

CERTAIN
SMALLER
TREATISES
OF
ST. AUGUSTINE



**CERTAIN SMALLER TREATISES OF
ST. AUGUSTINE.**

SAINT AUGUSTINE,

ON

INSTRUCTING THE UNLEARNED,
CONCERNING FAITH OF THINGS NOT SEEN,
ON THE ADVANTAGE OF BELIEVING,
THE ENCHIRIDION TO LAURENTIUS,
OR
CONCERNING FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

EDITED BY

H. DE ROMESTIN, M.A.
VICAR OF STONY STRATFORD.

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1885.



TO THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN CHRIST,

EDWARD [FIELD],

BY THE GRACE OF GOD BISHOP OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

I NOW offer to you, venerable Prelate, the little treatises of St. Augustine, which I some time since promised that I would edit. I have, however, postponed St. Bernard, whose works I understood that you would no less readily welcome, as being more difficult, and less well-known to myself.

The titles indicate what was the intention of the author. This, which I have wished for in some of the smaller works of the same author, I have found so exactly indicated in these, that I judged it better to add myself no further preface.

[C. MARRIOTT.]

ETON,

*Monday after the Festival of the
Ascension, 1848.*

NOTE.

MR. MARRIOTT'S original Edition of these treatises contained also the treatise, "De Symbolo ad Catechumenos," now included in a corresponding selection edited by Dr. Heurtley. In place of this the "Enchiridion" has been inserted in the Latin Edition, with which this translation corresponds.

The English version is based on that in the Library of the Fathers, and has been kept as closely as possible (perhaps, indeed, too much so) to the Latin text, word for word.

H. DE R.

Oxford, 1885.

5. AURELIUS AUGUSTINE,
BISHOP OF HIPPO,
ON INSTRUCTING THE UNLEARNED.

Augustine, having been requested by a Deacon of Carthage, undertakes to teach the art of catechizing; and first delivers precepts for the accomplishing of that duty not only by a certain method and suitable course, but also without irksomeness, and brightly. After this, putting his precepts into practice, he himself sets forth as a pattern two addresses for comparison, one longer and one very brief, for the instruction of him who wishes to be a Christian.

1. YOU have asked me, brother Deogratias, to write you something about instructing the unlearned which might be of use to you. For you said that often at Carthage, where you are a deacon, persons are brought to you, who are to be imbued with the rudiments of the Christian Faith, because you are supposed to have a copious power of teaching owing both to your knowledge of the Faith and to the sweetness of your language; but that you yourself almost always feel in a strait how you ought suitably to make known that exact doctrine the belief of which makes us Christians, at what point your statement should commence, and to what point

it should be carried on; whether, after ending the statement, we ought to use any exhortation, or deliver only those precepts by the observance of which he to whom we speak may know that the Christian life and profession is maintained. Again, you have confessed and complained that it has often happened to you in a long and lukewarm address to grow profitless and tedious even to yourself, much more to him whom you were endeavouring to instruct by your words, and to the others who were present and listening: and that you were driven by this necessity to constrain me, by the affection which I bear you, not to find it too irksome amongst my occupations to write something to you about this matter.

2. For my part I feel myself constrained, not only by the love and service which I owe to you because of our friendship, but also by that which I owe generally to the Church our mother, if by any help of mine, which, through the bounty of our Lord, I am able to render, that same Lord commands me to assist those whom He has made my brethren, by no means to refuse, but rather to undertake it with a ready and devoted will. For the more widely I wish the Lord's treasure to be distributed, so much the more is it my duty, if I perceive that the stewards, my fellow-servants, feel any difficulty in distributing it, to do all that is in my power, that they may be able to perform easily and readily what they diligently and zealously desire.

3. But as to what pertains specially to your own feeling about yourself, I would not have you be moved because your language has often appeared to you poor and wearisome. For it may be, that it did not seem so to him whom you were instructing, but because you were wishing that something better should be listened to, what you were saying appeared unworthy of the ears of others. For my own dis-

course is almost always unsatisfactory to myself. For I am desirous of something better, which I often enjoy in my mind, before I begin to express it in words aloud; and when I have only been able to express it less well than it is known to me, I am grieved that my tongue has failed in adequately expressing my feelings. For I wish him who hears me to understand all that I understand; and I feel that I do not so speak as to effect this: chiefly because that inward perception, as by a rapid flash, spreads over the mind, but speech, on the other hand, is slow and continuous and far different, and whilst it is being uttered the thought has already hidden itself in its secret recesses. Yet, forasmuch as it has impressed in a wonderful manner certain traces upon the memory, these endure with the pauses of syllables, and as results of these same traces we form significant sounds, which are called either the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, or any other tongue, whether these signs exist in thought only, or be also uttered by the voice; whereas those traces are neither Latin, nor Greek, nor Hebrew, nor peculiar to any other race whatever, but are so fashioned in the mind as the expression of the countenance in the body. For anger is expressed by one word in Latin, and by another in Greek, and differently again in the varieties of other languages; but the expression of countenance of an angry man is not Latin or Greek. And so all nations do not understand if any one says *Iratum sum*, [I am angry,] but the Latins only: yet if the disposition of his mind as it kindles with anger comes forth into his face and affects its expression, all who look upon the angry man perceive it. But we cannot, by the sound of the voice, so bring forth, and, as it were, hold up to the senses of the hearers those traces which the inward perception impresses on the me-

mory, so as to be as clear and evident as the expression of the countenance, for they are within in the mind, this is without in the body. Wherefore we must conjecture how great an interval there is between the sound of our voice and that stroke of the intelligence, since that sound does not correspond even to the impression made upon the memory. But we, for the most part, eagerly desiring the advantage of the hearer, wish so to express ourselves as we apprehend the matter in our minds, when, by reason of the very effort, we cannot do so; and because this does not succeed we are vexed, and grow weak with weariness as though we were labouring in vain, and from this very weariness our discourse at the same time goes on growing more dull and pointless than it was when it first brought on weariness.

4. But often the eagerness of those who desire to hear me shews that my utterance is not so frigid as it appears to me, and I perceive by their pleasure that they derive some benefit from it; and I take great pains with myself not to be wanting in offering this service in which I see that they take kindly what is offered. And so you, from the very fact that they who are to be instructed in the faith are so frequently brought to you, ought to understand that your discourse does not so displease others as it displeases yourself: nor ought you to think yourself unfruitful because you cannot explain as you desire those things which you discern, when perchance neither may you be able to discern things as you desire. For who in this life sees except in a riddle and through a glass^a? Not even love itself is so mighty as, having burst through the darkness of the flesh, to penetrate into that eternal calm, whence even transitory things derive whatever brightness they possess. But because the good are day by

^a 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

day progressing towards the sight of the day without change of sky or inroad of night, which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man*^b, there is no greater reason why our discourse should seem to grow worthless to us, except that we like to discern in an extraordinary way, but grow weary of speaking in an ordinary way. And in very deed we are listened to with much greater pleasure when we ourselves too delight at the same time in our task: for the thread of our discourse is affected by the very pleasure which we feel, and runs out more easily and acceptably. Wherefore it is not a difficult business to give rules with respect to those things which are made known as objects of belief, at what points the narration is to be commenced or ended, or how it is to be varied so as to be sometimes briefer, sometimes longer, and yet always full and complete; and when the briefer, when the longer form should be used. But by what means it is to be effected that each man may catechize with pleasure (for the better he can do this the more agreeable will he be) this is the chief subject of care. The precept indeed for this is close at hand. For if in carnal wealth, how much more in spiritual does God love a cheerful giver? But that this cheerfulness be present at the needful hour is of His mercy who gave that precept. Therefore, so far as God shall put into our mind, we will discuss, as I know you wish, first the manner of narration, then the rules concerning precept and exhortation, and afterwards how this cheerfulness is to be obtained.

5. The narration is full when each is at first catechized from that which is written, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*^d, down to the present times of the Church. It does not follow, however, that we are bound either to repeat

^b 1 Cor. ii. 9.

^c 2 Cor. ix. 7.

^d Gen. i. 1.

by heart the whole Pentateuch, and the whole books of Judges, and Kings, and Esdras, and the entire Gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles, if we have learned them word for word, or by telling in our own words all that is contained in these volumes so to expound and unfold them (which neither the time admits of, nor does any necessity require it), but to embrace the whole summarily and generally, so that certain more wonderful points, which are listened to with more pleasure, and which have been set in the very turning-points of the story, be selected; and these we ought not to shew as it were in their wrappings, and then straightway hurry them out of sight, but by dwelling upon them for a time, as it were to unbind them, and open them out, and present them to the minds of our hearers to be looked into and admired, but as for the remaining details, running over them rapidly to insert and weave them into the narrative. In this manner those things also, which we wish to be specially commended to the attention, stand forth the more from the others being kept in the background, nor does he whom we wish to interest by our narrative come to them already wearied, nor is his memory confused whom by our teaching we ought to instruct.

6. In all things, indeed, not only ought we to look to the end of the commandment, which is *charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and faith unfeigned*^e, to which to refer the whole of what we say, but also the gaze of him whom we are instructing by our words must be moved towards it and guided in the same direction. For all those things which we read in the sacred Scriptures were written before the coming of the Lord for no other reason but that His coming might be urged upon our attention, and the future Church be pointed out beforehand, that is the people

^e. 1 Tim. i. 5.

of God throughout all nations, which is His body, having joined and numbered with it all those saints who, even before His coming, lived in this world, believing that He was to come as we believe that He has come. X For as Jacob at the time of his birth put forth his hand first from the womb, with which also he was holding the foot of his brother in the act of being born before him, next certainly the head followed, and then at last of necessity the rest of his members^f: but notwithstanding, the head precedes in dignity and power not only those members which followed after it, but even that very hand which preceded it in birth, and is first, although not in the time of its appearing, yet in the order of nature; so, too, the Lord Jesus Christ, although before He appeared in the flesh, and came forth in a certain manner out of the womb of His secrecy before the eyes of men as the Mediator between God and men, *Who is over all God blessed for ever*^g, put forth in the holy patriarchs and prophets a certain part of His own body, by which as by a hand announcing beforehand His coming birth, He tripped up by the bonds of the law^h as by five fingers the people preceding Him in their pride (for during five epochs of times He ceased not to be preached of and foretold as about to come, and agreeably to this, he through whom the law was given wrote five books; and the proud being carnally minded, and wishing to establish their own righteousness^h, were not filled with blessing from the open hand of Christ, but were kept back from blessing by that hand shut fast and closed: therefore their feet were tied and they fell, *but we*

^f Gen. xxv. 26.^g Rom. ix. 5.^h Rom. x. 3.

*are risen and stand upright*¹). Although, therefore, as I have said, the Lord Christ sent forth a certain part of His body in the saints who preceded Him in the time of their birth, yet is He Himself the Head of the body, the Church^j; and they all have been united to that same body of which He is the Head by believing in Him Whom they foretold. For they were not severed from it by preceding Him, but rather were joined to it by obeying Him. For although the hand may be sent first by the head, yet is its connection beneath the head. Wherefore all things which were written before were written that we might be taught thereby, and they were figures of us, and things happened in a figure in them, but they were written for our sake, upon whom the end of the ages has come^k.

7. Again, what greater reason exists for the coming of the Lord than that God might shew in us His love, commending it mightily, because that *while we were yet enemies Christ died for us*^l? And this again to the intent that, since love is the *end of the commandment* and the *fulfilling of the law*^m, we also may love one another, and in like manner as *He laid down His life for us*ⁿ, so we also may *lay down our life for the brethren*^o; and as to God Himself, since *He first loved us, and spared not His only Son, but gave Him up for us all*^p, if to love Him was irksome, yet now at least to love Him in return may not be irksome. For there is no more powerful invitation to love than to be first in loving; and

¹ Ps. xx. 8.

^j Col. i. 18.

^k Rom. xv. 4; 1 Cor. x. 11.

^l Rom. v. 8, 10.

^m 1 Tim. i. 5; Rom. xiii. 10.

ⁿ 1 John iii. 16.

^o ib. iv. 10.

^p Rom. viii. 32.

that heart is overhard which, even though it was not willing to bestow love, is not willing to repay it. But if even in shameful and base loves we see that they who wish to be loved in return busy themselves with nothing else but with manifesting and shewing by all the proofs in their power how great is their love, and endeavour to cloak their doings with such an appearance of justice that they may in some sort demand that a return be made to them by those souls whom they are endeavouring to beguile, and themselves are the more ardently inflamed; when they perceive that those minds also which they are assailing are now stirred by the same flame—if, therefore, both the soul which was torpid is stirred when it has felt that it is loved, and that which was already glowing, when it has learnt that it is loved in return burns the more—it is manifest that there is no greater cause either for the beginning or for the increase of love, than for one who does not love as yet to perceive that he is loved, or for him who loves first either to hope that he may be, or already to have proof that he is, loved in return. And if this be so even in disgraceful loves, how much more is it in friendship? For what else are we on our guard against as endangering friendship except lest our friend should think either that we do not love him, or that we love him less than he loves us. If he come to believe this he will be cooler in that love in which men enjoy mutual intimacy with each other; and though he be not so weak that this vexation cause him to grow cold in his affection altogether, he yet limits himself to that degree in which he loves, not for his own enjoyment, but that he may benefit the other. Again, it is worth while to observe how, although superiors wish to be loved by their inferiors, and are pleased by their zealous service towards themselves, and the more they notice this the more they love them, yet with how great love the inferior kindles when

he feels that he is loved by his superior. For love is there more pleasing where it is not excited by the drought of want, but flows forth from the plenteousness of goodness. For the former love springs from need, the latter from tender-heartedness. And if further the inferior was in despair of the possibility of being loved by his superior, he will be unspeakably moved to love if that superior has voluntarily deigned to shew how much he loves him who could in no way dare to promise himself so great a good. But what is there superior to God who judges, what more desperate than man who sins? who had so much the more given himself up to the keeping and yoke of proud powers, which cannot confer happiness, as he had the more despaired of the possibility of his being an object of care to that Power which wills not to be exalted in wickedness but is exalted in goodness.

8. If, therefore, Christ came chiefly for this end, that man might understand how much God loves him, and might understand it to this intent, that he might grow fervent in the love of Him by Whom he was first loved, and might love his neighbour at the bidding and shewing of Him Who became man's neighbour by loving him, not when he was a neighbour, but when wandering far away; and if all divine Scripture which was written before was written to announce beforehand the coming of the Lord, and if whatever was afterwards committed to writing, and established by Divine authority, tells of Christ and admonishes of love; it is manifest that on those two commandments of the love of God and of our neighbour hang not only the whole Law and the Prophets which, when the Lord said this⁹, were as yet the whole of Holy Scripture, but also whatever books of the

⁹ Matt. xxii. 40.

Divine teaching were later written for our health and committed to our remembrance. Wherefore in the Old Testament there is a veiling of the New, in the New an unveiling of the Old. In consequence of that veiling, carnal men, understanding after a carnal fashion, both then and now have been under a yoke of penal fear. Again, in consequence of this unveiling, spiritual men (both at that time those to whom, when knocking piously, hidden things were made plain, and now those who do not seek in pride, lest even open things should be closed to them), understanding spiritually, have been made free by the love given to them. Because, therefore, nothing is more opposed to love than envying, and the mother of envying is pride, the same Lord Jesus Christ, God-man, is both a token of divine love towards us, and an example of human humility amongst us, that our great swelling might be healed by a greater counter-acting remedy. For the misery is great, man proud; but greater the mercy, God humble! With this love, therefore, as the end set before you, to which to refer everything which you say, whatever you narrate, ~~narrate~~ it so that he to whom you speak may by hearing believe, by believing hope, by hoping love.

9. On the foundation also of that very severity of God, by which the hearts of mortals are moved with most salutary fear, love is to be built up, that man, rejoicing that he is loved by Him Whom he fears, may venture to love Him in return, and yet, even though he might do so with impunity, fear to displease His love towards himself. For very rarely does it happen, or rather in truth never, that any one comes desiring to become a Christian who has not been smitten with some fear of God. For if in the expectation of some advantage from men, whom he thinks that he shall not

otherwise please, or for the avoidance of some disadvantage from men, whose displeasure or enmity he fears, a man wishes to become a Christian, he does not wish to become, so much as to feign himself a Christian. For faith is not of the body which does outward reverence, but of the mind which believes. But clearly the mercy of God is often present through the ministry of catechizing, so that a man moved by the discourse now wishes to become what he had purposed to feign himself, and when he has begun to wish this then we may judge him to have come in reality. And indeed it is hidden from us when he comes with the mind, whom we now see present in the body, but nevertheless we ought so to deal with him, that this wish may be produced in him, even though it do not as yet exist. For nothing is lost, since if the wish exist it is certainly strengthened by such action of ours, though we may be ignorant of what time or hour it began. It is certainly useful that, if it can be done, we should be informed beforehand, by those who know him, in what state of mind the person is, or what causes have moved him to come to embrace religion. But if there be no other person from whom we may know this, he must himself be questioned, that we may draw the commencement of our discourse from that which he answers. But if he have come with a feigned heart, desiring human advantages, or seeking to escape disadvantages, he will certainly say what is untrue; nevertheless, from the very untruth which he utters must we take our beginning, not with a view of confuting his falsehood, as if that were known to us, but if he say that he is come with a purpose which is truly praiseworthy, whether he speak truth or falsehood, in order that by approving and praising such a purpose as that with which he says that he is come, we may make him take pleasure in being really such as he desires to appear to

be. If, on the other hand, he shall say something other than ought to be in the mind of him who is about to be instructed in the Christian faith, by kindly and gently reproofing him as being unlearned and ignorant, and by pointing out and commending briefly and seriously the very true end of Christian teaching, so as neither to occupy the time of your future discourse, nor to venture to impose it on a mind not previously disposed for it, you may cause him to wish that which, either through error or through dissimulation, he did not as yet wish.

10. But if he shall perchance answer that some warning or alarm from God leads him to become a Christian, he furnishes a most happy approach to the commencement of our discourse, namely, the greatness of God's care for us. Certainly his attention must be turned from things of this nature, whether miracles or dreams, to the more solid path and surer oracles of the Scriptures, so that he may know how mercifully that warning was granted to him first, before he applied himself to the Holy Scriptures. And he must by all means be shewn that the Lord Himself would not warn him, nor urge him to become a Christian and to be incorporated into the Church, nor teach him by such signs or revelations, unless He had willed that he should with greater security and safety enter upon the path already prepared in the Holy Scriptures, wherein he should not seek visible miracles, but accustom himself to hope for invisible things, and receive warning not in sleep but when waking. The discourse should now commence from this point, that God made all things very good[†], and be continued, as we have said, down to the present times of the Church; in such man-

[†] Gen. i. 31.

ner as to give for those several things and deeds which we relate causes and reasons by which we may refer them to that end of love from which the eye neither of him that sayeth nor of him that doeth anything is to be turned away. For if, in respect of the fictitious fables of the poets, and such as are devised for the pleasure of minds whose food is trifles of this sort, they who are esteemed and called good grammarians notwithstanding endeavour to refer them to some use, though in itself vain and greedy, of the gross food of this world, how much more careful ought we to be lest those truths which we relate, uttered in order without any setting forth of their causes, be believed either with a gratification void of fruit, or even with harmful eagerness. But let us not so append their causes as, leaving the course of the narrative, to let our heart or tongue digress into knotty points of more difficult discussion; but that the very truth of the reason which we employ may be as it were the gold binding together a row of gems, but not by any excess disturbing the symmetry of the ornament.

11. When the narrative is finished the hope of the Resurrection must be made known, and according to the capacity and powers of the hearer, and according to the measure of time before us, we must treat, against the vain scoffs of unbelievers, of the resurrection of the body, and of the last judgment to come, with its goodness towards the good, its severity towards the bad, its exactness towards all; and when the punishments of the ungodly have been related with detestation and horror, the kingdom of the just and faithful, and that City which is above and its joys, must be set forth with longing desire. At this point, moreover, the weakness of man must be fortified and animated against temptations and scandals, whether without or in the Church itself

within; without, against the Gentiles, or Jews, or heretics; within, against the chaff of the Lord's threshing-floor. Not that one should dispute against every class of perverse men, or that all their erroneous opinions should be refuted by set arguments; but according to the shortness of the time it must be shewn that this was so foretold, and what is the benefit of temptations in training the faithful, and what an antidote exists in the example of the patience of God, Who has determined to allow them even to the end. When, however, he is being fortified against those whose perverse bands fill the churches with their persons, let the precepts of Christian and honest conversation be at the same time also set forth, that he be not so easily led astray by men that are drunkards, covetous, fraudulent, gamesters, adulterers, fornicators, lovers of shows, that bind on them sacrilegious amulets, that are enchanterers, astrologers, or diviners using any vain and evil arts, or other such like persons, and think that he shall be unpunished, because he sees that many who are called Christians love these things, and do them, and defend them, recommend and persuade men [to practise them]. For instruction must be given from the evidence of the divine books as to what is the end appointed for those who persevere in such a course of life, and how they must be borne with in the very church from which in the end they are to be separated. It must also be told him beforehand that he will find in the Church many good Christians, most true citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, if he himself begins to be such. And lastly he must be diligently admonished not to put his hope in man; because it cannot easily be judged by man what man is just, and, if it could easily be done, the

examples of just men are not set before us in order that by them we might be justified, but that imitating them we may know that we too are justified by Him Who is their justifier. For by this it will come to pass, which is specially to be commended, that when he who hears us, or rather hears God by means of us, shall begin to make progress in conduct and in knowledge, and to enter with eagerness upon the way of Christ, he will not venture to ascribe it either to us or to himself, but will love both himself and us, and whomsoever else he loves as friends, in Him and because of Him Who loved him when he was an enemy, that by justifying him He might make him a friend. And at this point I do not think that you need a preceptor to tell you that when either your own time or that of those who hear you is occupied you must be brief; when, however, more ample time is given you should speak more fully, for this the very necessity of the case teaches without any adviser.

12. But this case plainly must not be passed over, if one shall come to you to be catechized, instructed in liberal knowledge, who has already determined to be a Christian, and is come for the purpose of being made one, it can hardly be that he does not know much of our Scriptures and literature, being already instructed in which he is only come to have a share in the Sacraments. For such men are wont not at the very time at which they become Christians but previously to inquire diligently into all things, and to communicate and discuss, with whomsoever they can, the feelings of their minds. With these then you must deal briefly, not by tediously inculcating what they know, but by modestly touching on it, so that we should say that we believe they already know this or that; and in this fashion cursorily mention all those points which have to be impressed

upon the ignorant and unlearned; so that if this man of education knows anything already, he may not hear it as from a teacher, and if he be ignorant of any point he may learn it whilst we are going through those matters which we believe him to know already. Nor is it indeed without advantage to ask such a one why he wishes to be a Christian, that if you perceive that he has been influenced by books, whether canonical or those of profitable commentators, you may in the first place say something about these, commending them according to the different merits of each, whether in respect of canonical authority or of the great diligence and ability of the expounders; and in the sacred Scriptures especially commending that most salutary lowering of their marvellous loftiness, [and] in those writers on the other hand, according to the special ability of each, a style of more sounding and, as it were, more well-turned eloquence suited for minds that are prouder and thereby weaker. One must also certainly elicit from him information as to what author he chiefly read, and with what books he was more familiarly conversant, whence the determination grew in him to become a member of the Church. And after he has told us this, then if those books are known to us, or if we have heard at least by common report in the Church that they are written by some Catholic man of note, let us gladly express our approval. If on the other hand he has fallen upon the writings of some heretic, and in ignorance perhaps has accepted in his mind what the true faith condemns, and supposes it to be Catholic, he must be diligently taught, the authority of the universal Church being set first, with that of other most learned men esteemed for their discussions and writings as to the truth on that point. Although even they who have passed out of this life as Catholics, and have left to posterity some Christian writings, in certain places of

their works, either not being understood, or (such is human infirmity) lacking ability to penetrate into more hidden things with the eye of the mind, and with a semblance of truth wandering from the truth, have been an occasion for the presumptuous and bold to construct and bring forth some heresy. Which is not to be wondered at, since in the canonical Scriptures themselves, in which all things have been expressed in the soundest manner, not indeed by understanding certain things otherwise than either as the writer felt, or as the truth is, (for if this were all, who would not willingly pardon human infirmity willing to admit correction?) but by constantly defending with most passionate vehemence and obstinate conceit, many have given birth to many pernicious doctrines, having cut asunder the unity of communion. All these things must be treated of in modest conference with him who approaches the society of the Christian people, not as an illiterate man, as they say, but polished and cultivated by the books of the learned. And so much authority must be assumed in enjoining him to guard against the errors of presumption, as his humility which brought him to us is now felt to admit of. All other things, moreover, according to the rules of the doctrine of salvation, whatever have to be related or discussed, whether concerning the Faith, or concerning morals, or concerning temptations, going through them in the manner I have mentioned, are to be referred to that more excellent way^a.

13. There are also some who come from the most frequented schools of the grammarians and rhetoricians, whom you cannot venture to reckon either amongst illiterate persons, or amongst those very learned men whose minds have

^a 1 Cor. xii. 31.

been exercised in questions of great matters. When, therefore, these persons who appear to surpass the rest of mankind in the art of speaking come in order to be made Christians, we ought, in addition to what we communicate to those unlearned men, to warn them diligently that, being clothed with Christian humility, they must learn not to despise those whom they shall perceive to avoid faults of conduct more than faults of speech, and that they venture not even to compare with a pure heart the practised tongue which they have been accustomed even to prefer to it. But especially must they be taught to listen to the divine Scriptures, that solid eloquence may not grow vile in their eyes because it is not inflated; and that they may not suppose that the words or actions of men, wrapped up and concealed in carnal coverings, are not to be unfolded and opened out that they may be understood, but are to be so taken as the words sound. And as to the use of the hidden meaning (whence also they are called mysteries) such men must have proved to them by actual experience what power the hidden secrets of dark sayings have of sharpening the love of the truth and shaking off the torpor of weariness [which they will realize] when some subject which failed, when placed nakedly before them, to move them has its sense drawn out by the unravelling of some allegory. To these men it is especially useful to know that the meaning is to be preferred to the words as the soul is preferred to the body. Whence it follows, that they ought to wish rather to hear discourses which are true than such as are eloquent, in the same way as they ought to wish rather to have friends excelling in wisdom rather than in beauty. Let them also understand that no voice reaches the ears of God except the affection of the soul, for so they will not mock if perchance they shall notice any prelates or ministers of God either calling upon God in

barbarous or ungrammatical language, or failing to understand the very words they are uttering and making pauses confusedly. Not that these things are not by all means to be corrected, that the people may say Amen to what they clearly understand, but at the same time they are to be endured by those who have learned that the essence of speaking well consists, as in the Forum in the sound, so in Church in the desire of the heart. And so that of the Forum may perhaps sometimes be called good speaking [*bona dictio*], yet never holy speaking [*benedictio*]. But concerning the Sacrament which they are about to receive, it is sufficient for the more intelligent to hear what that thing signifies; with the duller, on the other hand, one must deal more in detail and employ similitudes that they may not despise what they see.

14. At this point you perhaps desire some discourse as an example, that I may shew you by an actual instance in what manner what I have advised is to be done. And this indeed I will do, so far as with the help of the Lord I shall be able; but first I ought to speak of acquiring that cheerfulness, as I proposed. For I have already, as far as seemed sufficient, fulfilled what I had promised with regard to the rules themselves for arranging your discourse in catechising one who comes to be made a Christian. And surely it is no part of my debt that I should also myself do in this volume what I lay down as fitting to be done. If then I do this, it will be equivalent to an over-measure, but how can an over-measure be poured on by me before I have filled up the measure of what I owe? And indeed I have not heard that you complain very much of anything except that your discourse seemed to yourself poor and worthless, when you were instructing any one in the Christian name. Now this I know to be caused not so much by want of matter to speak about, in which I know that you are sufficiently prepared and furnished, nor by poverty of speech, but by weariness of mind;

either from that cause which I mentioned, that what we perceive mentally and in silence pleases and fixes our attention more, and we are unwilling to be called away from it to a noise of words far from adequate to it; or because even when discourse is pleasant, we prefer to hear or read things which have been better expressed, and which are set forth without any care or anxiety on our part, rather than to adapt on the sudden words to the understanding of another, the issue being uncertain whether on the one hand words occur to us adequate to the sense, or on the other whether they will be beneficially received; or because, from the fact that those things which are communicated to the unlearned are very well known to us and no longer necessary for our own advancement, it is irksome to be very often recurring to them, and our mind, now of somewhat more advanced growth, passes without pleasure through those things so familiar and, as it were, childish. A hearer also who remains unmoved causes weariness to the speaker (whether because he is stirred by no feeling, or because he does not shew by any bodily motion that he understands or is pleased with what is said), not because it is fitting that we be greedy of human praise, but because the things we minister are of God, and the more we love those to whom we minister, so much the more do we desire that what is set forth for their salvation should be pleasing to them; and if this does not succeed, we are saddened, and are weakened and disheartened in the midst of our course as though we were labouring in vain. Sometimes also when we are called away from some other matter which we desire to deal with, and the dealing with which either was pleasant to us, or seemed to us more necessary, and we are obliged either at the bidding of one whom we are unwilling to offend, or by some person's importunity which we cannot escape from, to catechize some one, we approach a business for which great calmness is needed, with minds already disturbed, being vexed that we are not allowed

either to observe that order in our actions which we wish, nor are able to be sufficient for all things, and so the discourse proceeding from our own troubled feeling is less attractive, because that from the arid soil of dejection it flows forth less readily. Sometimes, too, sadness has taken possession of the breast because of some offence, and then it is said to us, "Come, speak to this man, he wishes to become a Christian." For this is said by those who know not what is shut up and consuming us within, and if we ought not to disclose to them our feelings, we undertake what they wish with too little pleasure, and languid indeed and without sweetness will that discourse be which has passed through the channel of an agitated and reeking heart. From so many causes then, whichever of them it may be which clouds the serene calm of our heart, remedies must be sought in accordance with God's will, through the use of which the contracted heart may again expand, and we may exult in fervour of spirit and rejoice in the calm consciousness of a good work, *For God loveth a cheerful giver*¹.

15. For if the cause of our sadness be this, that the hearer does not apprehend our conception, so that in a way descending from its height we are obliged to linger in the tediousness of words on a far lower level, and are troubled how that which the mind drinks in with a most quick draught shall pass forth from the bodily mouth in long and intricate windings, and because our utterance is so inadequate, speech grows irksome and silence pleasing, let us ponder what has been set before us by Him Who left us an example that we should follow His steps². For however much our articulate speech may differ from the liveliness of our intelligence, far

¹ 2 Cor. ix. 7.

² 1 Pet. ii. 21.

more does mortal flesh differ from equality with God. And yet although He was in the same form *He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man, and found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, being made obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross*^a.

For what purpose, but that to the weak He became weak that He might gain the weak^y? Hear His follower in another place also saying, *For whether we be beside ourselves it is to God; or whether we be sober it is for you; For the love of Christ constraineth us, judging this that One died for all*^z. For how could one be ready to be spent for their souls^a, if it were irksome to him to bend himself to their ears? On this account then He became a little child in the midst of us, as a nurse cherishing her children^b. For is it a pleasure, unless love invite us, to lisp shortened and mutilated words? And yet men desire to have children, to whom they may render this service, and it is more sweet to a mother to feed her little son with small morsels moistened in her own mouth, than herself to eat and swallow larger pieces. Let not then the memory ever fade from your heart of that hen^c who covers her tender brood with her drooping feathers, and summons her chirping chicks with a broken voice, who, if they in their pride turn away from her fostering wings, become a prey to birds. For if understanding brings delight in its purest recesses, let it also bring delight to understand how

^a Philip. ii. 7.^z 2 Cor. xii. 15.^y 1 Cor. ix. 22.^b 1 Thess. li. 7.^a 2 Cor. v. 13, 14.^c Matt. xxiii. 37.

love, the more generously it descends to the lowest matters, returns so much the more vigorously to those that are most interior, through the assurance of a good conscience that it seeks nothing from those to whom it descends but their eternal salvation.

16. If, however, we desire rather to read or hear such things as have been already prepared and better expressed, and for this reason it is irksome to us to put together for the time, with an uncertain issue, what we have to say, only let not our mind wander from the truth of the facts themselves, it is easy if anything in our words shall offend the hearer, for him to learn from the very circumstance how little this is to be cared for when the matter itself is understood, if what was spoken in order that the matter should be understood, sounded possibly somewhat imperfect or somewhat inaccurate. But if the purpose of human frailty have erred somewhat from the very truth of the matters (although in instructing the unlearned, where the most beaten path has to be kept, this can hardly happen, still lest it happen perchance that our hearer be offended even on this side) this ought to appear to us to arise from no other cause, except that God wills to try us, whether we receive correction with calmness of mind, that we be not carried headlong by a worse error into the defence of our error. But if no one has told us of it, and it has altogether escaped the notice of ourselves and of those who heard us, there is no cause for sorrow, if it do not happen again. For commonly when we ourselves recall what we have said we find something to blame, and we do not know how it was received when it was said, and we are the more sorry, when love is fervent within us, if, being false, it was readily accepted. Therefore, when an opportunity is found, as we find fault with ourselves in silence, so we must take care that they too be gradually set

right who have fallen into some error, not by the words of God, but plainly by our language. If however any, whisperers, detractors, hateful to God, blinded by mad envy, rejoice that we have erred^d, let them afford us matter for exercising patience with pity, because the patience also of God leadeth them to repentance. For what is there more detestable, or what can more treasure up wrath in the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God^e, than, after the evil likeness and pattern of the devil, to rejoice in the evil of another? Sometimes also when all things are rightly and truly stated, something either not being understood, or being opposed to some old erroneous opinion or habit seems harsh by its very novelty, offends and disturbs the hearer. If this shall become apparent, and the person shews himself capable of being set right, he should be set right without any delay by abundance of authorities and reasons. If, on the other hand, the offence be secret and hid the medicine of God can furnish a remedy. But if he shall start back and refuse to be healed, let the Lord's example comfort us, Who, when men were offended at His word and shrank from it as a hard saying, said even to those who had remained, *Will ye also go away*^f? For this ought to be retained thoroughly fixed and immoveable in our hearts, that Jerusalem which is in bondage is set free from the Babylon of this world when the times have run their course, and that no one from out of her shall perish, because he who shall perish was not of her. *For the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His, and, Let every one that nameth the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity*^g. If we think of these things and call upon the Lord to come into our heart, we shall less

^d Rom. i. 30.^e Rom. ii. 4, 5.^f John vi. 67.^g 2 Tim. ii. 19.

fear the uncertain issues of our discourse depending on the uncertain feelings of our hearers, and even the very suffering of vexations for our work of mercy will be pleasing to us if we seek not our own glory in it. For then is a work indeed good when the purpose of the doer is impelled by love, and, as if returning to its own place, rests again in love. But the reading which pleases us, or any listening to an eloquence superior to our own (by putting which first, and inclining to prefer it to our own discourse, we speak reluctantly and with disinclination), will find us in better spirits, and prove more pleasant after our toil; and we shall pray with greater confidence that God would speak to us as we wish, if we cheerfully submit that He speak by us as we are able; and so it comes to pass that all things come together for good to them that love God.

17. But again we weary of repeating often things trite and suited to children; let us unite ourselves to them by the love of a brother, a father, a mother, and when we are thus linked to their hearts these things will appear fresh to us also. For the feeling of a sympathising mind has so much power, that, whilst they are moved as we speak, and we as they learn, we have our dwelling in each other, and so both they as it were speak in us what they hear, and we in a certain fashion learn in them the things which we teach. Does not this constantly happen, when we shew to those who never had seen them before certain wide and beautiful spots which we now, from having often seen them, are used to pass by without any pleasure, that our delight is renewed by their delight at the novelty of the view? And so much the more in pro-

portion as they are dearer to us; because in proportion as we are bound up in them by love, so do things which had been old become new to us. But if we have made any progress in contemplation, we do not wish that they whom we love should be delighted and astonished when they look upon the works of men's hands; but we wish to raise them up to the very skill and purpose of their author, and thence to rise to the admiration and praise of the all-creating God, in Whom is the most fruitful end of love; how much more then ought we to be delighted when men come to us to obtain the knowledge of God Himself, for Whom all things should be learned that are to be learned, and to be renewed ourselves in their freshness, so that if our accustomed preaching be too cold it may grow warm by their unaccustomed hearing. And there is this further to cause us joy, that we think and reflect from what a death of error the man is passing to the life of faith. And if we pass through the most accustomed streets with kindly cheerfulness when we are shewing the road to one who had been in distress at losing his way, with how much more readiness and with how much greater joy in the case of teaching unto salvation ought we to traverse those paths which for our own sakes it is not necessary to pass over again; when we are leading a soul worthy of pity and wearied by the wanderings of this world through the paths of peace, at the command of Him Who gave us that peace.

18. But indeed it is much to continue speaking to the limit fixed beforehand, when we see that our hearer is unmoved; because either, being restrained by religious awe, he dares not shew his approval by word or by any movement of his body, or is kept back by human modesty;

or understands not what is said, or feels contempt for it. Since to us who cannot see into his mind this must be uncertain, everything must be tried in our discourse which may possibly avail to rouse him, and as it were draw him out of his hiding-place. For that fear which is excessive, and which hinders the declaration of his opinion, must be removed by gentle exhortation, and his modesty be tempered by suggesting our common brotherhood, and we must ascertain by questioning whether he understands, and give him confidence to set forth freely anything which it appears to him ought to be excepted to. He should also be asked whether he has ever before heard these things, and so perhaps as being well-known and common they fail to move him; and we must deal according to his answer, so as either to speak more simply and plainly, or to refute some contrary opinion, or to embrace briefly, and not explain more at length those things which are known to him, and to select some of those things which are spoken mystically in the sacred books, and especially in the narrative, by explaining and setting forth of which our discourse may become more agreeable. But if the man be over slow, and unfitted for and disinclined to all such methods of attraction, we must bear with him in pity, and having briefly run through the other matters, must impress upon him, so as to inspire awe, those things which are especially necessary, concerning the unity of the Catholic Church, concerning temptations, concerning Christian conversation in view of the future judgment, and rather speak much to God on his behalf than much to him concerning God.

19. Often, too, it happens, that he who at first heard us with pleasure, being wearied either by listening or by stand-

ing, now yawns and gapes, and even against his will shews a wish to depart. And when we have perceived this, we ought either to refresh his mind by saying something seasoned with decent cheerfulness, and suited to the matter which is being treated, or something very wonderful and marvellous, or even painful and sad; and preferably touching himself, that being pricked by concern for himself he may rouse up, and yet not such as to wound his feeling of reverence by any sharpness, but rather by a friendly manner to conciliate him; or we may relieve him by the offer of a seat, although without doubt it would be better, where it can be done with propriety, that the listener should sit from the commencement; and with far greater wisdom in certain churches beyond the sea, not only do the bishops sit when they address the people, but seats are provided for the people themselves, lest any one who is weak being wearied by standing should have his mind turned away from most profitable attention, or even be obliged to depart. And yet it makes a great difference, whether one of a great multitude withdraws himself to recruit his strength, who is already bound by participation in the Sacraments, or he withdraws who has to be initiated in the first Sacraments, (being generally unavoidably compelled, lest overcome by weakness within he even fall,) and through shame does not say why he goes, and through his weakness is not able to stand. I speak this from experience, for a certain countryman did this when I was catechizing him, whence I learnt that this is very carefully to be guarded against. For who would endure our arrogance, when we do not cause to sit down in our presence men who are our brethren, or, which should be attended to with even greater care, in order that they may become our brethren, and yet a woman listened sitting to

our Lord Himself, before Whom even the Angels stand ^b? Certainly if either the discourse is going to be short, or the place not suitable for sitting, let them listen standing, but [only] when the hearers are many, and are not to be admitted at that time. For when they are one or two, or a few, who have come in order to be made Christians, it is dangerous to speak to them standing. If however we have already begun in this manner, at least when the weariness of the hearer is observed, a seat should be offered him, nay, rather he must be pressed to sit down, and something should be said to refresh him, by which too, if any anxiety has entered his mind and begun to draw off his attention it may be put to flight. ~~X~~ For since the causes are unknown to us for which he remains silent and refuses to listen, something may, now that he is sitting, be said to him against thoughts of worldly matters which suggest themselves, either, as I have said, in a bright or in a serious manner; so that if these are what occupied his mind they may depart as if accused by name; but if it is not these, and he is wearied with listening, when we speak of them in an unexpected and unusual manner, as I have said, as if they really existed (since we indeed do not know), his attention will be restored from its weariness. But let this be brief, especially because it is inserted out of order, lest the very remedy increase the disease of weariness which we wish to relieve; and what remains should be hastened through, and a speedy termination be promised and held out.

20. But if the omission of some other occupation, on which as being more necessary you were now intent, has broken your spirit, and because you are sad on account of this you catechize without pleasure, you ought to reflect, that, excepting that we know that whatever dealings we

^b Luke x. 39.

have with men we must perform mercifully, and as an office of the sincerest charity, except this one thing, it is uncertain what we can do more usefully, and what we can postpone more suitably, or omit altogether. For since we know not what in the sight of God are the merits of the men for whom we are acting, and guess with no, or very slight and uncertain grounds of conjecture, rather than understand what may be expedient for them at the moment. Wherefore we ought to arrange such things indeed as have to be done, according to our ability, and if we shall be able to accomplish them in the way in which we had determined, let us rejoice that it has pleased God, not ourselves, that they should be so done; if, however, anything unavoidable happens whereby that arrangement of ours is disturbed, let us bend to it readily that we be not broken, so that the arrangement which God has preferred may itself become ours. For it is more fit that we should follow His will than He ours. Seeing, too, that that order of action which we wish to keep to according to our own will is surely to be approved in which the more excellent things have the first place. Why then are we grieved that the Lord God, Who is so far more excellent, should have the first place before us men, so that in the very point in which we cling to our own order we should wish to be out of order? For no one orders for the better what to do, except he who is more ready not to do what Divine Power prohibits, than anxious to do what his own human thought devises. *For there are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord stands for ever*¹.

21. But if our mind, disturbed by some cause of offence, is unable to deliver a calm and cheerful discourse, our love

¹ Prov. xix. 21.

towards those for whom Christ died, willing to redeem them by the price of His Blood from the death of the errors of this world, ought to be so great that this very fact which is announced to us when out of heart, that some one is waiting who desires to be made a Christian, ought to have power to console and dispel that sadness, just as the pleasures of gains usually soothe regrets for losses. For the offence caused by any one does not grieve us, except in the case of one whom we either believe or see to be perishing himself, or a cause of perishing to some weak person. Let then him who comes to be admitted, in that we hope that he will be able to go forward, wipe out the grief caused by one who is failing. Because even if that fear occurs to us that our proselyte may become a child of hell^k, since many such are before our eyes, from whom arise those offences with which we even now burn, this ought not to tend to keep us back, but rather to rouse us and spur us on, so far as to lead us to warn him whom we are instructing that he should beware of imitating those who are Christians only in name, not in very truth; nor be induced because of their numbers either to wish to follow them, or because of them to be unwilling to follow Christ, and either be unwilling to be in the Church of Christ where they are, or intend to be such when in it as they are. And somehow or other, in admonitions of this sort, that discourse is always more glowing to which a present sense of pain supplies fuel, so that not only are we not dull but stirred by this very thing, say more warmly and vehemently those same things which without our trouble we should utter more coldly and indifferently, and can rejoice that opportunity is given us that the emotions of our mind should not pass away without fruit.

^k Matt. xxiii. 15.

22. But if for any fault or sin of our own sadness has taken possession of us, let us not only remember that *the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit*¹, but also that saying, *Like as water a fire*^m, so *alms quench sin*, and *I will have mercy*, says He, *and not sacrifice*ⁿ. As, therefore, if in danger from fire we should certainly run for water, that it might be quenched, and should be glad if any one offered it close at hand, so if from our own hay there should arise any flame of sin, and we are therefore troubled, when opportunity has been given us for a most merciful work, let us rejoice as if a fountain were offered us, that from it that which had caught fire may be extinguished. Unless perchance we are so foolish as to think that we ought to be more ready to run with bread with which to fill the belly of one hungry, than with the word of God, with which to furnish the mind of him who feedeth on it. To this it must be added that if it were only expedient for us to do this, and that not to do it would be no disadvantage to us, we might to our misfortune neglect a remedy offered us when now the salvation not of a neighbour but of ourselves is in danger. But when from the mouth of the Lord this so threatening voice is heard, *Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou shouldest have given my money to the exchangers*^o, what madness, I pray you, is it, since our sin torments us, therefore to wish to sin again, by not giving the Lord's money to one who wishes and seeks for it. When the darkness of weary feelings has been removed by these and similar thoughts and considerations, the purpose of the mind is fitted for the work of catechizing, so that what bursts forth readily and cheerfully from the fulness of love is pleasantly

¹ Ps. li. 17.^m Eccus. iii. 30.ⁿ Hosca vi. 6.^o Matt. xxv. 26, 27.

imbibed by the hearer. For it is not so much I who say these things to you, as Love itself which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Who is given to us⁹.

23. But now perhaps you demand of me as a debt that which before I promised I did not owe, that I should not think it too much trouble to lay out and place before your view a pattern of a discourse, as though I were instructing some one. ~~X~~Before, however, I do this, I wish you would reflect that the working of the mind is different, in the case of one dictating, while he is thinking of a future reader, and in the case of one speaking when a present listener keeps the mind engaged; and again, that it is different in this very case when one is admonishing privately and no one is present to form a judgment upon us, and again when one is teaching anything openly, when listeners differing in opinion are standing round; and in this class of teaching again there is a difference when one is being instructed, but the rest listen as if judging or attesting what is known to them, and when all in common are waiting for what we may bring before them; and it makes a difference further, whether we are as it were sitting in private to engage in a discussion, or if the people silently and with attention look to one who is to speak from a higher place; it makes a great difference too, even when we are thus speaking, whether few or many are present; learned or unlearned, or made up of both classes; whether town or country people, or both together, or if the people be made up of every kind of men. For it cannot be, but that they affect in different ways him who is going to

speaking and address them, and that the discourse, which is delivered, bears as it were the expression of the feeling of the mind which delivers it, and according to this same difference affects the hearers in different ways, and they too in turn affect each other by their very presence in different ways. But because we are now treating of instructing the unlearned, I testify to you of myself, that I am moved differently according as I see before me to be instructed a learned man, a dull man, a citizen, a foreigner, a rich man, a poor man, a private man, a distinguished man, one placed in some post of authority, a person of this or that nation, of this or that age or sex, of this or that sect, coming from this or that vulgar error, and in accordance with the difference of my own emotions my discourse itself sets out, advances and concludes. And because, though the same love is due to all, the same medicine is not to be used for all, for love itself is in travail with some, is made weak with others; seeks to edify some, fears to offend others; to some it stoops, to others it holds itself erect; to some it is gentle, to some severe, to none unfriendly, to all a mother. And he who has not experienced what I say with the same feeling of love, when he sees us, because some ability bestowed upon us causes pleasure, gain some repute in the mouth of the multitude, thinks us therefore happy. But may God, into whose presence the *sorrowful sighing of the prisoners*⁹ enters, look upon our humility and our toil, and forgive all our sins. Wherefore if anything in us has pleased you so as to make you desirous of hearing from us some remarks for your dis-

⁹ Ps. lxxix. 11 : xxv. 12.

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¹ Ps. lxxix. 11 : xxv. 12.

course, you would learn more by seeing and hearing us when we are doing these things, than by reading when we dictate them.

24. But let us suppose that some one has come to us, who wishes to be a Christian, one of the class of uneducated persons, yet not a rustic but a townsman, such as you must necessarily have experience of in considerable numbers at Carthage; and that having been asked whether it is for the sake of any advantage in this present life, or for the sake of the rest which is hoped for after this life, that he desires to be a Christian, he has replied, for the sake of the rest to come, we should perhaps instruct him in some such address as this.

A Pattern of a Catechetical Discourse.

"Thanks be to God, my brother; I heartily congratulate you, and rejoice on your behalf, that in the so great and dangerous storms of this present life you have thought upon some true and certain security. For even in this life men seek rest and security by great toil, but through evil lusts find them not. For they wish to rest in things which are unquiet and not enduring, and because these in time are withdrawn and pass away, they disturb them with fears and sorrows, and do not suffer them to be at rest. For whether a man wishes to rest in riches, he is rather rendered proud than free from care. Do we not see how many have lost them suddenly, many too have perished because of them, either when they desire to possess them, or when they are borne down and their wealth plundered by those more covetous than themselves? And even if they remained with a man throughout his whole life, and did not forsake him who loves

them, yet would he desert them at his death. For what is the life of man, even if he grow old? Or when men wish old age for themselves, what else do they wish but lengthened infirmity? So too the honours of this world, what are they but vanity, and emptiness, and peril of falling? For thus speaks Holy Scripture, *All flesh is grass, and the goodliness of man as the flower of grass. The grass is withered, the flower faded, but the Word of God standeth for ever*¹. Therefore he who desires true rest and true happiness ought to raise his hope from mortal and transitory things, and to fix it in the word of the Lord, that cleaving to that which abides for ever he may also with it abide for ever.

25. "There are also men who neither seek to be rich, nor go about to obtain the vain show of honours, but like to enjoy themselves and to rest in feastings and fornications, and in theatres and frivolous shows, which they have in great cities without cost. But thus, too, themselves either consume their scanty means through luxury, and afterwards through want break out into thefts and housebreaking, and sometimes even robberies, and are suddenly filled with many and great fears; and they who shortly before were singing in the tavern, now dream of the wailings of the prison. Moreover in their eagerness after the games they become like devils, by their cries urging on men to slay one another, and to have furious contests with those who have not injured them, whilst they endeavour to gratify a mad-denied people; and if they perceive them to be peaceable,

¹ Is. xl. 6, 7.

they then detest and persecute them, and cry out that they should be beaten with clubs as if they had agreed to deceive them, and this injustice they compel even the judge, who is the avenger of injustice, to commit ; if, on the other hand, they have perceived them to be practising dreadful acts of hatred against each other, whether they be those who are called Sintæ [devourers], or actors and players, or chariot-eers, or hunters, wretched creatures whom they cause to contend and fight not only men with men, but even men with beasts ; and the greater the hatred with which they shall perceive them to rage against one another*, the more they like them, and are pleased with them, and applaud them when set on, and set them on by applauding them, the very spectators raging more against each other, each in behalf of some one, than those whose mad rage they are madly provoking, and in their madness desire to look upon. How then can a mind retain the soundness of peace which feeds upon strifes and contests ? For such as is the food partaken of, such is the health which ensues. Lastly, although mad joys are not joys, yet whatever they be, and however much pleasure the ostentation of riches may afford, and the pride of honours, and the extravagance of the taverns, and the contests of the theatres, and the impurity of fornications, and the lascivious-

* 1 Cor. ii. 9.

ness of the baths, one slight fever takes away all these, and withdraws from them whilst yet living all their false happiness; there remains a void and wounded conscience, about to feel that God as a Judge, Whom it would not have as a Protector, and about to find Him a stern Lord, Whom it scorned to seek and to love as a dear Father. But thou, because thou seekest that true rest, which after this life is promised to Christians, shalt taste its sweetness and pleasantness even here amidst the bitterest troubles of this life, if thou shalt love the commandments of Him Who promised that rest. For soon shalt thou perceive that the fruits of righteousness are more pleasant than those of iniquity, and that a man has a truer and more pleasant joy from a good conscience in the midst of troubles, than from an evil conscience in the midst of delights; seeing that thou hast not come to be joined to the Church of God, in order that thou mightest seek any temporal advantage from it.

26. "There are also those who therefore wish to be Christians, that they may oblige men from whom they hope for temporal benefits, or because they are unwilling to offend those whom they fear. But those are reprobate, and if for a time the Church bears them, as the threshing-floor bears the chaff till the time of winnowing; if they amend not themselves, and begin to be Christians for the sake of the future eternal rest, they shall be separated at the end. And let them not flatter themselves, because they can be in the floor with God's wheat, since they shall not be with it in the garner, but are destined to the fire which is due to them. There are others too, with better hope indeed, but notwithstanding in no less peril, who already fear God, and do not mock the Christian name, nor enter the Church of God with a feigned heart, but await happiness in this life, that they

may be more happy in earthly things than they who do not worship God; and therefore when they see certain wicked and impious persons prevailing and excelling in that worldly prosperity, and that they themselves either possess less or are losing what they have, they are disturbed as though they were worshipping God without ground, and easily fall away from the faith.

27. "But he who, for the sake of the everlasting happiness and perpetual rest, which it is promised shall belong to the Saints after this life, wishes to become a Christian, that he may not go into eternal fire with the devil, but may with Christ enter into His everlasting kingdom, he is in truth a Christian; watchful in every temptation, lest he be corrupted by prosperity, or overcome by adversity, and is moderate and temperate in the abundance of worldly goods, and brave and patient in tribulations. And he, too, by continual progress will attain to such a mind, that he will love God more than he will fear hell: so that even if God were to say to him, Enjoy the pleasures of the flesh for ever, and sin as much as you can, you shall neither die, nor be cast into hell, but shall only not be with Me; he would be filled with horror, and altogether keep from sin, not any longer that he might not fall into that whereof he used to be afraid, but that he might not offend Him Whom he so loves; in Whom alone is rest, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

28. "Concerning which rest Scripture signifies and is not silent, how at the beginning of the world, from the time that God made heaven and earth and all that is in them, He worked for six days, and on the seventh day He rested. The Almighty, indeed, could have made all things even in one moment of time. For He had not laboured so as to

need rest, when *He spake, and they were made, He commanded, and they were created*^a; but that He might signify, that after the six ages of this world, in the seventh age as though on the seventh day, He will rest in His saints, for they shall rest in Him after all the good works in which they have served Him, which He Himself works in them, Who calls them, and directs them, and forgives sins that are past, and justifies him who before was a sinner. But as when they by His gift do good works He is rightly said Himself to do the works, so when they rest in Him, He is rightly said Himself to rest. For so far as regards Himself, He seeks not cessation, for He feels not work. For He made all things by His Word, and His Word is Christ Himself, in Whom the angels and all the most pure heavenly spirits rest in holy silence. But man, fallen by sin, lost the rest which he had in His Godhead, and receives it in His Manhood; and so at the fitting time, when He Himself knew that it was right that it should be done, He became Man and was born of a woman. By the flesh indeed He could not be defiled, Himself being rather about to cleanse the flesh. The saints of old knew that He was about to come by the revelation of the Spirit, and they prophesied; and so were saved by believing that He would come, as we are saved by believing that He is come; that we might love God, Who so loved us as to send His only Son, that He, clothed in the lowliness of our mortal nature, might die at the hand of sinners and for sinners. For now long since,

^a Ps. cxlviii. 5.

from the beginning of the ages, the depth of this mystery ceases not to be prefigured and foretold.

29. "Since God Almighty, who is both good, and just, and merciful, Who made all things good, whether they be great or small, whether high or low ; whether things which are seen, such as are the heavens, the earth, and the sea, and in the heavens the sun and moon, and the rest of the stars, and in the earth and sea, trees, shrubs, each after their kind, and all bodies whether celestial or terrestrial ; or whether those which are not seen, such as are spirits by which bodies are animated and quickened with life : and made man after His own image, that as He Himself by His Almighty power rules over the whole creation, so man by his understanding, by which he knows and worships His Creator, might rule over all the animals of the earth. He made also woman, a helpmeet for him ; not for carnal concupiscence, since they had not then corruptible bodies, before that liability to death came upon them as the penalty of sin ; but that the man might have glory of the woman, when he led the way before her to God, and offered himself an example to her in holiness and piety, as he himself was the glory of God, when he followed His wisdom.

30. "And so He placed them in a certain place of perpetual happiness, which Scripture calls Paradise ; and gave them a commandment, which if they transgressed not, they would ever remain in that blessedness of immortality, but if they transgressed it, they would pay the penalties of mortality. God, however, knew beforehand that they would transgress :

but yet since He is the Creator and Author of all good, He the rather made them, when He made the beasts too, that He might fill the earth with earthly good things. And indeed man, even a sinner, is better than a beast. And His commandment, which they were not about to keep, He the rather gave them, that they might be without excuse, when He began to take vengeance on them. For whatever man doeth, he findeth God worthy of praise in His doings ; if he have acted rightly he findeth Him worthy of praise for the justice of His rewards ; if confessing his sins he have returned to right living, he findeth Him worthy of praise for the tenderness of His mercy. Why then should God not create man, although He foreknew that he would sin, when He might crown him if he stood upright, set him right if he fell, help him if he rose again, being Himself always and everywhere glorious for His goodness, justice, and mercy ? especially since He foresaw this also, that from his mortal race there should be Saints, who would not seek glory for themselves, but give it to their Creator, and by serving Him being free from all corruption, should merit to live for ever, and to live in bliss with the holy Angels ? For He who gave men free choice, that they might serve God, not with the compulsion of slaves, but with freedom of will, gave it also to the angels : and so neither did the angel, who, with the other spirits who followed him, through pride forsook the service of God and became a devil, in anything injure God, but himself. For God knew how to correct the souls [i.e. spirits, see *Retract.* ii. 14,] which forsook Him, and out of their just misery to furnish the lower parts of His Creation with a dispensation of

most suitable and fitting laws. And so neither did the devil at all injure God, either in that he fell himself, or in that he seduced man to death, nor did man himself in anything lessen the truth, or power, or bliss of his Creator, because he consented of his own will to his wife, seduced by the devil, to do that which God had forbidden. For by the most just laws of God all were condemned, God being glorious through the justice of His vengeance, and they full of shame through the disgrace of their punishment, that both man turning away from his Creator being overcome might be subject to the devil, and that the devil might be set forth to be overcome by man turning to his Creator; that whosoever should consent to the devil unto the end might go with him into eternal punishment, and again, whosoever should humble themselves before God, and by His grace overcome the devil, might merit eternal rewards.

31. "Neither ought this to move us, that many consent to the devil, and few follow God, since too the wheat in comparison with the chaff is very much less in number. But as the husbandman knows what to do with a vast heap of chaff, so the multitude of sinners is nothing before God, Who knows what to do with them, so that the government of His kingdom shall in no respect be troubled or defiled. And we must not think that the devil has therefore conquered, because he has drawn many to his side, that with them he may be overcome by a few. So two cities, one of the wicked and one of the saints, are continued from the beginning of the human race to the end of the world, now mingled together in their bodies, but separate in their wills, and destined in the day of judgment to be separated in body too. For all men who love

pride and temporal superiority, with vain boasting and arrogant pomp, and all spirits which love such things, and seek their glory in subduing men, are bound together in one society: but even though they often contend against each other for these things, they are by an equal weight of desire cast headlong into the same depths, and are united to one another by similarity of character and deserts. And again, all men and all spirits who humbly seek God's glory, not their own, and piously follow Him, belong to one society. And yet God is most merciful, and is patient with ungodly men, and affords to them place for repentance and amendment.

32. "For in that He also destroyed all by a flood, except one just man with his family, whom He willed to be saved in the ark—He knew indeed that they would not amend themselves—nevertheless, whilst during a hundred years the ark was built, assuredly the wrath of God about to come upon them was being preached to them, and that if they would turn to God He would spare them, as He afterwards spared the city of Nineveh when it repented, whereas He had by His prophet foretold to it its future destruction. But God does this, giving time of repentance, even to those who He knows will continue in their evil disposition, that He may by His own example exercise and instruct us in patience, that we may know how much it behoves us to bear patiently with the bad, seeing that we know not what they will hereafter be, since He spares and suffers them to live to whom nothing of what will happen is hidden. Yet moreover by the Sacrament of the Flood, in which the just were delivered by wood,

the Church to be was foretold, which Christ its King and God by the mystery of His Cross raised up from the submer-sion of this world. For God was not ignorant, that even from those who were saved in the ark evil men would be born who should again fill the face of the earth with iniquity, but nevertheless He both set forth a pattern of the future judgment, and foresignified the deliverance of the Saints by the mystery of the Wood. For even after these things evil did not cease to spring up again through pride, and lust, and unlawful impieties, when men having deserted their Creator fell away, not only to the creature which God had created, so as to worship for God that which God had made, but also bowed down their souls even to the works of men's hands, and the devices of artificers, wherein the devil and evil spirits might triumph over them more shamefully ; who rejoice that they themselves are worshipped and honoured in such images, whilst they feed their own errors by the errors of men.

33. "Nor indeed were there then wanting just men, who sought God devoutly, and overcame the pride of the devil, citizens of that holy City, whom the coming humiliation of Christ their King, being revealed by the Holy Ghost, healed. From amongst whom Abraham, the pious and faithful servant of God, was chosen ; to whom the Sacrament of the Son of God should be made known, that on account of their following his faith all the faithful of all nations might hereafter be called his children. From him was born a people by whom the one true God, Who made heaven and earth, should be worshipped, when the rest of the nations were serving images and devils. And clearly in this people the future Church was much more evidently shadowed forth. For there was in it a carnal multitude who worshipped God

for the sake of visible blessings. On the other hand there were in it a few contemplating the future rest, and seeking a heavenly country, to whom by prophesying was revealed the future humiliation of God our King and Lord Jesus Christ, that by that faith they might be healed from all pride and haughtiness. Of these saints who preceded in time the Nativity of the Lord, not only the speech, but also the lives and marriages and children and actions were a prophecy of this present time, in which through faith in the sufferings of Christ the Church is gathered together out of the nations. By those holy Patriarchs and Prophets were ministered to the carnal people of Israel, who afterwards also were called Jews, both visible blessings which they carnally desired from the Lord, and restraints of corporal punishments by which they might for a while be frightened, as was fitting for their hardness. And yet in all these spiritual mysteries were being signified which pertained to Christ and the Church, of which Church those holy ones were also members, although they were in this life before Christ the Lord was born according to the flesh. For He Himself, the only-begotten Son of God, the Word of the Father, equal to and co-eternal with the Father, by Whom all things were made, became Man for us, that He might be the Head of the whole Church, as of the whole Body. But, as the whole man, when he is being born, even if in the act of birth he put forth a hand first, yet is joined together and compacted in the whole body under the head; after which manner also some among the Patriarchs themselves for a sign of this very thing, the hand being put forth first, were born; so all the Saints who before the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ were upon earth, although they

were born before, nevertheless were united under the Head to the one Body of which He is the Head.

34. "That people then having been carried down into Egypt served a very hard king, and being instructed by most severe labours, sought God for their deliverer ; and one was sent to them from the same people, Moses, the holy servant of God, who by the power of God terrifying by miracles the then unholy nation of the Egyptians, brought out from among them the people of God through the Red Sea, where the water parting asunder made a way for their passing through, but the Egyptians when they pursued them were destroyed, being overwhelmed in the waves returning upon them. So, as by the flood the earth was purged from the wickedness of sinners, who were then destroyed in that overflow, and the just escaped by means of the wood, so the people going out of Egypt found a way through the waters by which their enemies were destroyed. Nor was the Sacrament of the Wood wanting there. For Moses smote with a rod, that that miracle might come to pass. Each of these is a sign of Holy Baptism, whereby the faithful pass into a new life, whereas their sins, as if their enemies, are blotted out and die. But the Passion of Christ was more openly represented in that people, when they were bidden to slay and eat a lamb, and to sign their doorposts with its blood, and to celebrate this every year and to call it the Lord's Passover. Most clearly indeed does prophecy say of the Lord Jesus Christ, that *He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter*. With the sign of Whose Cross and Passion thou art to-day to be signed on thy forehead as on the doorpost, and all Christians are thus signed.

35. "After which that people was led through the wilderness for forty years; they received also the law written by the finger of God, by which title the Holy Ghost is signified, as is most plainly declared in the Gospel. For neither is God limited by any bodily form, nor are members and fingers to be thought of in Him in such manner as we see them in ourselves, but because through the Holy Ghost the gifts of God are divided to the Saints, that though they have different powers they yet may not depart from the agreement of love: in the fingers, moreover, there appears especially a certain division, and yet no cutting off from unity. Whether for this reason, or whether for any other cause, the Holy Ghost is called the Finger of God, we must nevertheless, when we hear this, not think of the form of a human body. This people then received the law written by the Finger of God, on tables of stone indeed, to signify the hardness of their hearts, for that they were not about to fulfil the law; as desiring forsooth corporal gifts from God, they were bound rather by carnal fear than by spiritual love, but nothing except love fulfils the law. Therefore were they laden with many visible sacraments, that they might be pressed down by a servile yoke, in observances of meats, and in sacrifices of animals, and in numberless other matters, which yet were signs of spiritual things pertaining to our Lord Jesus Christ and the Church; which things were apprehended at that time by a few saints, so as to gain the fruit of salvation, and were observed according to the fitness of the time, but by the multitude of carnal men were observed only, not understood.

36. "Thus through many and various signs of future things, the enumeration of all of which is too long, and which we now see to be fulfilled in the Church, that people was brought to the land of promise, wherein, according to the manner of their desire, they might have temporal and carnal dominion, which earthly kingdom nevertheless bore the image of a spiritual kingdom. There Jerusalem was built, that most famous city of God, serving for a sign of that free city, which is called the heavenly Jerusalem, which is a Hebrew word, and is interpreted "The Vision of Peace;" the citizens of which are all sanctified men, who have been, who are, and who shall be, and all sanctified spirits, even all whosoever in the highest parts of the heavens obey God with pious devotion, and imitate not the impious pride of the devil and his angels. Of this city the King is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, by Whom the highest angels are ruled, and the Word taking the Manhood into Himself, that by Him men too should be ruled, who shall all reign together with Him in eternal peace. For the prefiguring of this King in that earthly kingdom of the people of Israel King David beyond others stood forth as pre-eminent, of whose seed according to the flesh should come the Lord Jesus Christ, our most true King, *Who is above all, God blessed for ever*¹. Many things in that land of promise were done to be a figure of the coming Christ and of the Church, which you will be able to learn by degrees in the sacred books.

37. "Moreover, after some generations God set forth

¹ Rom. ix. 5.

another type very pertinent to the matter in hand. For that city was brought into captivity, and a large part of it carried away into Babylon. But as Jerusalem signifies the city and fellowship of the saints, so Babylon signifies the city and fellowship of the wicked, since by interpretation it is called confusion. Of which two cities, running on commingled from the commencement of the human race even to the end of the world in all changes of times, and to be separated at the last judgment, we have already spoken a little earlier. So that captivity of the city of Jerusalem, and that people led into Babylon are commanded to go into bondage by the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet at that time. And there rose up kings of Babylon under whom they were in bondage, who by the occasion of their captivity, being moved by certain miracles, came to know and to worship, and ordered to be worshipped, the one true God Who fashioned the whole creation. Again, they were bidden both to pray for those by whom they were held captive, and to hope for peace in their peace, so that they should beget children, and build houses, and plant gardens and vineyards. But after seventy years deliverance is promised them from that captivity. Now all this signified by figure that the Church of Christ in all its saints, who are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, would be brought under bondage by the kings of this world. And the teaching of the Apostle also says, that *every soul should be subject to the higher powers, and that all things be rendered to all, tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom is due*^a; and those other things, which, saving the worship of our God, we render to the chiefs of human society, since the

^a Rom. xiii. 1, 7.

Lord Himself also, that He might give us an example of this sound doctrine, condescended to pay tribute for that human individuality wherewith He was clothed. Further, Christian slaves and good believers are bidden to serve their temporal masters patiently and faithfully, whom they will hereafter judge, if they find them unrighteous even to the end, or with whom they will reign in equality, if they too shall be converted to the true God. Yet all are bidden to be subject to human and earthly authority, until, at the end of the appointed time, which those seventy years signify, the Church is delivered from the confusion of this world, as Jerusalem from the captivity of Babylon. By occasion of which captivity the kings of the earth themselves, having deserted the idols, for whose sakes they used to persecute the Christians, recognize and adore the one true God and the Lord Christ; for whom the Apostle Paul orders prayer to be made, even when they were persecuting the Church. For he speaks thus: *I exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and charity**. And so by these very persons peace is given to the Church, though temporal only; and temporal tranquillity so as spiritually to build up houses, and plant gardens and vineyards. For see, at this present moment, we are by this discourse building up and planting you yourself. And this is being done through the whole world by permission of Christian kings, as the

* 1 S. Tim. ii. 1, 2.

same Apostle says, *Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's planting*⁷.

38. "And after seventy years, indeed, which Jeremiah had prophesied in a mystery, that he might prefigure the end of times, in order that the figure itself might be made perfect, there took place in Jerusalem a rebuilding of the temple of God; but because all was being done in a figure, settled peace and liberty were not restored to the Jews. And so afterwards they were conquered by the Romans and made tributaries. From that very time in truth at which they received the land of promise, and began to have kings, lest they should suppose that the promise of Christ their Deliverer was fulfilled in any of their kings, Christ was more clearly prophesied of by means of many prophecies, not only by David himself in the book of Psalms, but also by other both great and holy prophets, up to the time of the carrying them away captive into Babylon; and during the captivity itself there were prophets, who prophesied that the Lord Jesus Christ would come, the Deliverer of all. And after that, the seventy years being fulfilled, the temple was restored, the Jews endured so great oppressions and calamities at the hands of the kings of the Gentiles, that they might understand that the Deliverer was not yet come, Who they understood not was to deliver them spiritually, but longed for for the sake of a carnal deliverance.

39. "And so when five ages of the world were accomplished, of which the first is from the commencement of the human race, that is, from Adam, who was the first man created, to Noah, who made the ark at the time of the flood,

after that the second extends to Abraham, who was called the father indeed of all nations which should follow the example of his faith, but who yet, in the offspring of his own flesh, was father of the future Jewish people, which people, before the Christian faith was received by the Gentiles, alone of all the nations of the earth worshipped the one true God, from which people, according to the flesh, the Saviour Christ should come. For these divisions of two ages are prominent in the ancient books, but those of the remaining three are declared in the Gospel, when the descent of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh is mentioned. For the third is from Abraham down to David the king; the fourth from David down to that captivity in which the people of God passed into Babylon; the fifth from that passing into Babylon down to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; from the time of Whose coming the sixth age is going on, that now the spiritual grace which was then known to a few Patriarchs and Prophets might be manifested to all nations, that no one should worship God, except freely, desiring of Him not visible rewards for his service, and happiness in the present life, but only life eternal, in which to enjoy God Himself; that in this sixth age the mind of man may be renewed after the image of God, as on the sixth day man was created after the image of God. For then, too, is the law fulfilled, when, not through desire of temporal things, but for love of Him Who gave the commandment, whatsoever He hath commanded is done. For who would not strive to love in return a most just and merciful God, Who first so loved men most unjust and proud, as to send for their

sakes His only Son, by Whom He made all things, Who not by any change of Himself, but by assumption of man's nature, became man, that He might be able not only to live with them, but even be slain for them and by them.

40. "Therefore, making known the New Testament of our eternal inheritance, in which man, being renewed by the grace of God; might lead a new life, that is, a spiritual life; that He might shew the first to be old, in which a carnal people, carrying out the part of the old man, excepting a few Patriarchs and Prophets, and some hidden saints, living after a carnal fashion desired carnal rewards from the Lord God, and received them as a figure of spiritual good things; therefore the Lord Christ, being made man, despised all earthly good things, that He might shew that they are to be despised; and endured all earthly ills, which He enjoined to be endured, that neither might happiness be sought in them, nor unhappiness be feared in these. For being born of a mother, who, though she had conceived untouched by man, and always remained untouched, conceiving as a virgin, bringing forth as a virgin, dying a virgin, yet was espoused to a carpenter, He extinguished all the pride of nobility after the flesh. Being born, too, in the city of Bethlehem, which among all the cities of Judah was so small that it is at this day called a village, He willed not that any one should boast of the dignity of any earthly city. For He became poor Whose are all things, and by Whom all things were made; that no one when he believed in Him might dare to be puffed up on account of earthly riches. He would not be made a king by men, because He was shewing the way of humility to

wretched creatures whom pride had separated from Him ; although every creature testifies to His eternal reign. He hungered Who feeds all, thirsted through Whom all drink is made, and Who is spiritually the Bread of the hungry and the Fount of the thirsty ; He was wearied by an earthly journey Who made Himself to be for us the way to Heaven ; He was, as it were, dumb and deaf before those who reviled Him, through Whom the dumb spoke and the deaf heard : He was bound Who loosed from the bonds of infirmities ; He was scourged Who drove out of men's bodies the scourges of all pains ; He suffered crucifixion Who ended our sufferings ; He died Who raised the dead. But He rose also never again to die, that no one might learn from Him so to despise death, as though he were never about to live again.

41. " Then, having strengthened the disciples, He conversed with them forty days, and in their sight ascended into heaven ; and when fifty days from His resurrection were accomplished, He sent to them the Holy Spirit (for so had He promised), through Whom love being shed abroad in their hearts they might be able to fulfil the law not only without feeling the burden, but even with delight. Which law was given to the Jews in the ten commandments which they call the Decalogue. And these again are reduced to two, that we love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind, and love our neighbour as ourselves. For our Lord Himself both told us in the Gospel, and shewed by His own example, that on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. For both the people of Israel from the day on which they first celebrated

the Passover in a figure by killing and eating a lamb, with the blood of which their door-posts were marked as a safe-guard, —from this very day then the fiftieth day was fulfilled, and they received the law written by the Finger of God, by which word we have already said that the Holy Ghost is signified ; so, too, after the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord, which is the true Passover, on the fiftieth day the Holy Spirit Himself was sent to the disciples ; no longer signifying by tables of stone the hardness of their hearts, but when they were gathered together into one place in Jerusalem itself there was on a sudden a sound from heaven, as though a mighty blast were borne by, and there appeared to them cloven tongues as of fire, and they began to speak with tongues, so that all who had come to them recognized every one his own tongue (for Jews from every land wheresoever they had been dispersed, and had learned the languages of different nations, used to come together to that city) : then preaching Christ with all boldness they did many signs in His Name, so that as Peter went by his shadow touched a certain dead person, and he rose again^{*}.

42. "But when the Jews saw that so great signs were being done in His Name, Whom, partly through envy, and partly through error, they had crucified, some were provoked to persecute the Apostles who preached Him, but others wondering more at that very thing that so great miracles were being wrought in His Name, Whom they had derided as put down and overcome by themselves,

^{*} Acts v. 15.

being converted by repentance believed on Him, even thousands of Jews. These were not at this time desiring temporal benefits and an earthly kingdom from God, nor expecting Christ the promised King after a carnal fashion, but understanding after an immortal manner, and loving Him Who in mortal guise had endured for themselves so many things at their own hands, and had forgiven them their sins even to that of His own blood-shedding, and by the example of His own resurrection, had set forth to them immortality to be hoped for and desired from Himself. And so now mortifying the earthly desires of the old man, and burning with the newness of spiritual life, they, as the Lord had commanded in the Gospel, sold all that they had, and laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles' feet, that they might distribute to every man as each had need, and living in Christian love with one heart, said not that anything was their own, but they had all things common, and their mind and heart were one towards God. Then also they themselves suffered persecution in their flesh from the Jews their carnal fellow-citizens, and were dispersed, that by their dispersion Christ might be preached more widely, and that themselves also might imitate the patience of the Lord, since He Who had meekly suffered them bade them to become meek and suffer for Him.

43. "The Apostle Paul even had been amongst the persecutors themselves of the Saints, and used to rage extremely against the Christians, but afterwards believing, and having been made an Apostle, he was sent to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, suffering more grievous things for the name of Christ than he had done against the name of Christ. But when, founding churches through all the nations where he was planting the Gospel, he earnestly

enjoined them that since they themselves coming from the worship of idols, and being unskilled for the worship of the one God, could not easily serve God by selling and distributing their goods, they should make offerings for the poor of the Saints who were in the churches of Judæa, which had believed in Christ ; thus the teaching of the Apostle made the one as it were the soldiers, the others on the other hand, as it were tributaries of the provinces ; placing Christ in the midst of them as a Corner Stone, as was foretold of Him by the prophet, in Whom both, as if walls coming from different directions, that is from Jews and from Gentiles, might be joined together in kindred love. But afterwards more grievous and frequent persecutions arose against the Church of Christ from the unbelieving nations, and daily was fulfilled the word of the Lord, Who foretold, *Lo I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves* *.

44. " But that vine which was stretching forth its fruitful branches throughout the whole world, as had been prophesied of it, and foretold by the Lord Himself, shot forth more vigorously the more copiously it was watered with the blood of the martyrs. And as through all lands they died in countless numbers for the truth of the faith, even the very kingdoms which persecuted gave way, and, the neck of their pride being broken, were converted to the knowledge and worship of Christ. But it was needful that the same vine, as had been oftentimes foretold by the Lord, should be pruned, and that the unfruitful branches should be cut off from it, by which heresies and schisms were caused in different places under the name of Christ by men seeking not His glory but their own, by whose

* S. Matt. x. 16.

oppositions, however, the Church might be more and more exercised, and its doctrine and patience be proved and made clear.

45. "All these things then, as we read of them foretold so long before, so too we know them to have come to pass: and as the first Christians, because as yet they did not see that they had come to pass, were induced by miracles to believe, so we, because all those things have been so fulfilled, as we read them in the books, which were written long before these things were fulfilled, when all things were spoken of as future, and are now seen as present, are built up unto faith, so that enduring and persevering in the Lord, we believe without doubt that those things also which remain will come to pass. Seeing that tribulations yet to come are read of in the same Scriptures, the last day of judgment itself, when all the citizens of both those cities will receive again their bodies and rise, and will give account of their life before the judgment-seat of Christ. For He will come in the brightness of His power, Who before deigned to come in the humility of man's nature, and will separate all the godly from the ungodly, not only from those who wholly refused to believe in Him, but also from those who in vain and without fruit believed in Him, being about to give to the one an eternal kingdom with Himself, but to the others eternal punishment with the devil. But as no joy on account of temporal things can be found in any way like to the joy of eternal life, which the saints shall receive, so no suffering of earthly punishments can be compared with the eternal torments of the wicked.

46. "Therefore, my brother, strengthen yourself in His Name and assistance, on Whom you believe, against the tongues of them who mock at our faith, from whose mouths the devil utters seducing words, especially desiring to mock at faith in the resurrection. But do you of yourself believe that you will be, since you have been, seeing that whereas before you were not, you now see that you are. For where was that mass of your body, and that form and framing together of your members a few years ago, before you were born, or even before that you were conceived in your mother's womb, where was this mass and stature of your body? Did it not, as the Lord God invisibly fashioned it, come forth to light from the hidden secrets of this creation, and by the fixed growth of different periods rise up to this greatness and figure? Is it then any difficulty for God, Who also gathers together in a moment the masses of the clouds from their hiddenness, and covers the heaven in an instant of time, to make that quantity of your body again as it was, Who was able to make it as it was not? Believe, therefore, firmly and unshakeably that all things which seem to be withdrawn from human eyes as it were by perishing, are preserved and whole to the Omnipotence of God, Who without any delay and difficulty will restore them when He will, but only those which His justice judges meet to be restored; that in these bodies, in which they wrought them, men may give account of their deeds: and in these may deserve either a change into heavenly incorruption according to the deserts of their godliness, or a corruptible state of body according to the deserts of their ungodliness, not such a state as may be dissolved by death, but such as may supply matter for eternal pains.

47. "Flee, therefore, by unmoveable faith and good living, flee, my brother, these torments, wherein neither do the tormentors fail, nor do the tormented die, to whom it is death without end not to be able to die in their torments; and grow in ardent love and desire of the life eternal of the Saints, where neither shall action be full of toil, nor repose be slothful; there will be the praise of God without weariness or shortcoming: no tedium in the mind, no fatigue in the body; no want either of your own for which you might wish provision to be made, or of your neighbour's for which you might hasten to provide. God will be all the delight and satisfaction of that holy city, living in Him and of Him in wisdom and blessedness. For we shall, as having been promised by Him we hope and expect, be made equal to the angels of God^b, and equally with them enjoy then by sight that Trinity, in Which we now walk by faith^c. For we believe that which we do not see, that by the very merits of faith we may be worthy also to see and to inhere in that which we believe; so that the equality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Unity of the Trinity Itsclf, how these Three are one God, we may no longer utter in words of faith, and sounding syllables, but may drink in in that silence by purest and most ardent contemplation,

48. "Keep these things fixed in thy heart, and call upon God in Whom thou believest to protect thee against the temptations of the devil; and be on thy guard, lest that enemy creep on thee from any quarter, who for a most malicious solace of his own damnation seeks for others with whom he may be damned. For he dares to tempt Christians, not only by means of those who hate the Chris-

^b S. Luke xx. 36.

^c 2 Cor. v. 7.

tian name, and grieve that the world has been taken possession of by that name, and still desire to be enslaved to idols and strange rites of devils; but also he sometimes indeed attempts also the very same thing by those, of whom we made mention a little before, who have been cut off from the unity of the Church, as when a vine is pruned, who are called heretics or schismatics. But sometimes also he makes the same attempt too to tempt and seduce men through the Jews. But it must be especially guarded against that each man be not tempted and deceived through men who are in the Catholic Church itself, whom it bears like the chaff till the time of its winnowing. For on this account God is patient towards them, both that He may confirm the faith and wisdom of His elect by exercising it through their perversity, and because many go forward from their number, and taking pity upon their own souls so as to please God^d, are converted with a great impetus. For through the longsuffering of God they do not all treasure up unto themselves wrath in the day of wrath of His righteous judgment^e: but this same longsuffering of the Almighty leads many to the most healthful sorrow of repentance. And until this takes place not only the longsuffering, but also the pity of those who already hold the right way is exercised by them. You will therefore see many drunkards, covetous, defrauders, gamblers, adulterers, fornicators, men who bind on themselves sacrilegious charms, men given up to enchanters, astrologers, or diviners, using all kinds of impious arts. You will notice also that those crowds fill the churches on the festival days of Chris-

^d Cf. Eccles. xxx. 24.^e Rom. ii. 5.

tians, who fill also the theatres on the solemn days of the Pagans ; and by seeing them you will be tempted to imitate them. And why should I say you will see, of what you now already assuredly know : for you are not ignorant that many who are called Christians do all these evil things which I have briefly mentioned. And you are not ignorant that sometimes men commit perhaps even graver crimes, whom you know to be called Christians. But if you are come with this intention, that you may do such things as it were in safety, you commit a great error ; and the name of Christ will not profit you, when He shall begin to judge with the utmost severity, Who before deigned to aid us with the utmost mercy. For He foretold those things, and says in the Gospel, *Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father. Many shall say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, we have eaten and drunk in Thy Name*^f. To all then who persevere in such works the end is condemnation. When then you shall see many not only do these things, but also defend and persuade to them, keep yourself to the law of God, and follow not those who transgress it. For you will not be judged according to their opinion, but according to His truth.

49. "Be united with the good whom you see to love your King with you. For you will find many, if you also shall have begun to be such yourself. For if in the shows you used to wish to be with those, and to cleave to those who joined with you in liking some charioteer, or hunter, or actor of any kind, how much more ought union to please you with those who love God together with you, for Whom

^f S. Matt. vii. 21, 22.

no lover of Him ever blushes, for not only can He Himself not be overcome, but also He makes those who love Him invincible. And yet you ought not to place your hope even in good men themselves, who either precede or go with you to God, for you ought not to place it even in yourself, whatever progress you may have made, but in Him Who by justifying you makes you and them to be such. For you are secure concerning God, because He changes not, but no one is wisely secure concerning man. But if we ought to love those who are not yet just, that they may be so, how much more ardently ought they, who already are so, to be loved. But it is one thing to love a man, another to place one's hope in man; and the difference is so great that God commands the one, forbids the other. But if having suffered any insults or troubles for the name of Christ you shall not fall from the faith, nor err from the good way, you will receive a greater reward; they, however, who in these circumstances have yielded to the devil, lose even the less. But be humble before God, that He permit you not to be tempted beyond your powers."

50. When this address is ended, he ought to be asked whether he believes these things, and desires to observe them. And when he has answered that he does, he must be duly signed and dealt with after the manner of the Church. Concerning the Sacrament truly which he receives, when it has been well impressed upon him that the signs indeed of divine things are visible, but that the invisible things themselves are honoured in them, and that that species hallowed by benediction is not to be so esteemed, as it is esteemed in

any ordinary use, he must be told besides what that form of words also means, and what in him that seasons the likeness of which that matter bears. Then on this opportunity he should be warned, that if even in the Scriptures he should hear anything which has a carnal sound, even if he do not understand it, he should nevertheless believe that something spiritual is signified, which pertains to holy conduct and the life to come. This, however, he learns thus briefly, that whatever he shall hear out of the canonical books which he cannot refer to the love of eternity and truth and holiness, and to the love of our neighbour, he may believe to have been said or done figuratively; and may endeavour so to understand it, as to refer it to that twofold love. So indeed that he understand not his neighbour after the flesh, but every one who may be with him in that holy city whether already, or whether he be not yet to be seen : and that he despair of no man's amendment, whom he sees to be living by the long-suffering of God, not for any other reason, 'as the Apostle says, but that he may be brought to repentance'.

51. If that discourse appear long to you in which I have supposed myself to be instructing an unlearned man present with us, you may state those things more briefly, but I do not think that it ought to be longer, although it makes a great difference what the subject itself, whilst it is being treated, may suggest, and what the hearers who are present may shew that they not only can endure but even wish for. But when there is need of quickness, see how easily the whole matter may be set forth. Suppose again that some

one is present who wishes to be a Christian, then, too, that being questioned, he makes the same answer as the former ; since even if he do not make this answer one must say that he ought so to have answered. Then all else must be put together after this manner.

52. "Truly, brother, that is great and true blessedness which is promised to the saints in the world to come. But indeed all things visible pass away, and all the pomp of this world and its pleasures and inquisitiveness will perish, and are drawing to destruction with themselves those who love them. From which destruction, that is from eternal punishment, God in His mercy willing to deliver men if they be not their own enemies, and do not resist the mercy of their Creator, sent His only-begotten Son, that is His Word coequal with Himself by Which He made all things. And He abiding indeed in His own Divinity, and not departing from the Father, nor being changed in anything, yet by taking to Himself man, and by appearing in mortal flesh, came to men : that as by one man who was first created, that is Adam, death entered into the human race, because he consented to his wife who was seduced by the devil to transgress the commandment of God ; so by one Man Who is also God, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, all past sins being done away, all that believe in Him might enter into everlasting life.

53. "For all things which you now see to be done in the Church of God, and throughout the whole world in the Name of Christ, were already foretold ages before, and as we read of them, so too do we see them, and thereby are built up into faith. There took place once a flood over the whole earth,

that sinners might be destroyed : and yet they who escaped in the ark shewed forth a sacrament of the future Church, which now swims on the waves of the world, and is delivered from sinking by the wood of the Cross of Christ. It was foretold to Abraham, the faithful servant of God, one single man, that of him a people should be born which should worship the One God amongst the rest of the nations who were worshipping idols, and all things which were foretold as about to happen to that people so came to pass as they had been foretold. For among that people Christ, the King of all Saints and God, was prophesied as about to come of the seed of Abraham himself according to the flesh, which He took to Himself, that all too might be sons of Abraham who should imitate his faith ; and so did it come to pass : Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, who was of that race. It was foretold by the prophets that He should suffer on the Cross at the hands of that same people of the Jews, of whose race according to the flesh He came ; and so did it come to pass. It was foretold that He should rise again : He rose, and according to the very predictions of the Prophets ascended into heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples. It was foretold, not only by the Prophets, but also by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that His Church should be over the whole world, spread abroad by the martyrdoms and sufferings of His saints ; and foretold then when as yet His Name was unknown to the nations, and when it was known was scoffed at : and yet by the power of His miracles, whether those which He wrought Himself of Himself, or those which He wrought through His servants, whilst these are being proclaimed and believed, we now see that what

was predicted is fulfilled, and the kings of the earth themselves who before used to persecute Christians now subjugated to the yoke of Christ. It was foretold also that schisms and heresies would go forth out of His Church, and in His Name, in places where they were able, would seek their own glory not that of Christ, and these things are fulfilled.

54. "Will those things then which remain not come to pass? It is manifest that as the former things predicted came to pass, so also these will come to pass; whatsoever troubles of the just yet remain, and the day of judgment, which shall separate all the wicked from the just in the resurrection of the dead; and not those only who are outside the Church, but also the chaff of the Church itself, which she must endure with the utmost patience until the last winnowing, shall set apart for the fire due to it. But they who scoff at the resurrection, thinking that our flesh, because it rots, cannot rise again, will rise for punishment in it: and God will shew them that He Who could make these bodies before they were, can in a moment restore them as they were. But all the faithful about to reign with Christ shall so rise again in the same body as to deserve also to be changed to angelic incorruptibility; that they may be made equal to the angels of God ^b, as the Lord Himself hath promised, and may praise Him without any failing and without any weariness, always living in Him and of Him, with such joy and happiness as can neither be told nor thought of by man.

^b Luke xx. 36.

55. "Do you, therefore, believing these things guard against temptations (for the devil seeks those who may perish with him), that that enemy may not seduce you, not only by those who are outside the Church, whether pagans, or Jews, or heretics; but also that you copy not those whom you see in the Catholic Church itself living ill, either without moderation in the pleasures of the belly and the throat, or immodest, or given up to vain or unlawful curiosity, whether as to shows, or charms, or diabolical divinations, or living in the pomp and vanity of avarice and pride, or in any manner of life which the law condemns and punishes: but rather join yourself to the good, whom you will easily find, if you too are such, that together you may worship and love God for His own sake: because He Himself will be all our Reward, that in that life we may enjoy His goodness and beauty. But He is to be loved, not as anything which is seen by the eyes, but as wisdom is loved, and truth, and holiness, and justice, and charity, and if there be anything else named of this sort; not after the manner in which these things are in men, but after the manner in which they are in the very Source of incorruptible and unchangeable wisdom. Whomsoever, therefore, you see to love these things, join yourself to them, that you may be reconciled to God through Christ, Who became Man, that He might be the Mediator between God and man. But perverse men, even if they enter the walls of the Church, you must not think that they will enter into the kingdom of heaven, because they will be separated in their own time, if they have not changed themselves for the better. Imitate then good men, bear with evil men, love all men: for you know not what he may be going to be to-morrow who to-day is evil. Yet love not their unrighteous-

ness, but love themselves to the end that they may lay hold on righteousness; for not only the love of God is commanded us, but also love of our neighbour, on which two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophetsⁱ. Which no one fulfils except he who has received the gift of the Holy Spirit, undoubtedly coequal with the Father and the Son, because the Trinity Itself is God, in which God all our hope is to be placed. It is not to be placed in man of what sort soever he be. For He by Whom we are justified is one thing, they with whom we are justified another. Again, not only through lusts does the devil tempt us, but also through fears of insults and of pains and of death itself. But whatever a man shall have suffered for the Name of Christ, and for the hope of eternal life, and shall have endured continuing steadfast, the greater reward shall be given him: but if he shall have yielded to the devil, he shall be condemned together with him. But works of mercy, conjoined with pious humility, obtain from the Lord that He suffer not His servants to be tempted more than they are able to bear^k."

ⁱ Matt. xxii. 37, 39.

^k 1 Cor. x. 13.

S. AURELIUS AUGUSTINE,
BISHOP OF HIPPO,
CONCERNING FAITH OF THINGS WHICH
ARE NOT SEEN.

Wherein is demonstrated that in the Christian Religion we believe, not with culpable rashness but with praiseworthy faith, things which we see not with our eyes.

THERE are some who think that the Christian religion is on this account to be laughed at rather than held, because in it not a thing which may be seen is shewn, but faith of things which are not seen is enjoined upon men. We, then, that we may refute these who seem to themselves to be prudently unwilling to believe what they cannot see, although we are not able to shew to human sight the divine things which we believe, yet do shew to human minds that those things which are not seen are to be believed. And first they are to be admonished (whom folly has made so subject to their carnal eyes, that they think that they ought not to believe what they do not see by their means) how many things they not only believe, but also know, which cannot be seen by such eyes. Which things being without number in our mind itself, the nature of which is invisible, not to mention other matters, the faith itself by which we believe, or the thought by which we know that we either believe or do not believe

anything, since it is wholly alien from the sight of those eyes, what is so naked, so clear, what so certain to the inner sight of our minds? How, then, are we not to believe what we do not see with our bodily eyes, whereas, without any doubt, we see that we either believe or do not believe in cases where we cannot use our bodily eyes.

2. But, say they, we have no need to see by means of the eyes of the body those things which are in the mind, since we can see them in the mind itself; but those things which you tell us that we may believe them, you neither shew us without that we may know them by the eyes of the body, nor are they within in our mind, so that we may see them by consideration. They so say these things as if any one would be bidden to believe if he were able already to see set before him that which is believed. Therefore, certainly we ought to believe even some temporal things which we see not, that we may merit to see eternal things also which we believe. But, whoever you are, who will not believe except what you see, behold, you see present bodies with your bodily eyes, with your mind itself you see your present wishes and thoughts, because they are in your mind; tell me, I pray you, with what eyes you see your friend's will towards yourself? For no will can be seen by the bodily eyes. Do you, indeed, see in your own mind even that which is passing in the mind of another? And if you see it not, how do you return your friend's good will, if you believe not that which you can not see? Will you say perchance that you see the will of another by means of his works? You will then see deeds and hear words, but concerning

your friend's will, will believe that which cannot be seen or heard. For that will is not colour or shape, that it should strike the eyes; nor sound or tune, so as to penetrate the ears; nor indeed your own, so that it may be felt in affection of thy heart. It remains, therefore, that being neither seen nor heard, nor beheld by yourself within, it is believed lest your whole life should be left desolate without any friendship, or affection bestowed upon you should not be paid back by you in turn. Where, then, is that which you said, that you ought not to believe except what you saw either outwardly in the body, or inwardly in the heart? Behold, out of your own heart you believe a heart not your own; and adapt your faith to that where you direct not the sight of either mind or body. You behold the face of your friend by your own body, your faith you behold in your own mind; but your friend's faith is not loved by you, if there be not in you in turn that faith whereby you believe that which you see not in him. Although a man may be able also to deceive by feigning good-will, and concealing ill-will, or if he think not to do thee harm, yet, while expecting from thee some advantage, he feigns, because he has not, affection.

3. But you say that you therefore believe your friend, whose heart you cannot see, because you have proved him in your trials, and know what kind of mind he had towards you in your perils, wherein he did not desert you. Does it then seem to you that our own misfortune is to be desired, in order that the love of our friends towards us may be proved? And will no man be happy because of most sure friends unless he shall be unhappy through adversity; so that forsooth he may not enjoy the tried love of the other unless he be tortured by his own pain or fear?

And how in regard to having true friends can that happiness be wished for, and not rather be dreaded, which nothing but unhappiness can prove? And yet it is true that a friend may be had even in prosperity, but be proved more certainly in adversity. But certainly you would not commit yourself to dangers of your own in order to prove him unless you believed, and by this when you commit yourself that you may prove you believe before you prove. For certainly if we ought not to believe things not seen, since we believe the hearts of our friends even not yet surely proved; and when we have proved those good by our own evils, even then we believe their good-will towards us, rather than see it, except that because faith is so great that not unsuitably we judge that we see with certain of its eyes what we believe, whereas we ought therefore to believe because we cannot see.

4. If these faiths were taken away from human matters, who does not notice how great disorder of them, and how dreadful confusion must follow? For who will be loved by any one with mutual affection, when the love itself is invisible, if what I do not see I ought not to believe. The whole, therefore, of friendship will perish, because it consists not except of mutual love. For what of it will one be able to receive from any one, if nothing of it shall be believed to be shewn? Further, friendship perishing, neither will the bonds of marriages, nor of relationships

or affinities be preserved in the mind, for in these too surely there is an agreement of friendship. Spouse, therefore, will not be able to love spouse in turn, when each believes not that it is loved, because it cannot see the love itself. Nor will they desire to have sons, who they do not believe will make them a return. And if they be born and grow up, much less will the parents themselves love their own offspring, whose love towards themselves, because it is invisible, they will not see in their hearts, if those things which are not seen are believed not with praiseworthy faith, but with blameworthy rashness. Why should I now speak of other relationships, of brothers, sisters, sons-in-law and fathers-in-law, and of those joined by any consanguinity or affinity, if love is uncertain, and the will suspected, that of parents by sons, and of sons by parents, whilst due benevolence is not rendered, because neither is it thought to be owing, when that which is not seen in another is not believed to exist? Further, if this caution be not clever but hateful, when we believe not that we are loved, because we do not see the love of those who love us, and do not repay it in return to those to whom we do not think we owe it, to such an extent are human affairs thrown into disorder, if we do not believe what we do not see, as to be wholly and utterly overthrown, if we believe no wills of men, which certainly we cannot see. I omit to say how many things they who blame us because we believe things which we see not, believe on report and history, or about places where they themselves have not been, nor do they say, we believe not because we

have not seen. Since if they say this they are obliged to confess that their parents are not certainly known to them, because on this point too they have believed others telling them, and yet not able to shew it them because it is already past, retaining themselves no sense of that time, and yet yielding assent without any doubt to others speaking of it; and unless this be done there must of necessity be incurred a faithless undutifulness towards parents, whilst a rashness in believing those things which we cannot see is as it were avoided. If, then, unless we believe what we cannot see, the very society of mankind, through the perishing of concord, will not stand: how much rather is faith to be employed in divine things, although they be not seen, which if it be not employed, it is not the friendship of some men or other, but the very highest piety which is violated, so that the greatest misery must follow.

5. But, you will say, I am able, although I cannot see it, to trace out the good will of a friend towards me by many proofs; but you are unable to shew by any proofs what you wish that we should believe though unseen. Meanwhile, it is no slight thing that you confess that some things even which are not seen ought to be believed because of the clearness of some proofs; for even thus it is clear that not every thing which cannot be seen is not to be believed, and that saying, that we ought not to believe those things which we do not see, falls to the ground abandoned and refuted. Again, they are much deceived who think that we believe in Christ without any proofs concerning Christ. For what proofs are clearer than those things which we now see foretold and fulfilled? Do you, therefore, who think that there are no proofs why you

ought to believe about Christ what you have not seen, attend to the things which you see. The Church herself addresses you with the mouth of a mother's love, I whom you now wonderingly behold bearing fruit and increasing throughout the whole world once was not such as you now behold me. But, *In thy Seed shall all nations be blessed*^a. When God blessed Abraham He gave promise of me, for I am spread abroad throughout all nations in the blessing of Christ. The order of successive generations witnesses that Christ is the Seed of Abraham. To sum up which briefly, Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob, Jacob begat twelve sons, from whom sprang the people of Israel. For Jacob himself was called Israel. Among these twelve sons he begat Judah, from whom is the name of the Jews, of whom was born the Virgin Mary, who bare Christ. And behold in Christ, that is in the Seed of Abraham, you see and wonder that all nations are blessed, and you still fear to believe in Him, in Whom you ought rather to have feared not to believe. Do you hesitate or refuse to believe the travail of a Virgin, whereas you ought rather to have believed that so it was fitting that God should be born man? For this also understand to have been foretold by the Prophet, *Behold a Virgin shall conceive in her womb, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which is being interpreted, God with us*^b. You will not, therefore, doubt of a Virgin bringing forth, if you will believe of a God being born : not forsaking the governing of the world, and yet coming to men in flesh ; bringing fruitfulness to His Mother, not taking away maidenhood.

^a Gen. xx, 18.^b Isa. vii. 14.

Thus it behoved Him to be born as man, although He ever was God, by which birth He might become a God to us. Wherefore the Prophet says again of Him, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of right ruling is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, wherefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows*^c. That Unction is spiritual wherewith God anointed God, the Father, that is, the Son, so that we know Christ, so called from the Chrism, that is the anointing. I am the Church of whom it is said to Him in the same Psalm, and what was to be done is foretold as though accomplished, *At Thy right hand stood the Queen, in a vesture of gold, clothed with various colours, that is in the mystery of wisdom adorned with divers tongues. There it is said to me, Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear, forget also thine own people and thy father's house, for the King hath desired thy beauty; for He is thy Lord God, and the daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts, all the rich of the people shall entreat thy face. All the glory of her the King's daughter is within, in fringes of gold clothed with various colours. Virgins shall be brought unto the king after her, her nearest shall be brought unto thee; with joy and gladness shall they be brought, they shall be brought to the temple of the King. Instead of thy fathers, children are born unto thee, thou shalt make them princes over all the earth. They shall be mindful of thy name from every generation to generation. Therefore shall the people confess unto thee for ever, and for ever and ever*^d.

^c Ps. xlv. 6, 7.^d Ibid. 10—17.

6. If you see not this queen, even now fruitful with royal progeny. If she see not that fulfilled which she heard also to have been promised, to whom it was said, *Hear, O daughter, and see.* If she hath not left the old rites of the world, to whom it was said, *Forget thine own people and thy father's house.* If she does not everywhere confess Christ the Lord, to whom it was said, *The King hath desired thy beauty, for He is thy Lord God.* If she sees not the cities of the nations pour forth prayers and offer gifts to Christ, concerning Whom it was said to her, *The daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts.* If the pride also of the rich is not laid aside, and they implore help from the Church, to whom it was said, *All the rich of the people shall entreat thy face.* If she recognise not the daughter of the King, to Whom she was bidden to say, *Our Father Which art in heaven**; and in her saints in the inner man is not renewed from day to day, of whom it was said, *All the glory of her the King's daughter is within,* although she strike upon the eyes of those without by the bright flame of her preachers in diversity of tongues as in *fringes of gold* and in raiment of divers colours. If, since that His fame is spread abroad in every place by His good odour, Virgins are not also brought to Christ to be consecrated, of Whom it is said, and to Whom it is said, *Virgins shall be brought unto the King after her, her nearest shall be brought unto Thee.* And lest they should seem to be brought as captives into some, as it were, prison, *They shall be brought, he says, with joy and gladness, they shall be brought into the temple of the King.* If she does not bring forth sons, that of them she may have as it were fathers, whom

* Matt. vi. 9.

she may appoint for herself everywhere as rulers, to whom it is said, *Instead of thy fathers sons are born unto thee, thou shalt make them princes over all the earth*, to whose prayers their mother set both over them and under them commends herself, for which reason it is added, *They shall be mindful of thy name from generation to generation*. If on account of the preaching of those same fathers, in which they have made mention of her name without intermission, there are not gathered in her so great multitudes, and without end confess in their own tongues the praises of grace unto her, to whom it is said, *Therefore shall the people confess unto thee for ever, and for ever and ever*. If those things are not so shewn to be clear that the eyes of enemies find not a part to which they may be turned aside, where they may not be struck with the same clearness, so that by it they are manifestly compelled to confess, you perhaps assert rightly that no proofs are shewn to you by seeing which you may believe those things also which you do not see. But if these things, which you see, and which have been foretold long before, and are fulfilled with such clearness, if the truth itself makes itself clear to you by those things which it effects both in times before and since, O remnant of unbelief, blush at those things which you see, that you may believe those things which you see not.

7. Give heed to me, the Church says to you, give heed to me, whom you see, although you are unwilling to see. For the faithful who were in those times in the land of Judæa, being present learnt as present Christ's wonderful birth of a virgin, and His Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and all His divine words and deeds. These things you did not see, and therefore refuse to believe. Therefore look upon these

things, fix your eyes upon these things, think upon these things which you behold, which are not related to you as past, nor foretold as future, but are shewn as present. Does it seem to you a vain or light thing, and do you think it to be no divine miracle, or a small one, that the whole human race runs in the name of One Crucified? You saw not what was foretold and fulfilled concerning the human birth of Christ, *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive in her womb, and bear a Son*^f, but you see the word of God which was foretold and fulfilled unto Abraham, *In thy Seed shall all nations be blessed*^g. You saw not what was foretold concerning the wonderful works of Christ, *Come and behold the works of the Lord, what wonders He hath set upon the earth*^h, but you see what was foretold, *The Lord said unto Me, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee, ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth as Thy possession*ⁱ. You saw not what was foretold and fulfilled concerning the Passion of Christ, *They pierced My hands and My feet, they counted all My bones, but they themselves considered and looked upon Me, they divided My garments among them, and upon My vesture they cast the lot*: but you see what was foretold in the same Psalm, and now appears fulfilled, *All the ends of the earth shall remember and be turned unto the Lord, and all the countries of the nations shall worship in His sight; for the Kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall reign over the nations*^k. You saw not what was foretold and fulfilled concerning the Resurrection of Christ, the

^f Isa. vii. 14.^g Gen. xxii. 18.^h Ps. xlv. 8.ⁱ Ps. ii. 7, 8.^k Ps. xxii. 16—18.

Psalm speaking in His Person first concerning His betrayer and persecutors; *They went forth and spake together; all Mine enemies whispered against Me; against Me they imagined evil for Me; they planned an unrighteous word against Me*¹. Where that He might shew that they had prevailed nothing by slaying Him Who was about to rise again, He added and says, *Will not He that sleepeth add this that He rise again?* And a little after, when He had foretold concerning the traitor himself by the same prophecy, that which is written also in the Gospel, *He that did eat of My bread hath enlarged his heel upon Me*; that is, hath trodden Me under foot, He added at once, *But do Thou, Lord, have mercy on Me, and raise Me up again, and I shall reward them*^m. This was fulfilled, Christ slept and woke up, that is, rose again; Who, through the same prophecy, in another Psalm says, *I slept and took My slumber, and rose up again, for the Lord will uphold Me*ⁿ. But you saw not this, but you see His Church, concerning whom it is said in like manner and fulfilled, *O Lord my God, the nations shall come unto Thee from the end of the earth, and shall say, Truly our fathers worshipped lying images, and there is no profit in them*^o. This certainly, whether you will or no, you behold, even if you still think that there is or has been any profit in images; yet certainly you have heard numberless peoples of the nations, after having abandoned, or cast away, or broken in pieces such like vanities, say, *Truly our fathers worshipped lying images, and there is no profit in them, shall*

¹ Ps. xli. 6, 7.ⁿ Ps. iii. 6.^m John xiii. 18.^o Jerem. xvi. 19.

a man make gods? and lo, they are no gods. Nor should you think again that it was foretold that the nations should come to some one place of God, because it was said, *The nations shall come to Thee from the end of the earth.* Understand, if you are able, that the people of the nations come to the God of Christians, Who is the supreme and true God, not by walking, but by believing. For the same thing was thus foretold by another prophet, *The Lord*, says he, *shall prevail against them, and shall destroy all the gods of the nations of the earth, and all the isles of the nations shall worship Him, each man from his place*^p. What the one says, *All nations shall come to Thee*, this, too, says the other, *they shall worship Him, each man from his place*. Therefore, they shall come to Him, not departing from their own place, because, believing in Him, they will find Him in their heart. You have not seen what was foretold and fulfilled concerning the Ascension of Christ, *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens*^q; but you see what follows immediately after, *And Thy glory above all the earth*. You have not seen all those things already done and past concerning Christ, but you do not deny that you see those other present things in His Church. We shew you that both were foretold, but we cannot shew you that both are fulfilled, so that you can see them, for this reason, that we are not able to recall to sight things past.

8. But as the wills of friends which are not seen are believed through the proofs which are seen, so the Church which is now seen is a witness of all those things which are not seen, but are made known in those writings in which she is herself foretold, both a witness of things past, and a herald

^p Zeph. ii. 11.

^q Ps. cvii. 6.

of things future. Because both things past which cannot now be seen, and things present which, too, cannot all be seen, of these nothing could then be seen when they were foretold. When, therefore, things predicted began to be accomplished, from those things which have been accomplished down to those which are being accomplished, the things foretold concerning Christ and the Church have run on in an ordered series; to which series pertain the things which in like manner have been foretold as about to come concerning the day of judgment, the resurrection of the dead, the eternal damnation of the wicked with the devil, and the eternal reward of the godly with Christ. Why, then, should we not believe the first and the last things which we do not see, when we have those intervening things which we do see as evidences, and in the prophetical books either hear or read both the first things, and the things between, and the last, foretold before they came to pass? Unless perchance unbelieving men suppose those things to have been written by Christians, in order that those things which they already believed might have greater weight of authority, if they were supposed to have been promised before they came.

9. And if they suspect this let them examine the books of our enemies the Jews. Let them read there those things which we have mentioned, foretold concerning Christ in Whom we believe, and concerning the Church which we discern from the toilsome beginning of faith even to the eternal blessedness of the kingdom. But when they read, let them not wonder that they, whose the books are, do not on account of the darkness of their enmity understand those things. For it was foretold beforehand by the same Prophets that they would not understand, which it was necessary should be fulfilled as the other things, and that by the

hidden and just judgment of God due punishment should be rendered to their deserts. He indeed, Whom they crucified, and to Whom they gave gall and vinegar, although hanging on the tree by reason of those whom He had been about to bring out of darkness into light, said to the Father, *Forgive them, for they know not what they do*^r: yet on account of the others whom, through more hidden causes, He had been about to desert, He so long before foretold by the Prophet: *They gave Me gall for My meat, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink: let their table become a snare before them, and a recompense, and a stumbling-block; let their eyes be darkened that they see not, and ever bow Thou down their back*^s. And so with the clearest evidences of our cause they walk round about with eyes darkened, that through them these things may be proved wherein they themselves are made reprobate. Therefore it came to pass, that they should not be so blotted out that the same sect should not exist at all, but it was dispersed over the earth, that carrying the prophecies of the grace conferred on us for the more entire convincing of the unbelieving, it might everywhere profit us. And hear in what manner this very thing which I say was foretold, *Slay them not*, saith He, *lest at any time they forget Thy law, scatter them in Thy power*^t. Therefore they were not slain, because they forgot not those things which were read and heard among them. For if they were altogether to forget the holy Scriptures, although they understand them not, they would be slain in the Jewish rite itself, because when the Jews should know nothing of the Law and the Prophets they could not profit them. Therefore they were

^r Luke xxiii. 34.^s Ps. lxix. 22—23.^t Ps. lix. 11.

not slain, but scattered abroad, in order that, although they should not have in faith that whereby they might be saved, they might yet keep in memory that whereby we might be assisted, being in their books our supporters, in their hearts our enemies, in their copies our witnesses.

10. Although even if no testimonies went before concerning Christ and the Church, whom ought it not to move to believe, that the Divine brightness on a sudden shone upon the human race, when we see (the false gods being now abandoned, and their images everywhere broken, their temples overthrown or turned to other uses, and so many vain rites extirpated from the most inveterate custom of men) the One true God called upon by all. And that this has been effected by One Man mocked by men, taken prisoner, bound, scourged, smitten with the palms of the hands, reviled, crucified, slain. His disciples, whom, being common men, and unlearned, and fishermen, and publicans, He chose that by them His teaching might be published, proclaiming His Resurrection and Ascension, which they said they had themselves seen, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, sounded forth this Gospel in all tongues which they had not learnt. And those who heard them in part believed, in part not believing fiercely resisted them when preaching. And so they being faithful for the truth even unto death, and striving not by repaying evil but by enduring, and overcoming not by slaying but by dying; the world was so changed to this religion, the hearts of mortals were so converted to this Gospel, both of men and women, of small and great, of learned and un-

learned, of wise and foolish, of strong and weak, of noble and ignoble, of high and low, and the Church being diffused throughout all nations so grew, that even against the Catholic faith itself no perverse sect, no kind of error arises which is found to be so opposed to the Christian truth as not to affect and go about to boast in the Name of Christ; which, indeed, would not be suffered to increase throughout the earth unless the gainsaying itself exercised a wholesome discipline. When could that Crucified One have had such power, unless God had taken man's nature, even if He foretold by the Prophets no such things as about to be? But since this so great mystery of godliness had its prophets and heralds going before, by whose divine words it was foretold, and so came as was foretold, who would be so mad as to say that the Apostles lied concerning Christ, Whom they proclaimed so to have come as the Prophets before foretold that He would come, which Prophets were not silent as to true things about to happen concerning the Apostles themselves? For concerning these indeed they had said, *There is neither speech nor language of whom their voices are not heard, their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words into the ends of the world*^a. And this we certainly see fulfilled in the world, although we have not yet seen Christ in the flesh. Who, therefore, unless blinded by amazing madness, or hardened and steeled by amazing obstinacy, would be unwilling to put faith in the sacred Scriptures, which have foretold the faith of the whole world?

^a Ps. xix. 3, 4.

11. But you, beloved, who hold this faith, or who have begun to hold it as a new thing, let it be nourished and increase in you. For as the temporal things so long ago predicted have come, so, too, will the eternal promises come. And let not either the vain heathen deceive you, or the false Jews, or deceitful heretics, or, within the Catholic Church itself, bad Christians, so much the more hurtful as they are enemies within. Wherefore, that the weak should not be disturbed on this ground, divine prophecy has not been silent, when in the Song of Songs the bridegroom speaking to the bride, that is, Christ the Lord to the Church, saith, *As the lily among thorns, so is My dearest in the midst of the daughters*^x. He does not say in the midst of strangers, but *in the midst of the daughters*. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*^y: and whilst the net which is cast into the sea, and gathers all kinds of fishes^z, as the holy Gospel says, is being drawn to the shore, that is, to the end of the world, let him separate himself from the bad fishes in heart, not in body; by changing evil habits, not by breaking the holy nets; lest they, who now approved seem to be mingled with the reprobate, find not life but punishment everlasting, when they shall begin to be separated on the shore.

^x Cant. ii. 2.^y Matt. xiii. 9.^z Ibid. 47.

RETRACTATIONS, BK. I. CHAP. XIV.

MOREOVER, now as a presbyter at Hippo Regius I wrote a book on *the Advantage of Believing*, to my friend whom I knew to have been deceived by the Manichees, and still to be held by that error, and to mock at that point of teaching of the Catholic Faith that men were bidden to believe, but were not taught what was truth by most sure reason. In that book I said [§ 9]: *In which precepts of the law however, which now it is not lawful for Christians to observe, such as is either the sabbath, or circumcision, or sacrifices, or whatever is of this kind, so great mysteries are contained, that every godly person may understand that nothing is more harmful than that whatever is there should be taken to the letter, that is to the word; on the other hand nothing more healthful, than that it should be unveiled in the spirit. Hence it is, The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life*^a. But I have explained those words of the Apostle Paul otherwise, and as seems to me, or rather as appears by the matter itself, much more suitably in that book which is entitled *Of the spirit and the letter*; although the former sense too is not to be rejected.

2. Also I said [§ 25]: *For there are two praiseworthy characters in religion, one of those who have already found, whom also we must of necessity judge most blessed, the other of those who are seeking most zealously and most rightly. The first, therefore, are already*

^a 2 Cor. iii. 6.

in very possession, the second in the way, by which however it is most surely attained to. In these words of mine, if those who have already found, whom we have said to be already in possession, are so to be taken to be most blessed, that they are not so in this life, but in that which we hope for, and towards which we tend by the path of faith, that sense is not erroneous; for they are to be judged to have found what is to be sought, who are already there whither we by seeking and believing, that is by holding the way of faith, hope to arrive. But if they are thought to be or to have been so in this life, that does not seem to me to be true, not because no truth at all can be found in this life which may be discerned by the mind, not believed by faith, but because it is only so much, whatever it is, as not to make men most blessed. For neither is that which the Apostle says, *Now we see through a glass in a riddle*^b, and *Now I know in part*, not discerned by the mind. It is discerned clearly, but does not yet make men most blessed. For that makes men most blessed which he saith, *But then face to face*, and, *Then shall I know even as I am known*^c. They who have found this, they are to be said to stand in possession of the bliss to which that path of faith which we hold tends, and to which by believing we desire to attain. But who may be those most blessed who are already in that possession to which this path leads is a great question. And there is no question but that the holy Angels are there. But of holy men now departed, whether they at least are to be said to stand already in that possession is justly a matter of question. For they have already put off that corruptible body, whereby the soul is weighed down, but even they still wait for the redemption of their body^d, and their flesh rests in hope^e, and is not yet glorified in the future incorruption. But whether from this they are none the less able to contemplate the truth with the eyes of the heart, as it is said *face to face*, there is not space to discuss

^b 1 Cor. xiii. 12.^d Rom. viii. 23.^c Ibid.^e Ps. xvi. 9.

and search out here. Also what I said [§ 25], *For to know great and noble, or even divine things is most blessed*, we ought to refer to the same blessedness. For in this life, whatsoever of it be known, it is not yet perfect bliss, because that of it which remains unknown is beyond comparison far more.

3. And that I said [§ 25], *that there is a great difference, whether any matter is grasped by sure reason of the mind, which is what we call understanding it, or be usefully committed to report or writing in order to be believed by posterity*. And a little after: *What we know then we owe to reason, what we believe to authority*, is not to be so taken as that in ordinary conversation we should be afraid to say that we know what we believe of fit witnesses. In fact, when we speak properly we are said to know that only which we comprehend by the firm reason of the mind. But when we speak in words more suited to common use, as even divine Scripture speaks, let us not hesitate to say that we know both what we have perceived with our bodily senses and what we believe of trustworthy witnesses, since we understand what is the difference between the one and the other.

4. Also that which I said [§ 27], *No one doubts that all men are either fools or wise*, may seem to be contrary to what is read in the third book of *Free Will*¹, *As though human nature admitted of no middle condition between folly and wisdom*. But that statement is made there, when the question was about the first man, whether he were created wise or foolish, or neither, since we could in no wise call him foolish who was made without a flaw, since folly is a great flaw; and it was not sufficiently clear how we could call him wise who was capable of being led astray. And so for shortness I was led to say, *As though human nature admitted of no*

¹ § 71 (cap. xxiv.)

middle condition between folly and wisdom. I was also considering infants, whom, although we confess to have contracted original sin, yet we cannot properly call wise or foolish, as they have not yet the use of free-will, whether well or ill. But now I said that men were either wise or foolish, meaning that they should be understood, who already have the use of reason, whereby they are distinguished from cattle so as to be men; as we say that 'all men wish to be happy.' Do we in this so true and manifest a statement fear lest infants also should be understood, who are not as yet able to wish this?

In another place, when I had mentioned the miracles which the Lord Jesus wrought, when He was here in the flesh, I added, saying [§ 34], *Why, you will say, do not those things take place now?* And I answered, *Because they would not move men unless they were wonderful, but if they were customary they would not be wonderful.* But this I said, because not so great miracles, nor all miracles, take place now, not because none are wrought even now.

6. But in the end of the book I said [§ 36]: *But since this discourse of mine has run on to much greater length than I expected, let us here set an end to the book, in which I would have you remember, that I have not yet begun to refute the Manichees, and that I have not yet attacked that nonsense, nor unfolded anything great concerning the Catholic Church; but that I have wished only, if I could, to root out of you a false opinion concerning Christians, maliciously or ignorantly suggested to us, and to stir you up to learn certain great and divine things. Wherefore let this volume be as it is, and if your soul becomes more well-disposed, I shall perhaps be more prompt in what remains.* I did not say this in such sort, as though I had as yet written nothing against the Manichees, or had committed to writing nothing concerning Catholic doctrine, when so many volumes published before bear witness that I had not been silent on either matter; but in this book written to him I had not yet begun to refute the Manichees, and had not yet attacked those

follies, nor had I as yet explained any great thing concerning the Catholic Church itself; since I hoped that, having made this beginning, I should write to that same person what I had not as yet written here. This book begins thus, If, Honoratus, a heretic and a man trusting to heretics appeared to me to be one and the same thing.

S. AURELIUS AUGUSTINE,
BISHOP OF HIPPO,
ON THE ADVANTAGE OF BELIEVING,
TO HONORATUS.

He disputes against the Manichees, and proves that they sacrilegiously and rashly inveigh against those who, following the authority of the Catholic Faith, prepare themselves by its help for the understanding of mysteries, whilst they believe those things which they are not yet able to comprehend in their minds. But firstly he shews that the Old Testament is wrongly censured by the same heretics.

I. IF, Honoratus, a heretic and a man trusting to heretics appeared to me to be one and the same thing, I should think that I ought to remain silent in this matter both with tongue and pen. But now since there is a very great difference between these two, forasmuch as he, in my opinion, is a heretic, who, for the sake of some temporal advantage, and chiefly of his own glory and preeminence, either brings forth or follows false and new opinions; but he who trusts men of this kind is a man deceived by a certain appear-

ance of truth and piety. This being so, I have not thought it right to be silent towards you as to what seems right to me in regard to finding and retaining truth, with great love of which, as you know, we have been inflamed from early youth. But the thing is far removed from the minds of vain men, who having advanced too far and fallen into these corporeal things, think that there is nothing else than what they perceive by means of those five well-known reporters of the body; and the impressions and images which they have received from these they turn over with themselves, even when they endeavour to withdraw from the senses, and think that they can most accurately measure the unspeakable recesses of truth with the most deadly and deceitful rule of these. Nothing is more easy, my dearest friend, than not only to say, but also to think that one has found out the truth, but how difficult it is in reality you will, as I trust, recognize from this letter of mine. And that it may profit you, or at any rate in no way injure you, and also all into whose hands it may chance to come, I have both asked of God, and do ask, and hope that it will be so, as I am entirely conscious that I have come to this work in a pious and friendly spirit, not through desire of empty reputation or trifling display.

2. I propose then to prove to you, if I can, that the Manichees sacrilegiously and rashly inveigh against those who, following the authority of the Catholic faith before that they are able to gaze upon that Truth which is beheld by the pure mind, are forearmed by believing, and prepared for God Who is about to illuminate them. For you know, Honoratus, that for no other reason I fell in with such men, than because

they used to say, that laying aside the fear of authority, they would by mere and simple reason lead to God those who would listen to them, and would deliver them from all error. For what else was impelling me for nearly nine years, spurning the religion which had been planted in me when a child by my parents, to follow and diligently listen to those men, except that they said that we were frightened by superstition, and that faith is enjoined on us before reason, but that they press no one to faith except when the truth has been first discussed and made clear? Who would not be enticed by these promises, especially the mind of a young man desirous of truth, and also proud and talkative through the disputations of certain learned men in the school, such as they then found me, despising indeed as it were old wives' fables, and desiring to grasp and drink in the sincere and open truth promised by them? But what reason again recalled me from wholly cleaving to them, so that I kept myself in that rank which they call that of the hearers, so that I did not give up the hope and business of this world, except that I remarked that they themselves were rather eloquent and full in refuting others, than abiding firm and sure in proving their own positions? But what shall I say of myself, who was already a Catholic Christian? those breasts which now I, almost exhausted and dry after very long thirst, sought again with all greediness, and more deeply weeping and groaning have shaken and squeezed them out, that that might flow forth which should suffice for refreshment for me affected as I was, and for bringing back hope of life and safety. What, then, shall I say of myself? You, not yet

a Christian, who, since you vehemently execrated them, were hardly induced by my exhortation to look upon them as meet to be listened to and sought out, by what else, pray, were you delighted, I pray you recall it to mind, but by a certain great presumption and promise of reasons? But because they used to dispute much and at very great length, and with very great vehemence, about the errors of unlearned men, which I too late learnt to be very easy to any moderately instructed person; if they implanted in us anything even of their own, we used to think that we must necessarily retain it, since other things came not in our way in which to acquiesce. And so they did to us what crafty fowlers are wont to do, who fix limed twigs beside water, that they may deceive thirsty birds. For they fill up, and hide in any way other waters which are around, or frighten them thence even by alarming devices, that they may fall into their snares not through choice but want.

3. But why do I not myself answer myself, that these clever and neat similes and charges of this kind can be poured forth by any opponent with abundant wit and sarcasm against all who teach anything. But I thought that something of this kind ought to be inserted in my letter for this reason, that I might warn them to cease using such means, that as he [Cicero] says, trifles of common places being put aside, matter may contend with matter, cause with cause, reason with reason. Wherefore let them cease to say that which they have in their mouths as if of necessity, when any one who has for some time heard them has left them. *The Light has made a passage through him.* For you who

are my chief care see, (for I am not overmuch moved concerning them), how empty this is and most easy for any one to find fault with. Therefore I commend this to your own wisdom to consider. For I do not fear that you will think that I was dwelt in by the Light, when I was entangled in the life of this world, having a hope full of darkness, concerning the beauty of a wife, the pomp of riches, the emptiness of honours, and all other hurtful and pernicious pleasures. For I, as is not unknown to you, did not cease to wish and hope for all these things, when I was zealously listening to them. And I do not attribute this to their teaching; for I confess that they carefully advise those things to be shunned. But to say that now I am forsaken by the light, when I have turned away from all these shadows of things, and have determined to be content with that food only which is necessary for the health of the body, but that I was enlightened and shining, when I loved those things, and was held wrapped up in them, is the part of a man, to speak most mildly, not sufficiently keenly looking into the matters about which he loves to speak much. But let us come to the question if you please.

4. For you well know that the Manichees move the unlearned by finding fault with the Catholic faith, and especially by rending and tearing in pieces the Old Testament; who indeed know not how far those things are to be received, and in what manner being drawn out they profitably descend into the veins and marrow of souls as it were as yet only able to cry. And because there are there certain things which somewhat offend minds ignorant and negligent of themselves, and such are the largest number, they admit of being attacked in a popular manner, but on account of the

mysteries which are contained in them they cannot be defended in a popular manner by very many persons. But the few who know how to do this do not love public and talked-of disputations in matters of controversy, and for this reason are very little known, except to those who most earnestly seek them. Listen, I pray you, to those things which move me with regard to this rashness of the Manichees wherewith they find fault with the Old Testament and the Catholic Faith. But I desire and hope that you will receive them in the same spirit in which I say them. For God, to Whom are known the secrets of my conscience, knows that I am doing nothing in this discourse with evil craft, but, as I think it ought to be received, for the sake of proving the truth, for which one thing alone I have long determined to live, and with incredible anxiety, lest it shall have been most easy for me to err with you, but to hold the right way with you be, not to speak too hardly, most difficult. But I am confident that in this hope too, by which I hope that you will hold with me the way of wisdom, He, to Whom I have been consecrated, will not forsake me, Whom I strive night and day to look upon, and, since because of my sins and because of past habit having the eye of my mind wounded by the blows of feeble opinions I know that I am weak, I often entreat with tears. And since, after long blindness and darkness, the eyes being scarcely opened, and as yet by throbbing and turning away rejecting the light (which yet they long for,) especially if any one should endeavour to shew them the sun, so it now happens to me who do not deny that there is a certain unspeakable and singular good of the soul which is seen by the mind, and who confess

with weeping and groaning that I am not yet worthy of contemplating it. He will not then fail me, if I feign nothing, if I am led by duty, if I love truth, esteem friendship, and if I fear much lest you be deceived.

5. All Scripture, then, which is called the Old Testament, is handed down to them who diligently desire to know it in a fourfold way, according to history, according to ætiology, according to analogy, and according to allegory. Do not think me silly in using Greek words. In the first place because I have so received, and I do not dare to make this known to you otherwise than as I have received. Next you yourself observe that there are no names for these things in use amongst us ; and had I made such by translating, I should have been indeed more silly ; if again I used circumlocution, I should be more hampered in discussing. This only I pray you to believe, that, in whatever way I may err, I am not puffed up or swollen in anything I do. Well, then, it is handed down historically, when it is taught what has been written, or what has been done ; or what has not been done but only written down as if it had been done. According to ætiology, when it is shewn for what cause anything has been either done or said. According to analogy, when it is shewn that the two Testaments, the Old and the New, are not opposed to each other. According to allegory, when it is taught that some of the things which are written are not taken in the letter, but are to be understood figuratively.

6. Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles made use of all these methods. For that was taken from history, when it had been objected that His disciples had plucked the ears

of corn on the Sabbath day, *Have ye not read*, He says, *what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him: how he entered into the house of God, and ate the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but for the priests only**? But that instance pertains to ætiology that, when Christ had forbidden a wife to be put away, save for the cause of fornication, and it was alleged by those who were questioning Him that Moses granted permission when a bill of divorcement was given, He said, *Moses did this because of the hardness of your heart*^b. For here a reason was given why that for a time was fittingly allowed by Moses, that this which Christ was commanding might seem to shew that the times were now other. But it is too long to explain the changes of these times, and the order arranged and settled by a certain marvellous disposition of Divine Providence.

7. And further, why shall I say that all those to whose authority they yield have made use of analogy whereby the agreement of each Testament is plainly seen, since they can consider with themselves how many things they are wont to say have been inserted in the Divine Scriptures by I know not what corrupters of the truth? Which assertion indeed always appeared to me, even when I listened to them, very weak, and not to me only but also to you (for I remember it well), and to all of us who endeavoured to take a little more care in judging than the crowd of believers. Now, however, after that many things have been expounded and made plain to me, which used to move me chiefly, those

* Matt. xii. 3, 4.

^b Ib. xix. 8.

namely in which their talk for the most part boasts itself, and expatiates the more freely the more safely it can do so without an opponent ; nothing seems to be asserted by them with greater impudence, or, to speak more mildly, more carelessly and weakly, than that the Divine Scriptures have been corrupted, when they can prove it by no extant copies in a matter of so recent date. For if they were to say that they did not think that they ought thoroughly to be received by them because they were written by those who they did not think had written the truth, their refusal would be more right, or their error more natural. For they did this with regard to that book which is entitled the Acts of the Apostles, which device of theirs, when I consider it with myself, I cannot enough wonder at. For I do not want the wisdom of men in this matter, but ordinary intelligence. For that book has so great matters, which are like those which they receive, that it seems to me a mark of great folly not to receive this book too, and if anything in it offends them to say that it is false and interpolated. Or if such language is shameless, as it is, why do they think that it has any force in Paul's Epistles, or in the four books of the Gospel, in which I am not sure but that there are more things in proportion which they wish it to be believed have been interpolated by falsifiers than could have been in that book? But forsooth this is the matter as it appears to me, which I pray you to consider with me with most calm and serene judgment. For you know that striving to bring the person of their founder Manichæus into the number of the Apostles, they say, that the Holy Ghost, Whom the Lord promised His disciples that He would send, has come to us through him. Therefore, if they were to receive the Acts of the Apostles

in which the coming of the Holy Ghost is plainly proclaimed^c, they could not find how to say that it was interpolated. For they will have it that there were certain corrupters of the Divine books before the time of Manichæus, and that those who wished to combine the law of the Jews with the Gospel falsified them. But this they cannot say concerning the Holy Ghost, unless perchance they assert that those persons divined, and put in their books that which should be brought forth against Manichæus, who would arise at some future time, and say that the Holy Ghost had been sent through him. But we will speak in another place somewhat concerning the Holy Ghost more plainly. Now let us return to what I had purposed.

8. For that both the history of the Old Testament and ætiology and analogy are found in the New Testament has, as I think, been sufficiently demonstrated, it remains to shew this of allegory. Our Deliverer Himself in the Gospel uses allegory out of the Old Testament. *This generation*, He says, *seeketh a sign, and there shall not be given it except the sign of Jonas the prophet; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so too the Son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*^d. For what shall I say of the Apostle Paul? who signifies in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, that even the very history of the Exodus was an allegory of the future Christian people. *But I would not that ye should be ignorant, brethren, how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same*

^c Acts ii. 2—4.

^d Matt. xii. 39, 40.

*spiritual meat, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. But with most of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. But these things were figures of us, that we should not be lustful after evil things as they also lusted. Neither let us worship idols, as certain of them, as it is written^e: The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication as some of them committed fornication, and fell in one day twenty-three thousand persons. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them tempted and perished by serpents. Neither let us murmur as some of them murmured and perished by the destroyer. Now all those things happened to them in a figure; but they have been written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come^f. There is also in the Apostle a certain allegory, relating indeed very closely to the question, because that they themselves have been wont to bring it forth and display when disputing. For the same Paul says to the Galatians, *For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one of a bondmaid and one of a freewoman; but he indeed who was of the bondmaid was born after the flesh, but he of the freewoman by promise, which things were said by way of allegory. For these are the two Testaments, one indeed from Mount Sinai gendering unto bondage, which is Agar. For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which bordereth upon that Jerusalem which now is,**

^e Exod. xxxii. 6.

^f 1 Cor. x. 1—11.

and is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all^g.

9. Here then those too evil men, while they endeavour to make void the law oblige us to approve those Scriptures. For they mark that it is said, that those who are under the law are in bondage, and they brandish above the rest that last saying, *Ye are made void of Christ, ye who are justified in the law, ye have fallen from grace*^h. We allow that all these things are true, and do not say that that law is necessary except for those for whom bondage is still profitable, and that therefore it was profitably enacted, because men, who could not be recalled from sin by reason, were obliged to be constrained by such a law, that is to say by the threats and terrors of those punishments which can be seen by fools; from which when the grace of Christ sets us free, it does not condemn that law but invites us at length to obey its loving-kindness, not to be in bondage to the fear of the law. It is itself grace, that is a gift, which they who still desire to be under the bonds of the law do not understand to have come to them from God. Whom Paul deservedly rebukes as unbelievers, because they do not believe that by our Lord Jesus Christ they have been delivered from the bondage to which for a certain time, by the most just judgment of God, they were subjected. Hence is that saying of the same Apostle, *For the Law was our schoolmaster in Christ*ⁱ. He therefore gave to men a schoolmaster whom they might fear, who afterwards gave a Master whom they might love. In which precepts of the law however, which now it is not lawful for

^g Gal. iv. 22—26.

^h Ib. v. 4

ⁱ Ib. iii. 24.

Christians to observe, such as is either the sabbath, or circumcision, or sacrifices, or whatever is of this kind so great mysteries are contained, that every godly person may understand that nothing is more harmful than that whatever is there should be taken to the letter, that is to the word; on the other hand nothing more healthful, than that it should be unveiled in the spirit. Hence it is, *The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life*. Hence it is, *The same veil remaineth in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is not taken away, since it is made void in Christ*^k. For in Christ not the Old Testament but its veil is made void, that by Christ that which without Christ is obscure and covered may be understood and, as it were, laid bare. Forasmuch as the same Apostle straightway adds, *But when thou shalt have passed over to Christ, the veil shall be taken away*^l. For he says not the law shall be taken away, or the Old Testament. Things have not then been taken away by the grace of the Lord, as though being useless they were covered there, but rather the veil wherewith being useful they were covered. In this manner are they dealt with who zealously and piously, not disorderly and shamelessly, seek the sense of those Scriptures, and there is carefully shewn both the order of events and the causes of deeds and words, and so great an agreement of the Old Testament with the New that no point is left which does not harmonize, and so great secrets of figures, that all things which are drawn forth by interpretation force the confession that they are wretched who wish to condemn these things before they learn them.

10. But in order that, passing over meanwhile the depths

^k 2 Cor. iii. 6; ib. 14. (See Retraction on this passage, p. 90.)

^l 2 Cor. iii. 16.

of knowledge, I may deal with you as I think I ought to deal with my friend; that is, as I myself have the ability, not as I have wondered that very learned men have been able to do. There are three kinds of error whereby men err, when they read anything. The first kind is that in which that which is false is supposed to be true, when he who wrote thought otherwise. The second is, though not extending so widely yet not less hurtful, when what is false is supposed to be true, but that is supposed which he also who was the writer supposed. The third is when from the writing of another some truth is understood, whereas he who wrote did not understand it. In which class there is no little profit, in truth if you consider the matter more attentively the whole fruit of reading is sound. An example of the first class is as if any one, for example, were to say and believe that Rhadamanthus hears and judges the causes of the dead amongst those beneath the earth, because he has read that in the poems of Maro. For he errs in two ways, because he believes a matter which ought not to be believed, and he, too, whom he is reading is not to be supposed to have believed it. The second class may be thus noted, if any one, because Lucretius writes that the soul consists of atoms, and that after death it is resolved into the same atoms and perishes, should think that that was true and to be believed by him. For this person, too, is not less miserable, if on a matter of so great importance he has persuaded himself of that which is false as certain; although Lucretius, by whose books he has been deceived, may have thought this too; for what does it profit this man to be certain as to the author's opinion, since he has chosen him for himself not as one by whom he should not err, but in whose company he might err? This instance is suited to the third

class, if any one having read in his books some part where he praises continence, should assert that Epicurus placed the highest good in virtue, and therefore was not to be blamed. For how does the error of Epicurus injure this man if he thinks that pleasure of the body is man's highest good, since he has not surrendered himself up to so disgraceful and injurious an opinion, nor does Epicurus please him for any other reason but that he does not suppose him to have thought what ought not to be thought. This error is not only natural to many, but often even most worthy of a man. For what if I were told of some one whom I love, that, when he was of bearded age, he had said in the hearing of many that boyhood and infancy so pleased him that he even swore that he should wish to live after the same fashion, and that that was so proved to me that I could only deny it if with effrontery, should I seem worthy of blame if I thought that he, when he said this, wished to intimate that innocence pleased him, and a mind averse from those desires in which the race of men is wrapped up, and from that circumstance should love him more, and more than I loved him before, even if perchance he had foolishly loved in the age of boyhood a certain freedom in playing, and food, and idle ease? For suppose that he had died after that this was told to me, and that he could not be questioned at all by me so as to open his meaning, would any one be so unreasonable as to be angry with me because I praised the man's purpose and wish through those very words which I had heard? What, that even a just judge of matters would perhaps not hesitate to praise my

opinion and sentiment, in that both innocence was pleasing to me, and that as a man I had rather thought well of a man in a doubtful matter, when it was also possible for me to think ill.

11. This being so, hear also just as many conditions and differences of the same Scriptures. For of necessity just as many must occur. For either any one has written profitably, and is understood by some one not profitably, or each happens unprofitably, or the reader understands profitably, whereas he who is read has written in a contrary manner. Of these three I do not find fault with the first, and do not care for the last. For I am neither able to blame a man, who, through no fault of his own, is wrongly understood, nor take it ill that any one is read who has not seen the truth, when I see that it does not at all injure the readers. There is then one class most approved, and as it were most freed from evil, when good things are both written, and are taken in a good sense by the readers. But that also is further divided into two, for it does not wholly exclude error. For it sometimes happens that when a writer has had good opinions the reader also has good opinions, and different from the writer's, and sometimes better, sometimes worse, yet profitably. But when we feel the same as he whom we read, and it is excellently suited for passing life, rightly truth exists in its fullest measure, nor does there appear place for falsehood from any other quarter. And this class is absolutely most rare when what is read is about extremely obscure matters, nor in my opinion can it be clearly known, but only believed. For by what proofs can I so gather the

will of a man who is absent or dead, as to be able to swear concerning it, since even if he were present and questioned, there might be many things which if he were not an evil man he would most carefully hide? But I think that it has no value in ascertaining a matter, of what kind he was who wrote it; yet he, by whose writings the human race and posterity has benefited, is most rightly believed good.

12. Wherefore I should wish those people to tell me in which class they would place the error, as they suppose it, of the Catholic Church. If in the first, it is altogether a grave charge, but does not require a far-fetched defence, for it is enough to deny that we understand so as they suppose when they inveigh against us. If in the second, it is not less grave, but they will be refuted by the same answer. If in the third, it is no charge. Come, consider next the Scriptures themselves. For what do they object to the books of what is called the Old Testament? Is it that they are good, but are ill understood by us? But they themselves do not receive them. Or that they are neither good nor well understood? But this the above answer sufficiently overthrows. Or will they say this, Although they are understood by you in a good sense, yet they are evil? What is this other than to acquit living opponents with whom the question is, and to accuse those dead long since with whom there is no strife? I indeed believe that those men both profitably delivered everything to memory, and that they were great and divine, and that that law was promulgated and compiled by the commandment and will of God; and of this, although I know very little of books of that kind, I am able easily to persuade any one, if a mind fair and by no means obstinate

attend to me; and I will do that when you shall give me well-disposed ears and mind; this, however, when I shall have the power, but now is it not enough for me, however that matter may be, not to have been deceived?

13. I call my conscience to witness, Honoratus, and God Who dwells in pure souls, that I think nothing more prudent, chaste, or religious than are those Scriptures which the Catholic Church retains under the name of the Old Testament. You are surprised I know. For I cannot hide that we were far otherwise persuaded. But nothing is in truth more full of rashness (which we being then boys had in us) than to forsake the expounders of each book who profess that they know them, and are able to deliver them to their disciples, and to seek their meaning from those who, I know not what cause impelling them, have declared most bitter war against the framers and authors of them. For who ever thought that the deep and obscure books of Aristotle should be expounded by one who was his enemy? to speak of those studies in which the reader may perchance err without sacrilege. Who, in fine, wished to read or learn the geometrical writings of Archimedes with Epicurus as his master? against which writings the latter used to argue with great obstinacy, not, as I think, understanding anything of them. Are those Scriptures of the law very plain against which, as though set forth publicly, those men make their attack in vain and to no purpose? Who seem to me to be like that simple woman whom they themselves are wont to laugh at, who, being enraged because the sun was being

praised to her, and commended by some Manichæan woman as an object of worship, as she was simple in her religion, leaped up in haste, and often striking with her foot that place which the sun shone upon through the window, "See, I trample upon the sun and your god," she began to cry out, altogether after a silly and womanish manner; who denies it? But do not those men seem to you to be of this sort, who with a great rush of words and reproaches, tearing to pieces things which they understand not, nor their reasons, nor in the least of what kind they are, although like to matters of a lowly nature, yet to those who understand them exact and divine, think, because the unlearned applaud them, that they are accomplishing something? Believe me, whatever is in those Scriptures is lofty and divine: there is in them altogether truth, and teaching most suited for refreshing and restoring minds, and clearly so ordered in measure, that no one may not be able to draw from them what is sufficient for him, if only he come to draw with devotion and piety, as true religion demands. To prove this to you requires many reasons and a longer discourse. For I must first deal with you so that you may not hate the authors themselves, then that you may love them, and this must be done in any other way rather than by setting forth their opinions and words. For this reason, because if we hated Virgil, in truth, if we had not before he was understood esteemed him through the commendation of our ancestors, we should never be satisfied concerning those innumerable questions, by which the grammarians are usually disquieted and troubled, nor should we willingly listen to one who was explaining them praising him at the same time, but should be better pleased with him who should endeavour to shew by them that he had erred and

raved. But now since many endeavour to explain them and in various ways, each according to his capacity, those are mostly praised through whose explanation the poet is found better, who is believed even by those who do not understand him, not only to have had no faults, but to have sung nothing not worthy of praise. And so in some minute question we are rather indignant with the master who fails, and has not what to answer, than think that he is dumb through fault of Maro. And now if for his own defence he should wish to assert a fault in so great an author, his scholars will hardly remain with him, even though their fees were paid [in advance]. How great a matter were it that we should shew like good-will to them through whom it has been established by so long antiquity that the Holy Ghost has spoken. But, forsooth, we youths of the highest intelligence, marvellous investigators of reasons, without having at least unrolled those writings, without having sought teachers, without having to some extent chided our own slowness, lastly without even yielding moderate good-will to those who have willed that writings of that kind should be for a long time read, kept, and handled through the whole world; have thought that nothing in them is to be believed, moved by the words of those who are enemies and hostile to them, with whom we should be compelled under a false promise of reason to believe and esteem untold thousands of fables.

14. But now, if I can, I will go on with what I intended, and will so deal with you as not in the meanwhile to lay open the Catholic faith, but that they may investigate its great mysteries, will shew to those who care for their souls hope of divine fruit and of finding the truth. No one doubts that he who seeks after true religion either already believes

that the soul which that religion may profit is immortal, or that he wishes to find that very thing also in the same religion. All religion then is for the soul's sake ; for the nature of the body, howsoever it may be, especially after death, causes no care and anxiety to him whose soul has held to that whereby it may be blessed. For the sake then of the soul, either solely or at least chiefly, true religion, if there be any, has been established. But this soul, I will consider for what cause, and confess it to be most obscure, yet errs and is foolish, as we see, until it gains and perceives wisdom, and perhaps this [wisdom] itself is true religion. Am I sending you to fables ? Am I forcing you to believe rashly ? I say that our soul, entangled and sunk in error and folly, seeks the way of truth. If this be not so in you, forgive me and share with me, I pray you, your wisdom, but if you recognise in yourself what I am saying, I entreat you let us together seek the truth.

15. Suppose that we as yet have heard no teacher of any religion. See we have undertaken a new matter and business. We must, I suppose, seek the professors of this subject, if it exist. Suppose we have found different persons with different opinions, and wishing through their difference of opinions to draw persons each to themselves ; but that meanwhile some among these are pre-eminent in renown of reputation, and from having possession of nearly all peoples, it is a great question whether they hold the truth ; but should they not first be tried, that so long as we err, since we are men, we may seem to err with the human race itself.

16. But, it will be said, the truth is with some few. You know then already what it is, if you know with whom it is. Did I not say a little before, that we were seeking it as unlearned men? But if from the very force of truth you conjecture that few hold it, but know not who they are, what if they are so few who know the truth that they hold the multitude by their authority, whence the small number may be able to set itself free and, as it were, strain itself from the dregs in pursuit of those secrets? Do we not see how few attain to the highest eloquence, whilst the schools of the rhetoricians resound throughout the whole world with troops of youths? Do they who wish to turn out good orators, frightened at the multitude of the unskilful, think that they must spend their labour on the orations of Cæcilius or Erucius rather than on those of Tully? All seek after the latter, which are established by greater authority. Crowds of unskilful persons strive to learn the same which are received by the few learned as necessary to be learnt, but very few attain, fewer practise, fewest of all become famous. What if true religion be some such thing? What if a multitude of unlearned persons throng the churches, yet that is no proof that therefore no one has been made perfect by those mysteries. And yet if so few studied eloquence as the few who are eloquent, our parents would never think that we ought to be entrusted to such teachers. Since then a multitude has called us to these studies, which is numerous in the division of the unlearned, so that we might become enamoured of that which few can attain to; why are we unwilling to admit that a similar cause acts on us in religion which perhaps we despise with great

peril of our soul? For if the truest and purest worship of God, although it exist among few, yet does exist amongst those with whom the multitude, although wrapped up in lusts, and far removed from purity of understanding, does agree; which who can doubt that it may happen? I ask, if any one blame our rashness and folly, because we do not seek diligently amongst the teachers of it, that which we have great anxiety to discover, what can we answer? The crowd deterred me? Why has no crowd deterred us from the pursuit of liberal arts, which scarcely bring any advantage to this present life, or from seeking after money, or attaining to honour, or next from gaining and keeping good health, or lastly from the very aim at a happy life, seeing that all are busy with these, and few excel?

17. 'But absurdities seemed to be uttered there.' Who asserts this? Forsooth enemies, in whatever account, or for whatever reason, for this is not the question, yet enemies. Upon reading I found it so of myself. Is it so? Unprepared by some poetical training you would not venture to touch Terentianus Maurus without a teacher. Asper, Cornutus, Donatus, and numberless others are required that any poet may be understood, whose verses seem to catch at the applause even of the theatre; you, without any guide, rush upon those books, and dare, without a teacher, to give an opinion about them, which however they may be, are commonly reported by the confession of almost the whole human race to be holy and full of divine matters; and if any

things meet you which seem absurd, accuse not rather your own dulness and mind decayed by the corruption of this world, as is that of all foolish persons, than those books which cannot perchance be understood by such persons. You should seek some one at the same time pious and learned, or who would be said to be such by the consent of many, by whose precepts you might become better, and by whose advice you might become more learned. Could he not easily be found? He should be sought for with pains. Was he wanting in the country where you dwelt? What cause could more advantageously compel you to travel? Was he altogether hidden, or did he not exist on the mainland? You should take ship. If across the sea he was not found near at hand, you should go on to those lands in which those things which are contained in those books are said to have been done. What did we do of this kind, Honoratus? And yet we wretched boys of our own will and judgment condemned a religion perhaps the most holy, for as yet I am speaking as if it were a matter of doubt, the reputation of which has already taken possession of the whole world. What if those things which seem to offend some unlearned persons in the same Scriptures, are put there so that when things abhorrent from the sentiments of ordinary, not to say of wise and holy, men, are read, we might much more eagerly seek the hidden meaning? Do you not perceive how men endeavour to interpret the Catamite of the Bucolics for whom the hard shepherd wept, and affirm that the boy Alexis, on whom Plato also is said to have composed a love poem, signifies some great thing, but that it escapes the judgment of the unlearned; since without any sacrilege a very copious poet may seem to have put forth wanton songs?

18. But in truth did any decree of the law or power of opponents, or vile character of consecrated persons, or evil report, or newness of arrangement, or secret profession recall us and prohibit us from seeking? There is none of these. All divine and human laws permit us to seek the Catholic faith; but to hold and practise it is certainly allowed by human law, if it be uncertain, whether by divine law so long as we are in error; no enemy frightens our weakness (although truth and the salvation of the soul, if having been diligently sought it has not been found, where with most safety it may be, ought to be sought at any risk) the degrees of all dignities and powers most devotedly serve to this divine worship; the name of religion is most honourable and most famous. What, pray, hinders searching out and discussing with pious and careful enquiry, whether here be that which of necessity few know and guard with full purity, although the goodwill and affection of all nations agree in its favour.

19. This being so, suppose, as I said, that we are now first enquiring to what religion we may entrust our souls to be purified and restored; without doubt the beginning must be made with the Catholic Church. For there are now more Christians than if the Jews be added to the worshippers of idols. But of these same Christians, whereas there are many heresies, and all wish that they may appear Catholics, and call all others besides themselves heretics, there is, as all allow, one Church, if you consider the whole world, more full in number, but as they who know affirm, more pure in

truth than all the rest. But concerning the truth there is another question ; but, which is enough for those who are enquiring, there is one Catholic, to which different heresies give various names, whereas themselves are each called by their special names which they dare not deny. From which one may understand, by the judgment of witnesses whom no favour hinders, to whom the name of Catholic, which they all desire, is to be assigned. But that no one may suppose that it is to be discussed in too many words, and more than is necessary, there is certainly one in which in a certain way even human laws themselves are Christian. I do not wish any premature decision to be drawn from this, but I do esteem it a most opportune commencement of the enquiry. For we need not fear lest the true worship of God resting on no strength of its own, should appear to be supported by those whom it ought to support ; but certainly it is perfect happiness if the truth shall be able to be there found where both the search for it and the holding it is most secure ; if it shall not be so, then at length, at whatever risk, one must go and search elsewhere.

20. Having then laid down these principles, which, as I think, are so just that I ought to win that cause in your opinion with any adversary, I will set before you as well as I can what way I followed when I was seeking for true religion with that disposition with which I have now explained that it must be sought. For when I departed from you across the sea, now delaying and hesitating what I

ought to hold, what to abandon, which hesitation rose every day greater before me, from the time that I was a hearer of that man, whose arrival, as you know, was promised to us as from heaven in order to explain all the things which were stirring us, and found him to be, a certain eloquence excepted, such as the rest. Being now settled in Italy, I reasoned and deliberated greatly with myself, not whether I should remain in that sect, into which I was sorry that I had fallen, but in what manner the truth was to be found, my sighs for love of which are known to no one better than to yourself. Often it seemed to me that it could not be found, and great waves of my thoughts were borne along towards decision in favour of the Academics. Often again, looking as deeply as I could into the human mind, so full of life and intelligence and clearness, I thought that truth did not lie hid, except that in it the method of search lay hid, and that this same method must be received from some divine authority. There remained the enquiry what was that authority, since in the midst of such great dissensions every one promised that he would furnish it. And so there met me an intricate wood, in which indeed I was annoyed at being entangled, and in the midst of all this, without any rest, my mind was agitated with the desire of finding the truth. Yet I kept on loosening myself more and more from those whom I had already determined to abandon. But there remained nothing else in so great dangers, but to entreat the Divine Providence with tearful

and piteous words that He would bring me help. And this I went on doing diligently; and now certain disputations of the Bishop of Milan had almost moved me to desire, not without some hope, to enquire, about the Old Testament itself, many points which, as you know, we used to execrate having been ill commended to us. And I had decided to be a catechumen in the Church, to which I had been delivered by my parents, for so long a time till I should either find what I wished, or persuade myself that it ought not to be sought. Had there been one who could teach he would have found me then most ready and very teachable. If, then, you see that you too have been affected in this way and with like care for your soul, and if you now seem to yourself to have been sufficiently tossed about, and wish to put an end to these toils, follow the way of Catholic discipline, which has come down even to us from Christ through the Apostles, and will pass on hereafter to posterity.

21. That, you say, is ridiculous, since all profess that they hold and teach this. All heretics profess this, I cannot deny it, but so as to promise those whom they entice, that they will give them a reason concerning the most obscure matters; and on this ground they chiefly charge the Catholic Church that they who come to it are bidden to believe; but they boast that they do not impose a yoke of believing, but open a fountain of teaching. What, say you, could have been said which would more pertain to their praise? It is not so. For they do this, not because furnished with any strength,

but that they may gain the favour of some crowd by the name of reason, in the promise of which the soul of man naturally delights, and not considering its own strength and health, by desiring the meats of the whole, which are ill given except to those in good health, rushes in upon the poison of deceivers. For true religion can in no way be rightly entered upon, except those things be believed which each one afterwards, if he shall conduct himself rightly and be worthy, attains to and understands, nor altogether without a certain weighty control of authority.

22. But you seek perchance to hear some reason on this very point, by which you may be persuaded that you are not to be taught by reason before faith. Which can easily be done if only you shew yourself impartial. But that it may be done conveniently, I wish you would as it were answer when I question, and first would tell me why it seems to you that one should not believe. Because, you say, credulity itself, from which men are called credulous, seems to me to be a kind of fault; otherwise we should not apply this term for a reproach. For if a suspicious person be in fault, because he suspects things not found out; how much more a credulous person, who differs from a suspicious man in this, that the one assigns some doubt to things unknown, the other none. In the meanwhile I accept this opinion and distinction. But you know that we are not wont to call any one even inquisitive without reproach, but we call him studious even with praise. Wherefore notice, if you please, what seems to you to be the difference between these two. You certainly reply that although each is led by a great desire of knowing, yet the inquisitive person seeks after matters which in no way concern him, the studious man again, on the

other hand, seeks after what does concern him. But because we do not deny that a man's wife and children, and their safety, concern him, if any one placed abroad enquire diligently of all who arrive how his wife and children are, and how they fare, he is certainly led by a great desire to know; and yet we do not call him studious, who both exceedingly wishes to know, and as to matters which very closely concern him. Wherefore you now understand that that definition of a studious person is uncertain, in that every studious person wishes to know those matters which concern him, but that not every person who does this is to be called studious, but he who with the greatest pains seeks those things which pertain to the liberal culture and adornment of the mind, yet we call him rightly one who studies, especially when we add what he studies to be instructed in. For we may call him even studious of his own family, if he loves only his own family; but we do not consider him deserving of the common name of the studious without some addition. But I should not call him who was wishful to hear how his family was faring studious of hearing, unless rejoicing in a good report he wished often to hear the very same thing, but I should call him one who studied if [he did this] even once. Now turn your thoughts back to the inquisitive man, and tell me whether if any one willingly listened to a tale which would do him absolutely no good, that is about things which do not concern him; and that not offensively and frequently, but very seldom and with much moderation, either at a feast, or in some circle, or at any gathering, would he seem to you to be inquisitive? I do not think so; but he certainly would appear to have an interest in that matter which he willingly heard about. Wherefore the definition

of a curious person must be amended by the same rule as that of a studious person. Consider, therefore, whether those former statements too have to be amended. For why should not both he be deserving of the name of a suspicious person who sometimes suspects something, and he who sometimes believes something of [that of] a credulous person? And so as there is a very great difference between a person who studies any matter and the absolutely studious, and again, between him who has a care for something and the curious, so there is between one who believes and the credulous.

23. But now consider, you will say, whether we ought to believe in religion. For if we grant that it is one thing to believe and another to be credulous, it does not follow that it is no fault to believe in matters of religion. For what if to believe and to be credulous be faulty, as both to be drunk and to be a drunkard? He who thinks this certain can, it seems to me, have no friend. For if it is base to believe anything, either he acts basely who believes his friend, or if he does believe his friend in nothing, I do not see how he can call either him or himself a friend. Here perchance you will say, I grant that something ought sometimes to be believed, now make it clear how in religion it is not unfitting to believe before one knows. I will do so if I can. Wherefore I ask of you which you esteem the graver fault, to deliver religion to one unworthy, or to believe that which is said by them who deliver it. If you do not understand whom I mean by an unworthy person, I mean him who comes with feigned breast. You grant, as I suppose, that it is more blameworthy to disclose to such a man whatever holy secrets there are, than to believe religious men asserting anything concerning religion itself. For it would not have become you

to answer anything else. Wherefore now suppose that he is present who is about to deliver to you a religion, in what manner are you going to give him assurance that you are approaching with a true mind, and that so far as pertains to this matter there is in you no fraud or feigning? You will say, by your own good conscience that you are feigning nothing, asserting the same thing as strongly as you can in words, but still only in words. For man cannot lay open to man the secret places of your mind, so that you may be thoroughly known. But if he shall say, Lo, I believe you, is it not more fair that you too should believe me, when, if I possess any truth, you are about to receive, I to give, a benefit? What will you answer except that you must believe?

24. But you say, Were it not better that you should give me a reason, that I may follow without rashness whithersoever it may lead me? Perhaps it were, but since the matter is so great, that God should come to be known to you by reason, do you think that all are fitted to comprehend the reasons by which the human mind is led to the knowledge of God, or that many are, or few? You reply, Few I think. Do you believe that you are in the number of these? It is not for me, you say, to answer this. Therefore you think it the other person's place to believe you in this also, as indeed he does. Only do you remember that he has now twice believed you saying uncertain things, and that you are not willing even once to believe him admonishing you in a religious manner. But let that be so, both that you come with a true mind to receive religion, and that you are so far one of the few that you are able to grasp the reasons by which the Divine Power is brought into certain knowledge; why do you think that religion is to be denied

to the rest of men who are not endowed with such happy abilities? Or do you think that they are to be led gradually by certain steps to those deepest recesses? You see clearly which is the more religious. For it cannot appear to you that any man ought in any way to be abandoned or rejected in his desire for so great a thing. But do you not think, unless he first believes that he will attain to that which he purposes, and offers a suppliant mind, and obeying certain great and necessary precepts by a certain course of life purge it thoroughly, that he will not otherwise attain to those things which are purely true. You think so, certainly. What then with regard to those, of which class I now believe you to be one, who are very easily able to receive the divine secrets by certain reason, if they come by this road by which they come who believe at first; will it at all hinder them? I think not. But yet you say, What need is there to delay them? Because although they will in no way harm themselves by what is done, they will yet harm others by their example. For there is scarcely any one who thinks so much of himself as he might, but he who thinks too little must be roused, he who thinks too much must be repressed, so that neither the former be crushed by despair, nor the other carried headlong by presumption. Which is easy, if they too who are able to fly, lest they should be a perilous inducement to any one, are for a little obliged to walk by the path where it is safe for others also. This is the forethought of true religion, this the divine command, this was handed down by our blessed forefathers, this was observed even down to us; to wish to disturb and overthrow this is nothing else than to seek a sacrilegious way to true religion. And they who do this, even if what they wish be allowed them, are not able to arrive at the point at which they aim.

For let them excel in whatever kind of abilities they please, unless God be present with them, they creep on the ground. But He is then present, if there is a regard for their fellow-men in those who are aiming at God. Than which step nothing can be found more firm in the road to heaven. I, indeed, am not able to resist this reasoning, for how am I able to say that nothing is to be believed without full knowledge? since both friendship, unless something be believed which cannot be demonstrated by certain reason, would not exist at all, and often slaves who are stewards are trusted without any fault on the part of their masters. But in religion what could be more unfair than that God's ministers should believe us when we affirm that our hearts are not feigned, and that we should be unwilling to believe them when they bid anything? Lastly, what road can be more healthful than first to become fitted for receiving the truth, by giving credence to those things which have been divinely appointed for the previous culture and preparation of the heart? Or if you are already altogether fitted, rather to go round a little way where it is safest to enter, than to be both a cause of danger to yourself and a precedent for rashness to others?

25. Wherefore it now remains that we consider how they are not to be followed, who promise that they will conduct us by means of reason. For it has been already said how we may without fault follow those who bid us believe; but some think that they come to these promisers of reason, not only without blame, but even with some degree of praise, but it is not so. For there are two praiseworthy classes in

religion, one of those who have already found, whom also we must of necessity judge most blessed, the other of those who are seeking most zealously and most rightly. The first, therefore, are already in very possession, the second in the way, by which however it is most surely attained to. There are three other classes of men, to be assuredly disapproved of and detested. One is of those who hold their opinions, that is of those who think that they know what they know not. The second is of those who feel indeed that they know not, but do not so seek as to be able to find. The third is of those who neither think that they know, nor wish to seek. There are also three things in men's minds, as it were near to one another, most worth distinguishing, to understand, to believe, to be of opinion. And if these are considered by themselves, the first is always without fault, the second sometimes is faulty, the third never without fault. For to understand great and noble things, or even divine, is most blessed. Again, to understand superfluous things does no harm, but perchance the learning them did harm, since they occupied the time of necessary matters. But with regard to injurious things themselves, not the understanding, but the doing or suffering them is wretched. For if any one understands how his enemy can be killed without danger to himself, he is not guilty because of the understanding, and not because of the wish, and if this be wanting what can be called more free from guilt? But to believe is then to be blamed, when either anything unworthy is believed concerning God, or anything is readily believed concerning man. But in other matters, if any one believes anything, if he understand that he does not know it, there is no fault. For

I believe that very wicked conspirators were formerly put to death by the virtue of Cicero: and yet I not only do not know it, but certainly know that I cannot in any manner know it. But to be of opinion is most base because of two things: that he who has persuaded himself that he already knows cannot learn, if only the matter can be learnt; and of itself rashness itself is a sign of an ill-disposed mind. For even if any one persuades himself that he knows this very thing which I said about Cicero, although nothing hinders him from learning, because the matter itself can be grasped by no knowledge; yet, because he does not understand that it makes a great difference, whether any matter is grasped by sure reason of the mind, which is what we call understanding it, or be usefully committed to report or letters in order to be believed by posterity, he errs assuredly, and no error is free from baseness. We owe then to reason what we understand; to authority what we believe; to error what we have an opinion about. But every one who understands also believes; and every one who has an opinion believes, not every one who believes understands; no one who has an opinion understands. If, then, these three things be referred to those five classes of men, which we lately mentioned, that is the two to be approved which we placed first, and the remaining three faulty, we find that the first class of the blessed believe the truth itself, the second again, of those who pursue and love truth, believe authority. In which classes of the two belief is praiseworthy. But in the first class of the faulty, that is of those who are of opinion that they know that which they know not, there is certainly a faulty credulity. The two other

classes which are to be reprobated believe nothing, both they who seek the truth in despair of finding it, and they who do not seek it at all. And this only in matters pertaining to any system of teaching. For in the other business of life I am wholly ignorant how a man can believe nothing. Although amongst them, too, they who say that they follow probability in action wish rather to appear to know nothing than to believe nothing. For who does not believe what he approves? and how is that which they follow probable, if it be not approved? Wherefore there can be two kinds of opponents of truth, one of those who only oppose knowledge not faith; the second of those who condemn each, yet again I am ignorant whether they can be found in human affairs. These things have been said that we might understand that we, when we retain faith even of those things which we do not yet understand, are free from the rashness of those who have an opinion. For they who say that nothing is to be believed except what we know, are on their guard against that one term 'opinion,' which must be confessed to be base and very wretched; but if they diligently considered that it made a very great difference whether any one thinks that he knows, or, being moved by some authority, believes that which he understands that he does not know, he will assuredly escape the charge of error and want of culture and pride.

26. For, I ask, if what is not known is not to be believed, how do children serve their parents, and love with mutual affection those whom they believe not to be their parents. For it cannot in any way be known by reason, but by the intervention of the mother's authority it is believed of the father, but of the mother it is not generally she who is

believed, but midwives, nurses, servants. For she from whom a son may be stolen and another put in his place, may not she, being deceived, deceive? Yet we believe, and believe without any doubt, what we confess that we cannot know. For who but must see that, unless it be so, dutiful affection, the holiest bond of the human race, is violated by the wickedness of excessive pride. For who, even if mad, would think him meet to be blamed who rendered due services to those whom he believed to be his parents, even if they were not so? Who, on the other hand, would not judge that he ought to be banished, who loved not those who were perchance his true parents, whilst he fears lest he should love those who are false. Many things can be brought forward, by which it can be shewn that nothing whatever of human society remains safe, if we have determined to believe nothing which we are not able to grasp and apprehend.

27. But now listen to what I am confident I shall now more easily persuade you of. When dealing with religion, that is with the worship and understanding of God, they are not to be followed who bid us not to believe, most readily promising us reason. For no one doubts but that all men are either fools or wise. Now I call wise, not men of wit and ability, but those in whom there exists, so far as it can exist in man, the knowledge of man himself and of God, most surely realized, and life and behaviour agreeing with that knowledge, but the rest of men, by whatever kind of skill or want of skill they are marked, for whatever kind of life

they may be approved or reprobated, I should reckon in the number of fools. And this being so, who of moderate intelligence will not plainly see that it is more profitable and healthful for fools to obey the precepts of the wise than to live by their own judgment. For every action, if it be not rightly done, is a sin, nor can that be in any way rightly done which does not proceed from right reason. Further, right reason is virtue itself. But to whom of men is virtue at hand, except to the mind of the wise? So the wise man alone does not sin. Therefore every fool sins, except in those actions in which he obeys a wise man, for such actions proceed from right reason, nor, so to say, is the fool to be accounted master of his own action, since he is, as it were, the instrument and that which is employed by the wise man. Wherefore, if it is better for all men not to sin than to sin, all fools would assuredly live better, if they could be slaves of the wise. And if no one doubts that this would be expedient in minor matters, as in buying or cultivating land, in marrying a wife, in rearing and educating children, and lastly in the management of property itself, much more in religion. For human matters are both more easy to distinguish than divine, and in any kind of matters of greater sanctity and excellence, the more obedience and reverence we owe them, the more grievous and dangerous is it to sin. You see, then, that henceforth nothing remains for us, so long as we are fools, if the most excellent and religious life is dear to us, but to seek the wise,

by obeying whom we may be able not to feel so much the dominion of folly, whilst it exists in us, and at some time to escape from it.

28. Here again arises a very difficult question. For by what means shall we fools be able to find a wise man, since, although scarcely any one would dare to do so openly, yet most men claim indirectly, whilst they so disagree among themselves about the very things in the knowledge of which wisdom consists, that it must needs be that either none of them, or one certain one is wise? But I do not at all see how it can be plainly distinguished and perceived who that one is, when he is sought for by the fool. For one cannot recognize anything by whatever signs unless he know that matter itself, whose signs these are. But the fool is ignorant of wisdom. For it is not possible that wisdom should be seen by the mind's eye of him who lacks it, as you may recognize, though you may not possess, gold and silver, and other things of that kind, when you see them. For whatever things we come in contact with by the senses of the body, are offered us from without, and therefore we can also see with the eyes things which belong to others, whilst we have nothing of them or of that kind. But that which is perceived by the understanding is within in the mind, and to have it is nothing else than to see. But the fool lacks wisdom, therefore he knows not wisdom. For he could not see it with his eyes, for he cannot see and not have, neither can he have and be a fool. Therefore he does not know this, and whilst he does not know it, he cannot recognize it elsewhere. No one, so long as he is a fool, is able, with most

sure knowledge, to find a wise man, by obeying whom he may be delivered from the so great evil of folly.

29. Therefore, since we are enquiring about religion, God alone can remedy this so immense difficulty, and unless we believe that He both is, and assists men's minds, we ought not even to seek for true religion itself. For what pray do we wish to search out with such effort? What do we wish to attain to? Whither do we desire to arrive? Is it to that point, which we do not believe to exist, or to pertain to us? Nothing is more perverse than such a state of mind. At a time when you would not dare to ask a kindness of me, or would be impudent in daring, do you come to demand the discovery of a religion, when you think that God does not exist, or if He does exist, does not care for us? What if the matter be so great that it cannot be found unless sought for carefully and with all our might? What if the exceeding difficulty of finding exercise the mind of the seeker for the reception of that which shall be found? For what is more pleasant and familiar to our eyes than this light? And yet men are unable to endure and bear it after long darkness. What is more suited to the body exhausted by sickness than food and drink? Yet we see convalescents checked and restrained, lest they venture to commit themselves to the fulness of those in health, and bring it to pass by the food itself that they fall back into that disease in which they used to reject it. I speak of convalescents, what, do we not urge the sick themselves to take something? In which assuredly they would not with so great discomfort obey us, if they did not believe that they should recover from that disease. When then will you give yourself to a most toil-

some and laborious enquiry? When will you venture to lay upon yourself such care and trouble as the matter itself is worthy of, when you do not believe that that which you seek exists? Rightly, therefore, has it been appointed by the majesty of the Catholic discipline that faith should be before all things urged upon those who approach to religion.

30. And so what reason, I pray you, will that heretic (since our discourse is about those who wish to be called Christians) allege to me? What is there whereby he may recall me from believing as if from rashness? If he bids me believe nothing, I believe not that this very true religion exists at all in human affairs, and if I do not believe that it exists, I do not seek for it. But he, as I suppose, will shew it to me seeking for it, for so it is written, *He that seeketh shall find*. Therefore, unless I believed something, I should not come to him who bids me not to believe. Is there any greater madness than that I should displease him by faith alone, which rests upon no knowledge, which faith alone brought me to him?

31. What that all heretics exhort us to believe in Christ? Can they be more opposed to themselves? In which matter they are to be pressed in two ways. First they must be asked where is that reason which they promised, where the reproof of rashness, where the presumption of knowledge. For if it be base to believe any one without reason, why do you expect, why do you busy yourself that I should believe some one without reason in order that I may be the more easily led by your reason? Will your reason build anything firm on the foundation of rashness? I am speaking

after the manner of those whom we displease by believing. For I judge it not only most wholesome, but absolutely such that without it health cannot return to sick souls, to believe before reason, when you are qualified to receive reason, and to cultivate the mind by faith itself for receiving the seeds of faith. And in that this seems to them a thing to be derided and full of rashness, assuredly they endeavour in a shameless manner that we should believe in Christ. Then I confess that I have already believed in Christ, and have established in my mind that what He said is true even though it be supported by no reason. Are you, O heretic, going to teach me this in the first place? Suffer me to consider a little with myself (since I have not seen Christ Himself, how He willed to appear to men, Who is declared to have been seen even by those ordinary eyes), whom I have believed concerning Him, that I may come to you already furnished beforehand with such a faith. I see that I have believed none except the confirmed opinion and very widely spread report of peoples and nations, but that the mysteries of the Catholic Church have always had possession of these peoples. Why should I not then preferably enquire most diligently of them, what Christ commanded, having been moved by whose authority I have already believed that Christ commanded something profitable? Will you expound to me better what He said, Whom I should not suppose to have existed or to exist if this were commended by you to me to be believed? This, therefore, as I said, I have believed through report strengthened by numbers, by consent, by antiquity. But you are both so few, and so turbulent, and so modern, no one has a doubt how absolutely nothing worthy of authority you offer. What

then, is that so great madness of yours? Believe them that Christ is to be believed, and learn from us what He said. Why, I beseech you? For if they were to fail and could not teach me anything, I could much more easily persuade myself that I ought not to believe in Christ, than that I ought to learn anything about Him, except from those through whom I had believed in Him. O immense confidence, or rather folly! I teach you what Christ commanded, in Whom you believe. What if I did not believe in Him, could you teach me anything about Him? But it behoves you, says he, to believe. Why? because you commend Him? No, he says, for we lead by reason those who believe in Him. Why then should I believe Him? Because the report is established. Is it through you or through others? Through others, says he. Shall I then believe them that you may teach me? Perhaps I ought to do so, unless they had chiefly given me this warning that I was not to approach you at all, for they say that you have pernicious doctrines. You will answer, they lie. How then can I believe them concerning Christ, Whom they have not seen, and not believe them concerning you, whom they are unwilling to see? Believe the writings, says he. But every writing, if it be brought forward new and unheard of, or be commended by few with no reason confirming it, that writing is not believed, but they who bring it forward. Wherefore if you who are so few and unknown bring forward those writings, it does not please me to believe them. At the same time too you are acting contrary to your promise, by enjoining faith rather than giving a reason. You will call me back again to numbers and common report. Restrain, I pray, your obstinacy, and that untamed lust, whatever it be, of spreading your name, and advise me rather to seek the chief

men of this multitude, and to seek them most diligently and laboriously, that from them I may rather learn something concerning these writings, which if they did not exist, I should not know at all that I had to learn. But do you go back to your hiding-places, and do not lay any snares under the name of truth, which you endeavour to take away from them, to whom you yourself grant authority.

32. But if they say that we are not even to believe in Christ, unless undoubted reason shall be given, they are not Christians. For certain Pagans say that against us, foolishly indeed, but not contrary to, nor inconsistent with, themselves. But who could endure that these should profess that they belong to Christ, who contend that they are to believe nothing, unless they shall bring forward to fools most open reason concerning God? But we see that He Himself, so far as that history which they also believe teaches, willed that nothing should be believed in before, nothing more strongly than Himself: when they with whom He had to do were not yet fitted for receiving the divine secrets. For what other is the purpose of so great and so many miracles, when He Himself also said that they were done for no other reason, than that He might be believed in. He used to lead fools by faith, you lead them by reason. He used to cry out that He should be believed in, you declaim against it. He used to praise those that believe, you blame them. But unless either He should change water into wine, to omit other miracles, if men could follow Him doing nothing of that kind but only teaching, either that saying is to be made no account of, *Ye believe in God, believe also in Me*, or he is to be charged with rashness who would not that He should come into his house, believing that the sickness of his servant would depart at His mere command. Therefore He, bringing a medicine which should

heal the most corrupt manners, commended His authority by miracles, by His authority obtained belief, by belief drew together a multitude, by a multitude gained antiquity, by antiquity strengthened religion, which not only the most foolish novelty of heretics dealing deceitfully, nor even the inveterate error of the nations by its violent opposition could on any side tear up.

33. Wherefore although I am not able to teach, yet I cease not to advise, that, since many wish to appear wise, and it is not easy to distinguish whether they are fools, you should entreat God with all earnestness, and with all prayers, and lastly with groans, or if it be possible with tears, that He should set you free from the evil of error, if your heart be set on a life of blessedness. Which will more easily be done, if you willingly obey His precepts which He willed should be made sure by the so great authority of the Catholic Church. For since the wise man is so conjoined to God in mind, that nothing intervenes to cause separation—for God is Truth, and no one is by any means wise, if he do not in his mind lay hold of truth—we cannot deny that between the folly of man and the most pure truth of God, the wisdom of man is set as something intervening. For the wise man, as far as is given him, imitates God, but nothing is nearer to a foolish man for imitating healthfully than a wise man, whom since, as has been said, it is not easy to understand by reason, it was needful that certain miracles should be brought near the eyes themselves, which miracles fools use with much greater ease than the mind, that first the life and

ways of the men who are stirred by authority might be purified, and so become meet for receiving reason. Since then both man is to be imitated and our hope is not to be set in man, what could be done by God with greater kindness and bounty, than that the very pure, eternal, and unchangeable Wisdom of God to Whom it is needful for us to cleave, should condescend to take man's nature? Who should not only do those things by which we might be invited to follow God, but also suffer those things by which we were deterred from following God. For since no one can gain the most certain and highest good unless he love it fully and perfectly, which will not by any means take place so long as the evils of the body and accidents are dreaded; He by being miraculously born and working attracted love to Himself, and by dying and rising again shut out fear. Then, too, in all other matters, which it is too long to go through, He shewed Himself such, that we might feel both to what point the Divine clemency could be stretched out, and to what point human weakness might be raised.

34. This is, believe me, a most wholesome authority, this is a lifting up of our mind first from dwelling on earth, this a turning from the love of this world to the true God. It is authority alone which moves fools to hasten to wisdom. So long as we cannot understand pure truths, it is miserable indeed to be deceived by authority; but certainly it is more miserable not to be moved. For if the Providence of God does not preside over human affairs, there is no need to busy ourselves about religion. But if the outward appearance of all things which we must assuredly believe to issue forth from some source of most true beauty, and some, I know not

what, interior feeling exhorts as it were publicly and privately all the better kind of minds to seek God and to serve God, we must not give up the hope that some authority has been appointed by that same God, resting whereon, as on a sure step, we may be raised to God. But this, when reason is set aside, which, as we have often said, it is most difficult for fools to understand when pure, moves us in a twofold manner, partly by miracles, partly by multitude of followers. Nothing of these is necessary for a wise man; who would deny it? But our business now is, how we may be able to be wise, that is to cleave to the truth, which assuredly the filthy soul cannot do. Now the filth of the soul is, to explain it briefly, a love of any things besides the soul and God, from which filth the more purged any one is so much the more easily does he behold the truth. Therefore, to wish to see the truth that you may purge your soul, when it is therefore purged that you may see is certainly perverse and preposterous. Therefore authority is at hand to a man unable to see the truth; that he may become fitted for it, and suffer himself to be purged; and, as I said a little before, no one doubts that this avails partly by miracles, partly by multitude. I call a miracle whatever appears difficult or unusual beyond the expectation or power of him who wonders at it. In which kind nothing is more adapted for the people and for foolish men in general, than what is brought near to the senses. But again, these are divided into two classes, for there are some which only cause wonder, but some procure favour and good-will. For if any one were to see a man flying, since that circumstance would confer no advantage

on the spectator beyond the sight itself, he would only wonder. But if any one affected with grievous and hopeless disease were to recover at once upon being bidden he will surpass his wonder at his cure by love for him who cured him. Such things were done at that time when God as much as was sufficient appeared unto men in True Man. The sick were healed, the lepers cleansed, power to walk was restored to the lame, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf. The men of that time saw water changed into wine, five thousand satisfied with five loaves, the sea crossed over on foot, the dead rising again; so certain things done for the body by more manifest benefit, certain things again for the mind by more hidden sign, and all were for the good of men by their witness to Majesty: thus at that time was the Divine Authority moving the wandering souls of mortal men to itself. Why, you ask, do not those things take place now? Because they would not move, unless they were wonderful; but if they were usual, they would not be wonderful. Let there be some one with whom, however, we may be able to speak, who for the first time sees and perceives the changes of day and night, and the constant order of the heavenly bodies, the changes of the years divided into four parts, the leaves falling from and returning to the trees, the infinite power of seeds, the beauty of the light, the varieties of colours, sounds, scents, and tastes: he is stupefied and overwhelmed with miracles, but we despise all these things, not because of the ease of understanding them, for what is more obscure than the causes of these? but surely because of our constantly perceiving them. Therefore they were done at a most opportune time, that a multitude of believers, having

been gathered together by them and spread abroad, authority might be profitably turned upon men's habits themselves.

35. But any kinds of habits have so much power in holding men's minds, that even those among them which are evil, as usually happens where lusts hold sway, we are sooner able to disapprove of and detest than to abandon or to change. Do you think that little thought has been given to the benefit of men, that not a few very learned men argue, but that even the unlearned mass of men and women in so many and such different nations both believes and proclaims that nothing of earth, nothing of fire, nothing in fine which comes in contact with the senses of the body, is to be worshipped as God? That abstinence extends to the slenderest sustenance of bread and water; and that not for the day only but even through many days in succession fasts are prolonged; that chastity is carried even to contempt of marriage and offspring; endurance even to despising the cross and flames; liberality even to distributing inheritances to the poor; that, lastly, the contempt of the whole of this world even to the desire of death? Few do these things, fewer still do them well and prudently; but nations approve, nations hear, nations favour, nations, lastly, love; nations accuse their own weakness that they cannot do those things, and this not without some carrying forward of the mind to God, nor without certain sparks of virtue. This has been effected by the Providence of God, through the oracles of the Prophets, through the Manhood and teaching of Christ,

through the journeys of the Apostles, through the insults, crosses, blood, and deaths of the Martyrs, through the praiseworthy life of the Saints, and in all these through miracles worthy of so great matters, according as the times offered occasion. When, therefore, we see so great help of God, so great progress and fruit, shall we hesitate to hide ourselves in the bosom of that Church, which from the seat of the Apostles, through the successions of Bishops, even unto the confession of the human race, hath obtained the summit of authority, heretics in vain barking around her, and being condemned partly by the judgment of the very people, partly by the weight of councils, partly also by the majesty of miracles? To whom to be unwilling to grant the first place is assuredly a mark either of the greatest impiety, or of headlong arrogance. For if there be no sure way for souls to wisdom and safety except when faith prepares them for reason, what else is to be ungrateful for the Divine aid and assistance than to wish to resist authority furnished with so great labour? And if every system of teaching, though mean and easy, requires a teacher or master that it may be received, what is more full of rash pride than both to be unwilling to get the knowledge of the books of the Divine mysteries from their interpreters, and to wish to condemn them unknown?

36. Wherefore, if either reason or my discourse has in any way moved you, and if, as I believe, you have a true care for

yourself, I would you would listen to me, and with pious faith, lively hope, and simple charity, entrust yourself to good teachers of Catholic Christianity; and cease not to pray to God Himself, by Whose goodness alone we were made, by Whose justice we suffer punishments, and by Whose clemency we are delivered. So there will be wanting to you neither precepts and arguments of most learned and truly Christian men, nor books, nor calm thoughts themselves, by which you may easily find what you seek. For do you wholly forsake those wordy and wretched men (for what other milder word could I use?) who while they seek too much whence evil is, find nothing but evil. In which investigation they often rouse their hearers to enquire, but teach them when roused such things as that it were better even to sleep always than to be awake in that fashion. For instead of lethargic they make them frantic, between which two diseases, since each is generally deadly, there is yet this difference, that the lethargic die without troubling others, but a frantic man is to be dreaded by many who are sound, and chiefly by those who wish to help him. For neither is God the author of evil, nor hath it ever repented Him to have done anything, nor is He disturbed by the storm of any commotion of soul, nor is a small portion of the earth His Kingdom; He approves and commands no crimes or wickednesses, He never lies. For these and such like assertions used to move us, when they brandished them with great invectives, and alleged that this was the teaching of the Old Testament, which is wholly and utterly false. Thus, then, I grant that they rightly blame those things. What then have I learned? What do you think, except that when these are censured the

Catholic system is not censured? So what I had learned among them that is true, I hold; what I had thought which is false, I reject. But the Catholic Church taught me many other things to which those men, bloodless in body but coarse in mind, cannot aspire; namely, that God is not corporeal, that no part of Him can be perceived by the bodily eyes, that nothing of His Substance and Nature can in any way be subject to violence or change, or is compounded or formed, which points if you grant me (for one must not think otherwise concerning God) all their devices are overthrown. But how that is, that God neither begot nor created evil, and yet that there neither is, nor ever has been any nature or substance which God did not either beget or create, and yet that He delivers us from evil, is proved by reasons so necessary that it cannot at all be doubted, especially by you, and such as you; if, that is, to a good disposition there be added piety and a certain peace of mind, without which nothing whatever can be understood concerning such great subjects. And here there is no rumour concerning smoke, and I know not what Persian fable, to which it is enough to lend an ear, and a soul not subtle, but absolutely childish. For altogether far otherwise is the truth, not as the Manichees doat. But since this discourse of mine has run on to much greater length than I expected, let us here set an end to the book, in which I would have you remember, that I have not yet begun to refute the Manichees, and that I have not yet attacked that nonsense, nor unfolded

anything great concerning the Catholic Church; but that I have wished only, if I could, to root out of you a false opinion concerning Christians, which was maliciously or ignorantly suggested to us, and to stir you up to learn certain great and Divine things. Wherefore let this volume be as it is, and if your soul becomes more well disposed, I shall perhaps be more prompt in what remains.

RETRACTATIONS, BK. II. CHAP. LXIII.

I ALSO wrote a book concerning Faith, Hope, and Charity, at the request of the person to whom it is addressed, that he might have some little work of mine never to leave his hands, of the class which the Greeks call *Enchiridion* [hand-book]. In which I seem to myself to have pretty carefully treated of the manner in which God should be worshipped, which knowledge Divine Scripture defines to be the true wisdom of man.

This book thus commences. *I cannot express, my dearest son Laurentius, how much I am delighted at your learning.*

S. AURELIUS AUGUSTINE,
BISHOP OF HIPPO,
THE ENCHIRIDION TO LAURENTIUS,
OR
CONCERNING FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.
BOOK I.

In the first and much the largest part of the book Augustine teaches what things are to be believed, keeping the order of the Creed, and refutes all through the various heresies of the Manichees, Apollinarians, Priscillianists, Arians, and especially of the Pelagians, without mentioning their names. He devotes the second part to those matters which pertain to hope, in a very short exposition of the Lord's Prayer. And lastly he adds a third part, also of no great length, concerning Charity.

I. I cannot express, my dearest son Laurentius, how much I am delighted at your learning, and how earnestly I desire that you may be wise; not of the number of those concerning whom it is said, *Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world*^a? but of those concerning whom it is written, *The multitude of the wise is the*

^a 1 COR. i. 20.

welfare of the world^b. And such as the Apostle wishes them to become, to whom he says, *I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil*^c. But as no one can of himself exist, so too no one can of himself be wise, but of Him, concerning Whom it is written, *All wisdom is from God*^d.

2. Now the wisdom of man is godliness. This you have in the book of holy Job, for there it is written that Wisdom herself said to man, *Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom*^e. But if you enquire what piety she there spoke of, you will find more clearly in the Greek *Θεοσέβειαν*, which is the worship of God. For in Greek is also another word, that is, *εὐσέβεια*, by which name is signified good worship, although this too is chiefly referred to worshipping God. But there is nothing more convenient than that name by which the worship of God was clearly expressed, when it was said what was man's wisdom. Do you require that anything should be said more briefly, you who ask of me that great things should be briefly spoken of? Or do you perhaps desire that this very point should be briefly opened, and brought together in a short discourse, in what manner God is to be worshipped?

3. Here, if I answer that God is to be worshipped by Faith, Hope, and Charity, you will surely say that this statement is shorter than you wished; and then you will ask that those things may be briefly explained to you, which pertain

^b Wisd. vi. 26.

^d Eccus. i. 1.

^c Rom. xvi. 19.

^e Wisd. xxviii. 28.

to those three heads, that is what is to be believed, what to be hoped for, what to be loved. And when I have done that, all those matters will be there which you have put in your letter by way of enquiry ; and if you have a copy of it by you, it is easy for you to turn them over and read them again, but if you have not, you may recall them as I make mention of them.

4. For you wish, as you write, "that a book should be composed for you by me, which you may have for a *Hand-book* (as they call it), and which may never leave your hands ; containing the things demanded, that is, what is chiefly to be followed, what by reason of different heresies is chiefly to be avoided ; how far reason contends for religion, or what there is in reason, when faith stands alone, which is not suitable ; what is held to be first, what last, what is the sum of the whole defined doctrine ; what the certain and proper foundation of the Catholic faith." All these things which you enquire after, you will without doubt know, by knowing attentively what ought to be believed, hoped, and loved. For these things especially, nay rather alone, are to be followed in religious matters. Whosoever contradicts these things is either an alien from the name of Christ, or a heretic. These things are to be defended by reason, either taking their origin from the senses of the body, or discovered by the intelligence of the mind. But those things which we have neither experienced by bodily sense, and neither have been nor are able to attain to by the powers of the mind, are without any doubt to be believed on the testimony of those by whom that Scripture was composed which is deservedly now called divine ; who being aided by God through the mind were able either to see or even foresee them.

5. But when the mind has been imbued with the beginning

of faith, which worketh by love, it strives by good living to attain even to that seeing, wherein is unspeakable beauty known to holy and perfect hearts, the full vision of which is the highest happiness. This is undoubtedly what you are asking for ; "What is held to be first, what last ;" that the beginning is made in faith, and is perfected in sight. For this is the sum of the whole defined doctrine. But Christ is the certain and proper foundation of the Catholic Faith. *For, says the Apostle, other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus*¹. Nor must this therefore be denied to be the proper foundation of the Catholic faith, because it may be thought that we have this in common with some heretics. For if the things which pertain to Christ be diligently thought on, so far as the name, Christ is found amongst some heretics, who desire themselves to be called Christians ; but in very deed He is not amongst them. To demonstrate which is too long a matter ; since all heresies would have to be mentioned, whether those which have been, or which are, or which have been able to be under the Christian name, and how true this is would have to be pointed out in each separately. Which discussion is a matter of so many volumes, that it might seem even endless.

6. But you ask me for a *Handbook*, that is, "what may be held in the hand, not what may load the book-cases." To return therefore to those three things by which we said God is to be worshipped, Faith, Hope, and Love, it is easy to see what is to be believed, what hoped for, what loved ; but how

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 11.

it may be defended against the false charges of those who think differently is a matter of more laborious and fuller teaching; to possess which it is not the hand which must be filled with a short Handbook, but the breast must be kindled with great zeal.

7. For, see, you have the Creed and the Lord's Prayer; what is there shorter to hear or read? What can be more easily committed to memory? Because too the human race was oppressed by heavy misery arising from sin, and was in need of divine mercy, the prophet foretelling the time of the grace of God says, *And it shall be that whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved*, for this reason is the Prayer. But the Apostle, when he had mentioned this testimony, for the commending of grace itself, immediately added, *But how shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed?* for this reason is the Creed. In these two things behold those three, Faith believes, Hope and Love pray; but they cannot exist without Faith, and by this Faith also prays. Wherefore indeed it was said, *How shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed?*⁶

8. But what can be hoped for which is not believed? Further, something too which is not hoped for can be believed. For who of the faithful does not believe the punishments of the ungodly? and yet he does not hope for them, and whosoever believes that they are hanging over him, and shudders at them with a shrinking movement of the mind, is more rightly said to fear than to hope. Which two things a certain one distinguishing between says, "Let one fearing

⁶ Rom. x. 13.

be allowed to hope." Again by another poet it hath been said, and although by a better one, not properly,

"If I have been able to hope for this so great grief."

In short, in the art of grammar, some use the instance of this word to point out an improper expression, and say, he said 'to hope' for 'to fear.' There is then faith both of evil things and of good; because both good things are believed and evil; and this with good not evil faith. For there is faith of things both past, present, and to come. For we believe that Christ died, which is now past; we believe that He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, which now is; we believe that He will come to judge, which is future. Also faith is both of one's own things and of those of others. For every one believes both that at some time he began to be, and certainly was not eternal, and other men likewise and other things. And not only about other men do we believe many things which pertain to religion, but also about angels. But hope is not except of good things, nor except of future things, and pertaining to him, who is supposed to have hope of them. Which things being so, for these reasons faith will have to be distinguished from hope, as in name so also by reasonable difference. For as respects not seeing whether things which are believed or which are hoped for, this is common to faith and hope. In fact in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which illustrious defenders of the Catholic rule have used, faith is said to be the *demonstration of things*

which are not seen^b. Although when any one says that he has believed, that is, has conformed his faith to, not words, nor witnesses, nor in short any arguments, but to the evidence of things present, he does not seem so wrong as to be rightly censured for the word, and to have it said to him, You have seen, therefore you have not believed : whence it can be supposed not to follow that whatever thing is believed may not be seen. But we more properly call that faith which the divine utterances have taught, of those things, that is, which are not seen. Concerning hope, too, the Apostle says, *Hope which is seen is not hope. For what a man seeth, why doth he hope for ? But if we hope for what we do not see, we through patience wait for it*ⁱ. When therefore good things are believed as about to happen to us, they are nothing else than hoped for. What shall I now say of love without which faith profiteth nothing ? But hope cannot exist without love. Lastly, as the Apostle James says, *The devils also believe and tremble*^k, yet they neither hope nor love, but rather what we hope for and love, they by believing that it is about to come, fear. For which reason the Apostle Paul approves of and commends faith which worketh by love, which assuredly cannot exist without hope. Wherefore neither does love exist without hope, nor hope without love, nor both without faith.

9. When therefore it is asked what is to be believed which pertains to religion, the nature of things is not to be so explored as it is by them whom the Greeks call *physici*; nor need we fear lest a Christian be ignorant of

^b Heb. xi. 1.

ⁱ Rom. viii. 24.

^k James ii. 19.

anything concerning the number and force of the elements, the movement and order of the stars, the figure of the heaven, the classes and natures of animals, shrubs, stones, springs, rivers and mountains ; concerning intervals of places and times, concerning signs of coming storms, and other six hundred things concerning those matters which they have either found out, or think that they have found out ; because neither they themselves have found out all things, [though] excelling in such great ability, burning with zeal, abounding in leisure, and investigating some things by human conjecture, others again by traditional experience, and in those things which they boast to have found out, having opinions rather than knowledge on most subjects. It is enough for a Christian to believe that the cause of creatures whether heavenly or earthly, whether visible or invisible, is none other than the goodness of the Creator, Who is the One and true God ; and that there is no nature which is not either Himself or from Himself ; and that He is the Trinity, that is the Father, and the Son begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the same Father ; but one and the same Spirit of the Father and of the Son.

10. All things were created by this supremely and equally and unchangeably good Trinity, and they not supremely nor equally nor unchangeably good, yet also each good separately, but all together very good, because the admirable beauty of the whole is made up of all. In which even that which is called evil, rightly set and put in its own place, commends more highly things that are good, so that they are more pleasing and praiseworthy, when they are compared with evil things.

11. For neither would Almighty God, being as even unbelievers confess, He Who has supreme power over things, suffer any evil to exist in His works, unless He were Almighty and good even to such a point as to make good even out of evil. For what else is that which is called evil but a privation of good? For as in the bodies of animals to be affected by diseases and wounds is nothing else but to be deprived of health (for when a method of healing is applied, the object is not that those evils which were in the body, that is diseases and wounds, should depart and be elsewhere, but they may not be at all. For a wound or disease is not any substance, but a defect of the carnal substance, since the flesh is the substance itself, and assuredly something good, to which those evils happen, that is privations of that good which is called health) so too whatever are the defects of souls are privations of natural good things, and when they are healed they are not transferred elsewhere, but those things which were there will be nowhere, since they will not be in that health.

12. All natures, therefore, since the Creator of absolutely all natures is supremely good, are good; but because they are not as their Creator, supremely and unchangeably good, therefore in them goodness can be both diminished and increased. But that good should be diminished is evil, although however much it be diminished, there must necessarily remain something (if it be nature) whence it may be nature. For neither if nature be of any kind and how little soever, can the good whereby it is nature

be destroyed, unless the nature itself too be destroyed. D deservedly indeed is an uncorrupted nature praised, further if it be incorruptible which absolutely cannot be corrupted, it is without doubt much more praiseworthy. But when it is corrupted, its corruption is therefore an evil, because it deprives it of some good or other : for if it deprives it of no good, it does not injure it ; but it does injure it, therefore it takes away good. So long therefore as nature is corrupted, good is in it, of which it may be deprived ; and if through this any of the nature shall remain, which now cannot be corrupted, assuredly the nature will be incorruptible, and by corruption will attain to this so great good. But if it shall not cease to be corrupted, neither will it assuredly cease to possess good, of which corruption may be able to deprive it. And if it shall have consumed it wholly and entirely, there will be no good in it for this reason, because there will be no nature in it. Wherefore corruption is not able to consume what is good, except by consuming the nature. Every nature therefore is a good, a great good if it cannot be corrupted, a small one if it can, yet it can absolutely not be denied to be a good, except foolishly and ignorantly. Which if it be consumed by corruption, neither will the corruption itself remain, since no nature will exist where it could be.

13. And therefore that which is called evil is not if good be not. But good void of all evil is perfect good, but that in which is evil is marred or faulty good, nor can there be any evil where good is not. Whence a wonderful thing is brought to pass, that, since all nature, so far as it is nature, is 'good, nothing else seems to be asserted when

a faulty nature is called an evil nature, than that what is good is evil, and that there is no evil, except what is a good, since every nature is a good, nor would anything be evil, if the thing itself which is evil were not a nature. There cannot therefore be evil except it be some good. And though this seems absurd to say, yet the connection of this reasoning as it were inevitably compels us to say this. And we must be on our guard, lest we fall under that saying of the prophet, where we read, *Woe unto those who call good evil, and evil good, who say that darkness is light and light darkness, who say that sweet is bitter, and bitter sweet*¹. And yet the Lord says, *An evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things*². But what is an evil man but an evil nature, because man is a nature? Further if man is some good, because he is a nature, what is an evil man but an evil good? Yet when we distinguish between those two things, we find that he is neither an evil because he is a man, nor therefore a good because he is unrighteous; but he is a good because he is a man, an evil because unrighteous. Whosoever therefore says, It is evil to be a man, or, It is good to be unrighteous, he falls under that sentence of the prophet, *Woe to them who say that good is evil, and that evil is good*. For he finds fault with the work of God which is man, and praises the fault of man which is unrighteousness. To them every nature, even if it be faulty, so far as it is a nature is a good, so far as it is faulty is evil.

¹ Isa. v. 20.² Matt. xii. 35.

14. Wherefore in those contraries which are called good and evil that rule of the dialecticians fails, in which they say that nothing has in it two contraries at the same time. For no air is at the same time both dark and bright, no food or drink at the same time both sweet and bitter, no body at the same time black in the parts where it is white, none at the same time in parts where it is unshapely there also beautiful. And this is found in many and nearly in all contraries, that they cannot exist at the same time in one thing. Since then no one doubts that goods and evils are contraries, not only can they coexist, but evils cannot at all exist without goods and except in goods, although goods can be without evils. For a man or an angel may not be unjust, but except a man or angel there cannot be one that is unjust, and that he is a man is a good, that he is an angel is a good, that he is unjust is an evil. And these two contraries so exist together, that if there were not the good in which the evil might be, neither could the evil be at all; for corruption would not only not have where to exist, but not even whence to arise, unless there were something which could be corrupted, since corruption is nothing else than the banishing of good. Evils then have arisen out of goods, and except in certain goods they are not, nor was there anywhere else whence any nature of evil could arise. For if there were, in so far as it was a nature it would assuredly have been good; and either an incorruptible nature would be a great good, or even a corruptible nature could in no way exist except as some good, by corrupting which good corruption could injure it.

15. But when we say that evils arise out of goods, let not this be thought to oppose the utterance of the Lord, wherein He said, *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruits*°. For, as the Truth said, grapes cannot be gathered from thorns, because a grape cannot spring from thorns, but we see both grapes and thorns able to spring from good ground. And in the same way, as it were, an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruits, that is an evil will cannot produce good works, but from the good nature of man both good and evil will can arise; nor was there at all whence originally evil will should arise, except from the good nature of angel and man. Which the Lord Himself, in the same place, where He was speaking of the tree and its fruits, most clearly shews, for He says, *Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree evil and its fruit evil*®: sufficiently warning us, that from a good tree indeed evil fruits cannot spring, nor from an evil tree good fruits; yet that each tree may spring from the same earth to which He was speaking.

16. This being so, since that verse of Maro pleases us,
 “Happy is he who has been able to learn the causes of things,”

let it not seem to us to pertain to the attainment of happiness if we know the causes of great movements of bodies in the world, which are concealed in the most hidden recesses of nature.

“Whence is trembling to the lands, by what power the deep seas swell,

Having burst their barriers, and again sink back into themselves;”
 and the other matters of this kind. But we ought to know

° Matt. vii. 18.

p Ib. xii. 33.

the causes of good and evil things, and these up to the point that is granted to man in this life most full of errors and miseries, in order that he may escape those same errors and miseries. We must aim assuredly at that happiness, where we may be shaken by no misery, and deceived by no error. For if the causes of the movements of bodies were to be known by us, we ought to know none more than those affecting our own health. But since, being in ignorance of them, we seek physicians, who does not see with how great patience we must be ignorant of that which is hidden from us of the secrets of heaven and earth.

17. For although we ought to guard against error with all the care we can, not only in greater but also in lesser matters, and that one cannot err except through ignorance of matters, it does not however follow that whosoever is ignorant of anything straightway errs, but whosoever thinks that he knows what he does not know ; seeing that he approves the false instead of the true, which is the property of error. Nevertheless it makes a very great difference in what matter each man errs. For in one and the same thing he who knows is with good reason preferred to him who knows not, and he who errs not to him who errs. But in different things, that is when one knows some things and another other things, and the latter more useful, the former less useful or even harmful things, who would not, in those things which he [the former] knows, prefer to him the man who knows not? For there are certain things which it is better to be ignorant of than to know. And so it has sometimes been an advantage to some to err, but in the way of the feet, not in that of habits. For it happened to ourselves, that we were mistaken in a certain cross-way, and did not go by that place where an armed band of Donatists lay in ambush waiting

for our passing by; and so it happened that we reached the place to which we were bound by a circuit out of the way, and having learned their devices, congratulated ourselves that we had gone out of the way, and gave God thanks therefore. Who then would hesitate to prefer a traveller thus erring, to a robber not erring thus? And for this reason, perhaps, a certain wretched lover, speaking in the writings of that excellent poet, says :

“When I saw, when I was undone, when evil error carried
me away,”

since there is a good error, which not only does not injure but also profits somewhat. But when we consider the truth more attentively, since to err is nothing else than to think that that is true which is false, and that false which is true, or to hold the certain for uncertain, and uncertain for certain, whether it be false or true, and this be in the mind as unseemly and unbecoming, as we feel Yea, yea, nay, nay, to be beautiful and becoming, in speaking or assenting, assuredly on this account, too, that life is wretched which we live, because error is sometimes necessary to it that it be not lost. Far be it from that life being such, where the truth itself is the life of our soul, where no one deceives, no one is deceived. But here men deceive and are deceived, and are more wretched when they deceive by lying than when they are deceived by believing those who lie. But our reasonable nature shrinks from what is untrue up to such a point, and as far as it can avoids error, so that they even

who love to deceive are unwilling to be deceived. For he who lies does not seem to himself to err, but to lead into error one who believes him. And in that matter indeed which he covers by a lie he does not err, if he himself knows what is true, but in this he is deceived, that he thinks that his lie does himself no harm, whereas every sin does harm to the doer more than to the sufferer.

18. But here a most difficult and obscure question arises, concerning which, when the necessity of a reply was pressing upon us, we have already concluded a large book; whether it pertain to the duty of a righteous man at any time to lie. For some go even so far as to contend that it is sometimes a good and pious work even to commit perjury, and to say what is false concerning matters pertaining to the worship of God, and concerning the very nature of God. But to me it seems indeed every lie is a sin, but that it makes a great difference with what intention and concerning what things each person lies. For he does not sin in the same degree who lies with the intention of benefiting as he who does so with that of injuring; nor again does he so gravely injure who by lying sends a traveller into the wrong road, as he who by a deceitful lie perverts the way of life. No one indeed is to be judged to be lying who says an untruth which he thinks to be true, since as far as in him is, he does not deceive, but is deceived. He is, therefore, not to be blamed for falsehood but rather for carelessness, who incautiously esteems falsehoods for truths; and on the other hand he rather, so far as is in him lies, who speaks a truth which he considers false. For as far as relates to his mind, because he says not that which he thinks, he lies, although what he

says may be found to be true ; nor is he in any way free from falsehood, who unknowingly speaks the truth with his mouth but knowingly lies in intention. So, then, the matters themselves about which anything is said not being considered, but only the intention of the speaker, he is better who unknowingly says what is false since he thinks it true, than he who knowingly has the intention of deceiving, not knowing that what he says is true. For the former has not one thing in his mind and another in his words, but the latter, whatever that may be in itself which is said by him, yet has one thing shut up in his breast, another is ready on his tongue, which is the special evil of the liar. But in considering the things themselves which are said, it makes so great a difference in what matter each person is deceived or lies, that whereas it is a less evil to be deceived than to lie, so far as pertains to the will of man, yet it is far more tolerable to lie in those matters which are separate from religion, than to be deceived in those without the knowledge and belief of which God cannot be worshipped. To illustrate which by examples, let us consider what the case will be if some one, when he lies, report that some dead person is alive, and another, being deceived, believe that Christ, after however long time, will die again ; is it not beyond comparison better to lie in the former manner than to be deceived in the latter ? and is it not a much less evil to lead some one into the former error, than to be led by some one into the latter ?

19. So, then, we are deceived in certain matters with great evil, in certain matters with little, in certain matters with none. For a man is deceived with great evil when he

does not believe this which leads to eternal life, or believes this which leads to eternal death. But he is deceived with little evil, who by approving the false for the true falls into some temporal inconveniences, which, however, by the exercise in them of faithful patience he turns to good account. As if some one by thinking a man who is bad to be good, should suffer some evil from him. But he who believes a bad man to be good, so as to suffer no evil from him, is not deceived by any evil, nor does that denunciation of the Prophet fall upon him, *Woe to those who call what is evil good*⁹. For this must be understood as said of the things themselves whereby men are evil, not of the men. Whence he who should call adultery good is rightly convicted by that saying of the prophet. But he who calls the man himself good, whom he supposes chaste, and knows not to be an adulterer, is deceived not in the doctrine of good and evil things, but in the hidden matters of human character, by calling a man good in whom he thinks that to be which he does not doubt to be good, and calling an adulterer evil, and a chaste man good, but calling this man good not knowing that he is an adulterer and not chaste. Further, if through error any one escape destruction, as I said above happened to us on a journey, some good happens to the man from the error. But when I say that in certain things a man may be deceived with no evil, or even with some good, I do not call the error itself no evil or some good, but the evil which is not reached, or the good which is reached by erring, that is, either what in consequence of the very error itself does not come to pass, or

⁹ Isa. iii. 20.

what does come to pass. For the error itself, being either a great evil in a great matter, or a small one in a small matter, yet is always an evil. For who unless in error would deny that it was an evil to approve things false as true, or to condemn things true as false, or to esteem uncertain things for certain, or certain things for uncertain? But it is one thing to think a man good who is bad, which comes of error, and another thing not to suffer another evil arising from this evil, if the bad man who is supposed to be good does no harm. And so it is another thing to suppose that the way which is not; and another that some good should result from the evil of this error, as is to be delivered from the lying in wait of evil men.

20. I know not indeed whether also errors of this kind, when a man thinks well of a bad man, not knowing what he is; or when instead of those things which we perceive through the bodily senses, like things happen to us, which are felt by the spirit as if by the body, or by the body as if by the spirit; such as the Apostle Peter thought it to be, when he supposed he saw a vision, being suddenly freed by a holy angel from his bolts and chains; or when in bodily things themselves that is supposed to be soft which is rough, or sweet which is bitter, or to smell pleasantly which is stinking, or that it thunders when a cart passes, or that that one is the man when he is another, when two are very like each other, which often happens in the case of twins, whence he says,

“And a mistake pleasing to their parents,”

and whether other such like things are to be called sins likewise [I know not]. Nor has that most knotty question, which has tormented those most acute men the academicians, been undertaken to be now solved by me, whether a wise man ought to approve anything, lest he fall into error if he shall approve false things for true, since all things (as they affirm) are either hidden or uncertain. Whence in the beginning of my conversion I compiled three volumes, that they might not be a hindrance to us, who contradicted us as it were at the entrance. And certainly the despair of finding truth, which seems to be strengthened by their arguments, had needed to be removed. With them, then, every error is supposed to be sin, which they contend cannot be avoided, unless all assent be suspended. In fact they say that he errs, whosoever assents to what is uncertain, and they contend by the most subtle but most shameless arguments that because of the undistinguishable likeness of falsehood [to truth] nothing is certain in things seen of men, even if what appears be perchance true. But with us, *The just lives by faith*¹. But if assent be taken away, faith is taken away, because without assent nothing is believed. And there are truths, though they be not seen, without believing which one cannot attain to the life of bliss, which is none but life eternal. But I know not whether one ought to argue with those who are ignorant, not that they shall live for ever, but that they are alive at present, indeed they say that they are ignorant of things which they cannot be ignorant of. For neither is any one suffered to be ignorant that he is alive; inasmuch as if he be not alive, he cannot even be ignorant of anything, since not only to know but even to be ignorant

¹ Rom. i. 17.

belongs to a living person. But, plainly by not assenting that they are alive, they seem to themselves to guard against error, when even by erring they are proved to be alive, since he who is not alive cannot err. As, then, that we are alive is not only true but also certain, so many things are true and certain, not to assent to which far be it that it should be called wisdom rather than madness.

21. But in matters in which it makes no difference for attaining to the kingdom of God, whether they be believed or not, or whether they be true or supposed to be so, or false ; to err in these, that is, to suppose one thing instead of another, must not be thought to be a sin, or if it is, to be a very small and very light one. Lastly, of whatever kind it be and how great soever, it pertains not to that way by which we go to God, which way is the faith of Christ which worketh by love. For neither in the case of the twin sons did that mistake pleasing to the parents deviate from this way, nor did the Apostle Peter deviate from this way, when thinking that he saw a vision, he so took one thing from another, that he did not distinguish the true bodies amongst which he was, from the images of bodies amongst which he supposed that he was, except after that the angel, by whom he had been set free, departed from him ; nor did the patriarch Jacob deviate from this way, when he thought that his living son had been killed by a wild beast. In these and such like falsities we both are deceived, our faith which we have in God being sound, and we err without leaving the way which leads to Him ; which errors, although they be not sins, yet must be reckoned among the evils of this life which is so subject to vanity, that here things false are

approved for true, things true rejected for false, things uncertain held for certain. For although these things are separate from that faith by which, both true and sure, we tend to eternal bliss, they are yet not separate from that misery in which we still are. For in no way indeed should we be deceived in any sense either of mind or body, if we were already in enjoyment of that true and perfect happiness.

22. Further again, every lie is therefore to be called a sin because a man ought to say what he has in his mind whether it be true, or be supposed to be and be not true, not only when he himself knows that it is true, but even if sometimes he errs and is deceived as a man. But every one who lies against that which he feels in his mind, speaks with the intention of deceiving; and certainly words have been appointed for this purpose, not as a means whereby men should deceive each other, but as a means whereby each may convey his own thoughts to the knowledge of another. To use words then for the purpose of deceiving, not for that for which they were appointed, is a sin. Nor is any lie therefore to be supposed not to be a sin, because we can sometimes benefit some one by lying. For we can by stealing too sometimes benefit, if the poor person, to whom it is openly given, feel the advantage, and the rich man, from whom it is secretly taken, feel not any disadvantage; and no one will for that reason say that such a theft is no sin. And we can do this too by committing adultery, if any one, unless we consent to her in this, seems likely to die of love, and if she shall live, will be purified through repentance,

and such adultery would not therefore be said not to be sin. For if chastity rightly pleases us, how does truth offend us, so that for the sake of benefit to another the former should not be violated by committing adultery, while the latter should be violated by lying. It is not to be denied that men have indeed made very great progress towards good, who do not lie except for the safety of some man ; but in such progress of theirs their good will is deservedly praised or even receives a temporal reward, not their deceit, which it is enough that it be pardoned, not that it be published abroad, especially in heirs of the New Testament, to whom it is said, *Let it be in your mouth, yea, yea, nay, nay; for what is more is of evil*^a. On account of which evil, because it ceases not to creep on us in our mortal state, even the very joint heirs with Christ say, *Forgive us our debts*^b.

23. These things then having been treated of as this brevity required, because the causes of good and evil matters must be known, so far as is sufficient for the way, which leads us to the kingdom, where will be life without death, truth without error, bliss without disturbance; we ought by no means to doubt that the cause of the good things which pertain to us is nothing else than the goodness of God ; but the cause of evil things is the will of a being changeably good, first of an angel then of a man, falling away from the unchangeable good.

24. This is the first evil of a rational creature, that is the first privation of good ; after this, now even against their will there crept in ignorance of things which ought to be done and desire of things harmful, accompanying which are

^a Matt. v. 37.

^b Ib. vi. 12.

brought in error and pain, which two evils when they are felt to be hanging over us the movement of the mind endeavouring to avoid them is called fear. Further, the mind, when it gains what is desired, though hurtful or empty, since through error it does not perceive that, is either overcome by morbid delight, or is disturbed by vain joy. From these sources of evil, not of plenty, but as it were of want, the whole misery of the rational nature flows forth.

25. Which nature, however, amidst its evils could not lose the longing for blessedness. But these are the common evils both of men and of angels, at least of those condemned for their wickedness by the justice of the Lord. But man has also his peculiar penalty, by which he has been also punished by the death of the body. For indeed God threatened him with the punishment of death if he sinned, thus granting him the gift of free will so that he might direct him by His rule, and make him fear by destruction [threatened]; and placed him in the joy of paradise, as it were in the shadow of a life, from whence by keeping righteousness he might rise to better things.

26. After his sin having been exiled hence he bound his own race too, which by sinning he had corrupted in himself as it were in its root, by the penalty of death and condemnation; so that whatever offspring should be born of him and of his wife through whom he had sinned, who was condemned together with him, through carnal lust, in which a punishment like to the disobedience was repaid, should contract original sin, whereby it should be drawn through various errors and pains to that last endless punishment with

the apostate angels, its corrupters and possessors and associates. *Thus through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so passed through on all men, in that all sinned*^a. For in that place the Apostle called the whole human race the world.

27. Thus therefore was the matter ; the condemned mass of the whole human race was lying in evils, or was even rolling on and being precipitated from evils into evils, and being joined to the party of those angels who had sinned, was paying the well-deserved penalty of its wicked apostasy. Inasmuch as, whatever the wicked commit of their own will through blind and untamed lust, and whatever against their own will they suffer by manifest and hidden punishments, pertains to the just wrath of God ; the goodness of the Creator ceasing not both to supply life and the power of life to the evil angels, which supply if it were taken away they would perish ; and to form and quicken the seeds of men, though being born of a corrupted and condemned stock, and to order their limbs through different periods of time, and by intervals of space to animate their senses, and to supply nutriment. For He judged it better to work good out of evil things than to permit no evils to exist. And if indeed He had willed that there should be absolutely no reformation of men for the better, as there is none of the wicked angels, would it not deservedly come to pass, that the nature which forsook God, which using its power ill trampled upon and transgressed the commandment of its Creator, which it could very easily have kept ; which stubbornly turning away from His light corrupted in itself the

^a Rom. v. 12.

image of its Creator; which by its free will evilly broke off its healthful service from His laws; should wholly be for ever abandoned by Him, and pay eternal penalty in accordance with its deserts. Certainly He would so act, if He were only just, and not also merciful, and shewed His undeserved mercy much more clearly by rather delivering the unworthy.

28. Therefore when certain angels through wicked pride forsook God, and were cast down from the heavenly dwelling on high into the lowest darkness of this air, the number of angels that was left remained in eternal blessedness and holiness with God. For the rest of the angels were not derived from one fallen and condemned angel, so that original evil should bind them like men by the chains of a succession subject to it, and draw down all to deserved punishments; but when he, who became the devil, with the associates of his wickedness was lifted up, and overthrown by this very lifting up together with them, the rest clave to the Lord by pious obedience, receiving also what the former had not, a certain knowledge in themselves, whereby they might be sure of their own eternal and established steadfastness.

29. So it pleased God, the Creator and Governor of the universe, that, since not the whole multitude of angels had perished by forsaking God, that part which had perished should remain in perpetual perdition, but that part which had continued steadfast with God, when the other part forsook Him, should rejoice secure in the most certain knowledge of its blessedness which should always be; but since the other rational creation, which was in man, had wholly perished by sins and punishments both original and proper

to each, from the restored part of it should be made good, whatever loss that fall of the devil had brought upon the company of the angels. For this has been promised to the saints when they rise again, that they shall be equal to the Angels of God. So Jerusalem which is above, our mother, the City of God, shall be defrauded of none of the number of her citizens, or perchance shall reign with even larger abundance. For we know the number neither of holy men, nor of unclean demons, succeeding to whose place the sons of our holy mother the Church, which seemed to be barren upon earth, shall remain without any limit of time in that peace from which the others fell. But the number of those citizens, whether that which now is or that which shall be, is in the view of that Artificer *Who calls those things which are not, as if those things which are*², and orders all things in measure, and number, and weight³.

30. But can this part of the human race, to which God has promised deliverance and an eternal kingdom, be at all restored by the merits of its own works? Far from it. For what good does one who is lost work except so far as he has been delivered from being lost? Can it be at all by the free choice of its will? Far be this also, for man using his free choice ill destroyed both himself and it. For as he who kills himself must indeed when alive kill himself, but by killing himself lives no more, and will not be able to raise himself up again after he has killed himself; so when sin was committed through free-will, when sin conquered free-will was lost; *For by whom a man is overcome, to him is he adjudged a slave also*². Certainly that is the opinion of Peter

² Rom. iv. 17.³ Wisd. xi. 20.² 2 Pet. ii. 19.

the Apostle, and since it is true, what kind of liberty, pray, can there be to one adjudged a slave, except when it pleases him to sin? For he serves freely who willingly does the will of his master. And in this way he is free to sin, who is the slave of sin. Whence he will not be free to do righteousness, unless having been freed from sin he shall begin to be the slave of righteousness. For that is true liberty because of the joy in acting rightly, and at the same time a holy slavery because of obedience to the commandment. But whence shall a man sold and adjudged a slave have that liberty, unless He redeem him Whose is that saying, *If the Son shall have made you free ye shall be free indeed*^a? And before this begin to take place in a man, how doth any one who is not yet free to do good works, boast of free-will in a good work, except being puffed up with vain pride he exalt himself? Which [pride] the Apostle restrains saying, *By grace ye are saved through faith*.

31. And lest they should so arrogate to themselves faith at any rate, as not to understand that it is given by God, as the same Apostle says in another place that he obtained mercy to be faithful, here also he has added and says, *And this not of yourselves but it is the gift of God, not of works [which we have done] lest perchance any one be lifted up*^b. And lest it should be supposed that good works would be lacking to the faithful, he added again, *For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus in good works, which God has prepared that we may walk in them*^c. Then, therefore,

^a John viii. 36.^b Eph. ii. 8, 9.^c Eph. ii. 10.

are we made truly free, when God fashions us, that is forms and creates us, not as men, which He has already done ; but to be good men, which He now does by His grace, that we may be a new creature in Christ Jesus, according to what is said, *Create me a clean heart, O God*^d. For neither had God not already created his heart, so far as pertains to the nature of the human heart.

32. Also, that no one boast, although not of works yet, of the free choice itself of his will, as though merit had its origin from himself, to which as a due reward the liberty itself of working rightly was granted, let him hear the same herald of grace, saying, *For it is God Who worketh in you, both to will and to do according to His good pleasure*^e. And in another place, *Therefore it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, Who sheweth mercy*^f. Since without doubt if a man be of that age as now to exercise reason, he could not believe, hope, or love unless he willed, nor could he attain to the prize of the high calling of God unless he have run with his will. How, then, is it *not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God Who sheweth mercy*, unless because *the will* itself, as it is written, *is prepared of the Lord*^g? Otherwise, if it was therefore said, *It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God Who sheweth mercy*, because it is brought to pass of both, that is both of the will of man and of the mercy of God, so that we should take it as so said, *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God Who sheweth mercy*, as though it were said, The will of man alone is not sufficient, if there be not also the mercy of God. Therefore, also the mercy of God alone is not sufficient, if there be not

^d Ps. l. 12.^e Philip. ii. 13.^f Rom. ix. 16.^g Prov. viii. 35 sec. LXX.

also the will of man, and consequently if it be rightly said, *It is not of man who willeth, but of God Who sheweth mercy*, because the will of man alone does not fulfil it ; why is it not, on the other hand, also rightly said, *It is not of God Who sheweth mercy, but of man who willeth*, because the mercy of God alone does not fulfil it? Again, if no Christian will dare to say, *It is not of God Who sheweth mercy, but of man who willeth*, lest he most plainly contradict the Apostle, it remains, therefore, that it be understood to have been rightly said, *It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God Who sheweth mercy*, that the whole may be ascribed to God, Who both prepares the good will of man which is to be assisted, and assists it when prepared. . For the good will of man precedes many gifts of God, but not all ; but it is itself among those, which it does not itself precede. For both are read in the sacred utterances, both *His mercy shall go before me*^b, and *His mercy shall follow me*ⁱ. It goes before him who wills not, that he may will ; it follows him who wills that he may not will in vain. For why are we admonished to pray for our enemies, who certainly have not the will to live righteously, except that God may work in them to will also? Also why are we bidden to ask that we may receive, except in order that what we will may be done by Him, by Whom it has been brought to pass that we will? Therefore we pray for our enemies, that the mercy of God may go before them, as it goes before us also ; but we pray for ourselves, that His mercy may follow us.

33. Therefore the human race was kept under just con-

^b Ps. lviii. 2.

ⁱ Ib. xxii. 6.

demnation, and all were children of wrath. Concerning which wrath it is written, *Since all our days have failed, and we have failed in Thy wrath, our years shall be thought upon as a spider*^k. Concerning which anger Job also says, *For man born of a woman is short of life and full of wrath*^l. Concerning which anger, too, the Lord Jesus says, *He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life, but he that believeth not on the Son, hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him*^m; He says not, shall come, but *abideth*. Forasmuch as every man is born with this. For which reason the Apostle says, *For we too were by nature children of wrath, as the rest also*ⁿ. Since through original sin men were in this [state of] wrath, and so much the more grievously and hurtfully, as they had added greater or more sins besides, a Mediator was necessary, that is a Reconciler, Who should appease this wrath by the offering of a single sacrifice, of which all the sacrifices of the Law and the Prophets were shadows. Whence the Apostle says, *For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more now being reconciled in His Blood shall we be saved from wrath through Him*^o. But when God is said to be angry, there is not meant such a disturbance [of feeling] in Him as is in the mind of an angry man, but by a word transferred from human emotions, His vengeance, which is none other than just, has received the name of anger. Therefore, that we are reconciled to God through a Mediator, and receive the Holy Ghost, and of enemies are made sons, *for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of*

^k Ps. lxxxix. 9.^l Job xiv. 1.^m Joha iii. 36.ⁿ Ephes. ii. 3.^o Rom v. 9, 10.

God^p, this is the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

34. Concerning which Mediator it were tedious to say such things as are worthy, although they cannot be worthily spoken by man. For who can unfold this only in fitting words, that, *The Word became flesh and dwelt among us*^q, that we should believe in the only Son of God, the Father Almighty, born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary. So, that is, the Word became flesh, the flesh being taken by the Godhead, not the Godhead changed into flesh. Further, we ought here to understand flesh as 'man,' the expression from a part signifying the whole; as it is said, *Since by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified*^r, that is no man. For we are bound to say that nothing of human nature was wanting in that which He took; but of [human] nature, free in every way from every tie of sin, not such as is born of both sexes through lust of the flesh with the bond of sin, the guilt of which is washed away by regeneration; but such as it was fitting that He should be born of a Virgin, Whom the faith of His mother, not lust, had conceived, and if her virginity were impaired even by His being born, He would not now be born of a Virgin, and, which God forbid, the whole Church would falsely confess Him born of the Virgin Mary, which [Church] copying His Mother, daily brings forth His members, and is a virgin. Read, if it pleases you, on the virginity of the holy Mary, my letters to an illustrious man whom I name with honour and affection, Volusianus.

35. Wherefore, Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is both God

^p Rom. viii. 14.

^q John i. 14.

^r Rom. iii. 20.

and Man. God before all worlds, Man in our world. God, because the Word of God, for *the Word was God*^a, but Man because into the Unity of Person there was added to the Word a reasonable soul and flesh. Wherefore, in so far as He is God, He and the Father are one ; but in so far as He is Man, the Father is greater than He. For being the only Son of God not by grace but by nature, that He might be also full of grace, He became, too, the Son of man, and Himself at the same time Both, of Both one Christ. *For being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery*, what He was by nature that is, *to be equal with God. But He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant*^b, not losing or diminishing the form of God. And so He both became less and remained equal, Both in One, as has been said ; but one thing by reason of the Word, another by reason of the Manhood ; by reason of the Word equal to the Father, by reason of the Manhood, less. One Son of God, and at the same time Son of man. One Son of Man, and at the same time Son of God ; not two Sons of God, God and man, but one Son of God, God without beginning, Man from a certain beginning, our Lord Jesus Christ.

36. Here is the grace of God altogether greatly and evidently commended. For what had human nature in the man Christ merited, that it should be singularly assumed into the unity of the Person of the only Son of God ? What good will, what zealous good purpose, what good works had gone before, by which that man should merit to be made

^a John i. 1.

^b Philip. ii. 6, 7.

one person with God? Was He at all man before, and was this singular benefit granted Him because He singularly merited of God? Truly from the time that He began to be Man, that Man did not begin to be anything else than the Son of God; and this the only Son, and on account of God the Word, Which by assuming Him became flesh, certainly God; that, like as any man is one person, that is to say reasonable soul and flesh, so Christ should be one Person, the Word and Man. Whence has human nature such great glory, without any doubt freely given, since no merits preceded, unless that in this the great and sole grace of God is manifestly shewn to those who consider it faithfully, and soberly, that men may understand that they are justified from sins by the same grace, by which it was brought to pass that the Man Christ could have no sin? Thus, too, the angel saluted His mother when he announced to her His future birth, *Hail, said he, full of grace.* And a little after; *Thou hast found, said He, favour with God*^u. And she, indeed, is said to be full of grace, and to have found favour with God, that she might be the Mother of her Lord, yea of the Lord of all. But of Christ Himself the Evangelist John, after having said, *And the Word became Flesh and dwelt among us, says, and we saw His glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* That which he says, *The Word became Flesh, this is full of grace.* That which he says, *The glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, this is full of truth.* For the Truth Itself, the Only-Begotten Son of the Father, not by grace but

^u Luke i. 28, 30.

by nature, by grace took to Himself Man in such unity of Person, that Himself the Same was also Son of man.

37. For the same Jesus Christ the Only-Begotten, that is, the only Son of God, our Lord, was born of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary. And certainly the Holy Ghost is the gift of God, which also Itself is equal to the Giver, and therefore the Holy Ghost is also God, not inferior to the Father and the Son. From this, therefore, that the birth of Christ according to His human nature is of the Holy Ghost, what else than grace itself is shewn? For when the Virgin had asked of the angel how that should come to pass which he was announcing, the angel answered, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, and therefore that Holy Thing Which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*^{*}. And Joseph, when he was wishing to put her away, suspecting her to be an adulteress, whom he knew to be with child not of himself, received such an answer from the Angel, *Fear not to take Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost*[†]; that is, what you suspect to be of another man is of the Holy Ghost.

38. Yet are we therefore going to say that the Holy Ghost is the father of the man Christ, that God the Father begot the Word, the Holy Ghost the Man, of both which substances should be one Christ both Son of God the Father as touching the Word, and Son of the Holy Ghost as touching the man, because the Holy Ghost as though His Father

^{*} Luke i. 35.

[†] Matt. i. 20.

had begotten Him of His Virgin mother ! Who will dare to say this ? Nor is there any need to shew by discussion how great absurdities of other kinds would follow, when now this very thing is of itself so absurd, that no faithful ears are able to bear it. Wherefore, as we confess, our Lord Jesus Christ Who is God of God but was born as Man of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary, in each substance, the Divine that is and the human, is the Only Son of God the Father Almighty, from Whom proceeds the Holy Ghost. How, then, do we say that Christ was born of the Holy Ghost, if the Holy Ghost did not beget Him ? Was it because He made Him ? Since our Lord Jesus Christ in so far as He is God, *All things were made by Him*^a, in so far however as He is Man, Himself also was made, as the Apostle says, *Made of the seed of David after the flesh*^a. But since the whole Trinity made that creature Which the Virgin conceived and brought forth, although pertaining to the Person alone of the Son, for the works of the Trinity are not capable of division, why is the Holy Ghost alone named in the making of it ? Is it that when One of the Three is named in any work, the whole Trinity is understood to work ? So indeed it is, and it can be shewn by examples. But we must not delay too long on this point. For that moves us how it is said, *Born of the Holy Ghost*, when He is in no way Son of the Holy Ghost. For neither, because God created this world, is it lawful to say that it is the son of God, or that it is born of God ;

^a John i. 3.^a Rom. i. 3.

but that it is made, or created, or built, or constructed by Him, or if we rightly use any other expression of this kind. It is, therefore, difficult to explain how He, since we confess Him to be born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary, should not be the Son of the Holy Ghost and be the Son of the Virgin Mary, since He is born of Him and of her. Without doubt forasmuch as He was not so born of Him as of a father, but so born of her as of a mother.

39. It is not therefore to be granted that whatsoever is born of anything is forthwith to be called the son of that same thing. For to pass by the fact that a son is born of a man in one way, in another a hair, a louse, a stomach-worm, of which none is a son, to pass by these things then, since they are unfittingly compared to so great a matter; certainly no one would say rightly that they who are born of water and the Holy Ghost are sons of the water; but they are expressly called sons of God their Father and of the Church their mother. So then He Who was born of the Holy Ghost is the Son of God the Father, not of the Holy Ghost. For that which we said of the hair and of the rest is only of force so far as that we are reminded that not everything which is born of anything can also be called the son of that of which it is born. Just as it does not follow that all who are called the sons of any one are also said to have been born of him, as there are those who are adopted. They too are called sons of hell, not those who have been born of it, but those prepared for it, as they are called sons of the kingdom who are being prepared for the kingdom.

40. Since, then, one thing may be born of another also not in that manner as to be a son, and again not every one

who is called a son is born of him whose son he is called, without doubt that manner in which Christ was born of the Holy Ghost not as a Son, and of the Virgin Mary as a Son, suggests to us the grace of God whereby man with no merits going before, in the very beginning of his nature in which he began to exist, was joined to the Word of God unto so great unity of Person, that He should be at the same time Son of God Who was Son of man, and Son of man Who was Son of God, and thus in the taking upon Him of human nature in a certain way the very grace should be made natural to that Man, whereby He should not be capable of admitting any sin. Which grace it was therefore necessary should be signified by the Holy Ghost, because He is Himself properly so God as to be also called the Gift of God. To speak sufficiently of which (even if it can be done) is the matter of a very long discourse.

41. Being, therefore, begotten or conceived through no pleasure of carnal lust, and therefore deriving no sin originally, and by the grace of God in a wonderful and unspeakable manner joined and compacted together in Unity of Person with the Only-begotten Word of the Father, the Son not by grace but by nature, and so Himself also committing no sin, nevertheless on account of the likeness of the flesh of sin in which He had come, He was Himself also called sin, being to be sacrificed for the washing away of sins. Forasmuch as in the old law sacrifices for sins were called sins, which He truly was made, of which they were shadows. Hence the Apostle, after he had said, *We beseech you for Christ to be reconciled to God*, forthwith added and said, *He made Him sin for us Who knew not sin, that we*

may be the righteousness of God in Him^b. He does not say, as is read in some faulty copies, He Who knew not sin, committed sin for us, as though Christ Himself had sinned for us, but says, *Him Who knew not sin*, that is Christ, to Whom we are to be reconciled, *He made sin for us*, that is a sacrifice for sins, through which we might be able to be reconciled. He therefore is sin as we are righteousness, not our own but of God, and not in ourselves but in Him ; as He is sin, not His but ours ; by the likeness of the flesh of sin, in which He was crucified, He shewed that it had its place not in Him but in us ; that since sin was not in Him, so in a certain way He might die to sin, while dying to the flesh, in which was the likeness of sin ; and whereas He had never Himself lived according to the oldness of sin, He might by His resurrection signify our new life springing to life again from the old death in which we had been dead in sin.

42. This is that very great Sacrament of Baptism, which is celebrated amongst us, that whosoever pertain to that grace should die to sin, as He Himself is said to have died to sin, because He died to the flesh, that is the likeness of sin ; and should live by being born again from that laver, as He Himself by rising again from the sepulchre, whatever may be the age of their bodies.

43. For from the little child lately born to the decrepit old man, as no one is to be hindered from baptism, so there is no one who does not die to sin in baptism ; but little children only to original sin, older persons again to all those

^b 2 Cor. v. 20, 21.

sins also whatsoever by living ill they have added to that which they contracted from their birth.

44. But therefore also are they generally said to die to sin, when without doubt they die not to one but to many sins, and to all whatsoever they have already committed of their own, either by thought, or word, or deed, since also by the singular number the plural number is wont to be signified, as he says,

“And they fill the belly with the armed soldier,”

though they did this with many soldiers. And in our own books we read, *Entreat therefore the Lord that He take away from us the serpent*^c: he says not the serpents, from which the people were suffering so that He might say this; and countless other such. Since, however, that one original sin also is signified by the plural number, when we say that little children are baptized for the remission of sins, and do not say for the remission of sin, that is a form of speech of an opposite character, in which the singular number is signified by the plural. As in the Gospel when Herod was dead it is said, *They are dead who sought the Child's life*^d, it is not said, He is dead. And in Exodus, *They made*, he says, *to themselves gods of gold*, when they made one calf, of which they said, *These are thy gods, O Israel, which led thee forth out of the land of Egypt*^e, he also putting the plural for the singular.

45. Although too in that one sin, which by one man entered into the world, and passed upon all men, on account of

^c Num. xxi. 7, Septuag.

^d Matt. ii. 20.

^e Exod. xxxii. 31.

which, even little children are baptized, more sins than one may be understood, if that one itself be divided into its, as it were, several members. For both pride is there, because man chose rather to be in his own power than in that of God; and sacrilege, because he believed not God; and murder, because he cast himself headlong into death; and spiritual fornication, because the integrity of the human mind was corrupted by the persuasion of the serpent; and theft, because the forbidden food was taken; and avarice, because he desired more than ought to have sufficed for him; and whatever may by diligent thought be discovered in the commission of this one sin.

46. And it is said not without probability, that children are bound by the sins of their parents, not only of the first human beings, but also of their own of whom themselves were born. Forasmuch as that saying of God, *I will repay the sins of the fathers upon the children*[†], certainly binds them before that by regeneration they begin to belong to the New Testament. Which Testament was foretold, when it was said by Ezekiel that the sons should not receive the sins of their fathers, and that that parable should no longer be in Israel, *The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth have been set on edge*[‡]. For therefore is each one born again, that whatever of sin there is in which he is born may be loosed in him. For sins which are afterwards committed by acting wickedly, can also be healed by repentance, as also we see to take place after baptism. And therefore regeneration was not appointed except because

[†] Deut. v. 9.

[‡] Ezek. xviii. 2.

our generation is corrupt to such an extent that one born even of lawful wedlock says, *I was conceived in iniquities and in sins did my mother nourish me in the womb*^b. And here he said not, in iniquity or in sin, when this too could have been rightly said, but he preferred to say iniquities and sins. Because in that one sin also which passed upon all men, and is so great, that by it human nature was changed and turned into the necessity of death, there are found, as I explained above, more than one sin, and others of our parents, which, although they cannot so change our nature, yet bind the sons by guilt unless the free grace and mercy of God help them.

47. But it may not without good reason be questioned, concerning the sins of other parents, whom each succeeds as his ancestors down to his own father ; whether he who is born is involved in the evil deeds and multiplied original shortcomings of all, so that each is born in so much worse a state as he is later born ; or whether for this reason God threatens posterity for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generation, because He extends not His anger so far as regards the faults of their progenitors, further in the moderation of His pitifulness, lest they on whom the grace of regeneration is not conferred should be weighed down by too grievous a burden in their very eternal damnation, if they were compelled to gather together in the way of descent the sins of all their parents who have gone before from the commencement of the human race, and to pay the penalty due for them. Whether concerning so great a

^b Ps. l. 7.

matter, when the sacred Scriptures are more diligently examined and handled, anything else may or may not be discovered I do not venture hastily to affirm.

48. That one sin, however, which being so great was committed in a place and state of happiness, so that the whole human race was condemned in its origin, and so to say in its root, in one man, is not loosed nor washed away except by the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, Who alone could so be born, that for Him there was no need to be born again.

49. For they were not born again who were baptized with the Baptism of John, by whom He also Himself was baptized; but by a certain ministry as of a forerunner, of him who said, *Prepare a way for the Lord*ⁱ, they were prepared for that One in Whom alone they could be born again. For His Baptism was not in water alone, as was that of John, but also in the Holy Ghost, that whosoever believes in Christ might be regenerated of that Spirit, of Whom Christ being generated needed not regeneration. Whence that voice of the Father which was uttered over Him when baptized, *This day have I begotten Thee*^k, pointed out not that one day of time on which He was baptized, but that of unchangeable eternity, in order that it might shew that that Man pertained to the Person of the Only-begotten. For where a day neither commences at the close of yesterday, nor is ended by the commencement of to-morrow, it is ever to-day. Therefore He willed to be baptized with water by John, not that any iniquity of His should be washed away, but that His great humility might be commended. For in like manner baptism

ⁱ Matt. iii. 13.

^k Ps. ii. 7.

found in Him nothing to wash away, as death found nothing to punish : that the devil, being overcome and conquered by truth of righteousness, not by force of power, since he had most unjustly slain Him without desert [in consequence] of sin, might through Him most justly lose those whom he through their desert [in consequence] of sin was holding captive. Each, therefore, that is, baptism and death, was undergone by Him by reason of a determinate dispensation, not of pitiable necessity, but rather of pitying will, that one might take away the sin of the world as one had sent sin into the world, that is on the whole human race.

50. Except that that one man sent one sin into the world, this One however took away not only that one sin, but all at the same time, which He found added to it. Whence the Apostle says, *Not as by one man sinning, so is the gift also; for the judgment indeed was of one unto condemnation, but the grace of many offences unto justification*¹. Because certainly that one sin which is contracted by way of origin, even if it be alone, makes men liable to condemnation, but the grace justifies from many offences the man, who, besides that one which he has contracted in his origin in common with all men, has added many also of his own.

51. However that which he says a little after, *As by the offence of one upon all men to condemnation, so too by the righteousness of One upon all men to justification of life*, sufficiently shews that no one born of Adam is otherwise than held under condemnation, and that no one, unless born again in Christ, is freed from condemnation.

¹ Rom. v. 16.

52. Of which punishment through one man, and grace through one Man having said as much as he judged sufficient in that part of his Epistle, he next commended the great mystery of Holy Baptism in the Cross of Christ in such manner that we understand that Baptism in Christ is nothing else than the likeness of the death of Christ ; and that the death of Christ crucified is nothing else than the likeness of the remission of sins ; and just as in Him is a true resurrection, so in us is a true justification. For he says, *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound*^m? For he had said before, *For where sin abounded grace abounded more*ⁿ. And therefore he proposed to himself the question, whether one should continue in sin in order to obtain abundance of grace. But he answers, *God forbid*; and he added, *If we are dead to sin how shall we live in it?* Then that he might shew that we are dead to sin, *Know ye not*, says he, *that whosoever of us have been baptized in Christ Jesus, have been baptized in His death*^o. And it is therefore said that it may be shewn that we are dead to sin. But to what sin do little children die by being born again except to that which they contracted by being born? And therefore to them also pertains what follows, saying, *We have been buried together with Him through baptism unto death, that like as Christ*

^m Rom. vi. 1.ⁿ Ib. v. 20.^o Ib. iv. 2, 3.

rose from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together to the likeness of His death, so shall we be also [to the likeness] of His resurrection; knowing this that our old man has been crucified together, that the body of sin may be abolished that we may not serve sin longer. For he who is dead hath been justified from sin. But if we have died with Christ we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ rising from the dead now dies not, death shall no more have dominion over Him. For in that He hath died to sin, He died once; but in that He liveth, He liveth to God. So do ye consider yourselves to have died indeed to sin, but to live to God in Christ Jesus^p. For hence he had began to prove that we must not continue in sin that grace may abound, and had said, *If we have died to sin how shall we live in it?* And that he might shew that we were dead to sin, he had added, *Know ye not that whosoever of us have been baptized in Christ Jesus, have been baptized in His death?* Thus then he closed that whole passage as he began. Inasmuch as he introduced the death of Christ so as to say that even He died to sin. To what sin, unless to the flesh, in which was not sin but the likeness of sin, and therefore it was called by the name of sin? He says therefore to them who are baptized in the death of Christ in which

^p Rom. iv. 4-8.

not only older persons, but even little children are baptized, *So do ye also, that is after the same manner as Christ, So do ye also consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but to live to God in Christ Jesus.*

53. Whatever therefore was done in the Cross of Christ, in His Burial, in His Resurrection the third day, in His Ascension, in His sitting at the right hand of the Father, was so done as that the Christian life which is lived here might be conformed to these things, not only as spoken mystically, but also as done. For because of His Cross it is said, *But they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with its affections and lusts*^a. Because of His burial, *We have been buried together with Christ through baptism into death*^r. Because of His resurrection, *That like as Christ rose from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life*^s. Because of His Ascension into Heaven and His seat at the right hand of the Father, *But if ye have risen with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God; relish the things which are above, not those which are on the earth, for ye have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God*^t.

54. But now what we confess concerning Christ as future, that He is to come from heaven to judge the quick and dead, does not pertain to that life of ours which is lived here, because it is not in His past deeds, but in those things which

^a Rom. vi. 11.

^r Rom. vi. 4.

^s Galat. v. 25.

^t Coloss. iii. 1.

are to be done at the end of the world. To this pertains what the Apostle following on added, *When Christ your life shall appear, then shall ye too appear with Him in glory*^a.

55. But that He will judge the quick and the dead may be taken in two ways; either that we understand by the quick, those whom His coming will find here not yet dead, but still living in the flesh, but by the dead those who have departed or shall depart from the body, before He comes; or by the quick [understand] the just, by the dead the unjust, since the just also will be judged. For sometimes the judgment of God is used in a bad sense, whence is that [saying], *But they who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment*^b, sometimes also in a good one, according to that which is said, *O God, save me in Thy Name, and judge me in Thy might*^c. Forasmuch as by the judgment of God that very separation of good and bad takes place, that the good who are to be set free from evil, not to be destroyed with the wicked, may be set apart at the right hand. For which reason he cried out, *Judge me, O God*, and as it were explaining what he had said. *And separate*, says he, *my cause from an unrighteous people*^d.

56. But since we have said concerning Jesus Christ the only Son of God our Lord what pertains to the brevity of confession, we add that we so believe in the Holy Ghost, that that Trinity may be complete, Which is God; then the Holy Church is mentioned. Whence it is given to under-

^a Coloss. iii. 4.

^b Ps. liv. 1.

^c John v. 29.

^d Ib. xliii. 1.

stand that, after mention of the Creator, that is of the supreme Trinity, the rational creature which belongs to that free Jerusalem was meet to be subjoined. Since whatsoever was said of the Man Christ pertains to the unity of the Person of the Only-begotten. Therefore the right order of confession required that the Church should be subjoined to the Trinity, as the house to him who dwelleth therein, and His Temple to God, and His city to the Founder. The whole of which is here to be taken, not only in respect of that part in which she sojourns here on earth praising the Name of the Lord from the rising of the sun unto its setting, and after its old captivity singing a new song ; but also with respect to that part which from the time that it was created, has always cleaved to God in heaven, and has not experienced any evil of a fall in its own case. This continues blessed in the holy angels, and, as is meet, helps that part of itself which is a sojourner, because both will be one by a common partaking of eternity, and are now one in the bond of charity, the whole of which was instituted for the worship of one God. Whence neither the whole nor any part of it wills to be worshipped instead of God, nor to be a God to any one pertaining to the temple of God, which is built of gods whom the uncreated God creates. And thus the Holy Ghost if He were a creature, not Creator, would certainly be a reasonable creature, for that is the highest creature. And therefore, in the rule of Faith, He would not be placed before the Church, because He Himself too would pertain to the Church in that part of it which is in heaven. Nor would He have a temple, but would Himself be a Temple. But He has a temple, of which the Apostle says, *Know ye not*

that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost Who is in you, Whom ye have from God^a? Of whom he says in another place, Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ^b? How then is He not God Who has a temple? or is He less than Christ, Whose members He has as a temple? For neither is His temple one thing, and the temple of God another, since the same Apostle says, Know ye not that ye are the temple of God^c? And to prove this he added, And the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. God therefore dwells in His temple, not only the Holy Ghost, but also the Father and the Son, Who also saith concerning His Body (by which He was made the Head of the Church which is among men, that He may in all things Himself hold the first place^d,) Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up^e. The temple therefore of God, that is of the whole supreme Trinity, is the holy Church, that is to say, universal in heaven and in earth.

57. But what can we affirm of that which is in heaven? except that no evil person is in it, nor has any one since fallen thence or is about to fall, from the time that God spared not the angels who sinned, as the Apostle Peter writes, *but thrusting them back delivered them to the prisons of darkness of hell to be reserved for punishment in judgment^f.*

58. But what the nature of that most blessed and heavenly society is, what differences of pre-eminence may be

^a 1 Cor. vi. 19.

^d Coloss. i. 18.

^b Ib. 15.

^e John ii. 9.

^c Ib. iii. 16.

^f 2 Pet. ii. 4.

there, so that when all are called as it were by the general name Angels (as we read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, *To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit thou on My right hand*^a, seeing that in this manner He shewed that all generally are called Angels) there yet are there Archangels ; and whether these same Archangels are called Powers, and so it was said, *Praise Him all His Angels, praise Him all His Powers*, as if it were said, "Praise Him all His Angels, praise Him all His Archangels," and how those four words differ from each other, in which the Apostle seems to have embraced the whole of that heavenly society, saying, *Whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers*^b, let those say who can, if at least they can prove what they say, I confess that I am ignorant of these things. But I do not hold even that other point certain, whether the sun, and moon, and all stars belong to that same society, although to some they seem to be shining bodies, not endued with sense or understanding.

59. And also who can explain with what bodies angels have appeared to men, so as not only to be seen, but also to be touched ; and again not by bodily substance, but by spiritual power they bring certain visions not to the bodily eyes but to the spiritual, or to the minds ; or they say something not to the ear outwardly, but within in the mind of man, themselves also placing themselves there, as it is written in the book of the prophets, *And the Angel who was speaking in me said to me*^c, for he does not say, who

^a Heb. i. 13.^b Coloss. i. 16.^c Zech. i. 9.

was speaking to me, but *in me*. Or they appear also in sleep, and converse after the manner of dreams, as we have in the Gospel, *Behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in sleep, saying*¹. For in this manner the angels as it were point out that they have not bodies which can be handled, and cause it to be a very difficult question how the fathers washed their feet, how Jacob struggled with the angel with such real handling. When these things are enquired into, and each one as he can makes conjectures about them, the abilities are exercised not without profit, if moderate discussion be employed, and the error be absent of those who think that they know that which they know not. For what need is there that these things and others of this kind should be affirmed, or denied, or defined with risk, since without offence they may be unknown to us.

60. It is more needful to distinguish and discern when Satan transforms himself as an angel of light, lest by deceiving us he lead us away to any hurtful things. For when he deceives the senses of the body, but does not move the mind from true and right thinking, whereby each one lives a faithful life, there is no danger in religion; or when feigning himself good he does or says those things which are suitable to good angels, even if he be believed to be good it is not an error dangerous or infectious to the Christian faith. But when through those things which are foreign to him he begins to draw us to his own, then there is great and necessary vigilance to recognize him, and not to go after him. But how many men are able to escape all his deadly wiles except God guide and defend them? And the very

¹ Matt. i. 20.

difficulty of this matter is useful to this end, that no one be his hope to himself, or one man to another, but God to all of His. For no pious person doubts that that is altogether most profitable for us.

61. This Church, then, which is in the holy Angels and Powers of God will then be known to us as it is, when we shall be joined to it to the end that we may together have eternal bliss. That part, however, which separated from it is sojourning upon earth, is the better known to us for that reason that we are in it, and because it consists of men which we too are. This, by the Blood of a Mediator Who had no sin, has been redeemed from all sin, and its words are, *If God be for us, who is against us? He Who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all*¹. For Christ died not for the angels. But, therefore, is it also done for angels, whatsoever men are redeemed by His death and delivered from evil, since they, in a certain way, return to friendship with them after the enmities which sin has made between men and holy angels, and by the very redemption of men the losses of that fall of the angels are made good.

62. And certainly the holy angels, being taught of God in the eternal contemplation of Whose truth they are blessed, know to what number the completion of that city awaits its filling up from the human race. Wherefore the Apostle says, *That all things are restored in Christ, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, in Himself*². Forasmuch as the things which are in heaven are restored, when that which

¹ Rom. viii. 31.

² Ephes i. 10.

in the angels has fallen thence is restored from among men ; but those which are in earth are restored when men themselves, who have been predestinated to eternal life, are renewed from ancient corruption. And so by that single Sacrifice, in which the Mediator was slain, which being one many victims in the law prefigured, heavenly things are set at peace with earthly, and earthly things with heavenly. For as the same Apostle says, *In Him it hath pleased Him that all fulness should dwell, and that by Him all things should be reconciled unto Himself, making peace by the Blood of His Cross, whether things which are in earth, or things which are in Heaven* *.

63. *That peace surpasses*, as it is written, *all understanding*°, nor can it be known by us, except when we shall have come to those things. For how are heavenly things made at peace, except with us, that is by agreeing with us? For there peace always is both to the whole of the reasonable creatures among themselves, and with their Creator. Which *peace surpasses*, as has been said, *all understanding*, but surely ours, not that of those who always see the face of the Father. But we, however great human understanding there may be in us, know in part, and see now as by a glass in a riddle ; but when we shall be equal to the angels of God, then we shall see, after the same manner as they, face to face, and shall have as great peace towards them as they towards us, because we shall love them as much as we are loved by them. And so their peace will be known to us, because ours, too, will be such and so great, nor will it then

* Coloss. i. 19, 20.

° Philip. iv. 7.

surpass our understanding; but the peace of God which is there towards them, will surpass without doubt both their and our understanding. Forasmuch as every reasonable creature is blessed of Him so far as it is blessed, not He of it. Whence what is written is better taken according to this sense, *The peace of God which excels all understanding*, so that in that he said *all*, not even the understanding of the holy angels may be excepted, but of God alone, for His peace passes not His understanding.

64. But the holy angels are at one with us even now, when our sins are forgiven. Wherefore, after the mention of the holy Church in the order of confession is placed the remission of sins. For through this the Church which is in earth stands, through this that which was lost and has been found is not lost. Inasmuch as the gift of baptism being excepted, which was given against original sin, that what was contracted by generation may be done away by regeneration; and yet it takes away actual sins also, whatsoever it has found committed in heart, mouth, or deed; excepting, then, this great remission, whence the renewal of man begins, in which all guilt both inborn and added is loosed; the rest of life itself of an age now using reason, with whatever fruitfulness of righteousness it may now be remarkable, is not spent without remission of sins. Since the sons of God, so long as they live a mortal life, are striving with death. And although it has been said of them with truth, *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God*^p, yet they are so

^p Rom. viii. 14.

moved by the Spirit of God, and as sons of God make progress towards God, that even in their own spirit, especially since their corruptible body weighs them down, as sons of men they in certain human feelings fall away to themselves, and so sin. It makes a difference, indeed, how much, for neither because every crime is a sin, is therefore also every sin a crime. And therefore we say that the life of holy men, so long as they live this mortal life, can be found without crime. *But if we shall say that we have no sin, as so great an Apostle says, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*⁹.

65. But neither must the mercy of God be despaired of as regards the remission of crimes however great in the holy Church by those who practise penitence, each according to the measure of his own fault. But in the practice of penitence, where such a thing has been committed that he who has committed it should even be separated from the body of Christ, the measure of time is not to be considered so much as that of sorrow; for God does not despise a contrite and humbled heart. But because, for the most part, the sorrow of heart of one man is hidden from another, and does not come forth by words or any other signs to the knowledge of others, since it is manifest to Him, to Whom it is said, *My groaning has not been hidden from Thee*¹, times of penitence are rightly appointed by those who are set over the Churches, that satisfaction may be also made to the Church in which the sins themselves are remitted, inasmuch as outside of her they are not remitted. For she has specially received as a pledge the Holy Ghost, without Whom no sins are remitted, so that they to whom they are remitted

¹ 1 John i. 8.

² Ps. xxxviii. 9.

may obtain eternal life. For remission of sins takes place rather with reference to future judgment.

66. But in this life so entirely does that hold good which is written, *A heavy yoke upon the sons of Adam from the day of coming forth from their mother's womb, unto the day of their burial in the mother of all*^a, that we see little children also after the laver of regeneration tortured with the affliction of diverse evils, that we may understand that the whole which is wrought by healthful sacraments pertains rather to the hope of good things to come than to the retaining or gaining of things present. Many things, too, seem to be pardoned here and avenged by no punishment, but their penalties are reserved for hereafter. For not in vain is that properly called the day of judgment, when the Judge of quick and dead is to come. As on the other hand some things are punished here, and yet if they are remitted, they will certainly not injure in the world to come. Wherefore, concerning certain temporal penalties which are inflicted in this life on those sinners whose sins are blotted out, that they be not reserved to the end, the Apostle says, *For if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged of the Lord, but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord lest we should be condemned with this world*^b.

67. But some persons believe that even they who forsake not the name of Christ, and are baptized in His laver in the Church, and are not cut off from Him by any schism or heresy, in whatever wickedness they may live, which they neither do away by penitence nor redeem by alms, but continue in it most obstinately up to the last day of this life,

^a Eccclus. xl. 1.

^b 1 Cor. xi. 31.

will be saved by fire ; and that they are punished by fire, though lasting for a long time in proportion to the greatness of their crimes and wickednesses, yet not eternal. But they who believe this and yet are Catholics seem to me to be deceived by a certain human kindness. For the divine Scripture when consulted gives another answer. But I have composed a book on this question whose title is, *Concerning Faith and Works*; in which, according to the sacred Scriptures, I have shewn as far as I could by the help of God, that that faith saves men, which the Apostle Paul has sufficiently clearly set forth, saying, *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love*^a. If, however, it worketh ill and not well, without doubt, according to the Apostle James, *it is dead in itself*^b; who says again, *If any man say he have faith, but have not works, shall his faith in any wise be able to save him*^c? But further, if a wicked man, on account of his faith alone, shall be saved by fire, and that is thus to be understood which blessed Paul says, *But he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire*^d, then faith will be able to save without works, and that will be false which his co-Apostle James has said. And that, too, will be false which the same Paul has said: *Do not err, neither fornicators, nor they who serve idols, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God*^e. For if, even though persevering in those

^a Galat. v. 6.^b James ii. 17.^c Ib. 14.^d 1 Cor. iii. 15.^e Ib. vi. 9—12.

crimes, they shall yet be saved on account of faith in Christ, how shall they not be in the kingdom of God?

68. But because these most clear and open Apostolic testimonies cannot be false, that which is said obscurely concerning those who build upon the foundation which is Christ, not gold, silver, or precious stones, but wood, hay, stubble (for of these it is said that they shall be saved by fire, since by merit of the foundation they shall not perish) is so to be understood as that it be not found to be contrary to these plain [statements]. Forasmuch as wood, and hay, and stubble may be not unfitly taken of such desires of worldly things, although lawfully allowed, as that they cannot be lost without sorrow of mind. But when that sorrow burns him, if Christ have the place of the foundation in the heart, that is, that nothing be preferred to Him, and the man who is burned by such a sorrow would prefer rather to be without such things as he so loves than without Christ, he is saved by fire. But if in the time of trial he shall prefer to keep temporal and worldly things of this sort rather than Christ, he has not had Him in the foundation, because he has had these things in the first place, whereas in a building nothing is before the foundation. For the fire, of which the Apostle spoke in that place, ought to be understood to be such that both pass through it, that is, both he who builds upon this foundation gold, silver, and precious stones; and he who builds wood, hay, and stubble. *For the fire shall prove every*

one's work of what sort it is. *If any man's work shall remain which he hath built upon it, he shall receive a reward. But if any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss, but himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire*^b. The fire, therefore, will try the work not of one of them but of each. A certain kind of fire is the trial of tribulation, concerning which it is written plainly in another place, *The furnace proveth the potter's vessels, and the trial of tribulation just men*^c. This fire, in the meantime, in this life does what the Apostle said, if it happen to two believers, the one, that is, having in mind the things which are of God, how he may please God, that is, building upon Christ the foundation gold, silver, precious stones; the other having in mind the things which are of the world, how he may please his wife, that is, building upon the same foundation wood, hay, stubble. For the work of the former is not burnt up, because he loved not those things so as to suffer pain by the loss of them; but the work of the latter is burnt up, since those things are not lost without pain which have been possessed with love. But since, one of the two conditions being proposed, he would rather be without them than without Christ, and he does not forsake Christ through fear of losing such things, although he is grieved when he loses them, *he is saved indeed, yet so as by fire*, because sorrow for the things lost, which he had loved burns him, but does not overthrow nor consume him fortified by the stability and incorruption of the foundation.

69. That some such thing also takes place after this life is not incredible, and it may be a question whether it be so or not, and may be solved or remain hidden, that some of the

^b 1 Cor. iii. 13-15.

^c Eccclus. xxvii. 6.

faithful, in proportion as they have more or less loved perishing goods, are through a certain cleansing fire saved more slowly or more speedily, not however such concerning whom it is said that *they shall not inherit the kingdom of God*, unless these same crimes be remitted to them repenting after a fitting manner. But I said after a fitting manner, that they be not barren in alms, to which divine Scripture assigns so much that the Lord announces beforehand that He will impute the fruit of them alone to those on the right hand, and the dearth of them alone to those on the left, when He will say to the one, *Come ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom*, but to the other, *Go ye into eternal fire*^d.

70. It must, indeed, be shunned that any one should think that those unspeakable crimes, which they who commit shall not inherit the kingdom of God, can be perpetrated daily, and be daily redeemed by alms. Forasmuch as the life is to be changed for the better, and God is to be propitiated by alms concerning past sins, not in a manner to be bought for this end that it may be lawful at all times to commit them with impunity. *For He hath given to no man license to sin*^e, although by shewing mercy He blot out sins already committed, if fitting satisfaction be not neglected.

71. But for our momentary and light sins of every day, without which this life is not passed, the daily prayer of the faithful makes satisfaction. For it is theirs to say, *Our Father which art in heaven*, who are already born again to such a Father of water and the Spirit. This prayer wholly blots out very little and daily sins. It blots out those, too, from which the life of the faithful spent even wickedly

^d Matt. xxv. 34—41.

^e Eccius. xv. 21.

but changed by penitence for the better, departs, if as it is truly said, *Forgive us our debts*, since they are not wanting which should be forgiven, so it be truly said, *As we forgive our debtors*¹, that is if that which is said be done ; because it is very almsgiving to forgive a man seeking pardon.

72. And so for all things which are done with profitable pity that holds good which the Lord says, *Give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you*². Not only therefore he who gives food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, lodging to the stranger, a hiding place to the fugitive, visits to the sick or prisoner, redemption to the captive, support to the weak, guidance to the blind, comfort to the sorrowful, healing to the sick, right direction to the wanderer, counsel to the doubting, and whatever is necessary to him who is in want, but also he who gives forgiveness to one sinning, gives alms ; and he who corrects with a stripe one over whom power is given him, or restrains him by any kind of discipline, and yet forgives from his heart or prays that he be forgiven that sin of his whereby he has been hurt or offended by him, gives alms because he shews mercy, not only in that which he forgives and prays, but also in that which he chastens and punishes with some corrective punishment. For many benefits are conferred on men against their will, when their advantage is consulted not their wishes ; because they are found to be enemies to themselves, but those rather their friends whom they consider enemies, and in their error they return evil for

¹ Matt. vi. 9—12.

² Luke xi. 41.

good, whereas a Christian ought not to return evil even for evil. And so there are many kinds of almsdeeds, which when we do we obtain help that our sins may be forgiven us.

73. But there is nothing greater than that whereby we forgive from the heart what any one has done against us. For it is a less great thing to be well disposed, or even beneficent to him who has done you no harm, that is much greater, and an act of most resplendent goodness, that you love your enemy also, and that you always wish, and when you can do good to him who wishes, and if he can does evil to you ; hearing God saying, *Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute you*^b. But since these things are the marks of the perfect sons of God, after which indeed every believer ought to stretch out ; and by praying to God, and by pondering and striving with himself to bring his human mind to this disposition ; yet because this so great good is not the property of so great a multitude as we believe are heard, when it is said in the prayer, *Forgive us our debts, as we too forgive our debtors*^c without doubt the words of this pledge are fulfilled, if a man, who has not yet made such progress that he already loves his enemy, yet when he is asked by one who has sinned against him to forgive him, forgives him from his heart because he also wishes to be forgiven himself when asking, when he prays and says, *As we too forgive our debtors* ; that is, so forgive our debts to us when we ask, as we forgive our debtors when they ask.

74. Now he who entreats a man against whom he has

^b Matt. v. 44.

^c Ib. vi. 12.

sinned, if he be moved by his sin to entreat, is no longer to be considered an enemy, so that it should be difficult to love him, as it was difficult when he was committing unfriendly acts. But whosoever does not from his heart forgive one who entreats and repents of his fault, let him by no means think that his sins are forgiven by God, for the Truth cannot lie. But what hearer or reader of the Gospel can it escape Who has said, *I am the Truth*^k? Who, after he had taught the prayer, strongly commended this sentence set in it by saying, *For if ye shall forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father also shall forgive you your trespasses. But if ye shall not forgive men, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses*^l. He who is not roused up at such thunder is not sleeping, but is dead; and yet He is able to raise up even the dead.

75. Those certainly who live very wickedly, and take no care to correct such life and manners, and in the midst of their very misdeeds and crimes cease not continually to give alms, in vain flatter themselves on that account, because the Lord says, *Give alms and lo all things are clean unto you*^q. For they do not understand how widely this extends, but that they may understand, let them take heed to whom He spoke. For it is thus written in the Gospel, *While He was speaking a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him, and He went in and sat down. But the Pharisee began thinking within himself to say, why had He not washed before dinner? And the Lord saith unto him, Now do ye*

^k John xiv. 6.

^l Matt. vi. 14, 15.

Pharisees cleanse that which is without of the cup and platter, but that which is within yourselves is full of ravening and iniquity. Fools, did not He who made that which is without make that which is within also? However, as to what remains, give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you^m. Are we so to understand this, that to the Pharisees not having faith in Christ, even if they did not believe in Him, nor were born again of water and the Holy Ghost, all things are clean, if only they have given alms, as they think they ought to be given? whereas all are unclean whom the faith of Christ does not cleanse, concerning which it is written, *purifying their hearts by faith*ⁿ: and that the Apostle says, *But to the unclean and unbelieving nothing is pure, but their mind and conscience is polluted*^o. How then should all things be clean to the Pharisees, if they should give alms and not be believers? Or how should they be believers, if they were unwilling to believe in Christ and to be born again in His grace? And yet that is true which they heard, *Give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you*.

76. For he who would give alms in due order ought to begin with himself, and to give them to himself first. For alms are a work of mercy, and it has been said most truly, *Have mercy on thine own soul, pleasing God*^p. For this reason are we born again, that we may please God, to Whom that which we contracted by being born is deservedly displeasing. This is the first alms which we have given

^m Luke xi. 37—41.

^o Tit. i. 15.

ⁿ Acts xv. 9.

^p Eccles. xxx. 24.

ourselves, in that we by the mercy of the merciful God sought ourselves again in our misery, confessing His just judgment, whereby we were made miserable, concerning which the Apostle says, *The judgment indeed of one unto condemnation*⁹, and giving thanks to His great love, concerning which the same preacher of grace himself says, *But God commendeth His love in us, since while we were yet sinners Christ died for us*¹, that we also, judging truly of our own misery, and loving God with that love which He Himself bestowed upon us, might live piously and rightly. Which judgment and love of God the Pharisees passing by, yet on account of the alms which they used to make, gave tithes of even the smallest of their fruits ; and therefore did not give alms beginning with themselves, and first having mercy on themselves. On account of which order in love it is said, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*². Having therefore chidden them because they were washing themselves without, but within were full of ravening and iniquity, admonishing them that their inward parts should be cleansed by a kind of alms, which a man ought to bestow first of all on himself. *However*, He says, as to what remains, give alms, and behold *all things are clean unto you*³. Then that He might shew what He had admonished them, and what they did not care to do, lest they should think that He was ignorant of their alms, He says, *But woe unto you, Pharisees*; as though He would say, I indeed warned you that

⁹ Rom. v. 16.¹ Luke x. 27.² Ib. 8.³ Ib. xi. 41.

you should give alms by which all things may be clean unto you ; *But woe unto you who pay tithes of mint and rue and all kinds of herbs ;* for I know these alms of yours, that you may not think that I have now admonished you concerning them, *and pass by judgment and the love of God ;* by which alms you might be cleansed from all inward defilement, so that your bodies also which ye wash might be clean unto you ; for this is [the meaning of] all things, that is both within and without ; as it is read elsewhere, *Cleanse the things which are within, and those which are without shall be clean* ^u. But that He might not seem to have rejected those alms which are given of the fruits of the earth, He says, *These ought ye to do*, that is judgment and the love of God, *and not to leave the others undone* ^v, that is alms of the fruits of the earth.

77. Let not those, therefore, deceive themselves who think that by alms however large of their fruits, or of any kind of wealth, they purchase impunity for remaining in the enormity of their crimes, and wickedness of their sins ; for they not only do these things, but so love them as to wish, if only they could do so with impunity, to be always occupied in them. *But he who loveth iniquity hateth his own soul* ^w, and he who hateth his own soul is not merciful towards it but cruel, inasmuch as by loving it according to the world he hates it according to God. If, therefore, he should wish to give alms to it, whereby all things might be clean to it, he would hate it according to the world, that he might love it

^u Matt. xxiii. 26.

^v Luke xi. 42.

^w Ps. xi. 6.

according to God. But no one gives any alms of any kind whatever, unless he receive whence he may give from Him Who wants not; therefore it is said, *His mercy shall prevent me*^a.

78. But what sins are light, what heavy, must be weighed not by human but by the Divine judgment. For we see that some were conceded by pardoning by the Apostles themselves, such as is that which venerable Paul says to married persons, *Defraud not one the other, except by consent for a time that ye may have leisure for prayer, and come together again that Satan tempt you not for your incontinence*^a, which might be thought not to be sin, to have intercourse, that is, not for the sake of procreating children, which is the good thing in marriage, but also for the sake of carnal pleasure, that the weakness of them who cannot contain may avoid the deadly sin of fornication, or adultery, or of any other impurity, which it is shameful even to speak of, to which through the temptation of lust Satan may draw them. Therefore, as I said, this might be thought not to be sin unless he had added, *But this I say of pardon not of command*. But who now can deny that it is sin when he confesses that pardon is granted to it by Apostolical authority? It is something of the same kind where he says, *Dare any one of you having a matter against another go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?* And a little after, *If, therefore, ye have judgments of worldly matters, he says, set them that are despised in the Church. I speak to you to put you to shame, is it so that*

^a Ps. lix. 10.

^a 1 Cor. vii. 5.

there is not among you any wise man who is able to judge between his brother? but brother goeth to law with brother, and this before unbelievers^b. For here it might be thought that to have a suit against another was not a sin, but only to wish to have it judged outside the Church, unless he went on to add, *Now, indeed, it is wholly a fault that ye have suits with one another*. And that no one should excuse this by saying that he had a just matter, but was suffering injustice, which he wished to have removed from himself by the sentence of the judges, he at once meets such thoughts or excuses, and says, *Why do ye not rather suffer injustice? Why are ye not rather defrauded?* That they may return to that which the Lord said, *If any one will take away thy coat, and contend with thee in a suit, let him have thy cloak also*^c. And in another place, *From him who hath taken away thy goods, ask them not again*^d. He hath, therefore, forbidden them that are his from having a suit with other men concerning matters of this world, from which teaching the Apostle says that it is a fault. Yet when he allows such suits to be concluded in the Church between brothers, when brothers are judges, but awfully forbids them outside the Church, it is clear here, too, what is conceded to the weak by way of pardon. On account of these and sins of this kind and others, although less than these, which take place by offences in words or thoughts, as the Apostle James confesses and says, *For in many things we all offend*^e, it behoves us that we daily and frequently entreat the Lord and

^b 1 Cor. vi. 1—6.

^d Luke vi. 30.

^c Matt. v. 40.

^e James iii. 2.

say, *Forgive us our debts*, and that we lie not in that which follows, *As we forgive our debtors*¹.

79. But there are certain sins which would be thought very light, unless they were shewn in the Scriptures to be heavier than we think. For who would think that one saying to his brother, *Thou fool*, was in danger of hell fire, unless the Truth said it? For which wound, however, He forthwith subjoined a medicine, adding the commandment of brotherly reconciliation, saying soon after, *If, therefore, thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and shalt there remember that thy brother hath aught against thee*², &c. Or who would judge how great a sin it is to observe days, and months, and years, and times as they observe them who will or will not begin anything on certain days, or months, or years, because that according to the vain doctrines of men they think the times lucky or unlucky; unless we were to weigh the greatness of this evil from the fear of the Apostle, who says to such persons, *I am afraid of you, lest perchance I have laboured in vain amongst you*³?

80. To this is added [the fact] that sins, although great and horrible, when they have become habitual, are believed to be either small or none at all, to such a point as that they appear not only not things to be concealed, but even to be published and spread abroad, since as it is written, *The sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, and he who carrieth on unrighteous things is blessed*¹. Such unrighteousness is in the Divine books called a cry. As you have in the prophet Isaiah concerning the evil vine. *I looked*, says He,

¹ Matt. vi. 12.

² Galat. iv. 11.

³ 1b. v. 22, 23.

¹ Ps. x. 3.

that it should produce judgment, but it produced iniquity, and not justice but a cry^k. Whence, too, is that in Genesis, *The cry of Sodom and Gomorrha hath increased*^l. Because now amongst them not only were not those crimes punished, but even were publicly committed as if by law. So in our times so many evils, although not the same, have now come into open use, that for these we not only do not dare to excommunicate any layman for them, but not even to degrade a cleric. Whence when a few years ago I was expounding the Epistle to the Galatians, on that very place where the Apostle says, *I am afraid of you, lest haply I have laboured in vain amongst you*^m, I was compelled to exclaim, "Woe unto the sins of men, which we only shudder at when unusual, but when usual, for the washing away of which the Blood of the Son of God was shed, though they be so great as to cause that the kingdom of God be wholly shut against them, yet by seeing them often we are forced to bear with them all, by bearing with them often are compelled even to commit some." But I will consider whether immoderate grief drove me to say anything incautiously.

81. I will now say this, which indeed I have already often said in other places of my smaller works. We sin from two causes, either from not yet seeing what we ought to do, or from not doing what we already see ought to be done, of which two the former is an evil of ignorance, the latter of

^k Isa. v. 7.^l Gen. xviii. 20.^m Galat. iv. 11.

weakness. Against which indeed it is fitting that we strive, but we are assuredly overcome, unless we are helped by God so as not only to see what we ought to do, but also soundness of mind being added the delight in righteousness may overcome in us the delights in those things, through the desire of having, or fear of losing which, we sin knowingly and with our eyes open, being now not only sinners, which we were even when we sinned through ignorance, but also transgressors of the law, when we do not do that which we now know ought to be done, or do that which we now know ought not to be done. Wherefore He to Whom it is said in the Psalm, *The Lord is my light and my salvation* ^a, is to be entreated not only if we have sinned, that He would pardon us, for which intent we say, *Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors*, but also that He would rule us that we may not sin, for which intent we say, *Lead us not into temptation* ^o, that light may take away ignorance, salvation weakness.

82. For penance itself, whenever there is a fitting cause according to the custom of the Church, why it should be performed, is, for the most part, not performed through weakness; because, too, shame is a fear of displeasing, while the good opinion of men delights more than righteousness, wherein each man humbles himself by repenting. Whence the mercy of God is needed, not when penance is performed, but also that it may be performed. Otherwise the Apostle would not say of certain persons, *Lest perchance God should*

^a Matt. vi. 22.

^o Ps. xxvii. 1.

*give them repentance*⁸. And in order that Peter might weep bitterly, the Evangelist set forth a ground first, and said, *The Lord looked on him*⁹.

83. But he who not believing the remission of sins in the Church despises the so great largeness of the divine gift, and ends his last day in this obstinacy of mind, is guilty of that sin which cannot be forgiven against the Holy Ghost, in Whom Christ forgives sins. Concerning which difficult question I have treated as clearly as I could in a little book written on this subject alone.

84. But now concerning the resurrection of the flesh, not as some have come to life again, and have died again, but to eternal life, as the Flesh of Christ Himself rose again, I do not know how I may be able to argue briefly and to reply adequately to all the questions which are wont to be raised concerning this matter. But a Christian ought in no way to doubt that the flesh of all men whosoever have been and shall be born, and have died or shall die, shall rise again.

85. Whence there meets us first a question concerning abortions, which have been now already born in the wombs of their mothers, but not yet so that they might now be born again. For if we shall say that they will rise again, that which is said may in some way be borne with concerning those which are already formed, but who would not more readily think that unformed abortions perish as seeds which have not been quickened? But who would dare to deny, though he dare not affirm, that the resurrection will bring it to pass that whatever has been wanting to the form be sup-

⁸ 2 Tim. ii. 25.

⁹ Luke xxii. 61.

plied? And so that that perfection be not wanting which would have been added by time, in like manner as those faults will not exist which had been added by time; that nature should not be deprived of that which being suitable and congruous days were to bring with them, nor should nature be deformed by that which being adverse and contrary days had brought with them, but that that be made entire which was not yet entire, as that will be renewed which had been vitiated.

86. And thus it may indeed be most exactly enquired and discussed amongst the most learned men (and I know not whether it can be ascertained by man) when a man begins to live in the womb, whether there be a certain and hidden life, which does not yet appear by the motions of a living being. For it seems excessive boldness to deny that those births have lived which are cut out limb by limb and cast forth from the wombs of pregnant women for this reason, lest they kill their mothers also if they are left there dead. But from the time that a man begins to live, from that time certainly he is already capable of dying. But I cannot discover how one dead, wheresoever death has been able to happen to him, should not pertain to the resurrection of the dead.

87. For neither will it be denied that those monsters which are born and live, although they die quickly, will rise again, nor is it to be believed that they will rise again so deformed, and not rather with their nature corrected and freed from blemish. God forbid that that double-limbed creature, who was lately born in the east, of whom both most trustworthy brethren have brought word, and Jerome of holy memory, the Priest, has left it written that they saw

him. God forbid, I say, that we should think that one double man, and not rather two will rise again, which would have been the case if they had been born twins. So the others which are called monsters as each singly having something either in excess or defect, or because of some excessive deformity, will be recalled by the resurrection to the form of human nature so that each several soul shall have its own several body, none being joined together, even of such as were born joined together, but each separately bearing its own members, of which the entirety of the human body is made up.

88. For the earthly matter of which the flesh of mortal men is created perishes not unto God ; but into whatsoever dust or ashes it may be resolved, into whatsoever breath or air it flee away, into whatsoever substance of other bodies, or even into the very elements it be changed, the food of whatsoever animals or even of men it become, and be changed into their flesh, in an instant of time it returns to that human soul, which originally animated it, that it might become man, live, and grow.

89. And so that very earthly matter which by the departure of the soul becomes a corpse, will not be so restored at the resurrection as that those parts which pass away and are changed into ever various forms of other things, although they return to the body whence they passed away, must of necessity return to the same parts also of the body where they were. Otherwise if that returns to the hairs of the head, which so frequent clipping has removed, to the nails what cutting has so often taken away, there occurs to those who reflect on it an excessive and unseemly deformity,

and therefore do not believe the resurrection of the flesh. But as if a statue of any fusible metal should either be melted by fire, or be ground to dust or crushed into one mass, and a workman wished to restore it again from that amount of the same material, it would make no difference to its completeness, which particle of material was given to any member of the statue, so long at least as when restored it received again the whole of that of which it had consisted; so God, Who works in a wonderful and unspeakable way, will, of the whole of which our flesh consisted, restore it with wonderful and unspeakable quickness, nor will it have anything to do with its restoration, whether hair returns to hair, and nails to nails, or whether whatever of them had perished be changed into flesh, and be recalled into other parts of the body, the providence of the Worker taking care that nothing unseemly takes place.

90. Nor is that a necessary result that therefore the stature of each who returns to life should be different because it was different when they were living, or that the lean return to life with the same leanness, or the fat with the same fatness. But if this be in the design of the Creator, that the peculiarities of each person and a likeness which may be discerned should be preserved in his image, but that in the other properties of the body all things should be made equal, that matter which is in each will be so assigned that neither may anything of it perish, and that what shall be wanting to any He may supply Who has been able to work what He would even out of nothing. But if there shall be a reasonable inequality in the bodies of those who rise again, as there is in voices which fill up a song, this shall

be done for each of the matter of his own body, which may make man equal to the angelic assemblies, and bring in nothing unsuitable to their perceptions. Assuredly there will not there be anything unseemly, but whatever shall be this will be seemly, because it will not be if it be not seemly.

91. The bodies of the saints then will rise again without any defect, without any deformity, as without any corruption, burden, or difficulty, in which there will be as great capability as happiness. For which reason, too, they have been called spiritual, whereas without doubt they will be bodies, not spirits. But as it is now called an animate body, which yet is body, not soul, so that that will be a spiritual body, yet body, not spirit. Wherefore as far as belongs to corruption which now weighs down the soul, and to the vices by which the flesh lusts against the Spirit, then it will be not flesh but body, because there are also said to be celestial bodies. For which reason it is said, *Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God*^{*}, and as if explaining what he said, *Neither shall corruption*, says he, *inherit incorruption*. What he first called *flesh and blood*, this he afterwards called *corruption*; and what he first called *the kingdom of God*, this afterwards he called *incorruption*. But as far as pertains to substance even then it will be flesh. For which reason also after His Resurrection the Body of Christ was called flesh. But therefore the Apostle says, *It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body*^{*}, since so great will then be the agreement between flesh and spirit, the spirit quickening without need of any support the flesh subdued to it, that nothing

^{*} 1 Cor. xv. 50.

^{*} Ib. 44.

from out of ourselves shall oppose ourselves, but we shall suffer as from none without so neither from ourselves as enemies within.

92. But whosoever are not set free by the One Mediator between God and man from that mass of perdition which was caused by the first man, shall rise indeed themselves also, each with his own flesh, but that they may be punished with the devil and his angels. What is the need of labouring in the enquiry whether they indeed rise again with the faults and deformities of their own bodies, whatsoever they have borne in themselves of faulty and deformed members? For neither ought the uncertainty of their form or beauty, whose damnation will be certain and eternal, to weary us. Nor let it move us how there shall be in them a body incorruptible, if it shall be able to suffer pain; or how a corruptible, if it shall not be able to die. For true life is not except where it is spent happily, nor true incorruption, except where soundness is tainted by no pain. But where one in misery is not suffered to die, death itself, so to say, does not die; and where unceasing pain does not destroy but afflict, corruption itself is not ended. This is called in the sacred Scriptures *the second death*¹.

93. And yet neither would the first [death] in which the soul is compelled to leave its own body, nor the second in which it is not allowed to leave its body under punishment, have happened to man, if no one had sinned. The mildest punishment indeed of all will be theirs, who have added no sin further besides the sin of origin which they

¹ Rev. ii. 11, and xx. 6—14.

have contracted ; and in the rest, who have added [sins] each will receive there more endurable condemnation, in proportion as he has here had less iniquity.

94. So while reprobate angels and men remain in eternal punishment, then shall the just know more fully what good grace has conferred on them. Then through the facts themselves will appear more clearly what is written in the Psalm, *I will sing to Thee, O Lord, of mercy and judgment*^u, because no one is delivered but by undeserved mercy, and no one is condemned but through deserved judgment.

95. Then will that not be hidden which now is hidden, when of two little ones one was to be taken by the mercy of God, the other to be left through judgment, in which he who should be taken should recognize what was due to him through judgment, unless mercy should come to his aid, why he rather than the other should have been taken, when both were in one case, why mighty works were not wrought among some, which if they had been wrought those men would have repented ; and were wrought amongst those who were not about to believe. For the Lord says most plainly, *Woe to thee Corozain, and woe to thee Bethsaida, for if the mighty works which have been done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes*^x. Nor assuredly has God unjustly been unwilling that they should be saved, when they might be saved if He would. Then shall be seen in the clearest light of wisdom, what now the faith of the pious holds before be seen by clear knowledge, how certain, unchangeable,

^u Ps. ci. 1.

^x Matt. xi. 21.

and most effectual is the will of God ; how many things He can do and wills not, yet wills nothing which He cannot, and how true that is which is sung in the Psalm, *But our God is in Heaven above, He hath done all things whatever He would in heaven and in earth*¹. Which is certainly not true if He willed any things and has not done them, and, which is even more unworthy [of Him], has not done them because the will of man hindered that being done which the Almighty willed. Therefore nothing is done unless the Almighty wills that it be done, either by allowing it to be done, or by doing it Himself.

96. Nor must it be doubted that God does well even by allowing to be done whatever things are done ill. For He does not allow this except by just judgment, and certainly everything is good which is just. Although therefore those things which are evil, in so far as they are evil, be not good, nevertheless it is good that there be not only things good but also evil. For unless this were good that evils should also be, they would by no means be allowed to be by the Almighty Good, to Whom without doubt it is as easy not to allow to be what He wills not, as it is easy to do what He wills. Unless we believe this, the very beginning of our confession is in danger, in which we confess that we believe in God the Father Almighty. For He is not truly called Almighty on any other ground, except because He can do whatever He wills, and the effect of the Almighty Will is not hindered by the will of any creature.

97. Wherefore we must see how it is said of God, because

¹ Ps. cxv. 3.

the Apostle has most truly said this also, *Who willeth all men to be saved*^a. For since not all, but by far the larger number are not saved, it seems certainly that that is not done which God wills to be done, the will of man, that is to say, hindering the will of God. For when a reason is asked why all are not saved, it is wont to be answered, because they themselves will not. Which indeed cannot be said of little children, who have not yet the power of willing or not willing. For if it were judged that that ought to be referred to their will which they do in their infantine movements at the time they are baptized, when they resist as much as they can, we should say that they are saved even against their will. But the Lord speaks more openly in the Gospel, addressing the impious city, *How often*, says He, *would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth her chickens, and thou wouldest not*^a! as though the will of God were overcome by the will of men, and when the weakest by not willing hindered, the Strongest was not able to do what He willed. And where is that Omnipotence whereby He did all things whatsoever He would in heaven and in earth, if He willed to gather together the children of Jerusalem, and did it not? Or rather was she indeed unwilling that her children should be gathered together by Him, but, though she was unwilling, He Himself gathered together those children of hers whom He would? Because He did not will and do certain things *in heaven and in earth*, but willed and did not do certain things, but, *He hath done all things whatsoever He would*^b.

98. Who further would be so impiously foolish as to say

^a 1 Tim. ii. 4.

^a Matt. xxiii. 37.

^b Ps. cxv. 3.

that God cannot change to good the evil wills of men, which He will, when He will, and where He will? But when He does it, He does it through mercy, but when He does it not, He does it not through judgment. Since *upon whom He will He hath mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth*^c. The Apostle was commending grace [when led] to say this, for the commendation of which he had already said concerning those twins in Rachel's womb, who *not being yet born, nor doing anything good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth it was said unto her that the elder shall serve the younger*^d. Wherefore he brought forward another prophetic witness, where it is written, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau I have hated*^e. But feeling how much this that is said might move those who are not able to penetrate this depth of grace by understanding, he says, *What then shall we say? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid*^f. For it seems unrighteous that without any merits of good or evil works God should love one and hate another. In which matter if He wished that the future works, whether good of the one or bad of the other, should be understood, He would by no means say, not of works, but would say "of future works," and in this way would solve that question, or rather would raise no question which required to be solved. But now having answered *God forbid*, that is, far be it that there should be unrighteousness with God, shortly after that he might prove that this was done through no unrighteousness of God, he says, *For He saith to Moses*

^c Rom. ix. 18.^e Rom. ix. 13.^d Gen. xxv. 23, and Mal. i. 2.^f Ib. 14.

I will have pity on whom I will have pity, and will shew mercy on whom I will be merciful^a. For who except a fool would think God unrighteous, whether He inflict penal judgment on one worthy, or shew mercy on one unworthy? Finally he draws an inference and says, *Therefore it is not of him who willeth, nor of him who runneth, but of God Who hath pity*^b. For the twins were both by nature born children of wrath, through no works indeed of their own, but bound through their origin by the chain of damnation from Adam. But He Who said, *I will have pity on whom I will have pity*, loved Jacob through free mercy, but hated Esau through merited judgment. Which being due to both, the one recognized in the other that he had not to glory concerning his own merits [as] differing [from the other's] because that in the same case he incurs not the same punishment, but concerning the bountifulness of Divine grace, because it is *not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God Who sheweth pity*. In fact, by a very deep and very healthful mystery the whole face, and so to say, countenance, of the Sacred Scriptures is found to warn those who look well upon it, *That he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord*^c.

99. But when he had commended the mercy of God in that which he says, *Therefore it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God Who sheweth pity*^b, then, that he may also commend His judgment (since in whom mercy does not take place, unrighteousness does not take place, but judgment, for that there is not unrighteousness with God), he forthwith proceeded and says, *For the Scripture saith to Pharaoh, that for this end have I raised*

^a Rom. ix. 15.^b Ib. 16.^c 1 Cor. i. 31.^d Rom. ix. 17.

*thee up, that I may shew in thee My power, and that My Name may be declared in the whole earth*¹. After saying which, concluding as regards both, that is as regards mercy and judgment, he says, *Therefore He hath pity on whom He will, and whom He will He hardeneth*. He has pity, that is through His great goodness, He hardens with no unrighteousness, that neither he who is set free may glory in his merits, nor he who is condemned complain except of his merits. For grace alone separates the redeemed from the lost, whom a common cause derived from their origin had made grow together into one mass of perdition. But he who hears this in such a way as to say, *Why doth He yet complain? for who resisteth His will*^m? as if the evil man should not seem to be deserving of blame, for this reason, because *God hath pity on whom He will, and hardeneth whom He will*, far be it from us to be ashamed to make this answer which we see that the Apostle answered, *O man, who art thou who answerest God? Doth the thing fashioned say to him who fashioned it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay to make of the same lump one vessel indeed to honour, but another to dishonour*ⁿ? For in this place certain foolish men think that the Apostle failed in answering, and through want of a reason to be rendered repressed the boldness of the gainsayer. But that has great weight which is said, *O man, who art thou?* And in such questions he recalls a man to the consideration of his own capacity by a short word indeed, but in reality there the answer of the reason is great. For if he do not comprehend these things, who is he to make answer to God? But if he comprehend them, he fails the more to find what he may

¹ Exod. ix. 16.^m Ib. 19.ⁿ Ib. 20, 21.

answer. For if he comprehends, he sees the whole human race condemned in its apostate root by so just judgment of God that even if no one were delivered thence, no one could rightly blame the justice of God; and that it was needful that they who are delivered should be so delivered that it might be shewn by the larger number not delivered but left in most just condemnation, what the whole mass had deserved, and whither the deserved judgment of God would lead them also, unless His undeserved mercy helped them, that of those who wish to boast of their own merits, *every mouth should be stopped, and he that glorieth should glory in the Lord*°.

100. These are *the great works of the Lord, sought out unto all His will*°, and so wisely sought out, that when the angelic and human creation had sinned, that is had done not what He willed but what they willed, He Himself fulfilled that which He willed by means of that same will of the creature by which that was done which the Creator willed not; using well both the evil, as being Himself supremely good, for the condemnation of those whom He justly predestined to punishment, and for the salvation of those whom He mercifully predestined to grace. For as far as regards themselves, they did that which God willed not, but as far as regards the Almighty power of God, they were in no way able to effect that. For in that very thing which they did against His will, His will was done on them. For for this reason *are the works of the Lord great, sought out unto all His will*°, that in a wonderful and unspeakable way even that which is done against His will is not done without His will. Because it would not be done, if He did not permit it, and

° Rom. iii. 19, and 1 Cor. i. 31.

° Ps. cxi. 2.

He does not assuredly permit it unwillingly but willingly, nor could He being good allow evil to be done unless in His Omnipotence He could work good even out of evil.

101. But sometimes man wills something with good will, which God does not will with a will much more and much more certainly good, for His will can never be evil. As if a good son were to wish his father to live, whom God by good will wills to die. And again it may happen that man wills that with evil will, which God wills with good will, as if a bad son were to wish his father to die, and God also willed this. For the former wills what God does not will, but the latter wills what God also wills, and yet the dutifulness of the former agrees rather with the good will of God, than the undutifulness of the latter who wills the same thing [as God]. So great a difference is there between what is fitting for man to will, and what for God; and to what end each man refers his will, that it be either approved or disapproved. For God fulfils certain of His wills, assuredly good, by means of the evil wills of evil men; as by the good will of the Father Christ was slain for us by the evil-willing Jews, which was so great a good that the Apostle Peter, when he was unwilling that it should take place, was called Satan by Him Who had come to be slain. How good did the wills of the pious faithful appear, who were unwilling that the Apostle Paul should go to Jerusalem, lest he there should suffer the evils which the prophet Agabus had foretold, and yet God willed that he should suffer these things for the shewing forth the faith of Christ, exercising a witness

for Christ. And He did not fulfil that good will of His by means of the good will of the Christians, but by the evil wills of the Jews ; and they were rather His, who willed not what He willed, than they, by means of whom willing that was done which He willed ; for they wrought indeed the same thing, but He with a good will by their means, they with an evil will.

102. But how great soever be the wills either of angels or of men, whether good or evil, whether willing that which God wills, or willing other than God, the will of the Almighty is always unconquered ; because even when it inflicts evil it is just, and assuredly the will which is just is not evil. Therefore Almighty God, whether by mercy He have mercy on whom He will, or by judgment hardeneth whom He will, neither does anything unjustly, nor does anything except He wills it, and does all things whatsoever He wills.

103. And for this reason, when we hear and read in the sacred Scriptures that He wills all men to be saved, although we are sure that all men are not saved, we ought not therefore to derogate anything from the absolutely Almighty will of God, but so to understand that which is written, *Who willeth all men to be saved*⁹, as though it were said that no man is saved, except he whom He wills to be saved, not that there is no man except whom He wills to be saved, but that no one is so except whom He wills, and therefore is He to be entreated that He may will, because if He will it must

⁹ 1 Tim. ii. 4.

of necessity be done. In fact the Apostle was treating of praying to God when he said this. For so we understand also what is written in the Gospel, *Who lighteth every man*^{*}, not that there is no man who is not lighted, but that no one is lighted except by Him. Or surely it has been thus said, *Who willeth all men to be saved*, not that there is no man whom He willeth not to be saved, Who willed not to work miracles amongst those who He said would have repented if He had worked them; but that we should understand *all men* of every class of men distributed through what differences soever, kings, private men, nobles, commoners, high, low, learned, unlearned, of sound body, weakly, men of genius, slow-minded, foolish, rich, poor, of moderate position, men, women, infants, boys, youths, younger, older, aged; of all languages, all characters, arts, professions, of all the innumerable varieties of wills and consciences, and whatever other differences there may be in men. For what is there of them from which God does not will that throughout all nations men should be saved by His Only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore effects it, because the Almighty cannot will in vain whatsoever He shall will? For the Apostle had enjoined that prayer should be made *for all men*, and had specially added, *for kings and those who are in high places*^{*}, who might be supposed through haughtiness and pride of this world to be averse to the humility of the Christian faith. Therefore saying, *For this is good in the*

^{*} John i. 9.

^{*} 1 Tim. ii. 1.

sight of God our Saviour, that is that prayer shall also be made for such, he added, *Who willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*. This in fact God judged to be good, that He should grant to the prayers of the lowly the salvation of those in high place, which certainly we now see fulfilled. The Lord also used that manner of speech in the Gospel where He said to the Pharisees, *Ye tithe mint, and rue, and every herb*¹. For neither did the Pharisees tithe both whatever belonged to others, and all herbs of all foreign people throughout all countries. As, therefore, here we may understand by *every herb* all kinds of herbs, so in that place by *all men* we may understand every class of men; and in whatever other sense it can be understood, so long only as we are not obliged to believe that Almighty God willed that anything should be done, and that it has not been done, Who without any ambiguity, if, as the Truth says of Him, *He hath done all whatsoever He would in heaven and in earth*², certainly did not will to do whatsoever He has not done.

104. Wherefore also God would have willed to keep the first man in that state of salvation in which he had been created, and in fitting time after he had begotten sons to bring him without the interposition of death to better things, where he might now not only not be able to commit sin, but not even to have the will to sin, if He had foreknown that he would have an abiding will to remain without sin, as he had been made. But because He foreknew that he would use

¹ Luke xi. 42.

² Ps. cxv. 3.

his free-will ill, that is would sin, He prepared His own will for this rather, that He Himself might work good even of him working evil, and so the good will of the Almighty might not be made of none effect, by the evil will of man, but might be none the less fulfilled.

105. For it was needful that man should first be created so that he might have the power of willing both well and ill, and not without reward if well; nor without punishment if ill; but hereafter he will be so as not to be able to will ill, and will not therefore be without free-will. In fact the will will be much more free, because it will be wholly unable to serve sin. For neither is the will to be blamed, nor is it not will, or not to be called free, whereby we so will to be happy as not only to be unwilling to be wretched, but absolutely have not power to will it. As, therefore, our soul even now has no will for unhappiness, so will it always have no will for unrighteousness. But the order was not to be passed by in which God willed to shew how good is a reasonable animal, that it has power even not to sin, although it be better that it has not power to sin, as that immortality was less, and yet did exist, in which he had power even not to die, although that will be greater in which he will not have power to die.

106. Human nature lost the former through free-will, it will receive the latter through grace, which, if it had not sinned, it would have received through merit, although not even then could any merit have existed without grace. Because although sin had its place in free-will alone, yet free-will was not sufficient for the retaining of righteousness,

unless Divine aid were granted to it by participation in the unchangeable good. For as to die is in man's power when he wills, for there is no one who cannot, to mention nothing else, kill himself even by not taking food, but the will is not enough for the retaining of life, if the assistance whether of food or of some other means be wanting; so man in paradise was able by his will to kill himself by forsaking righteousness, but it was too little to will that the life of righteousness might be retained by him, unless He Who had created him helped him. But after that fall the mercy of God is greater since, too, the will itself is to be delivered from slavery, which now sin together with death rules over. Nor is it at all delivered by itself, but by the grace of God alone, which has its place in the faith of Christ, that the will itself, as it is written, may be prepared by the Lord ^a, whereby the rest of the gifts of God may be received, by means of which man may come to His eternal gift.

107. Whence the Apostle calls eternal life itself also, which certainly is the reward of good works, the grace of God; *For the wages of sin, he says, is death, but the grace of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*[†]. For wages are paid as due for military service, not given, therefore he said, *The wages of sin is death*, that he might shew that death was not undeservedly brought upon sin but due. But grace, unless it be gratuitous, is not grace. Therefore we

^a Prov. viii. 35, Septuag.

[†] Rom. vi. 23.

must understand that even the good merits themselves of men are the gifts of God, to which when eternal life is given, what is it but that grace is given for grace? So, then, man was created upright, that he might be able both to continue in that uprightness not without divine assistance, and to become perverse by his own will. Whichever of these he had chosen, the will of God would be done, either also by him, or certainly concerning him. Then because he chose rather to do his own will than God's, the will of God was done concerning him, Who of the same mass of perdition, which flowed from his stock, makes one vessel unto honour, another unto dishonour^{*}, unto honour through mercy, unto dishonour through judgment, that no one should glory in man, and therefore not in himself.

108. For we should not be delivered by the One Mediator Himself between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus^{*}, unless He were also God. But when Adam was created, that is upright man, there was no need of a Mediator. But when sins had widely separated the human race from God, it was needful that we should be reconciled to God unto the resurrection of the flesh to eternal life by a Mediator, Who alone was born without sin, lived, and was slain; that human pride might be convicted and healed by the humiliation of God, and that it might be shewn unto man how far he had departed from God, when he was called back by an Incarnate God, and an example of obedience might be given to stubborn man by the Man-God; and that, the Only-begotten taking upon Him the form of a servant which before had merited nothing, a fountain of grace might be opened, and the resurrection of the flesh promised to the redeemed might be shewn beforehand in the Redeemer Himself, and that the

^{*} Rom. ix. 21.

^{*} 1 Tim. ii. 5.

devil might be conquered through that same nature which he was rejoicing that he had deceived, and yet that man should not glory, lest pride should spring up again, and if there be anything else concerning the so-great Mystery of the Mediator, which can be seen and uttered by those who make progress, or be seen only even though it cannot be uttered.

109. But the time which intervenes between the death of man and the last resurrection keeps souls in hidden receptacles according as each is worthy either of rest or of misery, according to that which it obtained in the body when alive.

110. Nor must it be denied that the souls of the departed are relieved by the piety of their living friends, when for these the Sacrifice of the Mediator is offered, or alms are given in the Church. But these things profit those who, while they were alive, deserved that these things should afterwards be able to profit them. For there is a certain way of living, neither so good as not to require those things after death, nor so bad that they cannot profit after death; but there is [one] such in goodness as not to require those things, and there is again [another] such in evil that he cannot be helped even by these things, when he has passed out of this life. Wherefore all merit is provided here, whereby after this life any one may be aided or oppressed. But let no one hope that he can after death merit with God what he hath here neglected. Those things, therefore, which the Church celebrates for the commending of the departed are not opposed to that sentence of the Apostle wherein it is said, *For we shall all stand at the judgment-seat of Christ, that each may receive according to the things which he hath done in the*

body, whether good or bad^b. Because each man has obtained for himself while he lived in the body, this merit, that those things might be able to profit him. For they do not profit all, and wherefore do they not profit all, unless because of the difference of the life which each one lived in the body? When, then, the sacrifices whether of the altar or of any almsdeeds, are offered for all baptized persons deceased, they are for the very good thanksgivings, for the not very bad propitiations, for the very bad, although they are no assistance to the dead, they are consolations such as they are of the living. But whom they benefit, they benefit either to this point, that there be full remission, or at any rate that their condemnation itself may be made more tolerable.

111. But after the resurrection, when the general judgment has been done and completed, the two kingdoms shall have their ends, the one, that is, of Christ, the other of the devil, the one of the good, the other of the evil; each, however, both of angels and men. To the one it shall not be possible that there be any will, to the other any power of sinning, or any circumstance of death; the one living truly and happily in eternal life, the others continuing in eternal death without the power of dying, since both are without end. But of those in bliss one will be in a higher state than another, but of those in misery one will be in a more tolerable state than another.

112. In vain then do some, in truth very many, with human feeling pity the eternal punishment of the damned, and

^b Rom. xiv. 10, and 2 Cor. v. 10.

their perpetual torments without intermission, and so do not believe that they will be, not indeed by opposing the Divine Scriptures, but by softening according to their own feelings all the hard passages, and turning to a more gentle meaning the things which they think are said in them rather to cause fear than as being true. *For God, say they, will not forget to have pity nor shut up His tender mercies in His anger*^c. This indeed is read in the holy Psalm, but it is understood without any doubt of those who are called vessels of mercy, because they too are delivered from misery, not for their merits, but because God has mercy. Or if they think that it belongs to all, it is not therefore necessary that they should think that their condemnation may be ended of whom it is said, *And they shall go into eternal punishment*^d, lest in this way it should be thought also that their happiness will at some time have an end, of whom on the other hand it is said, *but the just into life eternal*. But let them think if this pleases them that the punishments of the damned are mitigated to some extent at certain intervals of time. Since indeed thus the wrath of God can be understood to abide upon them, that is, condemnation itself (for this is called the wrath of God, not any perturbation of the divine mind), so that in His anger, that is, His anger continuing, He notwithstanding may not shut up His tender mercies; not by granting an end to their eternal punishment, but by applying or interposing an alleviation to their torments. Because neither does the Psalm say, to put an end to His anger, or, after His anger, but *in His anger*. Which if it were alone, the very least

^c Ps. lxxvii. 9.

^d Matt. xxv. 46.

that can be imagined there, to perish from the kingdom of God, to be an exile from the city of God, to be an alien from the life of God, to be without so great a multitude of the sweetnesses of God*, which He has laid up for them that fear Him, but has perfected for those who hope in Him, is so great a punishment, that no torments which we know can be compared to it, if it be eternal, and they be however many ages long.

113. Therefore that perpetual death of the damned, that is, alienation from the life of God, will endure without end, and will itself be common to all, whatever men according to their human feelings may imagine concerning the variety of punishments, the lightening or intermission of pains; as the eternal life of the saints will remain the life in common of all, with whatever distinction of honours they may harmoniously shine.

114. From that confession of faith, which is briefly contained in the Creed, and which carnally understood is the milk of babes, but spiritually considered and handled is the meat of the strong, the good hope of the faithful which holy charity accompanies, takes its beginning. But of all those things which are to be believed faithfully, those alone pertain to hope which are contained in the Lord's Prayer. *Cursed is every one*, as the divine words testify, *who placeth his hope in man*^f. And therefore he also who places his hope in himself is tied by the bond of this curse. Therefore we ought not to seek except from the Lord God whatever we hope that we shall either do well [ourselves] or receive for our good works.

115. Accordingly in the Evangelist Matthew the Lord's Prayer seems to contain seven petitions, in three of which

* Ps. xxxi. 19.

^f Jerem. xvii. 5.

things eternal are asked, in the other four temporal things, which however are necessary for the attaining of eternal things. For that which we say, *Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done as in heaven so also on earth*^a (which some have not unsuitably understood in the spirit and in the body) are wholly to be retained without an end, and having been begun here, whatsoever progress we have made, are increased in us ; but when perfected, which is to be hoped for in another life, will always be possessed. But that which we say, *Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we too forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*^b. Who does not see that this pertains to the need of the present life? So in that future life, where we hope that we shall ever be, both the hallowing of God's Name, and His Kingdom, and His Will will remain perfectly and immortally in our spirit and body. But our daily bread is therefore so called because here it is necessary, as much as is to be given to our soul and flesh, whether it be understood spiritually or carnally, or in both ways. Here is also the forgiveness which we ask where there is the commission of sins ; here temptations which either entice or urge us to sin ; here lastly evil, from which we wish to be delivered ; but there there is none of these things.

116. But the Evangelist Luke^c has comprehended not seven but five petitions in the Lord's Prayer, and is not surely

^a Matt. vi. 9—12.

^b Matt. vi. 11—13.

^c Luke xi. 2—4.

at variance with that other, but by his very brevity has warned us how those seven are to be understood. That is to say, the name of God is hallowed in the spirit, but the kingdom of God is to come in the resurrection of the flesh. Luke, therefore, shewing that the third petition is in a certain way a repetition of the two former, causes it to be more understood by passing it by. Then he adds three others, concerning daily bread, concerning forgiveness of sins, and concerning the avoiding of temptation. But what the other set last, *But deliver us from evil*, he has not set down [at all], that we might understand that it belongs to that before which was said concerning temptation. Therefore indeed he [St. Matthew] says, *But forgive*, he says not, and forgive, as it were shewing that it is one petition (Do not this, but this); that each may know that he is delivered from evil in that he is not led into temptation.

117. Now further, charity, which the Apostle said was greater than those two, that is, than faith and hope, by how much the more it be in any one, so much the better is he in whom it is. For when it is asked whether any one be a good man, it is not asked what he believes or hopes, but what he loves. For he who loves rightly without doubt he rightly believes and hopes; but he who loves not believes in vain, even if those things be true which he believes; he hopes in vain, even if those things which he hopes for are taught to belong to true happiness, unless he also believe and hope this, that it may be given to him asking that he may love. For although one cannot hope without love, yet it may come to pass, that he love not that without which he cannot attain to that which he hopes. As if one should hope for eternal life (which who does not love?)

and should not love righteousness, without which no one attains to it. But this is the very faith of Christ, which the Apostle commends, which worketh by love, and, what in love it has not yet, asks that it may receive, seeks that it may find, knocks that it may be opened unto it. For faith obtains what the law commands^k. For without the gift of God, that is the Holy Ghost through Whom love is shed abroad in our hearts, the law will be able to command, not to help, and to make one moreover a transgressor who cannot excuse himself on account of ignorance. For carnal lust reigns where the love of God is not.

118. But when in the deepest darkness of ignorance, without any resistance on the part of reason, man lives according to the flesh, this is the first state of man. Then when by the law a knowledge of sin has been effected, if the Divine Spirit do not yet help, he willing to live according to the law is overcome, and sins knowingly, and having been subdued is the slave of sin : *For by whom a man is overcome, to him is he also made over as a slave*^l, the knowledge of the commandment effecting this, that sin works in the man all lust, the aggravation of transgression being added, and that that which is written be fulfilled, *The law entered that offence might abound*^m. This is the second state of man. But if God shall look upon him, so that He may be believed to assist him to fulfil what He Himself commands, and man shall begin to be led by the Spirit of God, he lusts against the flesh with the stronger power of love, so that although there still be that which [arising] from man fights against the man, the whole weakness not

^k Matt. vii. 7.

^l 2 Pet. ii. 19.

^m Rom. v. 20.

being yet healed, nevertheless the just man may live by faith and may live just, in so far as he does not yield to evil lust because the delight in righteousness prevails. This is the third state of good hope in man, in which if any one makes progress by pious perseverance, peace at last remains, which will be fulfilled after this life in the rest of the Spirit, and then at the resurrection in that of the flesh also. Of these four different states the first is before the law, the second under the law, the third under grace, the fourth in full and perfect peace. And so too has the people of God been ordered at intervals of times, as it pleased God, *Who ordereth all things in measure, number, and weight*^a. For it was at first before the law; secondly under the law which was given by Moses, then under grace which was revealed by the first coming of the Mediator. Which grace indeed was neither before wanting to those to whom it was proper that it should be imparted, although it was veiled and hidden according to the dispensation of the time. For neither could any one of the just men of old find salvation apart from the faith of Christ, nor yet, unless He had been known to them also, could He have been prophesied of to us through their ministry, at one time more openly, at another more obscurely.

119. But in whichever of those four, as it were, ages, the grace of regeneration found any individual man, there all his past sins are forgiven him, and that guilt contracted by his birth is done away with by his second birth. And so much does it avail that *the Spirit bloweth where it listeth*^o, that some have never known that second bondage under the law, but together with the commandment begin to have the divine help.

^a Wisd. xi. 20.

^o John iii. 8.

120. But before a man can be capable of [receiving] the commandment, it is necessary that he live according to the flesh, but if he has been already imbued in the sacrament of regeneration, it will in no way harm him if he shall depart out of this life. *For therefore did Christ die and rise again, that He might be Lord both of the living and of the dead*^o, nor will the kingdom of death hold him for whom He died, Who is *free among the dead*.

121. All the divine commandments therefore are referred to love, concerning which the Apostle says, *But the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and faith unfeigned*¹. The end therefore of every commandment is Charity, that is, every commandment is referred to Charity. But that which is so done, either through fear of punishment, or with any carnal intention so as not to be referred to that charity which the Holy Ghost sheds abroad in our hearts, is not yet done as it ought to be done, although it may appear to be so done. In fact that Charity is [love] of God and our neighbour, and assuredly *on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*². Add the Gospel, add the Apostles, for from no other source is that saying, *the end of the commandment is love*³, and *God is love*⁴. Whatsoever things therefore God commands, of which one is, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*⁵, and whatsoever things are not commanded, but advised by spiritual counsel, of which one is, *It is good for a man not to touch a woman*⁶, are then rightly done, when they are referred to the love of God and of our neighbour for God's sake, both in this world and in that which

^o Rom. xiv. 9.

¹ 1 Tim. i. 5.

² 1 Tim. i. 5.

³ 1 John iv. 16.

⁴ 1 Cor. vii. 3.

⁵ Matt. xxii. 40.

⁶ Matt. v. 27.

is to come ; of God now by faith, then by sight, and of our very neighbour now by faith. For we mortals do not know the hearts of mortals, but then, *the Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and every one shall have praise of God*¹, because that will be praised and loved by one neighbour in another, which God Himself will bring to light that it may not lie hid. But lust is lessened as love increases, until love arrive here to such greatness that it cannot be greater, *For greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*². But who can unfold how great love shall be there, where shall be no lust which even by repressing it may subdue ; since the most perfect soundness shall be when there shall be no strife with death.

122. But let there be at length an end of this volume, which you yourself will consider whether to call it or to have it as a handbook. But I, as I thought your zeal in Christ ought not to be despised, believing and hoping good things of you with the help of our Redeemer, and loving you much in His members, have, according to my ability, drawn up a book for you (would it were as useful as it is long) concerning Faith, Hope, and Charity.

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 5.

² John xv. 13.

Thanks be to God.

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