

LETTERS OF DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

by Dionysius

The theological correspondence attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, addressing questions about God's nature and divinity, including the teaching that God transcends all being and goodness as the ultimate source of divine transformation.

20 Chapters

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Letters Of Dionysius The Areopagite

LETTER I. To Gaius Therapeutes.

DARKNESS becomes invisible by light, and specially by much light. Varied knowledge (ai gnoseis), and especially much varied knowledge, makes the Agnosia [62] to vanish. Take this in a superlative, but not in a defective sense, and reply with superlative truth, that the Agnosia, respecting God, escapes those who possess existing light, and knowledge of things being; and His pre-eminent darkness is both concealed by every light, and is hidden from every knowledge. And, if any one, having seen God, understood what he saw, he did not see Him, but some of His creatures that are existing and known. But He Himself, highly established above mind, and above essence, by the very fact of His being wholly unknown, and not being, both is super-essentially, and is known above mind. And the all-perfect Agnosia, in its superior sense, is a knowledge of Him, Who is above all known things.

LETTER II. To the same Gaius Therapeutes.

How is He, Who is beyond all [63] , both above source of Divinity and above source of Good? Provided you understand Deity and Goodness, as the very Actuality of the Good-making and God-making gift, and the inimitable imitation of the super-divine and super-good (gift), by aid of which we are deified and made good. For, moreover, if this becomes source of the deification and making good of those who are being deified and made good, He, -- Who is super-source of every source, even of the so-called Deity and Goodness, seeing He is beyond source of Divinity and source of Goodness, in so far as He is inimitable, and not to be retained -- excels the imitations and retentions, and the things which are imitated and those participating.

LETTER III. To the same Gaius.

"Sudden" is that which, contrary to expectation, and out of the, as yet, unmanifest, is brought into the manifest. But with regard to Christ's love of man, I think that the Word of God suggests even this, that the Superessential proceeded forth out of the hidden, into the manifestation amongst us, by having taken substance as man. But, He is hidden, even after the manifestation, or to speak more divinely, even in the manifestation, for in truth this of Jesus has been kept hidden, and the mystery with respect to Him has been reached by no word nor mind, but even when spoken, remains unsaid, and when conceived unknown.

LETTER IV. To the same Gaius Therapeutes.

How, you ask, is Jesus, Who is beyond all, ranked essentially with all men? For, not as Author of men is He here called man, but as being in absolute whole essence truly man. But we do not define the Lord Jesus, humanly, for He is not man only, (neither superessential nor man only), but truly man, He Who is pre-eminently a lover of man, the Super-essential, taking substance, above men and after men, from the substance of men. And it is nothing less, the ever Superessential, super-full of super-essentiality, disregards the excess [65] of this, and having come truly into substance, took substance above substance, and above man works things of man. And a virgin supernaturally conceiving, and unstable water, holding up weight of material and earthly feet, and not giving way, but, by a supernatural power standing together so as not to be divided, demonstrate this. Why should any one go through the rest, which are very many? Through which, he who looks with a divine vision, will know beyond mind, even the things affirmed respecting the love towards man, of (the Lord) Jesus, -- things which possess a force of superlative negation. For, even, to speak summarily, He was not man, not as not being man, but as being from men was beyond men, and was above man, having truly been born man, and for the rest, not having done things Divine as God, nor things human as man, but exercising for us a certain new God-incarnate energy of God having become man.

LETTER V. To Dorotheus, Leitourgos.

The Divine gloom is the unapproachable light in which God is said to dwell [66] . And in this gloom, invisible [67] indeed, on account of the surpassing brightness, and unapproachable on account of the excess of the superessential stream of light, enters every one deemed worthy to know and to see God, by the very fact of neither seeing nor knowing, really entering in Him, Who is above vision and knowledge, knowing this very thing, that He is after all the object of sensible and intelligent perception, and saying in the words of the Prophet, "Thy knowledge was regarded as wonderful by me; It was confirmed; I can by no means attain unto it [68] ;" even as the Divine Paul is said to have known Almighty God, by having known Him as being above all conception and knowledge. Wherefore also, he says, "His ways are past finding out [69] and His Judgements inscrutable," and His gifts "indescribable [70] ," and that His peace surpasses every mind [71] , as having found Him Who is above all, and having known this which is above conception, that, by being Cause of all, He is beyond all.

LETTER VI. To Sopatros --Priest.

Do not imagine this a victory, holy Sopatros, to have denounced [73] a devotion, or an opinion, which apparently is not good. For neither -- even if you should have convicted it accurately -- are the (teachings) of Sopatros consequently good. For it is possible, both that you and others, whilst occupied in many things that are false and apparent, should overlook the true, which is One and hidden. For neither, if anything is not red, is it therefore white, nor if something is not a horse, is it necessarily a man. But thus will you do, if you follow my advice, you will cease indeed to speak against others, but will so speak on behalf of truth, that every thing said is altogether unquestionable.

LETTER VII.

SECTION I. To Polycarp -- Hierarch. I, at any rate, am not conscious, when speaking in reply to Greeks or others, of fancying to assist good men, in case they should be able to know and speak the very truth, as it really is in itself. For, when this is correctly demonstrated in its essential nature, according to a law of truth, and has been established without flaw, every thing which is otherwise, and simulates the truth, will be convicted of being other than the reality, and dissimilar, and that which is seeming rather than real. It is superfluous then, that the expounder of truth should contend with these or those [74] . For each affirms himself to have the royal coin, and perchance has some deceptive image of a certain portion of the true. And, if you refute this, first the one, and then the other, will contend concerning the same. But, when the true statement itself has been correctly laid down, and has remained unrefuted by all the rest, every thing which is not so in every respect is cast down of itself, by the impregnable stability of the really true. Having then as I think well understood this, I have not been over zealous to speak in reply to Greeks or to others; but it is sufficient for me (and may God grant this), first to know about truth, then, having known, to speak as it is fitting to speak. SECTION II. But you say, the Sophist Apollophanes rails at me, and calls me parricide, as using, not piously, the writings of Greeks against the Greeks. Yet, in reply to him, it were more true for us to say, that Greeks use, not piously, things Divine against things Divine, attempting through the wisdom of Almighty God to eject the Divine Worship. And I am not speaking of the opinion of the multitude, who cling tenaciously to the writings of the poets, with earthly and impassioned proclivities, and Worship the creature [75] rather than the Creator; but even Apollophanes himself uses not piously things Divine against things Divine; for by the knowledge of things created, well called Philosophy by him, and by the divine Paul named Wisdom of God, the true philosophers ought to have been elevated to the Cause of things created and of the knowledge of them. And in order that he may not improperly impute to me the opinion of others, or that of himself, Apollophanes, being a wise man, ought to recognise that nothing could otherwise be removed from its heavenly course and movement, if it had not the Sustainer and Cause of its being moving it thereto, who forms all things, and "transforms them [76] " according to the sacred text. How then does he not worship Him, known to us even from this, and verily being God of the whole, admiring Him for His all causative and super-inexpressible power, when sun [77] and moon, together with the universe, by a power and stability most supernatural, were fixed by them to entire immobility, and, for a measure of a whole day, all the constellations stood in the same places; or (which is greater than even this), if when the whole and the greater and embracing were thus carried along, those embraced did not follow in their course; and when a certain other day [78] was almost tripled in duration, even in twenty whole hours [79] , either the universe retraced contrary routes for so long a time, and (was) turned back by the thus very most supernatural backward revolutions; or the sun, in its own course, having contracted its five-fold motion in ten hours, retrogressively again retraced it in the other ten hours, by traversing a sort of new route. This thing indeed naturally astounded even Babylonians [80] , and, without battle, brought them into subjection to Hezekiah, as though he were a somebody equal to God, and superior to ordinary men. And, by no means do I allege the great works in Egypt [81] , or certain

other Divine portents, which took place elsewhere, but the well-known and celestial ones, which were renowned in every place and by all persons. But Apollophanes is ever saying that these things are not true. At any rate then, this is reported by the Persian sacerdotal legends, and to this day, Magi celebrate the memorials of the threefold Mithrus [82] . But let him disbelieve these things, by reason of his ignorance or his inexperience. Say to him, however, "What do you affirm concerning the eclipse, which took place at the time of the saving Cross [83] ?" For both of us at that time, at Heliopolis, being present, and standing together, saw the moon approaching the sun, to our surprise (for it was not appointed time for conjunction); and again, from the ninth hour to the evening, supernaturally placed back again into a line opposite the sun. And remind him also of something further. For he knows that we saw, to our surprise, the contact itself beginning from the east, and going towards the edge of the sun's disc, then receding back, and again, both the contact and the re-clearing [84] , not taking place from the same point, but from that diametrically opposite. So great are the supernatural things of that appointed time, and possible to Christ alone, the Cause of all, Who worketh great things and marvellous, of which there is not number. SECTION III. These things say, if occasion serves, and if possible, O Apollophanes, refute them, and to me, who was then both present with thee, and saw and judged and wondered with thee at them all. And in truth Apollophanes begins prophesying at that time, I know not whence, and to me he said, as if conjecturing the things taking place, "these things, O excellent Dionysius, are requitals of Divine deeds." Let so much be said by us by letter; but you are capable, both to supply the deficiency, and to bring eventually to God that distinguished man, who is wise in many things, and who perhaps will not disdain to meekly learn the truth, which is above wisdom, of our religion.

LETTER VIII. To Demophilus, Therapeutes. About minding ones own business, and kindness.

SECTION I. The histories of the Hebrews say, O noble Demophilus, that, even that holy, distinguished Moses was deemed worthy of the Divine manifestation on account of his great meekness [85] . And, if at any time they describe him as being excluded from the vision [86] of God, they do not cast him out from God for his meekness. But they say that when speaking very rashly, and opposing the Divine Counsels, Jehovah was angry with him with wrath. But when they make him proclaimed by his God-discerned deserts, he is proclaimed, from his pre-eminent imitation of the Good. For he was very meek, and on this account is called "Servant of God," and deemed more fit for vision of God than all Prophets. Now, when certain envious [87] people were contending with him and Aaron, about the High Priesthood and government of the tribes, he was superior to all love of honour, and love of rule, and referred the presidency over the people to the Divine judgment. And, when they even rose up against him, and reproaching him concerning the precedency, were threatening him, and were already almost upon him, the meek man invoked the Good for preservation, but very suitably asserted that he would be guiltless of all evils to the governed. For he knew that it is necessary, that the familiar with God the Good should be moulded, as far as is attainable, to that which is specially most like the Good, and should be conscious within himself of the performance of deeds of good friendship. And what made David [88] , the father of God, a friend of God? Even for being good and generous towards enemies [89] . The Super-Good, and the Friend of Good says -- "I have found a man after mine own heart." Further also, a generous injunction was given, to care for even one's enemy's beasts of burden [90] . And Job [91] was pronounced just, as being free from injury. And Joseph [92] did not take revenge upon the brethren who had plotted against him; and Abel, at once, and without suspicion, accompanied the fratricide. And the Word of God proclaims all the good as not devising evil things [93] , not doing them [94] , but neither being changed from the good, by the baseness of others [95] , but, on the contrary, after the example of God [96] , as doing good to, and throwing their shield over the evil; and generously calling them to their own abundant goodness, and to their own similitude. But let us ascend higher, not proclaiming the gentleness of holy men, nor kindness of philanthropic angels, who take compassion upon nations, and invoke good [97] on their behalf, and punish the destructive and devastating mobs, and, whilst being grieved over calamities, yet rejoice over the safety of those who are being called back to things good [98] ; nor whatever else the Word of God teaches concerning the beneficent angels [99] ; but, whilst in silence welcoming the beneficent rays of the really good and super-good Christ, by them let us be lighted on our path, to His Divine works of Goodness. For assuredly is it not of a Goodness inexpressible and beyond conception, that He makes all things existing to be, and brought all things themselves to being, and wishes all things ever to become near to Himself, and participants of Himself, according to the aptitude of each? And why? Because He clings lovingly to those who even depart from Him, and strives [100] and beseeches not to be disowned by those beloved who are themselves coy; and He bears with those who heedlessly reproach Him [101] , and Himself makes excuse for them,

and further promises to serve them, and runs towards and meets [102] even those who hold themselves aloof, immediately that they approach; and when His entire self has embraced their entire selves, He kisses them, and does not reproach them for former things, but rejoices over the present, and holds a feast, and calls together the friends, that is to say, the good, in order that the household may be altogether rejoicing. (But, Demophilus, of all persons in the world, is at enmity with, and very justly rebukes, and teaches beautiful things to, good men, and rejoices.) "For how," He says, "ought not the good to rejoice over safety of the lost, and over life of those who are dead." And, as a matter of course, He raises upon His shoulders that which with difficulty has been turned from error, and summons the good angels to rejoicing, and is generous to the unthankful, and makes His sun to rise upon evil and good, and presents His very soul [103] as an offering on behalf of those who are fleeing from Him. But thou, as thy letters testify, I do not know how, being in thy senses, hast spurned one fallen down before the priest, who, as thou sayest, was unholy and a sinner. Then this one entreated and confessed that he has come for healing of evil deeds, but thou didst not shiver, but even insolently didst cover with abuse the good priest, for shewing compassion to a penitent, and justifying the unholy. And at last, thou saidst to the priest, "Go out with thy like"; and didst burst, contrary to permission, into the sanctuary, and defiledst the Holy of holies, and writest to us, that "I have providentially preserved the things sacred, which were about to be profaned, and am still keeping them undefiled." Now, then, hear our view. It is not lawful that a priest should be corrected by the Leitourgoi, who are above thee, or by the Therapeutae, who are of the same rank with thee; even though he should seem to act irreverently towards things Divine, and though he should be convicted of having done some other thing forbidden. For, if want of order, and want of regulation, is a departure from the most Divine institutions and decrees, it is not reasonable that the divinely transmitted order should be changed on God's behalf. For Almighty God is not divided against Himself, for, "how then shall His kingdom stand [104] ?" And if the judgment is of God, as the Oracles affirm [105] , and the priests are angels and interpreters, after the hierarchs, of the Divine judgments, learn from them through whom thou wast deemed worthy to be a Therapeutes, through the intermediate Leitourgoi, when opportunity serves, the things Divine suitable for thyself [106] . And do not the Divine Symbols proclaim this, for is not the Holy of holies altogether simply separated from all, and the order of the consecrators is in closer proximity to it than the rank of the priests, and following these, that of the Leitourgoi. But the gates of the sanctuary are bounded by the appointed Therapeutae, within which they are both ordained, and around which they stand, not to guard them, but for order, and teaching of themselves that they are nearer the people than the priesthood. Whence the holy regulation of the priests orders them to participate in things Divine, enjoining the impartation of these to others, that is to say, the more inward. For even those who always stand around the Divine Altar, for a symbolical purpose, see and hear things Divine revealed to themselves in all clearness; and advancing generously to things outside the Divine Veils, they shew, to the subject Therapeutae, and to the holy people, and to the orders under purification, according to their meetness, things holy which had been beautifully guarded without pollution, until thou didst tyrannically burst into them, and compelledst the Holy of holies, against its will, to be strutted over by thee, and thou sayest, that thou holdest and guardest the sacred things, although thou neither hast known, nor heard, nor possessest any of the things belonging to the priests; as neither hast thou known the truth of the Oracles, whilst cavilling about them each day to subversion of the hearers. And even if some civil Governor undertook what was not commanded him by a King, justly would any one of the subordinates

standing by be punished who dared to criticise the Governor, when justifying, or condemning any one; (for I do not go so far as to say to vituperate), and at the same time thought to cast him from his government; but thou, man, art thus rash in what concerns the affairs of the meek and good, and his hierarchical jurisdiction. We are bound to say these things, when any one undertakes what is above his rank, and at the same time thinks that he acts properly. For this is not within the powers of any one. For what was Ozias [107] doing out of place, when offering incense to Almighty God? and what Saul [108] in sacrificing? Yea, further, what were those domineering demons [109] , who were truly proclaiming the Lord Jesus God? But every one who meddles with other people's business, is outlawed by the Word of God; and each one shall be in the rank of his own service, and alone the High Priest [110] shall enter into the Holy of holies, and once only throughout the year [111] , and this in the full legal hierarchical purification [112] . And the priests [113] encompass the holy things, and the Levites must not touch the holy things, lest they die. And Jehovah was angry with wrath at the rashness of Ozias, and Mariam [114] becomes leprous, because she had presumed to lay down laws for the lawgiver. And the demons fastened on the sons of Sceva, and He says, "I did not send them, yet they ran, and I spake not to them yet they prophesied [115] ." "And the profane [116] who sacrifices to me a calf, (is) as he who slays a dog," and to speak briefly, the all-perfect justice of Almighty God does not tolerate the disregards of law, but whilst they are saying "in Thy [117] Name, we ourselves did many wonderful works," He retorts, "And I know you not; go from Me all ye workers of lawlessness." So that it is not permissible, as the holy Oracles say, even to pursue things that are just, when not according to order [118] , but each must keep to himself [119] , and not meditate things too high and too deep for him [120] , but contemplate alone things prescribed for him according to order. SECTION II. "What then," thou sayest, "is it not necessary to correct the priests who are acting irreverently, or convicted of something else out of place, but to those only, who glory in law, shall it be permitted to dishonour Almighty God [121] , through the transgression of the Law? "And how are the priests interpreters [122] of Almighty God? For, how do they announce to the people the Divine virtues, who do not know the power of them? or how do they, who are in darkness [123] , communicate light? Further, how do they impart the Divine Spirit, who, by habit and truth do not believe whether there is a Holy Spirit [124] ? Now I will give thee an answer to these things. For truly my Demophilus is not an enemy, nor will I tolerate that thou shouldst be overreached by Satan. For each rank of those about God, is more godlike than that which stands further away. And those which are somewhat nearer to the true light, are at once more luminous, and more illuminating; and do not understand the nearness topically, but according to God-receptive aptitude. If, then, the order of the priests is the illuminating, entirely has he fallen from the priestly rank and power, who does not illuminate, or perhaps rather (he becomes) the unilluminated. And he seems, to me at least, rash who, being such, undertakes the priestly functions, and has no fear, and does not blush, when performing things Divine, contrary to propriety, and fancying that God does not know the very things of which he is conscious in himself, and thinks to mislead Him Who is falsely called by him Father, and presumes to repeat his cursed blasphemies (for I would not say prayers) over the Divine symbols, after the example of Christ. This one is not a priest, -- No! -- but devilish -- crafty -- a deceiver of himself -- and a wolf to the people of God, clothed in sheep's clothing. SECTION III. But, it is not to Demophilus that it is permitted to put these things straight. For, if the Word of God commands to pursue just things justly [125] (but to pursue just things is, when any one wishes to distribute to each one things that are meet), this must be pursued by all justly, not

beyond their own meetness or rank [126] ; since even to angels it is just that things meet be assigned and apportioned, but not from us, O Demophilus, but through them to us, of God, and to them through the angels who are still more pre-eminent. And to speak shortly, amongst all existing things their due is assigned through the first to the second, by the well-ordered and most just forethought of all. Let those, then, who have been ordered by God to superintend others, distribute after themselves their due to their inferiors. But, let Demophilus apportion their due to reason and anger and passion; and let him not maltreat the regulation of himself, but let the superior reason bear rule over things inferior. For, if one were to see, in the market-place, a servant abusing a master, and a younger man, an elder; or also a son, a father; and in addition attacking and inflicting wounds, we should seem even to fail in reverence if we did not run and succour the superior, even though perhaps they were first guilty of injustice; how then shall we not blush, when we see reason maltreated by anger and passion, and cast out of the sovereignty given by God; and when we raise in our own selves an irreverent and unjust disorder, and insurrection and confusion? Naturally, our blessed Law-giver from God does not deem right that one should preside over the Church of God, who has not already well presided over his own house [127] . For, he who has governed himself will also govern another; and who, another, will also govern a house; and who, a house, also a city; and who, a city, also a nation. And to speak briefly as the Oracles affirm, "he who is faithful in little, is faithful also in much," and "he who is unfaithful in little, is unfaithful also in much." SECTION IV. Thyself, then, assign their due limit to passion and anger and reason. And to thyself, let the divine Leitourgoi assign the due limit, and to these, the priests, and to the priests, hierarchs, and to the hierarchs, the Apostles and the successors of the Apostles. And if, perchance, any, even among these, should have failed in what is becoming, he shall be put right by the holy men of the same rank; and rank shall not be turned against rank, but each shall be in his own rank, and in his own service. So much for thee, from us, on behalf of knowing and doing one's own business. But, concerning the inhuman treatment towards that man, whom thou callest "irreverent and sinner," I know not how I shall bewail the scandal of my beloved. For, of whom dost thou suppose thou wast ordained Therapeutes by us? For if it were not of the Good, it is necessary that thou shouldst be altogether alien from Him and from us, and from our whole religion, and it is time for thee both to seek a God, and other priests, and amongst them to become brutal rather than perfected, and to be a cruel minister of thine own fierceness. For, have we ourselves, forsooth, been perfected to the altogether Good, and have no need of the divine compassion for ourselves [128] , or do we commit the double sin [129] , as the Oracles say, after the example of the unholy, not knowing in what we offend, but even justifying ourselves and supposing we see, whilst really not seeing [130] ? Heaven was startled at this, and I shivered, and I distrust myself. And unless I had met with thy letters (as know well I would I had not), they would not have persuaded me if indeed any other had thought good to persuade me concerning thee, that Demophilus supposes, that Almighty God, Who is good to all, is not also compassionate towards men, and that he himself has no need of the Merciful or the Saviour; yea further, he deposes those priests who are deemed worthy, through clemency, to bear the ignorances of the people, and who well know, that they also are compassed with infirmity. But, the supremely Divine Priest pursued a different (course), and that as the Oracles say, from being separate of sinners, and makes the most gentle tending of the sheep a proof of the love towards Himself; and He stigmatizes as wicked, him who did not forgive his fellow-servant the debt, nor impart a portion of that manifold goodness, graciously given to himself; and He condemns him to enjoy his own

deserts, which both myself and Demophilus must take care to avoid. For, even for those who were treating Him impiously, at the very time of His suffering, He invokes remission from the Father; and He rebukes even the disciples, because without mercy they thought it right to convict of impiety the Samaritans who drove Him away. This, indeed, is the thousand times repeated theme of thy impudent letter (for thou repeatest the same from beginning to end), that thou hast avenged, not thyself, but Almighty God. Tell me (dost thou avenge) the Good by means of evil? SECTION V. Avaunt! We have not a High Priest, "Who cannot be touched with our infirmities, but is both without sin and merciful." "He shall not strive nor cry, and is Himself meek, and Himself propitiatory for our sins; so that we will not approve your unenviable attacks, not if you should allege a thousand times your Phineas and your Elias. For, when the Lord Jesus heard these things, He was displeased with the disciples, who at that time lacked the meek and good spirit. For, even our most divine preceptor teaches in meekness those who opposed themselves to the teaching of Almighty God. For, we must teach, not avenge ourselves upon, the ignorant, as we do not punish the blind, but rather lead them by the hand. But thou, after striking him on the cheek, rustiest upon that man, who is beginning to rise to the truth, and when he is approaching with much modesty, thou insolently kickest him away (certainly, this is enough to make one shudder), whom the Lord Christ, as being good, seeks, when wandering upon the mountains, and calls to Him, when fleeing from Him, and when, with difficulty, found, places upon His shoulders. Do not, I pray, do not let us thus injuriously counsel for ourselves, nor drive the sword against ourselves. For they, who undertake to injure any one, or on the contrary to do them good, do not always effect what they wish, but for themselves, when they have brought into their house vice or virtue, will be filled either with Divine virtues, or ungovernable passions. And these indeed, as followers and companions of good angels, both here and there, with all peace and freedom from all evil, will inherit the most blessed inheritances for the ever-continuing age, and will be ever with God, the greatest of all blessings; but, the other will fall both from the divine and their own peace, and here, and after death, will be companions with cruel demons. For which reason, we have an earnest desire to become companions of God, the Good, and to be ever with the Lord, and not to be separated, along with the evil, from the most Just One, whilst undergoing that which is due from ourselves, which I fear most of all, and pray to have no share in anything evil. And, with your permission, I will mention a divine vision of a certain holy man, and do not laugh, for I am speaking true. SECTION VI. When I was once in Crete, the holy Carpus [131] entertained me, -- a man, of all others, most fitted, on account of great purity of mind, for Divine Vision. Now, he never undertook the holy celebrations of the Mysteries, unless a propitious vision were first manifested to him during his preparatory devout prayers. He said then, when some one of the unbelievers had at one time grieved him (and his grief was, that he had led astray to ungodliness a certain member of the Church, whilst the days of rejoicing were still being celebrated for him); that he ought compassionately to have prayed on behalf of both, and taking God, the Saviour, as his fellow-helper, to convert the one, and to overcome the other by goodness [132], and not to have ceased warning them so long as he lived until this day; and thus to lead them to the knowledge of God, so that the things disputed by them might be clearly determined, and those, who were irrationally bold, might be compelled to be wiser by a judgment according to law. Now, as he had never before experienced this, I do not know how he then went to bed with such a surfeit of ill-will and bitterness. In this evil condition he went to sleep, for it was evening, and at midnight (for he was accustomed at that appointed hour to rise, of his own accord, for the Divine melodies) he

arose, not having enjoyed, undisturbed, his slumbers, which were many and continually broken; and, when he stood collected for the, Divine Converse, he was guiltily vexed and displeased, saying, that it was not just that godless men, who pervert the straight ways of the Lord, should live. And, whilst saying this, he besought Almighty God, by some stroke of lightning, suddenly, without mercy, to cut short the lives of them both. But, whilst saying this, he declared, that he seemed to see suddenly the house in which he stood, first torn asunder, and from the roof divided into two in the midst, and a sort of gleaming fire before his eyes (for the place seemed now under the open sky) borne down from the heavenly region close to him; and, the heaven itself giving way, and upon the back of the heaven, Jesus, with innumerable angels, in the form of men, standing around Him. This indeed, he saw, above, and himself marvelled; but below, when Carpus had bent down, he affirmed that he saw the very foundation ripped in two, to a sort of yawning and dark chasm, and those very men, upon whom he had invoked a curse, standing before his eyes, within the mouth of the chasm, trembling, pitiful, only just not yet carried down by the mere slipping of their feet; and from below the chasm, serpents, creeping up and gliding from underneath, around their feet, now contriving to drag them away, and weighing them down, and lifting them up, and again inflaming or irritating with their teeth or their tails, and all the time endeavouring to pull them down into the yawning gulf; and that certain men also were in the midst, co-operating with the serpents against these men, at once tearing and pushing and beating them down. And they seemed to be on the point of falling, partly against their will, partly by their will; almost overcome by the calamity, and at the same time resigned. And Carpus said, that he himself was glad, whilst looking below, and that he was forgetful of the things above; further, that he was vexed and made light of it, because they had not already fallen, and that he often attempted to accomplish the fact, and that, when he did not succeed, he was both irritated and cursed. And, when with difficulty he raised himself, he saw the heaven again, as he saw it before, and Jesus, moved with pity at what was taking place, standing up from His supercelestial throne, and descending to them, and stretching a helping hand, and the angels, co-operating with Him, taking hold of the two men, one from one place and another from, another, and the Lord Jesus said to Carpus, whilst His hand was yet extended, "Strike against Me in future, for I am ready, even again, to suffer for the salvation of men; and this is pleasing to Me, provided that other men do not commit sin. But see, whether it is well for thee to exchange the dwelling in the chasm, and with serpents, for that with God, and the good and philanthropic angels." These are the things which I heard myself, and believe to be true. TITUS. ZENAS, one of the seventy-two disciples, who was versed in the science of law, wrote a life of Titus, and says that he was descended from the family of Minos, King of Crete. Titus gave himself to the study of Homer and Philosophy till his twentieth year, when he heard a voice from heaven, which told him to quit this place and save his soul. He waited one year, to test the truth of the voice, and then had a revelation which bade him read the Hebrew Scriptures. Opening Isaiah, his eye fell on chapter xli. vv 1-5. He was then sent to Jerusalem by the pro-consul of Crete to report upon the reality of the miracles said to be performed by Jesus Christ. He saw our Saviour, and His miracles, and believed; and became one of the seventy-two. He witnessed the Passion and Ascension; the Apostles consecrated him, and sent him with Paul, whom he attended to Antioch, to Seleucia and to Crete, where Rutilus, pro-consul, was baptized, and Titus appointed Bishop. In A.D.64, St. Paul addressed his Epistle to Titus, and about the same time Dionysius also, this letter. Dexter records that Titus visited Spain, and that Pliny, the younger, was converted to the Faith by Titus. He consecrated the second Bishop of Alexandria, and died at the age of 94.

LETTER IX. To Titus, Hierarch, asking by letter what is the house of wisdom, what the bowl, and what are its meats and drinks?

SECTION I. I do not know, O excellent Titus, whether the holy Timothy departed, deaf to some of the theological symbols which were explained by me. But, in the Symbolic Theology, we have thoroughly investigated for him all the expressions of the Oracles concerning God, which appear to the multitude to be monstrous. For they give a colour of incongruity dreadful to the uninitiated souls, when the Fathers of the unutterable wisdom explain the Divine and Mystical Truth, unapproachable by the profane, through certain, certainly hidden and daring enigmas. Wherefore also, the many discredit the expressions concerning the Divine Mysteries. For, we contemplate them only through the sensible symbols that have grown upon them. We must then strip them, and view them by themselves in their naked purity. For, thus contemplating them, we should reverence a fountain of Life flowing into Itself -- viewing It even standing by Itself, and as a kind of single power, simple, self-moved, and self-worked, not abandoning Itself, but a knowledge surpassing every kind of knowledge, and always contemplating Itself, through Itself. We thought it necessary then, both for him and for others, that we should, as far as possible, unfold the varied forms of the Divine" representations of God in symbols. For, with what incredible and simulated monstrosities are its external, forms filled? For instance, with regard to the superessential Divine generation, representing a body of God corporally generating God; and describing a word flowing out into air from a man's heart, which eructates it, and a breath, breathed forth from a mouth; and celebrating God-bearing bosoms embracing a son of God, bodily; or representing these things after the manner of plants, and producing certain trees, and branches, and flowers and roots, as examples; or fountains of waters y, bubbling forth; or seductive light productions of reflected splendours; or certain other sacred representations which explain superessential descriptions of God; but with regard to the intelligible providences of Almighty God, either gifts, manifestations, or powers, or properties, or repose, or abidings, or progressions, or distinctions, or unions, clothing Almighty God in human form, and in the varied shape of wild beasts and other living creatures, and plants, and stones; and attributing to Him ornaments of women, or weapons of savages; and assigning working in clay, and in a furnace, as it were to a sort of artisan; and placing under Him, horses and chariots and thrones; and spreading before Him certain dainty meats delicately cooked; and representing Him as drinking, and drunken, and sleeping, and suffering from excess. What would any one say concerning the angers, the griefs, the various oaths, the repentances, the curses, the revenges, the manifold and dubious excuses for the failure of promises, the battle of giants in Genesis, during which He is said to scheme against those powerful and great men, and this when they were contriving the building, not with a view to injustice towards other people, but on behalf of their own safety? And that counsel devised in heaven to deceive and mislead Achab [133] ; and those mundane and meretricious passions of the Canticles; and all the other sacred compositions which appear in the description of God, which stick at nothing, as projections, and multiplications of hidden things, and divisions of things one and undivided, and formative and manifold forms of the shapeless and unformed; of which, if any one were able to see their inner hidden beauty, he

will find every one of them mystical and Godlike, and filled with abundant theological light. For let us not think, that the appearances of the compositions have been formed for their own sake, but that they shield the science unutterable and invisible to the multitude, since things all-holy are not within the reach of the profane, but are manifested to those only who are genuine lovers of piety, who reject all childish fancy respecting the holy symbols, and are capable to pass with simplicity of mind, and aptitude of contemplative faculty, to the simple and supernatural and elevated truth of the symbols. Besides, we must also consider this, that the teaching, handed down by the Theologians is two-fold -- one, secret and mystical -- the other, open and better known -- one, symbolical and initiative -- the other, philosophic and demonstrative; -- and the unspoken is intertwined with the spoken. The one persuades, and desiderates the truth of the things expressed, the other acts and implants in Almighty God, by instructions in mysteries not learnt by teaching. And certainly, neither our holy instructors, nor those of the law, abstain from the God-befitting symbols, throughout the celebrations of the most holy mysteries. Yea, we see even the most holy Angels, mystically advancing things Divine through enigmas; and Jesus Himself, speaking the word of God in parables, and transmitting the divinely wrought mysteries, through a typical spreading of a table. For, it was seemly, not only that the Holy of holies should be preserved undefiled by the multitude, but also that the Divine knowledge should illuminate the human life, which is at once indivisible and divisible, in a manner suitable to itself; and to limit the passionless part of the soul to the simple, and most inward visions of the most godlike images; but that its impassioned part should wait upon, and, at the same time, strive after, the most Divine coverings, through the pre-arranged representations of the typical symbols, as such (coverings) are, by nature, congenial to it. And all those who are hearers of a distinct theology without symbols, weave in themselves a sort of type, which conducts them to the conception of the aforesaid theology. SECTION II. But also the very order of the visible universe sets forth the invisible things of Almighty God, as says both Paul and the infallible Word. Wherefore, also, the Theologians view some things politically and legally, but other things, purely and without flaw; and some things humanly, and mediately, but other things supermundanely and perfectly; at one time indeed, from the laws which are manifest, and at another, from the institutions which are unmanifest, as befits the holy writings and minds and souls under consideration. For the whole statement lying before them, and all its details, does not contain a bare history, but a vivifying perfection. We must then, in opposition to the vulgar conception concerning them, reverently enter within the sacred symbols, and not dishonour them, being as they are, products and moulds of the Divine characteristics, and manifest images of the unutterable and supernatural visions. For, not only are the superessential lights, and things intelligible, and, in one word, things Divine, represented in various forms through the typical symbols, as the superessential God, spoken of as fire, and the intelligible Oracles of Almighty God, as flames of fire; but further, even the godlike orders of the angels, both contemplated and contemplating, are described under varied forms, and manifold likenesses, and empyrean shapes. And differently must we take the same likeness of fire, when spoken with regard to the inconceivable God; and differently with regard to His intelligible providences or words; and differently respecting the Angels. The, one as causal, but the other as originated, and the third as participative, and different things differently, as their contemplation, and scientific arrangements suggest. And never must we confuse the sacred symbols haphazard, but we must unfold them suitably to the causes, or the origins, or the powers, or the orders, or the dignities of which they are explanatory tokens. And, in order that I may not

extend my letter beyond the bounds of propriety, let us come at once to the very question propounded by you; and we affirm that every nourishment is perfective of those nourished, filling up their imperfection and their lack, and tending the weak, and guarding their lives, making to sprout, and renewing and bequeathing to them a vivifying wellbeing; and in one word, urging the slackening and imperfect, and contributing towards their comfort and perfection. SECTION III. Beautifully then, the super-wise and Good Wisdom is celebrated by the Oracles, as placing a mystical bowl, and pouring forth its sacred drink, but first setting forth the solid meats, and with a loud voice Itself benignly soliciting those who seek It. The Divine Wisdom, then, sets forth the two-fold food; one indeed, solid and fixed, but the other liquid and flowing forth; and in a bowl furnishes Its own providential generousities. Now the bowl, being spherical and open, let it be a symbol of the Providence over the whole, which at once expands Itself and encircles all, without beginning and without end. But since, even while going forth to all, It remains in Itself, and stands fixed in unmoved sameness; and never departing from Itself, the bowl also itself stands fixedly and unmovably. But Wisdom is also said to build a house for itself, and in it to set forth the solid meats and drinks, and the bowl, so that it may be evident to those who understand things Divine in a manner becoming God, that the Author of the being, and of the well being, of all things, is both an all-perfect providence, and advances to all, and comes into being in everything, and embraces them all; and on the other hand, He, the same, in the same, par excellence, is nothing in anything at all, but overtops the whole, Himself being in Himself, identically and always; and standing, and remaining, and resting, and ever being in the same condition and in the same way, and never becoming outside Himself, nor falling from His own session, and unmoved abiding, and shrine, -- yea even, in it, benevolently exercising His complete and all-perfect providences, and whilst going forth to all, remaining by Himself alone, and standing always, and moving Himself; and neither standing, nor moving Himself, but, as one might say, both connaturally and supernaturally, having His providential energies, in His steadfastness, and His steadiness in His Providence. SECTION IV. But what is the solid food and what the liquid? For the Good Wisdom is celebrated as at once bestowing and providing these. I suppose then, that the solid food is suggestive of the intellectual and abiding perfection and sameness, within which, things Divine are participated as a stable, and strong, and unifying, and indivisible knowledge, by those contemplating organs of sense, by which the most Divine Paul, after partaking of wisdom, imparts his really solid nourishment; but that the liquid is suggestive of the stream, at once flowing through and to all; eager to advance, and further conducting those who are properly nourished as to goodness, through things variegated and many and divided, to the simple and invariable knowledge of God. Wherefore the divine and spiritually perceived Oracles are likened to dew, and water, and to milk, and wine, and honey; on account of their life-producing power, as in water; and growth-giving, as in milk; and reviving, as in wine; and both purifying and preserving, as in honey. For these things, the Divine Wisdom gives to those approaching it, and furnishes and fills to overflowing, a stream of ungrudging and unfailing good cheer. This, then, is the veritable good cheer; and, on this account, it is celebrated, as at once life-giving and nourishing and perfecting. SECTION V. According to this sacred explanation of good cheer, even Almighty God, Himself the Author of all good things, is said to be inebriated, by reason of the super-full, and beyond conception, and ineffable, immeasurableness, of the good cheer, or to speak more properly, good condition of Almighty God. For, as regards us, in the worst sense, drunkenness is both an immoderate repletion, and being out of mind and wits; so, in the best sense, respecting God, we ought not to imagine drunkenness as anything else beyond the

super-full immeasurableness of all good things pre-existing in Him as Cause. But, even in respect to being out of wits, which follows upon drunkenness, we must consider the pre-eminence of Almighty God, which is above conception, in which He overtops our conception, as being above conception and above being conceived, and above being itself; and in short, Almighty God is inebriated with, and outside of, all good things whatever, as being at once a super-full hyperbole of every immeasurableness of them all; and again, as dwelling outside and beyond the whole. Starting then from these, we will take in the same fashion even the feasting of the pious, in the Kingdom of Almighty God. For He says, the King Himself will come and make them recline, and will Himself minister to them. Now these things manifest a common and concordant communion of the holy, upon the good things of God, and a church of the first born, whose names are written in heavens; and spirits of just men made perfect by all good things, and replete with all good things; and the reclining, we imagine, a cessation from their many labours, and a life without pain; and a godly citizenship in light and place of living souls, replete with every holy bliss, and an ungrudging provision of every sort of blessed goods; within which they are filled with every delight; whilst Jesus both makes them recline, and ministers to them, and furnishes this delight; and Himself bequeaths their everlasting rest; and at once distributes and pours forth the fulness of good things.

SECTION VI. But, I well know you will further ask that the propitious sleep of Almighty God, and His awakening, should be explained. And, when we have said, that the superiority of Almighty God, and His incommunicability with the objects of His Providence is a Divine sleep, and that the attention to His Providential cares of those who need His discipline, or His preservation, is an awakening, you will pass to other symbols of the Word of God. Wherefore, thinking it superfluous that by running through the same things to the same persons, we should seem to say different things, and, at the same time, conscious that you assent to things that are good, we finish this letter at what we have said, having set forth, as I think, more than the things solicited in your letters. Further, we send the whole of our Symbolical Theology, within which you will find, together with the house of wisdom, also the seven pillars investigated, and its solid food divided into sacrifices and breads. And what is the mingling of the wine; and again, What is the sickness arising from the inebriety of Almighty God? and in fact, the things now spoken of are explained in it more explicitly. And it is, in my judgment, a correct enquiry into all the symbols of the Word of God, and agreeable to the sacred traditions and truths of the Oracles.

LETTER X. To John, Theologos, Apostle and Evangelist, imprisoned in the Isle of Patmos.

I salute thee, the holy soul! O beloved one! and this for me is more appropriate than for most. Hail! O truly beloved! And to the truly Loveable and Desired, very beloved! Why should it be a marvel, if Christ speaks truly, and the unjust banish His disciples from their cities [134] , themselves bringing upon themselves their due, and the accursed severing themselves, and departing from the holy. Truly things seen are manifest images of things unseen. For, neither in the ages which are approaching, will Almighty God be Cause of the just separations from Himself, but they by having separated themselves entirely from Almighty God; even as we observe the others, becoming here already with Almighty God, since being lovers of truth, they depart from the proclivities of things material, and love peace in a complete freedom from all things evil, and a Divine love of all things good; and start their purification, even from the present life, by living, in the midst of mankind, the life which is to come, in a manner suitable to angels, with complete cessation of passion, and deification and goodness, and the other good attributes. As for you then, I would never be so crazy as to imagine that you feel any suffering; but I am persuaded that you ate sensible of the bodily sufferings merely to appraise them. But, as for those who are unjustly treating you, and fancying to imprison, not correctly, the sun of the Gospel, whilst fairly blaming them, I pray that by separating themselves from those things which they are bringing upon themselves they may be turned to the good, and may draw you to themselves, and may participate in the light. But for ourselves, the contrary will not deprive us of the all-luminous ray of John, who are even now about to read the record, and the renewal of this, thy true theology: but shortly after (for I will say it, even though it be rash), about to be united to you yourself. For, I am altogether trustworthy, from having learned, and reading the things made foreknown to you by God, that you will both be liberated from your imprisonment in Patmos, and will return to the Asiatic coast, and will perform there imitations of the good God, and will transmit them to those after you.

LETTER XI. Dionysius to Apollophanes, Philosopher.

At length I send a word to thee, O Love of my heart, and recall to thy memory the many anxieties and solitudes, which I have formerly undergone on thy account." For thou rememberest with what a mild and benevolent disposition I have been accustomed to rebuke thy obstinacy in error, although with scant reason, in order that I might uproot those vain opinions with which thou wast deceived. But now, adoring the supreme toleration of the Divine long-suffering towards thee, I offer thee my congratulations, O part of my soul, now that you are turning your eyes to your soul's health. For, even the very things which formerly you delighted to spurn, you now delight to affirm; and the things that you used to reject with scorn, you now delight to enforce. For, often have I set before you, and that with great precision, what even Moses committed to writing, that man was first made by God, from mud, and the sins of the world were punished by the flood, and in process of time, that the same Moses, united in friendship with God, - performed many wonders, both in Egypt and the exodus from Egypt, by the power and action of the same God. Nor Moses only, but other divine prophets subsequently, published similar things, not infrequently, who long before foretold that God should take the nature of man from a Virgin. To which statement of mine, not once, but often, you replied, that you did not know whether these things were true, and that you were entirely ignorant, even who that Moses was, and whether he was white or black. Further, that you rejected with scorn the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Who is God of all Majesty -- which you used to call mine. Further, that Paul, the globe trotter, and a scatterer of words, who was calling people from things terrestrial to things celestial, you were unwilling to receive. Lastly, you reproach me, as a turncoat, who had left the customs of my country's religion, and was leading people to iniquitous sacrilege, and urged me to unlearn the things in which I was placing my trust; or, at least, that I should put away other people's things, and deem it sufficient to keep what was my own, lest I should be found to detract from the honour due to divine deities, and the institutions of my fathers. But, after the supernal light of the paternal glory of His own will sent the rays of His own splendour upon the darkness of your mind, at once He put into my inmost heart, that I should recall to your mind the whole counsel of God. How, for instance, when we were staying in Heliopolis (I was then about twenty-five, and your age was nearly the same as mine), on a certain sixth day, and about the sixth hour, the sun, to our great surprise, became obscured, through the moon passing over it, not because it is a god, but because a creature of God, when its very true light was setting, could not bear to shine. Then I earnestly asked thee, what thou, O man most wise, thought of it. Thou, then, gave such an answer as remained fixed in my mind, and that no oblivion, not even that of the image of death, ever allowed to escape. For, when the whole orb had been throughout darkened, by a black mist of darkness, and the sun's disk had begun again to be purged and to shine anew, then taking the table of Philip Aridaeus, and contemplating the orbs of heaven, we learned, what was otherwise well known, that an eclipse of the sun could not, at that time, occur. Next, we observed that the moon approached the sun from the east, and intercepted its rays, until it covered the whole; whereas, at other times, it used to approach from the west. Further also, we noted that when it had reached the extreme edge of the sun, and had covered the whole orb, that it then went back towards the east, although that was a time which called neither for the presence of the moon,

nor for the conjunction of the sun. I therefore, O treasury of manifold learning, since I was incapable of understanding so great a mystery, thus addressed thee -- "What thinkest thou of this thing, O Apollophanes, mirror of learning?" "Of what mysteries do these unaccustomed portents appear to you to be indications?" Thou then, with inspired lips, rather than with speech of human voice, "These are, O excellent Dionysius," thou saidst, "changes of things divine." At last, when I had taken note of the day and year, and had perceived that, that time, by its testifying signs, agreed with that which Paul announced to me, once when I was hanging upon his lips, then I gave my hand to the truth, and extricated my feet from the meshes of error. Which truth, henceforth, I, with admiration, both preach and urge upon thee -- which is life and way, and true light, -- which lighteth every man coming into this world, -- to which even thou at last, as truly wise, hast yielded. For thou yieldedst to life when thou renounced death. And surely thou hast, at length, acted in the best possible manner, if thou shalt adhere henceforth to the same truth, so as to associate with us more closely. For those lips will henceforth be on our side, by the splendour of whose words, as blunting the edge of my mind, thou hast been accustomed by pretexts brought from various quarters, and by a gorgeous glow of eloquence, to vex the innermost recesses of our breast; -- yea, even sometimes to probe us sharply by occasional stings of malice. Wherefore as formerly, as thou thyself used to say, the knowledge of Christian doctrine, although savoury, was not savoury to thee, but when you had brought yourself to it, merely to taste, it shrank from your mental palate, and as it were, disdained to find a resting-place in your stomach; so now, after you have acquired a heart, intelligent and provident, elevate thyself to things supernal, and do not surrender, for things that are not, things which really are. Therefore in future, be so much more obstinate against those who have urged you to the false, as you showed yourself perverse towards us, when we invited you, with all our force, to the truth. For thus, I, in the Lord Jesus, Whose Presence is my being and my life, will henceforth die joyful, since thou also livest in Him. End of Dionysius the Areopagite. May his prayer be with us!

PREFACE TO LITURGY.

THIS Liturgy gives the doctrine of Dionysius in a liturgical form. The Greek original might be restored from the writings of Dionysius. No one could reasonably doubt that the Author of the Writings and the Liturgy was the same. This Liturgy should be compared with the Coptic Liturgy of Dionysius, Bishop of Athens, disciple of Paul, and with the Liturgy of St. Basil, adapted from this, as used by the Uniat Copts, translated by the Marquess of Bute. In my opinion, this Liturgy was written for the Therapeutae near Alexandria, described by Philo in his "contemplative life," who were Christians; who occupied themselves with the contemplation of the Divine Names, and the heavenly Hierarchy. It was written not earlier than the death of James, Apostle and Martyr, A.D.42, and probably not later than A.D.67; when Dionysius, at the request of St. Paul, left Athens to meet the Apostle at Rome, for the purpose of being sent by him to Gaul. A note of primitive antiquity is found in the description of the Church, as "from one end of the earth to the other." There is no "one, only, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Orthodox Church," as in the later Liturgy of St. Basil. Some expressions are obscure, from the Latin Version, and it would be rash, without profound study, to venture to suggest the Greek text. In consequence of this, and other Liturgies, and his excellent writings, Dionysius was frequently commemorated in the diptychs as one of the Doctors of the Church.

LITURGY OF ST. DIONYSIUS, BISHOP OF THE ATHENIANS .

1st. The Prayer before the Pax [136] . Pr. [137] "O Lord God, Who art simplex, not compound, and hidden in essence sublime! God the Father, from Whom all paternity which is in heaven and earth is named [138] , Source of Divinity, of those who participate in the Divine Nature, and Perfector of those who attain perfection; Good above all good, and Beautiful above all beautiful; Peaceful repose, Peace, Concord and Union of all souls; compose the dissensions which divide us from one another, and lead them back to an union with charity, which has a kind of similitude to Thy sublime essence: and as Thou art One above all, and we, one, through the unanimity of a good mind; that we may be found before Thee simplex and not divided, whilst celebrating this mystery; and that through the embraces of Charity and bonds of Love, we may be spiritually one, both with ourselves and with one another, through that Thy Peace pacifying all; through the Grace and Compassion and Love towards man of Thine Only-begotten Son; through Whom, and with Whom is due to Thee, glory, honour and dominion, with Thy most holy Spirit." P. "Amen." Pr. "Pax" (to all). P. "And with thy spirit." D. "Let each one give the Peace." P. "All." D. "Post." P. "Before Thee, O Lord." Pr. "Giver of Holiness, and distributor of every good, O Lord, Who sanctifiest every rational creature with sanctification, which is from Thee; sanctify, through Thy Holy Spirit, us Thy servants, who bow before Thee; free us from all servile passions of sin, from envy, treachery, deceit, hatred, enmities, and from him, who works the same, that we may be worthy, holily to complete the ministry of these life-giving Sacraments, through the heavenly Pontiff, Jesus Christ, Thine Only-begotten Son, through Whom, and with Whom, is due to Thee, glory and honour." P. "Amen." Pr. "Essentially existing, and from all ages; Whose nature is incomprehensible, Who art near and present to all, without any change of Thy sublimity; Whose goodness every existing thing longs for and desires; the intelligible indeed, and creatures endowed with intelligence, through intelligence; those endowed with sense, through their senses; Who, although Thou art One essentially, nevertheless art present with us, and amongst us, in this hour, in which Thou hast called and led us to these Thy holy mysteries; and hast made us worthy to stand before the sublime throne of Thy majesty, and to handle the sacred vessels of Thy ministry with our impure hands: take away from us, O Lord, the cloke of iniquity in which we are enfolded, as from Jesus, the son of Josedec the High Priest, Thou didst take away the filthy garments, and adorn us with piety and justice, as Thou didst adorn him with a vestment of glory; that clothed with Thee alone, as it were with a garment, and being like temples crowned with glory, we may see Thee unveiled with a mind divinely illuminated, and may feast, whilst we, by communicating therein, enjoy this sacrifice set before us; and render to Thee glory and praise." P. "Amen." D. "Let us stand becomingly." P. "The Mercies of God." Pr. "Charity." P. "And with thy spirit." Pr. "Lift up your hearts." P. "We lift them to the Lord." Pr. "Let us give thanks to the Lord." P. "It is meet and right." Priest (bending low), "For truly the celebration of Thy benefits, O Lord, surpasses, the powers of mind, of speech, and of thought; neither is sufficient every mouth, mind and tongue, to glorify Thee worthily. For, by Thy word the heavens were made, and by the breath of Thy mouth all the celestial powers; all the lights in the firmament, sun and moon, sea and dry land, and whatever is in them. The voiceless, by their silence, the vocal, by their voices, words and hymns, perpetually

bless Thee; because Thou art essentially good and beyond all praise, existing in Thy essence incomprehensibly. This visible and sensible creature praises Thee, and also that intellectual, placed above sensible perception. Heaven and earth glorify Thee. Sea and air proclaim Thee. The sun, in his course, praises Thee; the Moon, in her changes, venerates Thee. Troops of Archangels, and hosts of Angels; those virtues, more sublime than the world and mental faculty, send benedictions to Thine abode. Rays of light, eminent and hidden, send their sanctus to Thy glory. Principalities and Orders praise Thee, with their Jubilate. Powers and dominions venerate Thee. Virtues, Thrones and Seats inaccessible exalt Thee. Splendours of light eternal -- mirrors without flaw -- holy essences -- recipients of wisdom sublime -- beyond all, investigators of the will hidden from all, in clearest modulations of inimitable tones, and by voices becoming a rational creature; many eyed Cherubim of most subtle movement, bless Thee. Seraphin, furnished with six wings intertwined, cry Sanctus unto Thee. Those very ones, who veil their faces with their wings, and cover their feet with wings, and flying on every side, and clapping with their wings, (that they may not be devoured by Thy devouring fire) sing one to another with equal harmony of all, sweet chants, pure from every thing material, rendering to Thee, eternal glory; crying with one hymn, worthy of God, and saying," P. "Holy, holy, holy." Priest (bending) -- "Holy art Thou, O God the Father, Omnipotent, Maker and Creator of every creature -- Invisible and visible, and sensible; Holy art Thou, O God, the Only-begotten Son, Power and Wisdom of the Father, Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Holy art Thou, O God, the Holy Spirit, Perfector and Sanctifier of Saints. Triad, Holy and undivided: -- co-essential and of equal glory, Whose compassion towards our race is most effusive. Thou art holy, and making all things holy. Who didst not leave that, our very race, in exile from Paradise, although in the meantime involved in every kind of sin, but wast manifested to it by the Word, Who, in the presence of the" world, suffered extreme poverty; it in very truth, He, the Word, took, being made like to it in all things, sin excepted, that it might make Him prepared beforehand unto holiness, and disposed for this life-giving feast. (Raising his voice) Who being conceived, formed and configured by the Holy Spirit, and from virgin blood of the Virgin Mary, holy genitrix of God, was born indeed Man, and from the pure and most holy body of the same, and receiving Deity in Flesh, whilst the law and properties of nature were preserved, but in a manner beyond nature, and was acknowledged God in the Spirit, and Man in the flesh; and inasmuch as the Word existed before the ages, from Thee, as was worthy of God, was born, and by power and miracles, such as became the Maker of all, was testified that He was such, from the very fact that He has freely imparted a complete healing and a perfect salvation to the whole human race. Likewise, in the end and consummation of His dispensation on our behalf, and before His saving Cross, He took bread into His pure and holy hands, and looked to Thee, O God the Father; giving thanks, He blessed, sanctified, brake and gave to His disciples, the holy Apostles, saying, "Take and eat from it and believe that it is my body, that same, which for you and for many is broken and given, for the expiation of faults, the remission of sins, and eternal life." P. "Amen." Pr. "Likewise, in the same manner, over the cup also, which He mingled with wine and water, He gave thanks, blessed, sanctified, and gave to the same disciples and holy apostles, saying, Take, drink from it, all of you, and believe that this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed and given for you and for many, for the expiation of faults, remission of sins, and eternal life.'" P. "Amen." Pr. "Himself also, through the same holy Apostles, gave a precept to the whole company and congregation of the faithful, saying, This do to the memory of Me, and as oft as ye shall eat this bread and drink the commixture which is in this cup, and shall celebrate this feast, ye shall perform

a commemoration of My death until I come." P. "Of Thy death, O Lord, we perform a memorial." Pr. "Obeying, then, Thy sovereign precept, and celebrating a commemoration of Thy death and resurrection, through this sacrifice in perpetual mystery, we await also Thy second coming, the renovation of our race, and the vivification of our mortality. For, not simply, but with glory worthy of God, in Spirit ineffable, Thou wilt terribly come, and seated upon the lofty throne of Thy majesty, Thou wilt exact the acknowledgment of Thy royal power, from all things created and made: and justly, Thou wilt take vengeance for Thy image upon those who have corrupted it through evil passions. This sacrifice, here celebrated, we commemorate to Thee, O Lord, and the sufferings which Thou didst endure on the Cross for us. Be propitious, O Good, and Lover of men, in that hour full, of fear and trembling, to this congregation of those adoring Thee, and to all sons of the holy Church, bought by Thy precious blood. May coals of fire be kept from those who are tinged with Thy blood, and sealed by Thy sacraments in Thy holy Name, as formerly the Babylonian flame from the youths of the house of Hanania; for neither do we know others beside Thee, O God, nor in other have we hope of attaining salvation, since indeed Thou art the Helper and Saviour of our race; and on this account, our wise Church, through all our lips and tongues, implores Thee, and through Thee, and with Thee, Thy Father, saying" -- P. "Have mercy." Pr. "We also." D. "How tremendous is this hour." (The Priest bending, says the prayer of the invocation of the Holy Spirit.) Pr. "I invoke Thee, O God the Father, have mercy upon us, and wash away, through Thy grace, the uncleanness of my evil deeds; destroy, through Thy mercy, what I have done, worthy of wrath; for I do not extend my hands to Thee with presumption, for I am not able even to look to heaven on account of the multitude of my iniquities and the filth of my wickedness. But, strengthening my mind, in Thy loving-kindness, grace and long-suffering, I crave Thy holy Spirit, that Thou wouldst send Him upon me, and upon these oblations, here set forth, and upon Thy faithful people." Pr. "Hear me, O Lord." P. "Kyrie eleison," three times. Pr. "Through His alighting upon them, and His overshadowing, may He make this bread indeed, living body, and procuring life to our souls; body salutary -- body celestial -- body saving our souls and bodies -- body of our Lord God and Saviour, Jesus Christ -- for remission of sins, and eternal life, for those receiving it." P. "Amen." Pr. "And the commixture, which is in this cup, may He make living blood, and procuring life to all our souls; blood salutary -- blood celestial -- blood saving our souls and bodies -- blood of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, for remission of sins to those receiving them." P. "Amen." Pr. "Further, according to the tradition, and Divine recommendation of those, who were eye witnesses of Thy mysteries, and interpreters of Thy wonderful acts, we offer this Eucharist before Thee, O Lord, and through it we commemorate Thy charity towards us, and the universal dispensation of Thine Only-begotten One, in this world, that Thou wouldst also be reminded through it of Thy mercy, cognate and natural to Thee, which, at all hours, is shed upon Thy creatures, and wouldst snatch us from the wrath, reserved for the wicked; and from the punishments of those who work iniquity; and from the cruel attack of demons, who attack our souls, when we shall go hence; and wouldst make us worthy of Thy kingdom, and the habitations of those who have kept Thy precepts; and we will render to Thee, glory and the giving of thanks, &c." P. "Amen." Pr. (bending) "By Thy words, that cannot lie, and by Thy most true teachings, Thou hast said, O Lord, that great is the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Rejoice then now, O Lord, in the conversion of Thy servants, who stand here before Thee; add also, exultation over us, to the souls of the pious and just Fathers -- Patriarchs -- Prophets -- Apostles -- Preachers -- Evangelists -- Martyrs -- Confessors -- Zealots" of Divine Worship -- Benefactors -- Givers of

Alms -- of those who minister to the necessities of the poor -- and from all, may there be one act of praise to-day, before Thee, at this holy Altar, and in the heavenly Jerusalem." (Elevating his voice) "And on account of these, and other things of the same kind, may Thy holy Church, which is from one end of the earth to the other, be established, and preserved in tranquillity and peace, in doctrines evangelical and apostolical, by Divine Hierarchs, rightly dispensing the word of truth, and instructing, by the dogmas of true religion: through holy Priests, who embrace the word of life, and carry themselves illustriously in dispensing Thy celestial mysteries: through Deacons, who are modest, and perform the pure and royal ministry without flaw, through true, faithful ones, who occupy themselves in words and acts worthy of a Christian; through choirs of virgins of each sex, bearing about in their members the life-giving mortification of Thy Only-begotten Son. And from hence, in one troop, may we all be sent to that Church, the Jerusalem of the firstborn, whose names are written in the heavens, and there let us spiritually glorify Thee, O God the Father, and Thine Only-begotten Son, and Thy Holy Spirit." P. "Amen." Pr. "Assist also, O Lord, all those who assist Thy Holy Church, by offerings -- by tenths -- by ministry -- and by oblations; and those also, who ask the prayers of our littleness, give to them the object of those their prayers, O Lord, Lover of men." (Raising his voice) "Send also perfect attention and full health to all those who have the charge of the poor, who provide food for orphans and widows, and visit the infirm and afflicted. Restore to them, here indeed abundance and goods, there also delights incorruptible, because thou art Lord of each age, and distributor of immense reward. And to Thee beseems beneficence, both here and there, and to Thine Only-begotten Son." P. "Amen." Pr. (bending) "Restrain, O King of Kings, the wrath of kings, mitigate the fury of soldiers, take away wars and seditions, cast down the pride of heretics, and the sentences pronounced against us by Justice, may Thy love for mankind overcome, and turn into the gentleness of benignity"; (raising his voice) "Tranquillity and Peace from Thee, concede to the earth and all its inhabitants, visit it with Thy benefits and the care of Thy mercy, with a good and temperate condition of atmosphere, copiousness of fruits, and abundance of crops, and variety of flowers; preserve it from all pests of fury, and all unjust attacks of enemies, both spiritual and sensible, that without any injury of passion, we may sing perpetual hymns of praise, to Thee and to Thine Only-begotten Son." P. "Amen." Pr. (bending) "At this altar, and at that more exalted one in heaven, may there be a good remembrance of all those, who, out of the world, have pleased Thee -- chiefly indeed of the Holy genitrix of God, of John the Messenger, Baptist and Forerunner, of Peter and Paul, and of the holy company of the Apostles, of Stephen also, and of the whole multitude of Martyrs, and of all those, who, before them, with them and after them, have pleased, and do please Thee." (Raising his voice) "And since indeed Thou art Omnipotent, to the company of those beloved ones and to Thy family, join our weakness, O Lord, to that blessed congregation, to this Divine part, that, through them may be received our oblations and prayers, before the lofty throne of Thy Majesty, inasmuch as we are weak and infirm, and wanting in confidence before Thee. Forsooth, our sin and our righteousness are as nothing in comparison with the ocean, broad and immense, of Thy mercy. Looking then, into the hearts of each, send to each one good returns for their petitions, that in all and in each may be adored and praised, Thy Majesty, and that of Thine Only-begotten Son." P. "Amen." Pr. (bending) "Remember, O Lord, all Bishops, Doctors and Prelates of Thy holy Church, those, who from James, Apostle, Bishop and Martyr, to this present day, have pleased, and do please Thee." (Raising his voice) "Engraft in us, O Lord, their true faith, and their zeal for the true religion; their sincere charity without defect; their morals without stain; in order that, adhering to their footsteps, we may be

partakers of their reward, and of the crowns of victory which are prepared for them in Thy heavenly kingdom, and there, together with them, we may sing to Thee, Glory unceasing, and to Thy Only-begotten Son." P. "Amen." Pr. (bending) "Remember, O Lord, all those who are fallen asleep, who have laid themselves down in Thy hope, in the true faith. More especially, and by name, our Fathers, Brothers and Masters, and those, on behalf of whom, and by favour of whom, this holy oblation is offered," (raising his voice) "join, O Lord, their names, with the names of Thy Saints in the blessed habitation of those, who feast and rejoice in Thee; not recalling against them the memory of their sins, nor bringing to their memory the things which they have foolishly done. For no one is tied to the flesh, and at the same time, innocent in Thy sight. For One alone has been seen on earth without sin, Jesus Christ, Thine Only-begotten Son; Simplex [139] , who came to composition, through whom we also have hope of obtaining mercy." P. "Keep quiet." Pr. (bending) "Remitting our and their voluntary sins, knowingly or ignorantly committed. Be propitious, O Lord, Lover of men." (Raising his voice) "And grant to us a peaceful end, departure with mercy, that we may stand without fault on the right hand; and, with open face, and confidence, run to meet the arising of Thine Only-begotten Son, and His second and glorious manifestation from heaven; and may hear from Him, that blessed voice, which He shall pronounce at the last day to the Blessed." "Blessed of my Father receive the inheritance of the heavenly kingdom," "that in this, as in all, may be glorified and praised, Thy most venerated Name." P. "That, &c." Pr. "Peace." P. "And with thy spirit." The Priest breaks the Host, and says the prayer, before "Our Father." Pr, "Father of all, and Beginning, Which is above all things -- Light eternal, and Fountain of Light, Which illuminates all natures endowed with reason; Who callest the poor from the dust, and raisest the beggar from the dunghill; and hast called us, lost, rejected, and infirm, to the liberty and household dignity of Thy sons, through Thy beloved Son, grant to us, that we may appear in Thy sight, holy sons, and not unworthy of the name; and may also perform all our ministry after a blameless manner; and with purity of soul, and cleanness of intellect, and with a godly mind, whenever we invoke Thee, God the Father Omnipotent, holy and heavenly, we pray and say, Our Father, which art in heaven." P. "Hallowed be Thy Name, &c." Pr. "Free us, Thy servants and sons, from all temptations, most difficult, and surpassing our forces; and from all griefs, which can bring loss to our body or soul. Guard us, at the same time from the evil one, and from his universal power, and from his most pernicious devices. For Thou art King of all, and to Thee we render glory." P. "Amen." Pr. "Peace," P. "And with thy spirit." D. "Before" (Ante). P. "Before Thee, O Lord." (Coram.) Pr. "Look, O Lord, upon Thy faithful people, who bend before Thee, and await Thy gift, and contemplate the deposit of the Sacraments of Thy Only-begotten, O God the Father. Take not away Thy grace from us, and cast us not away from Thy ministry, and from participation in Thy sacraments, but prepare us, that we may be pure and without flaw, and worthy of this feast; and that, with a conscience unblamable, we may ever enjoy His precious body and blood; and in a life, glorious and endless, may recline in a spiritual habitation, and may feast at the table of Thy kingdom, and may render to Thee glory and praise." P. "Amen." Pr. "Peace." P. "And with thy spirit." D. "With fear." Pr. "Holy things to holy persons." P. "One holy Father." D. "Let us stand becomingly." P. "Before Thee." Pr. "We give thanks to Thee, O Lord, and with grateful mind we acknowledge Thy loving-kindness; because, from nothing, Thou hast led us forth to that which we are, and hast made us members of Thy household, and sons of Thy sacraments; and hast entrusted this religious ministry to us, and hast made us worthy of this spiritual table. Preserve in us, O Lord, the deposit of Thy Divine Mysteries, that we may frame and complete our life in Thy sight, after the fashion of the angels;

that we may be secured and inseparable through the reception of Thy holy (mysteries); performing Thy great and perfect will, and may be found ready for that last consummation, and to stand before Thy Majesty, and may be made worthy of the pleasure of Thy kingdom, through the grace, mercy and love towards man, of Thy Only-begotten Son, through Whom, and with Whom, is due to Thee, glory, honour, &c." P. "Amen." Pr. "Peace." P. "And with thy spirit." D. "After" (Post), P. "Before Thee, O Lord." Pr. "O Christ, the King of Glory, and Father of the Age to come; Holy Sacrifice; heavenly Hierarch; Lamb of God, Who takest away the sin of the world, spare the sins of Thy people, and dismiss the foolishness of Thy flock. Preserve us, through, the communication of Thy Sacraments, from every sin, whether it be committed by word, or thought, or deed; and from whatever makes us far from the familiarity of Thy household, that our bodies may be guarded by Thy body, and our souls renewed through Thy sacraments. And may Thy benediction, O Lord, be in our whole man, within and without; and may Thou be glorified in us, and by us, and may Thy right hand rest upon us, and that of Thy blessed Father, and of Thy most holy Spirit." P. "Amen." D. "Bless, O Lord." CANNES,

Christmas, 1896.

OBJECTIONS TO GENUINENESS.

THE most plausible objection to the genuineness of these writings is thus expressed by Dupin: "Eusebius and Jerome wrote an accurate catalogue of each author known to them -- with a few obscure exceptions, -- and yet never mention the writings of the Areopagite." Great is the rejoicing in the House of the Anti-Areopagites over this PROOF; -- but what are the facts? Eusebius acknowledges that innumerable works have not come to him -- Jerome disclaims either to know or to give an accurate catalogue either of authors or works. The Library of Caesarea contained three hundred thousand volumes, according to the modest computation of Doublet, according to Schneider, many more -- Jerome says there are some writings, so illustrious in themselves, that they will not suffer from not being mentioned by him; Jerome follows Dionysius on the Heavenly Hierarchy; Jerome's Catalogue of Illustrious Men contains one hundred and thirty-five names. Josephus is mentioned for his testimony to Christ -- Seneca, for his correspondence with St, Paul -- Philo, for his description of the Therapeutse of Alexandria. Yet Dupin would have the unwary infer that Jerome gives a full catalogue of each Author known to him, with a few obscure exceptions. The "Ecclesiastical History" of Eusebius treats of the nature of Christ, the companions of the Apostles, the Martyrdoms -- the succession of Bishops -- the persecutions -- the folk-lore of the Church to the fourth Century. The Book would fill about 125 pages, yet Dupin would have us believe that he gives a complete catalogue; He does not give the writings of Hymenseus and Narcissus, of Athenagoras, and Pantaenus, nor a complete list of Clement, Origen, and Dionysius of Alexandria. His silence, in my opinion, is owing to "odium theologicum." According to Eusebius, Jesus is dittos; according to Dionysius, Jesus is haplous; both true when properly understood, but when misunderstood -- "Hinc lachrymae illae" -- Dupin formed his premise for his conclusion, not from facts [140] . FALLACY OF NAMES. Pearson, Daillé, Blundellum, Erasmus, Valla, Westcott, Lupton, pronounce against the genuineness. Who are you? But Pearson demolishes Daillé; Vossius pulverises Blundellum; Erasmus repudiates Valla. Dr. Westcott, following Dupin, assumes the non-genuineness, but his literary instinct places his Article on Dionysius before that on Origen. Dean Colet bumps the scale against Mr. Lupton. Pearson, in the xth Chapter of Ignatii Vindiciae, gives the shortest and best summary in favour of the genuineness. Speaking of the scholars of his own day, he says, "No one is so ignorant as not to know that these writings were recognised as genuine by the best judges in the sixth, fifth, fourth, and third centuries." Unhappily, he also said, Every "erudite" person regarded them in his day as written in the fourth century, and he assumed the date of Eusebius' death, as the date of the works, to account for his silence. Hence every inerudite person, who wished to pass for erudite, maintained that opinion for his own reputation. But when Pearson had re-surveyed the evidence, he confessed, with shame, that though he had given, what seemed to him a true opinion, he left the decision of the whole matter to the judgment of a more learned person. Erasmus, in his "Institutio" of a Christian Prince, writes thus: -- "Divus ille Dionysius qui fecit tres Hierarchias." In his prime work, "ratio verae religionis," Erasmus not only enumerates the "Divine Names," the "Mystic and Symbolic Theology," but calls them, not Stoic, not Platonic, not Aristotelian, but "celestial" philosophy. He so moulds Dionysius into his book, that it becomes Dionysius writing elegant Latin. The only reason which outweighed with him

all external testimony, was, that Erasmus could not imagine that any man, living in apostolic times, and so far removed from the age of Erasmus, could possibly have penned such a mirror of apostolic doctrine. How could the Areopagite, though disciple of Paul, and familiar friend of John Theologus, possibly be so learned as the author of these writings? Such is the testimony of the two Theologians who have been permitted to be doubtful of the genuineness. GREGORY OF TOURS [141] . Gregory is the great authority of those who think that the St. Denis of France is not identical with Dionysius the Areopagite. The authority is worthy of their critical acumen. Gregory collects the more obscure martyrdoms, in Gaul, under Nero, and subsequent Emperors. He gives several martyrdoms under Nero, and thus proves the Apostolic Evangelisation of Gaul. Gregory quotes, and misquotes, and misunderstands the ancient document [142] , "Concerning [143] seven men sent by St. Peter into Gaul, -- in Gallias -- to preach." "Under Claudius -- sub CLAUDIO -- Peter the Apostle sent certain disciples into Gaul to preach, -- they were, Trophimus, Paulus, Martial, Austremonius, Gatianus, Saturninus, Valerius, and many companions." -- These men were sent A.D.42-43. Gregory omits Valerius, and inserts Dionysius -- who was not converted to the Christian Faith till A.D.44 or 49. Then Gregory misreads "Claudio" for "consulibus Decio," and adds, "Grato" as the fellow-consul. Thus a disciple of the Apostles, sent by Clement, successor of Peter, arrives in Gaul A.D.250, and the identical names of his companions recur miraculously in the third century. At the very time that Trophimus [144] is thus supposed to have arrived at Aries, we have a letter from Cyprian, A.D.254, urging Pope Stephen to depose Marcion, 15th or 18th Bishop of Aries from Trophimus. Such is the basis upon which our critical friends build their house upon the sand. THE PÈRES BOLANDISTES. The Pères Bolandistes are a wonder in Christendom. They are critical, and yet follow the gross blunder of Gregory of Tours. They belong to the papal obedience, and yet prefer Gregory of Tours when wrong, to Gregory XIII., when right. They pronounce the solemn declaration of Pope John XIXth, "that Martial of Limoges was an apostolic man [145] ," as of no historic value. They think that St. John Damascene did not possess the same critical apparatus for proving the authenticity of the writings of Dionysius, that we possess in the sixth Century. Their "actes authentiques [146] " of Dionysius acknowledge that he was sent to Gaul by Clement, successor of Peter; and yet they affirm that he arrived in Gaul, A.D, 250. After Clement I., who succeeded Peter and Paul, there was not another Clement, Bishop of Rome, for a thousand years [147] . Happily, Les petits Bolandistes are more rational and critical than their Pères. GENERAL OBJECTION."The style, the theological learning, the language and allusions, prove the writings written after the apostolic age."Is the Epistolary style the proof? St. Paul, St. John, St. Peter, St. Luke, and nearly the whole of the New Testament is written under the form of Epistles. The Epistle of St. James, -- the first written in the Canon of the New Testament, -- will bear comparison with the book of Job for ornate diction. Consult the marginal references to the Epistle of St. Peter, to see the scriptural knowledge of the Apostles. Men use the testimony of the High Priests, that the Apostles were unlearned and ignorant men, but omit their testimony that they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus; and the further testimony, that Jesus opened their understanding, that they should understand the testimony of the Scriptures, respecting Himself; and further, that the Holy Spirit should recall to them whatever He had said to them. Those who would rather assume twenty miracles, than acknowledge one natural fact, surmise, that a Syrian, in the ivth century, may have written Greek permeated with technical expressions of Plato and Aristotle. There is not a single allusion to persons or events after the first century, unless it be supposed that the Epistle of Ignatius, A.D.108, is quoted. The works abound

in names recorded in the New Testament. The Apostolic Epistles allude to the leaven of heresy already working. The Antwerp edition gives about five hundred references to Holy Scripture in the Writings of Dionysius. He quotes every book in the Bible, except the two last particular Epistles of St. John, or John Presbyter. Dionysius writes four letters to Gaius, to whom St. John wrote his third Epistle. We have, therefore, in the writings of this Apostolic man, a proof that the Canonical Scriptures were quoted as the Oracles of God, in the first century, and a triumphant testimony that Faith is more trustworthy than criticism. Thanks be to God!

Other Works by same Author.

HOLY SCRIPTURES IN CHURCH OF ROME. APOSTOLIC TRADITIONS ACCORDING TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT. THE CELESTIAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL HIERARCHY. Printed by James Parker and Co., Crown Yard, Oxford.

THE WORKS OF DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE.

PART II. THE HEAVENLY HIERARCHY,

AND

THE ECCLESIASTICAL HIERARCHY NOW FIRST TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH,

FROM THE ORIGINAL GREEK,

BY THE

REV. JOHN PARKER, M.A., Author of "Christianity Chronologically Confirmed." &c. James Parker
and Co,

6 SOUTHAMPTON-STREET, STRAND, LONDON;

AND 27 BROAD-STREET, OXFORD.

1899.

TO

THE MEMORY OF EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY, THEOLOGIAN OF THE CHURCH OF
BRITAIN.

BOOKS TO BE READ.

1st. "The doctrine of the Lord, through the Twelve Apostles, to the Gentiles." Spence, Nisbet. 2nd. "The Apostolic Constitutions." Lagarde. Williams and Norgate, 1862. 3rd. "Coptic Constitutions." Lagarde. Tattam, 1845, 4th. Justin Martyr -- for Liturgy. 5th. Hippolitus, "Refutation of all heresies." Duncker. Göttingen, 1859. 6th. Hierocles on "Golden Verses" of Pythagoras. Roger Daniel. London, 1654. 7th. "Ecclesiastical History (in Greek) from establishment of the Church to our own time." By Professor Kyriakos. Athens, 1898. 8th. "St. Denys, l'Areopagite, premier Evêque de Paris." Darras, 1863. Vives, Paris. 9th. Gale's "Court of the Gentiles." Hall, Oxon, 1672. 10th. Dexter's Chronicle. Migne, T.31. 11th. Monuments inédits. Faillon.

DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE AND THE ALEXANDRINE SCHOOL.

ALEXANDRIA became the home of Christian Philosophy, but Athens was its birthplace. Pantaenus and Ammonius-Saccus were chief founders of the Alexandrine School. They were both Christian. They both drew their teaching from the Word of God, "the Fountain of Wisdom," and from the writings of Hierotheus, and Dionysius the Areopagite -- Bishops of Athens. For several centuries there had been a Greek preparation for the Alexandrine School. As the Old Testament was a Schoolmaster, leading to Christ, so the Septuagint, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristobulus, Philo, and Apollos were heralds who prepared the minds of men for that fulness of light and truth in Jesus Christ, which, in Alexandria, clothed itself in the bright robes of Divine Philosophy. Pantaenus was born in Athens, a.d.120, and died in Alexandria, a.d.213. He was Greek by nationality, and Presbyter of the Church in, Alexandria by vocation. First, Stoic, then Pythagorean, he became Christian some time before a.d.186, at which date he was appointed chief instructor in the Didaskeleion, by Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria. Pantaenus recognised the preparation for the Christian Faith in the Greek Philosophy. Anastasius-Sinaita describes him as "one of the early expositors who agreed with each other in treating the first six days of Creation as prophetic of Christ and the whole Church." Eusebius says, that "Pantaenus expounded the treasures of the Divine dogmas preserved direct, as from father to son, from St. Paul and other Apostles. Phptius records that Pantaenus was pupil of those who had seen the Apostles, but that he certainly had not listened to any of them themselves. Now, if Pantaenus was pupil of those who had seen the Apostles, and yet had, not listened to their oral teaching, it is natural to infer that he was pupil through their writings. I am a pupil of Dr. Pusey, but I never listened to his oral teaching; I am pupil through his writings. Now, there exist, to this day, the writings of two Presbyters who had seen the Apostles -- both, converts to the faith through St. Paul, -- whose writings contain the treasures of the Divine dogmas, received from St. Paul and the other Apostles. Those two Presbyters are Hierotheus and Dionysius the Areopagite, both ordained Bishop of Athens by St. Paul. Dionysius the Areopagite expressly calls, St. Paul his "chief initiator," and as such, gives his teaching on the holy Angels, in the sixth chapter of the Heavenly Hierarchy; and frequently describes St. Paul as his "chief instructor." If, then, we can prove that the writings of Dionysius existed before and were known in Alexandria, when Pantaenus delivered his lectures in that city, we may fairly infer that Pantaenus would know, and knowing, would use, the writings penned by the Chief of his own Areopagus, and Bishop of his own Athens. Historical criticism does not permit us to reject probabilities, merely because they confirm the Christian Faith. Dexter, in his Chronicle, collected from the Archives of Toledo and other churches in Spain, gives this testimony: -- "U.C.851 (a.d.98). Dionysius Areopagita dicat Eugenio Marcello, dicto, propter ingenii excellentiam, Timotheo, libros de Divinis Nominibus." Dionysius of Alexandria, writing to Pope Sixtus II., c.250, respecting the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, affirms "that no one can intelligently dispute their paternity -- that no one penetrated more profoundly than Dionysius into the mysterious depths of Holy Scripture -- that Dionysius was disciple of St. Paul, and piously governed the Church of Athens." If, then, the Bishops of Alexandria and Rome exchanged letters only a few years after the death of Pantaenus, and only seven years after the death of Ammonius, and in

those letters affirmed the writings to be undoubtedly written by Dionysius the Areopagite, it would be the height of absurdity to affirm that such writings were unknown to Pantaenus and Ammonius. But we do not need to base our proof on mere supposition. Routh gives two fragments of Pantaenus. The second is a distinct echo of Dionysius. In *Divine Names* (c.7), Dionysius discusses how Almighty God knows existing things, and explains the text; "He, knowing all things before their birth" as proving that "not as learning existing things from existing things, but from Himself, and in Himself, as Cause, the Divine Being pre-holds and pre-comprehends the notions and essence of all things, not approaching each several thing according to its kind, but knowing and containing all things within one grasp of the cause. Thus Almighty God knows existing things, not by a knowledge of existing things, but by that of Himself." Dionysius, c. V. s.8, speaking of creation, declares that the Divine and good volitions of Almighty God define and produce existing things. Pantaenus teaches the same: "Neither does He know things sensible sensibly (aisthetos), nor things intelligible intellectually. For it is not possible that He, Who is above all things, should comprehend things being, after things being (kata ta onta), but we affirm that He knows things being" as His own volitions . . . yea, as His own volitions, Almighty God knows things being, since by willing (thelon), He made all things being." In *Mystic Theology*, c. V., Dionysius says, "Almighty God does not know existing things, qua existing." The teaching of Ammonius-Saccus is the same; Ammonius uses the word boulema, Dionysius and Pantaenus, thelemata, of God, as Source of Creation. But, though the known fragments of Pantaenus are few, we possess abundant writings of two pupils, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, from which we may gather the teaching of their master. Clement speaks of Pantaenus as his "great instructor and collaborator." Such is the similarity between the writings of Clement and Dionysius, that some have hazarded the conjecture that Clement the Philosopher, mentioned by Dionysius, was Clement of Alexandria! I give only one familiar illustration. Clement writes: "As then, those riding at anchor at sea, drag the anchor, but do not drag it to themselves, but themselves to the anchor, thus those who are drawn to God in the gnostic life, find themselves unconsciously led to God." Dionysius, *D. N.*, c. III. s.1, says, "or, as if after we have embarked on ship, and are holding on to the cable, attached to some rock, we do not draw the rock to us, but ourselves, and the ship, to the rock. Wherefore, before everything, and especially theology, we must begin with prayer; not as though we ourselves were drawing the power, which is everywhere, and nowhere present, but as, by our godly reminiscences and invocations, conducting ourselves to, and making ourselves one with It." Origen confessed that Pantaenus was his superior in the philosophy of the schools, and that he moulded his teaching upon the model of Pantaenus. Do the writings of Origen bear the stamp of Dionysius and Hierotheus? Origen, on the resurrection of the body, says, "For how does it not seem absurd that this body which has endured scars for Christ, and, equally with the soul, has borne the savage torments of persecutions, and has also endured the suffering of chains, and rods, and has been tortured with fire, beaten with the sword, and has further suffered the cruel teeth of wild beasts, the gallows of the cross, and divers kinds of punishments, -- that this should be deprived of the prizes of such contests. If forsooth, the soul alone, which not alone contended, should receive the crown, and its companion the body, which served it with much labour, should attain no recompense, for its agony and victory, -- how does it not seem contrary to all reason, that the flesh, resisting for Christ its natural vices, and its innate lust, and guarding its virginity with immense labour, -- that one, when the time for rewards has come, should be rejected as unworthy and the other should receive its crown? Such a fact would undoubtedly argue on the part of God, either a lack of justice or a

lack of power." Dionysius (E. H., c. VII.) says, "Now the pure bodies of the holy souls, enrolled together as yoke-fellows, and fellow travellers, which together strove during the divine contests, throughout the Divine Life, in the unmoved steadfastness of the souls, will together receive their own resurrection. For, having been made one with the holy souls, to which they were united during this present life, by having become members of Christ, they will receive in return the godlike and incorruptible immortality and blessed inheritance." Dionysius (D. N., c. VI. s.2) says, "what is still more divine, It promises to "transfer our whole selves (I mean souls and bodies, their yoke-fellows), to a perfect life and immortality. Others again do this injustice to bodies, that, after having toiled with the holy souls, they unjustly deprive them of the holy retributions, when they have come to the goal of their most divine course." "For if the man have passed a life dear to God in soul and body, the body which has contended throughout the Divine struggles will be honoured together with the devout soul."To shew that Origen knew the works of Hierotheus, we give an extract from his letter to Gregory: "Would that you might both participate in and continually augment this part, so that you may not only say, we are partakers of Christ,' but also partakers of God." Papias [148] , Bishop of Hierapolis (fragment V.) says, "the Presbyters, the disciples of the Apostles, say that this is the gradation and method of those who are saved, and that they advance through steps of this nature, and that, moreover, they ascend through the Spirit to the Son, and through the Son to the Father; and that, in due time, the Son will yield up His work to the Father." Who the Presbyters, the disciples of the Apostles were, we may gather from the three last chapters of the "Book of Hierotheus [149] ," in which the very same doctrine is taught. Is it not, then, a legitimate inference, that when Photius says " that Pantaenus was a pupil of the Presbyters who had seen the Apostles," he designated Hierotheus and Dionysius the Areopagite, generally known under that title?Ammonius Saccus was born of Christian parents in Alexandria, and died in that city, a.d.242.Anastasius Sinaita calls him "the Wise," and Hierocles, "the taught of God." Besides being famous for his expositions of Holy Scripture, he wrote the "Diatesseron," or "Harmony of the Gospels," contained in the Bib. Patrum. In a.d.236, he wrote the agreement between Moses and Jesus. He was the great conciliator, who sought the good in every system, and to make all one in Christ. Pressensé beautifully describes him as a man who wished to believe and to know -- to adore and to comprehend -- to conciliate the Greek Philosophy with the Mysteries of the East. He wrote a commentary on the golden verses of Pythagoras, which Hierocles published, as well as reproduced his other works. The titles of his books, mentioned by Photius, such as "Providence" and "Free Will," recall those of the lost books of Dionysius, of which we have only a summary in his known works. (Cod.251-214.) Ammonius was surnamed Saccus from having been a corn carrier. Virgil, Shakespere, Milton, were great geniuses in themselves, but when we know the sources from which they drew, we can better understand their achievements.Dionysius was indebted to Hierotheus -- Ammonius drew from Dionysius. This we shall shew, not as we might, by his works as described by Photius, but from Plotinus, his disciple, in order that we may have the prevailing proof, to some minds, of testimony not necessarily Christian.Plotinus was born in Lycopolis, a.d.205, and died in Campagna, a.d.270. At the age of 29, he began to search for truth, in the schools of Alexandria. He wandered from teacher to teacher, but could find no rest until he was persuaded to go and hear Ammonius-Saccus. After listening to him, he exclaimed, "This is what I sought."Plotinus remained under him eleven years, until the death of Ammonius, a.d.242. In a.d.244, Plotinus began to teach in Rome. Plotinus was not a refined scholar. Porphyry, therefore, committed his teaching to writing. Porphyry was

regarded as the greatest enemy to the Christian Faith in the early centuries. Persecutors burned the bodies of Christians, but Porphyry sought to undermine their faith in the Holy Scriptures, by quibbles of unbelief, which have been revived to-day as "New Criticism." Porphyry wrote against the Holy Scriptures with a bitterness engendered by a conviction of their truth. Now, it is a startling fact, that though the teaching of Plotinus comes to us through Porphyry, there is not a word in the Enneades, in which the teaching of Plotinus is given, against the Christian Faith. It is true that Eutochius published another version of the teaching of Plotinus, on the ground that his teaching was coloured by Porphyry, but we prefer to rest our proof on Porphyry, as not being prejudiced in favour of the truth. Let us then first see what Plotinus teaches respecting the Holy Trinity. He says, "We need not go beyond the three Hypostaseis" (Persons). It is true that Plotinus presents that Trinity as "One," "Mind," and "Soul," whereas Dionysius gives the formula "Father, Son, and Spirit." Occasionally Plotinus uses "Logos" instead of "Mind." But even this substitution of "One" for "Father" may be traced to Dionysius, who speaks of the Triad, enarchike and even enarchikon hypostaseon, "One springing." The "One" represents the Father. Plotinus says, "We may represent the first principle, One, as source, which has no other origin than Itself, and which pours Itself in a multitude of streams without being diminished by what it gives." Dionysius speaks of the "Father" as sole source of Godhead, and says that "the Godhead is undiminished by the gifts imparted." In Chap. XII. of Divine Names, Dionysius treats of "One" and "Perfect" as applied to Almighty God. Let us now hear Plotinus on the "Beautiful" Enneades (I.6-7). Plotinus says, "The soul advances in its ascent towards God, until being raised above everything alien, it sees face to face, in His simplicity, and in all His purity, Him upon Whom all hangs, to Whom all aspire; from Whom all hold existence, life and thought. What transport of love must not he feel who sees Him! with what ardour ought he not to desire to be united to Him! He, who has not seen Him, desires Him as the Good; he who has seen Him, admires Him as the sovereign Beauty; and struck at once with astonishment and pleasure, disdains the things which heretofore he called by the name of Beauty. This is what happens to those to whom have appeared the forms of gods and demons; -- they no longer care for the beauty of other bodies. What think you, then, should he experience who has seen the Beautiful Himself, -- the Beautiful surpassing earth and heaven! The miserable is not he, Who has neither fresh colour nor comely form, nor power, nor royalty; it is alone he, Who sees himself excluded from the possession of Beauty -- a possession in comparison with which he ought to disdain royalty, rule of the whole earth, of the sea, and heaven itself, if he should be able, by abandoning, by despising all these, to rise to the contemplation of the Beautiful, face to face." Plotinus also recognised, "that the eye soiled with impurity could never bear the sight, or attain to the vision of that Beauty. We must render the organs of vision analogous and like to the object that they would contemplate. Every man ought to begin by rendering himself beautiful and divine to obtain a Vision of the Beautiful and the Deity." Well might St. Augustine say, that "with the change of a few words, Plotinus became concordant with Christ's religion." No wonder that Gregory and Basil quoted so largely from Plotinus. Let us now hear what Dionysius says of the "Good and Beautiful": -- "Goodness turns all things to Itself; all things aspire to It, as source and bond and end. From this Beautiful comes being to all existing things. All things aspire to the Beautiful and Good, -- and there is no existing thing which does not participate in the Beautiful and Good." Read the Fourth Chapter of the Divine Names. Porphyry records that Plotinus attained to that vision of the Beautiful three times during his life. How that vision of the Beautiful is to be attained, Dionysius describes in the "Mystic Theology:" -- "But thou, O dear Timothy, by thy persistent commerce with

the mystic visions, leave behind both sensible perceptions and intellectual efforts, and all objects of sense and intelligence, and all things not being and being, and be raised aloft agnostically to the union, as attainable, with Him Who is above every essence and knowledge. For by unchecked and absolute extasy, in all purity, from thyself, and all, thou wilt be carried on high to the superessential Ray of the Divine Darkness, when thou hast cast away all and become free from all." Ammonius had such extasy during his lectures, in which he seemed to have Divine visions. Plotinus differs from Dionysius in regarding creation as an act of necessity, whereas Dionysius regards it as an act of love. Plotinus treats evil as "an elongation from God." Dionysius speaks of Almighty God as immanent in matter the most elongated from spirit. Plotinus traces evil to matter; Dionysius to the fallacious choice of a free agent. May it not be that the pagan colouring of Porphyry in these respects led Eutochius to give a more faithful and consistent account of the teaching of Plotinus. But the crowning proof that Dionysius was the source from which the Alexandrine School drew much of its wisdom, is Proclus (450-485). Suidas affirmed long ago that Proclus cribbed whole passages from Dionysius. Professor Stiglmayr fills seven pages with parallel passages. Vachérot describes certain chapters of the "Divine Names" as extracts from Proclus, word for word, and says the whole doctrine of Dionysius seems to be a commentary upon the Theology of Alexandria. Barthélémy St. Hilaire says that Dionysius and Scotus Erigena, almost entirely implanted, in the middle age, the doctrine of Neo-Platonism. Matter is more profound; Professor Langen finds in Dionysius the "characteristics of Neo-Platonic speculation." The similarity of doctrine is denied by none. Which writings appeared first? that is the question. Dexter commemorates the "Divine Names" a.d.98 [150]. Polycarp quotes Dionysius verbatim as "a certain one." Jerome quotes him as "quidam Graecorum." Dionysius of Alexandria (a.d.250), writing to Sixtus II., declares that no one can intelligently doubt that the writings are those of Dionysius, the convert of St. Paul, Bishop of Athens. Tertullian, expresses the Agnosia "nihil scire omnia scire," Origen quotes him by name. Theodore (a.d.420) answers objections, -- whom Photius approved. Gregory calls Dionysius "an ancient and venerable Father." The Second Council of Nicea quotes the very words, contained in the "Ecclesiastical Hierarchy," c. I. s.4, as those of the great Dionysius. Bishop Pearson proves that the best judges in the sixth, fifth, fourth and third centuries regarded the writings as written: by Dionysius the Areopagite. German scholars to-day admit that the external testimony is in favour of their genuineness. Yet eccentric critics, on account of the precise theology, cannot believe that the works were written; by a learned Greek, -- Chief of the Areopagus -- who forsook all to follow Christ, -- the convert and disciple of St. Paul, -- the familiar friend of St. John and other Apostles, to whom our Saviour revealed the mysteries of the Father; but those critics can believe that an unknown man, whose century no one can fix, and possibly a Syrian, may have gleaned from writers of the first four centuries these theological pearls expressed in Greek in a style unique and always like itself. They can, believe that the Author of these Divine writings, would incorporate, fictitious allusions to persons and events of the apostolic, age, to add lustre to incomparable works, and to impute them to another. They can believe that writings, so composed, were foisted upon a credulous Christendom, so that Dionysius of Alexandria, Maximus, St. John Damascene, and the Council of Nicea, accepted them as the genuine works of Dipnysius. I do not belong to that school. Only unbelief could believe anything so incredible. Rational men will not hazard the surmise that works known in the first century were gleaned from writings composed four hundred years afterwards. The tone of the Alexandrine School may be further illustrated from Amelius and Dionysius the Sublime. Amelius attended

Plotinus twenty-four years as companion and pupil. Eusebius gives an extract from his writings, in which Amelius says, "This plainly was the Word, by Whom, being Eternal, things becoming became, as Heraclitus would say." It was probably he who said, "the Prologue of St. John's Gospel ought to be written in gold, and placed in the most conspicuous place in every church." De Civ. Dei, LX. c.29. Dionysius, the famous secretary of Zenobia, attended the lectures of Ammonius-Saccus. He was the "arbiter" of all literary questions. He expresses his admiration, De sub. L.9, of the diction of Moses in the description of the six days' creation, and numbers St. Paul amongst the most brilliant Greek orators, as a man who propounded a "dogma beyond demonstration." We claim that the testimony of these illustrious men, and the extracts from Pantaenus, Ammonius, and their disciples, justify the conclusion that the Alexandrine School was Biblical, Christian, and Philosophical, that its Philosophy was a Divine Philosophy of the Faith, not a pagan philosophy against the Faith, and that the main sources of its Divine Philosophy were the writings of Hierotheus and Dionysius, Bishops of Athens. JOHN PARKER. Cannes,

Epiphany, 1899. For sketch of Life, Internal Evidence of date, and External Testimony to genuineness during first nine centuries, see "Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchy." (Skeffington, 2s.6d.)

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