plain to every one that there is no single name that has in itself any substantial reality, but that every name is but a recognizing mark placed on some reality or some idea, having of itself no existence either as a fact or a thought.

How it is possible, then, to assign one's gratuities to the non-subsistent, let this man, who claims to be using words and phrases in their natural force, explain to the followers of his error. I would not, however, have mentioned this at all, if it had not placed a necessity upon me of proving our author's weakness both in thought and expression. As for all the passages from the inspired writings which he drags in, though quite unconnected with his object, formulating thereby a difference of immortality in angels and in men, I do not know what he has in his eye, or what he hopes to prove by them, and I pass them by. The immortal, as long as it is immortal, admits of no degrees of more and less arising from comparison. For if the one member of the comparison is, by the force of contrast, to suffer a diminution or privation as regards its immortality, it must needs be that such a member is not to be called immortal at all; for how can that be called absolutely immortal in which mortality is detected by this juxtaposition and comparison? And to think of that fine hair-splitting of his, in not allowing the idea of privation to be unvarying and general, but in asserting, on the contrary, that while separation from good things is privation, the absence of bad things is not to be marked by that term!

If he is to get his way here, he will take the truth from the Apostle's words, which say that He "only hath immortality ," which He gives to others. What this newly-imported dictum of his has to do with his preceding argument, neither we nor any one else amongst reflecting people are able to understand. Yet because we have not the mental strength to take in these scientific subtleties, he calls us "unscientific both in our judgment as to objects, and in our use of terms"; those are his very words. But all this, as having no power to shake the truth, I pass over without further notice; and also how he misrepresents the view we have expounded of the imperishable, and of the unembodied, namely, that of these terms the latter signifies the undimensional, where the threefold extension belonging to all bodies is not to be found, and the former signifies that which is not receptive of destruction: and also how he says, that "we do not think it right to let the shape of these words be lost by extending them to ideas inapplicable to them, or to imagine that each of them is indicative of something not present or not accruing; but rather we think they are indicative of the actual essence"; all this I deem worthy only of silence and deep oblivion, and leave to the reader to detect for himself their mingled folly and blasphemy.

He actually asserts that the perishable is not opposed to the imperishable, and that the privative sign does not mark the absence of the bad, but that the word which is the subject of our inquiry means the essence itself!

Well, if the term imperishable or indestructible is not considered by this maker of an empty system to be privative of destruction, then by a stern necessity it must follow that this shape given to the word indicates the very reverse (of the privation of destruction). If, that is, indestructibility is not the negation of destruction, it must be the assertion of something incongruous with itself; for it is the very nature of opposites that, when you take away the one, you admit the other to come in in its place. But as for the bitter task which he necessitates of proving that the Deity is unreceptive of death, as if there existed any one

who held the contrary opinion, we leave it to take care of itself. For we hold that in the case of opposites, it makes no difference at all whether we say that something is A, or that it is not the opposite of A; for instance, in the present discussion, when we have said that God is Life, we implicitly forbid by this assertion the thought of death in connection with Him, even though we do not express this in speech; and when we assert that He is unreceptive of death, we in the same breath show Him to be Life.

"But I do not see," he rejoins, "how God can be above His own works simply by virtue of such things as do not belong to Him ." And on the strength of this clever sally he calls it a union of folly and profanity, that our great Basil has ventured on such terms. But I would counsel him not to indulge his ribaldry too freely against those who use these terms, lest he should be unconsciously at the same moment heaping insults on himself. For I think that he himself would not gainsay that the very grandeur of the Divine Nature is recognized in this, viz. in the absence of all participation in those things which the lower natures are shown to possess. For if God were involved in any of these peculiarities, He would not possess His superiority, but would be quite identified with any single individual amongst the beings who share that peculiarity. But if He is above such things, by reason, in fact, of His not possessing them, then He stands also above those who do possess them; just as we say that the Sinless is superior to those in sin. The fact of being removed from evil is an evidence of abounding in the best. But let him heap these insults on us to his heart's content. We will only remark, in passing, on a single one of the points mentioned under this head, and will then return to the discussion of the main question.

He declares that God surpasses mortal beings as immortal, destructible beings as indestructible, generated beings as ungenerate, just in the same degree. Is it not, then, plain to all what this blasphemy of a fighter against God would prove? or must we by verbal demonstration unveil the profanity? Well, who does not know the axiom, that things which are distanced to the same amount (by something else) are level with one another? If, then, the destructible and the generated are surpassed in the same degree by the Deity, and if our Lord is generated, it will be for Eunomius to draw the blasphemous conclusion resulting from these data. For it is clear that he regards generation as the same thing as destruction and death, just as in his previous discussions he declares the ungenerate to be the same thing as the indestructible. If, then, he looks upon destruction and generation as upon the same level, and asserts that the Deity is equally removed from both of them, and if our Lord is generated, let no one demand from ourselves that we should apply the logical conclusion, but let him draw it for himself; if indeed it is true, as he says, that from the generated and from the destructible God is equally removed. "But," he proceeds, "it is not allowable for us to call Him indestructible and immortal by virtue of any absence of death and destruction.

Let those who are led by the nose, and turn in any direction that each successive teacher pleases, believe this, and let them declare that destruction and death do belong to God, to make it possible for Him to be called immortal and indestructible! For if these terms of privation, as Eunomius says, "do not indicate the absence of death and destruction," then

the presence in Him of the things opposite to, and estranged from, these is most certainly proved by this treatment of terms. Each one amongst conceivable things is either absent from something else, or it is not absent: for instance, light, darkness; life, death; health, disease, and so on. In all these cases, if one asserts that the one conception is absent, he will necessarily demonstrate that the other is present. If, then, Eunomius denies that God can be called immortal by reason of the absence of death, he will plainly prove the presence of death in Him, and so deny any immortality in the case of the universal Deity. But perhaps some one will say that we fix unfairly on his words; for that no one is so mad as to affirm that God is not immortal. But then, when none of mankind possess any knowledge of that which certain people secretly imagine, it is by their words that we have to make our guess about those secret things.

Therefore let us again handle this dictum of his: "God is not called immortal by virtue of the absence of death." How are we to accept this statement, that death is not absent from the Deity though He be called immortal? If he really commands us to think like this, Eunomius' God will be certainly mortal, and subject to destruction; for he from whom death is not absent is not in his essence immortal. But again; if these terms signify the absence neither of death nor of destruction, either they are applied falsely to the God overall, or else they comprise within themselves some different meaning. What this meaning is, our system-maker must explain to us. Whereas we, the people who according to Eunomius are unscientific in our judgment of objects and in our use of terms, have been taught to call sound (for instance), not the man from whom strength is absent, but the man from whom disease is absent; and unmutilated, not the man who keeps away from drinking-parties, but the man who has no mutilation upon him; and other qualities in the same way we name from the presence or the absence of something; manly, for instance, and unmanly; sleepy and sleepless; and all the other terms like that, which custom sanctions.

Still I cannot see what profit there is in deigning to examine such nonsense. For a man like myself, who has lived to gray hairs , and whose eyes are fixed on truth alone, to take upon his lips the absurd and flippant utterances of a contentious foe, incurs no slight danger of bringing condemnation on himself. I will therefore pass over both those words and the adjoining passage; this, for instance, "Truth gives no evidence of any union of natures with God. Well, if these words had not been spoken, who ever was there (except yourself) who mentioned a double nature in the Deity at all? You, however, unite each idea of each name with the essence of the Father, and deny that anything externally accrues to Him, centering every one of His names in that essence. Again, "Neither does she write in the statute-book of our religion any idea that is external and fabricated by ourselves. With regard to these words again I shall deprecate the idea that I have quoted them with a view of amusing the reader with their absurdity; rather I have done so with a view to show with what a slender equipment of arguments this man, after rating us for our want of system, advances to take these audacious liberties with the name of Truth.

What is he in reasoning, and what is he in speech, that he should thus revel in showing himself off before his hidebound readers, who applaud him as victorious over everybody by force of argument when he has brought these disjointed utterances of his dry bombastic jargon to an end . "Immortality," he says, "is the essence itself. But what, then, do you assert to be the essence of the Only-begotten? I ask you that: is it immortality, or is it not? For remember that in His essence also the singleness admits, as you say, of no complexity of nature. If, then Eunomius denies that immortality is the essence of the Son, it is clear what he is aiming at; for it does not require an exceedingly penetrating understanding to discover what is the direct opposite to the immortal. Just as the logic of dichotomy exhibits the destructible instead of the indestructible, and the mutable instead of the immutable, so it exhibits the mortal instead of the immortal. What, therefore, will this setter forth of new doctrine do? What proper name will he give us for the essence of the Only-begotten? Again I put this question to our author. He must either grant that it is immortality, or deny it. If, then, he will not assent to its being immortality, he must assent to the contradictory proposition; by negativing the superior term he proves that it is death.

If, on the other hand, he shrinks from anything so monstrous, and names the essence of the Only-begotten also as immortality, he must perforce agree with us that there is in consequence no difference whatever, as to essence, between them. If the nature of the Father and the nature of the Son are equally immortality, and if immortality does not divide itself by any manner of difference, then it is confessed by our foes themselves, that on the score of essence no manner of difference is discoverable between the Father and the Son.

But it is time now to expose that angry accusation which he brings against us at the close of his treatise, saying that we affirm the Father to be from what is absolutely non-existent. Stealing an expression from its context, from which he drags it, as from its surrounding body, into a naked isolation, he tries to carp at it by worrying the word, or rather covering it with the slaver of his maddened teeth. I will therefore first give the meaning of the passage in which our Master explained this point to us; then I will quote it word for word: by so doing the man who intrudes upon the expository work of orthodox writers, only to undermine the truth itself, will be revealed in his true colours. Our Master, in introducing us in his own treatise to the true meaning of ungenerate, suggested a way to arrive at a real knowledge of the term in dispute somewhat as follows, pointing out at the same time that it had a meaning very far removed from any idea of essence.

He says that the Evangelist , in beginning our Lord's lineage according to the flesh from Joseph, and then going back to the generation continually preceding, and then ending the genealogy in Adam, and, because there was no earthly father anterior to this first-formed creature, saying that he was "the son of God," makes it obvious to every reader's intelligence with regard to the Deity, that He, from Whom Adam was, has not Himself His subsistence from another, after the likeness of the human lives just given. When, having passed through the whole of it, we at last grasp the thought of the Deity, we perceive at the same moment the First Cause of it all. But if any such cause be found dependent on something else, then

it is not a first cause. Therefore, if God is the First Cause of the Universe, there will be nothing whatever transcending this cause of all things. Such was our Master's exposition of the meaning of ungenerate; and in order that our testimony about it may not go beyond the exact truth, I will quote the passage.

"The evangelist Luke, when giving the genealogy according to the flesh of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and stepping up from the last to the first, begins with Joseph, saying that he was 'the son of Heli, which was the son of Matthat,' and so by ascending brings his enumeration up to Adam; but when he has come to the top and said, that Seth 'was the son of Adam, which was the son of God,' then he stops this process. As, then, he has said that Adam was the son of God, we will ask these men, 'But God, who is He the son of?' Is it not obvious to every one's intelligence that God is the son of no one? But to be the son of no one is to be without a cause, plainly; and to be without a cause is to be ungenerate. Now in the case of men, the being son of somebody is not the essence ; no more, in the case of the Deity Who rules the world, is it possible to say that the being ungenerate is the essence."

With what eyes will you now dare to gaze upon your guide? I speak to you, O flock of perishing souls! How can you still turn to listen to this man who has reared such a monument as this of his shamelessness in argument? Are ye not ashamed now, at least, if not before, to take the hand of a man like this to lead you to the truth? Do ye not regard it as a sign of his madness as to doctrine, that he thus shamelessly stands out against the truth contained in Scripture? Is this the way to play the champion of the truth of doctrine-namely, to accuse Basil of deriving the God over all from that which has absolutely no existence? Am I to tell the way he phrases it? Am I to transcribe the very words of his shamelessness? I let the insolence of them pass; I do not blame their invective, for I do not censure one whose breath is of bad odour, because it is of bad odour; or one who has bodily mutilation, beause he is mutilated. Things such as that are the misfortunes of nature; they escape blame from those who can reflect. This strength of vituperation, then, is infirmity in reasoning; it is an affliction of a soul whose powers of sound argument are marred. No word from me, then, about his invectives.

But as to that syllogism, with its stout irrefragable folds, in whose conclusion, to effect his darling object, he arrives at this accusation against us, I will write it out in its own precise words. "We will allow him to say that the Son exists by participation in the self-existent ; but (instead of this), he has unconsciously affirmed that the God over all comes from absolute nonentity. For if the idea of the absence of everything amounts to that of absolute nonentity , and the transposition of equivalents is perfectly legitimate, then the man who says that God comes from nothing says that He comes from nonentity. To which of these statements shall we first direct our attention? Shall we criticize his opinion about the Son "existing by participation" in the Deity, and his bespattering those who will not acquiesce in it with the foulness of his tongue; or shall we examine the sophism so frigidly constructed from the stuff of dreams? However, every one who possesses a spark of practical sagacity is not unaware that it is only poets and moulders of mythology who father sons "by

participation" upon the Divine Being. Those, that is, who string together the myths in their poems, fabricate a Dionysus, or a Hercules, or a Minos, and such-like, out of the combination of the superhuman with human bodies; and they exalt such personages above the rest of mankind, representing them as of greater estimation because of their participation in a superior nature.

Therefore,with regard to this opinion of his, carrying as it does within itself the evidence of its own folly and profanity, it is best to be silent; and to repeat instead that irrefragable syllogism of his, in order that every poor ignoramus on our side may understand what and how many are the advantages which those who are not trained in his technical methods are deprived of. He says, "If the idea of the absence of everything amounts to that of absolute nonentity, and the transposition of equivalents is perfectly legitimate, then the man who says that God comes from nothing, says that He comes from nonentity. He brandishes over us this Aristotelian weapon, but who has yet conceded to him, that to say that any one has no father amounts to saying that he has been generated from absolute nonentity? He who enumerates those persons whose line is recorded in Scripture is plainly thinking of a father preceding each person mentioned. For what relation is Heli to Joseph? What relation is Matthat to Heli? And what relation is Adam to Seth? Is it not plain to a mere child that this catalogue of names is a list of fathers? For if Seth is the son of Adam, Adam must be the father of one thus born from him; and so tell me, who is the father of the Deity Who is over all? Come, answer this question, open your lips and speak, exert all your skill in expression to meet such an inquiry.

Can you discover any expression that will elude the grasp of your own syllogism? Who is the father of the Ungenerate? Can you say? If you can, then He is not ungenerate. Pressed thus, you will say, what indeed necessity compels you to say,-No one is. Well, my dear sir, do you not yet find the weak seams of your sophism giving way? Do you not perceive that you have slavered upon your own lap? What says our great Basil? That the Ungenerate One is from no father. For the conclusion to be drawn from the mention of fathers in the preceding genealogy permits the word father, even in the silence of the evangelist, to be added to this confession of faith. Whereas, you have transformed "no one" into "nothing at all," and again "nothing at all" into "absolute nonentity," thereby concocting that fallacious syllogism of yours. Accordingly this clever result of professional shrewdness shall be turned against yourself. I ask, Who is the father of the Ungenerate One? "No one," you will be obliged to answer; for the Ungenerate One cannot have a father. Then, if no one is the father of the Ungenerate, and you have changed "no one" into "nothing at all," and "nothing at all" is, according to your argument, the same as "absolute nonentity," and the transposition of equivalents is, as you say, perfectly legitimate, then the man (i. e. you) who says that no one is the father of the Ungenerate One, says that the Deity Who is over all comes from absolute nonentity!

Such, to use your own words, is the "evil," as one might expect, not indeed "of valuing the character for being clever before one is really such" (for perhaps this does not amount to a

very great misfortune), but of not knowing oneself, and how great the distance is between the soaring Basil and a grovelling reptile. For if those eyes of his, with their divine penetration, still looked on this world, if he still swept over mankind now living on the pinions of his wisdom, he would have shown you with the swooping rush of his words, how frail is that native shell of folly in which you are encased, how great is he whom you oppose with your errors, while, with insults and invectives hurled at him, you are hunting for a reputation amongst decrepit and despicable creatures. Still you need not give up all hope of feeling that great man's talons . For this work of ours, while, as compared with his, it will be a great thing for it to be judged the fraction of one such talon, has, as regards yours, ability enough to have broken asunder the outside crust of your heresy, and to have detected the deformity that hides within.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.