The Divine Names

Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (c. AD 500)

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DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE,

ON DIVINE NAMES.

CAPUT I. TO MY FELLOW PRESBYTER, TIMOTHY, DIONYSIUS THE PRESBYTER. What is the purpose of the discourse, and what the tradition concerning Divine Names. SECTION I. Now then, O Blessed One, after the Theological Outlines , I will pass to the interpretation of the Divine Names, as best I can.

But, let the rule of the Oracles be here also prescribed for us, viz., that we shall establish the truth of the things spoken concerning God, not in the persuasive words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit-moved power of the Theologians, by aid of which we are brought into contact with things unutterable and unknown, in a manner unutterable and unknown, in proportion to the superior union of the reasoning and intuitive faculty and operation within us. By no means then is it permitted to speak, or even to think, anything, concerning the superessential and hidden Deity, beyond those things divinely revealed to us in the sacred Oracles . For Agnosia, (supra-knowledge) of its superessentiality above reason and mind and essence----to, it must we attribute the super-essential science, so far aspiring to the Highest, as the ray of the supremely Divine Oracles imparts itself, whilst we restrain ourselves in our approach to the higher glories by prudence and piety as regards things Divine. For, if we must place any confidence in the All Wise and most trustworthy Theology, things Divine are revealed and contemplated in proportion to the capacity of each of the minds, since the supremely Divine Goodness distributes Divinely its immeasurableness (as that which cannot be contained) with a justice which preserves those whose capacity is limited. For, as things intelligible cannot be comprehended and contemplated by things of sense, and things uncompounded and unformed by things compounded and formed;

and the intangible and unshaped formlessness of things without body, by those formed according to the shapes of bodies; in accordance with the self-same analogy of the truth, the superessential Illimitability is placed above things essential, and the Unity above mind above the Minds; and the One above conception is inconceivable to all conceptions; and the Good above word is unutterable by word----Unit

making one every unit, and superessential essence and mind inconceivable, and Word unutterable, speechlessness and inconception, and namelessness----being after the manner of no existing being, and Cause of being to all, but Itself not being, as beyond every essence, and as It may manifest Itself properly and scientifically concerning Itself.

SECTION II. Concerning this then, as has been said, the super-essential and hidden Deity, it is not permitted to speak or even to think beyond the things divinely revealed to us in the sacred Oracles. For even as Itself has taught (as becomes Its goodness) in the Oracles, the science and contemplation of Itself in Its essential Nature is beyond the reach of all created things, as towering superessentially above all. And you will find many of the Theologians, who have celebrated It, not only as invisible and incomprehensible, but also as inscrutable and un-traceable, since there is no trace of those who have penetrated to Its hidden infinitude. The Good indeed is not entirely uncommunicated to any single created being, but benignly sheds forth its super-essential ray, persistently fixed in Itself, by illuminations analagous to each several being, and elevates to Its permitted contemplation and communion and likeness, those holy minds, who, as far as is lawful and reverent, strive after It, and who are neither impotently boastful towards that which is higher than the harmoniously imparted Divine manifestation, nor, in regard to a lower level, lapse downward through their inclining to the worse, but who elevate themselves determinately and unwaveringly to the ray shining upon them; and, by their proportioned love of permitted illuminations, are elevated with a holy reverence, prudently and piously, as on new wings.

SECTION III. Following then, these, the supremely Divine standards, which also govern the whole holy ranks of the supercelestial orders,----whilst honouring the unre-vealed of the Godhead which is beyond mind and matter, with inscrutable and holy reverence of mind, and things unutterable, with a prudent silence, we elevate ourselves to the glories which illuminate us in the sacred Oracles, and are led by their light to the supremely Divine Hymns, by which we are supermundanely enlightened and moulded to the sacred Songs of Praise, so as both to see the supremely Divine illuminations given to us by them, according to our capacities, and to praise the good-giving Source of every holy manifestation of light, as Itself has taught concerning Itself in the sacred Oracles. For instance, that It is cause and origin and essence and life of all things; and even of those who fall away from It, both recalling and resurrection; and of those who have lapsed to the perversion of the Divine likeness, renewal and reformation; of those who are tossed about in a sort of irreligious unsteadiness, a religious stability; of those who have continued to stand, steadfastness; of those who are being conducted to It, a protecting Conductor; of those being illuminated, illumination; of those being perfected, source of perfection; of those being deified, source of deification; of those being simplified, simplification; of those being unified, unity; of every origin superessentially super-

original origin; and of the Hidden, as far as is right, beneficent communication; and, in one word, the life of the living, and essence of things that be; of all life and essence, origin and cause; because Its goodness produces and sustains things that be, in their being.

SECTION IV.

These things we have learned from the Divine Oracles, and you will find all the sacred Hymnology, so to speak, of the Theologians arranging the Names, of God with a view to make known and praise the beneficent progressions of the Godhead. Hence, we see in almost every theological treatise the Godhead religiously celebrated, both as Monad and unity, on account of the simplicity and oneness of Its supernatural indivisibility from which, as an unifying power, we are unified, and when our divided diversities have been folded together, in a manner supermundane, we are collected into a godlike unit and divinely-imitated union; but, also as Triad, on account of the tri-personal manifestation of the superessential productiveness, from which all paternity in heaven and on earth is, and is named; also, as cause of things existing, since all things were brought into being on account of Its creative goodness, both wise and good, because all things, whilst preserving the properties of their own nature unimpaired, are filled with every inspired harmony and holy comeliness, but pre-eminently, as loving towards man, because It truly and wholly shared, in one of Its Persons (subsistencies), in things belonging to us, recalling to Itself and replacing the human extremity, out of which, in a manner unutterable, the simplex Jesus was composed, and the Everlasting took a temporal duration, and He, Who is superessentially exalted above every rank throughout all nature, became within our nature, whilst retaining the unchangeable and unconfused steadfastness of His own properties.

And whatever other divinely-wrought illuminations, conformable to the Oracles, the secret tradition of our inspired leaders bequeathed to us for our enlightenment, in these also we have been initiated; now indeed, according to our capacity, through the sacred veils of the loving-kindness towards man, made known in the Oracles and hierarchical traditions, which envelop things intellectual in things sensible, and things superessential in things that are; and place forms and shapes around the formless and shapeless, and multiply and fashion the supernatural and formless simplicity in the variedness of the divided symbols; but, then, when we have become incorruptible and immortal, and have reached the Christlike and most blessed repose, according to the Divine saying, we shall be ”ever with the Lord,” fulfilled, through all-pure contemplations, with the visible manifestation of God covering us with glory, in most brilliant splendours, as the disciples in the most Divine Transfiguration, and participating in His gift of spiritual light, with unimpassioned and immaterial mind; and, even in the union beyond conception, through the agnostic and most blessed efforts after rays of surpassing brilliancy, in a more Divine

imitation of the supereelestial minds. For we shall be equal to the angels, as the truth of the Oracles affirms, and sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But now, to the best of our ability, we use symbols appropriate to things Divine, and from these again we elevate ourselves, according to our degree, to the simple and unified truth of the spiritual visions;

and after our every conception of things godlike, laying aside our mental energies, we cast ourselves, to the best of our ability, towards the superessential ray, in which all the terms of every kind of knowledge pre-existed in a manner beyond expression, which it is neither possible to conceive nor express, nor entirely in any way to contemplate, on account of Its being pre-eminently above all things, and super-unknown, and Its having previously contained within Itself, superessentially, the whole perfections of all kinds of essential knowledge and power, and Its being firmly fixed by Its absolute power, above all, even the supereelestial minds. For, if all kinds of knowledge are of things existing, and are limited to things existing, that, beyond all essence, is also elevated above all knowledge.

SECTION V. And yet, if It is superior to every expression and every knowledge, and is altogether placed above mind and essence,----being such as embraces and unites and comprehends and anticipates all things, but Itself is altogether incomprehensible to all, and of It, there is neither perception nor imagination, nor surmise, nor name, nor expression, nor contact, nor science;----in what way can our treatise thoroughly investigate the meaning of the Divine Names, when the superessential Deity is shewn to be without Name, and above Name?

But, as we said when we put forth the Theological Outlines, it is not possible either to express or to conceive what the One, the Unknown, the Super-essential self-existing Good is,----I mean the threefold Unity, the alike God, and the alike Good. But even the unions, such as befit angels, of the holy Powers, whether we must call them efforts after, or receptions from, the super-Unknown and surpassing Goodness, are both unutterable and unknown, and exist in those angels alone who, above angelic knowledge, are deemed worthy of them. The godlike minds (men) made one by these unions, through imitation of angels as far as attainable (since it is during cessation of every mental energy that such an union as this of the deified minds towards the super-divine light takes place) celebrate It most appropriately through the abstraction of all created things----enlightened in this matter, truly and super-naturally from the most blessed union towards It----that It is Cause Indeed of all things existing, but Itself none of them, as being superessentially elevated above all. To none, indeed, who are lovers of the Truth above all Truth, is it permitted to celebrate the supremely-Divine Essentiality----that which is the supersubsistence of the super-goodness,----neither as word or power, neither as mind or life or essence, but as pre-eminently separated from every condition, movement,

life, imagination, surmise, name, word, thought, conception, essence, position, stability, union, boundary, infinitude, all things whatever.

But since, as sustaining source of goodness, by the very fact of Its being, It is cause of all things that be, from all created things must we celebrate the benevolent Providence of the Godhead; for all things are both around It and for It, and It is before all things, and all things in It consist, and by Its being is the production and sustenance of the whole, and all things aspire to It----the intellectual and rational, by means of knowledge----things inferior to these, through the senses, and other things by living movement, or substantial and habitual aptitude.

SECTION VI. The theologians, having knowledge of this, celebrate It, both without Name and from every Name. Without name, as when they say that the Godhead Itself, in one of those mystical apparitions of the symbolical Divine manifestation, rebuked him who said, ”What is thy name?” and as leading him away from all knowledge of the Divine Name, said this, ”and why dost thou ask my Name? ”and this (Name) ”is wonderful,” And is not this in reality the wonderful Name, that which is above every Name----the Nameless----that fixed above every name which is named, whether in this age or in that which is to come? Also, as ”many named,” as when they again introduce It as saying, ”I am He, Who is----the Life----the Light----the God----the Truth.” And when the wise of God themselves celebrate Him, as Author of all things, under many Names, from all created things----as Good----as Beautiful----as Wise----as Beloved----as God of gods----as Lord of lords----as Holy of Holies----as Eternal----as Being----as Author of Ages----as Provider of Life----as Wisdom----as Mind----as Word----as Knowing----as preeminently possessing all the treasures of all knowledge----as Power----as Powerful----as King of kings----as Ancient of days----as never growing old----and Unchangeable----as Preservation-----as Righteousness----as Sanctification ---- as Redemption----as surpassing all things in greatness----and as in a gentle breeze.----Yea, they also say that He is in minds, and in souls, and in bodies, and in heaven and in earth, and at once, the same in the same----in the world----around the world----above the world----supercelestial, superessential, sun, star----fire----water----spirit----dew----cloud----self-hewn stone and rock----all things existing----and not one of things existing.

SECTION VII. Thus, then, the ”Nameless ”befits the cause of all, which is also above all, as do all the names of things existing, in order that there may be strictly a kingly rule over the whole; and that all things may be around It and dependent upon It, as cause, as beginning, as end. And Itself, according to the Divine saying, may be the ”all in all,” and truly sung as of all, producing, directing and perfecting and sustaining guard, and shrine, and turning towards Itself, and that uniformly, irresistibly and pre-eminently. For It is not only cause of sustenance, or life, or perfection,----so that from this or that forethought alone the Goodness above Name should be named, but It previously embraced in Itself all things existing, absolutely and with-

out limit, by the complete benefactions of His one and all-creating forethought, and by all created things in joint accord It is celebrated and named.

SECTION VIII.

Further also, the Theologians do not honour alone the Names of God which are given from universal or particular Providences, or objects of His forethought; but also from certain occasional Divine Visions, in the sacred temples or elsewhere, which enlightened the initiated or the Prophets, they name the surpassing bright Goodness which is above Name, after one or other causes and powers, and clothe It in forms and shapes of man, or fire, or electron, and celebrate Its eyes and ears, and locks of hair, and countenance, and hands, and back, and wings, and arms, and hinder parts and feet. Also they assign to It crowns and seats, and drinking vessels and bowls, and certain other things mystical, concerning which, in our Symbolic Theology, we will speak as best we can. But now, collecting from the Oracles so much as serves the purpose of our present treatise, and using the things aforesaid, as a kind of Canon, and keeping our eyes upon them, let us advance to the unfolding of the Names of God, which fall within the range of our understanding, and, what the hierarchical rule always teaches us throughout every phase of theology, let us become initiated (to speak authoritatively) in the godlike contemplations with a god-enlightened conception. And let us bring religious ears to the unfoldings of the Holy Names of God, implanting the Holy in the Holy, according to the Divine tradition, and removing it from the laughter and jeers of the uninitiated;

yea, rather, if certain men really are such, purifying them from their fighting against God in this matter. Be it thine, then, to guard these things, O excellent Timothy, according to the most holy leading, and to make the things Divine neither spoken nor known to the uninitiated. For myself, may Almighty God give me to celebrate, in a manner worthy of God, the numerous beneficent Names of the uncalled and unnamed Deity; and may He not take away a word of truth from my mouth.

CAPUT II. SECTION I. Concerning common and distinctive theology, and what is the Divine Union and distinction. LET then the self-existent Goodness be sung from the Oracles as defining and manifesting the whole supremely-Divine-Subsistence in its essential nature. For, what else is there to learn from the sacred theology, when it affirms that the Godhead Itself, leading the way, says, ”Why dost thou ask me concerning the Good?----None is Good except God alone.” Now, this, we have thoroughly demonstrated elsewhere, that always, all the God-becoming Names of God, are celebrated by the Oracles, not partitively, but as applied to the whole and entire and complete and full Godhead, and that all of them are referred impartitively, absolutely, unreservedly, entirely, to all the Entirety of the entirely complete and every Deity. And verily as we have mentioned in the Theological Outlines, if any

one should say that this is not spoken concerning the whole Deity, he blasphemes, and dares, without right, to cleave asunder the super-unified Unity.

We must affirm, then, that this is to be received respecting the whole Deity. For even the essentially Good Word Himself said, ”I am Good . And a certain one of the God-rapt Prophets celebrates the Spirit as ”the Good . And again this, ”I am He, Who is . If they shall say that this is said, not of the whole Deity, but should violently limit it to one part, how will they understand this? ”These things, saith He, Who is, Who was, Who is to come, the Almighty ,” and ”Thou art the same ,” and this, ”Spirit of truth, which is, which proceedeth from the Father . And if they say that the supremely Divine Life is not coextensive with the whole, how is the sacred Word true which said, ”As the Father raiseth the dead and maketh alive, so also the Son maketh alive whom He will ,” and that ”the Spirit is He, Who maketh alive ? But, that the whole Deity holds the Lordship over the whole, one can scarcely say, as I think how many times, in reference to the Paternal Deity, or the Filial, the word ”Lord ”is repeated in the Word of God, as applied to Father and Son . But the Spirit also is Lord . And ”the beautiful and the wise” are also sung respecting the whole Deity.

And the light, and the deifying, and the cause, and whatever pertains to the whole Godhead, the Oracles introduce into all the supremely Divine hymnody----collectively, when they say ”all things are from Almighty God; ”but, specifically, as when they say, ”all things were made through Him and to Him,” and ”all things in Him consist,” and ”Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made. And, that one may speak summarily, the supremely Divine Word Himself said, ”I and the Father are One,” and ”all that the Father hath are Mine,” and, ”All Mine are Thine, and Thine, Mine. And again, whatever pertains to the Father and Himself, He attributes. to the supremely Divine Spirit, collectively and in common----the works of God----the homage, the fontal and ceaseless cause and the distribution of the goodly gifts. And I think, none of those, who have been nourished in the Divine Oracles with unprejudiced conceptions, will oppose this, that all things befitting God belong to the whole Godhead, according to the divinely perfect Word. Since, then, we have demonstrated and defined these things from the Oracles,----here indeed partially, but elsewhere sufficiently----we will undertake to unfold every Divine Name whatsoever, which is to be received as referring to the whole Deity.

SECTION II. But if any one should say that we introduce in so doing a confusion, in disparagement of the distinction which befits God, we do not think that such a statement as this is itself sufficient to convince that it is true. For, if there is any one who has placed himself entirely in opposition to the Oracles, he will be also entirely apart from our. philosophy; and, if he has no care for the divine Wisdom of the Oracles, how shall we care for his guidance to the theological science? But, if he regards the truth of the Oracles, we also, using this canon and illumination, will

advance unwaveringly to the answer, as best we can, by affirming that theology transmits some things as common, but others as distinctive; and neither is it meet to divide the common, nor to confuse the distinctive; but that following It according to our ability, we ought to rise to the Divine splendours; for, by taking thence the Divine revelations, as a most excellent canon of truth, we strive to guard the things lying there, in their native simplicity and integrity and identity----being ourselves guarded in our guard of the Oracles, and from these receiving strength to guard those who guard them.

SECTION III. The (Names) then, common to the whole Deity, as we have demonstrated from the Oracles, by many instances in the Theological Outlines, are the Super-Good, the Super-God, the Superessential, the Super-Living, the Super-Wise, and whatever else belongs to the superlative abstraction; with which also, all those denoting Cause, the Good, the Beautiful, the Being, the Life-producing, the Wise, and whatever Names are given to the Cause of all Good, from His goodly gifts. But the distinctive Names are the superessential name and property of Father, and Son and Spirit, since no interchange or community in these is in any way introduced. But there is a further distinction, viz., the complete and unaltered existence of Jesus amongst us, and all the mysteries of love towards man actually existing within it. SECTION IV.

But it is rather necessary, I suppose, to resume and to set forth the complete fashion of the Divine union and distinction, in order that the whole discourse may be seen at a glance to reject everything ambiguous and indistinct, and to define critically and distinctly the proper Names, as far as possible. For, as I said elsewhere, the sacred instructors of our theological tradition call the ”Divine Unions” the hidden and unrevealed sublimities of the super-unutterable and super-unknown Isolation; but the ”distinctions,” the goodly progressions and manifestations of the Godhead; and, following the sacred Oracles, they mention also properties of the aforesaid ”Union; ”and again of the distinction, that there are certain specific unions and distinctions. For example, with regard to the Divine Union, that is, the Superessentiality, there is kindred and common to the One-springing Triad, the superessential sustaining Source, the super-Divine Deity, the super-good Goodness, the supreme identity of the whole supreme Idiosyncrasy, the Oneness above source of one; the Unspeakable; the Much-speaking, the Agnosia, the Comprehended by all, the Placing of all, the Abstraction of all, that which is above all affirmation and abstraction, the abiding and steadfastness in each other, if I may so speak, wholly super-united and in no part commingled of the One-springing Persons, just as lights of lamps (to use sensible illustrations familiar to our capacity), when in one house, are both wholly distinct in each other throughout, and keep the distinction from each other specifically and perfectly maintained, being one in distinction and distinct in union;

and then, indeed, we may see in a house, in which are many lamps, the lights of all united to form one certain light and lighting up one combined radiance; and, as I suppose, no one would be able to distinguish in the air containing all the lights the light of one or other lamp from the rest, and to see one without the other, since whole in whole are mixed together without being mingled. But, if any one were to take out from the chamber one particular burner, the whole light belonging to it will depart with it; no particle of the other lights being drawn along with it, nor any of its own light left with the other. For there was, as I said, the complete union of all with all, unmingled throughout, and in no part confused, and this actually in a body, the air, the light even itself being dependent on the material fire. Whence we affirm that the superessential Union is fixed above not only the unions in bodies, but also above those in souls themselves, and in minds themselves, which, in a manner unmingled and supermundane, the Godlike and super-celestial Illuminations, whole through whole, possess, as beseems a participation analagous to those who participate in the Union elevated above all.

SECTION V. But there is a distinction in the superessential nomenclature of God, not only that which I have mentioned, namely, that each of the One-springing Persons is fixed in the union itself, unmingled and unconfused; but also that the properties of the superessential Divine Production are not convertible in regard to one another. The Father is sole Fountain of the superessential Deity, since the Father is not Son, nor the Son, Father; since the hymns reverently guard their own characteristics for each of the supremely Divine Persons. These then are the unions and distinctions within the unutterable Union and sustaining Source. But, if the goodly progression of the Divine Union, multiplying itself super-uniquely through Goodness, and taking to itself many forms, is also a Divine distinction, yet, common within the Divine distinction, are the resistless distributions, the substance-giving, the life-giving, the wise-making, and the other gifts of the Goodness, Cause of all, after which from the participations and those participating are celebrated the things imparticipatively participated. And this is kindred and common, and one, to the whole Divinity, that it is all entire, participated by each of the Participants, and by none partially. Just as a point in a circle's centre participates in all the circumjacent straight lines in the circle, and as many impressions of a seal participate in the archetypal seal, and in each of the impressions the seal is whole and the same, and in none partial in any respect. But superior to these is the im-partibility of the Deity----Cause of all----from the fact that there is no contact with it. Nor has it any commingled communion with the things participating.

SECTION VI. And yet some one might say the seal is not whole and the same in the images throughout. But of this the seal is not the cause, for it imparts itself all and the same to each; but the difference of the recipients makes the figures dissimilar, since the archetype is one and complete and the same. For instance, if the wax were soft and impressionable, and smooth and unstamped, and neither

unimpressionable and hard, nor running and dissolving, it will have the figure clear and sharp and fixed. But if it should lack any of the aforesaid aptitudes, this will be the cause of the non-participative and un-figured and indistinct, and whatever else arises from inaptitude for reception. Further, there is a distinction from the goodly work of God towards us, in that the superessential Word was invested with being amongst us----from us----wholly and truly, and did and suffered whatever things are choice and pre-eminent in His human work of God. For in these, the Father and the Spirit in no respect communicated, except perhaps, one might say, as regards the benign and philanthropic purpose, and as regards all the pre-eminent and unutterable work of God which the unchangeable, qua God and Word of God, did when He had been born amongst us. Thus we, too, strive to unite and distinguish in the Word the things Divine, as the things Divine themselves, are united and distinguished.

SECTION VII. Now we have set forth in the Theological Outlines whatever Divine Causes we have found in the Oracles, of these unions, and distinctions, by treating each separately, according to our ability; by explaining some things, by the infallible Word, and unfolding them; and by conducting the religious and unpolluted mind to the bright visions of the Oracles; but others, as being full of mystery, by approaching them according to the Divine tradition, which is superior to mental energy. For all the Divine properties, even those revealed to us, are known by the participations alone; and themselves, such as they are in their own source and abode, are above mind and all essence and knowledge. For instance, if we have named the superessential Hid-denness, God, or Life, or Essence, or Light, or Word (λόγος), we have no other thought than that the powers brought to us from It are deifying, or essentiating, or life-bearing, or wisdom-imparting; but to Itself we approach during the cessation of all the intellectual energies, seeing no deification, or life, or essence whatever, such as is strictly like the Cause pre-eminently elevated above all. Again, that the Father is fontal Deity, but the Lord Jesus and the Spirit are, if one may so speak, God-planted shoots, and as it were Flowers and superessential Lights of the God-bearing Deity, we have received from the holy Oracles; but how these things are, it is neither possible to say, nor to conceive.

SECTION VIII. But. up to this point, our utmost power of mental energy carries us, namely, that all divine paternity and sonship have been bequeathed from the Source of paternity and Source of sonship----pre-eminent above all----both to us and to the supercelestial powers, from which the godlike become both gods, and sons of gods, and fathers of gods, and are named Minds, such a paternity and sonship being of course accomplished spiritually, i.e. incorporeally, immaterially, intellectually,----since the supremely Divine Spirit is seated above all intellectual immateriality, and déification, and the Father and the Son are pre-eminently elevated above all divine paternity and sonship. For there is no strict likeness, between the caused and the causes. The caused indeed possess the accepted likenesses of the causes, but the causes themselves are elevated and established above the caused, according to the

ratio of their proper origin. And, to use illustrations suitable to ourselves, pleasures and pains are said to be productive of pleasure and pain, but these themselves feel neither pleasure nor pain. And fire, whilst heating and burning, is not said to be burnt and heated. And, if any one should say that the self-existent Life lives, or that the self-existent Light is enlightened, in my view he will not speak correctly, unless, perhaps, he should say this after another fashion, that the properties of the caused are abundantly and essentially pre-existent in the causes.

SECTION IX. Further also, the most conspicuous fact of all theology----the God-formation of Jesus amongst us----is both unutterable by every expression and unknown to every mind, even to the very foremost of the most reverend angels. The fact indeed that. He took substance as man, we have received as a mystery, but we do not know in what manner, from virginal bloods, by a different law, beyond nature, He was formed, and how, with dry feet, having a bodily bulk and weight of matter, He marched upon the liquid and unstable substance ; and so, with regard to all the other features of the super-physical physiology of Jesus. Now, we have elsewhere sufficiently spoken of these things, and they have been celebrated by our illustrious leader, in his Theological Elements, in a manner far beyond natural ability----things which that illustrious man acquired, either from the sacred theologians, or comprehended from the scientific, search of the Oracles, from manifold struggles and investigations respecting the same, or was instructed from a sort of more Divine Inspiration, not only having learnt, but having felt the pangs of things Divine, and from his sympathy with them, if I may so speak, having been perfected to their untaught and mystic union and acceptance. And that we may display, in fewest words, the many and blessed visions of his most excellent intelligence, the following are the things he says, concerning the Lord Jesus, in the Theological Elements compiled by him.

SECTION X. From the Theological Elements of the most holy Hierotheus. Deity of the Lord Jesus,---- the Cause and Completing of all, which preserves the parts concordant with the whole, and is neither part nor whole, and whole and part, as embracing in Itself everything both part and whole, and being above and before----is perfect indeed in the imperfect, as source of perfection, but imperfect in the perfect, as superperfect, and pre-perfect----Form producing form, in things without form, as Source of form----formless in the forms, as above form,----Essence, penetrating without stain the essences throughout, and superessential, exalted above every essence----setting bounds to the whole principalities and orders, and established above every principality and order. It is measure also of things existing, and age, and above age, and before age----full, in things that need, superfull in things full, unutterable, unspeakable, above mind, above life, above essence. It has the supernatural, supernaturally,----the superessential, superessentially. Hence, since through love towards man, He has come even to nature, and really became substantial, and the Super-God lived as Man (may He be merciful with regard to the things

we are celebrating, which are beyond mind and expression), and in these He has the supernatural and super-substantial, not only in so far as He communicated with us without alteration and without confusion, suffering no loss as regards His superfulness, from His unutterable emptying of Himself----but also, because the newest of all new things, He was in our physical condition super-physical----in things substantial, super-substantial, excelling all the things----of us----from us----above us.

SECTION XI.

This then is sufficient on these matters, let us now advance to the purpose of the discourse by unfolding, to the best of our ability, the kindred and common Names of the Divine distinction. And, in order that we may first distinctly define everything, in order, we call Divine distinction, as we have said, the goodly progressions of the Godhead. For, by being given to all things existing, and pouring forth the whole imparted goods in abundance, It is distinguished uniformly, and multiplied uniquely, and is moulded into many from the One, whilst being self-centred. For example, since Almighty God is superessentially Being, but the Being is bequeathed to things being, and produces the whole Essences; that One Being is said to be fashioned in many forms, by the production from Itself of the many beings, whilst It remains undiminished, and One in the multiplicity, and Unified during the progression, and complete in the distinction, both by being superessentially exalted above all beings, and by the unique production of the whole; and by the un-lessened stream of His undiminished distributions. Further, being One, and having distributed the One, both to every part and whole, both to one and to multitude, He is One, as it were, superessentially, being neither a part of the multitude, nor whole from parts; and thus is neither one, nor partakes of one, nor has the one. But, beyond these, He is One, above the one, to things existing----One, and multitude indivisible, unfilled superfulness, producing and perfecting and sustaining every one thing and multitude.

Again, by the Deification from Itself, by the Divine likeness of many who become gods, according to their several capacity, there seems, and is said to be, a distinction and multiplication of the One God, but. He is none the less the Supreme God, and super-God, superessentially One God,----undivided in things divided, unified in Himself, both unmingled and unmultiplied in the many. And when the common conductor of ourselves, and of our leader to the Divine gift of light,----he, who is great in Divine mysteries----the light of the world----had thought out this in a manner above natural ability,----he speaks as follows, from the inspiration of God, in his sacred writings----”For, even if there are who are called gods, whether in heaven or upon earth, as there are gods many and lords many; but to us there is One God, the Father, from Whom are all things, and we unto Him,----and One Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we, through Him . For, with regard to things

Divine, the unions overrule the distinctions, and precede them, and are none the less unified, even after the self-centred and unified distinction.

These, the mutual and common distinctions, or rather the goodly progressions of the whole Deity, we will endeavour to the best of our ability to celebrate from the Names of God, which make them known in the Oracles;----first, having laid down, as we have said, that every beneficent Name of God, to whichever of the supremely Divine Persons it may be applied, is to be understood with reference to the whole Supremely Divine wholeness unreservedly.

CAPUT III. What is the power of prayer, and concerning the blessed Hierotheus, and concerning reverence and covenant in the Word of God. SECTION I.

FIRST, with your permission, let us examine the all-perfect Name of Goodness, which is indicative of the whole progressions of Almighty God, having invoked the supremely good, and super-good Triad----the Name which indicates Its whole best Providences. For, we must first be raised up to It, as Source of good, by our prayers; and by a nearer approach to It, be initiated as to the all good gifts which are established around It. For It is indeed present to all, but all are not present to It. But then, when we have invoked It, by all pure prayers and unpolluted mind, and by our aptitude towards Divine Union, we also are present to It. For, It is not in a place, so that It should be absent from a particular place, or should pass from one to another. But even the statement that It is in all existing beings, falls short of Its infinitude (which is) above all, and embracing all. Let us then elevate our very selves by our prayers to the higher ascent of the Divine and good rays,----as if a luminous chain being suspended from the celestial heights, and reaching down hither, we, by ever clutching this upwards, first with one hand, and then with the other, seem indeed to draw it down, but in reality we do not draw it down, it being both above and below, but ourselves are carried upwards to the higher splendours of the luminous rays.

Or, as if, after we have embarked on a ship, and are holding on to the cables reaching from some rock, such as are given out, as it were, for us to seize, we do not draw the rock to us, but ourselves, in fact, and the ship, to the rock. Or to take another example, if any one standing on the ship pushes away the rock by the sea shore, he will do nothing to the stationary and unmoved rock, but he separates himself from it, and in proportion as he pushes that away, he is so far hurled from it. Wherefore, before everything, and especially theology, we must begin with prayer, not as though we ourselves were drawing the power, which is everywhere and nowhere present, but as, by our godly reminiscences and invocations, conducting ourselves to, and making ourselves one with, it.

SECTION II.

Perhaps also, this is worthy of apology, that whilst our illustrious leader, Hierotheus, is compiling his Theological Elements, in a manner above natural capacity, we, as if those were not sufficient, have composed others, and this present theological treatise. And yet, if that man had deigned to treat systematically all the theological treatises, and had gone through the sum of all theology, by detailed expositions, we should not have gone to such a height of folly, or stupidity, as to have attempted alone theological questions, either more lucidly or divinely than he, or to indulge in vain talk by saying superfluously the same things twice over, and in addition to do injustice to one, both teacher and friend, and that we, who have been instructed from his discourses, after Paul the Divine, should filch for our own glorification his most illustrious contemplation and elucidation. But, since in fact, he, whilst teaching things divine, in a manner suitable to presbyters, set forth comprehensive definitions, and such as embraced many things in one, as were suitable to us, and to as many as with us were teachers of the newly-initiated souls, commanding us to unfold and disentangle, by language commensurate with our ability, the comprehensive and uniform compositions of the most intellectual capacity of that illustrious man; and you, yourself, have oftentimes urged us to this, and sent back the very book, as being of transcendent value;

for this reason, then, we too distinguish him as a teacher of perfect and presbyterial conceptions for those who are above the common people, even as certain second Oracles, and next to the Anointed of God. But for people, such as we are, we will transmit things Divine, according to our capacity. For, if strong meat belongs to the perfect, how great perfection is required that the same should feed others. Correctly, then, we have affirmed this, that the self-perceptive vision of the intelligible Oracles, and their comprehensive teaching, needs presbyterial power; but the science and the thorough teaching of the reasons which lead to this, fittingly belong to those purified and hallowed persons placed in a subordinate position. And yet, we have insisted upon this with the utmost care, that, as regards the things that have been thoroughly investigated by him, our divine leader, with an accurate elucidation, we should not, in any way, handle the same tautologically, for the same elucidation of the Divine text expounded by him.

For, amongst our inspired hierarchs (when both we, as you know, and yourself, and many of our holy brethren, were gathered together to the depositing of the Life-springing and God-receptive body, and when there were present also James, the brother of God, and Peter, the foremost and most honoured pinnacle of the Theologians, when it was determined after the depositing, that every one of the hierarchs should celebrate, as each was capable, the Omnipotent Goodness of the supremely Divine Weakness), he, after the Theologians, surpassed, as you know, all the other divine instructors, being wholly entranced, wholly raised from himself, and experiencing the pain of his fellowship with the things celebrated, and was regarded as an inspired and divine Psalmist by all, by whom he was heard and seen

and known, and not known. And why should I say anything to thee concerning the things there divinely spoken? For, if I do not forget myself, many a time do I remember to have heard from thee certain portions of those inspired songs of praise; such was thy zeal, not cursorily, to pursue things Divine.

SECTION III.

But to pass over the mystical things there, both as forbidden to the multitude and as known to thee, when it was necessary to communicate to the multitude, and to bring as many as possible to the sacred knowledge amongst ourselves, he so excelled the majority of sacred teachers, both by use of time and purity of mind, and accuracy of demonstrations, and by his other sacred discourses, that we should scarcely have dared to look so great a sun straight in the face. For we are thus far conscious in ourselves, and know, that we may neither advance to understand sufficiently the intelligible of Divine things, nor to express and declare the things spoken of the divine knowledge. For, being far removed from the skill of those divine men, as regards theological truth, we are so inferior that we should have, through excessive reverence, entirely come to this----neither to hear nor to speak anything respecting divine philosophy, unless we had grasped in our mind, that we must not neglect the knowledge of things divine received by us. And to this we were persuaded, not only by the innate aspirations of the minds which always lovingly cling to the permitted contemplation of the supernatural, but also by the most excellent order itself of the Divine institutions, which prohibits us, on the one hand, from much inquisition into things above us, as above our degree, and as unattainable; yet, on the other hand, persistently urges us to graciously impart to others also whatever is permitted and given to us to learn. Yielding then to these considerations, and neither shirking nor flinching from the attainable discovery of things Divine, but also not bearing to leave unassisted those who are unable to contemplate things too high for us, we have brought ourselves to composition, not daring indeed to introduce anything new, but by more easy and more detailed expositions to disentangle and elucidate the things spoken by the Hierotheus indeed.

CAPUT IV. Concerning Good, Light, Beauty, Love, Ecstasy, Jealousy, and that the Evil is neither existent, nor from existent, nor in things being. SECTION I. BE it so then. Let us come to the appellation ”Good,” already mentioned in our discourse, which the Theologians ascribe pre-eminently and exclusively to the super-Divine Deity, as I conjecture, by calling the supremely Divine Subsistence, Goodness; and because the Good, as essential Good, by Its being, extends Its Goodness to all things that be. For, even as our sun----not as calculating or choosing, but by its very being, enlightens all things able to partake of its light in their own degree----so too the Good----as superior to a sun, as the archetype par excellence, is above an obscure image----by Its very existence sends to all things that be, the rays of Its whole goodness, according to their capacity. By reason of these (rays) subsisted

all the intelligible and intelligent essences and powers and energies. By reason of these they are, and have their life, continuous and undiminished, purified from all corruption and death and matter, and generation; and separated from the unstable and fluctuating and vacillating mutability, and are conceived of as incorporeal and immaterial, and as minds they think in a manner supermundane, and are illuminated as to the reasons of things, in a manner peculiar to themselves; and they again convey to their kindred spirits things appropriate to them; and they have their abiding from Goodness; and thence comes to them stability and consistence and protection, and sanctuary of good things; and whilst aspiring to It, they have both being and good being; and being conformed to It, as is attainable, they are both patterns of good, and impart to those after them, as the Divine Law directs, the gifts which have passed through to themselves from the Good.

SECTION II.

Thence come to them the supermundane orders, the unions amongst themselves, the mutual penetrations, the unconfused distinctions, the powers elevating the inferior to the superior, the providences of the more exalted for those below them; the guard-ings of things pertaining to each power; and unbroken convolutions around themselves; the identities and sublimities around the aspiration after the Good; and whatever is said in our Treatise concerning the angelic properties and orders. Further also, whatever things belong to the heavenly Hierarchy, the purifications befitting angels, the supermundane illuminations, and the things perfecting the whole angelic perfection, are from the all-creative and fontal Goodness; from which was given to them the form of Goodness, and the revealing in themselves the hidden Goodness, and that angels are, as it were, heralds of the Divine silence, and project, as it were, luminous lights revealing Him Who is in secret. Further, after these----the sacred and holy minds----the souls, and whatever is good in souls is by reason of the super-good Goodness----the fact that they are intellectual----that they have essential life----indestructible----the very being itself----and that they are able, whilst elevated themselves to the angelic lives, to be conducted by them as good guides to the good Origin of all good things, and to become partakers of the illuminations, thence bubbling forth, according to the capacity of each, and to participate in the goodlike gift, as they are able, and whatever else we have enumerated in our Treatise concerning the soul.

But also, if one may be permitted to speak of the irrational souls, or living creatures, such as cleave the air, and such as walk on earth, and such as creep along earth, and those whose life is in waters, or amphibious, and such as live concealed under earth, and burrow within it, and in one word, such as have the sensible soul or life, even all these have their soul and life, by reason of the Good. Moreover, all plants have their growing and moving life from the Good; and even soulless and

lifeless substance is by reason of the Good, and by reason of It, has inherited its substantial condition.

SECTION III. But, if the Good is above all things being, as indeed it is, and formulates the formless, even in Itself alone, both the non-essential is a pre-eminence of essence, and the non-living is a superior life, and the mindless a superior wisdom, and whatever is in the Good is of a superlative formation of the formless, and if one may venture to say so, even the nonexistent itself aspires to the Good above all things existing, and struggles somehow to be even itself in the Good,----the really Superessential----to the exclusion of all things. SECTION IV.

But what slipped from our view in the midst of our discourse, the Good is Cause of the celestial movements in their commencements and terminations, of their not increasing, not diminishing, and completely changeless, course , and of the noiseless movements, if one may so speak, of the vast celestial transit, and of the astral orders, and the beauties and lights, and stabilities, and the progressive swift motion of certain stars, and of the periodical return of the two luminaries, which the Oracles call ”great,” from the same to the same quarter, after which our days and nights being marked, and months and years being measured, mark and number and arrange and comprehend the circular movements of time and things temporal. But, what would any one say of the very ray of the sun? For the light is from the Good, and an image of the Goodness, wherefore also the Good is celebrated under the name of Light; as in a portrait the original is manifested. For, as the goodness of the Deity, beyond all, permeates from the highest and most honoured substances even to the lowest, and yet is above all, neither the foremost outstripping its superiority, nor the things below eluding its grasp, but it both enlightens all that are capable, and forms and enlivens, and grasps, and perfects, and is measure of things existing, and age, and number, and order, and grasp, and cause, and end;

so, too, the brilliant likeness of the Divine Goodness, this our great sun, wholly bright and ever luminous, as a most distant echo of the Good, both enlightens whatever is capable of participating in it, and possesses the light in the highest degree of purity, unfolding to the visible universe, above and beneath, the splendours of its own rays, and if anything does not participate in them, this is not owing to the inertness or deficiency of its distribution of light, but is owing to the inaptitude for light-reception of the things which do not unfold themselves for the participation of light. No doubt the ray passing over many things in such condition, enlightens the things after them, and there is no visible thing which it does not reach, with the surpassing greatness of its own splendour. Further also, it contributes to the generation of sensible bodies, and moves them to life, and nourishes, and increases, and perfects, and purifies and renews; and the light is both measure and number of hours, days, and all our time. For it is the light itself, even though it was then

without form, which the divine Moses declared to have fixed that first Triad of our days.

And, just as Goodness turns all things to Itself, and is chief collector of things scattered, as One-springing and One-making Deity, and all things aspire to It, as Source and Bond and End, and it is the Good, as the Oracles say, from Which all things subsisted, and are being brought into being by an all-perfect Cause; and in Which all things consisted, as guarded and governed in an all-controlling route; and to Which all things are turned, as to their own proper end; and to Which all aspire ----the intellectual and rational indeed, through knowledge, and the sensible through the senses, and those bereft of sensible perception by the innate movement of the aspiration after life, and those without life, and merely being, by their aptitude for mere substantial participation; after the same method of its illustrious original, the light also collects and turns to itself all things existing----things with sight ----things with motion----things enlightened----things heated----things wholly held together by its brilliant splendours----whence also, Helios, because it makes all things altogether (ἀολλῆ), and collects things scattered. And all creatures, endowed with sensible perceptions, aspire to it, as aspiring either to see, or to be moved and enlightened, and heated, and to be wholly held together by the light.

By no means do I affirm, after the statement of antiquity, that as being God and Creator of the universe, the sun, by itself, governs the luminous world, but that the invisible things of God are clearly seen from the foundation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Deity.

SECTION V. But we have spoken of these things in our Symbolical Theology. Let us now then celebrate the spiritual Name of Light, under Which we contemplate the Good, and declare that He, the Good, is called spiritual Light, on the ground that He fills every supercelestial mind with spiritual light, and expels all ignorance a.nd error from all souls in which they may be, and imparts to them all sacred light, and cleanses their mental vision from the mist which envelops them, from ignorance, and stirs up and unfolds those enclosed by the great weight of darkness, and imparts, at first, a measured radiance; then, whilst they taste, as it were, the light, and desire it more, more fully gives Itself, and more abundantly enlightens them, because ”they have loved much,” and ever elevates them to things in advance, as befits the analogy of each for aspiration. SECTION VI.

The Good then above every light is called spiritual Light, as fontal ray, and stream of light welling over, shining upon every mind, above, around , and in the world, from its fulness, and renewing their whole mental powers, and embracing them all by its over-shadowing; and being above all by its exaltation; and in one word, by embracing and having previously and pre-eminently the whole sovereignty of the light-dispensing faculty, as being source of light and above all light, and by comprehending in itself all things intellectual, and all things rational, and making

them one altogether. For as ignorance puts asunder those who have gone astray, so the presence of the spiritual light is collective and unifying of those being enlightened, both perfecting and further turning them towards the true Being, by turning them from the many notions and collecting the various views, or, to speak more correctly, fancies, into one true, pure and uniform knowledge, and by filling them with light, one and unifying.

SECTION VII.

This Good is celebrated by the sacred theologians, both as beautiful and as Beauty, and as Love, and as Beloved; and all the other Divine Names which beseem the beautifying and highly-favoured comeliness. But the beautiful and Beauty are not to be divided, as regards the Cause which has embraced the whole in one. For, with regard to all created things, by dividing them into participations and participants, we call beautiful that which participates in Beauty; but beauty, the participation of the beautifying Cause of all the beautiful things. But, the superessential Beautiful is called Beauty, on account of the beauty communicated from Itself to all beautiful things, in a manner appropriate to each, and as Cause of the good harmony and brightness of all things which flashes like light to all the beautifying distributions of its fontal ray, and as calling (kalou~n) all things to Itself (whence also it is called Beauty) (ka&lloj), and as collecting all in all to Itself. (And it is called) Beautiful, as (being) at once beautiful and super-beautiful, and always being under the same conditions and in the same manner beautiful, and neither coming into being nor perishing, neither waxing nor waning; neither in this beautiful, nor in that ugly, nor at one time beautiful, and at another not; nor in relation to one thing beautiful, and in relation to another ugly, nor here, and not there, as being beautiful to some, and not beautiful to others;

but as Itself, in Itself, with Itself, uniform, always being beautiful, and as having beforehand in Itself pre-eminently the fontal beauty of everything beautiful. For, by the simplex and supernatural nature of all beautiful things, all beauty, and everything beautiful, pre-existed uniquely as to Cause. From this Beautiful (comes) being to all existing things,----that each is beautiful in its own proper order; and by reason of the Beautiful are the adaptations of all things, and friendships, and inter-communions, and by the Beautiful all things are made one, and the Beautiful is origin of all things, as a creating Cause, both by moving the whole and holding it together by the love of its own peculiar Beauty; and end of all things, and beloved, as final Cause (for all things exist for the sake of the Beautiful) and exemplary (Cause), because all things are determined according to It. Wherefore, also, the Beautiful is identical with the Good, because all things aspire to the Beautiful and Good, on every account, and there is no existing thing which does not participate in the Beautiful and the Good. Yea, reason will dare to say even this, that even the non-existing participates in the Beautiful and Good. For then even it is beautiful

and good, when in God it is celebrated superessentially to the exclusion of all. This, the one Good and Beautiful, is uniquely Cause of all the many things beautiful and good.

From this are all the substantial beginnings of things existing, the unions, the distinctions, the identities, the diversities, the similarities, the dissimilarities, the communions of the contraries, the commingling of things unified, the providences of the superior, the mutual cohesions of those of the same rank; the attentions of the more needy, the protecting and immoveable abidings and stabilities of their whole selves and, on the other hand, the communions of all things among all, in a manner peculiar to each, and adaptations and unmingled friendships and harmonies of the whole, the blendings in the whole, and the undissolved connections of existing things, the never-failing successions of the generations, all rests and movements, of the minds, of the souls, of the bodies. For, that which is established above every rest, and every movement, and moves each thing in the law of its own being to its proper movement, is a rest and movement to all.

SECTION VIII. Now, the divine minds are said to be moved circularly indeed, by being united to the illuminations of the Beautiful and Good, without beginning and without end; but in a direct line, whenever they advance to the succour of a subordinate, by accomplishing all things directly; but spirally, because even in providing for the more indigent, they remain fixedly, in identity, around the good and beautiful Cause of their identity, ceaselessly dancing around. SECTION IX. Further, there is a movement of soul, circular indeed,----the entrance into itself from things without, and the unified convolution of its intellectual powers, bequeathing to it inerrancy, as it were, in a sort of circle, and turning and collecting itself, from the many things without, first to itself, then, as having become single, uniting with the uniquely unified powers, and thus conducting to the Beautiful and Good, which is above all things being, and One and the Same, and without beginning and without end. But a soul is moved spirally, in so far as it is illuminated, as to the divine kinds of knowledge, in a manner proper to itself, not intuitively and at once, but logically and discursively; and, as it were, by mingled and relative operations; but in a straight line, when, not entering into itself, and being moved by unique intuition (for this, as I said, is the circular), but advancing to things around itself, and from things without, it is, as it were, conducted from certain symbols, varied and multiplied, to the simple and unified contemplations.

SECTION X. Of these three motions then in everything perceptible here below, and much more of the abidings and repose and fixity of each, the Beautiful and Good, which is above all repose and movement, is Cause and Bond and End; by reason of which, and from which, and in which, and towards which, and for sake of which, is every repose and movement. For, both from It and through It is both Essence and every life, and both of mind and soul and every nature, the minutiae, the equalities,

the magnitudes, all the standards and the analogies of beings, and harmonies and compositions; the entireties, the parts, every one thing, and multitude, the connections of parts, the unions of every multitude, the perfections of the entireties, the quality, the weight, the size, the infinitude, the compounds, the distinctions, every infinitude, every term, all the bounds, the orders, the pre-eminences, the elements, the forms, every essence, every power, every energy, every condition, every sensible perception, every reason, every conception, every contact, every science, every union, and in one word, all things existing are from the Beautiful and Good, and in the Beautiful and Good, and turn themselves to the Beautiful and Good.

Moreover, all things whatever, which are and come to being, are and come to being by reason of the Beautiful and Good; and to It all things look, and by It are moved and held together, and for the sake of It, and by reason of It, and in It, is every source exemplary, final, creative, formative, elemental, and in one word, every beginning, every bond, every term, or to speak summarily, all things existing are from the Beautiful and Good; and all things non-existing are superessentially in the Beautiful and Good; and it is of all, beginning and term, above beginning and above term, because from It, and through It, and in It, and to It, are all things, as says the Sacred Word. By all things, then, the Beautiful and Good is desired and beloved and cherished; and, by reason of It, and for the sake of It, the less love the greater suppliantly; and those of the same rank, their fellows brotherly; and the greater, the less considerately; and these severally love the things of themselves continuously; and all things by aspiring to the Beautiful and Good, do and wish all things whatever they do and wish. Further, it may be boldly said with truth, that even the very Author of all things, by reason of overflowing Goodness, loves all, makes all, perfects all, sustains all, attracts all; and even the Divine Love is Good of Good, by reason of the Good. For Love itself, the benefactor of things that be, pre-existing overflowingly in the Good, did not permit itself to remain unproductive in itself, but moved itself to creation , as befits the overflow which is generative of all.

SECTION XI. And let no one fancy that we honour the Name of Love beyond the Oracles, for it is, in my opinion, irrational and stupid not to cling to the force of the meaning, but to the mere words; and this is not the characteristic of those who have wished to comprehend things Divine, but of those who receive empty sounds and keep the same just at the ears from passing through from outside, and are not willing to know what such a word signifies, and in what way one ought to distinctly represent it, through other words of the same force and more explanatory, but who specially affect sounds and signs without meaning, and syllables, and words unknown, which do not pass through to the mental part of their soul, but buzz without, around their lips and ears, as though it were not permitted to signify the number four, by twice two, or straight lines by direct lines, or motherland

by fatherland, or any other, which signify the self-same thing, by many parts of speech.

We ought to know, according to the correct account, that we use sounds, and syllables, and phrases, and descriptions, and words, on account of the sensible perceptions; since when our soul is moved by the intellectual energies to the things contemplated, the sensible perceptions by aid of sensible objects are superfluous; just as also the intellectual powers, when the soul, having become godlike, throws itself, through a union beyond knowledge, against the rays of the unapproachable light, by sightless efforts. But, when the mind strives to be moved upwards, through objects of sense, to contemplative conceptions, the clearer interpretations are altogether preferable to the sensible perceptions, and the more definite descriptions are things more distinct than things seen; since when objects near are not made clear to the sensible perceptions, neither will these perceptions be well able to present the things perceived to the mind. But that we may not seem, in speaking thus, to be pushing aside the Divine Oracles, let those who libel the Name of Love (1Erwtoj) hear them. ”Be in love with It,” they say, ”and It will keep thee----Rejoice over It, and It will exalt thee----Honour It, in order that It may encompass thee,”----and whatever else is sung respecting Love, in the Word of God.

SECTION XII.

And yet it seemed to some of our sacred expounders that the Name of Love is more Divine than that of loving-kindness (ἀγάπης). But even the Divine Ignatius writes, ”my own Love (ἔρως) is crucified; and in the introductions to the Oracles you will find a certain One saying of the Divine Wisdom, ”1 became enamoured of her Beauty. So that we, certainly, need not be afraid of this Name of Love, nor let any alarming statement about it terrify us. For the theologians seem to me to treat as equivalent the name of Loving-kindness, and that of Love; and on this ground, to attribute, by preference, the veritable Love, to things Divine, because of the misplaced prejudice of such men as these. For, since the veritable Love is sung of in a sense befitting God, not by us only, but also by the Oracles themselves, the multitude, not having comprehended the Oneness of the Divine Name of Love, fell away, as might be expected of them, to the divided and corporeal and sundered, seeing it is not a real love, but a shadow, or rather a falling from the veritable Love. For the Oneness of the Divine and one Love is incomprehensible to the multitude, wherefore also, as seeming a very hard name to the multitude, it is assigned to the Divine Wisdom, for the purpose of leading back and restoring them to the knowledge of the veritable Love; and for their liberation from the difficulty respecting it.

And again, as regards ourselves, where it happened often that men of an earthly character imagined something out of place, (there is used) what appears more euphonius. A certain one says, ”Thy affection fell upon me, as the affection of

the women. For those who have rightly listened to things Divine, the name of Loving-kindness and of Love is placed by the holy theologians in the same category throughout the Divine revelations, and this is of a power unifying, and binding together, and mingling pre-eminently in the Beautiful and Good; pre-existing by reason of the beautiful and good, and imparted from the beautiful and good, by reason of the Beautiful and Good; and sustaining things of the same rank, within their mutual coherence, but moving the first to forethought for the inferior, and attaching the inferior to the superior by respect.

SECTION XIII. But Divine Love is extatic, not permitting (any) to be lovers of themselves, but of those beloved. They shew this too, the superior by becoming mindful of the inferior; and the equals by their mutual coherence; and the inferior, by a more divine respect towards things superior. Wherefore also, Paul the Great, when possessed by the Divine Love, and participating in its extatic power, says with inspired lips, ”I live no longer, but Christ lives in me.” As a true lover, and beside himself, as he says, to Almighty God, and not living the life of himself, but the life of the Beloved, as a life excessively esteemed. One might make bold to say even this, on behalf of truth, that the very Author of all things, by the beautiful and good love of everything, through an overflow of His loving goodness, becomes out of Himself, by His providences for all existing things, and is, as it were, cozened by goodness and affection and love, and is led down from the Eminence above all, and surpassing all, to being in all, as befits an extatic superessential power centred in Himself. Wherefore, those skilled in Divine things call Him even Jealous, as (being) that vast good Love towards all beings, and as rousing His loving inclination to jealousy,----and as proclaiming Himself Jealous----to Whom the things desired are objects of jealousy, and as though the objects of His providential care were objects of jealousy for Him. And, in short, the lovable is of the Beautiful and Good, and Love preexisted both in the Beautiful and Good, and on account of the Beautiful and Good, is and takes Being.

SECTION XIV. But what do the theologians mean when at one time they call Him Love, and Loving-kindness, and at another, Loved and Esteemed? For, of the one, He is Author and, as it were, Producer and Father; but the other, He Himself is; and by one He is moved, but by the other He moves; or (when they say), that He Himself is Procurer and Mover of Himself and by Himself. In this sense, they call Him esteemed and loved, as Beautiful and Good: but again Love and Loving-kindness, as being at once moving and conducting Power to Himself;----the alone----self Beautiful and Good, by reason of Itself, and, being, as it were, a manifestation of Itself through Itself, and a good Progression of the surpassing union, and a loving Movement, simplex, self-moved, self-operating, pre-existing in the Good, and from the Good bubbling forth to things existing, and again returning to the Good, in which also the Divine Love indicates distinctly Its own unending and unbeginning, as it were a sort of everlasting circle whirling round in unerring combination, by

reason of the Good, from the Good, and in the Good, and to the Good, and ever advancing and remaining and returning in the same and throughout the same. And these things our illustrious initiator divinely set forth throughout His Hymns of Love, of which we may appropriately make mention, and, as it were, place as a certain sacred chapter to our treatise concerning Love.

SECTION XV. Extract from the ”Hymns of Love” by the most holy Hierotheus:---- Love, whether we speak of Divine, or Angelic, or intelligent, or psychical, or physical, let us regard as a certain unifying and combining power, moving the superior to forethought for the inferior, and the equals to a mutual fellowship, and lastly, the inferior to respect towards the higher and superior. SECTION XVI. Of the same, from the same Erotic Hymns. Since we have arranged the many loves from the one, by telling, in due order, what are the kinds of knowledge and powers of the mundane and super-mundane loves; over which, according to the defined purpose of the discourse, the orders and ranks of the mental and intelligible loves preside; next after which are placed the self-existent intelligible and divine, over the really beautiful loves there which have been appropriately celebrated by us; now, on the other hand, by restoring all back to the One and enfolded Love, and Father of them all, let us collect and gather them together from the many, by contracting It into two Powers entirely lovable, over which rules and precedes altogether the Cause, resistless from Its universal Love beyond all, and to which is elevated, according to the nature of each severally, the whole love from all existing things.

SECTION XVII. Of the same, from the same Hymns of Love. Come then, whilst collecting these again into one, let us say, that it is a certain simplex power, which of itself moves to a sort of unifying combination from the Good, to the lowest of things existing, and from that again in due order, circling round again, through all to the Good from Itself, and through Itself and by Itself, and rolling back to Itself always in the same way. SECTION XVIII.

And yet, any one might say, ”if the Beautiful and Good is beloved and desired, and esteemed by all (for even that which is non-existing desires It, as we have said, and struggles how to be in It; and Itself is the form-giving, even of things without form, and by It alone, even the non-existing is said to be, and is superessentially)---- ---”How is it that the host of demons do not desire the Beautiful and Good, but, through their earthly proclivities, having fallen away from the angelic identity, as regards the desire of the Good, have become cause of all evils both to themselves and to all the others who are said to be corrupted? and why, in short, when the tribes of demons have been brought into being from the Good, are they not like the Good? or how, after being a good production from the Good, were they changed? and what is that which depraved them, and in short, what is evil? and from what source did it spring? and in which of things existing is it? and how did He, Who is Good, will to bring it into being? and how, when He willed it, was He able? And

if evil is from another cause, what other cause is there for things existing, beside the Good? Further, how, when there is a Providence, is there evil, either coming into existence at all, or not destroyed? And how does any existing thing desire it, in comparison with the Good?

SECTION XIX.

Such a statement as this might be alleged by way of objection. We, however, on our part, will pray the objector to look to the truth of the facts, and will make bold to say this first. The Evil is not from the Good, and if it is from the Good, it is not the Evil. For, it is not the nature of fire to make cold, nor of good to bring into being things not good; and if all things that be are from the Good (for to produce and to preserve is natural to the Good, but to destroy and to dissolve, to the Evil), there is no existing thing from the Evil, nor will the Evil itself be, if it should be evil even to itself. And, if it be not so, the Evil is not altogether evil, but has some portion of the Good, in consequence of which it wholly is. Now, if the things existing desire the Beautiful and Good, and whatever they do, they do for the sake of that which seems good, and every purpose of things existing has the Good for its beginning and end (for nothing looking to the Evil qua evil, does what it does), how shall the Evil be in things existing; or, wholly being, how has it been seduced from such a good yearning? Also if all the things existing are from the Good, and the Good is above all things existing, then there is existing in the Good even the non-existing; but the Evil is not existing;

and, if this be not the case, it is not altogether evil, nor non-existing, for the absolutely non-existing will be nothing, unless it should be spoken of as in the Good superessentially. The Good, then, will be fixed far above both the absolutely existing and the non-existing; but the Evil is neither in things existing, nor in things non-existing, but, being further distant from the Good than the non-existing itself, it is alien and more unsubstantial. Where then is the Evil? some one may perchance say. For if the Evil is not,----virtue and vice are the same, both universally and particularly. Or, not even that which opposes itself to virtue will be evil, and yet sobriety and license, and righteousness and unrighteousness, are contraries. And I, by no means, speak in reference to the just and unjust man, and the temperate and intemperate man; but also, long before the difference between the just man and his opposite is made manifest externally, in the very soul itself the vices stand altogether apart from the virtues, and the passions rebel against the reason; and from this we must grant some evil contrary to the Good. For the Good is not contrary to Itself, but as the product from one Source and one Cause, It rejoices in fellowship and unity and friendship. Nor yet is the lesser good opposed to the greater, for neither is the less heat or cold opposed to the greater.

The Evil then is in things existing, and is existing, and is opposed, and is in opposition to, the Good; and if it is the destruction of things existing, this does not expel

the Evil from existence; but it will be, both itself existing, and generator of things existing. Does not frequently the destruction of one become birth of another? and the Evil will be contributing to the completion of the whole, and supplying through itself non-imperfection to the whole.

SECTION XX.

Now to all this true reason will answer, that the Evil qua evil makes no single essence or birth, but only, as far as it can, pollutes and destroys the subsistence of things existing. But, if any one says, that it is productive of being, and that by destruction of one it gives birth to another, we must truly answer, that not qua destruction it gives birth, but qua destruction and evil, it destroys and pollutes only, but it becomes birth and essence, by reason of the Good; and the Evil will be destruction indeed, by reason of itself; but producer of birth by reason of the Good; and qua evil, it is neither existing, nor productive of things existing; but, by reason of the Good, it is both existing and good-existing, and productive of things good. Yea, rather (for neither will the same by itself be both good and evil, nor the self-same power be of itself destruction and birth----neither as self-acting power, nor as self-acting destruction), the absolutely Evil is neither existing nor good, nor generative, nor productive of things being and good; but the Good in whatever things it may be perfectly engendered, makes them perfect and pure, and thoroughly good,----but the things which partake of it in a less degree are both imperfectly good, and impure, by reason of the lack of the Good. And (thus) the Evil altogether, is not, nor is good, nor good producing; but that which approaches more or less near the Good will be proportionately good;

since the All-perfect Goodness, in passing through all, not only passes to the All-good beings around Itself, but extends Itself to the most remote, by being present to some thoroughly, to others subordinately, but to the rest, in the most remote degree, as each existing thing is able to participate in It. And some things, indeed, participate in the Good entirely, whilst others are deprived of It, in a more or less degree, but others possess a more obscure participation in the Good; and to the rest, the Good is present as a most distant echo. For if the Good were not present according to the capacity of each, the most Divine and honoured would occupy the rank of the lowest. And how were it possible that all should participate in the Good uniformly, when not all are in the same way adapted to its whole participation?

Now, this is the exceeding greatness of the power of the Good, that It empowers, both things deprived, and the deprivation of Itself, with a view to the entire participation of itself. And, if one must make bold to speak the truth, even the things fighting against It, both are, and are able to fight, by Its power. Yea rather, in order that I may speak summarily, all things which are, in so far as they are, both are good, and from the Good; but, in so far as they are deprived of the Good, are neither good, nor do they exist. For, even with regard to the other conditions, such

as heat or cold, there are things which have been heated, and when the heat has departed from them, many of them are deprived both of life and intelligence (now Almighty God is outside essence, and is, superessentially), and, in one word, with regard to the rest, even when the condition has departed, or has not become completely developed, things exist, and are able to subsist; but that which is every way deprived of the Good, in no way or manner ever was, or is, or will be, nor is able to be. For example, the licentious man, even if he have been deprived of the Good, as regards his irrational lust, in this respect he neither is, nor desires realities, but nevertheless he participates in the Good, in his very obscure echo of union and friendship.

And, even Anger participates in the Good, by the very movement and desire to direct and turn the seeming evils to the seeming good. And the very man, who desires the very worst life, as wholly desirous of life and that which seems best to him, by the very fact of desiring, and desiring life, and looking to a best life, participates in the Good. And, if you should entirely take away the Good, there will be neither essence, nor life, nor yearning, nor movement, nor anything else. So that the fact, that birth is born from destruction, is not a power of evil, but a presence of a lesser good, even as disease is a defect of order, not total----for, if this should be, not even the disease itself will continue to exist, but the disease remains and is, by having the lowest possible order of essence, and in this continues to exist as a parasite. For that which is altogether deprived of the Good, is neither existing, nor in things existing; but the compound, by reason of the Good in things existing, and in consequence of this in things existing, is also existing in so far as it participates in the Good. Yea rather, all things existing will so far be, more or less, as they participate in the Good; for, even as respects the self-existing Being, that which in no ways is at all, will not be at all;

but that which partially is, but partially is not, in so far as it has fallen from the ever Being, is not; but so far as it has participated in the Being, so far it is, and its whole being, and its non-being, is sustained and preserved. And the Evil,----that which has altogether fallen from the Good----will be good, neither in the more nor in the less; but the partially good, and partially not good, fight no doubt against a certain good, but not against the whole Good, and, even it is sustained by the participation of the Good, and the Good gives essence even to the privation of Itself, wholly by the participation of Itself; for, when the Good has entirely departed, there will be neither anything altogether good, nor compound, nor absolute evil. For, if the Evil is an imperfect good, (then) by the entire absence of the Good, both the imperfect and the perfect Good will be absent; and then only will be, and be seen, the Evil, when on the one hand, it is an evil to those things to which it was opposed, and, on the other, is expelled from other things on account of their goodness. For, it is impossible that the same things, under the same conditions in every respect, should fight against each other. The Evil then is not an actual thing.

SECTION XXI.

But neither is the Evil in things existing. For, if all things existing are from the Good, and the Good is in all things existing, and embraces all, either the Evil will not be in things existing, or it will be in the Good; and certainly it will not be in the Good, for neither is cold in fire, nor to do evil in Him, Who turns even the evil to good. But, if it shall be, how will the Evil be in the Good? If forsooth, from Itself, it is absurd and impossible. For it is not possible, as the infallibility of the Oracles affirms, that a "good tree should bring forth evil fruits," nor certainly, vice versa. But, if not from Itself, it is evident that it will be from another source and cause. For, either the Evil will be from the Good, or the Good from the Evil; or, if this be not possible, both the Good and the Evil will be from another source and cause, for no dual is source, but a Unit will be source of every dual. Further, it is absurd that two entirely contraries should proceed and be from one and the same, and that the self-same source should be, not simplex and unique, but divided and double, and contrary to itself, and be changed; and certainly it is not possible that there should be two contrary sources of things existing, and that these should be contending in each other, and in the whole.

For, if this were granted, even Almighty God will not be in repose, nor free from disquietude, if there were indeed something bringing disturbance even to Him. Then, everything will be in disorder, and always fighting; and yet the Good distributes friendship to all existing things, and is celebrated by the holy theologians, both as very Peace, and Giver of Peace. Wherefore, things good are both friendly and harmonious, every one, and products of one life, and marshalled to one good; and kind, and similar, and affable to each other. So that the Evil is not in God, and the Evil is not inspired by God. But neither is the Evil from God, for, either He is not good, or He does good, and produces good things; and, not once in a way, and some; and at another time not, and not all; for this would argue transition and change, even as regards the very Divinest thing of all, the Cause. But, if in God, the Good is sustaining essence, God, when changing from the Good, will be sometimes Being, and sometimes not Being. But, if He has the Good by participation, He will then have it from another; and sometimes He will have it, and sometimes not. The Evil, then, is not from God, nor in God, neither absolutely nor occasionally.

SECTION XXII. But neither is the Evil in Angels; for if the good-like angel proclaims the goodness of God, being by participation in a secondary degree that which the Announced is in the first degree as Cause, the Angel is a likeness of Almighty God----a manifestation of the unmanifested light----a mirror untarnished----most transparent----without flaw----pure----without spot---- receiving, if I may so speak, the full beauty of the Good-stamped likeness of God----and without stain, shedding forth undefiledly in itself, so far as is possible, the goodness of the Silence, which dwells in innermost shrines. The Evil, then, is not even in Angels. But

by punishing sinners are they evil? By this rule, then, the punishers of transgressors are evil, and those of the priests who shut out the profane from the Divine Mysteries. And yet, the being punished is not an evil, but the becoming worthy of punishment; nor the being deservedly expelled from Holy things, but the becoming accursed of God, and unholy and unfit for things un-defiled.

SECTION XXIII.

But, neither are the demons evil by nature; for, if they are evil by nature, neither are they from the Good, nor amongst things existing; nor, in fact, did they change from good, being by nature, and always, evil. Then, are they evil to themselves or to others? If to themselves, they also destroy themselves; but if to others, how destroying, or what destroying?----Essence, or power, or energy? If indeed Essence, in the first place, it is not contrary to nature; for they do not destroy things indestructible by nature, but things receptive of destruction. Then, neither is this an evil for every one, and in every case; but, not even any existing thing is destroyed, in so far as it is essence and nature, but by the defect of nature's order, the principle of harmony and proportion lacks the power to remain as it was. But the lack of strength is not complete, for the complete lack of power takes away even the disease and the subject; and such a disease will be even a destruction of itself; so that, such a thing is not an evil, but a defective good, for that which has no part of the Good will not be amongst things which exist. And with regard to the destruction of power and energy the principle is the same. Then, how are the demons, seeing they come into being from God, evil? For the Good brings forth and sustains good things. Yet they are called evil, some one may say.

But not as they are (for they are from the Good, and obtained a good being), but, as they are not, by not having had strength, as the Oracles affirm, "to keep their first estate. For in what, tell me, do we affirm that the demons become evil, except in the ceasing in the habit and energy for good things Divine? Otherwise, if the demons are evil by nature, they are always evil; yet evil is unstable. Therefore, if they are always in the same condition, they are not evil; for to be ever the same is a characteristic of the Good. But, if they are not always evil, they are not evil by nature, but by wavering from the angelic good qualities. And they are not altogether without part in the good, in so far as they both are, and live and think, and in one word----as there is a sort of movement of aspiration in them. But they are said to be 'evil, by reason of their weakness as regards their action according to nature. The evil then, in them, is a turning aside and a stepping out of things befitting themselves, and a missing of aim, and imperfection and impotence, and a weakness and departure, and falling away from the power which preserves their integrity in them. Otherwise, what is evil in demons? An irrational anger----a senseless desire----a headlong fancy.----But these, even if they are in demons, are not altogether, nor in every respect, nor in themselves alone, evils.

For even with regard to other living creatures, not the possession of these, but the loss, is both destruction to the creature, and an evil. But the possession saves, and makes to be, the nature of the living creature which possesses them. The tribe of demons then is not evil, so far as it is according to nature, but so far as it is not; and the whole good which was given to them was not changed, but themselves fell from the whole good given. And the angelic gifts which were given to them, we by no means affirm that they were changed, but they exist, and are complete, and all luminous, although the demons themselves do not see, through having blunted their powers of seeing good. So far as they are, they are both from the Good, and are good, and aspire to the Beautiful and the Good, by aspiring to the realities, Being, and Life, and Thought; and by the privation and departure and declension from the good things befitting them, they are called evil, and are evil as regards what they are not: and by aspiring to the non-existent, they aspire to the Evil.

SECTION XXIV. But does some one say that souls are evil? If it be that they meet with evil things providentially, and with a view to their preservation, this is not an evil, but a good, and from the Good, Who makes even the evil good. But, if we say that souls become evil, in what respect do they become evil, except in the failure of their good habits and energies; and, by reason of their own lack of strength, missing their aim and tripping? For we also say, that the air around us becomes dark by failure and absence of light, and yet the light itself is always light, that which enlightens even the darkness. The Evil, then, is neither in demons nor in us, as an existent evil, but as a failure and dearth of the perfection of our own proper goods. SECTION XXV. But neither is the Evil in irrational creatures, for if you should take away anger and lust, and the other things which we speak of, and which are not absolutely evil in their own nature, the lion having lost his boldness and fierceness will not be a lion; and the dog, when he has become gentle to every body, will not be a dog, since to keep guard is a dog’s duty, and to admit those of the household, but to drive away the stranger. So the fact that nature is not destroyed is not an evil, but a destruction of nature, weakness, and failure of the natural habitudes and energies and powers. And, if all things through generation in time have their perfection, the imperfect is not altogether contrary to universal nature.

SECTION XXVI. But neither is the Evil in nature throughout, for if all the methods of nature are from universal nature, there is nothing contrary to it. But in each individual (nature) one thing will be according to nature, and another not according to nature. For one thing is contrary to nature in one, and another in another, and that which is according to nature to one, is to the other, contrary to nature. But malady of nature, that which is the contrary to nature, is the deprivation of things of nature. So that there is not an evil nature; but this is evil to nature, the inability to accomplish the things of one’s proper nature. SECTION XXVII. But, neither is the Evil in bodies. For deformity and disease are a defect of form, and a deprivation

of order. And this is not altogether an evil, but a less good; for if a dissolution of beauty and form and order become complete, the body itself will be gone. But that the body is not cause of baseness to the soul is evident, from the fact that baseness continues to coexist even without a body, as in demons. For this is evil to minds and souls and bodies, (viz.) the weakness and declension from the habitude of their own proper goods.

SECTION XXVIII. But neither (a thing which they say over and over again) is the evil in matter, so far as it is matter. For even it participates in ornament and beauty and form. But if matter, being without these, by itself is without quality and without form, how does matter produce anything----matter, which, by itself, is impassive? Besides how is matter an evil? for, if it does not exist in any way whatever, it is neither good nor evil but if it is any how existing, and all things existing are from the Good, even it would be from the Good; and either the Good is productive of the Evil, or the Evil, as being from the Good, is good; or the Evil is capable of producing the Good; or even the Good, as from the Evil, is evil; or further, there are two first principles, and these suspended from another one head. And, if they say that matter is necessary, for a completion of the whole Cosmos, how is matter an evil? For the Evil is one thing, and the necessary is another. But, how does He, Who is Good, bring anything to birth from the Evil? or, how is that, which needs the Good, evil? For the Evil shuns the nature of the Good. And how does matter, being evil, generate and nourish nature? For the Evil, quâ evil, neither generates, nor nourishes, nor solely produces, nor preserves anything.

But, if they should say, that it does not make baseness in souls, but that they are dragged to it, how will this be true? for many of them look towards the good; and yet how did this take place, when matter was dragging them entirely to the Evil? So that the Evil in souls is not from matter, but from a disordered and discordant movement. But, if they say this further, that they invariably follow matter, and unstable matter is necessary for those who are unable to stand firmly by themselves, how is the Evil necessary, or the necessary an evil? SECTION XXIX. But neither is it this which we affirm----the ”privation fights against the Good by its own power ”; for the complete privation is altogether powerless, and the partial has the power, not in respect of privation, but in so far as it is not a complete privation. For, whilst privation of good is partial, it is not, as yet, an evil, and when, it has become an accomplished fact, the nature of the evil has departed also.

SECTION XXX. But, to speak briefly, the Good is from the one and the whole Cause, but the Evil is from many and partial defects. Almighty God knows the Evil qua good; and, with Him, the causes of the evils are powers producing good . But, if the Evil is eternal, and creates, and has power, and is, and does, whence do these come to it? Is it either from the Good, or by the Good from the Evil, or by both from another cause? Everything that is according to nature comes into being from

a defined cause. And if the Evil is without cause, and undefined, it is not according to nature. For there is not in nature what is contrary to nature; nor is there any raison d'etre for want of art in art. Is then the soul cause of things evil, as fire of burning, and does it fill everything that it happens to touch with baseness? Or, is the nature of the soul then good, but, by its energies, exists sometimes in one condition, and sometimes in another? If indeed by nature, even its existence is an evil, and whence then does it derive its existence? Or, is it from the good Cause creative of the whole universe? But, if from this, how is it essentially evil? For good are all things born of this. But if by energies, neither is this invariable, and if not, whence are the virtues? Since it (the soul) comes into being without even seeming good. It remains then that the Evil is a weakness and a falling short of the Good.

SECTION XXXI. The Cause of things good is One. If the Evil is contrary to the Good, the many causes of the Evil, certainly those productive of things evil, are not principles and powers, but want of power, and want of strength, and a mixing of things dissimilar without proportion. Neither are things evil unmoved, and always in the same condition, but endless and undefined, and borne along in different things, and those endless. The Good will be beginning and end of all, even things evil, for, for the sake of the Good, are all things, both those that are good, and those that are contrary. For we do even these as desiring the Good (for no one does what he does with a view to the Evil), wherefore the Evil has not a subsistence, but a parasitical subsistence, coming into being for the sake of the Good, and not of itself.

SECTION XXXII. It is to be laid down that being belongs to the Evil as an accident and by reason of something else, and not from its own origin, and thus that that which comes into being appears to be right, because it comes into being for the sake of the Good, but that in reality it is not right for the reason that we think that which is not good to be good. The desired is shewn to be one thing, and that which comes to pass is another. The Evil, then, is beside the path, and beside the mark, and beside nature, and beside cause, and beside beginning, and beside end, and beside limit, and beside intention, and beside purpose. The Evil then is privation and failure, and want of strength, and want of proportion, and want of attainment, and want of purpose; and without beauty, and without life, and without mind, and without reason, and without completeness, and without stability, and without cause, and without limit, and without production; and inactive, and without result, and disordered, and dissimilar, and limitless, and dark, and unessential, and being itself nothing in any manner of way whatever. How, in short, can evil do anything by its mixture with the Good? For that which is altogether without participation in the Good, neither is anything, nor is capable of anything. For, if the Good is both an actual thing and an object of desire, and powerful and effective, how will the contrary to the Good,----that which has been deprived of essence, and intention,

and power, and energy,----be capable of anything? Not all things are evil to all, nor the same things evil in every respect. To a demon, evil is to be contrary to the good-like mind----to a soul, to be contrary to reason----to a body, to be contrary to nature.

SECTION XXXIII. How, in short, are there evils when there is a Providence? The Evil, qua evil, is not, neither as an actual thing nor as in things existing. And no single thing is without a Providence. For neither is the Evil an actual thing existing unmixed with the Good. And, if no single thing is without participation in the Good, but the lack of the Good is an evil, and no existing thing is deprived absolutely of the Good, the Divine Providence is in all existing things, and no single thing is without Providence. But Providence, as befits Its goodness, uses even evils which happen for the benefit, either individual or general, of themselves or others, and suitably provides for each being. Wherefore we will not admit the vain statement of the multitude, who say that Providence ought to lead us to virtue, even against our will. For to destroy nature is not a function of Providence. Hence, as Providence is conservative of the nature of each, it provides for the free, as free; and for the whole, and individuals, according to the wants of all and each, as far as the nature of those provided for admits the providential benefits of its universal and manifold Providence, distributed ’proportionably to each.

SECTION XXXIV. The Evil, then, is not an actual thing, nor is the Evil in things existing. For the Evil, qua evil, is nowhere, and the fact that evil comes into being is not in consequence of power, but by reason of weakness. And, as for the demons, what they are is both from the Good, and good. But their evil is from the declension from their own proper goods, and a change----the weakness, as regards their identity and condition, of the angelic perfection befitting them. And they aspire to the Good, in so far as they aspire to be and to live and to think. And in so far as they do not aspire to the Good, they aspire to the non-existent; and this is not aspiration, but a missing of the true aspiration. SECTION XXXV.

Now the Oracles call conscious transgressors those who are thoroughly weak as regards the ever memorable knowledge or the practise of the Good, and who, knowing the will, do not perform it,----those who are hearers indeed, but are weak concerning the faith, or the energy of the Good. And for some, it is against their will to understand to do good, by reason of the deviation or weakness of the will. And in short, the Evil (as we have often said) is want of strength and want of power, and defect, either of the knowledge, or the never to be forgotten knowledge, or of the faith, or of the aspiration, or of the energy of the Good. Yet, some one may say, the weakness is not punishable, but on the contrary is pardonable. Now, if the power were not granted, the statement might hold good; but, if power comes from the Good, Who giveth, according to the Oracles, the things suitable to all absolutely, the failure and deviation, and departure and declension of the possession from the

Good of our own proper goods is not praiseworthy. But let these things suffice to have been sufficiently said according to our ability in our writings ”Concerning just and Divine chastisement” throughout which sacred treatise the infallibility of the Oracles has cast aside those sophistical statements as senseless words, speaking injustice and falsehood against Almighty God. But now, according to our ability, the Good has been sufficiently praised, as really lovable,----as beginning and end of all----as embracing things existing----as giving form to things not existing----as Cause of all good things----as guiltless of things evil----as Providence and Goodness complete----and soaring above things that are and things that are not----and turning to good things evil, and the privation of Itself----as by all desired, and loved, and esteemed, and whatever else, the true statement, as I deem, has demonstrated in the preceding.

CAPUT V. Concerning Being----in which also concerning Exemplars. SECTION I. LET us now then pass to the name ”Being”----given in the Oracles as veritably that of Him, Who veritably is. But we will recall to your remembrance this much, that the purpose of our treatise is not to make known the superessential Essence----qua superessential----(for this is inexpressible, and unknowable, and altogether unrevealed, and surpassing the union itself), but to celebrate the progression of the supremely Divine Source of Essence, which gives essence to all things being. For the Divine Name of the Good, as making known the whole progressions of the Cause of all, is extended, both to things being, and things not being, and is above things being, and things not being. But the Name of Being is extended to all things being, and is above things being;----and the Name of Life is extended to all things living, and is above things living; and the Name of Wisdom is extended to all the intellectual and rational and sensible, and is above all these.

SECTION II. The treatise, then, seeks to celebrate these, the Names of God, which set forth His Providence. For it does not profess to express the very super-essential Goodness, and Essence, and Life, and Wisdom, of the very superessential Deity, Which is seated above all Goodness, and Deity, and Essence, and Wisdom, and Life,----in secret places, as the Oracles affirm. But it celebrates the beneficial Providence, which has been set forth as preeminently Goodness and Cause of all good things, and as Being, and Life, and Wisdom,----the Cause essentiating and vivifying, and wise-making, of those who partake of essence, and life, and mind, and reason, and sense. But it does not affirm that the Good is one thing, and the Being another; and that Life is other than Wisdom; nor that the Causes are many, and that some deities produce one thing and others another, as superior and inferior; but that the whole good progressions and the Names of God, celebrated by us, are of one God; and that the one epithet makes known the complete Providence of the one God, but that the others are indicative of His more general and more particular providences.

SECTION III. Yet, some one might say, for what reason do we affirm that Life is superior to Being, and Wisdom to Life? Things with life no doubt are above things that merely exist----things sensible above those which merely live,----and things rational above these,----and the Minds above the rational, and are around God, and are more near to Him. Yet, things which partake of greater gifts from God, must needs be better and superior to the rest. But if any one assumed the intellectual to be without being, and without life, the statement might hold good. But if the Divine Minds are both above all the rest of beings, and live above the other living beings, and think and know, above sensible perception and reason, and, beyond all the other existing beings, aspire to, and participate in, the Beautiful and Good, they are more around the Good, participating in It more abundantly, and having received larger and greater gifts from It. As also, the rational creatures excel those of sensible perception, by their superiority in the abundance of reason, and these, by their sensible perception, and others, by their life. And this, as I think, is true, that the things which participate more in the One and boundless-giving God, are more near to Him, and more divine, than those who come behind them (in gifts).

SECTION IV. Now, since we are speaking of these things, come then, and let us praise the Good, as veritably Being, and giving essence to all things that be. He, Who is, is superessential, sustaining Cause of the whole potential Being, and Creator of being, existence, subsistence, essence, nature; Source and Measure of ages, and Framer of times, and Age of things that be, Time of things coming into being, Being of things howsoever being, Birth of things howsoever born. From Him, Who is, is age, and essence, and being, and time, and birth, and thing born; the realities in things that be, and things howsoever existing and subsisting. For Almighty God is not relatively a Being, but absolutely and unboundedly, having comprehended and anticipated the whole Being in Himself. Wherefore, He is also called King of the ages, since the whole being both is, and is sustained, in Him and around Him. And He neither was, nor will be, nor became, nor becomes, nor will become----yea rather, neither is. But He is the Being to things that be, and not things that be only, but the very being of things that be, absolutely from before the ages. For He is the Age of ages----the Existing before the ages.

SECTION V.

Summing up, then, let us say, that the being to all beings and to the ages, is from the Preexisting. And every age and time is from Him. And of every age and time, and of everything, howsoever existing, the Pre-existing is Source and Cause. And all things participate in Him, and from no single existing thing does He stand aloof. And He is before all things, and all things in Him consist. And absolutely, if anything is, in any way whatsoever, it both is, and is contemplated, and is preserved in the Pre-existing. And, before all the other participations in Him, the being is presupposed. And self-existent Being has precedence of the being self-existent Life;

and the being self-existent Wisdom; and the being self-existent Divine Likeness; and the other beings, in whatever gifts participating, before all these participate in being; yea, rather, all self-existent things, of which existing things participate, participate in the self-existent Being. And there is nothing existent, of which the self-existent Being is not essence and age. Naturally, then, more chiefly than all the rest, Almighty God is celebrated as Being, from the prior of His other gifts; for pre-possessing even pre-existence, and super-existence, and super-possessing being, He pre-established all being, I mean self-existent being; and subjected everything, howsoever existing, to Being Itself. And then, all the sources of beings, as participating in being, both are, and are sources, and first are, and then are sources. And, if you wish to say, that the self-existent Life is source of living things, as living;

and the self-existent Similitude, of things similar as similar; and the self-existent Union, of things united, as united; and the self-existent Order, of things ordered, as ordered and of the rest, as many as, by participating in this or that, or both, or many, are this or that, or both, or many, you will find the self-existent participations themselves, first participating in being, and by their being, first remaining;----then being sources of this or that, and by their participating in being, both being, and being participated. But, if these are by their participation of being, much more the things participating in them.

SECTION VI. The self-existent Super-goodness then, as projecting the first gift of self-existent being, is celebrated by the elder and first of the participations; and being itself is from It, and in It; as also the sources of things being, and all the things that be, and the things howsoever sustained by being, and that irresistibly, and comprehensively and uniformly. For even in a monad, every number preexists in the form of a unit, and the monad holds every number in itself singly. And every number is united in the monad, but so far as it advances from the monad, so far it is distributed and multiplied. And in a centre, all the lines of the circle coexist within one union, and the point holds all the straight lines in itself, uniformly united, both to each other, and to the one source from which they proceeded, and in the centre itself they are completely united; but standing slightly distant from it, they are slightly separated; but when more apart, more so. And in one word, the nearer they are to the centre, the more they are united to it and to each other? and the more they stand apart from it, the more they stand apart from each other.

SECTION VII. But all the proportions of nature individually are comprehended in the whole nature of the whole, within one unconfused union; and in the soul, the powers of each several part are provident of the whole body in a uniform fashion. There is nothing out of place then, that, by ascending from obscure images to the Cause of all, we should contemplate, with supermundane eyes, all things in the Cause of all, even those contrary to each other, after a single fashion and unitedly. For It is Source of things existing, from which are both being itself, and all things

however being; every source, every term, every life, every immortality, every wisdom, every order, every harmony, every power, every protection, every stability, every endurance, every conception, every word, every sensible perception, every habit, every standing, every movement, every union, every mingling, every friendship, every agreement, every difference, every limit, and whatever other things existing by being, characterize all things being.

SECTION VIII.

And from the same Cause of all, are the higher and lower intellectual essences of the godlike angels; and those of the souls; and the natures of the whole Cosmos; all things whatsoever said to be either in others, or by reflection. Yea, even the all holy and most honoured Powers veritably being, and established, as it were, in the vestibule of the superessential Triad, are from It, and in It; and have the being and the godlike being; and after them, as regards Angels, the subordinate, sub-ordinately, and the remotest, most remotely, but as regards ourselves, supermundanely. And the souls, and all the other beings, according to the same rule, have their being, and their well-being; and are, and are well; by having from the Pre-existing their being and their well-being. And in It are both being and well-being; and from It, beginning; and in It, guarded; and to It, terminated. And the prerogatives of being he distributes to the superior beings, which the Oracles call even eternal. But being itself never at any time fails all existing beings. And even self-existent being is from the Pre-existent, and of Him is being, and He is not of being;----and in Him is being, and He is not in being; and being possesses Him, and not He possesses being; and He is both age and beginning, and measure of being; being essentiating Source, and Middle and End, of pre-essence, and being and age and all things.

And for this reason, by the Oracles, the veritably Pre-existing is represented under many forms, according to every conception of beings, and the ”Was” and the ”Is,” and the ”Will be,” and the ”Became,” and the ”Becomes,” and the ”Will become,” are properly sung respecting Him. For all these, to those who think worthily of God, signify by every conception His being superessenlially, and Cause in every way of things existing. For He is not this, but not that; nor is He in some way, but not in some other; but He is all things, as Cause of all, and containing and pre-holding in Himself all governments, all controls, of all existing things. And He is above all, as superessentially super-being before all. Wherefore, also, all things are predicated of Him and together, and He is none of them all; of every shape, of every kind, without form, without beauty, anticipating in Himself, beginnings and middles, and ends of things existing, irresistibly and preeminently; and shedding forth without flaw, (the light of) being to all, as beseems a One and super-united Cause. For, if our sun, at the same time that he is one and sheds a uniform light, renews the essences and qualities of sensible creatures, although they are many and various,

and nourishes and guards, and perfects and distinguishes, and unites, and fosters, and makes to be productive, and increases, and transforms, and establishes, and makes to grow, and awakens, and gives life to all;

and each of the whole, in a manner appropriate to itself, participates in the same and one sun; and the one sun anticipated in himself, uniformly, the causes of the many participants; much more with regard to the Cause of it and of all things, ought we to concede that It first presides over, as beseems One superessential Oneness, all the exemplars, of things existing; since He produces even essences, as beseems the egression from essence. But, we affirm that the exemplars are the methods in God, giving essence to things that be, and pre-existing uniformly, which theology calls predeterminations, and Divine and good wills, which define and produce things existing; according to which (predeterminations) the Superessential both predetermined and brought into existence everything that exists.

SECTION IX. But, if the Philosopher Clemens thinks good, that the higher amongst beings should be called exemplars in relation to something, his statement advances, not through correct and perfect and simple names. But, when we have conceded even this, to be correctly said, we must call to mind the Word of God, which says, ”I have not shewn thee these things for the purpose of going after them, but that through the proportionate knowledge of these we may be led up to the Cause of all, as we are capable.” We must attribute, then, all existing things to It, as beseems One Union pre-eminent above all, since by starting from Being, the essentiating Progression and Goodness, both penetrating all, and filling all things with Its own being, and rejoicing over all things being, pre-holds all things in Itself, rejecting all duplicity by an one superfluity of simplicity. But It grasps all things in the same way, as beseems its super-simplified Infinity, and is participated in by all uniquely, even as a voice, whilst being one and the same, is participated in by many ears as one.

SECTION X. The Pre-existing then is beginning and end of existing things; beginning indeed as Cause, and end as for whom; and term of all, and infinitude of all infinitude; and term, especially, of things that are, as it were, opposed. For in One, as we have often said, He both pre-holds and sustains all existing things, being present to all, and everywhere, both as regards the one, and the same, and as the every same, and issuing forth to all, and abiding in Himself; and standing and moving, and neither standing nor moving; neither having beginning, or middle, or end; neither in any of the existing things, nor being any of the existing things. And neither does any of the things eternally existing, or those temporarily subsisting, entirely come up to Him, but He towers above time and eternity, and all things eternal and temporal. Wherefore also, He is Eternity itself, and things existing, and the measures of things existing, and things measured through Him and from Him. But let us speak of these things more opportunely on another occasion.

CAPUT VI. Concerning Life. SECTION I. Now let us sing the Eternal Life, from which comes the self-existing Life, and every life; and from which, to all things however partaking of life, is distributed the power to live appropriately to each. Certainly the life and the immortality of the immortal Angels, and the very indestructibility of the angelic perpetual motion, both is, and is sustained from It, and by reason of It. Wherefore, they are also called living always and immortal; and again, not immortal, because not from themselves have they their immortality and eternal life; but from the vivifying Cause forming and sustaining all life; and as we said of Him, Who is, that He is Age even of the self-existing Being, so also here again (we say) that the Divine Life, which is above life, is life-giving and sustaining even of the self-existing Life; and every life and life-giving movement is from the Life which is above every life, and all source of all life. From It, even the souls have their indestructibility, and all living creatures, and plants in their most remote echo of life, have their power to live. And when It is ”taken away,” according to the Divine saying, all life fails, and to It even things that have failed, through their inability to participate in It, when again returning, again become living creatures.

SECTION II. And It gives chiefly to the self-existing Life to be a life, and to every life, and to the individual life, that each should be conformable to that which nature intended it to be. And to the supercelestial lives It gives the immaterial and godlike, and unchangeable immortality; and the unswerving and undeviating perpetual movement; whilst extending Itself through excess of goodness, even to the life of demons . For, neither has this its being from another cause, but from It life has both its being and its continuance. Further, It bequeaths even to men the angelic life, so far as is possible to compound being, and through an overflowing love towards man turns, and calls us back to Itself, even when we are departing from It; and, what is still more Divine, promises to transfer even our whole selves (I mean souls, and bodies their yoke-fellows), to a perfect life and immortality;----a fact which perhaps seems to Antiquity contrary to nature, but to me, and to thee, and to the truth, both Divine and above nature. But, by ”above nature,” I understand our visible nature, not the all-powerful nature of the Divine Life. For, to this, as being nature of all the living creatures, and especially the more Divine, no life is against nature, or above nature. So that the con- tradictory statements of Simon’s folly on this matter, let them be far repelled from a Divine assembly, and from thy reverent soul. For this escaped him, as I imagine, whilst thinking to be wise, that the right-thinking man ought not to use the visible reason of the sensible perception, as an ally against the invisible Cause of all; and this must be our reply to him, that his statement is against nature, for to It nothing is contrary.

SECTION III. From It, both all living creatures and plants draw their life and nourishment; and whether you speak of intellectual, or rational, or sensible, or nourishing, or growing, or whatever, life, or source of life, or essence of life, from It, which is above every life, it both lives and thrives; and in It, as Cause, uniformly

pre-existed. For the super-living, and life-springing Life is Cause both of all life, and is generative, and completive, and dividing of life, and is to be celebrated from every life, in consequence of its numerous generation of all lives, as Manifold, and contemplated, and sung by every life; and as without need, yea, rather, superfull of life, the Self-living, and above every life, causing to live and super-living, or in whatever way one might extol the life which is unutterable by human speech. CAPUT VII. Concerning Wisdom, Mind, Reason, Truth, faith. SECTION I.

COME then, if you please, let us sing the good and eternal Life, both as wise, and as wisdom's self; yea, rather, as sustaining all wisdom, and being superior to all wisdom and understanding. For, not only is Almighty God superfull of wisdom, and of His understanding there is no number, but He is fixed above all reason and mind and wisdom. And, when the truly divine man, the common sun of us, and of our leader, had thought this out, in a sense above nature, he says, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men," (meaning) not only that all human intelligence is a sort of error, when tried by the stability and durability of the Divine and most perfect conceptions, but that it is even usual with the theologians to deny, with respect to God, things of privation, in an opposite sense. Thus, the Oracles declare, the All-luminous Light, invisible, and Him, Who is often sung, and of many names, to be unutterable and without name, and Him, Who is present to all, and is found of all, to be incomprehensible and past finding out. In this very way, even now, the Divine Apostle is said to have celebrated as "foolishness of God," that which appears unexpected and absurd in it, (but) which leads to the truth which is unutterable and before all reason.

But, as I elsewhere said, by taking the things above us, in a sense familiar to ourselves, and by being entangled by what is congenial to sensible perceptions, and by comparing things Divine with our own conditions, we are led astray through following the Divine and mystical reason after a mere appearance. We ought to know that our mind has the power for thought, through which it views things intellectual, but that the union through which it is brought into contact with things beyond itself surpasses the nature of the mind. We must then contemplate things Divine, after this Union, not after ourselves, but by our whole selves, standing out of our whole selves, and becoming wholly of God. For it is better to be of God, and not of ourselves. For thus things Divine will, be given to those who become dear to God. Celebrating then, in a superlative sense, this, the irrational and mindless and foolish Wisdom, we affirm that It is Cause of all mind and reason, and all wisdom and understanding; and of It is every counsel, and from It every knowledge and understanding; and in It all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. For, agreeably to the things already spoken, the super-wise, and all-wise Cause is a mainstay even of the self-existing Wisdom, both the universal and the individual.

SECTION II.

From It the contemplated and contemplating powers of the angelic Minds have their simple and blessed conceptions; collecting their divine knowledge, not in portions, or from portions, or sensible perceptions, or detailed reasonings, or arguing from something common to these things, but purified from everything material and multitudinous, they contemplate the conceptions of Divine things intuitively, immaterially and uniformly, and they have their intellectual power and energy resplendent with the unmixed and undefiled purity, and see at a glance the Divine conceptions indi-visibly and immaterially, and are by the GodlikeOne moulded, as attainable by reason of the Divine Wisdom, to the Divine and Super-wise Mind and Reason. And souls have their reasoning power, investigating the truth of things by detailed steps and rotation, and through their divided and manifold variety falling short of the single minds, but, by the collection of many towards the One, deemed worthy, even of conceptions equal to the angels, so far as is proper and attainable to souls. But, even as regards the sensible perceptions themselves, one would not miss the mark, if one called them an echo of wisdom. Yet, even the mind of demons, qua mind, is from It; but so far as a mind is irrational, not knowing, and not wishing to attain what it aspires to, we must call it more properly a declension from wisdom.

But, since the Divine Wisdom is called source, and cause, and mainstay, and completion and guard, and term of wisdom itself, and of every kind, and of every mind and reason, and every sensible perception, how then is Almighty God Himself, the super-wise, celebrated as Mind and Reason and Knowledge? For, how will He conceive any of the objects of intelligence, seeing He has not intellectual operations? or how will He know the objects of sense, seeing He is fixed above all sensible perception? Yet the Oracles affirm that He knoweth all things, and that nothing escapes the Divine Knowledge. But, as I have been accustomed to say many times before, we must contemplate things Divine, in a manner becoming God. For the mindless, and the insensible, we must attribute to God, by excess----not by defect, just as we attribute the irrational to Him Who is above reason; and imperfection, to the Super-perfect, and Pre-perfect; and the impalpable, and invisible gloom, to the light which is inaccessible on account of excess of the visible light. So the Divine Mind comprehends all things, by His knowledge surpassing all, having anticipated within Himself the knowledge of all, as beseems the Cause of all; before angels came to being, knowing and producing angels; and knowing all the rest from within; and, so to speak, from the Source Itself, and by bringing into being. And, this, I think, the sacred text teaches, when it says, ”He, knowing all things, before their birth.

For, not as learning existing things from existing things, does the Divine Mind know, but from Itself, and in Itself, as Cause, it pre-holds and pre-comprehends the notion and knowledge, and essence of all things; not approaching each several thing according to its kind, but knowing and containing all things, within one grasp of

the Cause; just as the light, as cause, presupposes in itself the notion of darkness, not knowing the darkness otherwise than from the light. The Divine Wisdom then, by knowing Itself, will know all things; things material, immaterially, and things divisible, indivisibly, and things many, uniformly; both knowing and producing all. things by Itself, the One. For even, if as becomes one Cause, Almighty God distributes being to all things that be, as beseems the self-same, unique Cause, He will know all things, as being from Himself, and pre-established in Himself, and not from things that be will He receive the knowledge of them; but even to each of them, He will be provider of the knowledge of themselves, and of the mutual knowledge of each other. Almighty God, then, has not one knowledge, that of Himself, peculiar to Himself, and another, which embraces in common all things existing; for the very Cause of all things, by knowing Itself, will hardly, I presume, be ignorant of the things from Itself, and of which It is Cause. In this way then, Almighty God knows existing things, not by a knowledge of things existing, but by that of Himself.

For the Oracles affirm, that the angels also know things on the earth, not as knowing them by sensible perceptions, although objects of sensible perception, but by a proper power and nature of the Godlike Mind.

SECTION III.

In addition to these things, we must examine how we know God, Who is neither an object of intellectual nor of sensible perception, nor is absolutely anything of things existing. Never, then, is it true to say, that we know God; not from His own nature (for that is unknown, and surpasses all reason and mind), but, from the ordering of all existing things, as projected from Himself, and containing a sort of images and similitudes of His Divine exemplars, we ascend, as far as we have power, to that which is beyond all, by method and order in the abstraction and pre-eminence of all, and in the Cause of all. Wherefore, Almighty God is known even in all, and apart from all. And through knowledge, Almighty God is known, and through agnosia. And there is, of Him, both conception, and expression, and science, and contact, and sensible perception, and opinion, and imagination, and name, and all the rest. And He is neither conceived, nor expressed, nor named. And He is not any of existing things, nor is He known in any one of existing things. And He is all in all, and nothing in none. And He is known to all, from all, and to none from none. For, we both say these things correctly concerning God, and He is celebrated from all existing things, according to the analogy of all things, of which He is Cause.

And there is, further, the most Divine Knowledge of Almighty God, which is known, through not knowing (agnosia) during the union above mind; when the mind, having stood apart from all existing things, then having dismissed also itself, has been made one with the super-luminous rays, thence and there being illuminated by the

unsearchable depth of wisdom. Yet, even from all things, as I said, we may know It, for It is, according to the sacred text, the Cause formative of all, and ever harmonizing all, and (Cause) of the indissoluble adaptation and order of all, and ever uniting the ends of the former to the beginnings of those that follow, and beautifying the one symphony and harmony of the whole.

SECTION IV.

But Almighty God is celebrated in the holy Oracles as ”Logos”; not only because He is provider of reason and mind and wisdom, but because He anticipated the causes of all, solitarily in Himself, and because He passes through all, as the Oracles say, even to the end of all things; and even more than these, because the Divine Word surpasses every simplicity, and is set free from all, as the Superessential. This ”Logos ”is the simple and really existing truth, around which, as a pure and unerring knowledge of the whole, the Divine Faith is----the enduring foundation of the believers----which establishes them in the truth, and the truth in them, by an unchangeable identity, they having the pure knowledge of the truth of the things believed. For, if knowledge unites the knowing and the known, but ignorance is ever a cause to the ignorant person of change, and of separation from himself, nothing will move one who has believed in the truth, according to the sacred Logos, from true Faith’s Sanctuary upon which he will have the steadfastness of his unmoved, unchangeable identity. For, well does he know, who has been united to the Truth, that it is well with him although the multitude may admonish him as ”wandering.” For it probably escapes them, that he is wandering from error to the truth, through the veritable faith. But, he truly knows himself, not, as they say, mad, but as liberated from the unstable and variable course around the manifold variety of error, through the simple, and ever the same, and similar truth. Thus then the early leaders of our Divine Theosophy are dying every day, on behalf of truth, testifying as is natural, both by every word and deed, to the one knowledge of the truth of the Christians, that it is of all, both more simple and more Divine, yea rather, that it is the sole true and one and simple knowledge of God.

CAPUT VIII. Concerning power, justice, preservation, redemption, in which also concerning inequality. SECTION I. BUT since the theologians sing the Divine truth fulness and super-wise wisdom, both as power and as justice, and designate It preservation and redemption, come then, let us unfold these Divine Names also, as best we can. Now, that the Godhead is pre-eminent above, and surpasses every power, howsoever being and conceived, I do not suppose any of those nourished in the Divine Oracles does not know. For on many occasions the Word of God attributes the Lordship to It, even when distinguishing It from the supercelestial powers themselves. How then do the theologians sing it also as a Power, which is pre-eminent above every power? or how ought we to understand the name of power as applied to It? SECTION II.

We say, then, that Almighty God is Power, as pre-having, and super-having, every power in Himself, and as Author of every power, and producing everything as beseems a Power inflexible and unencom-passed, and as being Author of the very existence of power, either the universal or particular, and as boundless in power, not only by the production of all power, but by being above all, even the self. existent Power, and by His superior power, and by His bringing into existence, ad infinitum, endless powers other than the existing powers; and by the fact that the endless powers, even when brought into existence without end, are not able to blunt the super-endless production of His power-making power; and by the unutterable and unknown, and inconceivable nature of His all-surpassing power, which, through abundance of the powerful, gives power even to weakness, and holds together and preserves the remotest of its echoes; as also we may see even with regard to the powerful insensible perception, that the super-brilliant lights reach even to obscure visions, and they say, that the loud sounds enter even into ears which are not very well adapted to the reception of sounds. For that which does not hear at all is not hearing; and that which does not see at all is not sight.

SECTION III. The distribution, then, of boundless power, from Almighty God, passes to all beings, and there is no single being which is utterly deprived of the possession of some power; but it has either intellectual, or rational, or sensible, or vital, or essential power; yea even, if one may say so, self-existent being has power to be from the superessential Power. SECTION IV. From It, are the godlike powers of the angelic ranks; from It, they have their immutability, and all their intellectual and immortal perpetual movements; and their equilibrium itself, and their undiminishable aspiration after good, they have received from the Power boundless in goodness; since It commits to them the power to be, and to be such, and to aspire always to be, and the power itself to aspire to have the power always. SECTION V.

But the gifts of the unfailing Power pass on, both to men and living creatures, and plants, and the entire nature of the universe; and It empowers things united for their mutual friendship and communion, and things divided for their being each within their own sphere and limit, without confusion, and without mingling; and preserves the order and good relations of the whole, for their own proper good, and guards the undying lives of the individual angels inviolate; and the heavenly and the life-giving and astral bodies and orders without change: and makes the period of time possible to be; and disperses the revolutions of time by their progressions, and collects them together by their returns; and makes the powers of fire unquenchable, and the rills of water unfailing; and sets bounds to the aerial current, and establishes the earth upon nothing; and guards its life-giving throes from perishing; and preserves the mutual harmony and mingling of the elements without confusion, and without division; and holds together the bond of soul and body; and arouses the nourishing and growing powers of plants; and sustains the

essential powers of the whole; and secures the continuance of the universe without dissolution, and bequeaths the deification Itself, by furnishing a power for this to those who are being deified. And in a word, there is absolutely no single thing which is deprived of the overruling surety and embrace of the Divine Power. For that which absolutely has no power, neither is, nor is anything, nor is there any sort of position of it whatever.

SECTION VI. Yet Elymas, the Magician, says, ”if Almighty God is All-powerful, how is He said by your theologian, not to be able to do some thing ”? But he calumniates the Divine Paul, who said, ”that Almighty God is not able to deny Himself.” Now in advancing this, I very much fear lest I should incur ridicule for folly, as undertaking to pull down frail houses, built upon the sand by little boys at play; and as being eager to aim at the theological intelligence of this, as if it were some inaccessible mark. For, the denial of Himself, is a falling from truth, but the truth is an existent, and the falling from the truth is a falling from the existent. If, then, the truth is an existent, and the denial of the truth a falling from the existent, Almighty God cannot fall from the existent, and non-existence is not; as any one might say, the powerless is not powerful; and ignorance, by privation, does not know. The wise man, not having understood this, imitates those inexperienced wrestlers, who, very often, by assuming that their adversaries are weak, according to their own opinion, and manfully making a show of fight with them, when absent, and courageously beating the air with empty blows, think that they have overcome their antagonists, and proclaim themselves victors (though) not yet having experienced their rivals’ strength. But we, conjecturing the meaning of the Theologian to the best of our ability, celebrate the Super-powerful God, as Omnipotent, as blessed, and only Lord; as reigning in the kingdom of Eter-. nity itself; as in no respect fallen from things existing;----but rather, as both super-having and pre-having all existing things, as beseems Power superessential; and as having bequeathed to all things being, the power to be, and this their being in an ungrudging stream, as beseems abundance of surpassing power.

SECTION VII. But further, Almighty God is celebrated as justice, as distributing things suitable to all, both due measure, and beauty, and good order, and arrangement, and marking out all distributions and orders for each, according to that which truly is the most just limit, and as being Cause for all of the free action of each. For the Divine Justice arranges and disposes all things, and preserving all things unmingled and unconfused, from all, gives to all existing beings things convenient for each, according to the due falling to each existing thing. And, if we speak correctly, all those who abuse the Divine Justice, unconsciously convict themselves of a manifest injustice. For they say, that immortality ought to be in mortals, and perfection in the imperfect, and imposed necessity in the free, and identity in the variable, and perfect power in the weak, and the temporal should be eternal, and things moveable by nature, unchangeable, and that temporary plea-

sures should be eternal; and in one word, they assign the properties of one thing to another. They ought to know that the Divine Justice in this respect is really a true justice, because it distributes to all the things proper to themselves, according to the fitness of each existing thing, and preserves the nature of each in its own order and capacity.

SECTION VIII. But some one may say, it is not the mark of justice to leave pious men without assistance, when they are ground down by evil men. To which we must reply, that, if those whom you call pious do indeed love things on earth, which are zealously sought after by the earthly, they have altogether fallen from the Divine Love. And I do not know how they could be called pious, when they unjustly treat things truly loveable and divine, which do not at once surpass in influence in their estimation things undesirable and unloveable. But, if they love the realities, they who desire certain things ought to rejoice when they attain the things desired. Are they not then nearer the angelic virtues, when, as far as possible, by aspiration after things Divine, they withdraw from the affection for earthly things, by being exercised very manfully to this, in their perils, on behalf of the beautiful? So that, it is true to say, that this is rather a property of the Divine Justice----not to pamper and destroy the bravery of the best, by the gifts of earthly things, nor, if any one should attempt to do this, to leave them without assistance, but to establish them in the excellent and harsh condition, and to dispense to them, as being such, things meet for them.

SECTION IX.

This Divine Justice, then, is celebrated also even as preservation of the whole, as preserving and guarding the essence and order of each, distinct and pure from the rest; and as being genuine cause of each minding its own business in the whole. But, if any one should also celebrate this preservation, as rescuing savingly the whole from the worse, we will entirely accept this as the cantique of the manifold preservation, and we will deem him worthy to define this even as the principal preservation of the whole, which preserves all things in themselves, without change, undisturbed and unswaying to the worse; and guards all things without strife and without war, each being regulated by their own methods; and excludes all inequality and minding others' business, from the whole; and maintains the relations of each from falling to things contrary, and from migrating. And since, without missing the mark of the sacred theology, one might celebrate this preservation as redeeming all things existing, by the goodness which is preservative of all, from falling away from their own proper goods, so far as the nature of each of those who are being preserved admits; wherefore also the Theologians name it redemption, both so far as it does not permit things really being to fall away to non-existence, and so far as, if anything should have been led astray to discord

and disorder, and should suffer any diminution of the perfection of its own proper goods, even this it redeems from passion and listlessness and loss;

supplying what is deficient, and paternally overlooking the slackness, and raising up from evil; yea, rather, establishing in the good, and filling -up the leaking good, and arranging and adorning its disorder and deformity, and making it complete, and liberating it from all its blemishes. But let this suffice concerning these matters, and concerning Justice, in accordance with which the equality of all is measured and defined, and every inequality, which arises from deprivation of the equality, in each thing severally, is excluded. For, if any one should interpret inequality as distinctions in the whole, of the whole, in relation to the whole, Justice guards even this, not permitting the whole, when they have become mingled throughout, to be thrown into confusion, but keeping all existing things within each particular kind, in which each was intended by nature, to be.

CAPUT IX. Concerning great, small, same, different, similar, dissimilar, standing, movement, equality. SECTION I. BUT since even the great and the small are attributed to the Cause of all, arid the same, and the different, and the similar, and the dissimilar, and the standing, and the movement. Come! and let us gaze upon these images of the Divine Names, such as have been manifested to us. Almighty God, then, is celebrated in the Oracles as great, both in greatness and in a gentle breeze, which manifests the Divine littleness; and as the same, when the Oracles declare ”thou art the same”; and as different, when He is depicted, by the same Oracles, as of many shapes and many forms; and as similar, as mainstay of things similar and similitude; and as dissimilar to all, as the like of whom there is not; and as standing, and unmoved, and seated for ever; and as moving, as going forth to all; and whatever other Divine Names, of the same force with these, are celebrated by the Oracles.

SECTION II. Almighty God, then, is named great in reference -to His own peculiar greatness, which imparts itself to all things great; and overflows, and extends itself outside of all greatness; embracing every place, surpassing every number, going through every infinitude, both in reference to its super-fulness, and mighty operation, and its fontal gifts, in so far as these, being participated by all in a stream of boundless gifts, are altogether undiminished, and have the same superfulness, and are not lessened by the impartations, but are even still more bubbling over. This Greatness then is infinite, and without measure and without number. And this is the preeminence as regards the absolute and surpassing flood of the incomprehensible greatness. SECTION III. But little, i.e. fine, is affirmed respecting Him,----that which leaves behind every mass and distance, and penetrates through all, without hindrance. Yet the little is Elemental Cause of all, for nowhere will you find the idea of the little unparticipated. Thus then the little must be received as regards God as penetrating to all, and through all, without impediment; and

operating, and piercing through, to ”a dividing of soul and spirit, and joints and marrow”; and ”discerning thoughts and intents of heart,” yea rather----all things that be. For there is not a creature unmanifest in His sight. This littleness is without quality and without quantity, without restraint, without limit, without bound, comprehending all things, but itself incomprehensible.

SECTION IV. But the same is superessentially everlasting, inconvertible, abiding in itself, always being in the same condition and manner; present to all in the same manner, and itself by itself, upon itself, firmly and purely fixed in the most beautiful limits of the super-essential sameness, without changing, without falling, without swerving, unalterable, unmingled, immaterial, most simplex, self-sufficient, without increase, without diminution, unoriginated, not as not yet come into being, or unperfected, or not having become from this, or that, nor as being in no manner of way whatever, but as all unoriginated, and absolutely unoriginated, and ever being; and being self-complete, and being the same by itself, and differentiated by itself in one sole and same form; and shedding sameness from itself to all things adapted to participate in It; and assigning things different to those different; abundance and cause of identity, preholding identically in itself even things contrary, as beseems the One and unique Cause, surpassing the whole identity.

SECTION V.

But the different, since Almighty God is present to all providentially, and becomes all in all, for the sake of the preservation of all, resting upon Himself, and His own identity within Himself, standing, as beseems an energy, one and ceaseless, and imparting Himself with an unbending power, for deification of those turned to Him. And we must suppose that the difference of the manifold shapes of Almighty God, during the multiform visions, signifies that certain things are different from the phenomena under which they appear. For, as when language depicts the soul itself, under a bodily form, and fashions bodily members around the memberless, we think differently of the members attributed to it, as befits the soul’s memberless condition; and we call the mind head, and opinion neck,----as intermediate between rational and irrational----and anger, breast; and lust, belly; and the constitution, legs and feet; using the names of the members as symbols of the powers. Much more then, as respects Him, Who is beyond all, is it necessary to make clear the difference of forms and shapes by reverent and God-becoming, and mystic explanations. And if you wish to apply the threefold shapes of bodies to the impalpable and shapeless God, you must say, that the Progression of Almighty God, which spreads out to all things, is a Diyine extension; and length, the power extending itself over the whole; and depth, the hiddenness and imperception incomprehensible to all creatures. But, that we may not forget ourselves, in our explanation, of the different shapes and forms, by confounding the incorporeal Divine Names with those giyen through symbols of objects of sense, we have for this reason spoken con-

cerning these things in the Symbolic Theology. But now, let us suppose the Divine difference, as really not a sort of change from the superimmovable identity, but as the single multiplication of itself, and the uniform progressions of its fecundity to all.

SECTION VI. But similar, if any one might speak of Almighty God as the same, as being wholly throughout, similar to Himself----abidingly and indivisibly; we must not despise the Divine Name of the Similar; but the Theologians affirm that the God above all, in His essential nature, is similar to none; but that He bequeaths a Divine similarity to those who turn to Him, Who is above every limit and expression, by imitation according to their capacity. And there is the power of the Divine similitude, which turns all created things to the Cause. These things, then, must be said to be similar to Almighty God, both after a Divine likeness and similitude. For, neither must we say that Almighty God is similar to them, because neither is a man like his own image. For, with regard to those of the same rank, it is possible that these should be similar to each other, and that the similarity corresponds to each, and that both are similar to each other, after a preceding appearance of like. But, with respect to the Cause and the things caused, we do not accept the correspondence. For, the being similar is bequeathed, not to these, or those, alone, but to all those who participate in similarity. Almighty God becomes Cause of their being similar, and is mainstay of the self-existing Similarity itself; and the similar in all is similar to a soft of footprint of the Divine Similarity and completes their Oneness.

SECTION VII. And what must we say concerning this? For the Word of God Itself extols the fact that He is dissimilar, and of the same rank with none; as ”different ”even from everything, and, what is more paradoxical, says there is nothing that is similar to Him. Yet the expression is not contrary to the similarity towards Him, for the same things are both similar to God, and dissimilar----the former as regards the received imitation of the inimitable, the latter as regards the dependence of the things caused upon the cause, and their being inferior in degrees, endless and incalculable. SECTION VIII. But what also do we say concerning the Divine standing, i.e. seat? What other than that Almighty God remains Himself, in Himself, and is abidingly fixed in unmoved identity, and is firmly established on high; and thâ’t He acts according to the same conditions, and in reference to the same object, and in the same way; and that He exists altogether, as beseems the immutability from Himself; and as beseems the immovability Itself, entirely immovable, and that superessentially. For He is Cause of the standing and sitting of all, Who is above all sitting and standing, and in Him all things consist, being kept from falling out of the state of their own proper goods.

SECTION IX. But what again, when the Theologians say, that the unmoved goes forth to all, and is moved? Must we not understand thjs in a sense befitting God?

For we must reverently suppose that He is moved, not as beseems carriage, or change, or alteration, or turning, or local movement, or the straight, or the circular, or that from both (curvative), or the intellectual, or the spiritual, or the physical, but that Almighty God brings into being and sustains everything, and provides in every way for everything; and is present, to all, by the irresistible embrace of all, and by His providential progressions and operations to all existing things. But we must concede to our discourse, to celebrate in a sense becoming God, even movements of God, the immovable. And the straight must be considered (to be) the unswerving and the undeviating progression of the operation, and the production from Himself of the whole; and the curvative----r-the steady progression and the productive condition; and the circular the same, and the holding together the middle and extremities, which encompass and are encompassed,----and the turning to Him' of the things which proceeded from Him.

SECTION X. But, if any one should take the Divine Name in the Oracles, of "the same," or that of "justice," in the sense of "the equal," we must say, that Almighty God is equal, not only as indivisible and unswerving, but also as going forth to all, and through all, equally; and as foundation of the self-existent Equality, in conformity with which, He equally effects the same passage, through all things mutually, and the participation of those who receive equally, according to the aptitude of each; and the equal gift distributed to all, according to due; and according as He has anticipated pre-eminently and uniquely in Himself, every equality, intelligible, intelligent, rational, sensible, essential, physical, voluntary, as beseems the Power over all, which is productive of every equality. CAPUT X, Concerning Sovereign Lord, "Ancient of days" in which also, concerning Age and Time . SECTION I. THE time, then, is come for our discourse, to sing the God of many Names, as "Sovereign Lord," and as "Ancient of days." For He is called the former, by reason that He is an all-controlling basis, binding and embracing the whole, and establishing and supporting, and tightening, and completing the whole. Continuous in itself, and from itself, producing the whole, as it were from a Sovereign root, and turning to itself the whole, as to a sovereign parent stock, and holding them together as an all-embracing basis of all, securing all the things embraced, within one grasp superior to all, and not permitting them, when fallen from itself to be destroyed, as moved from an all-perfect sanctuary. But the Godhead is called Sovereign, both as controlling and governing the members of His household, purely, and as being desired and beloved by all, and as placing upon all the voluntary yokes, and the sweet pangs of the Divine and Sovereign, and in dissolvable love of the Goodness itself,

SECTION II. But Almighty God is celebrated as "Ancient of days" because He is of all things both Age and Time,----and before Days, and before Age and Time. And yet we must affirm that He is Time and Day, and appointed Time, and Age, in a sense befitting God, as being throughout every movement unchangeable and

unmoved, and in His ever moving remaining in Himself, and as being Author of Age and Time and Days. Wherefore, in the sacred Divine manifestations of the mystic visions, He is represented as both old and young; the former indeed signifying the ”Ancient” and being from the beginning, and the latter His never growing old; or both teaching that He advances through all things from beginning to end,----or as our Divine initiator says, ”since each manifests the priority of God, the Elder having the first place in Time, but the Younger the priority in number; because the unit, and things near the unit, are nearer the beginning than numbers further advanced.

SECTION III.

But we must, as I think, see from the Oracles the nature of Time and Eternity, for they do not always (merely) call all the things absolutely unoriginated and really everlasting, eternal, but also things imperishable and immortal and unchangeable, ’ and things which are in like fashion, as when they say, ”be ye opened, eternal doors,” and the like. And often they characterize the things the most ancient by the name of Eternity; and again they call the whole duration of our time Eternity, in so far as the ancient and unchangeable, and the measurement of existence throughout, is a characteristic of Eternity. But they call time that concerned in generation and decay and change, and sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. Wherefore also, the Word of God says that even we, who are bounded here by time, shall partake of Eternity, when we have reached the Eternity which is imperishable and ever the same. But sometimes eternity is celebrated in the Oracles, even as temporal, and time as eternal. But if we know them better and more accurately, things spiritual are spoken of and denoted by Eternity, and things subject to generation by time. It is necessary then to suppose that things called eternal are not absolutely co-eternal with God, Who is before Eternity, but that following unswervingly the most august Oracles, we should understand things eternal and temporal according to the hopes recognized by them, hut whatever participates partly in eternity and partly in time, as things midway between things spiritual and things being born. But Almighty God we ought to celebrate, both as eternity and time, as Author of every time an’d eternity, and ”Ancient of days,” as before time, and above time; and as changing appointed seasons and times; and again as being before âges, in so far as He is both before eternity and above eternity and His kingdom, a kingdom of all the Ages. Amen.

CAPUT XI. Concerning Peace, and what is meant by the self-existent Being; what is the self-existent Life, and what the self-existent Power, and such like expressions. SECTION I.

COME, then, let us extol the Peace Divine, and Source of conciliation, by hymns of peace! For this it is which unifies all, and engenders, and effects the agreement and fellowship of all. Wherefore, even all things aspire to it, which turns their divided multiplicity into the thorough Oneness, and unifies the tribal war of the whole into

a homogeneous dwelling together, by the participation of the divine Peace. With regard, then, to the more reverend of the conciliating powers, these indeed are united to themselves and to each other, and to the one Source of Peace of the whole; and the things (that are) under them, these they unite also to themselves and to each other, and to the One and all-perfect Source and Cause of the Peace of all, which, passing in-divisibly to the whole, limits and terminates and secures everything, as if by a kind of bolts, which bind together things that are separated; and do not permit them, when separated, to rush to infinity and the boundless, and to become without order, and without stability, and destitute of God, and to depart from the union amongst themselves, and to become intermingled m each other, in every sort of confusion.

Concerning then, this, the Divine Peace and Repose, which the holy Justus calls unutterableness, and, as compared with every known progression, immobility, how it rests and is at ease, and how it is in itself, and within itself, and entire, and to itself entire is super-united, and when entering into itself, and multiplying itself, neither loses its own Union, but even proceeds to all, whilst remaining entire within, by reason of excess of its Union surpassing all, it is neither permitted, nor attainable to any existing being, either to express or to understand. But, having premised this, as unutterable and unknowable, as being beyond all, let us examine its conceived and uttered participations, and this, as possible to men, and to us, as inferior to many good men.

SECTION II.

First then, this must be said, that It is mainstay of the self-existent Peace, both the general and the particular; and that It mingles all things with each other within their unconfused union, as beseems which, united indivisibly, and at the same time they severally continuously unmingled stand, as regards their own proper kind, not muddled through their mingling with the opposite, nor blunting any of their unifying distinctness and purity. Let us then contemplate a certain One and simple nature of the peaceful Union, unifying all things to Itself, and to themselves, and to each other; and preserving all things in an unconfused grasp of all, both unmingled and mingled together; by reason of which the divine Minds, being united,, are united to their own conceptions, and to the things conceived; and again they ascend to the unknowable contact of things fixed above mind; by reason of which, souls, by uniting their manifold reasonings, and collecting them together to an One intellectual Purity, advance in a manner proper to themselves, by method and order, through the immaterial and indivisible conception, to the union above conception; by reason of which, the one and indissoluble connection of all is established, within its Divine Harmony, and is harmonized by complete concord and agreement and fellowship, being united without confusion, and held together without division. For

the fulness of the perfect Peace passes through to all existing things, as beseems the most simple, and unmingled presence of Its unifying power, making all One.

and binding the extremes through the intermediate to the extremes, which are yoked together in an one connatural friendship; and bestowing the enjoyment of Itself, even to the furthest extremities of the whole, and making all things of one family, by the unities, the identities, the unions, the conjunctions of the Divine Peace, standing of course indivisibly, and showing all in one, and passing through all, and not stepping out of Its own identity. For It advances to all, and imparts Itself to all, in a manner appropriate to them, and there overflows an abundance of peaceful fertility; and It remains, through excess of union, super-united, entire, to and throughout Its whole self.

SECTION III. But how, some one may say, do all things aspire to peace, for many things rejoice in diversity and division, and would not, at any time, of their own accord, be willingly in repose. Now, if in saying this, he affirms, that the identity of each existing thing is diversity and division, and that there is no existent thing whatever, which at any time is willing to destroy this (identity), neither would we in any way contradict this, but would delare even this an aspiration after peace. For all things love to dwell at peace, and to be united amongst themselves, and to be unmoved and unfallen from themselves, and the things of themselves. And the perfect Peace seeks to guard the idiosyncrasy of each unmoved and unconfused, by its peace-giving forethought, preserving everything unmoved and unconfused, both as regards themselves and each other, and establishes all things by a stable and unswerving power, towards their own peace and immobility.

SECTION IV. And if all things in motion desire, not repose, but ever to make known their own proper movement, even this is an aspiration after the Divine Peace of the whole, which preserves all things from falling away of their own accord, and guards the idiosyncrasy and moving life of all moving things unmoved and free from falling, so that the things moved, being at peace amongst themselves, and always in the same condition, perform their own proper functions. SECTION V.

But if, in affirming the diversity as a falling from peace, he insists that peace is not beloved by all, verily there is no existing being which has entirely fallen from every kind of union; for, the altogether unstable and infinite, and unestablished, and without limit, is neither an actual thing, nor in things actual. But if he says, that those are inimical to peace, and good things of peace, who rejoice in strife and anger and changes and disturbances, even these are controlled by obscure images of a peaceful aspiration; being vexed by tumultuous passions, and ignorantly aspiring to calm them, they imagine that they will pacify themselves by the gratification of things which ever elude them, and they are disturbed by the non-attainment of the pleasures which overpowered them. What would any one say of the peaceful stream of love towards man in Christ, according to which we have learned no

longer to wage war, either with ourselves, or each other, or with angels, but that with them, according to our power, we should also be fellow-workers in Divine things, after the purpose of Jesus, Who worketh all in all, and forms a peace unutterable and pre-determined from Eternity, and reconciles us to Himself, in Spirit, and through Himself and in Himself to the Father; concerning which supernatural gifts it is sufficiently spoken in the Theological Outlines, whilst the Oracles of the sacred inspiration furnish us with additional testimony.

SECTION VI.

But, since you once asked me by letter, what in the world I consider the self-existent Being, the self-existent Life, the self-existent Wisdom, and said that you debated with yourself how, at one time, I call Almighty God, self-existent Life, and at another, Mainstay of the self-existent Life, I thought it necessary, O holy man of God, to also free you from this difficulty, so far as lay in my power. And first then, in order that we may now resume that which I have said a thousand times already, there is no contradiction in saying that Almighty God is self-existent Power, or self-existent Life, and that He is Mainstay of the self-existent Life or Peace or Power. For the latter, He is named from things existing, and specially from the first existing, as Cause of all existing things; and the former, as being above all, even the first existing of beings, being above superessentially. But you say, what in the world do we call the self-existent Being, or the self-existent Life, or whatever we lay down to be absolutely and originally and to have stood forth primarily from God? And we reply, this is not crooked but straight, and has a simple explanation.

For we do not say that the self-existent Being, as Cause of the being of all things, is a sort of Divine or angelic essence (for the Super-essential alone is Source and Essence and Cause of the existence of all things, and of the self-existent Being), nor that another Deity, besides the Super-divine, produces Life for all that live, and is a Life Causative of the self-existent Life; nor to speak summarily, that essences and personalities originate and make existing things, so that superficial people have named them both gods, and creators of existing things,----whom, to speak truly and properly, neither they themselves knew (for they are non-existent), nor their fathers,----but we call self-existent Being, and self-existent Life, and self-existent Deity, as regards at least Source, and Deity, and Cause, the One Superior and Super-essential Source and Cause; but as regards Impartation, the providential Powers, that issue forth from God the unparticipating, (these we call) the self-existent essentiation, self-existent living, self-existent deification, by participating in which according to their own capacity, things existing, both are, and are said to be, existing, and living, and full of God----and the rest in the same way. Wherefore also, He is called the good Mainstay of the first of these, then of the whole of them, then of the portions of them, then of those who participate in them entirely, then of those who participate in them in part.

And why must we speak of these things, since some of our divine instructors in holy things, affirm that the Super-good and Super-divine self-existent Goodness and Deity, is Mainstay even of the self-existent Goodness and Deity; affirming that the good-making and deifying gift issued forth from God; and that the self-existent beautifying stream, is self-existent beauty, and whole beauty, and partial beauty, and things absolutely beautiful, and things partially beautiful, and whatever other things are said and shall be said after the same fashion, which declare that providences and goodnesses issuing forth from God the unparticipating, in an ungrudging stream, are participated by existing things, and bubble over in order that distinctly the Cause of all may be beyond all, and the Superessential and Supernatural may, in every respect, be above things of any sort of essence and nature whatever.

CAPUT XII. Concerning Holy of Holies, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, God of Gods. SECTION I. BUT since whatever we have to say on these matters has reached, in my opinion, a fitting conclusion, we must sing Him of endless names, both as Holy of Holies and King of Kings; and as ruling eternity and for ever and beyond, and as Lord of Lords, and God of Gods. And first we must say, what we think Holiness Itself is; and what Kingdom, and what Lordship, and what Divinity, and what the Oracles wish to denote by the duplication of the names. SECTION II. Holiness then is (so far as we can say) the purity free from every pollution, and all perfect, and altogether unstained; Kingdom is the assignment of every limit and order, and ordinance and rank; and Lordship is not only the superiority over the worse, but also the perfect possession, in. every respect, of the Beautiful and Good; and a true and unswerving stability. Wherefore Lordship is parallel to τὸ Κῦρος καὶ κύριον, καὶ τὸ κυριστο□ν ; and Deity is the Providence watching over all, and with perfect goodness both circumscribing and grasping all, and filling with Itself, and surpassing all things which enjoy Its forethought.

SECTION III. These things, then, must be sung absolutely, respecting the Cause surpassing all, and we must add that It surpasses Holiness, and Lordship, and Kingdom, and most simplex Deity. For, from It, individually and collectively, were born and distributed every untarnished distinctness of every spotless purity, the whole arrangement and regulation of things existing, whilst It excludes want of harmony and want of equality, and want of symmetry, and rejoices over the well-ordered identity and rectitude, and leads round things, deemed worthy to participate in Itself. From It is all the perfect and complete possession of all. good things, every good forethought, watching and sustaining the objects of Its forethought, imparting Itself, as befits Its goodness, for deification of those who are turned to It. SECTION IV. But since the Cause of all is super-full of all, as beseems the One superfluity which surpasses all, He is sung as Holy of Holies and the rest, as beseems an overflowing Cause, and a towering Pre-eminence. As one might say, so far as the things which are,----holy or divine, or lordly, or kingly,----surpass the things which are not, and the self-existent participations, their participants; to such an

extent is seated above all things that be, He Who is above all things that be, and the unparticipating Cause of all the participants and the participations. But Holy and Kings and Lords and Gods, the Oracles call the higher orders in each, through whom the inferior in participating the gifts from God, multiply the simplicity of their distribution around their own diversities, the variety of which, the superior orders carefully and divinely collect to their own Oneness.

CAPUT XIII. Concerning Perfect and One. SECTION I. So much then on these matters; but let us now at last, with your good pleasure, approach the most difficult subject in the whole discourse. For the Word of God predicates everything, singly and collectively, respecting the Cause of all, and extols Him both as Perfect and as One . He is then perfect not only as self-perfect, and solitarily separated within Himself, by Himself, and throughout most perfect, but also as super-perfect, as beseems His pre-eminence over all, and limiting every infinitude, and surpassing every term, and by none contained or comprehended; but even extending at once to all, and above all, by His unfailing gratuities and endless energies. But, on the other hand, He is called perfect, both as without increase, and always perfect, and as undiminished, as pre-holding all things in Himself, and overflowing as beseems one, inexhaustible, and same, and super-full, and undiminished, abundance, in accordance with which He perfects all perfect things, and fills them with His own perfection.

SECTION II. But One, because He is uniquely all, as beseems an excess of unique Oneness, and is Cause of all without departing from the One. For there is no single existing being, which does not participate in the one, but as every number participates in an unit, and one dual and one decade is spoken of, and one half, and one third and tenth, so everything, and part of everything participates in the one, and by the fact that the One is, all existing things are. And the Cause of all is not One, as one of many, but before every one and multitude, and determinative of every one and multitude. For there is no multitude which does not partake in some way or other of the one. Yea, that which is many by parts, is one in the whole; and the many by the accidents, is one by the subject; and the many by the number or the powers, is one by the species, and the many by the species, is one by the genus; and the many by the progressions, is one by the source. And there is no single thing which does not participate in some way in the one, which uniformly pre-held in the uniqueness throughout all, all and whole, all, even the things opposed. And indeed, without the one there will not be a multitude, but without the multitude there will be the one, even as the unit previous to every multiplied number; and, if any one should suppose, that all things are united to all, the All will be one in the whole.

SECTION III.

Especially must this be known, that according to the pre-conceived species of each one, things united are said to be made one, and the one is elemental of all; and if you should take away the one, there will be neither totality nor part, nor any other single existing thing. For the one, uniformly, pre-held and comprehended all things in itself. For this reason, then, the Word of God celebrates the whole Godhead, as Cause of all, by the epithet of the One, both one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ, and one and the same Spirit, by reason of the surpassing indivisibility of the whole Divine Oneness, in which all things are uniquely collected, and are super-unified, and are with It SLiperessentially. Wherefore also, all things are justly referred and attributed to It, by Which and from Which, and through Which, and in Which, and to Which, all things are, and are co-ordinated, and abide, and are held together, and are filled, and are turned towards It. And you would not find any existing thing, which is not what it is, and perfected and preserved, by the One, after which the whole Deity is superessentially named.

And it is necessary also, that we being turned from the many to the One, by the power of the Divine Oneness, should celebrate as One the whole and one Deity----the one Cause of all----which is before every one and multitude, and part and whole, and limit and illimitability, and term and infinity, which bounds all things that be, even the Being Itself, and is uniquely Cause of all, individually and collectively, and at the same time before all, and above all, and above the One existing Itself, and bounding the One existing Itself; since the One existing----that in things being----is numbered, and number participates in essence; but the superessential One bounds both the One existing, and every number, and Itself is, of both one and number, and every being, Source and Cause, and Number and. Order. Wherefore also, whilst celebrated as Unit and Triad, the Deity above all is neither Unit nor Triad, as understood by us or by any other sort of being, but, in order that we may celebrate truly. Its super-oneness, and Divine generation, by the threefold and single name of God, we name the Deity, Which is inexpressible to things that be, the Superessential. But no Unit nor Triad, nor number nor unity, nor productiveness, nor any other existing thing, or thing known to any existing thing, brings forth the hiddenness, above every expression and every mind, of the Super-Deity Which is above all superessentially. Nor has It a Name, or expression, but is elevated above in the inaccessible.

And neither do we apply the very Name of Goodness, as making it adequate to It, but through a desire of understanding and saying something concerning that inexpressible nature, we consecrate the most august of Names to It, in the first degree, and although we should be in accord in this matter with the theologians, yet we shall fall short of the truth of the facts. Wherefore, even they have given the preference to the ascent through negations, as lifting the soul out of things kindred to itself, and conducting it through all the Divine conceptions, above which towers that which is above every name, and every expression and knowledge, and at the

furthest extremity attaching it to Him, as far indeed as is possible for us to be attached to that Being.

SECTION IV.

We then, having collected these intelligible Divine Names, have unfolded them to the best of our ability, falling short not only of the precision which belongs to them, (for this truly, even Angels might say) nor only of their praises as sung by Angels (and the chief of our Theologians come behind the lowest of them), nor indeed of the Theologians themselves, nor of their followers or companions, but even of those who are of the same rank as ourselves, last and subordinate to them; so that, if the things spoken should be correct, and, if we, as far as in us lies, have really reached the perception of the unfolding of the Divine Names, let the fact be ascribed to the Author of all good things, Who, Himself, bestows first the power to speak, then to speak well. And if any one of the Names of the same force has been passed over, that also you must understand according to the same methods. But, if these things are either incorrect or imperfect, and we have wandered from the truth, either wholly or partially, may it be of thy brotherly kindness to correct him, who unwillingly is ignorant, and to impart a word to him, who wishes to learn, and to vouchsafe assistance to him, who has not power in himself; and to heal him, who, not willingly, is sick; and having found out some things from thyself, and others from others, and receiving all from the good to transfer them also to us.

By no means grow weary in doing good to a man thy friend, for thou perceivest, that we also have kept to ourselves none of the hierarchical communications transmitted to us, but have transmitted them without flaw, both to you and to other holy men, yea, and will continue to transmit them, as we may be sufficient to speak, and those to whom we speak, ta hear, doing injury in no respect to the tradition, if at least we do not fail in the conception and expression thereof. But, let these things be held and spoken in such way, as is well pleasing to Almighty God; and let this indeed be our conclusion to the intelligible Divine Names. But I will now pass to the Symbolic Theology , with God for my Guide.

27 October, 1896. [Selected footnotes renumbered and moved to the end]

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.