The city of God

Saint Augustine (Bishop of Hippo.)
THE CITY OF GOD

BY

ST. AUGUSTINE

TRANSLATED BY

JOHN HEALEY
The Dancing Souls from Fra Angelico's Paradise. Accademia, Florence.
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IN 3 VOLUMES
VOL. TWO
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The frontispiece is reproduced from Alinari's photograph of The Dancing Souls in Fra Angelico's 'Paradise,' in the Accademia, Florence.
Of those that affirm they do worship these gods for eternal life and not for temporal respects.

In the five precedent books I think they be sufficiently confounded that hold that worship justly given unto these false gods, which is peculiar only to one true God, and in Greek is called λαυρσία, and that this worship ought to be offered unto them for temporal commodities, all which gods, Christianity convinces either to be frivolous and unprofitable images, and damned spirits, or at least, and at best no creators but creatures. But who knows not that neither those five books, nor all that a man could make, would stay and satisfy excess of obstinacy? for it is some men's glory (vain indeed) never to yield to the truth, but oppose it to their own perdition, in whose bosoms sin has so large an empire, for their disease exceeds all cure, not through the physician's want of skill, but the patient's impatient forwardness. But as for such as read the said books without any obstinate intent, or with little, and
secular blessings: ponder the things they read in an impartial discretion, those shall approve, that our labour in their satisfaction, has rather performed more than the question required, than otherwise: and that all the malice, wherein they make Christianity the cause of all the afflictions falling upon this transitory world (the best learned of them dissembling their knowledge against their own consciences), is not only void of all reason and honesty, but fraught with light rashness and pernicious impudence. Now, therefore (as our method exacts), are they to be dealt withal that make eternity the end of this erroneous worship, which Christian religion, so rejects: let us take our beginning from the holy and oracular Psalmist, that says “Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and regardeth not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies.” But of all such as do go astray in those errors, the philosophers are least faulty, that could never abide the fond opinions of the vulgar, who made their gods images, and fabled divers things of them, most false and unworthy the deities, or else believed them from the reports of others, and from that belief intruded them into the ceremonies, and made them parts of their worships. Wherefore with such as though they durst not openly, yet secretly disliked those things, this question may be fitly disputed of: Whether it be fit to worship one God, the maker of all bodies and spirits, for the life to come, or many gods being all (by their best philosophers’ confessions) both created and advanced. But who can endure to hear it said that the gods which I reckoned up in part, in the fourth book, and have peculiar charges, can give one life eternal. And those sharp-witted men that boast of the good they do by writing of these things, in instructing the

1 Ps. xl. 4.
people what to intreat at each of their hands, would they commit such a gross absurdity as that which the mimics do in jest, asking water of Bacchus and wine of the Nymphs? As thus: would they teach a man that prayed unto the Nymphs for wine, if they answered him, We have no wine, go to Bacchus for that; then to reply, If you have no wine, I pray you then give me life eternal? What grosser foolery could there be than this? would not the Nymphs fall a laughing (for they are prone to laughter when they do not affect deceit as the devils used to do), and say to him, Why, fond man, dost thou think we have life eternal at command, that have not a cup of wine at command, as thou hearest? Such fruitless absurdity should it be to ask eternal life, or hope for it of such gods as are so bound to peculiar charges in things respecting this frail and transitory life, that it were like mimical uncertainty to demand anything of any one of them which rests under the disposing of another. Which when the mimics do, men do very worthily laugh at them in the theatre, and when ignorant fools do it, they are far more worthily derided in the world. Wherefore the peculiar positions that we ought to make unto every god, by the governors of cities, their learned men have compiled, and left unto memory: which must be made to Bacchus, which to the Nymphs, Vulcan, &c., part whereof I recited in the fourth book, and part I willingly omitted. Now then if it be an error to ask wine of Ceres, bread of Bacchus, water of Vulcan, and fire of the Nymphs: how much more were it an error to ask life eternal of any one of them? Wherefore if that in our disputation about the earthly kingdoms, and in whose power they should be, we showed that it was directly false to believe that they consisted in the power of any one of
How those imaginary gods, were it not outrageous madness then to believe that the life eternal, with which the kingdoms of the earth are no way worthy to be compared, should be in the gift of any of them? Nor can their state, and height, compared with the base-ness of an earthly kingdom in respect of them, be a sufficient cloak for their defect in not being able to give it: because (forsooth) they do not respect it. No, whatever he be that, considering the frailty of man's nature makes a scorn of the momentary state of earthly dominion, he will think it an unworthy injury to the gods to have the giving and guarding of such vanities imposed upon them. And by this, if that (according as we proved sufficiently in the two books last past) no one god of all this catalogue of noble and ignoble gods were fit to behold the bestower of earthly states, how much less fit were they all to make a mortal man partaker of immortality? Besides (because now we dispute against those that stand for their worship in respect of the life to come) they are not to be worshipped for those things which these men's erroneous opinion (far from all truth) have put as their proprieties, and things peculiarly in their power: as they believe that hold the honouring of them very useful in things of this present life, against whom I have spoken to my power in the five precedent volumes. Which being thus, if such as adore Juventas, flourish in vigour of youth, and those that do not, either die under age, or pass it with the griefs of decrepit sickness: if the chins of Fortuna Barbata's servants grow full of hair, and all other be beardless: then justly might we say that thus far these goddesses are limited in their offices: and therefore it were no asking life eternal of Juventas, that could not give one a beard, nor were any good to be expected of Fortuna Barbata.
after this life, that had not power to make one live till he had a beard. But now, their worship being of no use for those things in their power, seeing many have worshipped Juventas that live not to be youth; and as many honoured Fortuna Barbata that never had good beards: and many without beards that worshipped her were mocked by them that had beards and scorned her; is any man then so mad, that knowing the worshipping of them to be ineffectual in those things whereunto their pretended power extends, yet will believe it to be effectual in the obtaining life eternal? Nay, even those that did share out their authority, for them (lest being so many, there should some sit idle), and so taught their worship to the rude vulgar, nor these themselves durst affirm that the life eternal was a gift comprised in any of their powers.

CHAPTER II

What may be thought of Varro’s opinion of the gods, who deals so with them in his discovery of them and their ceremonies, that with more reverence unto them he might have held his peace.

Who was ever a more curious inquisitor of these matters than Varro? a more learned inventor, a more diligent judge, a more elegant divider, or a more exact recorder? And, though he be not eloquent, yet as he so documental, and sententious, that to read his universal learning will delight one that loves matter, as much, as Tully will one that loves words. Yea Tully himself leaves this testimony of him, that the same disputatation, that he handles in his Academic
Varro both learned and inconsistent, he had (he says) with Marcus Varro, a man the most acute, and doubtless the most learned of his time. He says not the most eloquent, because herein he had his betters: but, most acute: and in his Academics where he makes doubts of all things, he calls him "doubtless the most learned:" being so assured hereof that he would take away all doubt which he used to induce into all questions, only in this academical disputation forgetting himself to be an Academic. And in his first book, having commended his works, "We, saith he, in the city were but as wandering pilgrims, thy books brought us home, and taught us to know what, and whom we were. Thy country's age, time, religious and political discipline, habitations, order, all the forms, causes, and kinds of divine and civil discipline, by these are fully discovered." So great was his learning, "as Terentius also testifies of him in the verse, 'Vir doctissimus undecunque Varro,' 'Varro, a man of universal skill,' who has read so much that we wonder how he has had time to write, and has written so much that we wonder how any man should read so much." This man (I say), so learned and so witty, had he been a direct opposer of that religion he wrote for, and held the ceremonies, no way religious, but wholly superstitious, could not (I imagine) have recorded more detestable absurdities thereof, than he has already. But being a worshipper of the same gods, and a teacher of that worship, that he professes he fears that his work should be lost, not by the enemies' incursion, but by the citizen's negligence, and affirms that with a more worthy and commodious care were they to be preserved, than that wherewith Metellus fetched the Palladium from the slaves, and Aeneas his household gods from the sack of Troy: yet for all this, does he
He leave such things to memory, as all, both learned and ignorant, do judge most absurd and unworthy to be mentioned in religion? What ought we then to gather, but that this deeply skilled man (being not freed by the Holy Spirit) was over-pressed with the custom of his city, and yet, under show of commend-ing their religion, gave the world notice of his opinion.

CHAPTER III

The division of Varro's books which he styles, "The antiquity of divine and human affairs."

He wrote one and forty books of antiquities: dividing them into affairs divine and human: these he handled in five and twenty of them, the divine in sixteen, so following the division, that every six books of humanity he divided into four parts; prosecuting the persons, place, time, and nature of them all; in his first six he wrote of the men, in the second six of the places, in his third six of the times, in his last six of the actions: one singular book, as the argument of them all, he placed before them all: in his divinity also he follows the same method touching the gods (for their rites are performed by men in time and place). The four heads I rehearsed he comprises in three books peculiar. In the first three of the men, the next three of places, the third of the times, the last of the sacrifices, herein also handling who offered, where, when, and what they offered with acuity and judgment. But because the chief expectation was to know to whom they offered, of this followed a full discourse in his three last books, which made them up fifteen. But in all sixteen,
because a book went as an argument by itself before all that followed; which being ended, consequently out of that five-fold division the three first books did follow of the men, so sub-divided that the first was of the priests, the second of the three, of the fifteen rite-observers. His second three books of the places handled (1) the chapels; (2) the temples; (3) the religious places. The three books of the times, handled (1) their holydays; (2) the Circensian games; (3) the stage-plays. Of the three concerning the sacrifices, the first handled consecrations; second, the private offerings; third, the public. All these as the parts of their precedent pomp, the gods themselves follow in the three last, they on whom all this cost is bestowed: in the first the gods known; second, the gods uncertain; third, the whole company of them; fourth, the selected principals of them. Now, in this godly frame and fabric of a well-distinguished work, it is apparent to all that are not obstinately blind, that vain and impudent are they that beg or expect eternal life of any of these gods: both by that we have spoken and that we will speak. These are but the institutions of men, or of devils: not good devils, as he says, but to be plain, wicked spirits, that out of their strange malice, instil such pernicious opinions into men's phantasies, by abusing their senses, and illuding their weak capacities, thereby to draw their souls into vanity more deep, and unloose the hold they have, or might have, of the unchangeable and eternal verity. Varro professes himself to write of humanity before divinity, because first, says he, there were cities and societies, which afterward gave being to these institutions. But the true religion has no original from earthly societies: God the giver of eternal comfort inspires it into the hearts of such as honour Him.
CHAPTER IV

That by Varro's disputations, the affairs of those men that worshipped the gods, are of far more antiquity than those of the gods themselves.

This therefore is the reason Varro gives why he writes first of the men and after of the gods who had their ceremonious institutions from men: even as, says he, "the painter is older than the picture, and the carpenter than the house, so are cities before their ordinances." But yet, he says, if he were to write of the full nature of the gods, he would have begun with them, and have dealt with men afterwards: as though he writes but of part of their natures, not of all: or that some part of the gods' nature (though not all) should not always be preferred before men? Nay, what say you to his discourse in his three last books of gods certain, gods uncertain, and gods selected? Here he seems to omit no nature of the gods. Why, then, should he say if we were to write of all the nature of gods and men, we would have done with the gods ere we would begin with the men? Either he writes of the gods' natures in whole, in part, or not at all: if in whole, then should the discourse have had first place in his work: if in part, why should it not be first nevertheless? Is it unfit to prefer part of the gods' nature before whole man's? If it be much to prefer it before all the world's, yet it is not so to prefer it before all the Romans. And the books were written only in Rome's respect, not in the world's, yet (says he) the men are fittest before, as the painter to the picture, and the carpenter to the building: plainly intimating
Hints all political cult is false.

that the deities' affairs had (as pictures and buildings have) their original directly from man. So then remains; that he wrote not all of the gods' nature, which he would not speak plainly out, but leave to the reader's collection. For where he says, not all, ordinarily it is understood some, but may be taken for none. For none neither all nor some. For as he says, if it were all the gods' nature that he wrote of, he would have handled it before the men's. But truth (hold he his peace) cries out, it should nevertheless have the place of the Romans' particular, though it be but particular itself. But it is rightly placed as it is, the last of all, therefore it is none at all. His desire therefore was not to prefer humanity before divinity, but truth before falsehood. For in his process of humanity he follows history: but in his divinity nothing but vain relations and idle opinions. This is the aim of his subtle intimation, in preferring the first, and giving the reason why he does so: which had he not given, some other means perhaps might have been invented for the defence of his method. But giving it himself, he neither leaves other's place for other suspicions, nor fails to show that he does but prefer men before men's institutions, not man's nature before the deity's: herein confessing that his books of divinity are not of the truth pertaining to their nature, but of their falsehood effecting others' error: which (as we said in our fourth book) he professed that he would form nearer to the rule of nature if he were to build a city: but finding one established already, he could not choose but follow the grounded customs.
Again, what means his threefold distinction of the doctrine concerning the gods, into mythical, physical, and civil? and (to give him a Latin tongue) that is the first, *fabulare*, but we will call it fabulous, for *μῦθος* in Greek, it is a fable or tale. The second, natural, as the use of the word teaches plain. The third he names in Latin, civil; and then proceeds; mythical, the poet's use principally; physical, the philosopher's; civil, the vulgar. For the first (says he), it is fraught with fictions most disgraceful to the deities; as this, that this god is born of one's head, that of one's thigh, that of drops of blood; and this, that the gods were thieves, adulterers, and servants to man; and finally, they attribute such things to the gods, as cannot be resident but in the most contemptible wretch of all mortality, nor happen but unto such slavish natures. Here now as far as fear permitted, he makes a fair discovery of the injury offered to the gods by such ungodly fables; and here he might, seeing he speaks not of the natural nor civil philosophy, but of the fabulous which he thought he might reprehend freely. But now to the next. The second, says he, is that wherewith the philosophers have filled their volumes: wherein they dispute what, whence, and when the gods were, whether from eternity of fire, as Heraclitus held, or of numbers, as Pythagoras taught; or of atoms, as Epicurus believed; and suchlike as are far more tolerable within the schools than without, in the place of orations. Here he blames nothing, in this kind, but only relates the
controversies which divided them into sexes and factions. Yet this kind he excludes from the people’s ears, but not the other, which was so filthy and so frivolous. O the religious ears of the people, and even with them, of Rome! The philosopher’s discourses of the gods they cannot anyway endure; but the poet’s fictions, and the player’s actions, being so much dishonourable to the divine essences, and fit to be spoken of none but the most abject persons, those they abide and behold with patience; nay, with pleasure. Nay, these the gods themselves do like, and therefore have them decreed as expiations. Aye but, say some, we make a difference of these two kinds, the *mythical* and the *physical*, from the *civil*, whereof you now are to speak; and so does he distinguish them also. Well, let us see what he says to that: I see good cause why the fabulous should be separate from the rest, because it is false, foul, and unworthy. But in dividing the natural and the civil, what does he but approve that the civil is faulty also? For if it be natural, why is it excluded? And if it be not natural, why is it admitted? This is that that makes him handle the human things before the divine, because in the latter he followed that which men had ordained, not that which the truth exacted. But let us see his civil divinity; the third kind says he, is that which men of the city, chiefly the priests, ought to be cunning in: as, which gods to worship in public, and with what peculiar sort of sacrifices each one must be served: but let us go on with him. The first of those kinds, says he, was adapted to the *stage*. The second to the *world*. The third to the *city*. Who sees not which he prefers? Even his second philosophical kind. This belongs (he says) to the world, than which they hold nothing more excellent. But the other two, the first and the third, them he
distinguishes and confines to the stage and the city; for we see that, that the pertinence of them to the city has no consequence why they should pertain to the world, though there be cities in the world; for false opinion may get such a belief of truth in a city which has not any nature or place in any part of the world. And for the stage, where is that but in the city? There ordained by the city, and for what end but stage-plays? And what stage-plays but of their gods, of whom these books are penned with so much pains?

CHAPTER VI

Of the fabulous and politic divinity against Varro.

VARRO, seeing thou art most acute, and doubtless most learned, yet but a man, neither God, nor assisted by God’s spirit in the discovery of truth in divinity, thou seest this, that the divine affairs are to be excluded from human vanities; and yet thou fearest to offend the people’s vicious opinions and customs in these public superstitions, being notwithstanding such, as both thyself held, and thy written works affirm to be directly opposite to the nature of the deities, or such as men’s infirmity surmised was included in the elements. What doth this human (though excelling) wit of thine in this place? what help doth thy great, reading afford thee in these straits? Thou art desirous to honour the natural gods, and forced to worship the civil; thou hast found some fabulous ones whom thou darest speak thy mind against: giving the civil some part of their disgrace whether thou wilt or no: for thou sayest
Neither mythic nor the fabulous are for the theatre, the natural for the world, the civil for the city; the world being the work of God, the theatre and city of men; nor are they other gods that you laugh at, than those you worship; nor be your plays exhibited to any but those you sacrifice unto; how much more subtle were they divided into some natural, and some instituted by men? And of these latter, the poet's books taught one part, and the priest's another: yet notwithstanding with such a coherence in untruth that the devils that like no truth approve them both; but setting aside your natural divinity (whereof hereafter) pleases it you to ask or hope for life eternal of your poetic ridiculous stage-gods? No, at no hand. God forbid such sacrilegious madness! Will you expect them of those gods whom these presentations do please and appease, though their crimes be the things presented: I think no man so brainlessly sottish. Therefore neither your fabulous divinity nor your politic, can give you everlasting life. For the first sows the god's turpitude, and the latter, by favouring it, reaps it. The first spreads lies, the latter collects them. The first haunts the deities with outrageous fictions, and the latter imputes these fictions to the honour of the deities. The first makes songs of the gods' lascivious pranks, and the latter sings them on the gods' feast days. The first records the wickedness of the gods, and the latter loves the rehearsal of those records. The first either shames the gods, or feigns of them: the latter either witnesses the truth or delights in the fiction. Both are filthy and both are damnable. But the fabulous professes turpitude openly, and the politic makes that turpitude her ornament. Is there any hope of life eternal where the temporal suffers such pollution? Or does wicked company and acts of
dishonest men pollute our lives, and not the society of those false-adorned, and filthily adored fiends? If their faults be true, how vile are they worshipped? If false, how wicked the worshippers? But some ignorant person may gather from this discourse that it is the poetical fictions only and stage-presentments that are derogatory from the deity's glory, but not the doctrine of the priests, at any hand; that is pure and holy. Is it so? No, if it were, they would never have given order to erect plays for the gods' honour, nor the gods would never have demanded it. But the priests feared not to present such things as the gods' honours in the theatres, whereas they had practised the like in the temples. Lastly, our said author, endeavouring to make politic divinity of a third nature from the natural and fabulous, makes it rather to be produced from them both, than several from either. For he says that the poets write not so much as the people observe, and the philosophers write too much for them to observe: both which, notwithstanding they do so eschew, that they extract no small part of their civil religion from either of them: wherefore we will write of such things as the poetic and the politic divinities do communicate: indeed we should acknowledge a greater share from the philosophers, yet some we must thank the poets for. Yet in another place of the gods' generations, he says the people rather follow the poets than the philosophers, for he teaches what should be done, there what was done: that the philosophers wrote for use, the poets for delight: and therefore the poesies that the people must not follow, describe the gods' crimes, yet delight both gods and men: for the poets (as he said) write for delight, and not for use, yet write such things as the gods affect, and the people present them with.
CHAPTER VII

The coherence and similitude between the fabulous divinity and the civil.

Theatric connected
Therefore this fabulous, scenical, filthy, and ridiculous divinity has all reference unto the civil. And all that which all condemn, is but part of this which all must be bound to reverence: nor is it a part incongruent (as I mean to show) or slightly depending upon the body of the other, but as conformed and consonant as a member is unto the fabric of the whole body. For what are all those images, forms, ages, sexes, and habits of the gods? The poets have Jove with a beard, and Mercury with none; have not the priests so? Have the mimics made Priapus so obscene, and not the priests? Does the temple expose him to be honoured in one form, and the stage to be laughed at in another? Do not the statues in the temples as well as the players on the stage present Saturn old, and Apollo youthful? Why are Forculus and Limentinus (gods of doors and thresholds) of the masculine sex, and Cardea, goddess of hinges, of the feminine? Because those are found so in the book of priests which the grave poets held too base to have places in their poems? Why is the stage Diana armed, and the city's a weaponless virgin? Why is the stage Apollo a harper, and Apollo of Delphos none? But these are honest in respect of worse: what held they of Jove, when they placed his nurse in the Capitol? Did they not confirm Euhemerus that wrote truly (not idly) that all these gods were mortal men? And those that placed a sort of glutton parasite goddess at Jove's table, what intended they but, to make the sacrifices ridiculous? If the mimic had
said that Jove bade his parasites to a feast, the people with the civil cult. would have laughed at it. But Varro spoke it not in the god's derision but their commendation, as his divinity, not his human works do keep the record: he spoke it not in explaining the stage-laws, but the Capitols: these and such like convince him to this confession, that as they made the gods of human shapes, so they believed them prone to human pleasures: for the wicked spirits lost no time in instilling those illusions into their phantasies: and thence it came that Hercules's sexton being idle, fell to dice with himself, making one of his hands stand for Hercules and another for himself: and played for this: that if he got the victory of Hercules, he would provide himself a rich supper, and a wench of the temple stock: and if Hercules overcame, he would provide such another supper for him of his own purse: having thereupon won of himself by the hand of Hercules, he provided a rich supper, and a delicate courtesan called Larentina. Now she lying all night in the temple, in a vision had the carnal company of Hercules, who told her that the first man she met in the morning after her departure should pay her for the sport that Hercules owed her for. She departing, accordingly met with one Tarutius, a rich young man, who falling acquainted with her and using her company long, at last died and left her his heir. She having got this great estate, not to be ungrateful to the deities whose reward she held this to be, made the people of Rome her heir: and then being gone (none knew how), a writing was found that affirmed that for these deeds she was deified. If poets or players had given first life to this fable, it would quickly have been packed up among fabulous divinity, and quite secluded from the politic society. But since the people not the
poets, the ministers not the mimics, the temples not the theatres are by this author taxed of such turpitude, the players do not vainly present the gods' bestiality, it being so vile, but the priests do in vain to stand so earnestly for their honesty, which is none at all. There are the sacrifices of Juno, kept in her beloved island Samos, where Jove married her. There are sacrifices to Ceres, where she sought her daughter Proserpina when Pluto had ravished her: to Venus, where her sweet delicate Adonis was killed by a boar: to Cybele, where her sweetheart Attis, a fair and delicate youth, being gelded by chaste fury, was bewailed by the rest of the wretched gelded Galli. These sacrifices being more beastly than all stage absurdities (yet by them professed and practised), why do they seek to exclude the poets' figments from their politic divinity, as unworthy to be ranked with such an honest kind? They are rather beholden to the players that do not present all their secret sacrileges unto the people's view. What may we think of their sacrifices done in covert, when the public ones are so detestably profane? How they use the Eunuchs, and their Ganymedes in holes and corners, look they to that: yet can they not conceal the bestial hurt done unto such by forcing them. Let them persuade any man that they can use such ministers to any good end: yet are such men part of their sacred persons. What their acts are we know not, their instruments we know; but what the stage presents we know, and what the whores present: yet there is no use of eunuch nor Pathic: yet of obscene and filthy persons there is: for honest men ought not to act them. But what sacrifices are these (think you) that require such ministers for the more sanctity as are not admitted, no not even in Thymelian bawdry.
CHAPTER VIII

Of the natural interpretations which the Paynim doctor pretend for their gods.

Aye, but these things (say they) are all to be interpreted naturally and physiologically. "All_a
interpreted naturally and physiologically. Good, as physical
though we were in quest of physiology, and not of
allegory."
theology, as if we sought nature and set God aside.
For though the true God be God in nature and not in opinion only, yet is not all nature God; for men,
beasts, birds, trees and stones, have each a nature that
is no deity. But if your interpretation of the mother
of the gods be, that she is the earth, what need we
seek further: what do they say more, than say all
your gods were mortal men? For as the earth is
the mother, so are they earth’s children: but refer
his sacrifices to what nature you can, for men to suffer
women’s effects is not according but contrary to nature.
Thus this crime, this disease, this shame is professed
in her sacrifices, that the vilest wretch living would
scarcely confess by tortures. Again if these cere-
monies, so much fouler than all stage obscenity, have
their natural interpretations for their defence; why
should not the like pretended excuse be sufficient for
the fictions poetical? They interpret much in the
same manner: so that in that it is counted so horrid
a thing to say that Saturn devoured his sons: they
have expounded it thus, that length of time, signified
by Saturn’s name, consumes all things it produces:
or as Varro interprets it, that Saturn belongs to the
seeds, which being produced by the earth, are en-
tombed in it again: others give other senses, and so
of the rest. Yet is this called fabulous theology,
Can such and cast out, scorned and excluded for all the ex-
guish life eternal?
positions; and because of the unworthy fictions, expelled both from coherence with the natural and philosophical kind, as also with the civil and political. Because indeed, the judicious and learned compilers hereof, saw both the fabulous and the politic worthy reprehension; but they durst not reprove this as they might do the other. That, they made culpable, and this they made comparable with that, not to prefer either before other, but to show them both fit to be rejected alike: and so having turned them both out of credit without incurring the danger of openly condemning the latter: the third, the natural kind, might get the less place in men's opinions. For the civil and the fabulous are both fabulous and both civil; both fabulous, witness he that observes their obscenities; both civil, witness he that observes their confusing them together in plays and sacrifices. How then can the power of eternity lie in their hands whom their own statues and sacrifices do prove to be like those fabulous rejected gods, in form, age, sex, habit, descent, ceremonies, etc.? In all which they either are convicted of mortality, and attaining those erroneous honours by the devil's assistance, in or after their life or death; or else that they were true devils themselves that could catch all occasions of filling men's heart with error's contagion.

CHAPTER IX

Of the offices of each peculiar god.

What say you to the absurd numerical division of the gods' charges, where each one must have prayers...
made to him for that which he commands? (of these we have recited part but not all): is it not more like a scene of scurrility than a lecture of divinity? If a man should set two nurses to look to his child, one for the meat, and another for the drink, as they do two goddesses, Educa and Potina, he should be taken for a cumanæ ass, or a mimical fool. And then they have a Liber, that lets loose the masculine sperm in men, at carnal copulation, and one Libera for the women, whom they hold Venus (for women, they say, do let forth sperm also), and therefore they dedicate a man's privy member to Liber, and a woman's to Libera: besides wine and women they subject unto Liber, as the provokers of lust: and in such mad manner keep they their Bacchanalian feasts: where Varro confesses that the Bacchæ, women, could not possibly do such things unless they were mad, yet the Senate being grown wiser, disliked and abolished these sacrifices. It may be here they descried the power of the devils in such men's minds as held them to be gods. Truly this could not have been upon the stage: there the players are never mad, though it be a kind of madness to honour the gods that delight in such gracelessness. But what a strange distinction has he of the religious and the superstitious, that the latter do stand in fear of the gods, and the first do but reverence them as parents, not fearing them as foes: and to call all the gods so good that they will far sooner spare the guilty than hurt the guiltless: and yet for all this the woman in child-bed must have three gods to look to her after her deliverance, lest Sylvanus come in the night and torment her: in signification whereof, three men must go about the house in the night, and first strike the thresholds with an hatchet, then with a pestle, and then sweep them
of these lesser means that by these signs of worship, they may keep Sylvanus out: because the trees are not pruned without iron, nor corn is not made into meal without pestles; nor the fruits swept up together without besoms: from these three acts, three gods got names: Intercidona, of the hatchet's cutting, intercisio; Pilumnus, of pilum, the pestle or mortar: Deverra, of verro, to sweep; and these kept Sylvanus from the woman in bed. Thus were they fain to have three good against one bad, or all had been too little: and these three must with their handsome neat culture, oppose his rough, savage brutishness. Is this your gods' innocence? is this their concord? Are these your saving city deities, far more ridiculous than your stage-gods? When man and woman are wed together, god Jugatinus has to do: nay that is tolerable. When the bride must be led home, god Domiducus look to your charge: now who must keep her at home? god Domitius: aye, but who must make her stay with her husband? why that can goddess Maturina do. Oh why proceed we further! spare, spare, man's chaster ears: let carnal effect and shame-faced secrecy give end to the rest! What does all that crew of gods in the bridal chamber upon the departure of the paranymphs, the feast-masters. Oh sir, not to make the woman more shame-faced by their being present but because she is weak and timorous, to help her to lose her virginity with less difficulty. For there is goddess Virginensis, god Subigus, goddess Prema, goddess Pertunda, and Venus, and Priapus. If the man stood in need of help in this business, why were not one of them sufficient to help him? Would not Venus's power serve, who they said was so called because virginity could not be lost without her help? If there be any shame in man, that is not in the gods,
when the married couple shall think that so many and gods of both sexes do stand by at their carnal conjunction, and have their hands in this business, will not he be less forward and she more froward? If Virginensis be there to loose the virgin girdle, Subigus to subject her under the man, and Prema to press her down from moving after the act, what shall Pertunda have to do but blush and get her out of doors, and leave the husband to do his business. For it were very dishonest for any one to fulfil her name upon the bride but he. But perhaps they allow her presence because she is a female. If she were a male and called Pertundus, the husband would call more protectors of his wife's honesty against him, than the child-bearing woman doth against Sylvanus. But what talk I of this, when Priapus (that unreasonable male) is there upon whose huge and beastly member: the new bride was commanded (after a most honest, old and religious order observed by the matrons) to get up and sit! Now, now let them go, and cashier their fabulous theology from the political, the theatre from the city, the stage from the temple, the poets' verses from the priests' documents, as turpitude from honesty, falsehood from truth, lightness from gravity, foolery from seriousness! Now let them use all the subtle art they can in it! We know what they do that understand the dependence of the fabulous theology upon the civil, and that from the poets' verses it redounds to the city again as an image from a glass, and therefore they, not daring to condemn the civil kind, present the image thereof, and that they spare not to spit true disgrace upon, that as many as can conceive them, may loathe the thing that shape presents and resembles: which the gods notwithstanding behold with such pleasure, that that very delight of theirs betrays their damned
Neither stage nor city gods

Neither essences; and therefore by terrible means have they wrung these stage-honours from their servants in the sacrifices: manifesting hereby that themselves were most unclean spirits, and making that abject, reprobate, and absurd stage-divinity a part of this civil kind that was held selected and approved, that all of it being nought but a lump of absurdity framed of such false gods as never were, one part of it might be preserved in the priests' writings, and another in the poets'. Now whether it have more parts is another question. As for Varro's division, I think I have made it plain enough that the divinity of the stage and the city belong both to that one political kind: and seeing they are both markable with the like brands of foul, false and unworthy impiety, far be it from religious men to expect eternal life from either of them. Lastly, Varro himself reckons his gods from man's original, beginning with Janus, and so proceeds through man's life to his age, and death, ending with Nænia, a goddess whose verses were sung at old men's funerals. And, then he mentions gods that concern not man, but his accidents, as apparel, meat, and such necessaries of life, showing what each only could, and consequently what one should ask of each one. In which universal diligence of his he never showed whom to ask eternal life of, for which only it is that we are Christians. Who is therefore so dull, that he conceives not that this man in his diligent discovery of political divinity, and his direct and apparent comparison of it with the fabulous kind, and his plain affirmation that this fabulous kind was a part of the civil, desired only to get a place for the natural kind (which he called the philosophers' kind) in the minds of men? Fully reprehending the fabulous kind, but not daring meddle with the civil, only show it subject to reprehension,
so that it being excluded together with the fabulous, give
the natural kind might have sole place in the elections
of all good understandings. Of which kind, God
willing, I mean to speak more peculiarly and fully in
place convenient.

CHAPTER X

Of Seneca's freer reprehension of the civil theology, than
Varro's was of the fabulous.

But the liberty that this man wanted in apprehending
that civil divinity which was so like to the stages,
Anneus Seneca (whom some proofs confirm to have
lived in the apostles' times) wanted it not fully,
though in part he did: in his works written he had
it, but in his life he lacked it. For in his book
against superstitions, far more free is he in beating
down the political kind of theology, than Varro was
against the poetical. For speaking of images, the
immortal and sacred gods (says he) do they con-
secrate in a vile, dead, and dejected substance, con-
fining them to shapes of men, beasts, fishes, and
ambiguous monster-like creatures: calling them
deities; which if one should meet alive were
monsters and prodigies. And a little after, speaking
of natural divinity, having rejected some opinions,
proposes himself a question thus: shall I believe
(says one) that heaven and earth are gods, that there
are some under the moon, and some above it? shall
I respect Plato, or Strato the peripatetic, while this
makes God without a soul, and that without a body?
Answering then to the question: "what then?" (says
Seneca roundly attacks foul civil cult

he) "do you think there is more truth in the dreams of Romulus, Tatius, or Tullus Hostilius? Tatius dedicated goddess Cloacina, Romulus, Picus and Tiberinus: Hostilius, Fear and Paleness, two extreme effects of man: the one being a perturbation of an affrighted mind, the other of the body: not a disease but a colour. Are these more like gods, inhabitants of heaven? And of their cruel and obscene ceremonies, how freely did he strike at them? One gelds himself, another cuts off his torn parts: and this is their propitiation for the god’s anger: but no worship at all ought they to have that delight in such as this is. The fury and disturbance of mind in some is raised to that height by seeking to appease the gods, that not the most barbarous and recorded tyrants would desire to behold it. Tyrants indeed have rent off the parts of some men, but never made them their own tormentors. Some have been gelded for their princes’ lust: but never commanded to be their own gelders. But these kill themselves in the temples, offering their vows in blood and wounds. If one had time to take interview of their actions, he should see them do things so unbecoming honesty, so unworthy of freedom, and so unlike to soberness, that none would make question of their madness, if they were fewer: but now their multitude is their privilege." And then the Capitol tricks that he records, and fearlessly inveighs at, who would not hold them mad ones, or mockeries? For first in the losing of Osiris in the Egyptian sacrifices, and then in the finding him again, first the sorrow and then their great joy, all this is a puppetry and a fiction, yet the fond people though they find not nor lose anything, weep, for all that, and rejoice again as heartily as if they had. "Aye but" (says he) "this madness has its time. It is tolerable
to be but once a year mad. But come into the more boldly
Capitol, and you will shame at the mad acts of public
furor. One sets the gods under their king, another
tells Jove what o'clock it is, another is his sergeant,
and another makes a rubbing of him as if he anointed
him. Others dress Juno and Minerva's hair,
standing afar off the temple, not only of the image,
and tricking with their fingers as if they were
combing and crisping it: another holds the glass,
and another bids the gods to be his advocates.
Some present them with scrolls, and propound their
causes to them. One old archplayer played the
mimic continually in the Capitol, as if the gods had
found great sport in him whom the world had
rejected. Nay, there you have all trades work to
the gods: and a little after: but these though they
be idle before the gods, yet they are not bawdy, or
offensive. But some sit there, that think Jove is in
love with them: never respecting Juno's poetically
supposed terrible aspect." This freedom Varro durst
not assume, he durst go no further than theology
poetical: but not to the civil which this man crushes
in sunder. But if we mark the truth, the temples
where these things are done, are worse than the
theatres where they are but feigned. And therefore
Seneca selects those parts of this civil theology for
a wise man to observe in his actions, but not to make
a religion of. "A wise man," says he, "will
observe these as commands of the laws, not as the
pleasures of the gods;" and again: "We can make
marriages, nay and those unlawful ones, amongst the
gods, joining brother and sister: Mars and Bellona,
Vulcan and Venus: Neptune and Salacia: yet some
we leave single, as wanting means of the bargain,
chiefly some being widows, as Populonia, Fulgura,
and Rumina, nor wonder if these want suitors."
But this rabble of base gods forged by inveterate superstition, we will adore (says he) rather for law's sake than for religion's, or any other respect. So that neither law nor custom gave induction to those things either as grateful to the gods or useful unto men. But this man whom the philosophers made as free, yet being a great senator of Rome, worshipped that he disavowed, professed that he condemned, and adored that he accused: because his philosophy had taught him this great matter, not to be superstitious in the world, but for law and custom's sake, to imitate those things in the temple, but not act them in the theatre: so much the more damnably, because that which he counterfeited, he did it so, that the people thought he had not counterfeited: but the player rather delighted them with sport, than wronged them with deceit.

CHAPTER XI

Seneca's opinion of the Jews.

This man amongst his other invectives against the superstitions of politic theology condemns also the Jews' sacrifices, chiefly their Sabbaths: saying that by their seventh day interposed, they spend the seventh part of their lives in idleness, and hurt themselves by not taking divers things in their time. Yet dares he not meddle with the Christians (though then the Jews' deadly foes) upon either hand, lest he should praise them against his country's old custom, or dispraise them perhaps against his own conscience. Speaking of the Jews, he says: "the custom of that
wicked nation getting head through all the world, the vanquished gave laws to the vanquishers." This he admired, not knowing the work of the godhead. But his opinion of their sacraments he subscribes. They know the cause of their ceremonies (says he) but most of the people do they know not what. But of the Jewish sacrifices how far God's institutions first directed them, and then how by the men of God that had the mystery of eternity revealed to them, they were by the same authority abolished, we have both elsewhere spoken chiefly against the Manichees, and in this work in convenient place mean to say somewhat more.

CHAPTER XII

That it is plain by this discovery of the Pagan gods' vanity, that they cannot give eternal life, having not power to help in the temporal.

Now for the three theologies, mythical, physical, and political: or fabulous, natural, and civil: that the life eternal is neither to be expected from the fabulous, for that the Pagans themselves reject and reprehend, nor from the civil, for that is proved but a part of the other: if this be not sufficient to prove, let that be added which the forepassed books contain, chiefly the four concerning the giver of happiness: for if Felicity were a goddess, to whom should one go for eternal life but to her? But being none, but a gift of God, to what God must we offer ourselves, but to the giver of that felicity, for that eternal and true happiness
"Gift of God is eternal life." which we so entirely affect? But let no man doubt that none of those filth-adored gods can give it: those that are more filthy even unless that worship be given them in that manner, and herein proving themselves direct devils: what is said I think is sufficient to prove this. Now he that cannot give felicity, how can he give eternal life? eternal life, we call endless felicity, for if the soul live eternally in pains, as the devils do, that is rather eternal death. For there is no death so sore nor sure, as that which never ends. But the soul being of that immortal nature, that it cannot but live some way, therefore the greatest death it can endure is the deprivation of it from glory, and constitution in endless punishment. So he only gives eternal life (that is, endlessly happy) that gives true felicity. Which since the politic gods cannot give, as is proved: they are not to be adored for their benefits of this life, as we showed in our first five precedent books: and much less for life eternal, as this last book of all, by their own helps has convinced.
The Seventh Book

Chapter I

Of the questions of natural theology to be handled with the most excellent philosophers.

Now had we need to call our wits together in far more exact manner than we used in our precedent discourses; for now we are to have to do with the theology called natural, nor deal we against each fellow (for this is neither the civil, nor stage theology, the one of which records the gods' filthy crimes, and the other their most filthy desires, and both show them devils and not gods), but against philosophers whose very name, truly interpreted, professes a love of wisdom. Now if God be wisdom, as truth and scripture testify, then a true philosopher is a lover of God. But because the thing thus called is not in all men that boast of that name (for all that are called philosophers are not lovers of the true wisdom), we must select such as we know how they stand affected by their writings, and with them dispute of this question in due fashion. I undertake not here to refute all the philosophers' assertions that concern other matters, but such only as pertain to this theology (which word in Greek signifies speech of divinity), nor all of that kind either, but only such as holding a deity respecting matters terrestrial, yet affirm that the adoration of one unchangeable God suffices not unto eternal life, but that many such are made and

Wisdom vii. 24; Heb. i.
Platonicists above all the rest. ordained by Him, to be adored also for this respect. For these do surpass Varro's opinion in their aim at the truth: for he could carry his natural theology no further than the world and the world's soul: but these beyond all nature living, acknowledge a God, creator not only of this visible world (usually called heaven and earth), but of every living soul also: and one that makes the reasonable soul blessed, by the participation of His incorporeal and unchangeable light: that these philosophers were called Platonicists, of their first founder Plato, I think that none that has heard of these opinions but knows.

CHAPTER II

Of the two kinds of philosophers, Italian and Ionian, and of their authors.

Wherefore concerning this Plato, as much as shall concern our purpose, I will speak in brief, with a remembrance of such as before him held the same positions. The Greek monuments (a language the most famous of all the nations) do record two kinds of philosophers: the Italian, out of that part of Italy which was whilom called Magna Grecia: and the Ionian, in the country now called Greece. The Italian had their original from Pythagoras of Samos, who also was the first author (they say) of the name of philosophers. For whereas they were before called wise men, that professed a reformed course of life above the rest, he being asked what he professes answered, "He was a philosopher, that is a lover and a longer after wisdom:" but to call himself a wise
man, he held a part of too great arrogance. But the Ionics were they whose chief was Thales Milesius, one of the seven sages. But the other six were distinguished by their several courses of life, and the rules they gave for order of life. But Thales, to propagate his doctrine to succession, searched into the secrets of nature, and committing his positions unto monuments and letters, grew famous: but most admired he was, because he got the knowledge of astrological computations, and was able to prognosticate the eclipses of sun and moon, yet did he think that all the world was made of water: that it was the beginning of all the elements, and all thereof composed. Nor did he teach that this fair admired universe was governed by any divine or mental power. After him came Anaximander, his scholar, but he changed his opinion concerning the natures of things: holding that the whole world was not created of one thing (as Thales held, of water), but that everything had original from his proper beginnings, which singular beginnings he held to be infinite, and that infinite worlds were thereby gotten, all which had their successive original, continuance, and end: nor did he mention any divine mind as rector of any part thereof. This man left Anaximenes, his scholar and successor, who held all things to have their causes from the infinite air: but he professed there were gods: yet made them creatures of the air, not creators thereof. But Anaxagoras, his scholar, first held the divine mind to be the efficient cause of all things visible, out of an infinite matter consisting of unlike parts in themselves, and that every kind of thing was produced according to the species, but all by the work of the divine essence. And Diogenes, another of Anaximenes' followers, held that the air was the substance producing all things, but that it was aided
Socrates was the first moralist. By the divine essence without which of itself it could do nothing. To Anaxagoras succeeded Archelaus, and he also held all things to consist of this dissimilitude of parts, yet so, as there was a divine essence wrought in them, by dispersing and compacting of this consonance and dissonance. This man's scholar was Socrates, Plato's master, for whose sake I have made this short recapitulation of these other.

CHAPTER III

Of the Socratical discipline.

Socrates therefore was the first that reduced philosophy to the reformation of manners, for all before him aimed at natural speculation rather than practice of morality: I cannot surely tell whether the tediousness of these obscurities moved Socrates to apply his mind unto some more set and certain invention, for an assistance unto beatitude: which was the scope of all the other philosophers' intents and labours: or (as some do favourably surmise) he was unwilling that men's minds, being suppressed with corrupt and earthly affects, should offer to crowd unto the height of these physical causes whose total and whose original relied solely (as he held) upon the will of God omnipotent, only and true; wherefore he held that no mind but a purified one could comprehend them: and therefore first urged a reformed course of life, which effected, the mind unladen of terrestrial distractions might tower up to eternity, and with the one intellectual purity, stick firm in contemplation of the nature of that incorporeal, and unchanged, and incomprehensible light, which contains the causes of
all creation. Yet sure it is that in his moral disputations he did with most elegant and acute urbanity and detect the ignorance of these overweening fellows that build castles on their own knowledge, either in this, confessing his own ignorance, or dissembling his understanding, whereupon envy taking hold, he was wrecked by a calumnious accusation, and so put to death. Yet did Athens that condemned him, afterward publicly lament for him, and the wrath of the community fell so sore upon his two accusers that one of them was trodden to death by the multitude, and another forced to avoid the like by a voluntary banishment. This Socrates (so famous in his life and death) left many of his scholars behind him, whose study and emulation was about morality ever, and that *sumnum bonum*, that greatest good, which no man wanting can attain beatitude. Which being not evident in Socrates’ controversial questions, each man followed his own opinion, and made that the final good: the final good is that which, attained, makes man happy. But Socrates’ scholars were so divided (strange, having all one master) that some (Aristippus) made pleasure this final good: others (Antisthenes) virtue. So each of the rest had his choice: too long to particularise.

CHAPTER IV

Of Plato, the chief of Socrates’ scholars, who divided philosophy into three parts.

But of all Socrates’ scholars, there was one whose glory worthily obscured all the rest: Plato. He
Plato, his great disciple, was an Athenian, born of honest parentage, and endowed with perfection of understanding far more than all his fellows. So he, thinking that his invention and Socrates’ instructions were all too short of the true aim of philosophy, and therefore would needs go travel to any place where Fame told him he might drink of the fount of noble sapience. So went he into Egypt, and there learnt all that he held worth learning, and from thence into Italy, where the Pythagoreans were famous, and there did he drain from the most eminent teachers, all the philosophy of Italy. And because he dearly affected his master Socrates, he makes him in all his dialogues to temperate that which either he had learned of others, or invented of himself, with his delicate urbanity and morality. So whereas the study of wisdom is either concerning action or contemplation, and thence assumes two several names, active and contemplative, the active consisting in the practice of morality in one’s life, and the contemplative in penetrating into the abstruse causes of nature, and the nature of divinity. Socrates is said to excel in the active: Pythagoras in the contemplative. But Plato conjoined them into one perfect kind, which he subdivided into three sorts: the moral, consisting chiefly in action: the natural, in contemplation: the rational, in distinction of true and false: which though it be useful in both the others, yet it pertains more particularly to contemplation. And therefore this trichotomy, or triple division, does not contradict the other, dichotomy, that includes all in action and contemplation. But as for Plato’s opinion herein, what should be the end of all actions, the cause of all natures, and the light of all reasons, is both tedious to follow, and may not be rashly affirmed. For delighting in his master Socrates’ dissembling of his
knowledge (whom he makes disputant in all his dialogues), and affecting that, he left his own opinions in these great questions as ambiguous (very near) as his master's: yet do we intend out of his own discourses, and his relations from others, to repeat some of his positions, either such as do square with truth of that religion, which our faith professes and defends, or such as oppose it: as far as shall concern the singularity or multitude of gods, whom the Catholic religion says we must worship for the obtaining of eternal felicity in the life to come. For it may be that such as knew Plato to excel all the other philosophers of all nations, and understood him far better than others, do think that in God is the cause of natures, the light of reason and the rule of life: which have reference to the three philosophies, natural, rational, and moral. For if a man were created, by his excelling part to aspire to that which excels all, that is, the One, True, Almighty God, without whom nothing has being, no reason instructs, and no use assists; then let Him be searched out, in whom we have all security: let Him be beheld, in whom is all our certainty: let Him be beloved, in whom is all our morality.

CHAPTER V

That the chief controversy with the Platonists is about theology, and that all the philosophers' opinions bereof are inferior unto theirs.

If Plato then affirm that a wise man is an imitator, a knowener and a lover of this God: whose participation
No one makes a man blessed, what need we meddle with the rest, whereof none come so near us as he? Away, therefore, with this same fabulous theology, pleasing reprobate affections with the crimes of the gods: away with the civil, wherein the devils, working upon the willingness of the ignorant to impure acts, cause them to celebrate mortal errors for divine honours: in the beholding of which they make their servants the ushers of their vain villainies, both by the example of these dishonest sports alluring others to their worship, and making themselves also better sport with the guilt of the spectators of these impurities. Wherein also, if there be any honesty in the temples, it is polluted by attraction of turpitude from the stages, and if any filth be presented on the stages, it is graced with the coherence it has with that of the temples. The pertinents whereof Varro, interpreting by references to heaven, nature, and causes of production, failed wholly of his purpose because the things themselves signified no such matters as he interpreted them by. And though they did, the reasonable souls, which are parts in that order of nature, are not to be held for gods: nor ought it to be subject to those things over which God has given it superiority. Away with those things also which Numa buried, being pertinent to these religious ordinances, and being afterwards turned up by a plough, were by the Senate buried. And those also (to favour our suspicion of Numa) which Alexander the Great wrote to his mother, that he had learned of Leon, an Egyptian priest: where not only Picus, Faunus, Æneas, Romulus, Hercules, Æsculapius, Bacchus, Castor, and Pollux, and other mortal men, whom they had for their gods, but even the gods of the greater families, whom Tully (not naming them though) seems to touch at in his
"Tusculan Questions:" Jupiter, Juno, Saturn, (Put all
Vulcan, Vesta, and many others which Varro would
make nothing but elements and parts of the world, there are they all shown to have been but men. For
the priest, fearing the revealing of these mysteries, warned Alexander that as soon as his mother had
read them, he should burn them. So not all this
fabulous and civil theology shall give place to the
Platonists (who held a true God the author of all
things, the clearer of all doubts, and the giver of all
goodness), but even the other philosophers also,
whose gross bodily inventions held the world's
beginning to be bodily: let all these give place to
those good god-conceiving men: let Thales depart
with his water, Anaximenes with the air, the Stoics
with their fire, Epicurus with his atome, his indivisible
and insensible bodies, and all other (that now are not
for us to recount) who placed nature's original in
bodies either simple, compound, quick or dead; for
there were some, and the Epicureans were they, that
held a possibility of producing the quick out of the
dead: others would produce out of the quick, some
things quick and some dead: yet all bodily, as of a
body produced. But the Stoics held the fire, one of
this visible world's four elements, to be wise, living,
the Creator of the world whole and part, yea even
God Himself. Now these and their fellows followed
even the bare surmises of their own fleshly opinions
in these assertions. For they had that in them which
they saw not, and thought that to be in them which
they saw externally: nay, which they saw not, but
imagined only: now this in the sight of such a
thought, is no body, but a body's likeness. But that
wherewith our mind sees this body's likeness, is
neither body nor likeness, and that which discerns
the other, judging of the deformity or beauty of it, is
We will consider Platonists alone.

more beauteous than that which it judges of. This is the nature of man's mind and reasonable soul, which is no body; nor is the body's likeness revolved in the mind a body either. So then it is neither fire, air, water, nor earth, of which four bodies which we call elements, this visible world is composed. Now if our soul be no body, how can God that made it be a body? So then let these give place to the Platonists, and those also that shamed to say God was a body, and yet would make Him of the same essence that our souls are; being not moved by the soul's mutability, which it were vile to ascribe unto God. Aye, but (say they), the body it is that alters the soul; of itself it is immutable. So might they say that it is a body that wounds the body: for of itself it is invulnerable. That which is immutable, nothing external can change: but that that anybody alters is not unchangeable, because it is externally alterable.

CHAPTER VI

How the Platonists conceived of the natural part of philosophy.

Wherefore these philosophers whom fame (we see) has worthily preferred before the rest, did well perceive that God was no bodily thing: and therefore passed further than all bodies in this investigation: they saw that no mutable thing was God, and therefore went further than all mutable spirits and souls to seek for Him. Again they saw that all forms of mutable things, whereby they are what they
are (of what nature soever they be) have original (God is from, none but Him, that is true and unchangeable life, know-
ledge, bliss.) Consequently, neither the body of this universe, the figures, qualities, motions, and elements, nor the bodies in the mall, from heaven to earth, either vegetative, as trees, or sensitive also as beasts, or reasonable also, as men: nor those that need no nutriment, but subsist by themselves, as the angels, can have being, but from Him who has only simple being. For in Him to be, and to live, differ not: as if He might have being without life: neither to live, and to understand, as if He could have life without intellect: nor to understand and to be blessed, as if He could have the one and not the other. But His life, understanding, and beatitude are all but His being. From this invariable and simple essence of His, they gathered Him to be the uncreated creator of all existence. For they considered that all things are either body, or life: that the life excels the body: that sensibility is but a species of the body; but understanding of the life: and therefore they preferred intellect before sense: sensible things are those that are to be seen or touched. Intelligible can only be understood by the mind. For there is no bodily sweetness, be it in the body, as beauty, or in motion, as a musical song, but the mind judges thereof: which it could not do if this form were not in it more excellent, than either in that quantity of body, or that noise of voices and keeping of tones and times. Yet if it were not mutable and could not judge better than another of these sensible species, nor one be Wittier, cunninger, or more exercised than another, but he that began after should profit as much as he that learned before: and he that profited after should be unaltered from his ignorance before: but that which admits majority or minority, is changeable doubtless. And therefore
Right in these learned men did well observe that the first form of things could not have existence in a subject mutable. And therefore beholding degrees of diversity in the forms of souls and bodies, and that the separation of all form from them directly destroyed them, this inferred a necessity of some unchangeable and consequently an all-exceling form: this they held the beginning of all things, uncreated, all creating, exceeding right. This which they knew of God He did manifest unto them by teaching them the graduate contemplation of His parts invisible by His works visible: as also His eternity and divinity, who created all things, both visible and temporal. Thus much of their physiology, or natural philosophy.

CHAPTER VII

The excellency of the Platonists above the rest in logic.

Now as concerning the other part of their doctrine, called logic, far be it from us to join them in comparison with those fellows that fetched the judgment of truth from the bodily senses, and held all things to be swayed by their false and frivolous positions, as Epicurus held, yea, and even Stoics. These men standing only affected to the art of disputation called logic, thought it was to be derived from the senses: affirming that from them the mind receives definable notions, 

\[ \text{invoitae}, \] 

and thence the whole method of learning and teaching has the propagation. Now here do I wonder how these men, affirming a wise man only to be beautiful, had any notion of this

\[ \text{Rom. i. 19, 20.} \]
beauty from their sense: and how their carnal eyes No less
could behold the fair form of wisdom. But those
whom we do worthily prefer, have distinguished the
conceits of the mind conceived from the forms re-
ceived by the sense: giving them no more than their
due, nor taking aught of their due from them. But
the light of the mind giving power to conceive all,
this they hold is God, that created all.

CHAPTER VIII

That the Platonists are to be preferred in morality also.

There remains the moral, in Greek, ἡθική, which
inquires after the greatest good whereto all our
actions have reference: and which is desired for
itself only, for no other end, but to make us blessed
in attaining it only: and therefore we call it the end:
as referring all the rest unto it. But desiring it only
for itself: this bliss-affording good some would derive
from the body, some from the mind, some from
both: for seeing that a man consists of but soul and
body, they believed that his chief good must have
original from one of the two, and therein subsist; as
the final end standing as the shot-mark of all their
actions, which being once attained, their labours were
crowned with perfection. So that they that added a
third kind of good to these two namely, consisting of
honour, riches, and such goods of fortune, otherwise
called extrinsical: did not propose it as a final good,
that is, to be desired in respect of itself, but referred
it to another: being of itself good to the good and
bad to the bad. So this good then, that some de-
(Plato's moral is religious.)

But they that took the body's part had the worse side, the soul had the better: marry they that took both, expected this good from the whole man. So then, part or whole, it is from man, howsoever. These three differences made above three several sects of philosophers: each man construing diversely both of the body's good, and the soul's good, and both their goods. But let all those stand by and make them place that say that he is not happy that enjoys a body, nor he that enjoys a mind, but he that enjoys God: not as the soul enjoys the body, or itself, nor as one friend enjoys another, but as the eye enjoys the light. If the rest can say anything for the other similes, or against this last, what it is, God willing we shall in due season discover.

CHAPTER IX

Of that philosophy that comes nearest to Christianity.

Let it suffice now to remember that Plato did determine that the end of all good was the attaining a virtuous life, which none could but he that knew and followed God: nor is any man happy by any other means. And therefore he affirms, that to be a philosopher is to love God, whose nature is incorporeal: and consequently that wisdom's student, the philosopher, is then blessed when he enjoys God. For though the enjoying of each thing a man loves does not forthwith make him happy: (for many by
placing their love on hateful objects are wretched "End of
and more wretched in enjoying them) yet is no man
happy that enjoys not that he loves. For even those
that love what they should not, think not themselves
happy in loving, but in enjoying. But he that
enjoys what he loves, and loves the true and greatest
good, who (but a wretch) will deny him to be happy?
This true and greatest good is God, says Plato, and
therefore he will have a philosopher a lover of God,
that because philosophy aims at beatitude, the lover
of God might be blessed by enjoying God. Where-
fore whatever philosophers they were that held this
of the high and true God, that He was the world's
Creator, the light of understanding, and the good of
all action: that He is the beginning of nature, the
truth of doctrine, and the happiness of life: whether
they be called Platonists (as fittest) or by any other
sect: whether the Ionian teacher held as this Plato
did, and understood him well; or that the Italians
held it from Pythagoras and his followers, or any
other of the same doctrine, of what nation soever
they were, and were counted philosophers, Atlantics,
Lybians, Egyptians, Indians, Persians, Chaldees,
Scythians, Gauls, Spaniards, or others that observed
and taught this doctrine, them we prefer before
all others, and confess their propinquity with our
belief. For though a Christian, used only to the
scriptures, never heard of the Platonists, nor knows
whether Greece held two sects of philosophers, the
Ionic and the Italian, yet is he not so ignorant in
humanity, but he knows that the philosophers profess
either the study of wisdom or wisdom itself. But
let him beware of those that dispute of the elements
of this world only, and reach not up to God that
made them elements. The apostle gives us good
warning of this: "Beware," says he, "lest any
Platonists have most share of truth, deceiving you by philosophy and vain deceit,”¹ according to the world’s elements. But lest you should think that he held all philosophers to be such, he says elsewhere: “For that which is known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them. For His invisible powers from the beginning of the world are manifested by His works, and so is His eternal virtue.”² And having spoken a great matter concerning God unto the Athenians which a few of them understood, “In Him we live, and move, and have our being:” he added “as some also of your writers have said:” he knew how to beware of their errors.³ For he said that God had by His works, laid open His invisible power to their understanding, there also he said that they did not worship Him aright, but gave the divine honours which were His peculiarly, unto other things than was lawful: “because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful: but became vain in their own imaginations: O their foolish heart was full of darkness! For professing themselves wise, they proved fools, and turned the glory of the incorruptible God, into the similitude of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and beasts, and serpents.”⁴ In this place the Romans, Grecians, Egyptians, and all that gloried in their wisdom, are justly taxed. But they and we will argue this hereafter: as for those things wherein we and they consent, as of one God the Creator of this universe, who is not only incorporeal, above all bodies, but also incorruptible above all spirits, our beginning, our light and our goodness, in these we prefer them before all others.

¹ Coloss. ii. 8. ² Rom. i. 19, 20. ³ Acts xvii. 28. ⁴ Rom. i. 21-23.
CHAPTER X

What the excellence of a religious Christian is in these philosophical arts.

Now if a Christian for want of reading, cannot use and their such of their words as fits disputations, because he never heard of them: or cannot call that part that treats of nature, either natural in Latin, or physical in Greek: nor that which inquires the truth, rational or logical: nor that which concerns rectifying of manners and goodness of ends, moral, or ethical: yet thence it follows not that he knows not, that from the true God is both nature, whereby He made us like His image, reason, whereby we know Him, and grace, whereby we are blessed in being united to Him. This then is the cause why we prefer these before the other: the other spent their wits in seeking out the causes of things, the means of learning, and order of life: these knowing God, found that there was both the cause of the whole creation, the light of all true learning, and the fount of all felicity. So that what Platonists or others soever held thus of God, they held as we do. But we choose rather to deal with the Platonists than others, because their works are most famous; for both the Greeks (whose language is very greatly esteemed of the nations) do preserve and extol them, and the Latins, moved by their excellence and glory, learning them more willingly themselves, and by recording them in their tongues also, left them the more illustrious and plain to us, and to all posterity.
CHAPTER XI

Whence Plato might have that knowledge that brought him so near the Christian doctrine.

Now some of our Christians admire at these assertions of Plato coming so near to our belief of God: so that some think that at his going to Egypt, he heard the prophet Jeremiah, or got to read some of the prophet’s books in his travel; these opinions I have elsewhere related. But by all true chronicles’ supputation, Plato was born a hundred years after Jeremiah prophesied. Plato lived eighty-one years, and from his death to the time that Ptolemy, king of Egypt, demanded the Hebrew prophecies, and had them translated by the seventy Jews that understood the Greek also, is reckoned almost sixty years. So that Plato in his travel, could never see Jeremiah, being dead, nor read the scriptures, being not as yet translated into the Greek, which he understood, unless (as he was of an indefatigable study) he had had then read by an interpreter, yet so as he might not translate them, or copy them (which Ptolemy as a friend might entreat, or as a king command), but only carry away what he could in his memory. Some reason there is for this, because Genesis begins thus:—“In the beginning God created heaven and earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the waters.” 1 And Plato in his “Timæus,” says that God first joined the earth and the fire: Now it is certain that he means heaven by fire: so that here is a correspondence with the other: “In the beginning God created heaven and earth.” Again he says that the two means conjoining these

1 Gen. i. 1, 2.
extremities, are water and air; this some may think he had from the other, "The Spirit of God moved upon the waters:" not minding in what sense the scripture uses the word "Spirit," and because air is a spirit, therefore it may be, he gathered that He collected four elements from this place. And whereas he says a philosopher is a lover of God, there is nothing better squares with the holy scriptures: but that especially (which makes me almost confess that Plato wanted not these books) that whereas the angel that brought God's word to Moses, being asked what his name was that bade him go free the Israelites out of Egypt, answered his name was, "I am that I am: and thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I am hath sent me to you:"¹ as if that in comparison of that which truly is, being immutable, the things that are immutable, are not. Plato stuck hard upon this, and commended it highly: and I make a doubt whether the like be to be found in any one that ever wrote before Plato, except in that book when it was first written, so, "I am that I am, and thou shalt tell them that I am sent me to you." But wheresoever he had it, out of other books before him, or as the apostle says: "Because that which is known of God, is manifest unto them: for God hath showed it them. For the invisible things of Him, that is His eternal power and godhead, are seen by the creation of the world, being considered in His works."² This makes me choose to deal with the Platonists, in our intended question of natural theology; namely, whether the service of one God, or many, suffice for the felicity of the life to come. For as touching the service of one or many for the helps of this temporal life, I think I have said already sufficient.

¹ Exod. iii. 14.
² Rom. i. 19, 20.
CHAPTER XII

That the Platonists for all their good opinion of the true God, yet nevertheless held that worship was to be given to many.

These therefore have I chosen these before the rest, because their good opinion of the true and only God, made them more illustrious than the rest, and so far preferred by posterity, that whereas Aristotle, Plato's scholar, an excellent witted man, Plato's inferior indeed, but far above the rest; who instituted the Peripatetic sect, that taught walking, and had many famous scholars of his sect in his master's lifetime, and after Plato's death, Speusippus, his sister's son, and Xenocrates, his beloved scholar, succeeded in his school, called the Academy, and their followers thereupon Academics: yet the latter philosophers that liked to follow Plato would not be called Peripatetics, nor Academics, but Platonists: of which sort there were these famous Grecians, Plotine, Jamblichus, and Porphyry: and Apuleius, an African, was famous both for his writings in the Greek and Latin tongues. But all these, and their followers, yea even Plato himself, held it fit to adore many gods.

CHAPTER XIII

Of Plato's affirmation, that the gods were all good, and lovers of virtue.

Wherefore though in other points they and we do differ, yet to over-pass them in this great controversy,
now in hand, I ask them what gods we must worship—
the good, the bad, or both? nay, herein we must
take Plato's assertion, that holds all the good to be
good, no bad ones of them. Why then this worship
is the gods; for then it is the gods, and if they be
bad their godhead is gone. This being true (and
what else should we believe), then down goes the
opinion that affirms a necessity of appeasing the bad
gods by sacrifices and invoking the good. For there
are no bad gods: and the good only (if there were)
must have the worship, without any other partakers.
What are they then that love stage-plays, and to see
their own crimes, thrust into their honours and
religion? Their power proves them something, but
their affects convince them wicked. Plato's opinion
of plays was shown in his judgment of the expulsion
of poets, as pernicious and baleful to an honest state.
What gods are they now that oppose Plato in
defence of those plays? He cannot endure that
the gods should be slandered, they cannot endure
unless they be openly defaced. Nay, they added
malicious cruelty to their bestial desires, depriving
T. Latinus of his son, and striking him with a
disease, marry when they had done as they pleased,
then they freed him from his malady. But Plato
very wisely forbade all fear of the evil powers, and
confirming himself in his opinion, feared not to avow
the expulsion of all these politic absurdities, from a
firm state, all those filthinesses that those gods
delighted in. And this Plato does Labeo make a
semi-god: even that Labeo that holds that sad,
black and bloody sacrifices do fit the evil gods, and
mirthful orgies the good. Why then dares Plato,
but a semi-god, boldly debar the gods themselves,
the very good ones, from those delights which he
held obscene and unlawful? These gods, neverthe-
Plato's doctrine of daemons.

let the Platonists, that hold all the gods to be good and in virtue the fellows of the wise, and affirm it a sacrilege to believe other of them, let them expound us this mystery: we will, say they: mark us well we do so.

CHAPTER XIV

Of such as held three kinds of reasonable souls: in the gods, in airy spirits, and in men.

All reasonable creatures (say they) are threefold: gods, men, devils, the gods the highest, then the devils, lastly, men: the first having place in heaven, the second in the air, the third on the earth: each with his change of place, has difference in nature. The gods are of more power than the spirits, or men; and men are under the spirits and gods, both by place of nature and worth of merit; the spirits, in the midst, are under the gods and so their inferiors. Above men in place, and therefore in power with the gods, they are immortal, with men passionate, and therefore lovers of loose sports and poetical figments, and are subject to all human affects, which the gods by no means can be. So Plato's prohibition of poetry did not deprive the gods of their delights, but only the airy spirits. Well, of this question divers, but Apuleius, a Platonist of Madaura, chiefly in one whole work, disputes, calling it De deo Socratis, of Socrates' god, where he disputes what kind of god
this power that Socrates had attendant upon him was. (Socrates' spirit or daemon.)

It was as his friend, and forbade him to proceed in any action which he knew would not end prosperously. Now there he plainly affirms that this was no god, but only an airy spirit, handling Plato's doctrine rarely concerning the height of the gods, man's meanness, and the devil's middle interposition. But this being thus, how durst Plato deprive (not the gods, for them he acquitted from all touch of human affects) but then the airy spirits of their stage pleasures by expelling of poets? unless by this act he meant to warn man's soul however here enchained in corruption, yet to detest the impure and impious foulness of these devils, even for honesty's sake? for if Plato's prohibition and proof be just, then is their demand and desire most damnable. So either Apuleius mistook the kind of Socrates' genius, or Plato contradicts himself, now honouring those spirits and straight after abridging them their pleasures, and expelling their delights from an honest state; or else Socrates' spirit was not worth the approving, wherein Apuleius offended in being not ashamed to style his book De deo Socratis, of his god, and yet proves by his own distinction of Dii et demones, that he should have called it De demon Socratis, of his devil. But this he had rather profess in the body of his discourse than in his name, for the name of a demon was by good doctrine brought into such hate, that whosoever had read demon in the title ere he had read the demons' commendations in the book, would have thought Apuleius mad. And what found he praiseworthy in them, but their subtle, durable bodies, and elevation of place. When he came to their conditions in geneal, he found no good, but spake much evil of them: so that he that reads that book will never marvel at their desiring
These in no way our betters plays, and that such gods as they should be delighted with crimes, beastly shows, barbarous cruelty, and whatever else is horrible or ridiculous, that all this should square with their affects, is no wonder.

CHAPTER XV

That neither the airy spirits' bodies, nor height of place, make them excel men.

Wherefore God forbade that a soul that fears God should think those spirits to excel it because they have more perfect bodies. So should beasts excel us also, many of which go beyond us in quickness of sense, nimbleness, swiftness, strength, and long life. What man sees like the eagle or vulture, smells like to the dog, is swifter than stags, hares, and birds? strong as a lion or an elephant, or lives with the serpent, that with his skin puts off his cares and becomes young again. But as we excel these in understanding, so do we the airy spirits in just living, or should do at least. For therefore has the high providence given them bodies in some sort excelling ours, that we might have the greater care to preserve, and augment that wherein we excel them, rather than our bodies; and learn to contemn that bodily perfection which we know they have, in respect of the goodness of life, whereby we are before them, and shall obtain immortality of body also, not for the eternity of plagues to afflict, but which purity of soul shall effect. And for the higher place, they having the air and we the earth, it were a ridiculous consequence to make them our betters in that: for so should birds be by the same
reason. Aye, but birds being tired, or lacking meat, because come down to earth to rest or to feed, so do not the spirits. Well, then, will you prefer them before us, and the spirits before them? if this be a mad position, as mad a consequence it is to make them excel us by place, whom we can, nay must, excel by piety. For as the birds of the air are not preferred before us, but subjected to us for the equity of our reason, so though the devils, being higher than we, are not our betters, because air is above earth; but we are their betters, because our faith far surmounts their despair. For Plato's reason dividing the elements into four, and parting movable fire and immovable earth by inter-position of air and water, giving each an equal place above the other, this proves that the worth of creatures depends not upon the placing of the elements. And Apuleius, making a man an earthly creature, yet prefers him before the water creatures, whereas Plato puts the water above the earth, to show that the worth of creatures is to be discerned by another method than the posture of natural bodies: the meaner body may include the better soul, and the perfecter the worse.

CHAPTER XVI.

What Apuleius the Platonist held concerning the qualities of those airy spirits.

This same Platonist, speaking of their qualities, says, "that they are (as men) subject to passions of anger, delight, glory, inconstancy in their ceremonies, and fury upon neglect." Besides, "to them belong divinations, dreams, auguries, prophecies, and all magicians' miraculous works." Briefly he defines
Surely these to be pitied, not worshipped, things “created, passive, reasonable, aerial, eternal.” In the three first they participate with us: in the fourth with none, in the fifth with the gods: and two of the first the gods share with them also. For the gods (says he) are creatures: and giving each element to his proper inhabitants, he gives earth to men, and the other creatures: water to the fishes, &c.: air to these spirits, and ether to the gods. Now in that the spirits are creatures, they communicate both with men and beasts, in reason with gods and men, in eternity with gods only, in passion with men only, in airy essence with none. So that they are creatures is nothing: for so are beasts: in that they are reasonable, so are we, equally: in that they are eternal, what is that without felicity? temporal happiness excels eternal misery. In that they are passive, what get they by that? so are we, and were we not wretched we should not be so: in that their bodies are airy, what of that, seeing a soul of any nature is preferred before a body of what perfection soever? And therefore the honour given by the soul, is not due to the soul’s inferior. But if that amongst these spirits’ qualities he had reckoned wisdom, virtue, and felicity, and have made them communicate these with the gods, then had he spoken somewhat worth noting, yet ought we not to worship them as God, for these ends, but rather we should know Him of whom they had these good gifts. But as they are, how far are they from worth of worship, being reasonable to be wretched, passive to be wretched, eternal to be ever wretched? wherefore to leave all and insist on this only which I said those spirits shared with us, that is passion, if every element has his creatures, fire and air immortals, earth and water mortals, why are these spirits subject to perturbations? (to that which the Greeks call τάθος, whence our word passion is derived:}
word of word, ἡμισθός, and passion, being a motion of for they the mind against reason). Why are these in these spirits that are not in beasts? For the appearance of such in beasts is no perturbation, because it is not against reason, which the beast wants. And that it is a perturbation in men, their foolishness or their wretchedness is cause. For we cannot have that perfection of wisdom in this life that is promised us after our acquaintance from mortality. Now the gods they say cannot suffer those perturbations, because that their eternity is conjoined with felicity: and this they affirm the reasonable soul that is absolutely pure, enjoys also. So then if the gods be free from passion, because they are creatures blessed, and not wretched: and the beasts, because they are creatures, neither capable of blessedness nor wretchedness: it remains that these spirits be perturbed like men, only because they are creatures not blessed but wretched.

CHAPTER XVII

Whether it becomes a man to worship those spirits from whose guilt he should be pure.

What fondness then, nay, what madness, subjects us unto that religion of devils, when as by the truth of religion we should be saved from participation of their vices: for they are moved with wrath (as Apuleius for all his adoring and sparing them affirms): but true religion bids us not to yield to wrath, but rather resist it. They are won with gifts, we are forbidden to take bribes of any. They love honours, we are prohibited all honours’ affectation. They are haters
Such will not carry prayers to heaven. of some, and lovers of some, as their affects transport them: truth teaches us to love all, even our very enemies.\(^1\) Briefly, all the intemperance of mind, passions and perturbations, which the truth affirms of them, it forbids us. What cause is then but thine own lamentable error, for thee to humble thyself to them in worship, whom thou seekest to oppose in uprightness of conversation? and to adore those thou hatest to imitate, when as all religion teaches us to imitate those we adore.

**CHAPTER XVIII**

*Of that religion that teaches that those spirits must be men's advocates to the good gods.*

In vain therefore did Apuleius and all of his opinion, honour them so as to place them in the air, and because God and man (as Plato says) have no immediate commerce, these are the carriers of men's prayers to the gods, and their answers to men. For those men thought it unfit to join the gods with men: but held the spirits fit means for both sides, to take the prayers hence and bring answers thence: that a chaste man, and one pure from magical superstition, might use them as his patrons, by whom he might send to the gods that love such things as if he forebore to use it, makes him far more fit to be heard of good deities: for they love stage-filth: which chastity loathes: they love all the villainies of witchcrafts which innocence abhors. Thus chastity and innocence, if they would any thing with God, must make their

\(^1\) Matt. v. 44.
enemies their intercessors, or else go empty away. Are
He may save his breath in defence of stage-plays: only fit for
Plato, his highly-admired master, gives them too sore
a blow: if any man be so shameless, as to delight in
obscenity himself, and thinks it accepted also of the
gods.

CHAPTER XIX

Of the wickedness of art magic, depending on these
wicked spirits' ministry.

Now will I, out of the public light of all the world,
bring overthrows to the arts magic, whereof some
wicked and some wretched do make boasts in the
devil's name: why, if they be the works of the gods,
are they so severely punished by the laws? or have
Christians divulged these laws against them with any
other intent than to suppress a thing so generally
pernicious unto all mankind? What says that worthy
poet?

"Testor cara deos et te germana tuumque
Dulce caput, magicas invitam accingier artes."

"Sister, by heaven, and thee that hearest my vows,
I would not use art magic, could I choose."

And that which he says elsewhere—

"Atque satas aliò vidi traducere messes."

"I saw the witch transport whole fields of corn."

In that these diabolical arts were reported of power
to remove whole harvests of corn and fruits whether
they pleased: was not this (as Tully says) recorded in the twelve tables of Rome's ancient laws, and a punishment proclaimed for all such as used it? Nay, was not Apuleius himself brought before Christian judges for such practices? If he had known them to be divine, he should have avouched them at his accusation, as congruent with the divine powers, and have convinced the opposite laws of absurd impiety, in condemning so admirable effects of the deities. For so might he either have made the judges of his mind, or if they had been refractory, and following their unjust laws put him to death, then the spirits would have done his soul as good a turn as he had deserved in dying fearlessly, for the due avouching of their powerful operations. Our martyrs, when Christianity was laid to their charge, knowing it was the tract of eternal glory, denied it not to avoid a temporal torment, but averred it constantly, bore all tortures undauntedly, and dying securely, struck shame upon the laws' foreheads that condemned it as unlawful. But this Platonist wrote a large and eloquent oration now extant, wherein he purges himself of all touch of using these arts, and sees no means to prove his own innocence but by denying that which indeed no innocent can commit. But for all these magic miracles, he rightly condemns them, as done by the works and operations of the devils: wherefore let him look how he can justly give them divine honours, as mediators between the gods and us, when he shows their works to be wicked: and such indeed as we must avoid if we will have our prayers come near to the true God. And then what are the prayers that he affirms they do bear unto the gods? Magical or lawful? If magical, the gods will receive no such prayers: if lawful, then use they no such ministers. But if a sinner (chiefly one that has sinned in magic)
repent and pray; will they carry up his prayers, or obtain his pardon that were the causers of his guilt, and whom he accuses? Or do these devils (to obtain his pardon), first repent themselves for deceiving him, and receive a pardon themselves also afterward. Nay, none will say so: for they that hope to get pardon by repentance, are far from being worthy of divine honours: for if they were desirous of them, and yet penitents also, their pride were to be detested in the first, though their humility were to be pitied in the latter.

CHAPTER XX

Whether it be credible that good gods had rather converse with those spirits than with men.

O but there is a necessity binds these spirits in this place between the gods and men, to carry and recarry messages and answers from the one to the other. Well, and what necessity? Why, because no god has commerce immediately with man. Very good! O that is a glorious holiness of God surely, that converses not with a penitent, humble man, and yet will converse with a proud spirit! He has no commerce with a man that flies from succour to his death, but with a spirit that counterfeits His deity, He has: He meddles not with him that asks pardon, but with the spirit that imagines mischief He does: He deals not with philosopher that expels stage-plays out of an honest city, but He deals with a devil that forces stage-plays from the priests and senators, as part of the religion of a city; He likes not the men's com-
Such spirits not Heaven's messengers. pany that forbid slanders of the gods, but the devils that delight in them, theirs He likes of. He converses not with the man that executes just laws upon magicians, but with the devils that teach magic and give it effect, those He converses with: nor is joined with a man that flies the example of the devil, yet joins with the devil that hunts for the wreck of man: this is likely sure.

CHAPTER XXI

Whether the gods use the devils as their messengers, and be willing that they should deceive them, or ignorant that they do it.

But there is a great necessity of this so vile an inconvenience, because the ethereal gods (but that these spirits being upward) otherwise could not know the affairs of earth: heaven (ye know) being far from earth, and air adjoining to both. O rare wisdom! This is their opinion, that their good gods have a care of human businesses, else were they not worth worship, and yet the distance of place debarst them from noticing how things pass, but that the spirits help them: so there are they necessary: and consequently worship-worthy, as the means that the gods have to know men's cases, and to send them help in time: if this then be so, the devils' contiguous body is better known to the gods than a man's good mind. Oh lamentable necessity!: nay, ridiculous detestable vanity, to keep vanity from divinity. If the gods by their freedom from the body's obstacles can behold our minds, what need they any spirit's help? And
The gods are ignorant of the devil's deceits, no more are they barred the knowledge of our actions. But I would they would tell me whether the spirits told the gods that Plato disliked the slanders that the poets laid upon them, and yet concealed that they did like well of them, or concealed all, that the gods never knew it: or revealed all, Plato's religious zeal, and their own vile affection; or did they suppress Plato's opinion that would have such impious liberty abrogated as by poetic fables did injure the gods, and yet shamed not to lay open their own wickedness in affecting such plays as contained the gods' disgraces: choose of these four which they will, and mark the sequel. How vilely they thought of these good gods. If they choose the first, then it is granted that the gods might not converse with good Plato that restrained their shames, and yet conversed with those evil spirits that rejoiced at these injuries of the gods, who could not know a good man, being afar, but by these devils, because they could not know these devils that were so near them. If they take the second, and say the spirits concealed both, that the gods should neither know Plato's religious law, and the devils' sacrilegious practice, what use can the gods have of these messengers for any knowledge, seeing they could not have knowledge of the good laws that honest men promulgated in their honour against the lust of those vile spirits! If they choose the third and make these spirits both to celebrate Plato's prohibition of the gods' injuries, and their own affectation of their continuance: why were not this rather to over-crow them, than to interpret to them? And so should the gods hear and judge.
of both these relations, that they neither should cashier these spirits of their service, that opposed Plato's good zeal, nor forbear to send Plato rewards by them, for his honest intent. For so are they placed in the chain of nature's elements, that they may have the company of those that injure them, but not of those that defend them: both they may know, but the states of air and earth they cannot alter, nor transmute. Now if they choose the fourth, it is worse than all. For who can endure the devils should tell the gods how they are abused by players and poets, and of the height of pleasure themselves take in the shows, and yet be silent of Plato's grave decree that abrogated all such obscenities? that so the good gods might have intelligence of the wickedness of the worst: their own messengers; and yet none of the philosophers' goodnesse, that aimed all at their honour, whereas the other professed their extreme disgrace.

CHAPTER XXII

The renouncing of the worship of those spirits against Apuleius.

To avoid therefore all evil thoughts concerning the gods, all the four are to be avoided: nor must we at all believe what Apuleius would have us, and others with him, that the daemones are so placed between the gods and men, that they bear up men's prayers, and bring down the gods' helps: but that they are spirits most thirsty of mischief, wholly unjust, proud, envious, treacherous, inhabiting the air indeed, as thrust out of
the glorious heaven for their unpardonable guilt, and condemned eternally to that prison. Nor are they above man in merit because air is above earth, for men do easily excel them, not in quality of body, but in the faith and favour of the true God. Indeed they rule over many that are not worthy of the participation of gods’ truth: such are their subjects, won to them by false miracles, and by illusions persuading them that they are gods. But others that looked more narrowly into them and their qualities, would not believe this that they were gods, only they got this place in their opinion, to be held the gods’ messengers, and bringers of men’s good fortunes. Yet those that held them not gods, would not give them the honour of gods because they saw them evil, and held all gods to be good: yet durst they not deny them all divine honours, for fear of offending the people, whose in-veterate superstition preserved them in so many temples, altars, and sacrifices.

CHAPTER XXIII

Hermes Trismegistus’ opinion of idolatry, and how he might come to know that the Egyptian superstitions were to be abrogated.

For Hermes the Egyptian, called Trismegistus, wrote contrary to these. Apuleius indeed holds them no gods, but middle agents between gods and men: that being so necessary, he conjoins their adoration with the divine worship. But Trismegistus says, that the high God made some gods, and men other some. These words as I write them, may be
understood of images, because they are the works of
men. But he calls visible and palpable bodies, the
bodies of the gods: wherein are spirits (invited in
thereto) that have power to hurt or pleasure such as
give them divine honours. So then, to combine such
a spirit invisible, by arts unto a visible image of some
certain substance, which it must use as the soul does
the body, this is, to make a god, says he, and this
wonderful power of making gods, is in the hands of
man. His words are these: "And whereas our dis-
course," says he, "concerns the affinity between gods
and men, mark (Asclepius) this power of man: our
God the Lord and Father, is the creator of the
celestial gods, so is man of the terrestrial, which are
in the temples." And a little after: "So doth
humanity remember the original, and ever striveth to
imitate the deity: making gods like the one image,
"as God the Father hath done like His." "Do you
mean statues?" replied Asclepius. "Statues," quoth
he, "do you not see them animate, full of spirits and
sense (trust your eyes), doing such wonders? see
you not statues that presage future events (far perhaps
beyond all prophetical inspiration to foretell), that
cure diseases and cause them, giving men mirth or
sadness, as they deserve? Know you not, Asclepius,
that Egypt is heaven's image, or rather the place
whereinto all the celestial graces descend, the very
temple of the whole world. And since wisdom
should foreknow all, I would not have you ignorant
herein. The time shall come that all the zeal of
Egypt shall be abrogated, and all the religious obser-
vations held idle and vain." Then goes he forward,
prophesying (by all likelihood) of Christianity, whose
ture sanctity is the utter subversion of all fictions and
superstitions: that the Saviour's true grace might
free us from those human gods, those handiworks of
man, and place us in God's service, man's maker. And prophesies their overthrow. But Hermes presages these things as the devil's confederate, suppressing the evidence of the Christian name, and yet foretelling with a sorrowful intimation, that from it should proceed the wreck of all their idolatrous superstitions: for Hermes was one of those who (as the apostle says), "Knowing God, glorified Him not as God, nor were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was full of darkness: when they professed themselves wise, they became fools. For they turned the glory of the incorruptible God into the similitude of the image of a corruptible man," and birds, and four-footed beasts, and serpents. For this Hermes says much of God according to truth; but how blindness of heart draws him to affirm this, I know not, that these gods should be always subject, whom man has made: and yet to bewail their abrogations to come. As if man could be more miserable any way, than in living slave to his own handiwork: it being easier for him to put off all humanity in adoring these pieces he has made, than for them to put on deity by being made by him. For it comes oftener to pass that a man being set in honour, be not understood to be like to the beasts, than that his handiwork should be preferred before the work that God made like His own image, to wit, man's self. Worthily then does he fall from His grace that made him, that makes that his lord which he has made himself. Those vain, deceitful, pernicious sacrileges, Hermes' foreseeing should perish, deplores, but as impudently as he had known it foolishly. For the Spirit of God had not spoken to him as it did to the prophets, that spoke this with gladness. "If a man make gods, behold they are no gods:" and in another place: "At that day," says the Lord,

1 Rom. i. 21-23.
"I will take the names of their idols from the earth, and there shall be no remembrance thereof." And to the purpose of Egypt, hear Isaiah. "The idols of Egypt shall be moved at His presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of her," and so forward. Such were they also that rejoiced for the fulfilling of that which they knew should come to pass: as Simeon, Anna, and Elizabeth, the first knowing Christ at His birth, the second at His conception: and Peter, that by God's inspiration said, "Thou art that Christ the Son of the living God." But Hermes had his knowledge from those devils, that trembling in the flesh said to Christ: "Why art thou come to undo us before the time?" either because that came suddenly upon them which they expected not until afterwards, or that they called it their undoing to be known, and so despised: and this was before the time, that is, the judgment wherein they, and all men their sectaries, are to be cast into eternal torments: as that truth says, that neither deceives nor is deceived; not as he says that, following the puffs of philosophy, flies here and there, mixing truth and falsehood, grieving at the overthrow of that religion which afterwards he affirms is all error.

CHAPTER XXIV

How Hermes openly confessed his progenitors' error, and yet bewailed the destruction of it.

For after much discourse, he comes again to speak of the gods men made: "but of these sufficient (says he):

1 Isa. xix. 1.  
2 Luke i.  
3 Matt. xvi. 16.  
4 Matt. viii. 29.
let us return again to man, and to reason, by which divine gift man has the name of reasonable. For we have yet spoken no wonderful thing of man: the wonder of all wonders is that man could find out the divine nature, and give it effect. Wherefore our fathers erring exceedingly in incredulity concerning the deities, and never penetrating into the depth of divine religion, they invented an art, to make gods, whereunto they joined a virtue out of some part of the world’s nature, like to the other: and conjoining these two, because they could make no souls, they framed certain images whereunto they called either angels, or devils, and so by these mysteries gave these idols power to hurt or help them.” I know not whether the devils being admired would say as much as this man says. “Our fathers exceedingly erring (says he) in incredulity concerning the deities, and not penetrating into the depth of divine religion, invented an art to make gods.” Was he content to say they but erred, in this invention? no, he adds, exceedingly; thus this exceeding error and incredulity of those that looked not into matters divine, gave life to this invention of making gods. And yet though it were so, though this was but an invention of error, incredulity, and irreligiousness, yet this wise man laments that future times should abolish it. Mark now whether God’s power compels him to confess his progenitors’ error, and the devils to be made the future wreck of the said error. If it were their exceeding error, incredulity, and negligence in matters divine that give first life to this god-making invention, what wonder if this art be detestable, and all that it did against the truth cast out from the truth, this truth correcting that error, this faith that incredulity, this conversion that neglect? If he conceal the cause, and yet confess that right to be their invention, we (if we
Men have any wit) cannot but gather that had they been in the right way, they would never have fallen to that folly: had they either thought worthily, or meditated seriously of religion, yet should we affirm that their great incredulous, contemptuous error in the cause of divinity, was the cause of this invention, we should nevertheless stand in need to prepare ourselves to endure the impudence of the truth's obstinate opponents. But since he that admires the power of this art above all other things in man, and grieves that the time should come wherein all those illusions should clasp with ruin, through the power of legal authority: since he confesses the causes that give this art first original, namely the exceeding error, incredulity, and negligence of his ancestor in matters divine: what should we do but think God has overthrown these institutions by their just contrary causes? that which error's multitude ordained, has truth's tract abolished: faith has subverted the work of incredulity, and conversion unto God's truth has suppressed the effects of true God's neglect: not in Egypt only (where only the diabolical spirit bewails) but in all the world, which hears a new song sung unto the Lord, as the Holy Scripture says, "Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth:" for the title of this psalm is, when the house was built after the captivity: the City of God, the Lord's House is built, that is the Holy Church all the earth over: after captivity wherein the devils held those men slaves, who after by their faith in God became principal stones in the building: for man's making of these gods, did not acquit him from being slave to these works of his, but by his willing worship he was drawn into their society: a society of subtle devils, not of stupid idols: for what are idols

1 Ps. xevi. 1.
but as the Scripture says, have eyes and see not, and all the other properties that may be said of a dead senseless image, how well soever carved. But the unclean spirits, therein by that truly black art, bound their souls that adored them, in their society, and most horrid captivity: therefore says the apostle: "We know that an idol is nothing in the world: but the Gentiles offer to devils and not unto God: I will not have them to have society with the devils."¹ So then after this captivity that bound men slaves to the devils, God's house began to be built through the earth: thence had the psalm the beginning, "Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord and praise His name, declare His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory amongst all nations, and His wonders amongst all people. For the Lord is great and much to be praised: He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols, but the Lord made the heavens." He then that bewailed the abolition of the idols in the time to come, and of that slavery wherein the devils held men captive, did it out of an evil spirit's inspiration, and from that did desire the continuance of that captivity which being disannulled, the psalmist sung that God's house was built up through the earth. Hermes presaged it with tears; the prophet with joy, and because that spirit that the prophet spake by is ever victor: Hermes himself that bewailed their future ruin, and wished their eternity, is by a strange power compelled to confess their original from error, incredulity, and contempt of God, not from prudence, faith, and devotion. And though he call them gods, that in saying: yet men did make them (and such men as we should not imitate), what does he (despite his heart)

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 4.
but teach us that they are not to be worshipped of such men, as are not like them that made them: namely, of those that be wise, faithful, and religious: showing also that those men that made them, bound themselves to adore such gods as were no gods at all. So true is that of the prophet: "If a man make gods, behold they are no gods." Now Hermes, in calling those gods that are made by such means, that is, devils bound in idols, by an art, or rather, by their own elections, and affirming them the handiworks of men, gives them not so much as Apuleius the Platonist does (but we have shown already how grossly and absurdly), who makes them the messengers between the gods, that God made, and the men that He made also: to carry up prayers and bring down benefits: for it were fondness to think that a god of man's making could do more with the gods of God's making than a man whom He made also could. For because a devil bound in a statue by this damned art, is made a god: not to each man, but to his binder, such as he is. Is not this a sweet god now, whom none but an erroneous, incredulous, irreligious man would go about to make? furthermore if the temple-devils, being bound by art (forsooth) in those idols by them that made them gods at such time as they themselves were wanderers, unbelievers, and contemners of God's true religion, are no messengers between the gods and them; and if by reason of their damnable conditions, those men that do so wander, believe so little, and despise religion so much, be nevertheless their betters, as they must needs be, being their godheads' makers: then remains but this, that which they do, they do as devils only, either doing good, for the more mischief, as most deceitful; or doing open mischief: yet neither of these can they do without the high inscrutable providence of God: nothing is in their power as they
are the gods' friends, and messengers to and from men: for such they are not: for the good divine powers, whom we call the holy angels, and the reasonable creatures inhabiting heaven, whether they be thrones, dominations, principalities, or powers, can hold no friendship at all with these spirits: from whom they differ as much in affection as virtue differs from vice, or malice from goodness.

CHAPTER XXV

Of such things as may be common to angels and men.

WHEREFORE the devils are no means for man to receive the gods' benefits by, or rather good angels: but it is our good wills, imitating theirs, making us live in one community with them and in honour of that one God that they honour (though we see not them with our earthly eyes) that is the means to their society: and whereas our miserable frailty of will, and infirmity of spirit effects a difference between them and us, therein we are far short of them, in merit of life, not in habit of body. It is not our earthly, bodily habitation, but our unclean carnal affection, that causes separation between them and us. But when we are purified, we become as they: drawing near them nevertheless before, by our faith, if we believe that (by their good favours also) He that blessed them will make us also blessed.
That all Paganism was fully contained in dead men.

(Clear evidence of cult of dead men)

But mark what Hermes, in his bewailing of the expulsion of these idols out of Egypt, which had such an erroneous incredulity and irreligious institutors, says amongst the rest, then (says he) "that holy seat of temples shall become a sepulchre of dead bodies." As if men should not die unless these things were demolished, or being dead should be buried anywhere save in the earth? Truly the more time that passes, the more carcases shall still be buried and more graves made. But this (it seems) is his grief, that the memories of our martyrs should have place in their temples: that the misunderstanding reader hereof might imagine that the Pagans worshipped gods in the temples, and we dead men in their tombs. For men’s blindness so carries them headlong against mountains, letting them not see till they be struck, that they do not consider that in all Paganism, there cannot be a god found but has been a man: but on will they, and honour them as eternally pure from all humanity. Let Varro pass, they said, "all that died were held gods infernal," proving it by the sacrifices done at all burials. there also he reckons the funeral plays, as the greatest token of their divinity, plays being never presented but to the gods. Hermes himself (now mentioned) in his deplorative presage, saying: "Then that holy seat of temples shall become a sepulchre of dead bodies," plainly avers that the Egyptian gods were all dead men: for having said that his fathers in their exceeding error, incredulity, and neglect of religion, had found a
means to make gods hereunto (says he), they added such as a virtue out of some parts of the world's nature, and conjoining these two, because they could make no souls, they framed certain images, into which they called either angels or devils, and so by these mysteries gave those idols power to hurt or help them. Then he proceeds to examples. "Thy grandfather (Asclepius)," saith he, "the first inventor of physic, has a temple on Mount Libya, near the crocodile shore: there lies his worldly man, his body, but his residue or his whole (if man be whole life) has gone up to heaven, helping all sick persons now by his deity as he did before by his physic." Lo here he confesses a dead man worshipped for a god, there where his grave was: erring and making others ere, in saying, "that he was ascended to heaven, and helpeth all sick persons by his deity." Nay, he proceeds to another. "My grandfather Hermes," says he, "lying in the town of his surname, doth he not assist and preserve all that implore his help." This was Hermes, the elder Mercury, buried (they say) in Hermopolis, the town of his surname. Behold now, here are two men gods already, Æsculapius and Mercury, for the first the opinion of both Greeks and Latins confirm it. But the second many think was never mortal: yet he says here that he was his grandfather, for this is one and that another, though both have one name. But this I stand not upon: he and Æsculapius were both made gods of men, by this great testimony of his nephew Trismegistus, who proceeds, and says "Isis, the wife of Osiris, doth much good (we see), being pleased, and being offended, much evil." And then to show that these are of that kind of gods that men make by this art, he gives us to understand, that he thinks those devils to be souls of dead men, which
he says those erring, incredulous, irreligious fellows, called by art into statues: because these could make no souls: and when he has spoken that of "Isis, being offended, much hurt," he adds: for earthly and worldly gods are soon offended, and moved to anger by reason they consist of men, in both their natures: both their natures (saith he), taking the devil for the soul, and the image for the body, whereupon it came to pass (says he) that such and such creatures became holy in Egypt, and their souls were adored in all the cities, that consecrated them in their lives, so far that they have part of their worship assigned them, and are called by their names. Where is now that sad complaint that Egypt, the seat of temples, should become a grave for carcases? see, the false spirit that made Hermes speak it, made him also confess that it was already filled with their carcases whom they held as gods. But in his complaint he was but the vent of the devils' woe, because their eternal plagues were in preparing by the martyrs' holy memories, for in such places are they often tormented and forced to confess themselves, and to avoid the bodies possessed.

CHAPTER XXVII

Of the honour that Christians give to the martyrs.

Yet we erect no temples, altars, nor sacrifices to the martyrs, because not they, but their God, is our God; we honour their memories, as God's saints, standing till death for the truth, that the true religion might be propagated, and all idolatry demolished: whereas
if any others had believed right before them, yet fear
forbade them confess it. And who has ever heard
the priest at the altar, that was built up in God’s
honour, and the martyrs’ memories, say over the
body, I offer unto thee, Peter, or unto thee, Paul, or
Cyprian? he offers to God, in the places of their
memorials, whom God had made men, and martyrs,
and advanced them into the society of His angels in
heaven, that we at that solemnity may both give
thanks to God for their victories, and be encouraged
to endeavour the attainment of such crowns and
glories as they have already attained: still invoking
Him at their memorials: wherefore all the religious
performances done there, at the martyrs’ solemnities,
are ornaments of their memories, but no sacrifices to
the dead, as unto gods, and those that bring banquets
thither, which notwithstanding the better Christians
do not, nor is this custom observed in most places,
yet, such as do so, setting them down, praying over
them, and so taking them away to eat, or bestow on
those that need: all this they do only with a desire
that these meats might be sanctified, by the martyrs,
in the God of martyrs’ name. But he that knows
the only sacrifices that the Christians offer to God,
knows also that these are no sacrifices to the martyrs;
wherefore we neither worship our martyrs with God’s
honours nor men’s crimes, neither offer them sacri-
fices nor turn their disgraces into any religion of theirs;
as for Isis, Osiris’ wife, and the Egyptian goddess
and her parents, that have been recorded to have
been all mortal, to whom she sacrificing found three
grains of barley, and showed it unto her husband and
Hermes, her counsellor: and so they will have her
to be Ceres also, what gross absurdities are hereof
recorded, not by poets, but their own priests (as Leon
showed to Alexander and he to his mother Olympia),
Shall let them read that list, and remember that have read and then but consider, unto what dead persons and dead persons' works their divinest honours were exhibited. God forbid they should in the least respect compare them with our martyrs, whom nevertheless we account no gods; we make no priests to sacrifice unto them, it is unlawful, indecent, and God's proper due: neither do we please them with their own crimes, or obscene spectacles: whereas they celebrate both the guilt that their gods incurred who were men, and the feigned pleasures of such of them as were flat devils. If Socrates had had a god, he should not have been of this sort: but such perhaps as loved to excel in this damnable art of making gods, thrust such an one upon him, being an innocent honest man, and unskilful in this their pernicious practice. What need we more? none that has his wits about him will now hold that these spirits are to be adored for the attainment of eternal bliss in the life to come. Perhaps they will say that all the gods are good, but, of these spirits some are good and some bad: and that by those that are good we may come to eternity, and therefore ought to adore them: well, to rip up this question, the next book shall serve the turn.
THE EIGHTH BOOK

CHAPTER I

The scope of the afore-passed disputation, and what is remaining to treat of.

In these controversies of the gods, some have held deities of both natures, good and evil: others (of better minds) did the gods that honour to hold them all good. But those that held the first, held the airy spirits to be gods also, and called them gods, as they called the gods, spirits, but not so ordinarily. Indeed they confess that Jove, the prince of all the rest, was by Homer called a demon. But such as affirmed all the gods were good ones, and far better than the best men, are justly moved by the arts of the airy spirits, to hold firmly that the gods could do no such matters, and therefore of force there must be a difference between them and these spirits: and that what ever displeasant affect, or bad act they see caused, wherein these spirits do show their secret power, that they hold is the devil's work, and not the gods'. But yet because they place these spirits as mediators between their gods and men (as if God and man had no other means of commerce), to carry and recarry prayers and benefits from the one to the other, this being the opinion of the most excellent philosophers the Platonists, with whom I choose to discuss this question, whether the adoration of many gods be helpful to eternal felicity? In the last book we disputed
Of these air-spirits are any good? how the devils (delighting in that which all wise and honest men abhor, as in the foul, enormous, irreligious fictions of the gods' crimes (not men's), and in the damnable practice of magic), can be so much nearer to the gods, that men must make them the means to attain their favours: and we found it utterly impossible. So now this book (as I promised in the end of the other), must not concern the difference of the gods betwixt themselves (if they make any such), nor the difference of the gods and spirits (the one being far distant from men (as they say), and the other in the midst between the gods and men), but of the difference of these spirits amongst themselves. This is the present question.

CHAPTER II

Whether amongst the spirits of the air that are under the gods, there be any good ones, that can further a man in the attainment of true blessedness.

For many use to say there are some good devils and some bad: but whether this opinion be Plato's or whosoever, it is not to be omitted; because no man shall be deluded in honouring those spirits as if they were good, or such as whiles he thinks should by their place be a mean of reconciliation betwixt them, and the gods, and desires their furtherance; to be with them after death, do inveigle him and draw him in with deceit, quite from the true God, with whom only and in whom only, every reasonable soul, must expect and enjoy beatitude.
CHAPTER III

What qualities Apuleius ascribes to the devils, to whom he gives reason but no virtue.

How is this difference of good and evil then extant, when as Apuleius the Platonist, disputing so much hereof, and attributing so much to those airy powers, yet never speaks a word of their virtues, which he would have done if they had had any? He shows not the cause why they are happy, but the signs of their misery he opens at full: confessing that though they have reason, they want virtue, that do not give way to unreasonable passions, but (as fools used to be) they are often perturbed with tempestuous and unquiet motions. His words are these: "Of these demones, the poets (not much amiss) do feign some to be haters, and some lovers of some particular men: preferring some, and dejecting others: so that pity, anger, joy, and all human affects are easily accidents unto them: and so is their mind exposed to the dominion of all perturbations, which the gods (whose minds are quiet, and retired) are not." Here you hear plainly that the devils' souls as well as mortals' are subject to all disturbance of passion, and thereby not to be compared unto wise men, who can curb and suppress those exorbitant affects, however accident unto them by reason of their humanity; giving them no predominance to work any unreasonable effect, opposite to justice; but they are more like (not to say worse) unto fools, and wicked persons, not in bodies but qualities; elder they are indeed, and incurably tortured, still floating in the sea of perturbation, having no hold at all of verity, or virtue, which are the means to repress all outrageous affections.
Chapter IV

The opinions of the Stoics and Peripatetics concerning perturbations of the mind.

And full of passion? Concerning motions of the mind which the Greeks call πάθη, and some of us (with Tully) perturbations, others affects, or affections, and some more expressly from the Greek, passions, there be two opinions of the philosophers: some say they may befall a wise man, yet so as they are still awed by reason, and by the rule of the mind, obliged to what conditions discretion imposes. The holders of this are Platonists, or Aristotelians, for Aristotle, the first Peripatetic, was Plato’s scholar. But others (as the Stoics) exempt a wise man from any touch of those passions. And those, Tully, in his books "De Finibus," proves to be rather materially than formally opposite unto the Platonists or Peripatetics: because the Stoics will not admit the external helps of the body, or estate, to the name of goods, reserving that only for virtue, as the art of living, fixed in the mind. But the others, following the common fashion, call them goods, many of small value in respect of virtue: so then howsoever they differ in their name, they concur in their esteem; nor do the Stoics show anything in this controversy but novelty of phrase: so that I hold directly, that in this question, whether a wise man may have passions of mind or not, their controversy is rather verbal, than real: for I am persuaded they are just of the Platonists' and Peripatetics' mind herein, though their words pretend a difference. This proof, I will show fair to avoid the tediousness of a longer discourse. A. Gellius, an eloquent and excellent
scholar, writes in his "Noctes Atticae," that he was (How the ancients tried to expel these passions!) at sea in the company of a famous Stoic. This Philosopher (as Gellius tells us large, but I in brief) seeing the ship in great peril by reason of a dangerous and dreadful tempest, was pale for very fear: which some that were by (being even in the chaps of death so curiously observe whether the philosopher were perturbed or not) did perceive; the storm ending, and fear letting men's tongues loose, a rich glutton of Asia fell a scoffing the Stoic for being so terribly afraid of that brunt which himself had passed without any passions at all: but he replied as Aristippus the Socratist did, upon the like case, "that the other having but the soul of a base knave, needed not care for it, but he was careful for the soul of Aristippus." This answer packed away the rich chaff, and then Gellius asked the philosopher (not desiring to offend, but to learn) what was the cause of his fear. Who desiring to satisfy a man so desirous to know, he pulls out of his scrip the book of Epictetus, a Stoic, containing the Axioms of Zeno and Chrysippus, Stoicism's founders: wherein Gellius (says he) showed him this position, "That the mind's apprehensions (they call them fantasies) arising from fearful and terrifying objects, can neither be hindered from befalling a wise man, nor from moving his mind when they do befall: that he shall fear, or be sad, a little by these passions' too hasty intrusion upon his reason: yet not so far that they leave an opinion or consent of the mind unto their effect, behind them: for this they keep free, as the difference between the fool and the wise: the fool consents to his passions: the wise man though he suffer them yet keeps his election, and his reprobation of them all, firm and free." Thus much from A. Gellius, no better, but briefer than his own relation of that which himself read in Epictetus,
Sages from the positive doctrine of the Stoics. Which being true, leaves small difference between them and other philosophers in this point of affects. For both do quit man's reason from being overruled by passion. And perhaps therefore the Stoics deny a wise man to seal them, because they alter him not, nor hurt his wisdom. But they befall him (not moving his wisdom) in the respects of the commodities or dis-commodities of this life which notwithstanding he will not call goods, or evils. For if the philosopher had not esteemed that which he doubted to loose by that shipwreck, namely his life and bodily safety, he would never have been pale for the matter: yet might his mind stand fixed for all that external pallor, and he still hold firm that life and bodily safety, which there he feared to lose, were not of those goods that make their possessors good, as virtue does. But in that they say they are not to be called goods at all, but only commodities, in this their mind is more upon the word than the matter. For what care is there of their name, when as their loss leaves both Stoic and Peripatetic alike affected? proving thereby their equal esteem of them, call them what they list? If the danger of these goods or commodities should draw either of them to mischiefs, or else to be lost: they both join in this; rather to abjure the use of bodily benefits than to transgress the rules of justice. Thus is the mind still fixed, holding steadfastly that no passion (though it insult upon the soul's meaner parts) can domineer over reason: but reason over them, exercising virtue's sovereignty over them by opposition, nor by consent. For such an one does Virgil say Aeneas was—

"Mens immota manet, lacrimae volvuntur immane."

"His mind stood fixed, yet fruitless tears must out."
CHAPTER V

That the Christians' passions are causes of the practice of virtue, not inducers unto vice.

Here is no need to stand upon a large discovery what the Christians' scriptures teach in this point of affects: it subjects the whole mind to God's government and assistance; and all the passions unto it, in that manner that they are all made to seem the increase of justice, finally our doctrine inquires not so much whether one be angry, but wherefore? Why he is sad, not whether he be sad; and so of fear? For anger with an offender, to reform him: pity upon one afflicted, to succour him: fear for one in danger, to deliver him—these no man, not mad, can reprehend. The Stoics indeed use to reprehend pity. But that Stoic might more honestly have pitied another man's danger than have feared his own. But with far more humanity and piety, said Tully in Cæsar's praise: "Of all thy virtues, is none more admired, nor applauded, than thy mercy." What is mercy but a compassion, in our own heart, of another's misfortunes, urging us as far as our power stretches to relieve him? This affect serves reason, when our pity offends not justice, either in relieving the poor or forgiving the penitent. This that eloquent Cicero stuck not to call a virtue, which the Stoics reckon with the vices: yet does Epicetetus, out of the doctrines of Zeno and Chrysippus, the first patrons of this sect, allow these passions unto a man, whom nameless they must needs keep from all vice, and consequently these passions that befall a wise man, so as they do not offer any prejudice to his reason or virtue, are no vices, and the Stoics,
 CHAPTER VI

What passion the spirits that Apuleius makes mediators between the gods and men are subject unto, by his own confession.

But to defer the question of the holy angels awhile, let us see how the Platonists teach of their mediating spirits, in this matter of passion. If those demons overruled all their affects with freedom and reason, then would not Apuleius have said that they are tossed in the same tempestuous cogitations that men's hearts do float in. So their mind then, their reasonable part, that if it had any virtue seated in it,
should be the dominator over these turbulent affects minds are of the inferior parts: this very mind floats (say the Platonists) in this sea of perturbation. Well, then the devils' minds lie open to the passions of lust, fear, wrath, and the rest. What part then have they free, wise, and unaffected, whereby to please the gods, and converse with good men, when as their whole mind is so subjugated unto affects, and their vices, that their whole reason is eternally employed upon deceit and illusion, as their desire to endamage all creatures is eternal?

CHAPTER VII

That the Platonists do but seek contentions in saying the poets defame the gods, whereas their imputations certain to the devils, and not to the gods.

If any say the poets' tolerable fictions, that some gods were lovers or haters of some men, were not spoken universally but restrictively, respecting the evil spirits, whom Apuleius says, "do float in a sea of turbulent thoughts:" how can this stand, when in his placing of them in the midst between the gods and us, he says not, "some for the evil, but all, because all have airy bodies"? for this he says is a fiction of the poets that make gods of those spirits, and call them so, making them friends to such or such men, as their own loose affects do put in their heads to poetize: whereas indeed the gods are far from these in place, blessedness, and quality. This is the fiction then, to call them gods that are not so: and to set them at odds, or at amity with such or such particular
All gods men, under the titles of deities. But this fiction (says he) was not much: for though the spirits be called gods as they are not, yet they are described as they are. And thence (says he) is Homer's tale of Minerva, that stayed Achilles from striking in the midst of the Greek host. That this was Minerva, he holds it false, because she (in his opinion) was a goddess highly placed amongst the greatest deities, far from conversation with mortals. Now if it were some spirit that favoured the Greeks against Troy, as Troy had divers against them, one of whom he calls Venus, and another Mars, who indeed are higher gods than to meddle with such trifles, and if those spirits contended each for his own side, then this fiction is not far wide, says he. For it was spoken of them whom he himself has testified subject to affects, as mortal men are: so that they might use their loves and hates not according to justice; but even as the people do in huntings and courses, each one does the best for his own party: for the philosophers' care it seems was this, to prevent the imputation of such acts upon the gods (whose names the poets used) and to lay them upon the spirits, to whom of right they belonged.

CHAPTER VIII

Apuleius' definition of the gods of heaven, spirits of air, and men of earth.

What of his definition of spirits? It is universal and therefore worth inspection. They are (says he) creatures, passive, reasonable, aerial and eternal.
in all which five there is no community, that those spirits have with good men, but they have it with bad. also. For making a large description of man, in their place, being the last, as the gods are the first, to pass from commemoration of both their extremes, unto that which was the mean between them, viz., these devils, thus he says: "Men, joying in reason, perfect in speech, mortal in body, immortal in soul, passionate and inconstant in mind, brutish and frail in body, of discrepant conditions, and conformed errors, of impudent boldness, of bold hope, of indurate labour, and uncertain fortune, particularly mortal, generally eternal, propagating one another, short of life, slow of wisdom, sudden of death and discontented in life, these dwell on earth. In these generals (common to many) he added one, that he knew was false in few: "slow of wisdom:" which had he omitted, he had neglected, to perfect his description. For in his description of the gods, he says, that that beatitude which men do seek by wisdom, excels in them, so had he thought of any good devils, their definition should have mentioned it, either by showing them to participate some of the gods' beatitude, or of man's wisdom. But he has no separation between them and wretches: though he be favourable in discovering their malevolent natures, not so much for fear of them, as their servants that should read his positions: to the wise he leaves his opinion open enough, and what theirs should be; both in his separation of the gods from all tempest of affect, and therein from the spirits, in all but eternity: and in his intimation that their minds were like men's, not the god's, nay, and that not in wisdom, which men may partake with the gods, but in being prone to passions, which rule both in the wicked and the witless: but is overruled by
the wise man, yet so as he had rather want it, than conquer it, for if he seek to make the devils to communicate with the gods in eternity of mind only, not of body, then should he not exclude man, whose soul he held eternal, as well as the rest: and therefore he says that "man is a creature mortal in body, and immortal in soul."

CHAPTER IX

Whether the airy spirits can procure a man the gods' friendships.

Wherefore, if men by reason of their mortal bodies have not that participation of eternity with the gods, that these spirits by reason of their immortal bodies have: what mediators can there be between the gods and men that in their best part, their soul, are worse than men, and better, in the worst part of a creature, the body? for, all creatures consisting of body and soul, have the soul for the better part, be it never so weak and vicious, and the body never so firm and perfect: because it is of a more excelling nature, nor can the corruption of vice deject it to the baseness of the body: but like base gold, that is dearer than the best silver, so far does it exceed the body's worth. Thus then those mediators, or posts from heaven to earth, have eternity of body with the gods and corruption of soul with the mortals, as though that religion that must make god and man to meet, were rather corporeal than spiritual! But what guilt or sentence has hung up those juggling intercedents by the heels, and the head downward, that their lower
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... their bodies, participate with the higher powers: and their higher, their souls, with the lower, holding correspondence with the gods in their servile part, and with mortals in their principal? for the body (as Sallust says) is the soul's slave: at least should be in the true use: and he proceeds: the one we have common with beasts, the other with gods: speaking of man whose body is as mortal as a beast's. Now those whom the philosophers have put between the gods and us, may say thus also: "We have body and soul, in community with gods and men:" but then (as I said) they are bound with their heels upward, having their slavish body common with the gods, and their predominant soul common with wretched men: their worst part aloft and their best underfoot, wherefore if any one think them eternal with the gods, because they never die the death with creatures, let us not understand their bodies to be the eternal palace wherein they are blessed, but the eternal prison wherein they are damned: and so he thinks as he should.

CHAPTER X

Plotine's opinion that men are less wretched in their mortality than the devils are in their eternity.

It is said that Plotine, that lived but lately, understood Plato the best of any. He, speaking of men's souls, says thus: "The Father out of His mercy bound them but for a season," so that in that men's bonds (their bodies) are mortal, he imputes it to God the Father's mercy, thereby freeing us from the
the eternal tedium of this life. Now the devils’
wickedness is held worthy of this favor. whose
passive souls have eternal prisons, not temporal as
men’s are, for they were happier than men, had they
mortal bodies with us, and blessed souls with the
gods. And men’s equals were they if they had but
mortal bodies to their wretched souls; and then could
work themselves rest after death by faith and piety.
But as they are, they are not only more unhappy
than man in the wretchedness of souls, but far more
in eternity of bondage in their bodies; he would not
have men to understand that they could ever come
to be gods, by any grace or wisdom, seeing that he
calls them eternal devils.

CHAPTER XI

Of the Platonists that held men’s souls to become
demones after death.

He says also that men’s souls are demones, and
become lares if their merits be good; if evil, lemures,
goblins; if uncertain, manes. But how pernicious
this opinion is to all goodness, who sees not; for be
men never so mischievous, hoping to becomelemures
or manes, the more desirous they are of hurt, the
worse they turn into, and are persuaded that some
sacrifices will call them to do mischief when they are
dead, and become such: for these lares (said he)
are evil demones that have been men on earth. But
here is another question: let it pass: he says further,
the Greeks call such as they hold blessed suðários,
good demones: herein confirming his position that
men’s souls become demones after death.
CHAPTER XII

Of the three contraries whereby the Platonists distinguish the devils' natures from the men's.

But now to those creatures whom he places properly between the gods and men, being reasonable, passive, aerial, and immortal. Having placed the gods the highest, and the men the lowest, here (says he) are two of your creatures: the gods and men much differing in height of place, immortality and perfection, the habitations being immeasurably distant, and the life there eternal, and perfection here, frail and faltering: their wits advanced to beatitude, ours dejected unto misery. Here now are three contraries between nature's two uttermost parts, the highest and the lowest: for the three praises of the gods' estate he compares with the contraries of man's. Theirs are height of place, eternity of life, perfection of nature. All these are thus opposed by him from humanity: the first, height of place, immeasurably distant from us: the second, eternity of life, poised with our frail and faltering state: the third, perfection of nature and wit, counterpoised by our wit and nature, that are dejected unto misery. Thus the gods' three, height, eternity, beatitude, are contrary in our three, baseness, mortality, and misery; now the devils being in the midway between them and us, their place is known, for that must needs be the mid-distance between the highest and the lowest. But the other two must be better looked into, whether the devils are either quite excluded from them, or participate as much of them as their middle posture require: excluded from them they cannot be, for we cannot say that they are neither happy nor wretched.
Neither (as we may say that the mid-place is neither the highest nor the lowest), beasts and unreasonable creatures neither are so. But such as have reason must be the one. Nor can we say they are neither mortal nor eternal, for all things alive are one. But he has said they are eternal. It remains, then, that they have one part from the highest, and another from the lowest, so being the mean themselves. For if they take both from either, their mediocrity is overthrown, and they rely wholly upon the lower part or the higher. Seeing, therefore, they cannot want these two qualities above-said, their mediation arises from their partaking one with either. Now eternity from the lowest they cannot have, for there it is not: so from the highest they must have that. So then is there nothing to participate for their mediety's sake between them and mortals but misery.

CHAPTER XIII

How the devils, if they be neither blessed with the gods nor wretched with men, may be in the mean between both without participation of either.

So then, according to the Platonists, the gods are in eternal blessedness, or blessed eternity, and men are in mortal misery or miserable mortality: and the spirits of the air between both, in miserable eternity, or eternal misery. For in his five attributes given them in their definition, is none that shows (as he promised) their mediety: this community with us including their reason, their being creatures, and their being passive, and holding community with the gods only in eternity: having their airy nature, com-
mon with neither. How are they mediate then, having but one from the higher, and three from the lower? Who sees not how they are thrust from the mediate to the lower side? But thus they may be found to be in the midst: they have one thing proper to themselves only, their airy bodies, as the gods have their celestial, and man his terrestrial; and two things they have common to both: their being creatures and their gift of reason: for he, speaking of the gods and men, said: "Here have you two creatures." Nor do they affirm but that the gods have reason. Two then remains: their passiveness and their eternity, one common with the lower and the other with the higher, so being proportioned in the mean place that they decline to neither side. Thus, then, are they eternally miserable or miserably eternal. For in calling them passive he would have called them miserable, but for offending them that served them. Besides, because the world is not ruled by rash chance but by God's providence: these spirits should never have been eternally miserable, but that they are extremely malicious: wherefore if the eudemons be blessed, then is it not that they are in this mediety between gods and men. Where is their place, then, admitting their ministry between gods and men. If they be good and eternal, then they are blessed. If blessed, then not in the midst, but nearer to the gods and farther from men: frustrate then is all their labour that seek to prove the mediety of those spirits being good, immortal, and blessed, between the gods immortal and blessed, and men mortal and wretched. For having beatitude and immortality, both attributes of the gods, and neither proper unto man, they must needs hold nearer correspondence with gods than men. For if it were otherwise, their two attributes should com-
If you must have a middle term, muni
cate with one upon either side, not with two upon one side: as a man is in the midst between a beast and an angel: a beast being unreasonable and mortal, an angel reasonable and immortal, a man mortal and reasonable, holding the first with a beast, the second with an angel, and so stands mean: under angels, above beasts. Even so in seeking a mediacy between immortality blessed, and mortality wretched, we must either find mortality blessed or immortality wretched.

CHAPTER XIV

Whether mortal men may attain true happiness.

It is a great question whether a man may be both mortal and happy: some, considering their estate with humility, affirmed that in this life man could not be happy, others extolled themselves and avouched that a wise man was happy: which if it be so, why are not they made the means, between the immortally happy, and the mortally wretched? Hold they their beatitude of the first, and their mortality of the latter? Truly if they be blessed, they envy no man. For what is more wretched than envy? And therefore they shall do their best in giving wretched mortals good counsel to beatitude, that they may become immortal after death and be joined in fellowship with the eternal blessed angels.
CHAPTER XV

Of the Mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

But if that be true (which is far more probable) let us that all men of necessity must be miserable whilst they are mortal, then must a mean be found which is God, as well as man, who by the mediation of His blessed mortality may help us out of this mortal misery unto that immortal happiness: and this mean must be born mortal, but not continue so. He became mortal not by any weakening of His deity, but by taking on Him this our frail flesh: He remained not mortal, because He raised Himself up from death: for the fruit of His mediation is, to free those whom He is mediator for, from the eternal death of the flesh: so then it was necessary for the mediator between God and us, to have a temporal mortality, and an eternal beatitude, to have correspondence with mortals by the first, and to transfer them by eternity to the second. Wherefore the good angels cannot have this place, being immortal and blessed. The evil may, as having their immortality, and our misery; and to these is the good mediator opposed, being mortal, for a while, and blessed for ever, against their immortal misery. And so these proud immortals, and hurtful wretches, lest by the boast of their immortality they should draw men to misery, has He by His humble death and bountiful beatitude expelled from swaying of all such hearts as He has pleased to cleanse and illuminate by faith in Him: what mean then, shall a wretched mortal, far separate from the blessed immortals, choose to attain their societies? The devil's immortality is miserable: but Christ's mortality has nothing undelectable.
Many present, one only aids us. There we had need beware of eternal wretchedness: here we need not fear the death (which cannot be eternal) and we cannot but love the happiness which is eternal: for the mean that is immortally wretched aims all at keeping us from immortal beatitude, by persisting in the contrary misery: but the mean that is mortal and blessed, intends after our mortality to make us immortal (as He showed in His resurrection) and of wretches to make us blessed, which He never wanted. So that there is an evil mean that separates friends, and a good that reconciles them: and of the first sort are many, because the blessedness that the other multitude attains, comes all from participating of one God: whereof the miserable multitude of evil angels being deprived, who rather are opposite to hinder, than interpose to further, does all that in it lies to withdraw us from that only one way that leads to this blessed good, namely the word of God, not made, but the maker of all: yet is He no mediator as He is the word: for so is He most blessed, and immortal, far from us miserable men. But as He is man: therein making it plain that to the attainment of this blessed, and blessing good, we must use no other mediators whereby to work: God Himself, blessed and blessing all, having graced our humanity with participation of His deity: for when He frees us from misery and mortality, He does not make us happy by participation of blessed angels but of that Trinity, in whose participation the angels themselves are blessed: and therefore when He was below the angels in form of a servant, then was He also above them in form of a god: being the same way of life below, and life itself above.

Phil. ii. 7.
CHAPTER XVI

Whether it be probable that the Platonists say, “That the gods, avoiding earthly contagion, have no commerce with men, but by the means of the airy spirits,” is false that this Platonist says. Plato said: “God hath no commerce with man:” and makes this absolute separation, the most perfect note of their glory and height. So then the devils are left to deal, and to be infected by man’s conversation, and therefore cannot mundify those that infect them, so that both become unclean— the devils by conversing with men, and then men by adoration of the devils. Or if the devils can converse with men, and not be infected, then are they better than the gods: for they cannot avoid this inconvenience: for that he makes the gods peculiar to be far above the reach of man’s corruption. But God the Creator (whom we call the true God), He makes such an one (out of Plato) as words cannot describe at any hand, nay and that the wisest men in their greatest height of abstractive speculation, can have but now and then a sudden and momentary glimpse of the understanding of this God. Well then, if this high God afford His ineffable presence unto wise men, sometimes in their abstractive speculation: (though after a sudden fashion,) and yet is not contaminate thereby: why then are the gods placed so far off, for fear of this contamination? As though the sight of those ethereal bodies that light the earth were not sufficient? And if our sight of the stars (whom he makes visible gods) do not contaminate them, then no more does it the spirits, though seen nearer hand. Or is man’s speech more infectious than his sight, and therefore
(Whether the gods (to keep themselves pure) receive all their requests at the delivery of the devils? What shall I say of the other senses? Their smelling would not infect them if they were below, or when they are below as devils, the smell of a quick man is not infectious at all, if the steam of so many dead carcases in sacrifices infect not. Their taste is not so craving of them as that they should be driven to come and ask their meat of men; and for their touch, it is in their own choice. For though handling be peculiar to that sense, indeed, yet may they handle their business with men, to see them and hear them, without any necessity of touching; for men would dare to desire no further than to see and hear them: and if they should, what man can touch a god or a spirit against their wills? when we see one cannot touch a sparrow, unless he have first taken her? So then in sight, hearing, and speech, the gods might have corporeal commerce with men. Now if the devils have thus much without infection, and the gods cannot, why then, the gods are subject to contamination, and not the devils? But if they be infected also, then what good can they do a man unto eternity, whom (being themselves infected) they cannot make clean, nor fit to be adjoined with the gods, between whom and men they are mediators? And if they cannot do this, what use has man of their mediation? Unless that after death they live both together corrupted, and never come near the gods; nor enjoy any beatitude, either of them. Unless some will make the spirits like to sponges, fetching all the filth from others, and retaining it in themselves: which, if it be so, the gods converse with spirits that are more unclean than the man whose conversation they avoid for uncleanness' sake. Or can the gods mundify the devils from their infection, uninfected, and cannot do
so with men? Who believes this that believes not the devil’s illusions? Again, if the looks of man infect, then those visible gods, the world’s bright eyes, and the other stars, are liable to this infection, and the devils that are not seen but when they list, in better state than they. But if the sight of man (not his) infect, then let them deny that they do see man, we seeing their beams stretched to the very earth. Their beams look uninfected through all infection, and themselves cannot converse purely with men only; though men stand in never so much necessity of their help, we see the sun’s and moon’s beams to reflect upon the earth without contamination of the light. But I wonder that so many learned men, preferring things intelligible evermore before sensible, would mention any corporal matter in the doctrine of beatitude. Where is that saying of Plotinus: “Let us fly to our bright country, there is the father, and there is all”? What flight is that? to become like to God. If then the liker a man is to God the nearer he is also, why then the more unlike, the farther off: and man’s soul, the more it looks after things mutable and temporal, the more unlike is it to that essence that is immutable and eternal.

CHAPTER XVII

That unto that beatitude that consists in participation of the greatest good, we must have only such a mediator as Christ, not such as the devil.

To avoid this inconvenience, seeing that mortal impurity cannot attain to the height of the celestial
purity, we must have a mediator, not one bodily mortal as the gods are, and mentally miserable as men are, for such an one will rather malign than further our cure; but one adapted unto our body by nature, and of an immortal righteousness of spirit, whereby (not for distance of place but excellence of similitude) he remained above, such an one must give us his truly divine help in our cure from corruption and captivity. Far be it from this incorruptible God to fear the corruption of that man which He put on; be of those men with whom as man He conversed. For these two documents of His incarnation are of no small value, that neither true divinity could be contaminated by the flesh, nor that the devils are our betters in having no flesh; this, as the Scripture proclaims, is the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, of whose divinity, equal with the Father, and His humanity, like unto ours: this is now no fit place to dispute.

CHAPTER XVIII

That the devils, under colour of their intercession, seek but to draw us from God.

But those false and deceitful mediators, the devils, wretched in uncleanness of spirit, yet working strange effects by their aerial bodies, seek to draw us from profit of soul, showing us no way to God, but sweating to conceal that wholly from us: for in the corporal way, which is most false and erroneous; a way that righteousness walks not (for our ascent to God must be by this spiritual likeness, not by corporal
elevation), but (as I said), in this corporal way that the devils' servants dream lies through the elements, the devils are placed in the midst between the celestial gods and the earthly men, and the gods have this pre-eminence that the distance of place keeps them from contagion of man: so that rather they believe that the devils are infected by man, than he maddened by them, for so would he infect the gods (think they), but for the far distance that keeps them clean. Now who is he so wretched as to think any way to perfection, there, where the men do infect, the spirits are infected, and the gods subject to infection? and will not rather select that way where the polluted spirits are abandoned, and men are purged from infection by that unchangeable God, and so made fit persons for the fellowship of the angels ever unpolluted.

CHAPTER XIX

That the word demon is not used as now of any idolater in a good sense.

But to avoid controversy concerning words, because some of these demon-servers, and Labeo for one, say, that whom they call demons, others call angels: now must I say somewhat of the good angels, whom indeed they deny not, but had rather call them demons than angels. But we (as Scripture, and consequently Christianity, instructs us), acknowledge angels both good and evil, but no good demons. But wheresoever in our scripture demon or demonium is read, it signifies an evil and unclean spirit: and is now
In ordinary use, demon evil.

In so universally used in that sense, that even the Pagans themselves that hold multitude of gods and demons to be adored, yet be they never such scholars, dare not say to their slave as in his praise: "thou hast a demon." Whosoever does say so, knows that he is held rather to curse than commend. Seeing therefore that all ears do so dislike this word: that almost none but takes it in ill part, why should we be compell'd to express our assertion further, seeing that the use of the word angel will quite abolish the offence that the use of the word demon causes.

CHAPTER XX

Of the quality of the devil's knowledge, whereof they are so proud.

Yet the original of this name (if we look into divinity), affords somewhat worth observation, for they were called in Greek, δαιμονες, for their knowledge. Now the apostle, speaking in the Holy Spirit, says: "knowledge puff's up, but charity edifies"; that is, knowledge is then good when it links with charity; otherwise it puff's up, that is, fills one with vainglory. So then; in the devils is this knowledge without charity, and thence they are puffed so big and so proud, that the religious honours which they well know to be God's due, they have ever arrogated to themselves, and as far as they can, do so still. Now what power the humility of Christ, that came in form of a servant, has against this devil's...
pride (as men deserved), domineered in their hearts, (From men's wretched minds being devilishly as yet puffed up, can by no means (because of their proud tumour) comprehend or conceive.

CHAPTER XXI

In what manner the Lord would make Himself known to the devils.

For the devils had this knowledge, they could say to the Lord in the flesh: “What have we to do with Thee, oh Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us before our time?” Here is a plain knowledge without charity: they fear to be plagued by Him, but loved not the justice in Him. Their knowledge was bounded with His will, and His will with convenience: but they knew Him not as the angels knew Him, that participate of His deity in all eternity, but unto their terror, out of whose clutches He quit those that He had predestined to His kingdom of true eternal glory, and eternal glorious truth. The devils therefore knew Him not as He was the life eternal, the unchangeable light, illuminating all the godly who receive that light to the purification of their hearts by faith, but they knew Him by some temporal effects of His presence, and secret signs of His virtue, which the devils' angelical senses might more easily observe than man's natural infirmity: which signs when He suppressed, the prince of devils made question of His deity, and tempted Him for the trial of His deity, trying how far He would

1 Mark i. 24.
suffer Himself to be tempted, in adapting His humanity unto our imitation. But after His temptation when the good and glorious angels (whom the devils extremely feared) came and ministered unto Him; then the devils got more and more knowledge of Him, and not one of them durst resist His command, though He seemed infirm and contemptible in the flesh.

CHAPTER XXII

The difference of the holy angels' knowledge and the devils'.

Unto the good angels, the knowledge of all temporal things (that puff's up the devils), is vile: not that they want it, but in that they wholly respect the love of that God that sanctifies them, in comparison of which ineffable and unchangeable glory with the love of which they are inflamed, they contemn all that is under it, that is not it, yea and even themselves, that all their good may be employed in enjoying that only good: and so came they to a more sure knowledge of the world, viewing in God the principal causes of the world's creation, which causes do confirm this, frustrate that, and dispose of all: now the devils are far from beholding those eternal and fundamental causes in the wisdom of God, only they can extract a notion from certain secret signs which man is ignorant in, have more experience, and therefore may oftener presage events. But they are often deceived, marry the angels never. For it is one thing to presage changes

1 Matt. iv.
and events from changeable and casual grounds, and to confound them by as changeable a will: (as the Devils are permitted to do), and another thing to foresee the changes of times, and the will of God in His eternal unalterable decrees most certain and most powerful by the participation of His divine spirit, as the angels are vouchsafed by due gradation to do. So are they eternal and blessed. He is their God that made them, for His participation and contemplation, they do continually enjoy.

CHAPTER XXIII

That the Pagan idols are falsely called gods, yet the Scripture allows it to saints and angels.

Now if the Platonists had rather call these gods, the demons, and reckon them among those gods whom the father created (as their master Plato writes), let them do so: we will have no verbal controversy with them: if they call them immortal, and yet God's creatures, made immortal by adherence with Him, and not by themselves, they hold with us, call them what they will. And the best Platonists (if not all) have left records that thus they believed: for whereas they call such an immortal creature a god, we contend not with him, our Scriptures saying: "The God of gods, even the Lord hath spoken:" 1 again: "Praise ye the God of gods:" 2 again: "A great king above all gods:" 3 And in that it is written: "He is to be feared above all gods:" 4 the sequel explains it:

1 Ps. lx. 1.  
2 Ps. cxxxvi. 2.  
3 Ps. xcv. 3.  
4 Ps. xcvi. 4, 5.
For all the gods of the people are idols; but the Lord made the heavens.” He calls him, over all god, to wit, of the peoples, those that the nations called their gods being idols, therefore He is to be feared above them all, and in this fear they cried: “Art Thou come to destroy us before our time?”

But whereas it is written, “The God of gods,” this is not to be understood, the God of idols, or devils: and God forbid we should say, “A great King above all gods,” in reference to his kingdom over devils: but the Scripture calls the men of God’s family, gods, “I have said you are gods, and all children of the Most High:” of these must the “God of gods” be understood, and over these gods, is King, “The great King above all gods.” But now one question: if men being of God’s family, whom He speaks unto by men or angels, be called gods, how much more are they to be so called that are immortal, and enjoy that beatitude which men by God’s service do aim at? We answer that the Scripture rather calls men by the name of gods, than those immortal blessed creatures whose likeness was promised after death, because our unfaithful infirmity should not be seduced by reason of their super-eminence to make us gods of them: which inconvenience in man is soon avoided. And yet men of God’s family are the rather called gods; to assure them that He is their God that is the God of gods: for though the blessed angels be called gods, yet they are not called the gods of gods, that is, of those servants of God of whom it is said, “You are gods, and all children of the Most High.” Hereupon the apostle says: “though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be many gods, and many Lords: yet unto us there is but one God which is the Father: of whom are all

Mark i. 24.  
Ps. lxxxii. 6.
things and we in Him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by Him." No matter for the name then, the matter being thus past all scruple. But whereas we say from those immortal choirs, angels are sent with God’s command unto men, this they dislike; as believing that this business belongs not to those blessed creatures whom they call gods, but unto the demons, whom they dare not affirm blessed but only immortal: or so immortal and blessed as good demons are, but not as those high gods whom they place so high or so far from man’s infection. But (though this seem a verbal controversy) the name of a demon is so detestable, that we may by no means attribute it unto our blessed angels. Thus then let us end this book. Know all that those blessed immortals (however called) that are creatures, are no means to bring miserable man to beatitude, being from them doubly different. Secondly, those that partake immortality with them, and miserable (for reward of their malice) with us, can rather envy us this happiness, than obtain it us: therefore the favours of those demons can bring no proof why we should honour them as God, but rather that we must avoid them as deceivers. As for those whom they say are good, immortal, and blessed, calling them gods and allotting them sacrifices for the attainment of beatitude eternal, in the next book (by God’s help) we will prove that their desire was to give this honour not to them, but unto that one God, through whose power they were created, and in whose participation they are blessed.

1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.
THE NINTH BOOK

CHAPTER I.

That the Platonists themselves held, that one only God was the giver of all beatitude unto men and angels: but the controversy is, whether they that they hold are to be worshipped for this end, would have sacrifices offered to themselves, or resign all unto God.

It is perspicuous to the knowledge of all such as have use of reason, that man desires to be happy: but the great controversies arise upon the inquisition whence or how mortal infirmity should attain beatitude: in which the philosophers have bestowed all their time and study, which to relate were here too tedious, and as fruitless. He that has read our eighth book, wherein we selected with what philosophers to handle this question of beatitude, whether it were to be attained by serving one God, the Maker of the rest, or the others also, need not look for any repetitions here, having there to repair his memory: if it fail him, we choose the Platonists, as worthily held, the most worthy philosophers, because as they could conceive that the reasonable immortal soul of man could never be blessed, but in participation of the light of God, the world's creator: so could they affirm that beatitude (the aim of all humanity) was unattainable without a firm adherence in pure love, unto the
unchangeable One: that is, God. But because they also gave way to Pagan errors (becoming vain, as Paul says, in their own imaginations) and believed (or would be thought to believe) that man was bound to honour many gods, and some of them extending this honour even to devils (whom we have indifferently confuted): it rests now to examine (by God’s grace) how these immortal and blessed creatures in heaven (be they in thrones, dominations, principalities, or powers) whom they call gods, and some of them good demons, or angels, as we do, are to be believed to desire our preservation of truth in religion and piety: that is (to be more plain), whether their wills be, that we should offer prayer and sacrifice, or consecrate ours or ourselves unto them, or only to God, who is both their God and ours: the peculiar worship of the divinity or (to speak more expressly) the deity, because I have no one fit Latin word to express it: when I need, I will use the Greek latria, which our brethren (in all translation of Scripture) do translate, “service.” But that service wherein we serve men, intimated by the apostle in these words, “Servants, be obedient to your masters,” that is expressed by another Greek word. But latria, as our evangelists do use it either wholly or most frequently, signifies the honour due unto God. If we therefore translate it cultus, of colo, to worship or to till, we communicate it with more than God, for we worship [colimus] all men of honourable memory or presence: besides colo, in general use, is proper to things under us, as well as those whom we reverence or adore, for hence comes the word colonus, for a husbandman, or an inhabitant. And the gods are called celicole, of celum, heaven: and colo, to inhabit, not to adore, or worship, nor yet as husbandmen, that have their name from the village

1 Rom. i. 27. 2 Ephes. vi.
Are we to worship intermediate beings? of the soil they possess, but as that rare Latinist says, "Urbs antiqua fuit, Tyrrii tenuère coloni," coloni being here the inhabitants, not the husbandmen. And here-upon the towns that have been planted and peopled by other greater cities (as one hive of bees produces divers) are called colonies. So then we cannot use colo with reference to God without a restraint of the signification, seeing it is communicate unto so many senses: therefore no one Latin word that I know is sufficient to express the worship due unto God. For though religion signify nothing so distinctly as the worship of God, and thereupon so we translate the Greek ἡρῴσιος, yet because in the use of it in Latin, both by learned and ignorant, it is referred unto lineages, affinities, and all kindreds, therefore it will not serve to avoid ambiguity in this theme: nor can we truly say, religion is nothing else but God's worship: the word seeming to be taken originally from human duty and observance. So piety also is taken properly for the worship of God, where the Greeks use ἱσσεβία: yet is it attributed also unto the duty towards our parents: and ordinarily used for the works of mercy, I think because God commands it so strictly, putting it in His presence for, and before sacrifices. Whence came a custom to call God pious. Yet the Greeks never call Him ἱσσεβίς, though they use ἱσσεβία for mercy, or piety often. But in some places (for more distinction) they choose rather to say ἰσσεβία, God's worship, than ἱσσεβία, plainly, worship, or good worship. But we have no one fit word for to express either of these. The Greek λατρεία we translate "service," but with a restraint of it only to God: their ἡρῴσιος we turn it "religion," but still with a peculiar reference to God: their ἰσσεβία we have no one word for, but we may call it God's worship: which we say is due only to Him that is
the true God, and makes His servants gods. Therefore if there be any blessed immortals in heaven, that neither love us, nor would have us blessed, then we must not serve: but if they both love us, and wish us happiness, then truly they wish it us from the fount whence they have it. Or shall theirs come from one stock, and ours from another?

CHAPTER II

The opinion of Plotine the Platonist, concerning the supernal illumination.

But we and those great philosophers have no conflict about this question: for they well saw, and many of them plainly wrote, that both their beatitude and ours had original from the participation of an intellectual light, which they counted God, and different from themselves: this gave them all their light, and by the fruition of this they were perfect and blessed: in many places does Plotine explain Plato thus: that that which we call the soul of this universe has the beatitude from one fount with us, namely, a light which it is not, but which made it: and from whose intellectual illustration it has all the intelligible splendour. This he argues in a simile drawn from the visible celestial bodies compared with these two invisible things, putting the sun for one, and the moon for another, for the light of the moon is held to proceed from the reflection of the sun. So (says the great Platonist) the reasonable or intellectual soul, of whose nature all the blessed immortals are, that are
Plotinus, with Scripture looks up direct.

contained in heaven, has no essence above it, but only God’s that created both it, and all the world; nor have those supernal creatures their beatitude or understanding of the truth from any other original than ours has: herein truly agreeing with the Scripture, where it is written, “There was a man sent from God whose name was John, the same came for a witness to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not the Light but came to bear witness of the light. That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,”¹ which difference shows, that that reasonable soul which was in John could not be the one light, but shone by participation of another, the true Light. This John himself confessed in his testimony, where he said, “Of His fulness have all we received.”

CHAPTER III

Of the true worship of God, wherein the Platonists failed in worshipping good or evil angels, though they knew the world’s Creator.

This being thus, what Platonist or other philosopher soever had held so, and known God, and glorified Him as God, and been thankful, and not become vain in his conceits, nor have been an author of the people’s error, nor winked at them for fear they would have confessed, that both the blessed immortals and we wretched mortals are bound to the adoration of one only God of gods both their God and ours.

¹ John i. 6, 7.
CHAPTER IV

That sacrifice is due only to the true God.

To Him we owe that Greek latria, or service, both in ourselves and sacrifices, for we are all His temple, and each one His temples, He vouchsafing to inhabit us all in some and each in particular, being no more in all than in one: for He is neither multiplied nor diminished, our hearts elevated to Him are His altars: His only Son is the Priest by whom we please Him: we offer Him bloody sacrifices when we shed our blood for His truth: and incense when we burn in zeal to Him, the gifts He giveth us, we do in vows return Him: His benefits we consecrate unto Him in set solemnities, lest the body of time should bring them into ungrateful oblivion: we offer Him the sacrifices of humility and praises on the altar of our heart in the fire of fervent love: for by the sight of Him (as we may see Him), and to be joined with Him, are we purged from our guilty and filthy affects and consecrated in His name: He is our blessed founder, and our desires' accomplishment. Him we elect, or rather re-elect, for by our neglect we lost Him. Him, therefore, we re-elect (whence religion is derived), and to Him we do hasten with the wings of love to attain rest in him: being to be blessed by attainment of that final perfection, for our good (whose end the philosophers jangled about) is nothing but to adhere unto Him, and by His intellectual and incorporeal embrace, our soul grows great with all virtue and true perfection. This good are we taught to love with all our heart, with all our soul, and all our strength. To this good we ought to be led by those that love us, and to lead Sole source of good and object of worship.
To Him those we love. So are the two commandments fulfilled, wherein consist all the law and the prophets. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”¹ For to teach a man how to love himself, was this end appointed, whereunto refer all his works for beatitude, for he that loves himself desires but to be blessed. And the end of this is, coherence with God. So then the command of loving his neighbour, being given to him that knows how to love himself, what does it but command and commend the love of God unto him? Thus God’s true worship, true piety, true religion, and due service to God only, wherefore what immortal power soever (virtuous or otherwise) that loves us as itself, it desires we should but be His servants for beatitude, of whence it has beatitude by serving Him. If it worship not God, it is wretched, as wanting God: if it do, then will not it be worshipped for God. It rather holds, and loves to hold, as the Holy Scripture writes, “He that sacrifices to any gods but the one God, shall be rooted out,” for to be silent in other points of religion there is none dare say a sacrifice is due but unto God alone. But much is taken from divine worship and thrust into human honours, either by excessive humility or pestilent flattery: yet still with a reserved notice that they are men, held worthy indeed of reverence and honour, or at most of adoration. But whoever sacrificed but to him whom he knew, or thought, or feigned to be a god: and how ancient a part of God’s worship a sacrifice is, Cain and Abel do show full proof, God Almighty rejecting the elder brother’s sacrifice, and accepting the younger’s.

¹ Matt. xxii. 37.
CHAPTER V

Of the sacrifices which God requires not, and what He requires in their signification.

But who is so fond to think that God needs anything that is offered in sacrifice? The Scripture condemns them that think so diversely, one place of the Psalmist (to make short) for all: "I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, because Thou needest none of my goods." ¹ Believe it therefore, God had no need of man's cattle, nor any earthly good of his, no not his justice: but all the worship that he gives God, is for his own profit, not God's. One cannot say he does the fountain good by drinking of it, or the light, by seeing by it. Nor had the patriarch's ancient sacrifices (which now God's people read of, but use not) any other intent, but to signify what should be done of us in adherence to God, and charity to our neighbour for the same end. So then an external offering, is a visible sacrament of an invisible sacrifice, that is, a holy sign. And thereupon the penitent man in the prophet (or rather the penitent prophet), desiring God to pardon his sins: "Thou desirest no sacrifice though I would give it," says he: "but Thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit: a broken and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." ² Behold here he says, God will have sacrifices, and God will have no sacrifices. He will have no slaughtered beast, but He will have a contrite heart. So in that which He denied, was implied that which He desired. The prophet then saying He will not have such, why do fools think He will, as delighting in them? If He would not

¹ Ps. xv. 2. ² Ps. li. 16, 17.
have had such sacrifices as He desired (whereof a contrite heart is one), to have been signified in those other (wherein they thought He delighted), He would not have given any command concerning them in Leviticus: but there are set times appointed for their changes, lest men should think He took pleasure in them, or accepted them of us otherwise, than as signs of the other: therefore, says another Psalm, "If I be hungry I will not tell thee, for all the world is mine, and all that therein is: will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?" as who should say, If I would I would not beg them of thee, having them in my power. But then adds He their signification, "Offer praise to God, and pay thy vows to the Most High: and call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me." And in another prophet: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, and with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for the transgression, even the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has showed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires of thee: surely to do justice and to love mercy, and to humble thyself, and to walk with thy God."  

In these words are both the sacrifices plainly distinct, and it is shown that God respects not the first, that signifies those He respects as the Epistle entituled to the Hebrews says: "To do good and to distribute forget not: for with such sacrifices God is pleased." And as it is elsewhere: "I will

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1 Ps. l. 12, 13.  
2 Ps. l. 14, 15.  
3 Micah vi. 6-8.  
4 Heb. xiii. 16.
have mercy and not sacrifice:” this shows that the all
external sacrifice is but a type of the better, and that symbolic
which men call a sacrifice is the sign of the true one.
inward
And mercy is a true sacrifice, whereupon it is said, love.)
as before: “With such sacrifices God is pleased.”
Wherefore all the precepts concerning sacrifices, in the tabernacle and the temple, have all reference to the love of God and our neighbour. For in these two, as is said, is contained all the law and the prophets.

CHAPTER VI

Of the true, and perfect sacrifice.

Every work therefore tending to effect our beatitude by a sinful inherence with God, is a true sacrifice. Compassion shown upon a man, and not for God’s sake, is no sacrifice. For a sacrifice (though offered by a man) is a divine thing, and so the ancient Latinists term it: whereupon a man, consecrated wholly to God’s name, to live to Him, and die to the world, is a sacrifice. For this is mercy shown upon himself. And so is it written, “Pity thine own soul, and please God.”  

And when we chastise our bodily abstinence, if we do it as we should, not making our members instruments of iniquity, but of God’s justice, it is a sacrifice, whereunto the Apostle exhorts us, saying: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you give up your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable serving of God.”

1 Eccles. xxx. 23.  
2 Rom. xii. 1.
and instrument unto the soul, being rightly used in God's service, be a sacrifice, how much more is the soul one, when it relies upon God, and being inflamed with His love loses all form of temporal concupiscence, as is framed according to His most excellent figure, pleasing Him by participating of His beauty? This the Apostle adjoins in these words: "And fashion not yourselves like this world, but be ye changed in newness of heart, that ye may prove what is the good will of God, and what is good, acceptable, and perfect."  

Wherefore seeing the works of mercy being referred unto God (be they done to ourselves or our neighbours) are true sacrifices: and that their end is nothing but to free us from misery and make us happy, by that God (and none other) of whom it is said: "It is good for me to adhere unto the Lord:" 

truly it follows that all the whole and holy society of the redeemed and sanctified city, be offered unto God by that great Priest who gave up His life for us to become members of so great a head in so mean a form: this form He offered, and herein was He offered, in this is He our priest or mediator and our sacrifice, all in this. 

Now therefore the Apostle, having exhorted us to give up our bodies a living sacrifice, pure and acceptable to God, namely our reasonable serving of God, and not to fashion ourselves like this world, but be changed in newness of heart, that we might prove what is the will of God, and what is good, acceptable and perfect, all which sacrifice we are: "For I say," quoth he, "through the grace that is given to me, to every one among you, that no man presume to understand more than is meet to understand: but that he understand according to sobriety, as God hath dealt to every man the measure

1 Rom. xii. 2.  

2 Ps. lxxiii. 28.
of faith: for as we have many members in one body, and all members have not one office. So we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one, one another’s members, having divers gifts according to the grace that is given us, ” &c. This is the Christian’s sacrifice: we are one body with Christ, as the Church celebrates in the sacrament of the altar, so well known to the faithful, wherein is shown that in that oblation, the Church is offered.

CHAPTER VII

That the good angels do so love us, that they desire we should worship God only, and not them.

Worthily are those blessed immortals placed in those celestial habitations, rejoicing in the participation of their Creator, being firm, certain, and holy by His eternity, truth, and bounty: because they love us mortal wretches with a zealous pity, and desire to have us immortally blessed also, and will not have us sacrifice to them, but to Him to whom they know both us and themselves to be sacrifices. For we both are inhabitants of that in the Psalm: “Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou City of God:”¹ part whereof is pilgrim yet with us, and part assists us with them. From that eternal city where God’s unchanging will is all their law: and from that supernal court (for there are we cared for) by the ministry of the holy angels was that Holy Scripture brought down unto us, that says, “He that sacrifices to any but God alone, shall

¹ Ps. lxxxvii. 2.
be rooted out.” This scripture, this precept is confirmed unto us by so many miracles, that it is plain enough, to whom the blessed immortals, so loving us, and wishing as themselves, would have us to offer sacrifice.

CHAPTER VIII

Of the miracles whereby God has confirmed His promises in the minds of the faithful by the ministry of His holy angels.

I should seem tedious in revolving the miracles of too abstruse antiquity: with what miraculous tokens God assured His promises to Abraham, “that in his seed should all the earth be blessed,”¹ made many thousand years ago? Is it not miraculous for Abraham’s barren wife to bear a son, she being of age both past child-birth and conception?² that in the same Abraham’s sacrifices, the fire came down from heaven between them as they lay divided; that the angels foretold him their destruction of Sodom, whom he entertained in men’s shapes, and from them had God’s promise for a son;³ and by the same angels was certified of the miraculous delivery of his brother Lot, hard before the burning of Sodom; whose wife being turned into a statue of salt for looking back,⁴ is a great mystery, that none being in his way of freedom should cast his eyes behind him? And what stupendous miracles did Moses effect in Egypt by God’s power for the freedom of God’s

¹ Gen. xvii. 18. ² Gen. xxii. ³ Gen. xviii. ⁴ Gen. xix.
people? Where Pharaoh’s magicians (the kings of Egypt that held God’s people in thrall) were suffered to work some wonder, to have the more admired foil: for they wrought by charms and enchantments (the delights of the devils): but Moses had the power of the God of heaven and earth (to whom the good angels do serve), and therefore must needs be victor: and the magicians failing in the third plague, strangely and mystically did Moses effect the other seven following: and then the hard-hearted Egyptians and Pharaoh yielded God’s people their passage. And by and by repenting, and pursuing them, the people of God passed through the waters (standing for them as ramparts) and the Egyptians lost all their lives in their depth, being then rejoined. Why should I rehearse the ordinary miracles that God showed them in the desert: the sweetening of the bitter waters by casting wood therein, the manna from heaven, that rotted when one gathered more than a set measure: yet gathering two measures the day before the Sabbath (on which they might gather none) it never putrefied at all: how their desire to eat flesh was satisfied with fowls that fell in the tents sufficient (O miracle) for all the people, even till they loathe them! how the holding up of Moses’ hands in form of a cross, and his prayer, caused that not an Hebrew fell in the fight: and how the seditious, separating themselves from the society ordained by God, were by the earth swallowed up quick, to invisible pains, for a visible example. How the rock burst forth into streams, being struck with Moses’ rod, and the serpents’ deadly bitings being sent amongst them for a just plague, were cured by beholding a brazen serpent set up upon a pole, herein being both a present

1 Exod. xiv. 2 Exod. xv. 3 Exod. xxiii.
This help for the hurt, and a type of the future destruction of death by death in the passion of Christ crucified! The brazen serpent, being for this memory reserved, and afterwards by the seduced people adored as an idol, Ezechias, a religious king, to his great praise, brake in pieces.

CHAPTER IX

Of unlawful arts concerning the devil's worship, whereof Porphyry approves some, and disallows others.

These, and multitudes more, were done to commend the worship of one God unto us, and to prohibit all other. And they were done by pure faith and confident piety, not by charms and conjuration tricks of damned curiosity, by magic, or (which is in name worse), by Goetia or (to call it more honourably) Theurgy, which whoso seeks to distinguish (which none can) they say that the damnable practices of all such as we call witches, belong to the goetic, marry the effects of theurgy they hold laudable. But indeed they are both damnable, and bound to the observations of false filthy devils, instead of angels. Porphyry indeed promises a certain purging of the soul to be done by theurgy, but he falters and is ashamed of his text: he denies utterly that one may have any recourse to God by this art: thus floats he between the surges of sacrilegious curiosity, and honest philosophy: for, now, he condemns it as doubtful, perilous, prohibited, and gives us warning of it: and by and by, giving way to the praisers of
it, he says it is useful in purging the soul: not in the intellectual part, that apprehends the truth of intelligibilities abstracted from all bodily forms: but the spiritual, that apprehends all from corporal objects. This he says may be prepared by certain theurgic consecrations called "Teletæ," to receive a spirit or angel, by which it may see the gods. Yet confesses he that these theurgic teletæ profit not the intellectual part a jot, to see the one God and receive apprehensions of truth. Consequently, we see what sweet apparitions of the gods these teletæ can cause, when there can be no truth discerned in these visions. Finally he says the reasonable soul (or, as he likes better to say, the intellectual), may mount aloft, though the spiritual part have no theurgic preparation: and if the spiritual do attain such preparation, yet it is thereby made capable of eternity. For though he distinguish angels and demons, placing these in the air, and those in the sky, and give us counsel to get the amity of a demon whereby to mount from the earth after death, professing no other means for one to attain the society of the angels, yet does he (in manner, openly), profess that a demon's company is dangerous: saying that the soul being plagued for it after death, abhors to adore the demons that deceive it. Nor can he deny that this theurgy (which he makes as the league between the gods and angels), deals with those devilish powers, which either envy the soul's purgation, or else are servile to them that envy it: a Chaldean (says he), a good man, complained that all his endeavour to purge his soul was frustrate, by reason a great artist envying him this goodness, adjured the powers (he was to deal with) by holy invocations, and bound them from granting him any of his requests. So he bound them (says he), and this other could not loose them.
Here now is a plain proof that theurgy is an art effecting evil as well as good both with the gods and men: and that the gods are wrought upon by the same passions and perturbations that Apuleius lays upon the devils, and men, alike: who notwithstanding (following Plato in that), acquires the gods from all such matters by their height of place, being celestial.

CHAPTER X

Of theurgy that falsely promises to mundify the mind by the invocation of devils.

Behold now this other (and they say more learned) Platonist Porphyry, with his own theurgy makes all the gods subject to passion and perturbation. For they may by his doctrine, be so terrifying from purging souls by those that envy their purgation, that he that means evil may chain them for ever from benefiting him that desires this good, and that by this art theurgic: that the other can never free them from this fear and attain their helps, though he use the same art never so: who sees not that this is the devils’ mere cozenage but he that is their mere slave, and quite barred from the grace of the Redeemer? If the good gods had any hand herein, surely the good desire of man that would purge his soul should vanquish him that would hinder it. Or if the gods were just and would not allow him it, for some guilt of his, yet it should be their own choice, not their being terrified by that envious party, nor (as he says) the fear of greater powers that should cause this denial. And it is strange that that good Chaldean
that sought to be thus purged by theurgy could not find some higher god, that could either terrify the other worse, and so force them to further him, or take away their terror, and set them free from the other’s bond to benefit him: and yet so should this good theurgic still have lacked the rites wherewith to purge these gods from fear first ere they came to purge his soul: for why should he call a greater god to terrify them, and not to purge them? Or is there a god that hears the malicious, and so frights the lesser gods from doing good, and none to hear the well-minded, and to set them at liberty to do good again? O goodly theurgy! O rare purgation of the mind! where impure envy does more than pure devotion! No, no, avoid these damnable trapfalls of the devil, fly to the healthful and firm truth: for whereas the workers of these sacrilegious expiations do behold (as he says) some admired shapes, of angels, or gods, as if their spirits were purged: why if they do, ask the apostle’s reason: “For Satan transformeth himself into an angel of light.”

These are his apparitions, seeking to chain men’s poor deluded souls in fallacies, and lying ceremonies, wresting them from the true, and only purging and perfecting doctrine of God: and as it is said of Proteus, he turns himself to all shapes; pursuing us as an enemy, fawning on us as a friend, and subverting us in both shapes.

2 Cor. xi. 14.
Of Porphyry's Epistle to Anebuns of Egypt, and desiring of him instruction in the several kinds of demons.

Truly Porphyry showed more wit in his epistles to Anebuns of Egypt, where between learning and instructing he both opens and subverts all these sacrileges. Therein he reproves all the demons, that because of their foolishness do draw (as he says) the humid vapours up unto them, and therefore are not in the sky but in the air, under the moon, and in the moon's body. Yet dares he not ascribe all the vanities to all the devils that stuck in his mind: for some of them he (as others do) calls good, whereas before he had called them all fools. And much is his wonder why the gods should love sacrifices, and be compelled to grant men's suits. And if the gods and demons be distinguished by corporal and uncorporal, why should the sun, moon, and other stars visible in heaven (whom he avouches to be bodies) be called gods? and if they be gods, how can some be good and some evil? Or, being bodies, how can they be joined with the gods that have no bodies? Furthermore, he makes doubts whether the soul of a diviner, or a worker of strange things, or an external spirit, cause the effect.

But he conjectured on the spirit's side the rather of the two, because that they may be bound, or loosed, by herbs and stones in this or that strange operation. And some, therefore, he says, do hold a kind of spirits, that properly hear us, of a subtle nature and a changeable form, counterfeiting both gods, demons, and dead souls, and those are agents.
in all good and bad effects. But they never further man in good action, as not knowing them, but they do entangle and hinder the progress of virtue by all means; they are rash and proud, lovers of fumigations, taken easy by flattery, and so forth of those spirits that come externally into the soul and delude man's senses, sleeping and waking: yet all this he does not affirm, but conjectures, or doubts, or says that others affirm, for it was hard for so great a philosopher to know all the devil's vileness fully, and to accuse it freely, which knowledge no Christian idiot ever seeks, but fully detests. Perhaps he was afraid to offend Anebuns, to whom he wrote, as a great priest of such sacrifices, and the other admirers of those things as appurtenances of the divine honours. Yet makes he, as it were, an inquisitive proceeding in those things which, being well pondered, will prove attributes to none but malignant spirits. He asks why the best gods, being invoked, are commanded as the worst to fulfil men's pleasures: and why they will not hear one's prayers that is stained with venery, when as they have such incestuous contracts amongst themselves, as examples to others? Why they forbid their priests the use of living creatures lest they should be polluted by their smells, when as they are invoked and invited with continual suffumigations and smells of sacrifices? And the soothsayer is forbidden to touch the carcase, when as their religion lies wholly upon carcases. Why the charmer threatens not the gods, or demons, or dead men's souls, but the sun or the moon, or such celestial bodies, fetching the truth out by this so false a terror? They will threaten to knock down the sky, and such impossibilities, that the gods being, like foolish babes, afraid of this ridiculous terror, may do as they are charged. He says further that one Chatemon, one
of the sacred (or rather sacrilegious) priests, has written that that same Egyptian report of Isis, or her husband Osiris, is most powerful in compelling of the gods to do men's pleasures, when the invoker threatens to reveal them, or to cast abroad the members of Osiris, if he do not despatch it quickly. That these idle fond threats of man, yea unto the gods and heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, &c., should have that violent effect to force them to perform what men desire. Porphyry justly wonders at, nay rather under colour of one admiring and inquiring, he shows these to be the actions of those spirits whom he describes under shadow of relating others' opinions, to be such deceitful counterfeiters of the other gods, marry they are devils themselves without dissembling. As for the herbs, stones, creatures, sounds, words, characters, and constellations used in drawing the powers of those effects, all these he ascribes to the devils' delight in deluding and abusing the souls that serve and observe them.

So that Porphyry, either in a true doubt, describes such of these acts, as can have no reference to those powers by which we must aim at eternity, but convince themselves the false devils' peculiar; or else he desires by his humility in inquiring, not by his contentious opposing, to draw this Anebuns (that was a great priest in those ceremonies, and thought he knew much) unto a due speculation of these things, and to detect their detestable absurdity unto him. Finally in the end of his epistle he desires to be informed what doctrine of beatitude the Egyptians held. But yet he affirms that such as converse with the gods, and trouble the deities about fetching again of thieves, buying of lands, marriages, bargains, or such like, seem all in a wrong way to wisdom. And the gods they use herein, though they tell them true,
yet teaching them nothing concerning beatitude, are neither gods nor good demons, but either the false ones, or all is but a fygment of man. But because these arts effect many things beyond all human capacity, what remains but firmly to believe, and credibly to affirm that such wonders (in word or deeds) as have no reference to the confirmation of their worship of that one God (to whom to adhere, as the Platonists affirm, is the only beatitude) are only seducements of the deceitful fiends, to hinder man’s progress to virtue, and solely to be avoided and discovered by true zeal and piety.

CHAPTER XII

Of the miracles that God works by His angels’ ministry.

But all miracles (done by angels or whatever divine power), confirming the true adoration of one God unto us (in whom only we are blessed), we believe truly are done by God’s power working in these immortals that love us in true piety. Hear not those that deny that the invisible God works visible miracles: is not the world a miracle? Yet visible, and of His making. Nay, all the miracles done in this world are less than the world itself, the heaven and earth and all therein, yet God made them all, and after a manner that man cannot conceive nor comprehend. For though these visible miracles of nature, be now no more admired, yet ponder them wisely, and they are more admirable than the strangest: for man is a greater miracle than all that He can work. Wherefore God that made heaven
and earth (both miracles) scornc not as yet to work miracles in heaven and earth, to draw men's souls that yet affect visibilities, unto the worship of His invisible essence. But where and when He will do this, His unchangeable will only can declare: at whose disposing all time past has been, and to come, is. He moves all things in time, but time moves not Him, nor knows He future effects otherwise than present. Nor hears our prayers otherwise than He foresees them ere we pray: for when His angels hear them, He hears in them, as in His true temple (not made with hands) and so does He hold all things effected temporally in His saints, by His eternal disposition.

CHAPTER XIII

How the invisible God has often made Himself visible, not as He is really but as we could be able to comprehend His sight.

Nor hurts it His invisibility to have appeared visible oftentimes unto the fathers. For as the impression of a sound of a sentence in the intellect, is not the same that the sound was: so the shape wherein they conceived God's invisible nature, was not the same that He is: yet was He seen in that shape, as the sentence was conceived in that sound, for they knew that no bodily form could contain God. He talked with Moses, yet Moses intreated Him, "If I have found favour in Thy sight, show me Thy face, that I may know Thee." ¹ And seeing it behoved the

¹ Exod. xxxiii, 13.
law of God to be given from the mouths of angels (Even showing Himself to men.) with terror, not to a few of the wisest, but to a whole nation; great things were done in the mount before the said people, the law being given by one, and all the rest beholding the admirable and strange things that were done. For the Israelites had not that confidence in Moses that the Lacedemonians had in Lycurgus, to believe that he had his laws from Jove or Apollo. For when that law was given the people, that enjoins the worship of one God, in the view of the same people; were strange proofs shown (as many as God's providence thought fit) to prove that that was the Creator whom they His creatures ought to serve in that law.

CHAPTER XIV

How but one God is to be worshipped for all things, temporal and eternal: all being in the power of His providence.

But the true religion of all mankind (referred to the people of God) as well as one, has had increase, and received more and more perfection, by the succession and continuance of time, drawing from temporalities to eternity, and from things visible to the intellectual: so that even then when the promise of visible rewards was given, the worship of one only God was taught, lest mankind should be drawn to any false worship for those temporal respects: for he is mad that denies that all that men or angels can do unto man, is in the hand of one almighty: Plotine the Platonist disputes of providence, proving it to be derived from the high
He gives ineffable and beauteous God, unto the meanest earthly creature on earth, by the beauty of the flowers, and leaves: all which so transitory, momentary things, could not have their peculiar, severally-sorted beauties, but from that intellectual and immutable beauty forming them all. This our Saviour showed, saying: "Learn how the lilies of the field do grow: they labour not, neither spin, yet say I unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these: wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field which is to-day and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall not He do much more unto you? O you of little faith?" Wherefore though the mind of man be weak, and clogged with earthly affects, and desires of those things that are so frail and contemptible in respect of the blessings celestial (though necessaries for this present life) yet does it well to desire them at the hands of one only God, and not to depart from His service to obtain them elsewhere, when they may soonest attain His love by neglect of such trifles, and with that love all necessaries both for this life and the other.

CHAPTER XV

Of the holy angels that minister to God’s providence.

It pleased the divine providence therefore so to dispose of the times, that as He said, and we read in the Acts, the law should be given by the angels’ mouths, concerning the worship of the true God, wherein God’s person (not in His proper substance, which

1 Matt. vi. 28-30.
corruptible eyes can never see, but by certain suppositions of a creature for the Creator) would appear, and speak syllabically in a man's voice, unto us: even He that in His own nature speaks not corporally but spiritually, not sensibly but intelligibly, not temporally, but (as I may say) eternally, neither beginning speech, nor ending: whom His blessed and immortal messengers and ministers heard not with ears, but more sincerely, with intellects: and hearing His commands after an ineffable manner, they instantly and easily frame to be delivered us in a visible and sensible manner. This law was given (as I say) in a division of time, first having all earthly promises that were types of the goods eternal, which many celebrated in visible sacraments, but few understood. But there the true religious worship of one only God, is directly and plainly taught and testified, not by one of the people, but by Him that made heaven and earth, and every soul and spirit that is not Himself; for He makes them that are made, and have need of His help that made them, in all their existence.

CHAPTER XVI

Whether in this question of beatitude we must trust those angels that refuse the divine worship, and ascribe it all to one God, or those that require it to themselves.

What angels shall we trust then in this business of eternal bliss? Those that require mortal men to offer them sacrifice and honours, or those that say it is all
Which angels to believe?

Which due unto God the Creator, and will us most piously, to give Him above it all, as one, in the only speculation of whom we may attain this happiness. For the sight of God is a sight of that beauty, and worthy such love, that Plato did not doubt to call him that wanted this unhappy, had the never such store of goods besides. Seeing then that some angels resign all this religious worship to Him, and some would have it themselves: the first refusing all part of it; and the second not daring to forbid him of part of it: let the Platonists, Theurgics (or rather Periurgics, for so may all those arts be truly termed), or any other philosophers, answer which we should follow. Nay, let all men answer that have any use of natural reason, say, whether we shall sacrifice to these gods or angels that exact it, or to Him only to whom they bid us, that forbid it both to themselves and the others. If neither of them did any miracles, but the one side demanded sacrifice, and the others said no, God must have all; then ought piety to discern between the pride of the one and the virtue of the other. Nay, I will say more, if these that do claim sacrifice should work upon men’s hearts with wonders, and those that forbid it, and stand all for God, should not have power at all to work the like, yet their part should gain more by reason, than the others’ by sense: but seeing that God, to confirm His truth, has by their ministry, that debase themselves for His honour, wrought more great, clear, and certain miracles than the others, lest they should draw weak hearts unto their false devotion by inveigling their senses with amazements: who is so grossly fond, as will not choose to follow the truth, seeing it confirmed with more miraculous proofs? for the recorded miracles of the Pagan gods (I speak not of such as time and nature’s secret causes by God’s providence,
have, produced, beyond custom as monstrous births, Loyal or sights in the air and earth, fearful, or hurtful also, all which the devils' subtlety persuaded the world, they both, procured and cured) I mean of such as were their evident acts, as the removal of the gods (that Æneas brought from Troy) from place to place by themselves: Tarquin's cutting of a whetstone, the Epidaurian serpents accompanying Æsculapius in his transportation to Rome: the drawing on of the ship that brought Berecynthia's statue from Phrygia (being otherwise not to be moved by so huge strength of men and beasts) by one woman with her girdle, in testimony of her chastity; and the carrying of water from Tiber in a sieve by a vestal, thereby acquitting herself from an accusation of adultery. These, nor such as these, are comparable to those, done in presence of the people of God, either for rarity or greatness. How much less than the strange effects of those arts which the Pagans themselves did legally prohibit, namely, of magic and theurgy, many whereof are mere *deceptiones visus*, and flat falsehoods indeed, as the fetching down of the moon, till (says Lucan) she spume upon such herbs as they desire. Now though some in their art seem to come near others of the saints' wondrous deeds, yet whoso considereth their end discerneth the latter ones far to excel the first. For their gods, the more sacrifices they desire, the fewer they deserve. But ours do but prove unto us One, that needs no such, as He has showed both by His holy writ, and whole abolishment of these ceremonies afterwards. If therefore these angels require sacrifice, then are these their betters that require none, but refer all to God: for herein they show their true love to us, that they desire not our subjection to them, by sacrifice, but unto Him in contemplation of whom is their felicity, and desire to
Surely, not the childish and fraudulent see us joined to Him from whom they never are separate. But suppose the other angels that seek sacrifices for many, and not for one only, would not have them for themselves, but for the gods they are under; yet for all this are the other to be preferred before them, as being under but one God, to whom only they refer all religion, and to none other; and the other no way daring to forbid this God all worship, to whom the former ascribe all. But if they be neither good angels nor gods (as their proud falseness proves) but wicked devils, desiring to share divine honours with that one glorious God, what greater aid can we have against them than to serve that God, to whom those good angels serve, that charge us to sacrifice not to them, but unto Him, to whom ourselves ought to be a sacrifice?

CHAPTER XVII

Of the ark of the testament and the miracles wrought to confirm this law and promise.

The law of God, given by the angels, commanding the worship of one God, and forbidding all other, was put up in an ark called the ark of the testament: whereby is meant that God (to whose honour all this was done) was not included in that place or any other, because He gave them certain answers from the place of the ark, and showed miracles also from thence; but that the testament of His will was there: the law (that was written upon tables of stone and put in the ark) being there: which being, in their travel carried in a tabernacle, gave it also the name of
the tabernacle of the testament, which the priests with due reverence did bear. And their sign was a pillar of a cloud in the day, which shone in the night like fire: and when it removed, the tents removed, and where it stayed, they rested. Besides, the law had many more great testimonies given for it, besides what I have said, and besides those that approached out of the place where the ark stood: for when they and the ark were to pass Jordan, into the land of promise, “The waters cleft, and left them a dry way;” besides having borne it seven times about the first city that was their foe, and (as the land was then) slave to paganism, “The walls fell flat down without ruin or battery.” And when they had gotten the land of promise, and that the ark (for their sins) was taken from them, and placed by the victor idolater in their chief god’s temple and locked fast in, coming again the next day, they found their idol thrown down and broken all to pieces: and being terrified by these prodigies (besides a more shameful scourge) they restored the ark to those they took it from. And how? They set it upon a carriage yoking kine in it (or heifers) whose calves they took from them, and so (in trial of the divine power) turned them loose to go whither they would: they without guide came straight to the Hebrews, never turning again for the bleating of their calves, but so brought home this great mystery to those that honoured it: these and such like are nothing to God, but much to the terror and instruction of man. For if the philosophers (chiefly the Platonists) that held the providence of God to extend to everything great and small, by the proof drawn from the several forms and beauties of herbs and flowers as well as living

1 Exod. xiii. 2 Joshua iv. 3 Joshua vi.; 1 Kings v.
creatures, were held to be more wisely persuaded than the rest: how much more do these things testify the Deity coming to pass at the hour when this religion was taught, that commands the adoration of one God, the only loving and beloved God, blessing all, limiting these sacrifices in a certain time, and then changing them into better by a better priest: and testifying hereby that He desires not these, but their significations, not to have any honour from them neither, but that we by the fire of His love might be inflamed to adore Him, and adhere unto Him, which is all for our own good, and adds nothing to His.

CHAPTER XVIII

Against such as deny to believe the Scriptures concerning those miracles shown to God’s people.

Will any one say there were no such miracles; all is lies? He that says so and takes away the authority of Scripture herein, may as well say that the gods respect not men. For they had no mean but miracles, to attain their worship, wherein their Pagan stories show how far they had power to prove themselves always rather wonderful than useful. But in this our work (whereof this is the ninth book) we deal not against atheists, not such as exclude the gods from dealing in man’s affairs, but with such as prefer their gods before our God, the founder of this glorious city: knowing that He is the Creator invisible and immutable of this visible and changeable world; and the giver of beatitude, from none of His creatures, but from Himself entirely. For His true prophet
says: “It is good for me to adhere unto the Lord.” The philosophers contend about the final good to which all the pains man takes has relation. But He said not: “It is good for me to be wealthy, honourable or invested a king: or (as some of the philosophers shamed not to say) “It is good for me to have fulness of bodily pleasure:” or (as the better sort said) “It is good for me to have virtue of mind:” but he said: “It is good for me to adhere unto God.” This had He taught him, unto whom only both the angels, and the testimony of the law, do teach all sacrifice to be due: so that the prophet became a sacrifice unto Him, being inflamed with His intellectual fire, and holding a fruition of His ineffable goodness in a holy desire to be united to Him. Now if these men of many gods in the discourse of their miracles, give credence to their histories and books of magic, or (to speak to please them) theurgical books, why should not the Scripture be believed in these other, who are as far beyond the rest as He is above the others, to whom only these our books teach all religious honour to be peculiar?

CHAPTER XIX

The reason of that visible sacrifice that the true religion commands us to offer unto one God.

But as for those that think visible sacrifices pertain to others, and invisible to Him, as only invisible, as greater to the greater, and better to the better (viz.: the duties of a pure heart, and an holy will) verily

1 Ps. lxxii.
No good angel wishes for worship. These men conceive, not that the other are symbols of these, as the sound of words are significations of things. Wherefore as in our praises and prayers to Him, we speak vocal words, but offer the contents of our hearts, even so we in our sacrifice, know that we must offer thus visibly to none but Him to whom our hearts must be an invisible sacrifice. For then the angels, and predominate powers do rejoice with us and further us with all their power and ability. But if we offer unto them, they are not willing to take it, and when they are personally sent down to men, they expressly forbid it. And this the Scriptures testify: some held that the angels were either to have adoration, or (that which we owe only to God) sacrifice: but they were forbidden, and taught that all was only God’s and lawfully given Him. And those angels the saints did follow, Paul and Barnabas being in Lycaonia, the people (for a miraculous cure) held them gods, and would have sacrificed unto them, but they humbly and godly denied it, and preached that God unto them in whom they believed. But the wicked spirits do affect it only because they know it to be God’s only due. For (as Porphyry and others think) it is the divine honours, not the smells of the offerings that they delight in. For those smells they have plenty, and may procure themselves more if they list. So then these arrogant spirits affect not the smoke ascending from a body, but the honours given them from the soul, which they may deceive and domineer over, stopping man’s way to God, and keeping him from becoming God’s sacrifice, by offering unto other than God.

CHAPTER XX

Of the only and true sacrifice, which the mediator between God and man became.

Wherefore the true mediator, being in the form of a servant, made mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, taking sacrifices with His Father, as God, yet in the servile form chose rather to be one than to take any, less some hereby should gather that one might sacrifice unto creatures. By this is He the Priest, offering, and offerer. The true sacrament whereof is the Church's daily sacrifice: which being the body of Him the Head, learns to offer itself by Him. The ancient sacrifices of the saints were all divers types of this also, this being figured in many and divers, as one thing is told in many words, that it might be commended without tediousness. And to this great and true sacrifice, all false ones gave place.

CHAPTER XXI

Of the power given to the devils, to the greater glorifying of the saints that have suffered martyrdom, and conquered the airy spirits, not by appeasing them, but adhering to God.

The devils had a certain temporary power allowed them, whereby to excite such as they possessed, against God's city, and both to accept sacrifices of the willing offerers, and to require them of the un-
The willing, yea even to extort them by violent plagues: nor was this at all prejudicial, but very commodious for the Church, that the number of martyrs might be fulfilled: whom the City of God holds so much the dearer, because they spent their blood for it against the power of impiety: these now (if the Church admitted the words’ use) we might worthily call our heroes. For this name came from ἰπώς, Juno, and therefore one of her sons (I know not which) was called Heros, the mystery being that Juno was Queen of the air, where the heroes (the well-deserving souls) dwell with the demons. But ours (if we might use the word) should he called so, for a contrary reason, namely, not for dwelling with the demons in the air, but for conquering those demons, those aerial powers, and in them, all that is called Juno: whom it was not for nothing, that the poets made so envious, and such an opposite to good men being defied for their virtue. But unhappily was Virgil overseen in making her first to say, Æneas conquers men, and then to bring in Helenus warning Æneas, as his ghostly father, in these words—

"Junoni cane vota libens, dominamque potentem Supplicibus supra donis"—

"Purchase great Juno’s wrath with willing prayers And conquer’d her with humble gifts"—

And therefore Porphyry (though not of himself) holds that a good god or genius never comes to a man till the bad be appeased: as if it were of more power than the other, seeing that the bad can hinder the good from working, and must be entreated to give them place, whereas the good can do no good unless the others list, and the others can do mischief maugre their beards. This is no tract of true religion: our martyrs do not conquer Juno, that
is the airy powers, that malice their virtues on this fashion: our Heroes (if I may say so) conquer not Hera by humble gifts but by divine virtues. Surely Scipio deserved the name of African rather for conquering Africa, than for begging or buying his honour of his foes.

CHAPTER XXII

From whence the saints have their power against the devils and their pure purgation of heart.

Godly men do expel the aerial powers, opposing them from their possession by exorcisms, not by pacification: and break their temptations by prayer, not unto them but unto God, against them. For they conquer nor chain no man but by the fellowship of sin. So that His name that took on Him humanity, and lived without sin, confounds them utterly. He is the priest and sacrifice of the remission of sins: He the mediator between God and men, even the man Christ Jesus by whom we are purged of sin, and reconciled unto God: for nothing severs man from God but sin, which not our merits, but God's mercy wipes off us. It is His pardon, not our power, for all the power that is called ours is ours by His bounteous goodness; for we should think too well of our flesh, unless we lived under a pardon all the while we are in the flesh. Therefore have we our grace by a mediator, that being polluted by the flesh, we might be purged by the like flesh. This grace of God wherein His great mercy is shown us, doth rule us by faith in this life, and after this life is ended, will transport us by that unchangeable truth unto most absolute perfection.
CHAPTER XXIII

Of the Platonists' principle in their purgation of the soul.

Porphyry says that the Oracles said that neither the sun's nor moon's teletae could purge us, and consequently the teletae of no gods can. For if the sun's and moon's (the chief gods) cannot, whose is more powerful? But the Oracles answered (quoth he) that the beginnings may: lest one should think that upon the denial of this power to the sun and moon some other god of the multitude might do it. But what beginnings he has as a Platonist, we know. For he speaks of God the Father, the Son, called in Greek the Father's intellect: but of the Spirit, not a word, at least not a plain one, though what he means by a mean between the two I cannot tell: for if he follow Plotine in his discourse of the three privy essences, and would have this third, the soul's nature, he should not have put it as the mean between the Father and the Son. For Plotine puts it after the Father's intellect, but Porphyry, in calling it the mean, interposes it between them. And this he says as well as he could, or would: but we call it neither the father's spirit alone, nor the son's, but both. The philosophers speak freely, never fearing to offend religious ears in those incomprehensible mysteries; but we must lay our words to a line, that we produce no impious error by our freedom of speech concerning these matters. Wherefore when we speak of God, we neither talk of two principles, nor three, as we may not say there were two gods or three, though when we speak of the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost, we say that each of these is God.
Nor say we with the Sabellian heretics, that He that is the Father is the Son, and He that is the Holy Ghost is the Father and the Son, but the Father is the Son's Father, and the Son the Father's Son, and the Holy Spirit both the Father's and the Son's, but neither Father nor Son. True then it is that man's purged by none but the beginning, but this beginning is by them too variably taken.

CHAPTER XXIV

Of the true only beginning that purges and renews man's whole nature.

But Porphyry, being slave to the malicious powers (of whom he was ashamed, yet durst not accuse them), would not conceive that Christ was the beginning, by whose incarnation we are purged, but contemned Him in that flesh which He assumed to be a sacrifice for our purgation, not apprehending the great sacrament, because of his devil-inspired pride, which Christ, the good mediator, by His own humility subverted, showing Himself to mortals in that mortal state which the false mediators wanted, and therefore insulted the more over men’s wretched souls: falsely promising them succours from their immortality. But our good and true mediator made it apparent, that it was not the fleshly substance but sin, that is evil: the flesh and soul of man may be both assumed, kept, and put off without guilt, and be bettered at the resurrection. Nor is death, though it be the punishment of sin (yet paid by Christ for our sins), to be avoided by sin, but rather, if occasion
He serve, to be endured for justice. For Christ's dying, and that not for His own sin, was of force to procure the pardon of all other sins. That He was the beginning, this Platonist did not understand, else would he have confessed His power in purgation. For neither the flesh nor the soul was the beginning, but the Word, all creating. Nor can the flesh purge us by itself, but by that Word that assumed it, when "the word became flesh and dwelt in us." 1 For He speaking of the mystical eating of His flesh (and some that understood not being offended at it, and departing, saying: "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" 2) answered to those that stayed with Him: "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." Therefore the beginning, having assumed flesh and soul, mundifies both in the believer. And so when the Jews asked Him who He was, He answered them, "that He was the beginning," 3 which our flesh and blood, being encumbered with sinful corruption, can never conceive, unless He, by what we were, and were not, do purify us. We were men, but just we were not. But in His incarnation our nature was, and that just, not sinful: this is the mediation that helps up those that are fallen, and down: this is the seed that the angels sowed, by dictating the law wherein the true worship of one God was taught, and this our mediator truly promised.

1 John i. 14. 2 John vi. 60. 3 John viii. 25.
CHAPTER XXV

That all the saints in the old law, and other ages before it, were justified only by the mystery and faith of Christ.

By the faith of this mystery might the ancient saints (This justified saints of God also be justified (together with godly life) not only before the law was given the Hebrews (for they wanted not God's instructions nor the angels'), but also in the very times of the law, though they seemed to have carnal promises in the types of spiritual things, it being therefore called the Old Testament. For there were prophets then that taught the promise as well as the angels, and one of them was he whose sacred opinion of man's good, I related before: "It is good for me to adhere unto God." 1 In which Psalm the two testaments are distinguished. For first, he (seeing those earthly promises abound so to the ungodly) says his feet slipped, and that he was almost down, as if he had served God in vain, seeing that felicity that he hoped of God was bestowed upon the impious: and that he laboured sore to know the reason of this, and was much troubled until he entered into the sanctuary of God, and there beheld their ends whom he (in error) thought happy. But then as he says, he saw them cast down in their exaltation, and destroyed for their iniquity, and that all their pomp of temporal felicity was become as a dream, leaving a man when he is awake, frustrate of the feigned joys he dreamed of. And because they showed great, here upon earth, "Lord," says he, "In Thy city Thou shalt make their image be held as nothing." But how good it was for him to seek

1 Ps. lxxiii. 28.
those temporalities at none but God's hands he shows, saying: "I was as a beast before Thee, yet was I always with Thee as a beast not understanding." For I should have desired such goods as the wicked could not share with me: but seeing them abound with goods, I thought I had served Thee to no end, when as they that hated Thee enjoyed such felicity. "Yet was I always with Thee." I sought no other gods to beg these things upon. And then it follows. "Thou hast holden me by my right hand, Thou hast guided me by Thy will, and hast assumed me into glory." As if all that which he saw the wicked enjoy were belonging to the left hand, though seeing it, he had almost fallen. "What have I in heaven but Thee?" says he, "And what have I upon earth but Thee?" Then he doth check himself justly, for having so great a good in heaven (as afterwards he understood), and yet begging so transitory, frail, and earthen a thing of God here below: "Mine heart faileth, and my flesh, but God is the God of mine heart." A good failing, to leave the lower and elect the loftier. So that in another Psalm he says: "My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord." And in another: "My heart fainteth for Thy saving health." But having said both heart and flesh faints: he rejoined not, "The God of mine heart and flesh, but the God of my heart:" for it is by the heart that the flesh is cleansed (as the Lord says), "Cleanse that which is within, and then that which is without shall be clean:" then he calls God his portion, not anything of God's, but himself, "God is the God of my heart, and my portion for ever." Because amongst men's manifold choices, he chose Him only. For behold says he, "they that withdraw themselves from them, shall perish: thou

1 Ps. lxxxiii.
destroyest all them that go a-whoring from Thee, To this that is, that make themselves prostitute unto many gods: ” and then follows that which is the cause I have spoken all this of the Psalm: “As for me, it is good for me to adhere unto God,” not to withdraw myself, nor to go a-whoring. And then is our adherence to God perfect, when all is freed that should be freed. But as we are now, the hold is, “I put my trust in the Lord God, for hope that is seen, is no hope, how can a man hope for that which he seeth,” 1 says the apostle. But when we see not our hope, then we expect with patience: wherein let us do that which follows, each one according to his talent becoming an angel, a messenger of God, to declare His will, and praise His gracious glory. “That I may declare all Thy works,” says he, “in the gates of the daughter of Sion: ” this is that glorious city of God, knowing and honouring Him alone: this the angels declared, inviting us to inhabit it, and become their fellow-citizens in it. They like not that we should worship them as our elected gods, but with them Him that is God to us both: nor to sacrifice to them: but with them, be a sacrifice to Him. Doubtless then (if malice give men leave to see the doubt cleared), all the blessed immortals that envy us not (and if they did, they were not blessed), but rather love us, to have us partners in their happiness, are far more favourable and beneficial to us, when we join with them in sacrificing ourselves to the adoration of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

1 Rom. viii. 24.
CHAPTER XXVI

Of Porphyry's wavering between confessing of the true God, and adoration of the devils.

Porphyry, methinks Porphyry (I know not how) is ashamed of his theurgical acquaintance. He had some knowledge of good, but he durst not defend the worship of one God, against the adoration of many. He said there were some angels, that came down and taught theurgic practisers things to come: and others that declared the will of the Father upon earth, and His altitude and immensity. Now whether would he have us subject to those angels that declare the will of the Father upon earth, or unto Him whose will they declare. It is plain, he bids us rather imitate them than invoke them: why then we need not fear to give no sacrifices to these blessed immortals, but refer it all freely unto God. For questionless that which they know to be due to that God only in whose participation they are blessed, they will never ascribe to themselves either by figures or significations. This is arrogance proper to the proud and miserable devils, from which the zeal of God's subjects and such as are blessed by coherence with Him, ought to be far separate. To which blessed coherence it behoves the angels to favour our attainment, not arrogating our subjection to them, but declaring God the mean of both our coherences unto us. Why fearest thou now (philosopher) to censure these adverse powers, enemies both to the true God and true virtue? Thou saidst but now that the true angels that reveal God's will, do differ from them that descend unto men that use theurgical conjurations. Why dost thou honour them so much as to
say they teach divine things? How can that be, teaching not the will of the Father? Those now are they whom the malicious theurgic bound from purging the soul of the good one: whom he could not loose, for all that they desired to be let loose, and to do him some good. Doubtest thou yet that those are wicked devils? Or dost but dissemble for fear of offending the theurgics, whose curiosity inveigled thee so, that they made thee believe they did thee a great pleasure in teaching thee this damnable cunning? Darest thou extol that malicious plague (no power) that is a slave, and no regent over the envious, above the air, into heaven, and do the starry gods, or the stars themselves, such foul disgrace as to place it amongst them?

CHAPTER XXVII

Of Porphyry exceeding Apuleius in impiety.

How much more tolerable was the error of Apuleius, thy fellow-sectary, who confessed (spite of his teeth, for all his honouring of them) that the devils under the moon only were subject to perturbation! quitting the gods ethereal, both visible as the sun, moon, &c., and invisible also from these affects, by all the arguments he could devise. Plato taught thee not this thine impiety, but thy Chaldee masters, to thrust up mortal vices amongst the ethereal powers, that the gods might instruct your theurgic in divinity: which notwithstanding thou in thine intellectual life makest thyself excel: putting art theurgic as not necessary for thee, but for others that will be no philosophers,
These cannot give cleansing.

yet thou teachest it, to repay thy masters, in seducing those to it that affect not philosophy, yet holding it of no use for a philosopher as thou thyself art: so that all that fancy not philosophation (which being hard to attain is affected by few) might by thine authority, inquire out theurgica, and of them attain (no intellectual but) a spiritual purification. And because the multitude of those do far exceed the philosophers, therefore more are drawn to thy unlawful magical masters, than to Plato’s schools, for this the unclean devil (those counterfeit ethereal gods whose messenger thou art become) promised thee, that such as were purged by theurgy should never return to the Father, but inhabit above the air amongst the ethereal gods. But those whom Christ came to free from those devilish powers, endure not this doctrine. For in Him have they most merciful purification of body, soul, and spirit. For therefore put He on whole man without sin, to cleanse whole man from sin: I wish thou hadst known but Him, and laid the cure of thyself upon Him rather than upon thine own frail, weak virtue, or thy pernicious curiosity. For He which your own Oracles (as thou writest) acknowledged for holy and immortal, would never have deceived thee. Of whom also that famous poet says (poetically indeed) as under another person, but with a true reference to Him—

"Te duce si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras."

"Thy conduct all sin’s marks from men shall clear,
And quit the world of their eternal fear."

Speaking of those steps of sin (if not sins) which by reason of our infirmity may have residence in the great proficients of righteousness, and are cured by
none but Christ, of whom the verse speaks. For Virgil spoke it not of himself, as he shows about the fourth verse of his "Eclogue," where he says—

"Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas,"

"Time and Sybilla's verse are now new met,"

plainly showing he had it from Sybilla Cumæa. But those theurgics (or rather fiends in the shapes of gods) do rather putrefy than purify men's hearts by their false apparitions, and deceitful illusion in change of forms. For how should they cleanse another, being unclean themselves? Otherwise could they not be bound by the charms of the envious, either to fear to infect, or to envy to bestow the good they seemingly were about to do. But it suffices that thou confessest that neither the soul's intellectual part is made pure, nor the spiritual (that is under the other part) eternal, by art theurgic. But Christ promises this eternity, and therefore (to thy own great admiration, and deep grief) the world flocks to Him. What of that, that thou canst not deny that the theurgics do often err and draw others into the same blindness, and that it is a most plain error to become suppliant to those angelical powers? And then (as though thou hadst not lost thy labour in the former assertion) thou sendest such as live not intellectually to the theurgics to be purged in the mind's spiritual part.
What persuasions blinded Porphyry from knowing Christ the true wisdom.

Though he thus drawest thou men into most certain error, and art not ashamed of it, being a professor of virtue and wisdom, which if thou truly respected, thou wouldst have known Christ the virtue, and wisdom, of God the Father, and not have left His saving humility for the pride of vain knowledge. Yet thou confessest that the virtue of continence only, without theurgy, and with those teleta (thy fruitless studies) is sufficient to purge the soul spiritually. And once thou saidst that the teleta elevate not the soul after death as they do now, nor benefit the spiritual part of the soul after this life: and this thou tossest, and tumblest, only, I think, to show thyself skilful in those matters, and to please curious ears, or to make others curious. But thou dost well to say this art is dangerous both for the laws against it, and for the performance of it. I would to God that wretched men would hear thee in this, and leave the gulf, or never come near it, for fear of being swallowed up therein. Ignorance (thou sayest) and many vices annexed thereunto, are not purged away by any teleta but only by the Father's intellect, his mens, that knoweth His will. But that this is Christ thou believest not: contemning Him for assuming flesh of a woman, for being crucified like a felon, because thou thinkest it was fit that the eternal wisdom should contemn those base things, and be embodied in a most elevated substance. Aye, but He fulfils that of the prophet, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and cast away the understanding of the
prudent." He does not destroy His wisdom in men into delusive snares. such as He has given it unto, but that which others ascribe to themselves, who have none of His, and therefore the apostle follows the prophetical testimony, thus, "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of the world? hath not God made the wisdom of this world foolishness?" For seeing the world by wisdom knew not God in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Seeing also that the Jews require a sign, and the Grecians seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling-block unto the Jews, and foolishness unto the Grecians. "But unto them that are called both Jews and Grecians we preach Christ, the power, and wisdom of God: for the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." This now the wise and strong in their own conceit do account as foolish, and weak. But this is the grace that cures the weak, and such as boast not proudly of their false happiness, but humbly confess their true misery.

CHAPTER XXIX

Of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, which the impious Platonists shame to acknowledge.

Thou teachest the Father and His Son, calling Him His intellect, and their mean (by which we think thou meanest the Holy Spirit) calling them after your manner, three Gods. Wherein though your words

1 1 Cor. i. 19.
2 Isa. xxxiii. 18.
be extravagant, yet you have a little glimpse of that we must all rely upon. But the incarnation of the unchangeable Son, that saves us all, and brings us all to that other which we believe and rely upon, that you shame to confess. You see your true country (though a long, long way off) and yet you will not see which way to get thither. Thou confessest that the grace to understand the deity is given to a very few. Thou sayest not, few like it, or few desire it; but, is given to a few: fully confessing the guilt of it to lie in God’s bounty, and not in man’s sufficiency. Now thou playest the true Platonist and speakest plainer, saying, “That no man in this life can come to perfection of wisdom:” yet that God’s grace and providence doth fulfil all that the understanding lacks, in the life to come. Oh hadst thou known God’s grace resident in Jesus Christ our Lord! Oh that thou couldst have discerned His assuming of body and soul to be the greatest example of grace that ever was! But what? in vain do I speak to the dead: but as for those that esteem thee for that wisdom or curiosity in arts, unlawful for thee to learn: perhaps this shall not be in vain. God’s grace could never be more grace fully extolled, than when the eternal Son of God came to put on man, and made man the mean to derive His love to all men: whereby all men might come to Him, who was so far above all men, being compared to them, immortal to mortal, unchangeable to changeable, just to unjust, and blessed to wretched. And because He has given us a natural desire to be eternally blessed, He remaining blessed, and putting on our nature, to give us what we desired, taught us by suffering to contemplate what we feared. But humility, humility a burden unacquainted with your stiff necks, must be the mean to bring you to credence of this truth. For what, can it seem in-
credible to you (that know such things, and ought to enjoin yourselves to believe it), can it seem incredible to you, that God should assume man’s nature and body? you give so much to the intellectual part of the soul (being but human) that you make it consubstantial with the Father’s intellect, which you confess is His Son. How then is it incredible for that Son to assume one intellectual soul to save many of the rest by? Now nature teaches us the coherence of the body and the soul to the making of a full man. Which if it were not ordinary were more incredible than the other. For we may the more easily believe that a spirit may cohere with a spirit (being both incorporeal, though the one human, and the other divine), than a corporal body with an incorporeal spirit. But are you offended at the strange child-birth of a virgin? This ought not to procure offence, but rather pious admiration, that He was so wonderfully born. Or dislike you that He changed His body after death and resurrection into a better, and so carried it up into heaven, being made incorruptible, and immortal. This perhaps you will not believe, because Porphyry says so often in his work “De regressu animæ” (whence I have cited much), “that the soul must leave the body entirely, ere it can be joined with God.” But that opinion of his ought to be retracted, seeing that both he and you do hold such incredible things of the world’s soul animating the huge mass of the bodily universe. For Plato teaches you to call the world a creature, a blessed one, and you would have it an eternal one. Well then, how shall it be eternally happy, and yet never put off the body, if your former rule be true? Besides, the sun, moon, and stars, you all say, are creatures, which all men both see, and say also. But your skill (you think) goes further: calls them blessed
The incarnation a stumbling-block creatures, and eternal with their bodies. Why do you then forget or dissemble this, when you are invited to Christianity, which you otherwise teach and profess so openly? why will you not leave your contradictory opinions (subverting themselves) for Christianity, but because Christ came humbly, and you are all pride? Of what quality the saints’ bodies shall be after resurrection may well be a question amongst our greatest Christian doctors, but we all hold they shall be eternal, and such as Christ showed in His resurrection. But howsoever, seeing they are taught to be incorruptible, immortal, and no impediment to the soul’s contemplation of God, and you yourselves say that they are celestial bodies immortally blessed with their souls; why should you think that we cannot be happy without leaving of our bodies (to pretend a reason for avoiding Christianity) but only as I said, because Christ was humble, and you are proud? Are you ashamed to be corrected in your faults? a true character of a proud man. You that were Plato’s learned scholars, shame to become Christ’s, who by His spirit taught a fisher wisdom to say, “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and God was the word. The same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by it, and without it was made nothing that was made. In it was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” Which beginning of Saint John’s Gospel a certain Platonist (as old holy Simplicianus, afterwards Bishop of Milan, told me) said was fit to be written in letters of gold, and set up to be read in the highest places of all churches. But those proud fellows scorn to have God their master, because the word became flesh, and dwelt in us. Such a thing of nothing it is for
the wretched to be sick and weak, but they muts because 
exalt themselves in their sickest weakness, and shame 
to take the only medicine that must cure them: nor 
do they this to rise, but to take a more wretched fall.

CHAPTER XXX

What opinions of Plato Porphyry confuted, and 
corrected.

If it be unfit to correct aught after Plato, why does 
Porphyry correct such, and so many of his doctrines? 
Sure it is that Plato held a transmigration of men’s 
souls into beasts: yet though Plato the learned held 
thus, Porphyry his scholar justly refuted him, hold-
ing that men’s souls returned no more to the bodies 
they once left, but into other human bodies. He 
was ashamed to believe the other, lest the mother, 
living in a mule, should carry her son; but never 
shamed to believe the latter, though the mother 
living in some other maid might become her son’s 
wife. But how far better were it to believe the 
sanctified and true angels, the holy inspired prophets; 
him that taught the coming of Christ, and the blessed 
apostles, that spread the gospel through the world? 
how far more honestly might we believe that the 
souls return but once into their own bodies: rather 
than so often into others? But as I said, Porphyry 
reclaimed this opinion much in subverting those 
bestial transmigrations, and restraining them only to 
human bodies. He says also that God gave the 
world a soul, that it, learning the badness of the 
corporal substance by inhabiting it, might return to

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(He has no sample elsewhere)

the Father, and desire no more to be joined to such contagion. Wherein though he err something (for the soul is rather given to the body to do good by, nor should it learn any evil but that it does evil), yet herein he exceeds, corrects all the Platonists, in holding that the soul being once purified and placed with the Father shall never more suffer worldly inconvenience. Where he overthrows one great Platonism, viz., that the dead are continually made of the living and the living of the dead: proving that Platonical position of Virgil false, where he says that the souls being purified and sent unto the Elysian fields (under which fabulous name they figured the joys of the blessed) were brought to drink of the river Lethe, that is, to forget things past—

"Scilicet immemores supera ut convexa reuisant
Rursus et incipient in corpora velle reverti."

"'The thought of heaven is quite out of the brain.
Now 'gin the wish to live on earth again."

Porphyry justly disliked this, because it were foolish to believe that men, being in that life which the only assurance of eternity makes most happy, should desire to see the corruption of mortality, as if the end of purification were still to return to new pollution, for if their perfect purification require a forgetfulness of all evils, and that forgetfulness produce a desire in them to be embodied again, and consequently to be again corrupted, truly the height of happiness shall be the cause of the greatest unhappiness: the perfection of wisdom the cause of foolishness, and the fulness of purity, mother unto impiety. Nor can the soul ever be blessed, being still deceived in the blessedness: to be blessed it must be secure; to be secure it must believe it shall be ever
blessed, and that falsely, because it must sometimes be wretched: wherefore if this joy must needs rise of a false cause, how can it be truly joyful? This Porphyry saw well, and therefore held that the soul once fully purified returned immediately to the Father, lest it should be any more polluted with the contagion of earthly and corruptible affects.

CHAPTER XXXI

Against the Platonists holding the soul co-eternal with God.

But altogether erroneous was that opinion of some Platonists importing the continual and necessary revolution of souls from this or that, and to it again: which, if it were true, what would it profit us to know it? unless the Platonists will prefer themselves before us, because we know not that they are to be made most wise in the next life, and blessed by their false belief? If it be absurd and foolish to affirm this, then is Porphyry to be preferred before all those transporters of souls from misery to bliss, and back again: which, if it be true, then here is a Platonist refuses Plato for the better: and sees that which he saw not, not refusing correction after so great a master, but preferring truth before man, and man’s affection. Why, then, do we not believe divinity in things above our capacity, which teaches us that the soul is not co-eternal with God, but created by God? The Platonists refuse, upon this (seeming sufficient) reason, that that which has not been for ever cannot be for ever. Aye, but Plato says
directly that both the world, and the gods, made by
that great God in the world, had a beginning, but
shall have no end, but by the will of the Creator
endure for ever. But they have a meaning for this.
They say this beginning concerned not time, but
substitution: for even as the foot (say they), if it
had stood eternally in the dust, the footstep should
have been eternal also, yet no man but can say, some
foot made this step; nor should the one be before
the other, though one were made by the other. So
the world and the God therein have been ever co-
eternal with the Creator’s eternity, though by Him
created. Well then, put the case, the soul be and
has been eternal; has the soul’s misery been so also?
Truly if there be something in the soul that had a
temporal beginning, why might not the soul itself
have a beginning also? And then the beatitude,
being firmer by trial of evil, and to endure for ever,
questionless had a beginning, though it shall never
have an end. So then the position that nothing can
be endless that had a temporal beginning is quite
overthrown. For the blessedness of the soul has a
beginning, but it shall never have an end. Let our
weakness therefore yield unto the divine authority,
and let us trust those holy immortals in matter of
religion, who desire no worship to themselves, as
knowing all is peculiar to their and our God: nor
command us to sacrifice but unto Him to whom (as
I said often, and must so still), they and we both
are a sacrifice to be offered by that Priest that took
our manhood, and in that, this priesthood upon Him,
and sacrificed Himself even to the death for us.
CHAPTER XXXII

Of the universal way of the soul’s freedom, which Porphyry sought amiss, and therefore found not: that only Christ has declared it.

This is the religion that contains the universal way of the soul’s freedom: for nowhere else is it found but herein. This is the king’s highway that leads to the eternal dangerless kingdom, to no temporal or transitory one. And whereas Porphyry says in the end of his first book, “De regressu animæ,” that there is no one sect yet, either truly philosophical, Indian or Chaldæan, that teaches this universal way: and that he has not had so much as any historical reading of it, yet he confesses that such an one there is, but what it is he knows not. (So insufficient was all that he had learnt, to direct him to the soul’s true freedom and all that himself held, or others thought him to hold: for he observed the want of an authority fit for him to follow.) But whereas he says that no sect of the true philosophy ever had notice of the universal way of the soul’s freedom, he shows plain that either his own philosophy was not true, or else that it wanted the knowledge of this way, and then, still, how could it be true? For what universal way of freeing the souls is there but that which frees all souls, and consequently without which none is freed? But whereas he adds Indian or Chaldæan, he gives a clear testimony, that neither of their doctrines contained this way of the soul’s freedom: yet could not he conceal, but is still a-telling us that from the Chaldæans had he the divine oracles. What universal way then does he mean, that is neither received
in philosophy nor into those Pagan disciplines that
had such a stroke with him in matters of divinity
(because indeed with them was the curious fond
superstition, invocation of all angels) and which he
never had so much as read of?

What is that universal way, not peculiar to every
particular nation but common to all the world and
given to it by the power of God? Yet this witty
philosopher knew that some such way there was.
For he believes not that God’s providence would
leave mankind without a mean of the soul’s freedom.
He says not, there is no such, but that so great and
good a help is not yet known to us, nor unto him:
no marvel: for Porphyry was yet all for the world,
when that universal way of the soul’s freedom,
Christianity, was suffered to be opposed, by the
devils and their servants’ earthly powers, to make up
the holy number of martyrs, that is, witnesses of the
truth, who might show that all corporal tortures were
to be endured for advancement of the truth of piety.
This Porphyry saw, and thinking persecution would
soon extinguish this way, therefore held not this the
universal, not conceiving that that which he stuck at,
and feared to endure in his choice, belonged to his
greater commendation and confirmation. This there-
fore is that universal way of the soul’s freedom, that
is granted unto all nations out of God’s mercy, the
knowledge whereof comes, and is to come unto all
men: we may not, nor any hereafter, say, why
comes it, so soon, or, why so late, for His wisdom
that does send it, is unsearchable unto man. Which
he well perceived when he said, it was not yet re-
ceived, or known unto him: he denied not the truth
thereof, because he as yet had it not. This I say is
the way that will free all believers, wherein Abraham
trusting, received that divine promise, “In thy seed
shall all the nations be blessed." ¹ Abraham was a Chaldæan, but for to receive this promise, that the seed which was disposed by the angels in the mediator's power, to give this universal way of the soul's freedom unto all nations, he was commanded to leave his own land and kindred, and his father's house. And then was he first freed from the Chaldæan superstitions, and served the true God, to whose promise he firmly trusted. This is the way recorded in the prophet. "God be merciful unto us, and bless us: and show us the light of His countenance and be merciful unto us. That Thy way may be known upon earth: Thy saving health among all nations." ² And long after: Abraham's seed being incarnate, Christ says of Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." ³ This is the universal way, mentioned so long before by the prophets. "It shall be in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall fly unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His way, and we will walk therein. For the law shall go forth of Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." ⁴ This way therefore is not peculiar to some one nation but common to all. Nor did the law, and word of God, stay in Jerusalem, or Sion, but came from thence to overspread all the world. Thereupon the Mediator, being risen from death, said unto His amazed and amated disciples, "All things must be fulfilled which are written of Me in the law, the prophets and the psalms." Then opened He their

¹ Gen. xxii. ² Ps. lxvii. ³ John xiv. ⁴ Isa. ii.
Christ purges man's entire being.

understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, saying, "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name amongst all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." This then is the universal way of the soul's freedom, which the saints and prophets (being at first but a few, as God gave grace, and those all Hebrews, for that estate was in a manner consecrated), did both adumbrate in their temple, sacrifice, and priesthood, and foretold also in their prophecy, often mystically, and sometimes plainly. And the Mediator Himself and His apostles, revealing the grace of the New Testament, made plain all those significations, that success of precedent times had retained, as it pleased God, the miracles which I spoke of before evermore giving confirmation to them. For they had not only angelical visions, and saw the ministers of heaven, but even these simple men, relying wholly upon God's word, cast out devils, cured diseases, commanded wild beasts, waters, birds, trees, elements, and stars, raised the dead. Aye, except the miracles, peculiar to our Saviour, chiefly in His birth and resurrection, showing in the first the mystery of maternal virginity, and in the other the example of our renovation. This way cleanses every soul, and prepares a mortal man in every part of his for immortality. For lest that which Porphyry calls the intellect should have one purgation, the spiritual another, and the body another, therefore did our true and powerful Saviour take all upon Him. Besides this way (which has never failed mankind, either in prophecies or in their performances), no man has ever had freedom, or ever has or ever shall have. And whereas Porphyry says he never had any

historical notice of this way, what history can be more famous than this that looks from such a towering authority down upon all the world? or more faithful, since it so relates things past as it prophesies things to come: a great part whereof we see already performed, which gives us assured hope of the fulfilling of the rest. Porphyry, nor ever a Platonist in the world, can contemn the predictions of this way (albeit they concern but temporal affairs), as they do all other prophecies and divinations of what sort soever: for them, they say they neither are spoken by worthy men, nor to any worthy purpose: true, for they are either drawn from inferior causes, as physic can presage much concerning health upon such or such signs, or else the unclean spirits foretell the arts that they have already disposed of, confirming the minds of the guilty and wicked with deeds fitting their words, or words fitting their deeds, to get themselves a domination in man’s infirmity. But the holy men of this universal way of ours never respect the prophesying of those things, holding them justly trifles: yet do they both know them and often foretell them to confirm the faith in things beyond sense and hard to present unto plainness. But they were other and greater matters which they (as God inspired them) did prophesy: namely the incarnation of Christ, and all things thereto belonging, and fulfilled in His name, repentance and conversion of the will unto God, remission of sins, the grace of justice, faith, and increase of believers throughout all the world, destruction of idolatry, temptation for trial, mundifying of the proficients, freedom from evil, the day of judgment, resurrection, damnation of the wicked, and glorification of the city of God in an eternal kingdom. These are the prophecies of them of this way: many are fulfilled, and the rest as-
Pagan materialism alike refuted. Surely are to come. That this strait way, leading to the knowledge and coherence of God, lies plain in the Holy Scriptures, upon whose truth it is grounded: they that believe not, and therefore know not, may oppose this, but can never overthrow it: and therefore in these ten books I have spoken, by the good assistance of God, sufficient in sound judgments (though some expected more) against the impious contradictors, that prefer their gods before the founder of the holy city whereof we are to dispute. The first four of the ten opposed them that adored their gods for temporal respects: the four latter, against those that adored them for the life to come. It remains now, according as we promised in the first book, to proceed in our discourse of the two cities that are confused together in this world and distinct in the other, of whose original progress and consummation I now enter to dispute, evermore invoking the assistance of the Almighty.
THE TENTH BOOK

CHAPTER I

Of that part of the work wherein the demonstration of the beginnings and ends of the two cities, the heavenly and the earthly, are declared.

We give the name of the city of God unto that society whereof that Scripture bears witness, which has got the most excellent authority and pre-eminence of all other works whatsoever, by the disposing of the divine providence, not the affectation of men’s judgments. For there it is said: “Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God:”¹ and in another place, “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, even upon His holy mountain, increasing the joy of all the earth.”² And by and by in the same psalm: “As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God: God hath established it for ever.” And in another: “The rivers’ streams shall make glad the city of God, the most high has sanctified His tabernacle, God is in the midst of it unmoved.”³ These testimonies, and thousands more, teach us that there is a city of God, whereof His inspired love makes us desire to be members. The earthly citizens prefer their gods before this heavenly city’s holy founder, knowing not that He is the God of gods, not of those false,

¹ Ps. lxxxvii. 2. ² Ps. xlvi. 1. ³ Ps. xlvi.
I must now set forth the origin.

wicked, and proud ones (which wanting His light so universal and unchangeable, and being thereby cast into an extreme needy power, each one follows his own state, as it were, and begs peculiar honours of his servants), but of the godly and holy ones, who select their own submission to Him, rather than the world's to them, and love rather to worship Him, their God, than to be worshipped for gods themselves. The foes of this holy city, our former nine books (by the help of our Lord and King), I hope have fully affronted. And now, knowing what is next expected of me, as my promise—viz., to dispute (as my poor talent stretches) of the original, progress, and consummation of the two cities that in this world lie confusedly together: by the assistance of the same God, and King of ours, I set pen to paper, intending first to show the beginning of these two, arising from the difference between the angelical powers.

CHAPTER II

Of the knowledge of God, which none can attain but through the mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

It is a great and admirable thing for one to transcend all creatures, corporal or incorporeal, frail and mutable, by speculation; and to attain to the deity itself, and learn of that, that it made all things that are not of the divine essence. For so does God teach a man, speaking not by any corporal creature unto him, nor reverberating the air between the ear and the speaker,
nor by any spiritual creature, or apparition, as in dreams, or otherwise. For so He does speak as unto bodily ears, and as by a body, and by breach of air and distance. For visions are very like bodies. But He speaks by the truth, if the ears of the mind be ready, and not the body. For he speaks unto the best part of the whole man, and that wherein God only does excel him; and understand a man in the best fashion, you cannot then but say he is made after God’s image, being nearer to God only by that part wherein he excels his others, which he has shared with him by beasts. But yet the mind itself, wherein reason and understanding are natural inerents, is weakened and darkened by the mist of inveterate error, and disenabled to enjoy by inheritance, nay, even to endure that immutable light, until it be gradually purified, cured, and made fit for such an happiness, therefore it must first be purged, and instructed by faith, to set it the surer; wherein truth itself, God’s Son, and God, taking on our manhood without wasting of godhead, ordained that faith, to be a pass for man to God, by His mean that was both God and man, for by His manhood is He mediator, and by man He is our way. For if the way lie between him that goes and the place to which he goes, there is hope to attain it. But if one have no way, nor know which way to go, what boots it to know whither to go? And the only sure, plain, infallible high way is this mediator, God and man: God, our journey’s end, and man, our way unto it.
CHAPTER III

Of the authority of the canonical scriptures, made by the Spirit of God.

This God, having spoken what He held convenient, first by His prophets, then by Himself, and afterwards by His apostles, made that scripture also, which we call canonical, of most eminent authority, on which we rely on things that befall our understanding, and yet cannot be attained by ourselves. For if things sensible either to our exterior or interior sense (we call them things present) may be known in our own judgments, we see them before our eyes, and have them as infallible objects of our sense: then truly in things that fall not in compass of sense, because our own judgments do fail us, we must seek out other authorities, to whom such things (we think) have been more apparent, and them we are to trust. Wherefore, as in things visible, having not seen them ourselves, we trust those that have: (and so in all other objects of the senses): even so in things mental, and intelligible, which procure a notice, or sense, in man (whereof comes the word sentence): that is, in things invisible to our exterior sense, we must needs trust them, who have learned them of that incorporeal light, or behold them continually before them.
That the state of the world is neither eternal, nor ordained by any new thought of gods, as if He meant that after, which He meant not before.

Of things visible, the world is the greatest: of invisible, God. But the first we see, the second we but believe. That God made the world, whom shall we believe with more safety than Himself? Where have we heard Him? never better than in the Holy Scriptures, where the prophet says, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." Was the prophet there when He made it? no. But God's wisdom, whereby He made it, was there, and that does infuse itself into holy souls, making prophets and saints, declaring His works unto them inwardly, without any noise. And the holy angels that eternally behold the face of the Father, they come down when they are appointed, and declare His will unto them, of whom he was one that wrote, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," and who was so fit a witness to believe God by, that by the same spirit that revealed this unto Him, did he prophesy the coming of our faith. But what made God create heaven and earth, then, not sooner? they that say this to import an eternity of the world, being not by God created, are damnably, and impiously deceived and infected. For (to except all prophecy) the very order, disposition, beauty, and change of the world and all therein proclaims itself to have been made (and not possible to have been made but) by God, that ineffable, invisible Great One, ineffably and invisibly beauteous. But they that say God made the world, and yet allow it no
in time, but only a formal original, being made after a manner almost incomprehensible, they seem to say somewhat in God’s defence from that chanceful rashness, to take a thing into His head that was not therein before, viz., to make the world, and to be subject to change of will, He being wholly unchangeable and for ever. But I see not how their reason can stand in other respects, chiefly in that of the soul, which if they do co-eternize with God, they can never show how that misery befalls it anew, that was never accident to it before. If they say that the happiness and misery have been co-eternal ever, then must they be so still, and then follows this absurdity, that the soul being called happy, shall not be happy in this, that it foresees the misery to come. If it do neither foresee their bliss nor their bale, then is it happily a false understanding: and that were a most fond assertion. But if they hold that the misery and the bliss have succeeded each other from all eternity, but that afterwards the soul being once blessed, returns no more to misery, yet does not this save them from being convicted that the soul was never truly happy before; but then begins to enjoy a new and uncertain happiness: and so they confess that this so strange and unexpected a thing befalls the soul then, that never befell it before: which new changes cause if they deny that God eternally foreknew, they deny Him also to be the author of that happiness (which were wicked to do). And then if they should say that He had newly resolved that the soul should not become eternally blessed, how far are they from quitting Him from that mutability which they disallow? But if they acknowledge that it had a true temporal beginning, but shall never have temporal end, and having once tried misery, and gotten clear of it, shall never be miserable more,
this they may boldly affirm with prejudice to God's immutability of will. And so they may believe that the world had a temporal original, and yet that God did not alter His eternal resolution in creating of it.

CHAPTER V

That we ought not to seek to comprehend the infinite spaces of time or place, ere the world was made.

And then let us see what we must say to those that make God the world's maker and yet examine the time: and what they will say to us, when we examine them of the place. They ask why it was made then, and no sooner, as we may ask, why was it made in this place and in no other? for if they imagine infinite spaces of time before the world, wherein they cannot think that God did nothing, so likewise may they suppose infinite spaces of place besides the world, wherein if they do not make the Deity to rest and not operate, they must fall to Epicurus' dream of innumerable worlds, only this difference there will be; he makes all his worlds of the casual coagulation of atoms, and so by their parting dissolves them: but they must make all theirs God's handiworks, if they will not let Him rest in all the interminable space beyond the world, and have none of all them worlds (no more than this of ours) to be subject to dissolution. For we now dispute with those that do as we do, make God the incorporeal Creator of all things that are not of His own essence. For those that stand for many gods,
they are unworthy to be made disputants in this question of religion. The other philosophers have quite outstripped all the rest in fame and credit because (though they were far from the truth, yet) were they nearer than the rest. Perhaps they will neither make God’s essence dilatable, nor limitable, but (as one should indeed hold) will affirm his incorporeal presence in all that spacious distance besides the world, employed only in this little place (in respect of His immensity) that the world is fixed in: I do not think they will talk so idly. If they set God on work in this one determinate (though greatly dilated) world: that reason that they gave why God should not work in all those infinite places beyond the world, let them give the same why God wrought not in all the infinite times before the world. But as it is not consequent that God followed chance rather than reason in placing of the world’s frame where it now stands, and in no other place, though this place had no merit to deserve it before the infinite others: (yet no man’s reason can comprehend why the divine will placed it so); even so no more is it consequent that we should think that it was any chance made God create this world then, rather than at any other time, whereas all times before had their equal course, and none was more meritorious of the creation than another: but if they say, men are fond to think there is any place besides that wherein the world is: so are they (say we) to imagine any time for God to be idle in, since there was no time before the world’s creation.
CHAPTER VI

That the world and time had both one beginning, nor was the one before the other.

For if eternity and time be well considered, time never to be extant without motion, and eternity to admit no change, who would not see that time could not have being before some movable thing were created; whose motion, and successive alteration (necessarily following one part another) the time might run by? Seeing therefore that God, whose eternity alters not, created the world, and time, how can He be said to have created the world in time, unless you will say there was something created before the world, whose course time did follow? And if the holy and most true scriptures say that "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," to wit, that there was nothing before then, because this was the beginning, which the other should have been if aught had been made before, then verily the world was made with time, and not in time, for that which is made in time, is made both before some time, and after some. Before it is time past, after it is time to come: but no time passed before the world, because no creature was made by whose course it might pass. But it was made with the time if motion be time's condition, as that order of the first six or seven days went, wherein it were counted morning and evening until the Lord fulfilled all the work upon the sixth day, and commended the seventh to us in the mystery of sanctification. Of what fashion those days were, it is either exceeding hard, or altogether impossible, to think, much more to speak.
CHAPTER VII

Of the first six days that had morning, and evening, ere the sun was made.

As for ordinary days, we see they have neither morning nor evening but as the sun rises and sets. But the first three days of all had no sun, for that was made the fourth day. And first, God made the light, and severed it from the darkness, calling it day, and darkness, night: but what that light was, and how it ran a course to make morning and night, is out of our sense to judge, nor can we understand it, which nevertheless we must make no question but believe, for the light was either a bodily thing placed in the world's highest parts far from our eye, or there where the sun was afterwards made: or else the name of light signified that holy city, with the angels and spirits whereof the apostle says: "Jerusalem which is above is our eternal mother in heaven." ¹ And in another place he says: "Ye are all the children of light, and the sons of the day: we are not sons of night and darkness." Yet has this day the morn and evening, because the knowledge of the creature, compared to the Creator's, is but a very twilight. And day breaks with man, when he draws near the love and praise of the Creator. Nor is the creature ever benighted, but when the love of the Creator forsakes him. The Scripture orderly reciting those days, never mentions the night: nor says, "night was," but, "the evening and the morning were the first day," so of the second, and so on. For the creature's knowledge, of itself, is as it were far more discoloured, than when it joins with the Creator's, as

CHAPTER VIII

What we must think of God's resting the seventh day after His six days' work.

Burth whereas God rested the seventh day from all His works, and sanctified it, this is not to be childishly understood, as if God had taken pains; He but spake the word, and by that intelligible and eternal one (not vocal nor temporal) were all things created. But God's rest signifies theirs that rest in God, as the gladness of the house signifies those that are glad in the house, though something else (and not the house) be the cause thereof. How much more then if the beauty of the house make the inhabitants glad, so that we may not only call it glad, using the continent for the contained, as, the whole theatre applauded, when it was the men: the whole meadows bellowed, for the oxen; but also using the efficient for the effect, as
The first and chief citizen of God's city a merry epistle—that is, making the readers merry. Therefore the Scripture, affirming that God rested, means the rest of all things in God, whom He by Himself makes to rest: for this the prophet has promised to all such as he speaks unto, and for whom he wrote, that after their good works which God does in them or by them (if they first have apprehended Him in this life by faith) they shall in Him have rest eternal. This was prefigured in the sanctification of the Sabbath by God's command in the old law, whereof more at large in due season.

CHAPTER IX

What is to be thought of the qualities of angels, according to Scripture.

Now having resolved to relate this holy city's original, and first of the angels, who make a great part thereof so much the happier in that they never were pilgrims, let us see what testimonies of holy writ concern this point. The Scriptures, speaking of the world's creation, speak not plainly of the angels, when or in what order they were created, but that they were created, the word heaven includes. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth," or rather in the world light, whereof I speak now, are there signified: that they were omitted, I cannot think, holy writ saying, that God rested in the seventh day from all His works, the same book beginning with, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth:" to show that nothing was made ere then. Beginning therefore with heaven and earth, and earth the first thing
created, being as the Scripture plainly says, without
form and void, light being yet unmade, and darkness
being upon the deep (that is, upon a certain confusion
of earth and waters): for where light is not, darkness
must needs be; then the creation proceeding, and all
being accomplished in six days, how should the angels
be omitted, as though they were none of God’s works,
from which He rested the seventh day? This,
though it be not omitted, yet here is it not plain: but
elsewhere it is most evident. The three children
sang in their hymn, “Oh all ye works of the Lord,
bless ye the Lord,” amongst which they reckon the
angels. And the Psalmist says: “Oh praise God
in the heavens, praise Him in the heights: praise Him
all ye His angels, praise Him all His hosts; praise
Him sun and moon, praise Him stars and light.
Praise Him ye heaven of heavens, and the waters that
be above the heavens, praise the name of the Lord,
for He spake the word and they were made: He
commanded and they were created:” here divinity
calls the angels God’s creatures most plainly: insert-
ing them with the rest, and saying of all: “He spake
the word and they were made:” who dares think
that the angels were made after the six days: if any
one be so fond, hearken, this place of Scripture con-
founds him utterly, “When the stars were made, all
mine angels praised Me with a loud voice.”
Therefore they were made before the stars, and the
stars were made the fourth day. What? they were
made the third day, may we say so? God forbid.
That day’s work is fully known, the earth was parted
from the waters, and two elements took forms distinct,
and earth produced all her plans. In the second day
then? neither. Then was the firmament made be-
tween the waters above and below, and was called

1 Job xxxviii. 7.
and heaven, in which firmament the stars were created the fourth day. Wherefore if the angels belong unto God's six days' work, they are that light called day; to commend whose unity, it was called, one day, not the first day, nor differs the second or third from this, all are but this one, doubled unto six or seven, six of God's works, the seven of His rest. For when God said: "Let there be light, and there was light;" if we understand the angels' creation aright herein, they are made partakers of that eternal light, the unchangeable wisdom of God, all-creating, namely, the only begotten Son of God, with whose light they in their creation were illuminate, and made light, and called day in the participation of the unchangeable light and day, that word of God by which they and all things else were created. For the true light that lighteneth every man that cometh into this world, this also lighteneth every pure angel, making it light, not in itself, but in God, from whom if an angel fall, it becomes impure, as all the unclean spirits are, being no more a light in God, but a darkness in itself, deprived of all participation of the eternal light: for evil has no nature; but the loss of good, that is evil.

CHAPTER X

Of the un compounded, unchangeable Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God in substance and quality, ever one and the same.

Good therefore (which is God) is only simple, and consequently unchangeable. This good created all things, but not simple, therefore changeable. I say
created, that is made, not begot. For that which
the simple good begot, is as simple as it is, and is the
same that begot it. These two we call Father and
Son, both which with their Spirit, are one God:
that Spirit, being the Father's and the Son's, is
properly called in Scriptures, "the Holy Spirit," it
is neither Father nor Son, but personally distinct
from both, but it is not really: for it is a simple and
unchangeable good with them, and co-eternal. And
this trinity is one God: not simple because a trinity
(for we call not the nature of that good, simple,
because the Father is alone therein, or the Son, or
Holy Ghost alone, for that name of the Trinity is
not alone with personal subsistence, as the Sabellians
held), but it is called simple, because it is one in
essence and the same one in quality (excepting their
personal relation: for therein the Father has a Son,
yet is no Son, and the Son a Father, yet is no
Father). But in consideration each of itself, the
quality and essence is both one therein, as each lives,
that is, has life, and is life itself. This is the reason
of the nature's simplicity, wherein nothing adheres
that can be lost, nor is the containant one and the
thing contained another—as vessels and liquors,
bodies and colours, air and heat—or the soul and
wisdom are: for those are not co-essential with their
qualities: the vessel is not the liquor, nor the body
the colour, nor air heat, nor the soul wisdom: there-
fore may they all lose these adjuncts, and assume
others: the vessel may be empty, the body dis-
coloured, the air cold, the soul foolish. But the
body being one incorruptible (as the saints shall have
in the resurrection), that incorruption it shall never
lose, yet is not that incorruption one essence with
the bodily substance. For it is alike in all parts of
the body, all are incorruptible. But the body is
is Three Persons in one godhead.) greater in whole than in part, and the parts are some larger, some lesser, yet neither enlarging nor lessening the incorruptibility. So then the body being not entire in itself, and incorruptibility being entire in itself, do differ: for all parts of the body have inequality in themselves, but none in incorruptibility. The finger is less than the hand, but neither more nor less corruptible than the hand: being unequal to themselves, their incorruptibility is equal. And therefore though incorruptibility be the body's inseparable inherent, yet the substance making the body, and the quality making it incorruptible, are absolutely several. And so it is in the disjunct aforesaid of the soul, though the soul be always wise (as it shall be when it is delivered from misery to eternity), though it be from thence evermore wise, yet it is by participation of the divine wisdom, of whose substance the soul is not. For though the air be ever light, it follows not that the light and the air should be all one. (I say not this as though the air were a soul, as some that could not conceive an incorporeal nature did imagine. But there is a great similitude in this disparity: so that one may fitly say, as the corporeal air is lightened by the corporeal light, so is the incorporeal soul by God's wisdom's incorporeal light, and as the air being deprived of that light, becomes dark, corporeal darkness being nothing but air deprived of light, so does the soul grow darkened, by want of the light of wisdom.) According to this then, they are called simple things, that are truly and principally divine, because their essence and their quality are indistinct, nor do they partake of any deity, substance, wisdom, or beatitude, but are all entirely themselves. The Scripture indeed calls the Holy Ghost the manifold spirit of wisdom, because the powers of it are many: but all one with
the essence, and all included in one, for the wisdom thereof is not manifold, but one, and therein are infinite and immeasurable treasuries of things intelligible, wherein are all the immutable and inscrutable causes of all things, both visible and mutable, which are thereby created: for God did nothing unwittingly, it were disgrace to say so of any human artificer. But if He made all knowing, then made He but what He knew. This now produces a wonder, but yet a truth in our minds: that the world could not be known unto us, but that it is now extant: but it could not have been at all but that God knew it.

CHAPTER XI

Whether the spirits that fell did ever partake with the angels, in their bliss at their beginning.

Which being so, the angels were never darkness at all, but as soon as ever they were made they were made light: yet not created only to live, and be as they listed, but live happily and wisely in their illumination, from which some of them turning away, were so far from attaining that excellence of blessed wisdom which is eternal, with full security of the eternity, that they fell to a life, of bare foolish reason only, which they cannot leave although they would: how they were partakers of that wisdom, before their fall, who can define? How can we say they were equally partakers with those that are really blessed by the assurance of their eternity, whom if they had been therein equal, they had still
and the fallen so began in bliss.

continued in the same eternity, by the same assurance? For life indeed must have an end, last it never so long, but this cannot be said of eternity, for it is life, because of living; but it is eternity of never ending: wherefore though all eternity, be not blessed (for hell fire is eternal), yet if the true beatitude be not without eternity, their beatitude was no such, as having end, and therefore being not eternal, whether they knew it, or knew it not: fear keeping their knowledge, and error their ignorance from being blessed. But if their ignorance built not firmly upon uncertainty, but on either side, wavering between the end, or the eternity of their beatitude: this protraction proves them not partakers of the blessed angels’ happiness. We tie not this word, beatitude, unto such strictness, as to hold it God’s only peculiar: yet is He so blessed as none can be more: in comparison of which (be the angels as blessed of themselves as they can), what is all the beatitude of anything, or what can it be?

CHAPTER XII

The happiness of the just that as yet have not the reward of the divine promise, compared with the first man of Paradise, before sin’s original.

Neither do we only call them blessed, respecting all reasonable intellectual creatures, for who dares deny that the first man in Paradise was blessed before his sin? though he knew not whether he should be so still or not. He had been so eternally, had he not sinned: for we call them happy whom we see live
well in this life, in hope of the immortality to come, without terror of conscience, and with true attainment of pardon for the crimes of our natural imperfection. These, though they be assured of reward for their perseverance, yet they are not sure to persevere. For what man knows that he shall continue to the end in action and increase of justice, unless he have it by revelation from Him, that by His secret providence instructs few (yet fails none), herein? But as for present delight, our first father in Paradise was more blessed than any just man of the world: but as for his hope, every man in the miseries of his body, is more blessed: as one to whom truth (not opinion) has said that he shall be rid of all molestation, and partake with the angels in that Great God, whereas the man that lived in Paradise in all that felicity, was uncertain of his fall or continuance therein.

CHAPTER XIII

Whether the angels were created in such a state of happiness, that neither those that fell, knew they should fall, nor those that persevered, foreknew they should persevere.

Wherefore now it is plain, that beatitude requires both conjoined: such beatitude I mean, as the intellectual nature does fitly desire: that is, to enjoy God, the unchangeable good, without any molestation, to remain in Him for ever without delay of doubt, or deceit of error. This we faithfully believe the holy angels have: but consequently that the angels that offended, and thereby lost that light, had not,
To true bliss before their fall: some beatitude they had, but not certainly essential. For knowing: this we may think, if they were created any while before they sinned. But if it seem hard to believe some angels to be created without foreknowledge of their perseverance or fall, and other some to have true prescience of their beatitude, but rather that all had knowledge alike in their creation, and continued so, until these that now are evil, left that light of goodness, then verily it is harder to think that the holy angels now are in themselves uncertain of that beatitude, whereof the Scriptures afford them so much certainty, and us also that read them. What Catholic Christian but knows that no angel that now is, shall ever become a devil: nor any devil an angel, from henceforth? The truth of the Gospel tells the faithful, that they shall be like the angels, and that they shall go to life eternal. But if we be sure never to fall from bliss, and they be not sure, we are above them, not like them: but the truth affirming (and never erring), that we shall be their like, and equals, then are they sure of their blessed eternity: whereof those other being uncertain (for it had been eternal had they been certain of it), it remains that they were not the others’ equals, or if they were, these that stood firm, had not this certainty of knowledge, until afterwards. Unless we will say that which Christ says of the devil: “He hath been a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth,” 1 is not only to be understood from the beginning of mankind, that is, since man was made, whom he might kill by deceiving; but even from the beginning of his own creation: and therefore because of his aversion from his Creator, and proud opposition (herein both erring and seducing), was debarred even from his creation, from happiness, because he could

1 John viii. 44.
not delude the power of the Almighty. And the devil
he that would not in piety hold with the truth,
in his pride counterfeits the truth, that the apostle
John’s saying, “The devil sinneth from the
beginning,” may be so understood also: that is, ever
since his creation, he rejected righteousness: which
none can have, but a will subject unto God. Whosoever holds thus, is not of the heretics’ opinion, called
the Manichees, nor any such damnations as they, that
hold that the devil had a wicked nature given him in
the beginning: they do so dote that they conceive
not what Christ said, “He abode not in the truth,”
but think He said, “He was made enemy to the
truth:” but Christ did intimate his fall from the
truth, wherein if he had remained, he had par-
ticipated it with the holy angels, and been eternally
blessed with them.

CHAPTER XIV

How this is meant of the devil, “He abode not in the
truth, because there is no truth in him.”

But Christ set down the reason, as if we had asked
why he stayed not in the truth? because, “there is
no truth in him.” Had he stood in it, truth had
been in him. The phrase is improper: it says,
“He abode not in the truth, because there is no truth
in him,” whereas it should reverse it, and say, “there
is no truth in him because he abode not therein.”
But the Psalmist uses it so also, “I have cried,
because Thou hast heard me, O God:” whereas

1 John iii. 8.  
2 John viii. 44.  
3 Ps. xvii. 16.
properly it is: “Thou hast heard me, O God, because I have cried.” But he, having said, “I have cried:” as if he had been asked the reason, adjoined the cause of his cry in the effect of God’s hearing: as if he said, “I show that I cried, because Thou hast heard me, O God.”

CHAPTER XV

The meaning of this place, “The devil sinneth from the beginning.”

And that, that John says of the devil, “The devil sinneth from the beginning,” if they make it natural to him, it can be no sin. But how then will they answer the prophets, as Isaiah, prefiguring the prince of Babylon, says: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning”? and Ezekiel: “Thou hast been in Eden in God’s garden, every precious stone was in thy raiment”? This proves him once sinless: and so does that which follows more plainly: “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created,” &c. Which places, if they have none other fitter meaning, do prove that he was in the truth, but abode not therein: and that John’s place, “He abode not in the truth,” proves him once in the truth, but not persevering, and that also, “He sinneth from the beginning,” means the beginning of sin, arising from his pride, but not from his creation. Now must not the place of Job, concerning the devil, “He is the beginning of God’s works, to be deluded by the angels,” or that of the

1 Isa. xiv. 12.  
2 Ezek. xxviii. 13.  
3 Job xl.
psalm, "this dragon whom Thou hast made to scorn him:" i be taken as if God had made the devil at first, fit for the angels to deride, but that that was ordained for his punishment after his sin? "He is the beginning of God's works," for there is no nature in the smallest beast, which God made not; from Him is all form, subsistence and order: wherefore much more must the creature that is angelical, by the natural dignity, have the pre-eminence of all God's other works.

CHAPTER XVI

Of the different degrees of creatures, wherein profitable use and reasons order do differ.

For in all things that God made, and are not of His essence, the living is before the dead: the productive before these that want generation, and in their living, the sensitive before the senseless, as beasts, &c., before trees; and in things sensitive, the reasonable before the unreasonable, as man before beasts; and in things reasonable, immortals before mortals, as angels before men, but this is by nature's order. Now the esteem of these is peculiar and different, as the divers uses are: whereby some senseless things are preferred before some sensitive, so far, that if we had power, we would root the latter out of nature, or (whether we know or know not what place therein they have) put them all after our profit. For who had not rather have his pantry full of meat than mice, or possess pence than fleas? No marvel: for man's

1 Ps. civ.
and all, esteem (whose nature is so worthy) will give more, oftentimes, for a horse than for a servant, for a ring than a maid. So that in choice, the reason of him that respects the worth often controls him that respects his own need or pleasure, nature pondering everything simply in itself, and use everything respectively for another: the one valuing them by the light of the mind, the other by the pleasure, or use of the sense: and indeed a certain will and love, has gotten such predominance in reasonable natures, that although generally, all angels excel men in nature's order, yet by the law of righteousness, good men have gotten place of preferment before the evil angels.

CHAPTER XVII

That the vice of malice is not natural, but against nature, following the will, not the creation in sin.

Wherefore in respect of the devil's nature, not his will, we do understand this place aright, "He was the beginning of God's works." For where the vice of malice came in, the nature was not corrupted before: vice is so contrary to nature that it cannot but hurt it, therefore were it no vice, for that nature that leaves God, to do so, but that is more natural to it to desire adherence with God. The evil will then is a great proof that the nature was good. But as God is the best creator of good natures, so is He the just disposer of evil wills: that when they use good natures evil, He may use the evil wills, well. Thereupon He caused that the devil's good nature, and evil

1 Job xv.
THE CITY OF GOD

will, should be cast down, and derided by His angels, that is, that His temptations might confirm His saints, whom the other sought to injure. And because God, in the creating of him, foresaw both his evil will, and what good God meant to effect thereby; therefore the Psalmist says: "This dragon whom Thou hast made for a scorn:" that, in that very creation that it were good by God's goodness, yet had God foreknowledge how to make use of it in the bad state.

CHAPTER XVIII

Of the beauty of this universe, augmented by God's ordinance, out of contraries.

For God would never have foreknown vice in any work of His, angel or man, but that He knew in like manner what good use to put it unto, so making the world's course, like a fair poem, more gracious by antithetic figures. Antitheta, called in Latin, opposites, are the most decent figures of all elocution: some, more expressly call them contra-posites. But we have no use of this word, though for the figure, the Latin, and all the tongues of the world, use it. St. Paul uses it rarely upon that place to the Corinthians where he says: "By the armour of righteousness on the right hand, and the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good, as deceivers, and yet true, as unknown and yet known, as dying and behold we live, as chastened, and yet not killed, as sorrowing and yet ever glad, as poor and yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet
So then were angels made possessing all things." 1 Thus as these contraries opposed do give the saying an excellent grace, so is the world's beauty composed of contrarieties, not in figure but in nature. This is plain in Ecclesiasticus, in this verse: "Against evil is good, and against death is life, so is the godly against the sinner: so look for in all the works of the highest, two and two, one against one." 2

CHAPTER XIX

The meaning of that place, "God separated the light from darkness."

WHEREFORE though the hardness of the Scriptures be of good use in producing many truths to the light of knowledge, one taking it thus and another thus (yet so as that which is obscure in one place be explained by some other plainer, or by manifest proofs: whether it be that in their multitude of opinions, one light on the author's meaning, or that it be too obscure to be attained, and yet other truths, upon this occasion, be admitted): yet verily I think it no absurdity in God's works to believe the creation of the angels, and the separation of the clean ones from the unclean, then, when the first light (lux) was made. Upon this ground: "And God separated the light from the darkness: and God called the light day, and the darkness he called night." 3 For He only was able to discern them, who could foreknow their fall ere they fell, their deprivation of light, and their eternal bondage in darkness of pride. As for the

1 2 Cor. vi. 7-10. 2 Ecclus. xxxiii. 13. 3 Gen. i. 4, 5.
days that we see, viz.: this our natural light and darkness, He made the two known lights, the sun and the moon, to separate them. "Let there be lights," says He, "in the firmament of the heaven, to separate the day from the night." And by and by: "then God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser to rule the night:"

He made both them and the stars: and God set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth, and to rule in the day and night, and to separate the light from darkness; but between that light which is the holy society of angels, shining in the lustre of intelligible truth and their opposite darkness, the wicked angels, perversely fallen from that light of justice, He only could make separation, who foreknows, and cannot but foreknow, all the future evils of their wills not their natures.

CHAPTER XX

Of that place of Scripture spoken of after the separation of the light and darkness, "And God saw the light that it was good."

Nor may we overslip that these words of God, "Let there be light, and there was light," were immediately seconded by these: "and God saw the light that it was good:"

not after He had separated the light and darkness, and named them day and night, lest He should have seemed to have shown His liking of the darkness as well as the light. For whereas the darkness, which the conspicuous lights of heaven divide from the light, is inculpable: there-
God approves only of the good.

fore it was said after it was, and not before, "And God saw that it was good." And God, says he, "Set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth, and to rule in the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good." Both those He liked, for both were sinless; but having said, "Let there be light, and there was so," he adjoins immediately, "And God saw the light that it was good." And then follows: "God separated the light from the darkness, and God called the light day, and the darkness night;" but here he adds not, "And God saw that it was good:" lest he should seem to allow well of both, the one being (not naturally but) voluntary evil. Therefore the light only pleased the Creator: the angelical darknesses, though they were to be ordained, were not to be approved.

CHAPTER XXI

Of God's eternal unchanging will and knowledge wherein He pleased to create all things in form as they were created.

What means that saying that goes through all, "And God saw that it was good," but the approbation of the work made according to the workman's art, God's wisdom? God does not see it is good, being made, as if He saw it not so ere it was made: but in seeing that it is good being made, which could not have been made so but that He foresaw it, He teaches, but learns not, that it is good. Plato durst go further,

1 Gen. i.
and say, “That God had great joy in the beauty of the universe.” He was not so fond to think the newness of the work increased God’s joy; but he showed that that pleased Him, being effected, which had pleased His wisdom to foreknow should be so effected; not that God’s knowledge varies, or apprehends diversely of things past, present, and future. He does not foresee things to come as we do, nor behold things present, nor remember things past as we do: but in a manner far different from our imagination. He sees them not by change in thought, but immutably, be they past or not past, to come or not to come, all these has He eternally present, nor thus in His eye and thus in His mind (He consists not of body and soul), nor thus now, and otherwise hereafter, or heretofore: His knowledge is not as ours is, admitting alteration by circumstance of time, but exempted from all change, and all variation of moments: for His intention runs not from thought to thought; all things He knows are in His unbodily presence. He has no temporal notions of the time, nor moved He the time by any temporal notions in Himself. Therefore He saw that which He had made was good, because He foresaw that He should make it good. Nor doubted His knowledge in seeing it made, or augmented it, as if it had been less ere He made it; He could not do His works in such absolute perfection, but out of His most perfect knowledge. Wherefore if one urges with, “Who made this light?” it suffices to answer, God: if we be asked by what means, suffices this, “God said, Let there be light, and there was light:” God making it by His very word. But because there are three necessary questions of every creature, who made it, how He made it, and wherefore He made it? God says, quoth Moses, “Let there be light, and there
CHAPTER XXII

Concerning those that disliked some of the good Creator's creatures, and thought some things naturally evil.

Yet this good cause of the creation, God's goodness: this just, fit cause, which being well considered, would give end to all further investigation in this kind, some heretics could not discern, because many things, by not agreeing with this poor frail mortal flesh (being now our just punishment) do offend, and hurt it, as fire, cold, wild beasts, &c. These do not observe in what place of nature they live, and are placed, nor how much they grace the universe (like a fair state) with their stations, nor what commodity redounds to us from them, if we can know how to use them: insomuch that poison (a thing one way pernicious) being conveniently ministered, procures health: and contrariwise, our meat, drink, nay, the very light, immoderately used, is hurtful. Hence does God's providence advise us not to dispraise anything rashly, but to seek out the use of it warily,
and where our wit and weakness fails, there to believe the rest that is hidden, as we do in other things past our reach: for the obscurity of the use, either exercises the humility, or beats down the pride, nothing at all in nature being evil (evil being but a privation of good), but everything from earth to heaven ascending in a degree of goodness, and so from the visible unto the invisible, unto which all are unequal. And in the greatest is God the great workman, yet no lesser in the less: which little things are not to be measured to their own greatness, being near to nothing, but by their Maker’s wisdom: as in a man’s shape, shave his eyebrow, a very nothing to the body, yet how much does it deform him, his beauty consisting more of proportion and parility of parts, than magnitude. Nor is it a wonder that those that hold some nature bad, and produced from a bad beginning, do not receive God’s goodness for the cause of the creation, but rather think that He was compelled by this rebellious evil of mere necessity to fall a-creating, and mixing of His own good nature with evil in the suppression and reforming thereof, by which it was so foiled, and so toiled, that He had much ado to recreate and mundify it: nor can yet cleanse it all, but that which He could cleanse, serves as the future prison of the captived enemy. This was not the Manichees’ foolishness, but their madness: which they should abandon, would they like Christians believe that God’s nature is unchangeable, incorruptible, impassible, and that the soul (which may be changed by the will, unto worse, and by the corruption of sin be deprived of that unchangeable light) is no part of God nor God’s nature, but by Him created of a far inferior mould.
CHAPTER XXIII

Of the error that Origen incurs.

(Origen's view is unsound, but) the great wonder is that some hold one beginning with us, of all things, and that God created all things that are not of His essence, otherwise they could never have had being; and yet will not hold that plain and good belief of the world's simple and good course of creation, that the good God made all things good. They hold that all that is not God, is after Him, and yet that all is not good which none but God could make. But the souls, they say (not parts, but creatures of God), sinned in falling from the Maker: and being cast according to their deserts, into divers degrees, down from heaven, got certain bodies, for their prisons. And thereupon the world was made (say they) not for increase of good, but restraint of bad, and this is the world. Herein is Origen justly culpable, for in his Ἀρχαία Ἀρχαία, or book of beginnings, he affirms this; wherein I have much marvel, that a man so read in divine Scriptures, should not observe first how contrary this was to the testimony of Scripture, that confirms all God's works with this, "And God saw that it was good:" and as the conclusion, "God saw all that He had made, and lo, it was very good:" averming no cause for this creation, but only, that the good God should produce good things: where if no man had sinned, the world should have been adorned and filled only with good natures. But sin being committed, it did not follow that all should be filled with badness, the far greater part remaining still good, keeping the course of their nature in heaven: nor could the evil willers,
in breaking the laws of nature, avoid the just laws of the all-disposing God. For as a picture shows well though it have black colours in divers places, so the universe is most fair, for all these stains of sins, which notwithstanding being weighed by themselves do disgrace the lustre of it. Besides, Origen should have seen (and all wise men with him) that if the world were made only for a penal prison for the transgressing powers to be embodied in, each one according to the guilt, the less offenders the higher and lighter, and the greater ones the baser and heavier: that then the devils (the worst prevaricators) should rather have been thrust into the basest, that is, earthly bodies, than the worst men. But that we might know that the spirits' merits are not repaid by the bodies' qualities: the worst devil has an airy body, and man (though he be bad) yet of far less malice and guilt, has an earthly body, yea and had ere his fall. And what can be more fond, than to think that the sun was rather made for a soul to be punished in as a prison, than by the providence of God, to be one, in one world as a light to the beauty, and a comfort to the creatures? Otherwise, two, ten, or a hundred souls sinning all alike, the world should have so many suns: to avoid which we must rather believe that there was but one soul sinned in that kind, deserving such a body rather than that the Maker's miraculous providence did so dispose of the sun, for the light and comfort of things created: it is not the souls whereof, speak they know not what, but it is their own souls that are so far from truth that they must needs be attained and restrained. Therefore these three I commended before, as fit questions of every creature, viz. : "Who made it, how, and why?" the answer to which is, "God by His word, because He is good:" whether the Holy Trinity, the Father, the
In every creation Son and Holy Ghost do imitate this unto us by their mystical body, or there be some place of Scripture that prohibits us to answer thus, is a great question, and not fit to be opened in one volume.

CHAPTER XXIV

Of the divine Trinity, notifying itself (in some part) in all the works thereof.

We believe, hold, and faithfully affirm, that God the Father begot the world, His wisdom by which all was made, His only Son, one with one, co-eternal, most good, and most equal: and that the Holy Spirit is both of the Father and the Son, consubstantial, and co-eternally with them both: and this is both a Trinity in respect of the persons, and but one God in the inseparable divinity and one omnipotence in the inseparable power, yet so, as every one of the three be held to be God omnipotent: and yet altogether are not three Gods omnipotents, but one God omnipotent: such is the inseparable unity of three persons, and so must it be taught of. But whether the Spirit, being the good Father's, and the good Son's, may be said to be both their goodnesses, here I dare not rashly determine: I durst rather call it the sanctity of them both: not as their quality, but their substance and the third person in Trinity. For to that, this probability leads me, that the Father is holy, and the Son holy, and yet the Spirit is properly called holy, as being the substantial, and consubstantial holiness of them both. But if the divine goodness be nothing else but holiness, then it is but diligent reason, and no
the whole Trinity represented. 

bold presumption to think (for exercise of our intentions' sake) that in these three questions of each work of God, who made it, how, and why, the Holy Trinity is secretly intimated unto us: for it was the Father of the world that said, "Let it be made;" and that which was made when He spake, doubtless was made by the word: and in that, where it is said, "And God saw that it was good," it is plain that neither necessity nor use, but only His mere will moved God to make what was made, that is, "Because it was good:" which was said after it was done, to show the correspondence of the good creature to the Creator, by reason of whose goodness it was made. If this goodness be now the Holy Spirit, then is all the whole Trinity intimate to us in every creature: and hence is the original, form, and perfection of that holy city whereof the angels are inhabitants. Ask whence it is? God made it. How has it wisdom? God enlightened it. How is it happy? God whom it enjoys has framed the existence, and illustrated the contemplation, and sweetened the inheritance thereof in Himself, that is, it sees, loves, rejoices in God's eternity, shines in His truth, and joys in His goodness.

CHAPTER XXV

Of the tripartite division of all philosophical discipline.

Hence was it (as far as we conceive) that philosophy got three parts: or rather that the philosophers observed the three parts. They did not invent them, but they observed the natural, rational, and moral,
Every nature falls into threefold division, from hence. These are the Latin names, ordinarily used, as we showed in our seventh book; not that it follows that herein they conceived a whit of the Trinity: though Plato were the first that is said to find out and record this division: and that unto him none but God seemed the author of all nature, or the giver of reason, or the inspirer of honesty. But whereas in these points of nature, inquisition of truth, and the final good, there are many diverse opinions, yet all their controversy lies in those three great and general questions: every one makes a discrepant opinion from another in all three, and yet all do hold that nature has some cause, knowledge some form, and life some direction and sum. For three things are sought out in every artist—nature, skill, and practice; his nature to be judged of by wit, his skill by knowledge, and his practice by the use. I know well that fruit belongs to fruition properly, and use to the user (and that they seem to be differently used, fruition of a thing which being desired for itself only, delights us; and use of that which we seek for another respect: in which sense we must rather use than enjoy temporalities, to deserve the fruition of eternity: not as the wicked enjoy money, and use God, spending not money for Him, but honouring Him for money), yet in common phrase of speech we both use fruition, and enjoy use. For fruits properly are the field's increase, whereupon we live: so then thus I take use in three observations of an artist—his nature, skill, and use. From which the philosophers invented the several disciplines, tending all to beatitude: the natural for nature, the rational for doctrine, the moral for use. So that if our nature were of itself, we should know our own wisdom, and never go about to know it by learning, ab externo, and if our love had original of itself, and returned upon
itself, it would suffice us unto beatitude, exempting us from need of any other good. But seeing our nature has being from God our author, doubtless we must both have Him to teach us true wisdom, and to inspire us with the means to be truly blessed, by His high sweetness.

CHAPTER XXVI

Of the image of the Trinity which is in some sort in every man's nature, even before his glorification.

And we have in ourselves an image of that Holy Trinity which shall be perfected by reformation, and made very like it: though it be far unequal, and far distant from it, briefly neither co-eternal with God, nor of His substance, yet is it the nearest it of any creature, for we both have a being, know it, and love both our being and knowledge. And in these three no false appearance ever can deceive us. For we do not discern them as things visible, by sense as we see colours, hear sounds, scent smells, taste savours, and touch things hard and soft: the abstracts of which sensibles we conceive, remember, and desire in incorporeal forms most like to these other: in those three it is not so; I know without all fantastical imagination that I am myself, that this I know and love. I fear not the academic arguments in these truths, that say, "What, if you err?" if I err, I am. For he that has no being cannot err; therefore mine error proves my being: which being so, how can I err in holding my being? for though I be one that may err, yet doubtless in that I know my being, I err not; and consequently, if I know that, I know my being.
and loving these two, I adjoin this love as a third of equal esteem with the two. For I do not err in that I love, knowing the two things I love, without error: if they were false, it were true that I loved false things. For how could I be justly checked for loving of false things if it were false that I loved them? But seeing the things loved are true, and sure, how can the love of them be but true and sure? And there is no man that desires not to be, as there is none desires not to be happy: for how can he have happiness, and have no being?

CHAPTER XXVII

Of essence, knowledge of essence, and love of both.

So naturally does this delight, that very wretches, for nothing else but this, would rather leave their misery than the world, knowing themselves wretches though, yet would they not die. And the most wretched or all, either in wise judgments (for their foolishness) or in theirs that hold themselves blessed (for their defect hereof): if one should proffer them an immortality of misery, and tell them if they refused it, they should become just nothing, and lose all being, verily they would rejoice and choose an eternal misery before a nullity of being. This our common sense testifies. For why do they fear to end their misery by death rather than continue it, but that nature still wishes to hold a being? And therefore seeing they know they must die, they do make such great account of a long life in their misery, ere they die: wherein doubtless they show how thankful they will be for immortality, though it had not end of their misery. And what of brute beasts that understand not this, from the dragon
to the worm? Do they not show their love of being, by avoiding death all ways possible? The trees and plants that have no sense of death nor means to avoid it, do they not put forth one sprig into the air, and another deeper into the earth, whereby to attract nutriment and preserve their being? Nay, the very bodies that have neither sense nor vegetation, by their very motion upwards, downwards, or middle suspension, move to the conservation of their essence and nature. Now then may be gathered how much man's nature is beloved, and loth to be deceived; from hence, that man had rather lament in a sound mind, than rejoice in folly. Which power is in no mortal creature but man: others have sharper sights than we, yet not any can behold the incorporeal light, which in some sort lights our minds, producing a true judgment of all these things, as far as we are capable of it. But though the unreasonable creatures' senses contain no knowledge, yet some semblitude of knowledge there is in them. But all other corporal creatures, having no sense in themselves, are but the objects of others' senses, therefore called sensible: and the growth and power whereby the trees draw nutriment, this is like their sense. But these and all other corporal bodies' causes, are hid in nature, marry their forms in the diversity (the parts of the world's structure) are apparent to us, seemingly professing a desire to be known since they could not know themselves: but our bodily senses judge not of them though they apprehend them. That is left unto a far more excellent interior sense, discerning just and unjust: just, by the intelligible form, unjust, by the privation thereof. The office of this sense, neither the eye, the ear, the smell, the taste, nor the touch can perform. By this I know my being, and I know this knowledge, and I love them both, and know that I love them both.
CHAPTER XXVIII

Whether we draw nearer to the image of the Holy Trinity, in loving of that love by which we love to be, and to know our being.

But we have spoken as much as needs here of the essence and knowledge, how much we ought to respect them in ourselves, and in other creatures under us, though we find a different similitude in them. But whether the love that we love them in be loved, that is to declare. It is loved: we prove it, because it is loved in all things that are justly loved. For he is not worthily called a good man, that knows good, but he that loves it. Why, then, may we not love that love in ourselves, whereby we love that which is to be loved? They may both be in one man; and it is good for a man that, his goodness increasing, his evil should decrease, even to the perfection of his cure, and full change into goodness: for if we were beasts, we should love a carnal sensitive life: and this good would suffice our nature without any further trouble; if we were trees, we should not indeed love anything by motion of sense: yet should we seem to affect fruitfulness and growth: if we were stones, water, wind, fire, or so, we should want sense and life, yet should we have a natural appetite unto our due places, for the motions of weights are like the body's loves, go, they upward or downwards: for weight is to the body, as love is to the soul. But because we are men, made after our Creator's image, whose eternity is true, truth eternal: charity, true and eternal; neither confounded nor severed, we run through all things under us (which could not be created, formed, nor ordered
without the hand of the most essential, wise, and good God), and so through all the works of creation; gathering from this more plain, and from that less apparent marks of His essence: and beholding His image in ourselves like the prodigal child, we recall our thoughts home, and return to Him from whom we fell. There our being shall have no end, our knowledge no error, our love no offence. But as now, though we see these three sure, trusting not to others, but observing it ourselves, with our certain interior sight, yet because of ourselves we cannot know how long they shall last, when they shall end, whither they shall go, doing well or evil, therefore here we take other witnesses, of the infallibility of whose credit we will not dispute here, but hereafter. In this book of the city of God, that was never pilgrim, but always immortal in heaven, being compounded of the angels eternally coherent with God, and never ceasing this coherence, between whom and their darkness, namely, those that forsook Him, a separation was made as we said at first by God, now will we, by His grace, proceed in our discourse already begun.

CHAPTER XXIX

Of the angels’ knowledge of the Trinity in the Deity, and consequently of the causes of things in the Archetype, ere they come to be effected in works.

These holy angels learn not of God by sounds, but by being present with that unchangeable truth, His only begotten Word, Himself, and His Holy Spirit,
Our knowledge is but twilight. Our undivided Trinity, of substantial persons: yet hold they not three Gods, but one, and this they know plainer than we know ourselves. The creatures also do they know better in the wisdom of God, the workman's draught, than in the things produced, and consequently themselves in that, better than in themselves, though having their knowledge in both: for they were made, and are not of His substance that made them. Therefore in Him their knowledge is day, in themselves, as we said, twilight. But the knowledge of a thing by the means it is made, and the thing itself made, are far different. The understanding of a line or a figure does produce a more perfect knowledge of it than the draught of it in dust: and justice is one in the changeless truth, and another in the just man's soul. And so of the rest, as the firmament between the waters above and below, called heaven, the gathering of the waters, the appearance of land, growth of plants, creation of souls and fishes, of the water, and four-footed beasts of the earth, and last, of man, the most excelling creature of all. All these the angels discerned in the word of God, where they had their causes of their production immovable and fixed, otherwise than in themselves: clearer in Him, but cloudier in themselves: yet referring all those works to the Creator's praise, it shines like morning in the minds of these contemplators.
CHAPTER XXX

The perfection of the number six, the first is complete in all the parts.

And these were performed in six days because of the perfection of the number of six, one being six times repeated: not that God was tied unto time, and could not have created all at once, and afterwards have bound the motions to time's congruence, but because that number signified the perfection of the work: for six is the first number that is filled by conjunction of the parts, the sixth the third and the half: which is one, two, and three; all which conjoined are six. Parts in numbers are those that may be described of how many they are, as a half, a third, a fourth, and so forth. But four being in nine, yet is no just part of it: one is the ninth part, and three the third part. But these, two parts, one and three, are far from making nine the whole. So four is a part of ten, but no just part: one is the tenth part, two the fifth, and five the second: yet these three parts one, two, and five, make not up full ten, but eight only. As for the number of twelve, the parts exceed it. For there is one the twelfth part, six the second, four the third, three the fourth, and two the sixth. But one, two, three, four and six, make above twelve, namely sixteen. This by the way now to prove the perfection of the number of six, the first (as I said), that is made of the conjunction of the parts: and in this did God make perfect all His works. Wherefore this number is not to be despised, but has the esteem apparently confirmed by many places of Scripture. Nor was it said in vain of God's works, "Thou madest all things in number, weight and measure."  

1 Wisd. xi.
CHAPTER XXXI

Of the seventh day, the day of rest and complete perfection.

Seven suitable to rest and perfection. But in the seventh day, that is, the seventh repetition of the first day (which number has perfection also in another kind), God rested, and gave the first rule of sanctification therein. The day that had no even, God would not sanctify in His works but in rest. For there is none of His works, but being considered first in God, and then in itself, will produce a day knowledge, and an even's. Of the perfection of seven, I could say much, but this volume grows big, and I fear I shall be held rather to take occasion to show my small skill, than to respect others' edification. Therefore we must have a care of gravity and moderation, lest running all upon number, we be thought neglecters of weight and measure. Let this be a sufficient admonition, that three is the first number, wholly odd, and four wholly even, and these two make seven, which is therefore oftentimes put for all: as here, "The just shall fall seven times a day, and arise again," that is, "How oftsoever he fall, he shall rise again." (This is not meant of iniquity, but of tribulation, drawing him to humility.) Again, "Seven times a day will I praise thee:" the same he had said before: "His praise shall be always in my mouth." Many such places as these the Scripture has, to prove the number of seven to be often used for all, universally. Therefore is the Holy Spirit called oftentimes by this number, of whom Christ said, "He shall teach us all truth." There is God's rest, wherein we rest in God: in this whole, in this per-

1 Prov. xxiv. 16.
The angels endure, know, rest. 

Chap. XXXII] THE CITY OF GOD

fection is rest, in the part of it was labour: therefore we labour, because we know as yet but in part, but when perfection is come, that which is in part shall be abolished. This makes us search the Scriptures so laboriously. But the holy angels (unto whose glorious congregation our toilsome pilgrimage casts a long look), as they have eternal permanence, so have they easy knowledge, and happy rest in God, helping us without trouble, because their spiritual, pure, and free motions are without labour.

CHAPTER XXXII

Of their opinion that held angels to be created before the world.

But if some oppose, and say that that place, “Let there be light and there was light,” was not meant of the angels’ creation, but of some other corporal light, and teach that the angels were made not only before the firmament dividing the waters, and called heaven, but even before these words were spoken: “In the beginning God made heaven and earth:” taking not this place as if nothing had been made before, but because God made all by His wisdom and word, whom the Scripture also calls a beginning, as answered also to the Jews when they inquired Who He was: I will not contend, because I delight so in the intimation of the Trinity in the first chapter of Genesis. For having said: “In the beginning God made heaven and earth:” that is, the Father created it in the Son, as the psalm says: “O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In Thy wisdom madest Thou them
all: "presently after, he mentions the Holy Spirit. For having showed the fashion of earth, and what a huge mass of the future creation God called heaven and earth: "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the deep:" to perfect his mention of the Trinity he added, "and the Spirit of the Lord moved upon the waters." Let each one take it as he likes: it is so profound that learning may produce divers opinions herein, all faithful and true ones: so that none doubt that the angels are placed in the high heavens, not as co-eternals with God, but as sure of eternal felicity: to whose society Christ did not only teach that His little ones belonged, saying, "They shall be equal with the angels of God:" but he shows further, the very contemplation of the angels, saying: "See that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven, their angels always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."

CHAPTER XXXIII

Of the two different societies of angels, not unjustly termed light and darkness.

That some angels offended, and therefore were thrust into prisons in the world's lowest parts; until the day of their last judicial damnation, St. Peter testifies plainly, saying, "That God spared not the angels that had sinned, but cast them down into hell and delivered them into chains of darkness to be kept unto damnation." Now whether God's pre-
science separated these from the other, who doubts? That He called the other light, worthily, who denies? Are not we here on earth, by faith, and hope of equality with them, already ere we have it, called light by the apostles? "Ye were once darkness," says he, "but are now light in the Lord." 1

And well do these perceive the other apostolical powers are called darkness, who consider them rightly, or believe them to be worse than the worst unbeliever. Wherefore though that light, which God said should be, and it was, be one thing; and the darkness from which God separated the light, be another; yet the obscurity of this opinion of these two societies, the one enjoying God, the other swelling in pride: the one to whom it said: "Praise God all ye His angels," the other whose prince said: "All these will I give. Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me:" the one inflamed with God's love, the other, blown big with self-love (whereas it is said, "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the lowly"); the one in the highest heavens, the other in the obscurest air: the one, piously quiet, the other madly turbulent: the one punishing or relieving according to God's justice and mercy: the other raging with the over unreasonable desire to hurt and subdue: the one allowed God's minister to all good, the other restrained by God from doing the desired hurt: the one scorning the other for doing good against their wills by temptations: the other envying this, the recollection of the faithful pilgrims: the obscurity (I say) of the opinion of these two so contrary societies (the one good in nature and will, the other good in nature also, but bad by will), since it is not explained by other places of Scripture, that this place in Genesis, of the light and darkness,

1 Ephes. v. 8.
may be applied as denominative unto them both (though the author had no such intent), yet has not been unprofitably handled: because though we could not know the author's will, yet we kept the rule of faith, which many other places make manifest. For though God's corporal works be here recited, yet have some similitude with the spiritual, as the apostle says: "You are all the children of the light, and the children of the day: we are no sons of the night nor darkness." But if this were the author's mind, the other disputations also attained perfection: that "so wise a man of God, may the spirit in him," in reciting the works of God, all perfected in six days, might by no means be held to leave out the angels, either in the beginning, that is, because He had made them first, or (as we may better understand, "In the beginning") because He made them in His only begotten Word, in which beginning God made heaven and earth: which two names either include all the creation, spiritual and temporal, which is more credible: or the two great parts only as continents of the lesser, being first proposed in the whole, and then the parts performed orderly according to the mystery of the six days.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Of the opinion that some held, that the angels were meant by the several waters, and of others that held the waters uncreated.

Yet some there were that thought that the company of angels were meant by the waters: and that these words, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of
the waters, and let it separate the waters from the (Bad angels not independent of God.)

waters," meant by the upper waters the angels, and by the lower, either the nations, or the devils. But if this be so, there is no mention of the angels' creation, but only of their separation. Though some most vainly and impiously deny, that God made the waters, because He never said, "Let there be waters." So they may say of earth: for He never said, "Let there be earth." Aye, but say they: it is written God "created both heaven and earth." Did He so? Then is water included therein also, for one name serves both: for the psalm says, "The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands prepared the dry land." but the elementary weights do move these men not to take the waters above for the angels, because so an element cannot remain above the heavens. No more would these men, if they could make a man after their principles, put phlegm, being instead of water in man's body, in the head: but there is the seat of phlegm, most fitly appointed by God: but so absurdly in these men's conceits, that if we know not (though this book told us plain) that God had placed this fluid, cold and consequently heavy humour, in the uppermost part of man's body, these world-weighers would never believe it. And if they were subject to the Scripture's authority, they would yet have some meaning to shift by." But seeing that the consideration of all things that the Book of God contains concerning the creation would draw us far from our resolved purpose, let us now (together with the conclusion of this book) give end to this disputature of the two contrary societies of angels, wherein are also some grounds of the two societies of mankind, unto whom we intend now to proceed, in a fitting discourse.

Gen. i. 1 Ps. xcvi.
THE ELEVENTH BOOK

CHAPTER I

Of the nature of good and evil angels.

This Before I speak of the creation of man, wherein (in respect of mortal reasonable creatures) the two cities had their original, as we showed in the last book of the Angels: (to show as well as we can) the congruity and convenience of the society of men with angels: and that there are not four, but rather two societies of men and angels qualified alike, and combined in either, the one consisting both of good angels and men, and the other of evil: that the contrariety of desires, between the angels, good and evil, arose from their diverse natures and beginnings, we may at no hand believe: God having been alike good in both their creations, and in all things beside them. But this diversity arises from their wills: some of them persisting in God, their common good, and in His truth, love, and eternity: and other some delighting more in their own power, as though it were from themselves, fell from that common all-blessing good to dote upon their own: and taking pride for eternity, vain deceit for firm truth, and factious envy for perfect love, became proud, deceitful, and envious. The cause of their beatitude was their adherence with God: then must their misery's cause be the direct contrary, namely, their not adherence with God. Wherefore if when we are asked, "Why they are
blessed?" and we answer well, "Because they stuck fast unto God;" and being asked, "Why they are wretched?" we answer well, "Because they stuck not unto God;" then is there no beatitude for any reasonable or understanding creature to attain, but in God. So then though all creatures cannot be blessed, for beasts, trees, stones, &c., are incapable hereof; yet those that are, are not so of themselves, being created of nothing, but they have it from the Creator. Attaining Him they are happy, losing Him, unhappy: but He Himself is good only of Himself, and therefore cannot lose His good, because He cannot lose Himself. Therefore the one, true blessed God, we say is the only immutable good: and those things He made are good also, because they are from Him, but they are mutable because they were made of nothing. Wherefore though they be not the chief goods, God being above them, yet are they great, in being able to adhere unto the chief good, and so be happy, without which adherence they cannot but be wretched. Nor are other parcels of the creation better, in that they cannot be wretched: for we cannot say our other members are better than our eyes in that they cannot be blind: but even as sensitive nature in the worst plight is better than the insensible stone: so is the reasonable (albeit miserable) above the brutish, that cannot therefore be miserable. This being so, then this nature created in such excellence, that though it be mutable yet by inheritance with God that unchangeable good, it may become blessed: nor satisfies the one need without blessedness, nor has any means to attain this blessedness but God, truly commits a great error and enormity in not adhering unto Him. And all sin is against nature and hurtful thereunto. Wherefore that nature differs not in Nature, from that which adheres unto God, but in vice: and yet in
Some vice is the nature itself laudable still. For the vice being justly discommended, commends the nature: the true dispraise of vice being, “that it disgraceth an honest nature.” So therefore even as when we call blindness a fault of the eyes, we show that sight belongs to the eye: and in calling the fault of the ears deafness, that hearing belongs to the ear: so likewise when we say it was the angels’ fault not to adhere unto God, we show that that adherence belonged to their natures. And how great a praise it is to continue in this adherence; fruition and living in so great a good without death, error, or trouble, who can sufficiently declare or imagine? Wherefore since it was the evil angels’ fault not to adhere unto God (all vice being against nature): it is manifest that God created their nature good: since it is hurt only by their departure from Him.

CHAPTER II

That no essence is contrary to God, though all the world’s frailty seem to be opposite to His immutable eternity.

This I have said lest some should think that the apostolical powers whereof we speak had a different nature from the rest, as having another beginning; and not God to their author. Which one shall the sooner avoid by considering what God said unto Moses by His angels, when He sent him to the children of Israel: “I am that I am.” ¹ For God being the highest essence, that is, eternal and un-

¹ Exod. iii.
changeable, gave essence to His creatures, but not such as His own: to some more, and to some less; ordering nature's existence by degrees; for as wisdom is derived from being wise, so is essence ab ipso esse, of having being: the word is now not used of the old Latinists, but taken of late into the tongue, to serve for to explain the Greek ousia, which it expresses word for word. Wherefore unto that especial, high essence, that created all the rest, there is no nature contrary, but that which has no essence: for that which has being is not contrary unto that which has also being. Therefore no essence at all is contrary to God the chief essence, and cause of essence in all.

CHAPTER III

Of God's enemies not by nature, but will, which hurting them, hurts their good nature: because there is no vice but hurts nature.

The Scripture calls them God's enemies, because they oppose His sovereignty not by nature but will, having no power to hurt Him, but themselves. Their will to resist, not their power to hurt, makes them His foes, for He is unchangeable and wholly incorruptible: wherefore the vice that makes them oppose God, is their own hurt, and no way God's: only because it corrupts their good nature. Their nature it is not, but their vice that contraries God: evil only being contrary to good. And who denies that God is the best good; so then vice is contrary unto God, as evil is unto good. The nature also which it corrupts is good, and therefore opposed by it: but it
stands against God as evil only against good; but against this nature as evil and hurt also, for evil cannot hurt God, but incorruptible natures only, which are good by the testimony of the hurt that evil does them, for if they were not good, vice could not hurt them, for what does it in hurting them but abolish their integrity, lustre, virtue, safety, and whatever vice can diminish or root out of a good nature; which if it be not therein, vice takes it not away, and therefore hurts not: for it cannot be both a vice, and hurtless, whence we gather that though vice cannot hurt that unchangeable good, yet it can hurt nothing but good: because it is not but where it hurts. And so we may say that vice cannot be in the highest good, nor cannot be in some good. Good therefore may be alone, but so cannot evil: because the natures that an evil will has corrupted, though as they be polluted they are evil, yet as they are natures, they are good. And when this vicious nature is punished, there is this good besides the nature, that it is not unpunished, for this is just, and what is just is questionless good, and no man is punished for the faults of his nature, but of his will, for that vice that has gotten from a custom into a habit and seems natural, had the original from corruption of will: for now we speak of the vices of that nature wherein is a soul capable of the intellectual light, whereby we discern between just and unjust.
Of lifeless and reasonless natures, whose order differs not from the decorum held in the whole universe.

But it were a sottishness to think that the faults of beasts, trees, and other unreasonable, senseless, or lifeless creatures, whereby their corruptible nature is damnified, are damnable: for the Creator's will has disposed of those, thus, to perfect the inferior beauty of this universe by this successive alteration of them. For earthly things are not comparable to heavenly: yet might not the world want those, because the other are more glorious. Wherefore in the succession of those things one to another in their due places, and in the change of the meaner into qualities of the better, the order of things transitory consists. Which order's glory we delight not in, because we are annexed to it, as parts of mortality; we cannot discern the whole universe, though we observe how conveniently those parcels we see, are combined: whereupon in things out of our contemplation's reach, we must believe the providence of the Creator, rather than be so rash as to condemn any part of the world's fabric, of any imperfection. Though if we mark well, by the same reason, those involuntary, and unpunishable faults to those creatures, commend their natures unto us: none of whom has any other maker but God: because we ourselves dislike that that nature of theirs which we like should be defaced by that fault: unless men will dislike the natures of things that hurt them, not consider their natures, but their own profit, as of those creatures that plagued the pride of Egypt.¹

¹ Exod. viii.
But so they might dispraise the sun, for some offenders, or unjust detainers of others' right, are by the judges condemned to be set in the hot sun. Wherefore it is not the consideration of nature in respect of our profit, but in itself that glorifies the Creator. The nature of the eternal fire is assuredly audible? though the wicked shall be therein everlastingly tormented. For what is more fair than the bright, pure, and flaming fire? What more useful to heat, cure, or boil withal, though not so hurtful in burning? Thus that being penally applied, is pernicious, which being orderly used, is convenient: for who can explain the thousand uses of it in the world? Hear them not that praise the fire's light and dispraise the heat: respecting not the nature of it but their own profit and disprofit: they would see, but they would not burn. But they consider not that this light they like so, being immoderately used, hurts a tender eye: and that in this heat which they dislike so many creatures do very conveniently keep, and live.

CHAPTER V

That the Creator has deserved praise in every form and kind of nature.

Wherefore all natures are good, because they have their form, kind, and a certain rest withal in themselves. And when they are in their true posture of nature, they preserve the essence in the full manner as they received it: and that, whose essence is not eternal, follows the laws of the Creator that sways
it, and changes into better, or worse, tending (by God's disposition) still to that end which the order of the universe requires, so that that corruption which brings all natures mortal into dissolution cannot so dissolve that which was, but it may become that afterwards which it was before, or that which it should be: which being so, then God, the highest being, who made all things that are not Himself (no creature being fit for that equality, being made of nothing, and consequently being not able to have been, but by Him), is not to be discommended through the taking offence at some faults, but to be honoured upon the due consideration of the perfection of all natures.

CHAPTER VI

The cause of the good angels' bliss, and the evils' misery.

The true cause, therefore, of the good angels' bliss is their adherence to that most high essence, and the just cause of the bad angels' misery is their departure from that high essence, to reside upon themselves, that were not such: which vice, what is it else but pride? "For pride is the root of all sin." These would not therefore stick unto Him, their strength, and having power to be more perfect by adherence to this highest good, they preferred themselves that were His inferiors before Him. This was the first fall, misery, and vice of this nature, which were it not created to have the highest being, yet might it have beatitude by fruition of the highest being: but

1 Ecclus. 2.
Proud falling from Him, not be made nothing, but yet less than it was, and consequently miserable. Seek the cause of this evil will, and you shall find just none. For what can cause the will’s evil, the will being sole cause of all evil? The evil will therefore causes evil works, but nothing causes the evil will. If there be, then either it has a will or none. If it have, it is either a good one or a bad; if good, what fool will say, a good will is cause of an evil will? It should if it caused sin: but this were extreme absurdity to affirm. But if that it have an evil will, then I ask what caused this evil will in it? and to limit my questions, I ask the cause of the first evil will. For not that which another evil will has caused is the first evil will, but that which none has caused: for still that which causes is before the other caused. If I be answered, that nothing caused it, but it was from the beginning, I ask then whether it were in any nature. If it were in none, it had no being; if it were in any, it corrupted it, hurt it, and deprived it of all good; and therefore this vice could not be in an evil nature, but in a good; where it might do hurt: for if it could not hurt, it was no vice, and therefore no bad will; and if it did hurt, it was by privation of good, or diminishing of it. Therefore a bad will could be from eternity in that wherein a good nature had been before, which the evil will destroyed by hurt. Well, if it were not eternal, who made it? It must be answered, something that had no evil will: what, was this inferior, superior, or equal unto it? If it were the superior, it was better, and why then had it not a will, nay, a better will?

This may also be said of the equal: for two good wills never make the one the other bad. It remains, then, that some inferior thing that had no will was
cause of that vicious will in the angels. Aye, but all things below them, even to the lowest earth, being natural, is also good, and has the goodness of form and kind in all order. How then can a good thing produce an evil will? how can good be cause of evil? for the will turning from the superior to the inferior, becomes bad, not because the thing whereunto it turns is bad, but because the division is bad and perverse. No inferior thing then depraves the will, but the will depraves itself by following inferior things inordinately. For if two of like effect in body and mind should behold one beauteous personage, and the one of them be stirred with a lustful desire towards it, and the other's thoughts stand chaste, what shall we think was cause of the evil will in the one and not in the other? Not the seen beauty, for it transformed not the will in both, and yet both saw it alike: not the flesh of the beholder's face, why not both? nor the mind we presupposed them both alike before, in body and mind. Shall we say the devil secretly suggested it unto one of them, as though he consented not to it in his own proper will?

This consent, therefore, the cause of this assent of the will to vicious desire, is that we seek. For, to take away one, lets more in the question, if both were tempted, and the one yielded, and the other did not, why was this, but because the one would continue chaste, and the other would not? whence, then, was this secret fall but from the proper will, where there was such parity in body and mind, a like sight, and a like temptation? So then he that desires to know the cause of the vicious will in the one of them, if he mark it well shall find nothing. For if we say that he caused it, what was he ere his vicious will, but a creature of a good nature, the
Not work of God, that unchangeable good? Wherefore he that says that he that consented to this lustful desire which the other withstood (both being before alike affected, and beholding the beautiful object alike) was cause of his own evil will, whereas he was good before this vice of will; let him ask why he caused this? whether from his nature, or for that he was made of nothing; and he shall find that his evil will arose not from his nature, but from his nothing: for if we shall make his nature the effecter of his vicious will, what shall we do but affirm that good is the efficient cause of evil? But how can it be that nature (though it be mutable), before it have a vicious will, should do viciously, namely, in making the will vicious?

CHAPTER VII

That we ought not to seek out the cause of the vicious will.

Let none therefore seek the efficient cause of an evil will: for it is not efficient but deficient, nor is there effect but defect: namely falling from that highest essence, unto a lower, this is to have an evil will. The causes whereof (being not efficient but deficient) if one endeavour to seek, it is as if he should seek to see the darkness, or to hear silence: we know them both, this by the ear, and that by the eye: but not by any forms of theirs, but privation of forms. Let none then seek to know that of me which I know not myself: unless he will learn not to know what he must know, that he cannot know: for the things
that we know by privation and not by form, are Evil will rather (if you can conceive me) known by not knowing; and in knowing them, are still unknown. For the body's eye coursing over bodily objects, sees no darkness, but when it ceases to see. And so it belongs to the ear, and to no other sense to know silence, which notwithstanding is not known but by not hearing. So our intellect speculates the intelligible forms, but where they fail it learns by not learning: for who can understand his faults? This I know, that God's nature can never fail in time, nor in part: but all things that are made of nothing may decay: which do notwithstanding more good, as they are more essential: for then do they something when they have efficient causes: but in that they fail, and fall off, and do evil, they have deficient causes: and what do they then but vanity?

CHAPTER VIII

Of the perverse love, whereby the soul goes from the unchangeable to the changeable good.

I know besides that wherein the vicious will is resident, therein is that done, which if the will would not, should not be done: and therefore the punishment falls justly upon those acts which are wills and not necessities. It is not the thing to which we fall, but our fall that is evil: that is, we fall to no evil natures, but against nature's order, from the highest to the lower: and therefore evil, Covetousness is no vice in the gold, but in him that

1 Ps. xix.
The fault not in things but in will. perversely leaves justice to love gold, whereas justice ought always to be preferred before riches. Nor is lust the fault of sweet beauteous bodies, but the soul’s that runs perversely to bodily delights, neglecting temperance, which scorns all company with those, and prepares us unto far more excellent and spiritual pleasures. Vainglory is not a vice proper to human praise, but the soul’s that perversely affects praise of men, not respecting the conscience’s testimony. Nor is pride his vice that gives the power, but the soul’s, perversely loving that power, contemning the justice of the Most Mighty. By this then, he that perversely affected a good of nature, though he attain it, is evil himself in this good, and wretched, being deprived of a better.

CHAPTER IX

Whether He that made the angels’ nature, made their wills good also, by the infusion of His love into them through His Holy Spirit.

Seeing therefore there is no natural nor essential cause, effecting the evil of will, but that evil of mutability of spirit, which depraves the good of nature, arises from itself: being effected no way but by falling from God, which falling also has no cause: if we say also that good wills have no efficient cause, we must beware lest they be not held uncreated and co-eternal with God. But seeing that the angels themselves were created, how can their wills but be so also? Besides being created, whether were they created with them, or without them first? if with them,
then doubtless He that made one, made both: and as soon as they were created, they were joined to Him in that love wherein they were created. And therein were they severed from the other, because they kept their good wills still, and the other were changed by falling in their evil will, from that which was good, whence they need not have fallen unless they had listed. But if the good angels were at first without good wills, and made those wills in themselves without God's working, were they therefore made better of themselves than by His creation? God forbid. For what were they without good wills, but evil. Or, if they were not evil because they had no evil wills neither, nor fell from that which they had not, howsoever they were not as yet so good, as when they had gotten good wills. But now if they could not make themselves better than God (the best workman of the world) had made them: then verily could they never have had good wills but by the operation of the Creator in them. And these good wills, affecting their conversion (not to themselves who were inferiors, but) to the supreme God, to adhere unto Him, and be blessed by fruition of Him, what do they else but show, that the best will should have remained poor, in desire only, but that He who made a good nature of nothing capable of Himself, made it better by perfecting it of Himself, first having made it more desirous of perfection? for this must be examined: whether the good angels created good will in themselves, by a good will or a bad, or none: if by none, then none they created. If by a bad, how can a bad will produce a good? if by a good, then had they good wills already.

And who gave them those, but He that created them by a good will, that is, in that chaste love of their adherence to Him, both forming them nature,
but defect and giving them grace? Believe it therefore the angels were never without good will, that is, God's love: but those that were created good, and yet became evil by their proper will (which no good nature can do but in a voluntary defect from good, that, and not the good being the cause of evil), either received less grace from the divine love, than they that persisted therein, or if they had equal good at their creation, the one fell by the evil wills, and the other having further help attained that bliss, from which they were sure never to fall, as we showed in our last book. Therefore, to God's due praise we must confess that the diffusion of God's love is bestowed as well upon the angels, as the saints, by His Holy Spirit bestowed upon them: and that that Scripture, "It is good for me to adhere unto God," was peculiar at first to the holy angels, before man was made. This good they all participate with Him to whom they adhere, and are a holy city, a living sacrifice, and a living temple unto that God. Part whereof, namely that which the angels shall gather and take up from this earthly pilgrimage unto that society, being now in the flesh, upon earth, or dead, and resting in the secret receptacle of souls, how it had first original must I now explain, as I did before of the angels. For of God's work, the first man, came all mankind, as the Scripture says, whose authority is justly admired throughout the earth, and those natures whom (amongst other things) it prophesied should believe it.

1 Ps. lxiii.
CHAPTER X

Of the falseness of that history that says the world has continued many thousand years.

Let the conjectures therefore of those men that fable of man's and the world's original they know not what, pass for us: for some think that men have been always, as of the world; as Apuleius writes of men: "Severally mortal, but generally eternal," and when we say to them: why, if the world has always been, how can your histories speak true in relation of who invented this or that, who brought up arts and learning, and who first inhabited this or that region? they answered us: "The world has at certain times been so wasted by fires and deluges, that the men were brought to a very few: whose progeny multiplied again: and so seemed this as man's first original, whereas indeed it was but a reparation of those whom the fires and floods had destroyed: but that man cannot have production, but from man." They speak now what they think, but not what they know: being deceived by a sort of most false writings, that say, "The world has continued a many thousand years," whereas the Holy Scripture gives us not account full six thousand years since man was made. To show the falseness of these writings briefly, and that their authority is not worth a rush herein, that epistle of Great Alexander to his mother, containing a narration of things by an Egyptian priest unto him, made out of their religious mysteries: contains also the monarchies, that the Greek histories record also: in this epistle the Assyrian monarchy lasts five thousand years and above. But in the Greek history, from Belus, the first king, it continues but one
or other evidence than holy writ! thousand three hundred years. And with Belus does the Egyptian story begin also. The Persian monarchy (says that epistle) until Alexander’s conquest (to whom this priest spake thus), lasted above eight thousand years: whereas the Macedonians until Alexander’s death lasted but four hundred four score and five years, and the Persians until his victory, two hundred thirty and three years, by the Greek story. So far are these computations short of the Egyptians’, being not equal with them though they were trebled. For the Egyptians are said once to have had their years but four months long: so that one full year of the Greeks or ours, is just three of their old ones. But all this will not make the Greek and Egyptian computations meet: and therefore we must rather trust the Greek, as not exceeding our Holy Scriptures’ account. But if this epistle of Alexander being so famous, differ so far from the most probable account, how much less faith then ought we to give to those their fabulous antiquities, fraught with leasings, against our divine books, that foretold that the whole world should believe them, and the whole world has done so: and which prove that they wrote truth in things past, by the true occurrences of things to come, by them presaged.

CHAPTER XI

Of those that hold not the eternity of the world, but either a dissolution and generation of innumerable worlds, or of this one at the expiration of certain years.

But others there are, that do not think the world eternal, and yet either imagine it, not to be one world
but many: or one only, dissolved and regenerate at the date of certain years. Now these must needs confess, that there were first men of themselves, ere any men were begotten. For they cannot think that the whole world perishing, any man could remain, as they may do in those burnings and inundations which left still some men to repair mankind: but as they hold the world to be re-edified out of its own ruins, so must they believe that mankind first was produced out of the elements, and from these first, as man’s following propagation, as other creatures, by generation of their like.

CHAPTER XII

Of such as held man’s creation too lately effected.

WHEREFORE our answer to those that held the world to have been ab externo against Plato’s express confession, though some say he spake not as he thought, the same shall be our answer still to those that think man’s creation too lately effected, having let those innumerable spaces of time pass, and by the Scripture’s authority been made but so late, as within this six thousand years. If the brevity of time be offensive, and that the years since man was made seem so few, let them consider that nothing that has an extreme, is continual: and that all the definite spaces of the world being compared to the interminate Trinity, are as (a very little, nay as) just nothing. And therefore though we should reckon five or six, or sixty, or six hundred thousand years, and multiply them so often till the number wanted a name, and say then
To ask why God made man, yet may we ask why He made him not sooner? For God's pause before man's creation being from all eternity was so great, that compare a definite number with it, of never so unspeakable a quantity, and it is not so much, as one half drop of water being counterpoised with the whole ocean; for in these, though the one be so exceeding small, and the other so incomparably great, yet both are definite. But that time which has any original, run it on to never so huge a quantity, being compared unto that which has no beginning, I know not whether to call it small, or nothing. For, withdraw but moments from the end of the first, and be the number never so great, it will (as if one should diminish the number of a man's days from the time he lives in to his birthday) decrease, until we come to the very beginning. But from the latter abstract, not moments, nor days, nor months, nor years, but as much time as the other whole number contained (lay it out of the compass of all computation) and that as often as you please, prevail you when you can never attain the beginning, it having none at all? Wherefore that which we ask now after five thousand years, and the overplus, our posterity may as well ask after five hundred thousand years, if our mortality should succeed, and our infirmity endure so long. And our forefathers, presently upon the first man's time might have called this in question. Nay, the first man himself, that very day that he was made, or the next, might have asked why he was made no sooner? But whenever he had been made, this controversy of his original and the world's, should have no better foundation than it has now.
CHAPTER XIII

Of the revolution of times. at whose expiration some philosophers held that the universe should return to the state it was in at first.

Now these philosophers believed that this world had no other dissolution, but a renewing of it continually at certain revolutions of time, wherein the nature of things was repaired; and so passed on a continual rotation of ages past and coming: whether this fell out in the continuance of one world, or the world arising and falling gave this succession, and date of things by its own renovation, from which ridiculous mocking they cannot free the immortal nor the wisest soul, but it must still be tossed unto false bliss, and beaten back into true misery. For how is that bliss true, whose eternity is ever uncertain, the soul either being ignorant of the return unto misery, or fearing it in the midst of felicity? But if it go from misery to happiness never to return, then is something begun in time which time shall never give end unto, and why not then the world? and why not man made therein? (to avoid all the false tracts that deceived wits have devised to distract men from the truth) for some will have that place of Ecclesiastes: "What is it that hath been? that which shall be? (what is it that hath been made? that which shall be made.) And there is no new thing under the sun: nor anything whereof one may say, behold this is new: it hath been already in the time that was before us,"

1 Eccles. i. 9, 10.
nor torrent's falls; or else generally of all transitory creatures; for there were men before us, there are with us, and there shall be after us; so it is of trees, and beasts. Nay, even monsters, though they be unusual, and diverse, and some have fallen out but once, yet as they are generally wonders, and miracles, they are both past and to come: nor is it news to see a monster under the sun. Though some will have the wise man to speak of God's predestination that fore-framed all, and therefore that now there is nothing new under the sun. But far be our faith from believing that these words of Solomon should mean those revolutions that they do dispose the world's course and renovation by: as Plato the Athenian philosopher taught in the academy that in a certain unbounded space, yet definite, Plato himself, his scholars, the city and school, should after infinite ages meet all in that place again and be as they were when he taught this. God forbid I say that we should believe this. "For Christ once died for our sins, and rising again, dies no more, nor hath death any future dominion over Him, and we, after our resurrection shall be always with the Lord," 1 to whom now we say with the psalm, "Thou wilt keep us, O Lord, and preserve us from this generation for ever." 2 The following place I think fits them best: the wicked walk in a circuit: not because their life (as they think) is to run circularly, but because their false doctrine runs round in a circular maze.

1 Rom. vi.; 1 Thess. iv. 2 Ps. xii. 7.
CHAPTER XIV

Of man's temporal estate, made by God, out of no newness or change of will.

But what wonder if these men run in their circular error, and find no way forth, seeing they neither know mankind's original nor his end? being not able to pierce into God's depths: who being eternal, and without beginning, yet gave time a beginning, and made man in time whom He had not made before, yet not now makes He him by any sudden motion, but as He had eternally decreed. Who can penetrate this inscrutable depth, wherein God gave man a temporal beginning and had none before: and this out of His eternal, unchangeable will; multiplying all mankind from one? for when the psalmist had said, "Thou shalt keep us, O Lord, and preserve us from this generation for ever," 1 then he apprehends those whose fond and false doctrine reserve no eternity for the soul's blessed freedom, in adjoining, "The wicked walk in a circuit," as who should say, "What dost thou think or believe?" Should we say that God suddenly determined to make man, whom He had not made in all eternity before, and yet that God is ever immutable, and cannot change His will, lest this should draw us into doubt, he answers God presently, saying, "In thy deep wisdom didst Thou multiply the sons of men." Let men think, talk, or dispute as they will (says he) and argue as they think, "In thy deep wisdom," which none can discover, "didst thou multiply mankind." For it is most deep, that God should be from eternity; and yet decree that man should be made at this time, and not before, without alteration of will.

1 Ps. xi.
Whether (to preserve God’s eternal domination) we must suppose that He has always had creatures to rule over, and how that may be held always created, which is not co-eternal with God.

But I, as I dare not deny God’s domination eternal from ever, so may I not doubt but that man had a temporal beginning before which he was not. But when I think, what God should be Lord over from eternity, here do I fear to affirm anything, because I look unto myself, and know that it is said, “Who can know the Lord’s counsels, or who can think what God intendeth?” Our cogitations are fearful, and our forecasts are uncertain. The corruptible body suppresses the soul, and the earthly mansion keeps down the mind that is much occupied. Therefore of these which I revolve in this earthly mansion, they are many, because out of them all I cannot find that one of them or besides them which perhaps I think not upon, and yet is true. If I say there have been creatures ever for God to be Lord of, who has been ever, and ever Lord; but that they were now those, and then others by success of time (lest we should make some of them co-eternal with the Creator, which faith and reason reprove) then must we look that it be not absurd for a mortal creature to have been successively from the beginning, and the immortal creature to have had a temporal original in this our time, and not before, wherein the angels were created (whether they be meant by the name of light, or, heaven, of whom it is said, “In the beginning God created heaven and earth”), and

1 Rom. xi. 14. 2 Wisd. iii.
that they were not from the beginning, until the time that they were created: for otherwise they should be co-eternal with God. If I say they were not created in time, but before it, that God might be their Lord, who has been a Lord for ever; then am I demanded, whether they were before all time, or how could they that were created be from eternity? And here I might perhaps answer how that which has been for the space of all time, may not be unjustly said to have been always, and they have been so far in all time, that they were before all time, if time began with heaven’s motion, and they were before heaven. But if time began not so, but were before heaven, not in hours, days, months or years (for sure it is that these dimensions, properly called times, began from the stars’ courses, as God said when He made them: “Let them be for signs, and seasons and days, and years”), but in some other wondrous motion, whose former part did pass by, and whose latter, succeeded, it being impossible for them to go both together: if there were such a heaven in the angels’ motions, and that as soon as they were made, they began to move thus, even in this respect: have they been from the beginning of all time: time, and they, having original both at once. And who will not say that what has been for all time, has been always? But if I answer thus; some will say to me, why are they not their co-eternal with the Creator if both He and they have been always? What shall I say to this? That they have been always, seeing that time and they had original both together, and yet they were created? for we deny not that time was created, though it has been for all time’s continuance; otherwise, there should have been a time that had been no time; but what fool will say so? we may say, there was a time when
Rome was not: when Jerusalem was not: Abraham, or man himself, or so, when they all were not. Nay, the world itself being not made at times: beginning but afterwards, we may say, "there was a time when the world was not." But to say, there was a time when time was not, is as improper, as to say there was a man when there was no man, or a world, when the world was not. If we mean of divers particulars, we may say, this man was when that was not: and so this time was when that was not: true. But, to say time was, when no time was, who is so sottish? So then as we say time was created, and yet has been always, because it has been whilst time has been, so is it no consequent then that the angels that have been always, should yet be uncreated, seeing they have been always, only in that they have been since time has been: and that because time could not have been without them. For where no creature is whose motion may proportion time forth, there can be no time: and therefore though they have been always they are created, and not co-eternal with the Creator: for He has been unchangeable from all eternity, but they were created, and yet are said to have been always, because they have been all time, that could not be without them. But time, being transitory, and mutable, cannot be co-eternal with unchanging eternity? And therefore though angels have no bodily transmutation, nor is this part past in them and the other to come, yet their motion, measuring time, admits the differences of past and to come: and therefore they can never be co-eternal with their Creator, whose motion admits neither past, present, nor future. Wherefore God having been always a Lord, has always had a creature to be Lord over, not begotten by Him, but created out of nothing by Him, and not co-eternal with Him, for He was
before it, though in no time before it: nor foregoing to rule it in any space, but in perpetuity. But if I answer over.

this to those that ask me, how the Creator should be always Lord, and yet have no creature to be Lord over: or how has He a creature that is not co-eternal with Him, if it has been always: I fear to be thought rather to affirm what I know not, than teach what I know? So that I return to the Creator's revealed will; what He allows to wiser knowledges, in this life, or reserves for all unto the next, I profess myself unable to attain to. But this I thought to handle without affirming, that my readers, may see what questions to forbear as dangerous: and not to hold them fit for farther inquiry: rather following the apostle's wholesome counsel, saying: "I say through the grace that is given me, unto every one amongst you, presume not to understand more than is meet to understand, but understand according to sobriety, as God hath dealt unto every man the measure of faith," 1 for if an infant be nourished according to his strength, he will grow up, but if he be strained above his nature, he will rather fade than increase in growth and strength.

CHAPTER XVI

How we must understand that God promised man life eternal before all eternity.

What revolution passed ere man's creation, I confess I know not: but sure I am, no creature is co-eternal with the Creator. The apostle speaks of eternal

1 Rom. xii.
Yet is no creature co-eternal. For thus he says, "Under the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, hath promised before all eternity of time: but His word He hath manifested in time." Behold he talks of time’s eternity past, yet makes it not co-eternal with God! For he was not only Himself before all eternity, but promised eternal life before it, which he manifested in His due time: that was, "His word:” for that is "eternal life." But how did He promise it unto men that were not before eternity, but that in His eternity and co-eternal world, He had predestinated what was in time to be manifested.

CHAPTER XVIII

The defence of God’s unchanging will against those that set God’s works about from eternity, in circles, from state to state.

Nor do I doubt that there was no man before the first man’s creation: but deny the (I cannot tell what) revolution of the same man I know not how often, or of others like him in nature, nor can the philosophers drive me from this, by objecting (acutely they think) that nullum infinitum est scibile, infinite things are beyond reach of knowledge. And therefore God, say they, has definite forms in Himself of all the definite creatures that he made: nor must His goodness be ever held idle, nor His works temporal, as if He had had such an eternity of leisure before, and then repeated Him of it, and so fell to
Work: therefore, say they, is this revolution necessary: the world either remaining in change (which, though it has been always, yet was created) or else being dissolved, and re-edified in this circular course: or otherwise giving God's works a temporal beginning, we seem to make Him disallow and condemn that leisure that He rested in from all eternity before as slothful and useless. But if He did create from eternity, now this and then that, and came to make man in time, that was not made before, then shall He seem not to have made him by knowledge (which they say contains nothing infinite) but at the present time, by chance as it became into His mind. But admit those revolutions, say they, either with the world's continuance in change, or circular revolution, and then we acquit God both of this (so long and idle seeming) cessation, and from all operation in rashness and chance. For if the same things be not renewed, the variation of things infinite is too incomprehensible for His knowledge or prescience.

These batteries the ungodly do plant against our faith, to win us into their circle; but if reason will not refute them, faith must deride them. But by God's grace, reason will lay those circularities flat enough. For here is these men's error: running rather in a maze than stepping into the right way, that they proportionate the divine, unchangeable power, unto their human, frail and weak spirit, in mutability and apprehension. But as the Apostle says: "Comparing themselves to themselves, they know not themselves." For because their actions that are suddenly done proceed all from new intents, their minds being mutable, they do imagine (not God, for Him they cannot comprehend) but themselves for God, and compare not Him to Himself, but...
of His pure goodness He created themselves (in His stead) unto themselves. But we may not think that God’s rest affects Him one way, and His work another, He is never affected, nor does His nature admit anything that has not been ever in Him. That which is affected, suffers, and that which suffers is mutable. For His vacation is not idle, slothful, nor sluggish, nor is His work painful, busy, or industrious. He can rest working, and work resting. He can apply an eternal will to a new work, and begins not to work now because He repents that He wrought not before. But if He rested first and wrought after (which I see not how man can conceive), this first and after were in things that first had no being, and afterwards had. But there was neither precedence nor subsequence in Him to alter or abolish his will, but all that ever he created was in His unchanged fixed will eternally one and the same: first willing that they should not be, and afterwards willing that they should be, and so they were not, during His pleasure, and began to be, at His pleasure. Wondrously showing to such, as can conceive it, that He needed none of these creatures, but created them of His pure goodness, having continued no less blessed without them, from all unbegun eternity.

CHAPTER XVIII

Against such as say that things infinite are above God’s knowledge.

But such as say that things infinite are past God’s knowledge, may even as well leap headlong into this
God comprehends the infinite.

pit of impiety, and say that God knows not all numbers. That numbers are infinite, it is true, for take what number you can, and think to end with it, let it be never so great and immense, I will add unto it; not one, nor two, but by the law of number, multiply it unto ten times the sum it was. And so is every number composed, that one cannot be equal to another, but all are different, every particular being different, and all in general, infinite. Does not God then know these numbers because they are infinite, and can His knowledge attain one sum of numbers, and not the rest? what madman would say so? nay, they dare not exclude numbers from God’s knowledge, Plato having so commended God for using them in the world’s creation: and our Scripture says of God, “Thou hast ordered all things in measure, number, and weight;” and the Prophet says: “He numbereth the world;” and the Gospel says: “All the hairs of your heads are numbered.”

God forbid then that we should think that He knows not number: whose wisdom and understanding is innumerably infinite, as David says: for the infiniteness of number, though it be beyond number, is not known to Him whose knowledge is infinite. Therefore if whatsoever be known, be comprehended in the bound of that knowledge, then is all infiniteness bounded in the knowledge of God, because His knowledge is infinite, and because it is not incomprehensible unto His knowledge. Wherefore if number’s infiniteness be not infinite unto God’s knowledge, nor cannot be, what are we mean wretches that dare presume to limit His knowledge, or say that if this revolution be not admitted in the world’s renewing, God cannot either foreknow all things ere He made them, or know them when.

1 Wisd. xi. 17.  
2 Matt. x. 30.
I will not be He made them, whereas His wisdom being simply and uniformly manifold, can comprehend all incomprehensibility by His incomprehensible comprehension, so that whatsoever thing that is new and unlike to all other He should please to make, it could not be new, nor strange unto Him, nor should He foresee it a little before, but contain it in His eternal prescience.

CHAPTER XIX

Of the world without end, or ages of ages

That He does so, and that there is a continual connection of those times which are called *secula seculorum*, ages of ages, or worlds without end: running on in a predestinate difference: only the souls that are freed from misery, remaining eternally blessed, or that these words, *secula seculorum*, do import the world's idea, remaining firm in God's wisdom and being the efficient cause of this transitory world, I dare not affirm. The singular may be an explication of the plural, as if we should say, heaven of heavens, for the heavens of heavens. For God calls the firmament above which the waters are, Heaven, in the singular number, and yet the psalm says, "And thou waters that be above the heavens, praise the name of the Lord." Which of those two it be, or whether *secula seculorum* have another meaning, is a deep question. We may let it pass, it belongs not to our proposed theme, but whether we could define, or but observe more by the discourse,
let us not adventure to affirm aught rashly in so over-obscure a controversy. Now are we in hand with curious, the circulatory persons that turn all things round about till they become repaired. But which of these opinions soever be true concerning these secula secullorum, it is nothing to these revolutions, because whether the worlds of worlds be not the same revolved, but others successively depending on the former (the freed souls remaining still in their endless bliss), or whether the worlds of worlds be the forms of these transitory ages, and ruling them as their subjects: yet the circularities have no place here howsoever; the saints’ eternal life overthrows them utterly.

CHAPTER XX

Of that impious assertion that souls truly blessed, shall have divers revolutions into misery again.

For what godly ears can endure to hear, that after the passage of this life in such misery (if I may call it a life, being rather so offensive a death, and yet we love it rather than that death that frees us from it), after so many intolerable mischiefs, ended all at length by true zeal and piety, we should be admitted to the sight of God, and be placed in the fruition and participation of that incorporeal light and unchangeable immortal essence with love of which we burn, all upon this condition, to leave it again at length, and be re-infolded in mortal misery amongst the hellish immortals, where God is lost, where truth is sought by hate, where blessedness is sought by un-
but cleanness, and be cast from all enjoying of eternity, cannot admit truth, or felicity: and this not once but often, being eternally revolved by the course of the times from the first to the latter: and all this, because by means of these circularities, transforming us and our false beatitudes in true miseries (successively, but yet eternally), God might come to know His own works. Whereas otherwise He should neither be able to rest from working, nor know aught that is infinite? Who can hear or endure this? Which were it true, there were not only more wit in concealing it, but also (to speak my mind as I can) more learning in not knowing it: for if we shall be blessed in not remembering them there, why do we aggravate our misery in knowing them here? But if we must needs know them there, yet let us keep ourselves ignorant of them here, to have the happier expectation, than the good is that we shall attain: here expecting blessed eternity, and there attaining only bliss, but with assurance that it is but transitory. But if they say that no man can attain this bliss unless he know the transitory revolutions thereof, ere he leave this life, how then do they confess that the more one loves God, the easier shall he attain bliss, and yet teach the way how to dull this loving affect. For who will not but love him lightly whom he knows he must leave, and hold against his truth and wisdom, and that, when by the perfection of his bliss, he comes to the full knowledge of him? one can never love his friend faithfully, if he know that he shall become his enemy. But God forbid that this threatening of theirs that our misery should never be ended, but only interrupted now and then by false happiness, should be true. For what is falser than that bliss, wherein we shall be either wholly ignorant in such light or otherwise, con-
tinually afraid of the loss of it, being on the top of eternal felicity? If we know not that we shall become wretched, our misery here is wiser than happiness there. But if we shall know it, then, the wretched soul had better live in miserable state and go from thence to eternity, than in a blessed state to fall from thence to misery. And so our hope of happiness is unhappy, and of misery, happy: and consequently, we suffering miseries here, and expecting them there, are rather wretched than blessed in truth. But piety cries out, and truth convinces this to be false. The felicity promised us is true, eternal, and wholly un-interrupted by any revolution to worse.

Let us follow Christ, our right way, and leave this circular maze of the impious. For if Porphyry the Platonist refused his master’s opinion in this circumrotation of souls, being moved hereto either by the vanity of the thing, or by fear of the Christians’ arguments; and had rather affirm (as I said in the ninth book) that the soul was sent into the world to know evil, that being purged from it, it might return to the Father, and never more suffer any such pollution: how much more then ought we to detest this impiety, this enemy of true faith and Christianity? These circles now being broken, there is nothing urges us to think that man had no beginning, because (I know not what) revolutions have kept all things in such a continual course of up and down, that nothing can be new in the world. For if the soul be freed, and shall no more return to misery, it being never freed before, there is an act, and that a great one, new begun, namely, the soul’s possession of eternal bliss.

And if this fall out in an immortal nature without any circumvolution, why is it not as possible in mortal things? If they say that bliss is no new
Soul, once saved is certain.

thing to the soul, because it returns but unto that which it enjoyed always before: yet is the freedom new then, for it was never freed before, being never miserable, and the misery is new unto it, that was never miserable before. Now if this newness happen, not in the order that God's providence allotted, but by chance, where are our revolutions that admit nothing new, but keep all in one course? But if this novelty be within the compass of God's providence, be the soul given from heaven, or fallen from thence, there may be new accidents that were not before, and yet in the order of nature. And if the soul by folly procure itself new misery (which the divine providence foresaw and included in the order of things, freeing it from thence also by this provident power), how dare flesh and blood then be so rash as to deny that the divinity may produce things new unto the world (though not to Himself) which though He foresaw, yet were never made before? If they say it is no news that the freed souls return no more to misery, because there are some, daily and daily freed from thence, why then they confess that there are still new souls created, to be new freed from new miseries. For if they say they are not new souls, but have been from eternity, which are daily put into new bodies, and living, wisely, are freed, never to return: then they make the souls of eternity, infinite: for imagine a number of souls never so large, they could not suffice for all the men of these infinite ages past, if each soul as soon as it was quit, flew up, and returned no more. Nor can they show how there may be an infinite sort of souls in the world: and yet debar God from knowing of things infinite. Wherefore seeing their revolutions of bliss and misery are cashiered, what remains but to aver that God can when His good pleasure is, create what new thing He will, and yet
because of His eternal foreknowledge never change
His will? And whether the number of those freed, and not returning souls may be increased, look they to that, who will keep infiniteness out of the world: we shut up our disputation on both sides. If it may be increased, why deny they that that may be made now, that had no being before, if that number of freed souls that was before, be not only increased now, but shall be for ever? But if there be but a certain number of souls to be freed, and never to return, and that number be not increased, howsoever it shall be, it is not the same yet that it must be, nor can it increase to the consummation but from a beginning, which being not before man, that man was made to begin, before whom was no other.

CHAPTER XXI

Of the state of the first man, and mankind in him.

This hard question of God's power to create new things without change of will, because of His eternity, being (I hope) sufficiently handled, we may plainly see that He did far better in producing mankind from one man only, than if He had made many: for whereas He created some creatures that love to be alone, and in deserts, as eagles, kites, lions, wolves, and such like: and others, that had rather live in flocks and companies, as doves, stars, stags, hinds, and such like; yet neither of those sorts did He produce of one alone, but of many together. But man, whose nature He made as mean between angels and beasts, that if he obeyed the Lord his true
Creator, and kept His behests, he might be transported to the angels' society: but if he became perverse in will, and offended his Lord God by pride of heart, then that he might be cast unto death like a beast, and living the slave of his lusts after death be destinate unto eternal pains, him did He create one alone, but meant not to leave him alone without another human fellow: thereby the more zealously commending true concord unto us, men being not only of one kind in nature, but also of one kindred in affect: creating not the woman He meant to join with man, as He did man, of earth, but of man, and man whom He joined with her, not of her, but of Himself, that all mankind might have their propagation from one.

CHAPTER XXII

That God foreknew that the first man should sin, and how many people He was to translate, out of his kind into the angels' society.

God was not ignorant that man would sin, and so incur mortality both for himself and his progeny: nor that mortals should run on in that height of iniquity, that brute beasts should live at more atonement and peace between themselves, whose original was out of water and earth, than men whose kind came all out of one, in honour of concord: for lions never war among themselves, nor dragons, as men have done. But God foresaw withal, that His grace should adopt the godly, justify them by the Holy Spirit, pardon their sins, and rank them in eternal peace with the
angels, the last and most dangerous death being de-
stroyed: and those should make use of God's pro-
ducing all mankind from one, in learning how well
God respected unity in mankind.

CHAPTER XXIII

Of the nature of man's soul, being created according to
the image of God.

Therefore God made man according to His image
and likeness, giving him a soul whereby in reason
and understanding he excelled all the other creatures,
that had no such soul. And when he had made
man thus of earth, and either breathed the soul which
he had made, into him, or rather made that breath
one which he breathed into him (for to breathe, is
but to take a breath) then out of his side did He
take a bone, whereof He made him a wife, and an
help, as He was God, for we are not to conceive this
carnally, as we see an artificer work up anything into
the shape of a man, by art: God's hand is His power
working visible things invisibly. Such as measure
God's virtue and power that can make seeds of seeds
by those daily and usual works, hold this rather for
a fable than a truth: but they know not this creation,
and therefore think unfaithfully thereof; as though
the works of ordinary conception, and production,
are not strange to those that know them not, though
they assign them rather to natural causes than account
them the Deity's works.

1 Gen. ii.
CHAPTER XXIV

Whether the angels may be called creators, of any, the least creature.

(The But here we have nothing to do with them that hold the divine essence not to meddle with those things at all. But those that follow Plato in affirming that all mortal creatures, of which man is the chief, were made by the lesser created gods, through the permission or command of the Creator, and not by Himself that framed the world; let them but abjure the superstition wherein they seek to give those inferiors just honours, and sacrifices, and they shall quickly avoid the error of this opinion, for it is not lawful to hold any creature, be it never so small, to have any other Creator than God, even before it could be understood. But the angels (whom they had rather call gods) though at His command they work in things of the world, yet we no more call them creators of living things, than we call husbandmen the creators of fruits and trees.

CHAPTER XXV

That no nature or form of anything living has any other Creator but God.

Whereas there is one form given externally to all corporal substances according to the which potters, carpenters, and others shape antiques, and figures of creatures; and another that contains the efficient
causes hereof in the secret power of the uniting and as Plato understanding nature, which makes not only the natural forms, but even the living souls, when they are not extant. The first, each artificer has in his brain, but the latter belongs to none but God, who formed the world and the angels without either world or angels; for from that all-dividing, and all-effective divine power, which cannot be made, but makes, and which in the beginning gave rotundity both to the heavens and sun, from the same, had the eye the apple, and all other round figures that we see in nature their rotundity not from any external effective, but from the depth of that Creator's power that said, "I fill heaven and earth:" and whose wisdom reaches from end to end, ordering all in a delicate decorum: wherefore what use He made of the angels in the creation, making all Himself, I know not. I dare neither ascribe them more than their power, nor detract anything from that. But with their favours, I attribute the estate of all things as they are natures unto God, only of whom they thankfully acknowledge their being: we do not then call husbandmen the creators of trees or plants, or anything else: for we read, "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God, that giveth the increase." 1 No, nor the earth neither, though it seems the fruitful mother of all things that grow: for we read also: "God giveth bodies unto what He will, even to every seed his own body." 2 Nor call we a woman the creatrix of her child, but Him that said to a servant of His, "Before I formed thee in the womb I knew thee;" 3 and although the woman's soul being thus or thus affected, may put some quality upon her burthen, as we read that Jacob coloured his sheep diversely by spotted sticks: yet she can no more

1 1 Cor. iii. 7.  
2 1 Cor. xv. 38.  
3 Hier. i.
God is direct creator

make the nature that is produced, than she could
make herself: what seminal causes then soever that
angels or men do use in producing of things living or
dead, or proceed from the copulation of male and
female, or what affections soever of the mother dispose
thus or thus of the colour or feature of her conception,
the natures thus or thus affected in each of their kinds
are the works of none but God: whose secret power
passes through all, giving all being to all whatsoever,
in that it has being: because without that He made
it, it should not be thus, nor thus, but have no being
at all: wherefore if in those forms external, imposed
upon things corporal, we say that (not workmen) but
kings, Romulus was the builder of Rome, and
Alexander of Alexandria, because by their direction
these cities were built: how much the rather ought
we to call God the builder of nature, who neither
makes anything of any substance but what He had
made before, nor by any other ministers but those He
had made before: and if He withdraw His efficient
power from things, they shall have no more being
than they had ere they were created: ere they were,
I mean in eternity, not in time: for who created
time, but He that made them creatures, whose
motions time follows.

CHAPTER XXVI

The Platonists' opinion that held the angels God's
creatures, and man the angels'.

And Plato would have the lesser gods (made by the
highest) to create all other things, by taking their
immortal part from him, and framing the mortal and needs themselves: herein making them not the creators of ourselves, but our bodies only. And therefore Porphyry, in holding that the body must be avoided ere the soul be purged, and thinking with Plato, and his sect, that the souls of bad livers were for punishment thrust into bodies (into beasts also says Plato, but into man's only says Porphyry) affirms directly that these gods whom they will have us to worship as our parents and creators, are but the forgers of our prisons, and not our formers, but only our jailors, locking us in those dolorous grates, and wretched fetters: wherefore the Platonists must either give us no punishment in our bodies, or else make not those gods our creators, whose work they exhort us by all means to avoid and to escape: though both these positions be most false, for the souls are neither put into bodies to be thereby punished, nor has anything in heaven or earth any creator but the Maker of heaven and earth. For if there be no cause of our life, but our punishment, how is it that Plato says the world could never have been made most beautiful, but that it was filled with all kind of creatures? But if our creation (albeit mortal) be the work of God; how is it punishment then to enter into God's benefits, that is, our bodies? and if God (as Plato says often) had all the creatures of the world in His prescience, why then did not He make them all? would He not make some, and yet in His unbounded knowledge, knew how to make all? wherefore our true religion rightly affirms Him the Maker both of the world, and all creatures therein, bodies, and souls, of which, in earth man, the chief piece was made alone, after His image, for the reason showed before, if not for a greater: yet was he not left alone, for there is nothing in the world so sociable by
He creates one in whom nature, and so jarring by vice, as man is; nor can man's nature speak better either to the keeping of discord whilst it is out, or expelling it when it is entered; than in recording our first father, whom God created single (from him to propagate all the rest), to give us a true admonition to preserve an union over greatest multitudes. And in that the woman was made of his rib, was a plain intimation of the concord that should be between man and wife. These were the strange works of God, for they were the first. He that believes them not, must utterly deny all wonders: for if they had followed the usual course of nature, they had been no wonders. But what is there in all this whole work of the divine providence, that is not of use, though we know it not? The holy psalm says: "Come and behold the works of the Lord, what wonders He hath wrought upon the earth."¹ Wherefore, why the woman was made of man's rib, and what this first seeming wonder prefigured, if God vouchsafe, I will show in another place.

CHAPTER XXVII

That the fulness of mankind was created in the first man, in whom God foresaw both who should be saved, and who should be damned.

But now because we must end this book; let this be our position: that in the first man, the foresaid two societies or cities, had original; yet not evidently, but unto God's prescience: for from him were the

¹ Ps. xlvi. 8.
rest of men to come: some to be made fellow-citizens with the angels in joy: and some with the devils in torment, by the secret, but just judgment of God. For seeing that it is written: "All the ways of the Lord be mercy and truth," I His grace can neither be unjust, nor His justice cruel.

I Ps. xxv. 10.
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VI. 1 (after first sentence). Augustine now turns to a more difficult task; from the sensual materialistic heathen, who propitiates heaven and its crew for the sake of earthly gifts, to the spiritual monotheist of the Platonic School. “Let us see whether the Life Eternal which they desire is in the power of any gods to bestow.”

VI. 6 (first sentence). We can here thoroughly sympathise with Augustine’s reproof of Varro. Any religion is weak and worthless which teaches the intellectual apprehension of truths as a higher stage than moral obedience. Reserve, esoteric mysteries, aristocracy of mind, allegoric and impersonal blurring of historic fact, and a contempt for the vulgar, combined with an unworthy compromise and tolerance for their rites—such are the features of any system which, like Varro, apportions merit and advance in things spiritual according to mental equipment.

VII. 2. “Anaximander.” Augustine seems conscious that he stands at the break-up of the classical world. In this work he reviews not merely the whole of human history, sacred and profane, but the whole course of human thought; and both surveys, in spite of blunders, with extraordinary skill. He is singularly accurate in his conceptions of the three great Ionians; and in refusing to assent to the current “Theism” with which Thales was credited, is undoubtedly right. For these earlier speculators had no wish to attack popular religion; their scientific surmises on the substance of things carried no challenge to the partial deities of Olympus: φύσις to them precedes the gods, who arise from it. Herein lies the essential difference of their thought to ours: we seek in God an ultimate and metaphysical (perhaps a moral) basis for the universe; they believed in no “timeless gods,” but asked and told how they were born from the mysterious Reality, which always eluded their grasp.

VII. 4. “Socrates is said to excel in the active, Pythagoras in the contemplative.” Christian monasticism in the West was just now receiving an extra-
ordinary stimulus from St. Jerome. It is essentially an alien growth on early Gospel teaching; and it seems curious that many who believe our whole scheme of dogmatics is Greek, are unaware that this asceticism, whether of cenobite or monk proper, is derived direct from Hellenism (and this again has not escaped Oriental influences). The true Greeks adopted and harmonised foreign elements. Socrates identified, at least formally, virtue and knowledge; Plato tended to emphasise the mystic and contemplative side of this knowledge, and to represent civic duties as a necessary concession to the need of the State. Aristotle, from the point of view of Individualism, elevated the intellectual above the moral virtues (see third paragraph of VII. 3); Porphyry places the "telestic or epoptic" virtues in a higher grade than those of mere ethical honesty; and the Middle Ages carried on the belief in theory, in the "Unio" and the "Visio Dei." (See Prof. Kaftan's novel survey of the Ἀργος doctrine in his Truth of the Christian Religion). Brahminism bids the active merchant at the age of fifty retire for contemplation to the forests, and give up the fruits of his past labour. Only the monastic systems of Buddhism and Catholicism divide these roughly, not into two parts of the same life to be spent in "alternation of solitude and society" (Seneca's advice to Lucilius), but as rigorous and impassable distinction between the priest and the layman—a distinction not of individual life but of the social order.

VII. 8 (last sentence). So above, "Plato non dubitavi hoc esse philosophari, amare Deum." Hence arises that hybrid and mystical philosophy, which is neither pure thought nor religion. To Lactantius, Erigena, and many modern philosophers, philosophy and religion are identical; and where one expects to find nothing but verifiable laws and true axioms, one is troubled to hear the familiar language of religious appeal to sentiment. It need not be said this confusion is bad for both science and piety. Final causes and an immediate teleology long sterilised inquiry; religious feeling has somehow become bound up with cosmological, etc., arguments in favour of the existence of God. The hardest of all victories has been the freedom of thought and conscience, the division of State and Church—we have not yet learnt to keep apart our scientific sense and our religious consciousness; what medleys and "mixt chalices" have been produced by the attempt to harmonise
two forms of belief essentially distinct, the nineteenth century can bear ample witness.

VII. 9. It is clear, however, that it is for this very reason that Augustine prefers the Platonists. They made a philosophy not of examination or experience, but of intuitive truth, elicited by the communing of soul with itself. What came forth was a faith-religion and a poetical imagining of the world, not a strict system of theology. Augustine had passed through his phase of Platonism as he had through Manichæan dualism. He had believed a serene but impersonal goodness lay behind the world, and that error and pain were either fictitious or relative and momentary. He had adopted the violent antithesis of two co-eternal powers of good and evil; and in his orthodox days he had somehow united the absolutism of the first with the dyarchy of the second system. He had refused Lactantius' compromise of a constitutional sovereign setting two leaders of the right and left to play their mimic contests in the arena of parliament; he places, instead, these final qualities in God Himself, who is for the elect, good; and for the rest, evil.

VII. 10. "Fount of all felicity." Here he states his reasons for preferring Platonism, because they did not "waste their time and temper" (ingenia sua studiaque contriverint in requirendis rerum causis, et quinam esset modus discendi et vivendi), but knew God, and discovered the three-fold Deity; cause of world, and light of intelligence, and fount whence the thirsty may drink bliss. This is not philosophy in the usual sense; it is rather an emotional form of natural religion, and depends little on probable argument, but rather on deep-seated conviction of the heart.

VII. 23. The Hermetic writings are clearly the last and most degenerate product of an Orientalized Hellenism. They may be classed with the Sibylline writings (which have a pronounced Christian bias), and with the Egyptian Mysteries, a work attributed to Jamblichus-Casaubon attributed them to a Jew or a Christian (!); Jablonski to a gnostic source; Creuzer to Alexandrine syncretism, in which appear odd traces of the ancient Egyptian cult and belief. It seems certain that the Latin translation of this dialogue is not by Apuleius, and M. Menard confidently maintains that neither the translation nor the original are anterior to Constantine I. (306-337 A.D.). (Hermes Trismegistus, vii.)
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VIII. 3. "yet never speaks a word of their virtues." Here is clear proof of the readiness with which a genial universalism relapses into mere apotheosis of the physical. No one can read Plutarch (for instance, "de defectu oraculorum") without the sense of disappointment. All philosophy which starts from man as knowing subject, rather than agent, is bound at last to acquiesce in this. The daemons do not help man on the moral or active side of his nature; for they have no counterpart to this faculty, no need for its exercise (Arist. Ethics, X.). They are, closely regarded, a more dangerous ally than were physical laws which engage and compel our obedience; for they are rancorous and capricious, and offer no sort of encouragement to virtuous endeavour.

VIII. 5. Christianity does not, as Stoics pretended to do, extirpate the emotions, but rather guides and modifies them. The fundamental "asceticism" of reflected morality is here clearly seen. The Greeks were dualists the very moment they became self-conscious. They found no place in their ethics for body or for the lower part of mind. How easily this attack on human nature fell over into pure mysticism of the Platonists, or the complacent compromise of the gnostics, half sensuous, half spiritual, is a matter of history. Apart from any notion of revelation, a mere human critic must admire the singular common sense and moderation of the Christian scheme.

VIII. 10 (end). Augustine very strikingly shows how pitiable is the lot of luckless daemons that carry about for ever the hideous dead-weight of an aerial body animated by the lower propensities (see Gen. vi. 4 ff.; the ancient legend of Tithonus; St. Paul's, "O wretched man that I am," and Philo's pity of Cain). Surely here, if anywhere, is damnation! a sentence not of any external authority, but the Karmah within that forbids us to escape from ourselves.

VIII. 11 (first sentence). A common belief even in modern times. To suppose man is the summit of evolution, here or elsewhere, and a vast empty gulf stretched between him and the next real Being—God—is hasty and illogical. Vague conceptions of an obscure teleology are creeping into the setting-forth of evolution. That the "last is the best," that the new pity and care for others which defies the natural axiom, "each for himself," is somehow an obligation as well as an irksome scruple, that man's moral and
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intelligent faculty marks him out as a privileged being, and not a supremely unhappy one—these are views which today lend much colour to a belief in spiritual existences, in a continuation of that hierarchy of beings which only in the visible world finds its highest point in man. Leibnitz in the eighteenth century, and Sir Oliver Lodge in the twentieth, would assuredly not dogmatise on the subject; but it is clearly not mere superstition in their eyes to believe that good men have other spheres of useful work allotted to them after death, pass into other planets, or watch not with vain or futile vigilance over the fortunes of those they have left behind. Yet it seems almost certain, too, that it will remain a pious belief only, no fixed article either of a demonstrable creed of science or of necessary religious orthodoxy. Until the rising wave of accurate and inexorable knowledge frightened and appalled us, we have perhaps not realised how much life and hope we owe to uncertainty in ultimate problems.

IX. 9. ("theurgic telete.") The true meaning of this word is rarely given; it implies the controlling and threatening power of the adept or magician, not the free working of the Divine. God is worked upon, influenced, and forced; as the moon by Thessalian witches is brought down to earth ("despumet in herbes"). It implies a violence done to the spirits by possession of a talisman or "runic" rhyme, which somehow compels their obedience; a lamp of Aladdin, Abracadabra, or "open sesame!" It seems probable that even the early users of this term lost its meaning and employed it in a vague sense. (On threats and menaces to Spirits, see the middle of Chap. 11.)

IX. 24. "answered 'that He was the beginning'" (John viii. 25). This is one of the most debated passages in the whole gospel, and the meaning here given is very doubtful in itself, and is now abandoned by most annotators.

IX. 31 (beginning of last sentence). Augustine does not, perhaps, in this work display very prominently the favourite African principle of absolute submission to authority. Tertullian glosses over the paradoxes of dogma, because so faith becomes more difficult and meritorious, and human reason is completely silenced. So to him fasting is good, not necessarily in itself, but because it is ordered in Scripture. Cyprian, in the interests of Church centralized government, discourages subjective independence, and tries to submit the extraordinary influence of
martyrs and confessors to the ordinary officials of the hierarchy,—because authority comes from God, and man's virtue contributes nothing to the value of the channel or means of grace, nor do his demerits detract from the efficacy of sacraments. Augustine hands over, fully developed, to the Church of Rome this belief that the individual is nothing (either in sanctity or use of reason), and the Church everything. From another quarter, that of metaphysics, came the belief in predestination, and added to the abasement of the unit. Yet what we marvel at is not the rigorous creed of Rome, but her tenderness and sympathy with individuals, their ideals, difficulties, opportunities,—mercifully inconsistent with her theory. (Augustine can approve the "certum quia impossibile" of Tert.'s *De Carne Christi*, § 5, as witness xviii. § 5).

X. 2. "intelligatur vel si hoc non potest saltem credatur." The early Church (and following her the medieaval schoolmen) were far more Rationalist than professed theologians to-day. The curious involution of piety and rapture and faith in the intellectualism of Plato, and the dislike of patient induction and analysis (invertebrate in the Hellenic mind), the Aristotelian (as well as Platonic) article of faith, that the mind wove itself its web of knowledge,—led to great obscurity in the definition of science and the ways in which it was to be attained. Clement of Alexandria (began to teach about 190 A.D.) insists on the passage from faith to knowledge; the former was the lower stage of mere assent to authority and an objective formula. The Middle Ages took for granted the essential harmony of Christianity with secret truths and axioms of reason. Scholastic is one long attempt to show how supremely rational (not reasonable) was the scheme of redemption and the dogmas of revelation. Yet, one by one, profounder and dissatisfied minds removed all the characteristic features of the Gospel-teaching back again to the domain of faith (which now began to acquire again a moral significance to which it had long been a stranger). Adequate proof from a purely intellectual standpoint was not forthcoming for the most valuable part of doctrine. The Lutherans broke with human reason and refused any offer of alliance. The Ritschlian theology to-day is a protest against the confusion of two parallel but never mingling forms of truth—the impersonal and the personal, the "rational" and the "reasonable." At the beginning
of this century the tendency is to regard not only all the theological dogmas, but all religious belief (even the slender equipment of deism), nay, all moral effort, as in their very nature outside the domain of the certain and demonstrable, as suffering nothing from the denial of science and gaining nothing from a compromising alliance. In faith the moral venture, the religious "choice of sides," begins; and in faith it certainly culminates, until "faith passes into sight."

X. 9 (last sentence). In his Manichean period he had believed in the substantive existence of evil as an independent principle (see end of Chap. 13). Here it is pure negation, a sign of loss and emptiness. At the same time, we must point out that the ultimate fate of the two kingdoms leads to an eternal dualism of happiness and misery, of praise and blasphemy; which is far more painful to contemplate than an initial contest, as of Loki and Balder, Ormuz and Ahriman, which gradually gives way to harmony and reconciliation, and the final triumph of good. A sentimental and pietistic monism, in its promise for a bright future, can never wipe out the memories and the hopeless sufferings of the past. So Augustine, in his attempt to start from the undivided sway of Omnipotence, gets into graver difficulties in the settled and everlasting antithesis of the saved and lost. (See evil as negation, Chap. 22; XI. 7; but in the Lactantian view, as a necessary instrument of God's purpose, XVIII. 1; see XI. 18 below.)

X. 10. (end). Here is Berkeleianism in a nutshell (cf. Dr. Rashdall's essay in Contentio Veritatis).

X. 18 (end of first sentence). This is the strongest and strangest statement to be found in Augustine on the value of evil. He is largely indebted for this principle to Lactantius (c. 260-330 A.D.), whose work is one long vindication of the use of evil as a foil to good (see my article, Studia Biblica, Vol. IV., "Subordinate Dualism"). To-day, though we are still convinced of the necessity of a dark background of suffering and unrighteousness for the display and exercise of virtue, it is hard to explain the world as the mere "play of the divine power with itself," or understand, under this hypothesis, the accountability of the creature.

X. 26. (second sentence). For a sentence like this, so simple yet so pregnant with meaning, we can forgiving
Augustine much of the prolix and wearisome part that is coming. "Per hoc sum si fallor." This is, of course, another form of the celebrated Cartesian "cogito (dubito) ergo sum." It may be interesting to note the different deductive method of the East: "There is Being; therefore I think."

XI. 1 (first sentence). It will be seen that Augustine, in his strong conviction of the two opposed kingdoms of spirits, diminishes very much the importance of man. Fully developed, and in strong antagonism, stand the two armies of loyalist and rebel angels, before man is called upon to play his part in the free choice of good.

XI. 3 (last sentence but 3). This should be noticed carefully, as it is contrary to the usual view entertained of Augustine's determinism. Here he is as emphatic on Free-will as any Eastern father.

XI. 16 (sub. fin.). "ultra vires meas esse confiteor." Augustine, like Origen, is frequently modest in his speculation. Many questions in this volume are left as "too high." The Medæval schoolmen had not the same scruple or modesty. They frequently astonish us by the impertinence of their inquiry and the triviality of their results.

XI. 18. Notice in this and the following chapters the paradoxes which are bound to appear in forming a conception of God. To attempt to reconcile them is to confuse both; and all heresies arise from a rationalistic inability to maintain contradictions together. "Novit quiescens agere, agens quiescere." So Chap. 19. God's wisdom is "simpliciter multiplex et uniformiter multiformis incomprehensibili comprehensione omnia incomprehensibilis comprehendit." So Chap. 21. If this was true, "non solum tacerentur prudensius verum etiam doctius nescirentur." And here is a foretaste of the Docta Ignorantia of Nicolas Cusanus in the fifteenth century, and all later speculators on God, as the "place of the reconciliation of opposites."

XI. 21 (end). The doctrine of the eternal and recurrent fluctuations of soul is due in the Christian church to Origen, περὶ ἄρχων. Like Pomponatius, later, and many holders of the "Double Truth," he submits his guesses and surmises to Church or Scripture authority; but he clearly believes, in every free spirit there must always remain a possibility of degeneration and lapse. To Augustine this
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uncertainty is intolerable, and he commends Porphyry (230-306 A.D.) for maintaining the fixity of the spiritual lot.

XI. 27 (end of second sentence). The Latin here is very remarkable, sonorous and gloomy, like the idea enshrined. The angels are "inclusores adligatoresque," and our bodies, "prison-houses of clay," are "ergastula aerumnosa" and "gravissima vincula." For this thought, see a very curious dying consolation to his parents of a boy in Dio Chrysostom, 'Charidemus.' Pessimism and ascesis are inseparable from paganism when it begins to reflect.

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