Morals on the Book of Job (part 4 of 5)

Gregory the Great (c. AD 540–604)

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Book XXVII

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF ST. GREGORY THE POPE, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB.

VOLUME III - THE FIFTH PART. — BOOK XXVII.

The last twelve verses of the thirty-sixth chapter are expounded, with the whole of the thirty-seventh, and their meanings ingeniously examined, for the sake of establishing a system of Christian doctrine, and ethics. [i] 1. Whoever is endeavouring to gain knowledge from the mighty words of the arrogant, ought carefully to secure himself from imitating their pride of learning, lest, with the words of virtue, he should acquire the vices of their habits, and in attaining to skill in speaking, should wound himself through unskilfulness in living. For when we hear these persons speaking powerful words, and yet observe them proud of their powerful words, we enter, as it were, the garden of learning, and pluck roses from thorns. We need, therefore, careful discrimination, to cull that which is sweet scented, and to avoid that which pricks us: lest the incautious hand of the gatherer should be wounded with the thorn of their habits, if the flower of their words happens to be carelessly gathered. Eliu, therefore, being both learned and arrogant, produces at one while something to give a sweet scent, and at another, something to wound. We must then so gather what is fragrant from his teaching, as yet to carefully guard against the wounds of his pride. He introduced, indeed, many remarks above with a moral object, and yet in the words which follow he raised himself solely to the mysteries of prophecy. For he abandons the low ground of morality, and rises to the heights of prophecy.

2. Nor is it to be wondered at, that a haughty man could be filled with the prophetic spirit, when Saul also was in the number of the prophets. [1 Sam. 10, 11] But why do we say this of Saul, when we know that even a she ass learned rational words from the sight of an Angel? [Num. 22, 28; 2 Pet. 2, 16] But as the irrational animal uttered rational words, and yet went not so far as to take a rational nature in exchange; thus does an unworthy person often receive holy words by the spirit of prophecy, but yet does not attain to deserve the glory of sanctity; so as to rise above himself in his words, and listlessly to sink beneath himself in his life. Whence Eliu, though not now humble, beholds the humble advent of our Redeemer: and announces, in prophecy, Him, Whom he assails with his haughty manners, saying,

Ver. 22. Behold, God is lofty in His strength, and none is like Him among lawgivers. [ii]

3. As if he said plainly, He, Who will appear humble in weakness, remains lofty in strength, Paul also witnessing this, who says, For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. [2 Cor. 13, 4] Of Whom it is rightly subjoined, None is like Him among lawgivers. Moses was a lawgiver, Joshua a lawgiver, the Prophets lawgivers also. We can term all lawgivers, who, we know, admonish the people rightly from the Law. But there is no one like to this Mediator among lawgivers. For they, having been called by grace from their sins, return to innocence, and, from what they have experienced in themselves, bring back others by their preaching. But our Redeemer is Man without sin, a Son without adoption, and has never committed any thing which He has disapproved. And He so speaks to the world by His Manhood, as yet to be still the Lord of the same world before all ages by His Godhead. Hence certain persons believed that the Mediator between God and men was like the lawgivers. For when He asked, Whom do men say that the Son of Man is, the disciples answered and said, Some say that He is John the Baptist, others Elias, others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets. [Matt.16, 13. 14. But He doubtless disclosed to Peter how lofty He was in strength; for looking on Him truly, he separated Him from an equality with lawgivers, saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.

[ib. 16] Whence the Bride rightly says of Him in the Song of Songs, By night on my bed I sought Him Whom my soul loveth, I sought Him, and I found Him not. [Cant. 3, 1] And a little after, The watchmen who guard the city found me. [ib. 3] Of Whom she says again, They wounded me, they took my cloak. [ib. 5, 7] And she asks them again, saying, Saw ye Him Whom my soul loveth? When I had passed by them but a little, I found Him Whom my soul loveth. [ib. 3, 4]

4. For the Beloved is sought for by night on the bed; because He is longed for in tribulation of spirit, in the secret chambers of the heart. Whom yet the Bride, though seeking, finds not; because every Elect soul is already kindled with the torches of His love, but the sight of Him, which is sought for, is still denied, that the longing of the lover may increase; and water is, as it were, withdrawn in thirst, that the heat of the thirst may be augmented, and that the longer a person thirsts, and longs for it, the more eagerly may he seize it at last when he has found it. But the watchers find her when seeking for Him; and wound her, and take away her cloak: because when anxious teachers meet with any soul, already seeking for a sight of its Redeemer, they wound it, by the word of preaching, with the darts of heavenly love: and if it has any covering of its former conversation, they take it away; in order that the more it is stripped of the burden of this world, the more quickly may He, Who is sought for, be found by her. But it is well added, When I had passed by them but a little, I found Him Whom my soul loveth? because the mind, eager for the sight of Him, would not find Him, Who is above man, unless it were to go beyond the estimate of the Prophets, the loftiness of the Patriarchs, and the standard of all men.

To pass by the watchers, then, is to postpone, in comparison of Him, those even whom the soul admires. And He, Who was sought for, is then beheld, if He is believed to be a Man,

but yet above the measures of men. Whence it is now well said, None is like Him among lawgivers. But He in truth, appearing to our sight through the infirmity of the flesh, as He rejects some, and calls others, has displayed marvellous judgments, which can be thought upon, and yet not be comprehended by us. For He says, For judgment have I come into this world, that they which see not, might see, and that they which see might be made blind. [John 9, 39] And again, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. [Matt. 11, 25] In which judgments the Jews are doubtless rejected, the Gentiles gathered. Which fact in truth we can certainly wonder at, but are not at all able to search into. Whence it is now also well subjoined by Eliu,

Ver. 23. Who will be able to search out His ways? Or who dareth to say to Him, Thou hast wrought iniquity? [iii] 5. As if he said; 'How can He be blamed, Whose doing cannot be searched into? For no one judges properly of that, which he knows not. We ought, therefore, to rest the more silent under His judgments, the more we see that we perceive not the reason of His judgments. Whence it is also well subjoined. Ver. 24. Remember that thou knowest not His work, of Whom men have sung. [iv]

6. In Holy Scripture sometimes Angels, and sometimes persons ['homines'] of perfect life, are called 'men.' ['viri.'] For that an Angel is sometimes called a man, the Prophet Daniel bears witness, saying, Behold, the man Gabriel. [Dan. 9, 21] And again, that persons of perfect life are called by the name of 'men,' Wisdom declares in the Proverbs, saying, Unto you, O men, I call. [Prov. 8, 4] Men then sing of the Lord, when either spirits from above, or perfect teachers, make known to us His power. But yet His work is not known; because doubtless even they who preach Him, venerate His unpenetrated judgments. They, therefore, both know Him, Whom they preach, and yet know not His works: because they know, by grace, Him, by Whom they were made, but yet cannot understand His judgments, which are wrought by Him even above their understanding. For that Almighty God is not clearly seen in His doings the Psalmist bears witness, saying, Who hath made darkness His secret place. [Ps. 18, 11] And again, Thy judgments are a great deep. [Ps. 36, 6] And again, The deep like a garment is His clothing. [Ps. 104, 6] Whence also it is well said by Solomon, As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones grow together in the belly of her that is with child, so thou knowest not the works of God, Who is the Maker of all things. [Eccles. 11, 5]

7. For to state one thing out of many, two little ones come to this light: but to one it is granted to return to redemption by Baptism; the other is taken away before the regenerating water bedews it. And the son of faithful parents is often taken off without faith, while that of unbelievers is renewed by the grant of the Sacrament of faith. But some one may perhaps say, that God knew that he would act wickedly even after Baptism, and that He did not, on that account, bring him to the grace of Baptism. But if this is the case, the sins of some persons are without doubt punished even before they are committed. And who, that thinks rightly, would say this, that Almighty God, Who releases some from the sins they have

committed, condemns, in others, these very sins, even when not committed? His judgments are, therefore, hidden; and they ought to be reverenced with an humility, as great as the obscurity by which they cannot be seen. Let him say then, Remember that thou knowest not His work, of Whom men have sung. As if he were to say plainly, The works of Him, of Whom mighty men have spoken, are concealed from the eyes of thy mind; because they surpass the measure of thy knowledge, inasmuch as thou art circumscribed by thy humanity. It follows,

Ver. 25. All men see Him, every one beholdeth afar off. [v]

8. Every man from the fact that he is created rational, ought to conclude from reason that He Who made him is God. And to see Him at this time, is doubtless to behold, through reason, His sovereign power. But when it is said, All men see Him, it is rightly subjoined, Every one beholdeth afar off. For, to behold Him afar off, is to behold Him at present not in Person, but to think of Him as yet, solely from admiration of His works. Even the Elect behold Him here afar off; because they do not as yet discern His brightness with the keenness of inmost vision. For although they are near Him now by love, yet they are separated from Him by the burden of their earthly habitation; and although they cling close to Him by good living, yet they sigh that they are far removed from the sight of His contemplation. And when the reprobate also see Him coming to judgment, they doubtless behold Him afar off, because they behold Him not in the form of His Godhead, but in His Manhood only, in which alone He could even be comprehended. Because, namely, their own evil deeds, being then brought back to their memory, strike against their sight: and while they behold the Manhood of Him, Whose Godhead they see not, they are, in a wonderful manner, far away from the sight of Him Whom they behold.

But when it is said, Remember that thou knowest not His work, and it is then subjoined, All men see Him, (and to behold Him, is, as we before said, to infer from reason His all-transcendent essence,) it is a great marvel that we behold God Himself, and yet know not His work. For we cannot doubt of His essence, and yet we remain uncertain of His judgments. That which is highest is plain to us, that which is least is concealed. For His works are surely less than Himself; and yet we behold the Doer, but are in darkness as to His doing: from the very fact, that the reason why any thing is done is uncertain, but Who it is that acts thus uncertainly, is not uncertain. Let him say then, Remember that thou knowest not His work, of Whom men have sung; all men see Him, every one beholdeth afar off. Because we see by reason that He exists, Whose judgments we by no means comprehend. But yet, at present, we behold Him afar off, because we are separated from His strength by the mist of our own infirmity. It follows,

Ver. 26. Behold, God is great, surpassing our knowledge. [vi] 9. He had said above, Behold, God is lofty. [ver. 22] He now says again, Behold, God is great. Why is it, that when speaking of God he says, 'Behold,' and again repeats, 'Behold,' if it be not that we say, 'Behold' of that thing, which we point out as present? And since God is every where present, when 'Behold' is said of Him, He is said to be present even to those who see Him not. But he well says, that He surpasses our knowledge, Who he had said before was seen by all men. Because,

though He is beheld by reason, yet His greatness is not penetrated by any subtlety of our senses. For whatever we know of the brightness of His greatness, is beneath Him; and the more we suspect that we comprehend His power, the more are we driven far away from the knowledge of Him. For though our mind is caught up on high, yet it is transcended by the immensity of His greatness. Of Whom we know as it were something in part, when we feel that we are not able to know Him worthily. It follows,

The number of His years cannot be reckoned. [vii] 10. He wished, in some way or another, to speak of eternity, and he called the very length of eternity, 'years.' For when we wish to expand the briefness of time, we extend our moments through hours, our hours through days, our days through months, and our months through years. Since then he wished to speak of something very large, but did not find what wider thing to speak of, he multiplied years in God without reckoning their number, saying, The number of His years cannot be reckoned; in order that while he multiplies those things which are long in themselves, human weakness may learn that it cannot measure the length of eternity. Stretch therefore thine eye into eternity, that thou mayest see God, either when He is from the beginning, or how far He extends. And there is no boundary any where above, because He begins not to be; no boundary any where below, because He ceases not to be. All things are bounded together within Him; but He is extended around all things without space, is spread abroad without place. Behold all things which are made, by the very circumscription of their creation, are encircled by a boundary both above and below. For by their own law, because they begin from not being, they are hastening not to be.

11. But some things have marvellously received this, that, though a boundary commences them above, yet no boundary confines them below; and that though they begin to be, yet that they do not cease to be for ever. But their eternity is unlike the highest eternity, because they began to be eternal. When we look at their extremes, we do not comprehend that end of theirs which is altogether wanting; but when we carry our mind back, we behold their commencement. And while we turn our thoughts below and above in them, we do not at all understand how far they extend, but we see from whence they begin. But since God has a kind of length of being through eternity, which neither commences with a beginning, nor is terminated by an end, and which does not admit in itself the from whence, nor until when; let it be said then, The number of His years cannot be reckoned. By the number of His years being mentioned, His Being is shewn to be of long duration. But by its being said to be beyond number, this same Being is pointed out as infinite and incomprehensible. But we have learned, that He is known to the minds of men, when all men see Him; and that we behold and admire His greatness, when the number of His years is considered beyond number; it now remains for us to hear, what are His doings. It follows,

Ver. 27. Who taketh away the stars of rain, and poureth forth showers like whirlpools. [viii]

12. There are two kinds of just persons in this life; one, namely, of those who live uprightly, but teach nothing; another, of those who live uprightly, and teach accordingly. As in the face of heaven some stars come forth, which no storms succeed: and others come forth, which

water the thirsty earth with great showers. As often then as persons live uprightly in Holy Church, but yet know not how to preach this same uprightness, they are stars indeed, but produced in the dryness of the air: because they can give light to others by their example of good living, but cannot rain by their word of preaching. But when certain persons both live uprightly therein, and distil this uprightness into others by their word of preaching, stars appear, as it were, in heaven, to bring on rain, which are so to enlighten others by the merits of their life, as also to rain with the word of preaching. Did not Moses appear in this heaven, as a star of rain; who, when he shone forth from above, watered also the hearts of sinners with the rain of holy exhortation as the thirsty ground beneath, to make it bring forth grass abundantly? Did not Isaiah appear as a star of rain, who in foreseeing and holding up the light of truth, watered the drought of the unbelieving by announcing the words of prophecy?

Were not Jeremiah, and the other Prophets, placed as it were in heaven, like stars of rain, who, when exalted on the high eminence of preaching, while they dared boldly to reprove the depravity of sinners, kept down as it were the dust of human blindness, by watering it with the drops of their words? But since, namely, the judgments of heaven take away from this present life the souls of these persons, enclosed in this corruptible flesh, the stars of rain are withdrawn as it were from the face of heaven. And the stars return into their hidden places, when the souls of the Saints, having completed their courses, are laid up in the treasuries of the Inner Disposal.

13. But since the earth would be dried up, if the streams of rain from above were to cease entirely, when the stars were withdrawn, it is rightly said, Who taketh away the stars of rain, and poureth forth the showers like whirlpools. For, when the Lord had taken away the Prophets, He sent the Apostles in their place; to rain like whirlpools, after the external preaching of the Law had ceased, when the old fathers had been withdrawn. He conceals therefore the stars of rain, and pours out showers like whirlpools, because after He withdrew the preachers of the Law to His inmost and secret mansions, a more exuberant power of preaching poured forth, by the words of those who came after.

14. By stars of rain can be designated also the holy Apostles, of whom it is said by Jeremiah to rejected Judaea, The stars of rain have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain. [Jer. 3, 3] The Lord, therefore, has withdrawn the stars of rain, and has poured forth showers like whirlpools; because, when He took away from Judaea the Apostles who were preaching, He watered the world with the doctrine of new grace. Both of which things can be understood, not improperly, to have been done in the Church. For when He withdrew the souls of the Apostles to the secret recesses of the regions above, on the dissolution of their bodies, He hid, as it were, from the face of heaven the stars of rain. But, when the stars of rain had been taken away, He gave showers like whirlpools; for, when the Apostles had been withdrawn to the regions above, He disclosed, in more abundant profusion, by the tongues of subsequent expositors, the streams of Divine knowledge which had been long concealed. For that which they stated briefly, they manifoldly increased by expounding it. Whence this very preaching of expositors is not improperly compared to whirlpools, since,

while they collect the sayings of many who precede them, they spread themselves out to a greater depth in what they accumulate. For whilst they unite testimonies to testimonies, they make, as it were, whirlpools from drops. And whilst the Gentile world is daily taught by their words, because the mind of sinners receives heavenly wisdom, the water standing on the earth exhibits, as it were, whirlpools. But let not these expositors prefer themselves in any way to the same Apostles in wisdom, when they speak at greater length in exposition. For they ought constantly to remember through whom they have received the discoveries of this very wisdom. Whence it is also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 28. Which flow from the clouds. [ix]

15. For these whirlpools do indeed flow from the clouds; because, if the power of understanding did not begin with the holy Apostles, it would not flow more fully through the mouths of teachers. For by 'clouds' in Holy Scripture, sometimes fickle men, sometimes Prophets, sometimes Apostles, are designated. By clouds the fickleness of the human mind is expressed; as Solomon says, He that observeth the wind, doth not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds, doth never reap. [Eccles. 11, 4] He doubtless calls the unclean spirit, 'wind,' but men who are subjected to him, 'clouds;' whom he impels backwards and forward, hither and thither, as often as his temptations alternate in their hearts from the blasts of suggestions. He, therefore, who observes the wind, does not sow; since he who dreads coming temptations, does not direct his heart to good works. And he who regards the clouds, does not reap, since he who trembles from the dread of human fickleness, deprives himself of the recompense of an eternal reward. By 'clouds' are Prophets set forth, as is said by the Psalmist; Dark water in the clouds of the air; [Ps. 18, 11] that is, hidden wisdom in the Prophets. By 'clouds' also Apostles are designated, as is said by Isaiah, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. [Is. 5, 6] They are 'stars' then, because they shine with the merits of their life; they are 'clouds,' because they water the parched ground of our heart with the streams of heavenly knowledge. For if they were not 'clouds,' the Prophet would not have said, when looking on them, Who are these that fly as clouds? [Is. 60, 8] The whirlpools of showers pour then from the clouds, because the profound instructions of those that follow derived the origin of their wisdom from the holy Apostles. Of which clouds it is still further fitly subjoined,

Which cover all things above. [x]

16. When the clouds cover the air above, if we lift up our eyes to the heaven, we behold not the heaven, but them; nor does our sight penetrate the ethereal regions, because its own infirmity conceals them from it. And when the sun shines forth from the heaven, it first feeds itself on the air which is poured between, that so it may afterwards contemplate the rays of the sun in the sky. Because, therefore, we are carnal men, when we endeavour to attain to heavenly things, we raise, as it were, our eyes to heaven, and direct our gaze thither; for oppressed by our connection with bodily things, we wish to teach it spiritual things. But because our intellect is not permitted to pass over to Divine objects, unless it be first fashioned by the examples of preceding Saints, our eye, as it were, now looks up to

heaven, but beholds clouds; because it seeks to comprehend those things which are of God, but is barely able to admire those things which have been given to men. Whence it is said in another place, Thou enlightenest wonderfully from the eternal mountains. [fwtizeiV su qaumastwV apo orewn aiwniwn. Vers. LXX. Ps. 76, 4] For he, who cannot behold the rising sun, looks at the mountains tinged with his rays, and discovers that the sun has risen. God enlightens us, therefore, from the eternal mountains, because He illuminates us with the ray of His brightness, by our admiring the doings of former fathers.

Behold we are kindled with zeal of devotion and love for the Lord; but we are the better moulded in this devotion and love by our contemplation of these clouds. For what was more devoted than Peter? What more full of love than John? The one through his devotion feared not to tread the watery ridges of the sea. [Matt. 14, 28. 29. The other rested through love on the very breast of our Maker: and he who had come to the refreshment of a bodily feast, derived spiritual food from the bosom of the Redeemer. [John 13, 23-25]

17. But because we have said, that Prophets also are signified by 'clouds,' it is necessary for us still to bring forward the examples of the ancient fathers. Behold when we are wishing to submit, through obedience, to heavenly precepts, we are assisted by considering the footsteps of the old fathers. For what was more obedient than Abraham, who at one word from the Lord, forsakes his kindred, and his country; [Gen 12, 1-4] and for the sake of obtaining his eternal inheritance, fears not to smite him, whom he had received as his heir, when now old and almost ready to die? When we are endeavouring to gain hold of the virtue of patience, we look at the examples of those who precede us. For what is more patient than Isaac, who carries the wood, asks about the burnt offering, and is, shortly afterwards, bound, and speaks not: is placed upon the altar, and resists not? [Gen. 22, 6-9] What then can be spoken of, more patient than this man? who is led, as if for consolation, and makes an enquiry; who is bound ready for the blow, and is silent; who speaks when about to offer a burnt offering, but when about to be offered as a burnt offering speaks not? When we are endeavouring to gird ourselves for endurance of toils, we are supported by preceding examples.

For what is more laborious than Jacob, who though near to Laban by the rights of kindred, discharged for so long a time servile offices in his family, and obeyed him in the place of a servant, that he might enjoy the rewards of the heir? [Gen. 29, 15-30] When we are striving to ascend the citadel of continence and chastity, we are supported by the examples of those who precede us. For what is more chaste than Joseph, who could not, even though a captive, be brought under the yoke of lust at the desire of his wanton mistress? [Gen. 39, 7. 8. And he was indeed a slave to men, but was, even in slavery, free from the power of dominant wickedness. When we are wishing to be filled with gentleness, we are assisted with the examples of those who precede us. For what was more gentle than Moses, who bears with the sedition of the people committed to his care, and yet entreats the Lord when angry, in behalf of these his persecutors, and exposes himself in their stead to the Divine wrath; because love glows in his holy breast even from persecution? [Numb. 16, 20-22] When we

are endeavouring to fashion the constancy of our mind against the adversities of the world, we are supported by the consideration of those who precede us. For what is more constant than Joshua, who, when sent to search out the nature of the nations, feared not either the hugeness of their height, nor the multitude of their numbers?

[Numb. 14, 6-9] Whence he subdued in battle those very same nations which he feared not in searching them out. When we are endeavouring to reach the height of kindness, we are instructed by the examples of those who go before us. For what is more kind than Samuel, who when deposed from his office of governing the people, humbly seeks for his successor; and anoints him when found to be king, and soon endures him when anointed as his persecutor? He is afraid of dying by his hands, and yet entreats the Lord not to be angry with him. For he himself says when he was sent, Saul will hear, and will kill me. [1 Sam. 16, 2] And the Truth says to him by Itself; How long dost thou mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him. [ib. 1] What then can be mentioned more kind than that man, who wishes not that even he should be smitten by God, by whom he is afraid of being killed? When we are advancing to the height of mercifulness and humility, we are supported by the examples of those who go before us. For what can be mentioned more merciful than David, what more humble, who received from the reprobate king insults for his victories, who by his strength rescued the nation of the Israelites from the hand of their enemies, and yet fled away himself lest he should die, as one of no strength?

He knows that he himself was elected by the Divine sentence, and that his persecutor was rejected; and yet he submits himself to this very same persecutor of his, with the humility of frequent satisfaction, who takes away the spear of his persecutor, cuts off the border of his cloak, [l Sam. 24, 4] and hastens at once to the top of the mountain, and at one and the same time shews that he has had the power of slaying, and prays that he might not be slain. [ib. 26, 12-16]

18. Because then we are instructed by preceding examples, in all things which we spiritually desire, it is well said of these clouds, Which cover all things above. For we are covered by the life of the fathers spread over us, like clouds, in order that we may be watered, to bear the produce of a fruitful growth. And we behold, as it were, the clouds first, when looking up to heaven; because we first behold, with admiration, the doings of the good, and we afterwards penetrate, by our experience, those things which are heavenly. But because the life and the virtue of these clouds, that is, of these ancient fathers, would not be open to us, unless other clouds, that is the Apostles, disclosed it with the light of their preaching, let our discourse turn back to those clouds, which go about the world with their preaching; and let it shew what the Lord has done by their means in the world. It follows,

Ver. 29, 30. If He will spread out clouds as His tent, and lighten with His light from above, He will cover also the ends of the sea. [xi]

19. The Lord 'spreads out the clouds,' when, opening the way of preaching to His ministers, He disperses them in every direction, through the breadth of the world. But it is well said,

As His tent. For a tent is wont to be pitched, on a journey. And, when holy preachers are sent into the world, they make a way for God. Whence it is written, Behold, I send My Messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee. [Mal. 3, 1] And hence also it is said by the Psalmist, Make a way for Him Who ascendeth over the west. [Ps. 68, 4] And again, O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people, when Thou passedst through the desert, the earth was moved. [ib. 7] For God, Who of Himself is, not locally, in every place, walks locally into the regions of the world, by means of His preachers. Whence also it is said by the Prophet, And I will walk in them. [Lev. 26, 12] For He does in truth walk through them, whilst He pours Himself into the hearts of men by their teaching. And in this journey the tents of God are these self-same hearts of the Saints, by which He is covered, as it were, in resting on the way. Whilst coming through them to the minds of men, He effects what He has ordained, and is not beheld.

Hence it is that all the synagogue together is called a 'tent,' when the Lord complains by Jeremiah that the priests had ceased from preaching, saying, There is none to stretch forth My tent any more, and to set up My curtains. [Jer. 10, 20] Hence again it is said of its extermination, He hath destroyed His tent, as a garden, He hath thrown down His tabernacle. [Lam. 2, 6] For since the Lord at that time dwelt secretly among men in the worship of a single people, He called that self-same people His tent. Whence also these clouds are now rightly called His tent, because God, when coming to us by His grace, is concealed within the hearts of His preachers. Was not Paul His tent, when coming to the hearts of men, from Jerusalem round about into Illyricum, the Lord was resting in his mind? [Rom. 15, 19] For he was a cloud for men, but a tent for God; because he was invisibly retaining Him in his heart, Whom he was by his preaching pouring into the hearts of his hearers. When the same Paul was proceeding towards Rome, bound in chains, to take possession of the world, God, concealed in his breast, was journeying as if in a tent. [Acts 27, 28] Because He could not be seen, from being concealed, and yet, disclosed by the words of preaching, He was prosecuting without ceasing the course of grace which He had begun.

Moses appeared as His cloud, when, before he undertook the leadership of the Jewish people, he was dwelling for forty years in the wilderness, and aiming at lofty things, lived separated from the converse of the people. [Ex. 3] But he was made the tent of God, when, on being sent into Egypt, to bring back the people, he was going on, bearing in his heart the invisible truth; and when Almighty God, Who was manifested in his work, was lying concealed in his heart. And He who is ever present, and containing all things, coming into Egypt was journeying thither in His servant. Whence it is written, God went into Egypt, that He might ransom His people. [2 Sam. 7, 23] Behold He is said to journey, by Whose uncircumscribed presence all things are contained, because He, Who is every where by His Majesty, places, as it were, His steps in the way, by preaching.

20. But words only are by no means sufficient for these same holy preachers, for persuasion, unless miracles are also added. Whence it is said, When He will spread out the clouds as His tent, it is rightly subjoined, And lighten with His light from above. For what else but

miracles ought we to suppose lightnings to mean? Of which it is said by the Psalmist, Thou wilt multiply Thy lightnings, and confound them. [Ps. 144, 6. LXX] By these clouds then He lightens from above with His light; because by holy preachers He illumines the gloom of our insensibility even by miracles. 21. And when these clouds rain down with words, and when they disclose, by miracles, the power of their glittering light, they convert to divine love even the farthest boundaries of the world. Whence it is rightly subjoined, He will cover also the ends of the sea. A thing which we heard by the voice of Eliu was to take place, but which we at this time see performed by the power of God. For the Almighty Lord has covered, with His lightening clouds, the ends of the sea; because, by the brilliant miracles of preachers, He has brought even the ends of the world to the faith. For, lo! He has now penetrated the hearts of almost all nations; lo! He has joined together in one faith the boundaries of the East and of the West; lo! the tongue of Britain,

[This special mention of Britain was probably added after the publication of the work, as the Saxons were not converted till St. Gregory had been some years Pope. See his Eps. to St. Augustine, Bertha, and Edilberthus. Lib. xi. Ind. iv. 28. 29. 64. 65. 66. Ben. (St. Gregory was not, however, unaware of the existence of the British Church, and may have referred to it. Ed.)] which knew only how to grate barbarian sounds, has begun long since to resound in the Divine praises the Hebrew Alleluia. Behold the ocean, which before was swelling, is now calmed beneath, and subject to, the feet of the saints: and its barbarous motions, which the princes of the earth had been unable to control with the sword, do the mouths of priests bind with simple words through fear of God: and he who, when unbelieving, had not dreaded the bands of combatants, now fears, when faithful, the tongues of the humble. For because the virtue of Divine knowledge is poured into him, by the heavenly words which he hears, and by the brightness also of miracles, he is so restrained by his dread of this same Divine power, as to fear to do wrong, and to long with all his desires to attain to the grace of eternity. Whence it is here also appropriately added,

Ver. 31. For by these things judgeth He the people, and giveth food to many mortals. [xii]

22. By these words of preachers, that is drops of the clouds, by these lightnings of miracles, God doubtless judges the peoples; because He invites their terrified hearts to repentance. For when they hear heavenly things, when they attend to marvellous works, they soon return into their own hearts, and afflicting themselves for their former wickednesses, dread eternal torments. But food is given too by these same clouds by which terror is inflicted: since mighty is the trust committed to preachers to know how so to afflict the minds of the haughty, as yet to be skilful in cherishing them when afflicted, with words of consolation; so as to alarm sinners with eternal punishments, and support penitents with the joys of the kingdom of heaven. Whence the very course of this dispensation is well observed, so that Eliu said, in proper order, that God first judges the people by these, clouds, and afterwards gives them food. Because, in truth Almighty God first reproves and rouses us from our evil deeds, by means of His preachers, and afterwards cherishes and consoles us by hope. For if the Divine dispensation did not act the part of a judge, by these clouds, He never would

have said to these same clouds, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. [John 20, 22. 23.

And again, if He did not feed by them our famished hearts, the Lord would never say to His disciples, of the hungering people, Give ye them to eat. But we believe that that was then done thus by their hands, that we may see that this is daily taking place without ceasing by their words. [Mat. 14, 16] For what does Peter effect, when he speaks by his Epistles, unless it be, that our miserably hungry hearts may be fed with the food of the word? What are Paul and John labouring at, when speaking by their Epistles, except that our minds may enjoy heavenly food, and overcome that loathing of hunger with which they were dying? Let it be said then, When He will spread out the clouds as His tent, and lighten with His light from above, He will cover also the ends of the sea; for by these things He judgeth the people, and giveth food to many mortals. As if he were plainly saying, If He sends forth His Saints for the ministry of preaching, and aids their words by miracles, He summons the boundaries of all the world to the faith; and by these means He first judges the proud, and afterwards cherishes with hope, and strengthens the humble by the word of consolation.

23. But when he was saying, that He gives food to mortals, we must observe that he does not say to all, but 'to many.' Because, namely, it is written, All men have not faith. [2 Thess. 3, 2] And to certain persons it is said, Ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God. [John 8, 47] And again, No man can come to Me, except the Father Which hath sent Me draw him. [John 6, 44] And again, The Lord knoweth them that are His. [2 Tim. 2, 19] Whence most persons, even in Holy Church herself, retain faith, and yet retain not the life of faith: they partake of the Sacraments of the Lord's humility, but scorn to be humbled in imitation of the Lord. They partake the gentle preaching of the Divine Word, but continue, in themselves, mighty in pride. Whence here also, after the breadth of the whole collected Church has been signified by the ends of the sea, it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 32. He hideth the light from the mighty. [xiii]

24. For those in truth are 'mighty,' who exalt themselves with lofty thoughts. Against whom it is said by Isaiah; Woe unto you, who are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight. [Is. 5, 21] Against whom also Paul says, Be not wise in your own conceit. [Rom. 12, 16] But the light is hidden from these mighty ones, because, doubtless, the knowledge of the truth is denied to haughty men. Whence the Truth says by Its own self, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. [Matt. 11, 25] Calling, namely, the haughty, wise and prudent. For He, Who did not subjoin, 'Thou hast revealed them to fools,' but, 'to little ones,' made it plain that he condemned their pride, and not their wisdom. Whence it is said in another place, The Lord guarding the little ones. [Ps. 116, 6] And in order to shew what is meant by this littleness ['parvitas'], it is added, I was brought low, and He set me free. Because then there are many in the Church, who scorn to be little ones, they cease not to be great in their own sight, even in the place of humility. You may frequently see them

raised high in honours, enjoying pleasures, and spreading abroad with the multiplicity of their goods. These often specially desire nothing, except to rule over others, are pleased at being feared by many;

neglect to live uprightly, and wish to have the credit of an upright life; court flattery, and are puffed up by applause. And since they are abundantly supplied with goods ready at hand, they do not seek for the joys which are to come. And, because manifold employments engage them, they prove them to be strangers even to themselves. And yet if any trial of their faith arise, because they are contained therein though but in appearance, they defend it by words, they defend it by their exertions, and claim their heavenly country, and yet love it not.

25. And these do the sons of Reuben, and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, well represent in Moses; who possessing many flocks and herds, whilst they desire that plain country which they had seen beyond Jordan, refused to receive an inheritance in the land of promise, saying, The country which the Lord smote before the sight of the children of Israel, is of a region most fertile for the pasture of animals, and we thy servants have many blasts; and we pray thee, if we have found grace in thy sight, to give it unto us thy servants for a possession, and make us not to pass over Jordan. [Numb. 32, 4. 5. They therefore who possess very many beasts of burden, avoid passing over Jordan, because they, whom many worldly engagements occupy, do not seek for the abode of their heavenly country. But that faith, which they hold in appearance, urges them on; lest they should become inactive from the delight of ease, and should deter others, by their example, from the endurance of toil, and from studying to be patient. Whence it is said to them by Moses, Shall your brethren go to battle? and shall ye sit here? Why do ye subvert the minds of the children of Israel. [Numb. 32, 7] But because they are ashamed not to defend that which they confess, they hasten to contend for that faith which they have professed; and secure it, not for themselves, but for their neighbours.

Whence they say to Moses, We will build sheepfolds, and stalls for our beasts, and fortified cities for our little ones; but we ourselves will go armed and ready for battle before the children of Israel. [Numb. 32, 16. 17. And they go boldly forth at once in behalf of others, and free the land of promise from their enemies, and leave it, and return to feed their herds beyond Jordan. For many persons, although faithful, being engaged in present cares, feed, as it were, their herds beyond Jordan; because, contrary to the faith of Baptism, they are enslaved with all their heart, and with every desire, to perishing objects. But yet, as we have said, when a trial of their faith arises, they gird themselves with the arms of defence. They overcome and slaughter the enemies of the faith, and love not the inheritance of the land of promise, that is, the fruit of faith. And they so fight in its behalf, as yet to deposit their pledges outside of it. For because they have their children without, they do not place their affection in dwelling therein. Whence they return to the plain country, because they descend from the lofty summits of the mountains, as if from the hope of heavenly things, to rear brute animals without the land of promise. Because they labour diligently to supply

the irrational motions of their mind with various objects of desire: because they, who are blinded with transient pursuits, know not how great is the brightness of the eternal light;

and whilst they are proud of worldly things, they close up for themselves the access of the light of heaven. Whence it is now rightly said, He hideth His light from the mighty. But yet grace from above sometimes looks upon these mighty men, and afflicts them by the very employments caused by their abundant goods, and intersperses with their prosperity, adverse, but profitable, tribulations: in order that, when sorrowful, they may turn to their heart, and learn how vainly they are engaged in perishable pursuits. Whence here also, after the light is said to have been withdrawn, it is fitly subjoined,

And ordereth it to return again. [xiv] 26. Because the light of truth, which is concealed from proud and overbusied minds, is revealed to the afflicted and humbled. For light approaches, when the afflicted mind discerns the gloom of tribulation which it is enduring from perishable pursuits: for, if it had not some perception of the light within, it would not even see that it had lost the light. But this can be specially understood also of the Jews, who dared for this reason to speak against our Redeemer, coming in the flesh, because they were mighty in their own thoughts. But the light was hid from these mighty men; because, while they are persecuting in their pride the light of truth, they lost it. But because they are to be admitted to the faith at the end of the world, it is rightly subjoined, And ordereth it to return again. Whence also it is said by Isaiah, If the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved. [Is. 10, 22] For the light then returns to them when they themselves return to confess the power of our Redeemer.

27. But if we take 'in manibus,' not as one noun, in the dative case, but as two parts of speech [That is, not inmanibus, but in manibus, as Heb.]; it can be understood that the light is concealed in the hands, when the unjust are blinded in their own works in the presence of the righteous Judge. But yet it is ordered to return again. Because, when sinners have learned that they cannot be saved by their own strength, they receive the light of grace, and are enlightened with the rays of inward protection, so that they afterwards love their heavenly country with greater zeal, than they used before to glow with in earthly pleasure. But when we are speaking thus of our heavenly country, (in which we hear that there are hosts of Angels endowed with wondrous brightness; over which the Maker of all things presides, which He refreshes and fills with the sight of Himself, of which light is the true inheritance, and there is no failure in its brightness;) we turn our thoughts back to ourselves, and reflect that we bear about us earthly members; we consider that born in darkness, and estranged from the rays of the light within, we have lived the more sinfully, the more we were given up to bodily pursuits, and dwelt far away from spiritual objects. But a heart affected with this thought, and conscious to itself of sin, is alarmed, and despairs of becoming a citizen of that mighty country, of which it hears. Whence it is here also fitly subjoined, how the fearful mind is restored to confidence. For of this light it is immediately added,

Ver. 38. He declares of it to His friend, that it is his possession, and that he may come up to it. [xv] 28. The friend of truth is a lover of upright conduct. Whence the Truth Itself says to Its disciples, Ye are My friends, if ye have done what I command you. [John 15, 14] For a friend is named as 'the keeper of the soul;' ['amicus, quasi animi custos.' Isid. Etym. x. 14] and hence he who endeavours to guard the will of God in His precepts is, not undeservedly, called His friend. Hence is it that the Truth again says to the same disciples, But I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. [John 15, 15] Of this light then of the eternal country, God announces to His friend, that it is his possession, that he should not despair of himself from the frailness of his own infirmity; that he should not think what he was made, but what he was new made; but should know more certainly that he possesses this light, the more truly he is now trampling down the gloom of assailing sins. But it is well subjoined in promise, And that he may come up to it. For what is more difficult than for a man born on the earth, and bearing about earthly and fragile members, to ascend the heights of heaven, and to penetrate the secrets of the spirits above?

29. But the Maker of these very spirits has come to us, and exhibited Himself as a man, even beneath them, as is said of Him to the Father by the Prophet, Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels. [Ps. 8, 5] And because He found between these selfsame spirits and ourselves the stumbling-block of a discordant life, with wonderful power, and with still more wonderful kindness, creating the higher, and taking on Him the lower nature, He united the highest and lowest together. Hence is it that, on the birth of this selfsame King, the bands of Angels come forth to announce Him, sing a hymn, and, the discordance of their evil conduct being overcome, acknowledge those, as citizens, of whom they before despaired: proclaiming with harmonious voice, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will. [Luke 2, 14] As if they said plainly; Those whom wickedness had separated, let the Goodness now born on earth unite to us. Hence is it, that before His Incarnation we read in the Old Testament, that a man adored an Angel,

[Hom. 8. in Evang. he names Lot and Joshua. The former, perhaps, only bowed as to guests. In judging of the latter instance Deut. 34, 10. must not be forgotten. See also Dan. 12, 1]

and was not forbidden to adore him. [Gen.19, 13-16] But when after the coming of the Redeemer, John had prostrated himself to adore the Angel, he heard, See thou do it not, I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren. [Rev. 19, 10] For what is meant by the Angels first patiently allowing themselves to be adored by man, and afterwards refusing it; except, that at first the more abject they knew man to be, who had been given up to carnal corruptions, and was not yet delivered from this condition, the more justly did they despise Him, but that afterwards they could not keep human nature in subjection under them, inasmuch as they beheld it, in their Maker, exalted even above themselves? For that nature ought no longer to be despised, and degraded in the members, which, exalted in the head of the members, deserved to be venerated. He then, Who became lower than the Angels for our sake, made us equal to the Angels by the virtue of His humiliation. [Heb. 2, 7] Whence He also taught

us by dying, that death is not to be dreaded, by His rising again, to be confident of life, by His ascension, to exult in our inheritance of the heavenly country. That so the members also may rejoice, that they are following to the same place, where they see that their Head has gone before. Whence it is well said by this our Head Himself, Wheresoever the carcase is, there will also the eagles be gathered together. [Matt. 24, 28] Whence Peter says, To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens. [1 Pet. 1, 4] Whence Paul says, We know that if our earthly house this habitation be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. [2 Cor. 5, 1]

30. But if we also, who are born on the earth, ascend into heaven, where is that which the Truth again says, No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of Man Which is in heaven? [John 3, 13] For to this sentence, that which the same Truth says is directly opposed, Father, I will that where I am, they may be with Me also. [John 17, 24] But yet It is not at variance with Itself in Its words, but It inflames the zeal of our mind to enquire into these things, which seem at variance. For all we, who are born in His faith, are doubtless His body. Because then the Lord has, by a marvellous dispensation of condescension, been made the Head of His own members, He is alone, even when with us, the multitude of the reprobate having been cast off. No man, therefore, ascends into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of Man Who is in heaven. For, since we have been already made one with Him, He returns alone, even in us, to that place, from whence He came alone in Himself; and He Who ever is in heaven, ascends daily to heaven; because He Who remains in His Godhead above all things, draws Himself up daily to heaven, in the body of His Manhood. Let not then human weakness despair of itself;

let it consider the Blood of the Only-begotten, and in its own price behold how great that is, which costs so much. Let it consider anxiously, whither its Head has gone before; and let that which is bound by His precept to good living, be strengthened to hope by His example. Let it feel sure of heaven; let it hope for the heavenly country; let it know that it is the companion of Angels, and rejoice that in its Head it has been preferred even to Angels. Let it be rightly said then of this light of the eternal country, He declares of it to His friend that it is his possession, and that He may come up to it. But these things are very marvellous, and very awful, that a man, born on the earth, and condemned, as his deserts demand, to separation from his heavenly country, is not only brought back to the state of his creation, but is even exalted to a more glorious condition; that he who has lost paradise obtains heaven, and that so far from the guilt of his debt being binding on him, gifts are heaped upon him more abundantly even after his sin; and that that despiser of God, and imitator of the devil, if he returns to fruitful penitence, ascends even to the loftiness of contemplating the inward light. Whose heart then would not leap in admiration of such graciousness? Whose sloth would not be startled at the elevation of so high a thought? Whence it is filly subjoined,

Chap. xxxvii. ver. 1. At this my heart trembled, and was moved from its place. [xvi] 31. Because, while fear strikes the mind, it estranges it from itself, the Latin translations sometimes call an ecstasy fear, as is said by the Psalmist, I said in my fear, I am cast out from the sight of Thine eyes; [Ps. 31, 22] Where, namely, it could have been called not fear, but a transport ['excessus']. But fear is in that place used for transport, because the mind is estranged from itself in fear, as it is a transport. Whence also, in this place, after considering the light of the eternal country, it is rightly subjoined, At this my heart trembled. As if he said, It went beyond itself in transport of admiration, and because the mind is inspired with the spirit of new hope, it has deserted itself as it used to be in its old thought.

32. But it is well said, And was moved from its place. For the pleasure of this present life is the 'place' of the human heart. But when the place of our heart is touched with a divine aspiration, there comes a love of eternity. The mind, therefore, is moved from its place by a consideration of its eternal home, because it leaves those things which are below, and fixes itself in thoughts of things above. For before it knew not what things were eternal, it had become stupified by the delight of present things, and, transient itself, used to embrace with love transitory things. But after it knew what things were eternal, after it reached the rays of the heavenly light, by a hasty glance, being roused by its admiration of the highest objects, it raised itself from things below; so that it now feels no pleasure except in the things of eternity, and despising transitory objects, it seeks only for those which endure. It is well said then, At this my heart trembled, and was moved from its place. For when the sluggish heart, which has been long given up to earthly thoughts, suddenly, by going beyond itself, attaches itself to the highest objects, it has left the place of lowest thoughts. But because the mind slumbers of itself, overcome by the love of this present world, and sleeps, in its delights, cold and insensible, unless it is aroused by the breath of Divine grace, it is necessary for him to add, how it is affected by its inward thoughts, or rather how it is restored to a sense of spiritual truths. It follows,

Ver. 2. It will hear a hearing in the terror of His voice, and a sound going out of His mouth. [xvii]

33. It is the habit of Holy Scripture, that, when it informs us that any thing is heard with the hearing ['read 'audivi.'], it says that this hearing is heard. As Habakkuk says, O Lord, I have heard Thy hearing, and was afraid. [Hab. 3, 1] Whence it is said here also, It will hear a hearing in the terror of His voice. But we must observe that the voice of God is said to be heard, not in joy, but in terror. Because, doubtless, while every sinner thinks of earthly things alone, and bears a heart overwhelmed with degrading thoughts, if he is suddenly touched by the aspiration of Divine grace, he understands this, above all things, that all his doings are punished by the judgment of the eternal Judge. The hearing, therefore, of the voice of the Lord, first takes place in terror, that it may afterwards be changed into sweetness. Because it first chastises us with the dread of the strict judgment, in order that it may refresh us, when chastised, with the consolation of heavenly sweetness. For when the overpowering delight of temporal objects possesses our minds, and oppresses the eyes of

our mind with the sleep of sloth, if we are roused suddenly by the hand of the Divine favour, we open at once those eyes, which have been long closed, to the light of truth: we call to mind the sins we have committed, we see how strictly the Judge is coming against them;

it is considered within, how great is the coming of so mighty a Judge; how great is that assembly then of men and angels: how mightily even the burning elements contend against the reprobate; how terribly that eternal sentence comes forth from the mouth of the strict Judge, with which it is said to the reprobate, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. [Matt. 25, 41] The punishment of these reprobates is presented to the eyes, and the thought occurs with a heavy gloom of bitterness, what is the darkness of hell? Because then the proud heart is first shaken with terror, in order that, when shaken, it may be established in love, it is now rightly said, It will hear a hearing in the terror of His voice. Where it is also well subjoined, And a sound going forth from His mouth.

34. The sound from the mouth of God, is the power of fear, rushing into us from heavenly inspiration. Because when God, by breathing on us, fills us with thoughts of the future, He doubtless alarms us, for our past misdeeds. But by the 'mouth of God' can be designated, the Only-Begotten Son, Who, as He is said to be His arm, because God works is all things by Him, (of whom the Prophet says, To Whom is the arm of the Lord is revealed? [Is. 53, 1] of whom John says, All things were made by Him; [John 1, 3]) so is He also called His mouth. For hence is that which the Prophet says, For the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken these things. [Is. 1, 20] By Whom He speaks all things to us. As if the Word was plainly spoken of under the name of 'mouth;' as we also are accustomed to say 'tongue' instead of 'words,' as when we speak of the Greek or Latin 'tongue' we indicate Latin or Greek words. We therefore rightly understand Him, by the 'Mouth of the Lord.' Whence the Bride says to Him in the Song of Songs, Let Him kiss me with the kiss of His Mouth. [Cant. 1, 1] As if She said; Let Him touch me with the presence of the Only Begotten Son my Redeemer. But, by the sound of His Mouth, can be designated the Holy Spirit of the same Lord.

Whence it is written in another place also, as signifying the same Spirit, Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind approaching. [Acts 2, 2] A sound, therefore, proceeds from the Mouth of the Lord, when His Consubstantial Spirit, coming to us through His Son, breaks through the deafness of our insensibility. As the Mouth of the Lord speaks of this same uncircumscribed and incorporeal sound, and says, He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you. [John 16, 14] By the terror of His voice, then, can be understood the power of fear, and by the sound of His mouth the sweetness of consolation; for those, whom the Holy Spirit fills, He first alarms at their earthly doings, and afterwards consoles with the hope of heavenly objects; in order that they may afterwards rejoice the more in confidence of their rewards, the more they were before afraid on beholding only the punishments. Hence is it that Paul speaks of this Spirit of the Only Begotten, as of this sound of His mouth. For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of the adoption of sons, whereby we cry Abba, Father. [Rom. 8, 15]

Hence the Truth says by His own mouth, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whose soever ye retain, they are retained. [John 20, 22. 23. Lo! the terror of the converted is turned into power;

because while they punish their sins by penance, they ascend up even to the exercise of judgment; so as to receive this power from God, which before they used themselves to fear at His hands. For they in truth become judges, who feared greatly the judgment of heaven; and they now begin to remit the sins of others, who had before been afraid that their own would be retained. But because this very judgment, which takes place spiritually, is not now seen by the carnal; there are some who consider that God is not concerned about human affairs, and think that they are carried on by accidental movements. Against whom it is rightly subjoined,

Ver. 3. He himself considereth under all the heavens, and His light is over the ends of the earth. [xviii] 35. As if it were plainly said; He who rules over the highest things, forsakes not even the most remote. Because His watchful rule is so directed towards the greatest concerns, as not to be kept from those which are little. For He Who is every where present, and every where equal, is not unlike Himself, even in unlike circumstances. He therefore equally regards all things, equally disposes all things, Who, though present in all places, is not locally confined, nor varied by attending to various concerns. But if we understand by the heavens, holy preachers, (as the Prophet attests who says, The heavens declare the glory of God;) [Ps. 19, 1] after the coming of the Holy Spirit is designated by the sound of the mouth, it is rightly subjoined, He Himself considereth under all the heavens, and His light is over the ends of the earth.

36. For there are some, who, when they hear the wonderful works of the Apostles, (that they raised the dead by the Holy Spirit which they had received, cast out devils from the possessed, removed infirmities by their shadow, foretold future events by prophecy, and, speaking in the tongue of all nations, preached the Only Begotten Word of God;) because they do not see these powers now in the Church, suspect that the grace of heaven has been already withdrawn from the Church, forgetting to consider that it is written, An assister in needful times, in tribulation. [Ps. 9, 9] For Holy Church required then the assistance of miracles, when the tribulation of persecution oppressed her. For after she has overcome the pride of unbelief, she requires no longer the signs of miracles, but the merits of deeds alone, though she displays even them by many persons, when opportunity demands. For it is written, Tongues are for a sign not to them that believe, but to them that believe not. [1 Cor. 14, 22] Where then all are faithful, what cause demands signs to be displayed? On which head perhaps we the more readily give satisfaction, if we make some mention of the Apostolic dispensation.

37. For Paul, the illustrious preacher, coming to Melite, and knowing the island to be full of unbelievers, healed by his prayers the father of Publius, afflicted with dysentery and fevers; [Acts 28, 8] and yet advised Timothy when sick, saying, Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities. [1 Tim. 5, 23] Why is it, O Paul, that thou

restorest the sick unbeliever to health by thy prayers, and yet healest so great a defender of the Gospel by food, like a physician? except that outward miracles are wrought, in order that the minds of men may be brought to inward truths; that so by the wonder which is visibly displayed, those invisible truths, which are more wonderful, may be believed? For the father of Publius required to be healed by a sign of power, in order that he might revive in mind, while returning to health by a miracle. But no miracle needed to be manifested outwardly to Timothy, because he was already full of life within. What wonder is it then, that miracles are not frequently displayed, when the faith has been spread abroad, when even the Apostles themselves performed them not in the case of some who already believed? The heavens, then, having been raised up, the Lord considers inferior objects; because, when the greatest preachers have been taken away, He constantly regards even the lowliness of our infirmity. And His light beholds, as it were, the ends of the earth, under the heavens;

because, after the sublime doings of those who have gone before, He embraces the ways and doings even of sinners by the illumination of His grace. And though He does not now frequently manifest miraculous signs, by the life of believers, He yet departs not from these same believers by the virtue of works. But His light over the ends of the earth can also be thus understood; that whilst the preaching of heavenly Grace gathers the nations to the faith, it has embraced within itself the boundaries of the world.

38. Or, certainly, the ends of the earth are the ends of sinful men. And it is often the case, that many forsake God, and waste the seasons of their life in carnal desires. But yet, when looked down upon by Divine Grace, they turn to God at their latter end, they learn what are the eternal judgments, and punish with tears all the evil deeds they remember to have committed; and prove by their upright conduct that they are sincerely prosecuting these. And when righteousness succeeds, their former sin is surely entirely forgiven. For hence Hannah says by the spirit of prophecy, The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; [1 Sam. 2, 10] because doubtless God does not judge the former life of sinners, when, by a look of affection from above, He enlightens their latter end. Hence Moses says, The firstling of an ass thou shall exchange for a sheep. [Ex. 13, 13] For, by an ass is designated uncleanness, but by a sheep, innocence. To exchange then the firstling of an ass for a sheep, is to convert the beginnings of an impure life into the simplicity of innocence; in order that a sinner, after having committed those deeds which the Lord rejects as unclean, may now display such conduct, as He can offer to God as a sacrifice.

Because then a sinner is converted after his sins, and is brought back at last from the darkness of his misdeeds, at the end of his life, it is now rightly said, And His light is over the ends of the earth. But that very grace, which fills the mind after sins, affects it with great grief. For it recals evil deeds to the memory, and shews a man how justly he is to be condemned. Whence it comes to pass, that he bewails with daily floods of tears every sin which he remembers to have committed, and the more he is now able to discern what is righteous, the more ardently does he desire to punish his own wicked self with groans. Whence it is fitly subjoined,

Ver. 4. After Him a sound will roar. [xix] 39. For the Lord doubtless turns into sorrow the life of him whom He has filled with His illumination; and the more He suggests to the enlightened mind eternal punishments, the more cruelly does He weary it with sorrow for its past wickedness; and a man grieves at what he was, because he now begins to discern the good which he was not. He hates himself, as he remembers himself to have been. He loves himself as he discerns he ought to have been; and now loves only the bitterness of penitence; because he carefully considers in what great pleasures he has sinned through self-indulgence. It is well said then, After Him a sound will roar. Because when God enters the mind, it is doubtless plain, that the sorrow of repentance immediately follows, in order that that soul may now delight in wholesome sorrow, which used to rejoice in its iniquity with a lamentable mirth. But the more abundantly a sin is lamented, the higher is the knowledge of the truth attained. Because the conscience, before polluted, is renewed by a baptism of tears, to behold the light within. Whence after the roaring of repentance, it is fitly subjoined,

He will thunder with the voice of His greatness. [xx] 40. For God thunders with the voice of His greatness, when, to us who have been now well prepared by sorrow, He makes known, how great He is in His doings above. For thunder proceeds, as it were, from heaven, when the look of grace strikes us slumbering in carelessness and neglect, with sudden fear; and when lying on the ground we hear a sound from above: for thinking of things of earth, we are suddenly alarmed at the sentence of terror from above; and our mind, which used to slumber with evil security in things below, is now properly alarmed and anxious for things above. But we know not, in what way the terror of this secret visitation enters into us: nor is it discerned by the eye of the very mind, whose purpose is changed for the better. Whence it is fitly subjoined,

And He will not be enquired into, when His Voice hath been heard. [xxi]

41. The voice of the Lord is heard, when the breathing of His grace is conceived within the mind; when the insensibility of our inward deafness is broken through, and the heart, excited to zeal for the noblest love, is pierced by the voice of inward power. But even the mind, which has been enlightened by the voice of the supervenient Spirit, which insinuates Itself into the ears of the heart, does not trace it out. For it is unable to consider by what openings this invisible power flows into it, in what ways it comes to, or recedes from, it. Whence it is well said by John, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth. [John 3, 8] For to hear the voice of the Spirit, is to rise up to the love of the invisible Creator, by the power of inward compunction. But no man knows whence it cometh; because we are not told on what occasions it pours itself forth on us by the mouths of preachers. And no man knows whither it goeth; because when many hear one and the same preaching, it doubtless cannot be understood, whom It forsakes and casts off, or into whose heart It enters and takes its rest. For but one thing is taking place without, but the hearts of those who behold are not penetrated by it in one way:

because He who invisibly modifies visible things, plants incomprehensibly the seeds of events in the hearts of men. Hence is it that some believed, when Lazarus was raised from the dead: while yet the greater number of the Jews were roused to zeal in persecution by this very resurrection. [John 12, 10. 11. That one and the same miracle, then, which conferred on some the light of Faith, deprived others of the light of the mind, by the darkness of envy. Hence is it that each of the thieves beheld that same death of our Redeemer, which was like his own; but the one feared not in his pride to assail Him with contumely, Whom the other honoured by fearing Him. In the same circumstance the thoughts of each was not the same; because the inward Arbiter, by invisibly modifying, made it to differ. But as these secret modes of breathing on us cannot be comprehended by our thoughts, the traces of the Divine voice are doubtless unknown to us. Whence it is still further subjoined,

Ver. 5. God will thunder marvellously with His voice. [xxii] 42. God thunders marvellously with His voice, because He penetrates our hearts incomprehensibly with His secret might. For while with its secret motions it overpowers us with fear, and fashions us in love, it proclaims in some silent manner how eagerly He is to be followed, and a violent impulse arises in the mind, though nothing sounds in the voice. And it sounds the more loudly within us, the more completely it deadens the ear of our heart to every outward sound. Whence also the soul, as soon as it is brought back to itself by this inward call, wonders at what it hears, because it feels the force of unknown compunction. And this its admiration is well signified in Moses by the manna coming from above. For the sweet food which is received from above is called 'manhu.' For manhu means, What is this? [Ex. 16, 15] And we say, 'what is this,' when we ignorantly wonder at that which we behold. The soul then perceives the manna from above, when, roused by the voice of compunction, it is surprised at this unusual kind of inward refreshment; so that filled with Divine sweetness, it rightly responds, What is this? For while it is kept from the thought of lower objects, it feels unusual wonder at what it beholds from above. But because the habit of our former life is immediately changed, when the deafness of our slumber is burst through, by this voice; so that the soul, inspired by the Spirit from above, desires as highest the things which it had despised, and contemns as lowest what it used to desire, it is rightly subjoined,

Who doeth great things and inscrutable. [xxiii] 43. For that a man who was given up to earthly objects, and overpowered by sinful desires, becomes suddenly ardent for new pursuits, and cold to his former habits, that he renounces outward cares, and is eager for inward contemplation; who can be sufficient to consider this power of the voice from above? who can comprehend it on consideration? Great are the things which God effects by His voice; but they would be less great, if they could have been searched out. He doeth, therefore, great things and inscrutable: because He exhibits outwardly the result of His work, but the nature of the work is itself concealed within. He sounds abroad with His voice, even by Apostles, but He illumines the hearts of the hearers within, by Himself: as Paul bears witness, who says, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. For neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. [l Cor. 3, 6. 7.] But though they do not themselves confer on our minds the hearing of the

Divine voice, they are yet sent to condescend to us by words from without. Whence it is fitly subjoined,

Ver. 6. Who ordereth the snow to descend on the earth, and the rains of the winter, and the showers of His strength. [xxiv]

44. Because the Psalmist says, Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow; [Ps. 51, 7] what do we understand by snow in this place, but the hearts of the Saints made white by the light of righteousness? But waters are taken up, and congealed above, in order to become snow. But when this snow descends to the earth, it is changed again into liquid waters. Waters therefore are the minds of preachers; which are confirmed in a higher sense of things, when they raise themselves to contemplate heavenly objects. And when they are hurried along in the consideration of lofty things, they receive the strength of confirmation. But because they are still retained on earth by love of the brethren, they bring themselves down from their lofty understanding, and preaching humbly to the weak, they melt like snow, and water their thirsty hearts. Snow then descends to the earth, when the lofty hearts of the Saints, which already feast on solid contemplation, condescend to humble words of preaching through love of the brethren. For as snow covers the ground, when it lies on it, but waters it, when it melts; so the virtue of the Saints protects the life of sinners by its strength with God, and by its condescension melts, as it were, and waters the thirsty earth, to bear fruits. And because water is first brought up from below, that it may afterwards be returned in showers from above;

so do holy men, when placed on the lofty eminence of their virtues, consider from whence they are elevated, for fear of despising the meanness of others' infirmity. Waters, then, return, as it were, to the earth from which they have been raised, when righteous men, condescending to sinners, cease not to remember what once they were. Paul had certainly been hitherto but water on the earth, when he knew the Law carnally. But when raised up to heavenly knowledge, he was converted into snow; because he changed his former feeble knowledge into the solidity of true wisdom; and yet, condescending to his brethren, he returned as snow to the earth. For even after his heights of virtue, he acknowledges how unworthy he was, saying, Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, &e. [1 Tim. 1, 13] Behold how considerately he calls to mind his own weakness, so as to bear with equanimity the weaknesses of others. For Paul returned, as water, after being in heaven, to the earth from which it had been taken, when, after the great secrets of his contemplation, he called to mind that he was a sinner, in order that he might benefit sinners by his humility. Let us see therefore how this water, which is to be turned into solid snow, is drawn up to its highest level. He says, Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God. [2 Cor. 5, 13] Let us see how the snow returns to the ground, to water it, while melting.

He says, Or whether ice be sober, it is for your cause. [ibid. Let us see with what hand it is guided, and can be raised up, when low, and be brought back again when raised up. He says, For the love of Christ constraineth us. [ibid. 14] Because therefore the love of Christ, which raises the minds of Saints to heavenly things, shapes them by its considerate control even

to humble condescension, for the love of the brethren, it is rightly said, Who ordereth the snow to descend on the earth. Where it is also fitly subjoined, And the rains of the winter, and the shower of His strength.

45. For this present life is indeed winter: in which though hope even now raises us up to things above, yet the cold torpor of our mortality still binds us. Because it is written, The corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the sense that museth on many things. [Wisd. 9, 15] But this winter has rains, which are doubtless the preachings of rulers. Of which rains it is in truth said by Moses, Let my speech be expected as the rain, and my words descend as the dew. [Deut. 32, 2] These rains doubtless are suited to the winter, and will cease in the summer; because now that the heavenly life is hidden from the eyes of the carnal, it is necessary for dew to be poured on us by the preachings of holy men. But when the heat of eternal judgment has glowed, no one will then find the words of preachers necessary. Because every one is brought back to his own conscience, on the coming of the Judge, so as to understand what is holy, when he cannot any longer perform it, and to learn from the punishment of his perverseness the right which he ought to have pursued. Whence it is well said by the Prophet, Gather them together as a flock for a sacrifice, and sanctify them in the day of slaughter. [Jer. 12, 3] For the reprobate are sanctified in the day of slaughter:

for they then perceive the holiness, which they ought to have pursued, when they cannot now avoid the punishments which their depravity deserves. But since holy preaching will cease with this present life, that is the rains with the winter; to the soul which is departing, and hastening to the summer regions of eternal happiness, it is rightly said by the voice of the Bridegroom persuading it; Arise, haste, my beloved, my fair one, and come: for the winter hath past, the rain hath passed and is gone. [Cant. 2, 10. 11. For as the winter passes away, the rain departs: because when the present life is over, in which the torpor of the corruptible flesh had surrounded us with a mist of ignorance, all the ministry of preaching ceases. For we shall then behold that more clearly with our own eyes, which we now hear more obscurely by the voices of the Saints. The Lord therefore orders the snow, and the rains of the winter, to descend on the earth, while He humbles the hearts of the Saints to the ministry of preaching, for the correction of sinners, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Where it is rightly added, And the shower of His strength.

46. For the shower of the strength of God, is the preaching His Godhead; for the shower of His weakness is the preaching His Manhood, of which it is said by Paul, The weakness of God is stronger than men. [1 Cor. 1, 25] And again, Though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. [2 Cor. 13, 4] But holy men so preach the weakness of His Manhood, as to pour also into the hearts of their hearers the strength of His Godhead. Let us hear, through the thunder of the cloud, the shower of His strength; In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [John 1, 1] Let us hear also the shower of His weakness; The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. [ibid. 14] Let us hear the shower of His strength; All things were made by Him,

and without Him was not any thing made that was made. What was made in Him was life. [ibid. 3] Let us hear also the shower of His weakness; He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. [ibid. 11] He commands therefore the shower of His strength to descend on the earth, because He so preaches to us the weaknesses of His Manhood by the voices of His Saints, as to make known to us also the wonders and the strength of His Godhead. But when we hear the power of our Maker, we are immediately brought back to our own hearts by the compulsion of fear, and, considering that so great a Judge is over us, we examine what we have done (worthily, and what) [Mss. vary.] unworthily. Whence it is well subjoined,

Ver. 7. Who sealeth the hand of all men, that every one may know his works. [xxv] 47. For men scorn to think of the sins they commit. But when they hear the power of heavenly severity, they discern this burden of misdeeds which weighs them down. For being roused by the words of preaching, they keep on the watch, in order to consider to what punishments the merit of their former doings is leading them. When, then, the shower of His strength descends on the earth, a seal is made in the hand of each one, for him to know his works; because when the Virtue of His Incomprehensible Majesty is acknowledged, his own life is weighed more carefully by each person.

48. But this can also be understood in another sense. For the Almighty Creator has made man a rational creature, distinguished from all which are void of sense and reason; in order that he should not be ignorant of what he has done. For he is compelled by the law of nature to know whether what he is doing is right or wrong. For why is he brought to judgment for his conduct, if he could be ignorant of what he has done? And therefore even they, who scorn to be instructed by the precepts of the Lord, know whether the things they are doing are good or evil. For if they do not know they are doing good, why do they ostentatiously boast of some of their doings? Again, if they know not that they are doing wrong, why do they shrink from the eyes of others in these very doings? For they are witnesses to themselves, that they know what they are doing is wrong, because they are ashamed of being seen by others. For if they did not really believe it to be wrong, they would not be afraid of its being seen by others. Whence it is well said by a certain wise man; When wickedness is fearful, it beareth testimony to its own condemnation. [Wisd. 17, 11] For when fear assails and convicts the conscience of what it has done, it furnishes testimony against itself, that its conduct is deserving of condemnation.

The contrary to which is said by John, If our heart condemn us not, we have confidence toward God. [1 John 3, 21] Let the wicked fly then from the eyes of men; they certainly cannot fly from themselves. For that they know the sin which they commit, they have their conscience as a witness, they have their reason as a judge. In the sin therefore which they commit, they first find the judgment of their reason against them, and they are afterwards brought to the strictness of the eternal judgment. And this is perhaps that which is said by the Psalmist, Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts. [Ps. 42, 7] Because, when by a wondrous course of secret dispensation, the evil which is committed is

not suffered to be unknown, a sinner both condemns himself at once in his conscience by his own sentence, and after his own condemnation hastens to the sentence of the eternal Judge. For deep then to call on deep, is to pass from one judgment to another. Let holy preachers proceed then to reprove the conduct of sinners, but let wicked hearers despise the words of the righteous. Let them defend their wickedness as much as they please, and multiply their shameless deeds by a more shameless defence. They are certainly witnesses to themselves in their conscience that they are without excuse.

For by the very fact that God has created man a rational being, He puts a seal in the hand of all men, that every one may know his own works. But because Eliu has stated his opinion of the wickedness of men one by one, he turns at once the eyes of his mind to the author of wickedness himself, by whose means each separate wickedness takes its rise; that, because he had assailed in this one verse the members of a wicked head, he might also briefly describe the head himself of these members. Or certainly, because he had mentioned above the virtues of the clouds of God, he now proceeds to set forth also the assaults of the adversary against the life of the righteous. For it follows,

Ver. 8. The beast will enter his covert, and will abide in his den. [xxvi]

49. Who else is understood by the name of the beast, except our ancient enemy, who cruelly aimed at the deception of the first man, and mangled by his wicked advice the integrity of his life? against whom it is promised by the words of the Prophet, concerning the restoration of the Church of the Elect to its ancient condition, And no evil beast shall pass through it. But when after the coming of the Redeemer, after the voices of preachers, after the thunder, as it were, of the clouds, this beast has seized that accursed person, Antichrist, what else does he do but enter his covert, in order to abide in his own den? For that vessel of the devil is the den and covert of the beast, so that, when lying in ambush against men who are journeying through this life, he both escapes their notice by his wonders, and kills them by his malice, in his person. But yet he possesses even now the hearts of all reprobates, before he manifests himself openly; and occupies them by his secret wickedness, as though they were his own den; and conceals himself in their gloomy minds, in order to effect all the hurt he desires against the good. Were not the hearts of the persecuting Jews, the den of this beast; in whose designs he long lurked secretly, but suddenly burst forth with the voices of those who cried, Crucify, Crucify?

[John 19, 6] And because he could not reach so far in his temptation, as to wound the mind of our Redeemer, he was eager for His death in the flesh. This beast doubtless possessed the hearts of many of the Elect, but the Lamb has, by His death, expelled him from them. Whence also He says in the Gospel, Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. [John 12, 31] For while He has, by a wonderful and righteous judgment, enlightened and accepted the confessions of the humble, He has forsaken and closed the eyes of the proud. Whence it is said to Him by the Psalmist, Thou hast appointed darkness, and it became night, in it all the beasts of the woods will pass through: the young of lions roaring to seize their prey, and to seek their food from God. [Ps. 104, 20. 21. For God in truth appoints darkness,

when, in inflicting judgment in requital for sins, He withdraws the light of His wisdom. And it is made night, because the mind of wicked men is blinded with the errors of their own ignorance. In which all the beasts of the field pass through, when malignant spirits, lurking under the gloom of deceit, pass through into the hearts of the reprobates, by fulfilling their evil purposes. In which also the young of lions roar, because spirits rise up with importunate temptations, as the ministers of most wicked, but yet preeminent, powers. But yet they seek their food from God;

because doubtless they are unable to catch souls, unless by a just judgment they are permitted by God to prevail. Where it is also fitly subjoined, The sun hath arisen, and they are gathered together, and have laid them down in their dens. [ibid. 22] Because, when expelled from the minds of the faithful, by the Light of the Truth manifested in the flesh, they returned, as it were, to their dens, when they held the hearts of unbelievers only. That then which is there called the den of lions, is here termed the den of the beast.

50. But I think it ought to be specially observed, that this beast is said, not only to enter his den, but to abide therein. For he sometimes enters even the minds of the good, he suggests unlawful thoughts, he wearies them with temptations, he endeavours to turn aside the uprightness of the spirit to the pleasure of the flesh; he also strives to carry out delight as far as to consent: but yet he is kept from prevailing by the opposition of aid from on high. He can enter therefore into the minds of the good, but cannot abide therein, because the heart of the righteous is not the den of this beast. For he doubtless abides in and occupies the minds of those, whom he possesses as his own den: because he first leads on their thoughts to wicked desires, and afterwards leads their wicked desires even to the commission of most sinful deeds. For the reprobate do not endeavour to repel, with the upright hand of judgment, the suggestions of him, to whose wishes they desire to yield, by submissive delight. And when any evil thought arises in their hearts, it is cherished at once by the eagerness of delight; and when no resistance is made to him, he is strengthened immediately by consent, and consent is instantly carried into outward act, but outward act is also made worse by habit. This beast then is well said to abide in his cave;

which keeps hold of the thoughts of the reprobate, till it also pierces their life with the sting of evil deeds. Whence the Lord well says to Judaea by the Prophet, How long shall hurtful thoughts abide in thee? [Jer. 4, 14] For He does not blame for their coming, but for their remaining there. And unlawful thoughts come even unto good hearts, but they are forbidden to remain; because the righteous, in order to keep the house of conscience from being taken, drive away the enemy from the very threshold of the heart. And if he has ever secretly crept [Oxf. Mss. 'subrepit'] by sudden suggestions in front of the entrance, yet he does not reach to the gate of consent. It was to this beast doubtless that Peter, overcome by the impulse of sudden fear, opened the gate of his heart, by denial, but he withstood it by a speedy discovery, he closed it by his tears. [Luke 22, 57-62] But because the ancient enemy has not only entered and occupied the hearts of persecutors, but has also occupied and possessed them, let it be rightly said, The beast will enter his covert, and will abide

in his den. For we learn how much he dwelt in the minds of the Jews, when we hear their plans, on the evidence of the Gospel narrative. For therein it is described, with what eager cruelty they raged for His death, when they beheld our Lord quickening the dead;

how many evil designs they ardently wished to carry out against Him, but yet feared the people; how many opportunities they sought of killing Him, and could not find them; how many hands of aliens they used to carry out their cruel wishes; because they gave Him up to the Gentiles to be killed, Whom they themselves were not able legally to put to death; in order that the Roman governor might perform that by his mere power, which they eagerly insisted ought to be done, merely from their malice. Whence it is also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 9. A tempest will come forth from the inner parts, and cold from Arcturus. [xxvii]

51. When Holy Scripture mentions the inner parts, in opposition to Arcturus, it designates the quarter of the South, opposite to the parts of the North. Whence it is written in this same book; Who maketh Arcturus, and the Orions, and the inner parts of the South. [Job 9, 9] Because then the sun pervades with greater warmth the inner parts of the South, but does not pursue its course at all in the North ['in Arcturo.'], by the word 'inner parts' in this place is expressed the Jewish people, but by the term 'Arcturus' the Gentile people. For they who had known the One and Invisible God, and obeyed His Law, at least carnally, were kept, as it were, in the warmth of faith, under the glow of the midday sun. But because the Gentiles had not attained to any knowledge of heavenly wisdom, they were remaining, as it were, in the cold, without the sun, under the North. But because a tempest impels, but cold oppresses with torpor; it is now rightly said, A tempest will come forth from the inner parts, and cold from Arcturus. As if it were plainly said; From the Jews there arises persecuting malice, and from the Gentiles oppressing power. For the precepts of the Law had not forbidden the performance of miracles, and yet the Jews sought to kill the Redeemer of the human race on account of these very miracles. And hence when unable to fulfil what they had begun, they flocked to the hall of Pilate, in order that he, whom no law could restrain when murdering unjustly, might himself put Him to death. A tempest therefore came forth from the inner parts, and cold from Arcturus, whilst the Gentile judge perpetrated with the authority of Rome, that which the Jews requested through envy. Whence it is well subjoined still further against this same envy,

Ver. 10. When God bloweth, the ice congeals. [xxviii] 52. Because, as the Holy Spirit breathed on the hearts of the faithful, and conferred greater miracles of power, benumbing envy grew up the more in the sluggish hearts of the faithless; and the unbelieving multitude became hardened against God, from the same causes, as the humble people softened the obduracy, with which it had bound itself. For when God blew on them, they were turned into ice, who said, through envy of the miracles they had witnessed; Behold, the whole world hath gone after Him. [John 12, 19] They were beholding the signs, perceiving the miracles performed by His ministers, and foreseeing, that the whole world was now about to follow the preaching of the faith; and yet, the more the Holy Spirit had filled the world, the more firmly was the malice of envy binding their minds. The water therefore had been turned into

ice, when sluggish Judaea was still remaining in envy, as the whole world was going after God. But because Divine Power was sufficient to soften the hardness even of such great cruelty, and to melt the hearts of unbelievers to love Him, after this ice it is immediately well subjoined;

And the waters are again poured forth abundantly. [xxix]

53. For the Lord has in truth poured forth the waters abundantly, after this ice; for after He had endured the hardness of the Jews, even unto death, He immediately melted their hearts from the hardness of unbelief, by breathing on them the love of Himself; in order that they might afterwards run the more eagerly to obey Him, the more obstinately they had before resisted His commands. Whence it is well said by a certain wise man, As ice in fair weather, so shall thy sins be melted away. [Ecclus. 3, 15] The Prophet had desired to be freed from the ice of this torpor, when saying, Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the stream in the South. [Ps. 126, 4] Of these waters, that is, of people flocking together to the Lord, it is said again, He will send forth His word, and will melt them: His breath will blow, and the waters will flow. [Ps. 147, 18] Waters run from ice, because many great preachers are made out of hard persecutors. Ice therefore melts in water, when the numbness of inward cold is changed into the irrigation of preaching. Was not Paul ice, who when going to Damascus, after he had received letters, was seeking to check the seeds of the word of God, which had been scattered in the heart of the faithful, as if in the earth that they might not spring up to the perfection of good deeds? [Acts 9, 2] But this ice returned in water; because he afterwards watered with the streams of holy exhortation those whom he before endeavoured to oppress with persecution, in order that there might arise a more abundant harvest of the Elect, in so much as the shower of God was watering it from the mouth even of a persecutor. Whence it is well subjoined; Ver. 11. The corn desireth clouds.

[xxx] 54. For what are all the Elect, but the corn of God, to be treasured up in the heavenly garners? Which now bear with the chaff in the threshing of the floor; because in this purification of Holy Church, they endure the contrary habits of the reprobate, till the inward Husbandman separates them with His fan of judgment, and taking His Elect, as grains now cleaned, into the heavenly habitations, consigns the chaff to eternal fires. Whence it is well said by John, Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. [Matt. 3, 12] But this corn, till it attain to the perfection of its fruits, looks for the rains of the clouds, in order to its growth. Because the mind of good men is watered with the words of preachers, lest it should be drained of the moisture of charity by the sun of carnal desires. The heavenly Husbandman had beheld this corn growing up in the world, and desiring the clouds, when He was saying, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the labourers are few. But pray ye the Lord of the harvest, to send forth labourers into His harvest. [Matt. 9, 37. 38] Those therefore which here are called 'corn,' are there called 'harvest,' but they who are here called 'clouds,' are there called 'labourers,' because holy preachers are both clouds and labourers; clouds, namely, by their doctrine, labourers by their life; clouds because they flow

into us by their words, labourers, because they cease not to do what they speak. Whence it is subjoined;

And the clouds scatter their light. [xxxi] 55. For, for clouds to scatter their light, is for holy preachers to spread abroad examples of conduct, both by their words and actions. But though they scatter the light of their inward message, yet they do not attain to the conversion of all the hearts which they desire. For it follows; Ver. 12. Which traverse all things in a circuit, whithersoever the will of their Ruler shall lead them. [xxxii]

56. For holy preachers often wish to exhort some persons, but cannot do so. Some they often wish to avoid, but are yet most urgently compelled, by the impulse of inward instigation, to exhort them. Let us behold the cloud of God, how it is led by the hand of Him Who guides it, even to those things which it does not seek after: and is, again, kept from following its own impulse, by the hand of Him who governs it. When Paul was shaking his raiment, and was wishing to depart from the Corinthians, he surely heard, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city. [Acts 18, 9, 10] Again, when he had wished to go to the Thessalonians, he was kept back, and said, I wished to come unto you, even I Paul, both once and again, but satan hindered me. [1 Thess. 2, 18] For satan could not of himself hinder the journeys of so mighty an Apostle; but, while opposing, he ignorantly subserved the design of the secret dispensation; in order that Paul, while he wished to visit other persons, and was unable, might more suitably benefit those, from whom he could not depart. The clouds of God, therefore, traverse all things in a circuit, because they illuminate the ends of the world with the light of preaching. But, because being subject to the Divine will, they cannot fulfil their own wishes, they cannot go any where, except where the will of their Ruler shall lead them. Whence it is still further subjoined;

To every thing which He shall command them upon the face of the earth. [xxxiii] 57. For often when they are led by the will of their Ruler, they seek to do one thing, but are disposed otherwise. For they frequently desire to correct some of their hearers in a gentle way, and yet their speech is turned into sharpness. They frequently seek to be severe with others, but yet their vigour is restrained by the spirit of gentleness. As, therefore, they cannot go whither they will, so also they cannot act as they will. For because the inward Judge keeps hold of them, when He sends them, so also does He modify and take them up, when He leads them on, so that sometimes they arrange one thing in their thought, but carry another into effect; they sometimes begin in one way, but end in another. Because then they serve according to that which is commanded them, let it be rightly said, Whithersoever the will of their Ruler shall lead them, to every thing which He shall command them upon the face of the earth. For they find the way of their preaching the more open, in that they are guided to it, not by their own will, but that of their Teacher. Whence it is still further subjoined;

Ver. 13. Whether in one tribe, or in His own land, or in whatsoever place of His mercy He shall order them to be found. [xxxiv]

58. The one tribe of Judah is certainly meant, which is mentioned in Holy Scripture plainly and repeatedly above the rest. For it received a special gift above them all, in that it brought forth from itself the flesh of our Redeemer. But all Judaea together is called the land of the Lord. [Deut. 32, 42] Because it then produced to Him the fruit of faith, when the whole world was in error, the Gentiles having fallen under the worship of idols. But the place of the mercy of God is the Gentile world itself, for if the strict Judge were justly to punish its faults, it would never come to the reconciliation of grace. For, when it had no merits before God, it yet received the grace of reconciliation of His sole mercy. Whence it is well said by Paul, And that the Gentiles should glorify God for His mercy. [Rom. 15, 9] Whence it is written again, Which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. [1 Pet. 2, 10] God therefore leads His clouds, either in one tribe, or in His own land, or in whatsoever place of His mercy He shall order them to be found; because at one time He conferred preachers of the Old and New Testament on the tribe of Judah only, and rejected nearly the whole of Israel by the wicked governing of their kings.

At one time, He makes these clouds to rain, even in His own land, because He recalled this same people of Israel to His former favour, after correction in captivity. At another, He wished them to shine forth from the place of His mercy; because He made known by holy preachers even to the Gentiles the miracles of His power, in order by His sole mercy to free those from the yoke of error whom His wrath in their innate unbelief was weighing down. But behold, because Eliu has perceived future events by the spirit of prophecy, because he has uttered many sublime truths; the haughty man, wearied with the weight of his pride, is unable to bear the burden of what he says. For he adds at once in a boastful manner,

Ver. 14. Hearken unto these things, O Job, stand, and consider the wondrous works of God. [xxxv]

59. He saw him to be lying down, as it were, in comparison with himself, whom he directed to stand at the words of so great preaching. Although even by this word, 'Listen' which he uses, he inflicts a grievous insult upon Job: because, as we have already said of him also before, it is arrogance for an inferior, to wish to extort for himself a hearing from his superior. But although Eliu does not consider to whom he is saying the truths that he utters, yet we, who seek to be instructed by all things, ought carefully to examine the words of his teaching. For perhaps it is said with great skill in virtue, Stand, and consider the wondrous works of God. For there are some who consider the wondrous works of God, but lying down; because they do not follow and admire the power of His doings. For to 'stand,' is to act uprightly. Whence also it is said by Paul, Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. [1 Cor. 10, 12] And they often indeed admire the judgments of heaven, love the announcements of their heavenly country, when they hear them, are astounded at the wondrous operations of His inward ordaining, but yet neglect to attain to these words by their love and their lives. They then lie, and consider the wondrous works of God, who think of God's power in their understanding, but do not love it in their lives.

They turn indeed their eyes in consideration, by thinking on them, but yet do not raise themselves from the earth by their intention. Whence it is well said in reproach of Balaam, Who falling, hath his eyes open. [Numb. 24, 4] For he had said many things of the coming of the Redeemer, and was foreseeing what things were to come to pass in the last days. But yet he was unwilling to rise up to Him in his life, Whom by foreseeing he announced. He was lying then, and had his eyes open, when prophecy was directing his mind to heavenly things, and covetousness was confining it to earth. He was lying and had his eyes open, because he was able to behold Him from above, Whom, grovelling below, he loved not. Eliu therefore, who did not believe that blessed Job had maintained in his life that, which he professed, says, as if advising him, Stand, and consider the wondrous works of God. He still further examines him as to future events, and adds, as if humbling him for his ignorance;

Ver. 15. Dost thou know when God commanded the rains to shew forth the light of His clouds? [xxxvi]

60. If 'clouds' are holy preachers, the rains from the clouds are the words of their preaching. But when clouds fly through the air, unless rain descends from above, we know not what an immensity of waters they carry. Unless the glittering sun breaks forth amidst the rain, we cannot understand, what brightness also is concealed within them. Because doubtless if holy preachers are silent, and shew not by their words, how great is the brightness of heavenly hope, which they bear in their hearts, they seem to be like other men, or far more despicable. But when they have begun to lay open by their preaching, what is the reward of the heavenly country, which they possess within; when, oppressed by persecution, they make known in what a height of virtue they have made progress; when, despised in outward appearance, they point out by their words what makes them feared; the rains themselves, which pour from the clouds, shew us the light of these very clouds. For we learn by the words of preachers to reverence in them, with great humility, the brightness of life which they seek after. Paul was doubtless displaying this light to his disciples, when he said, That ye may know, what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe. [Eph. l, 18. 19.

This light the Corinthians had known by the words of his writings, as by drops of rain, when they said, His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible. [2 Cor. 10, 10] But holy preachers frequently desire to display themselves, in order to do good, but yet are unable: they frequently desire to be concealed, in order to be quiet, and are not permitted. No one therefore knows when the rains shew the light of the clouds, because no one comprehends when God grants the virtue of preaching, that the glory of the preachers may shine forth. He says therefore, Dost thou know, when God commanded the rains, to shew forth the light of His clouds? As if he said plainly, If thou now beholdest preachers about to come to the world, dost thou understand, when God urges them on to preach, by filling them with His Holy Spirit, or in what way He makes known their brightness to the world? Whence it is also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 16. Dost thou know the mighty paths of the clouds, and their perfect knowledge? [xxxvii] 61. These clouds have most subtle paths, namely, the ways of holy preaching. For narrow is the gate, which leadeth unto life. [Matt. 7, 14] They confine then those by paths, who do not depart from the track of their purpose by wandering through the wide desires of the world. For the strict censure of holy living is not a broad way, but a path, in which each preacher is studiously confined: because he is carefully hemmed in by the defence of precepts. Is it not, as it were, a kind of narrowness of way to live indeed in this world, but to have no desires for this world, not to seek for another's goods, not to retain one's own, to despise the praises of the world, to love reproaches for God's sake, to avoid glory, to court contempt, to despise flatterers, to honour our despisers, to banish from our hearts the wrongs of those who hurt us, and to retain towards them the unchangeable grace of affection in the heart? All which namely are paths, but paths of greatness. For the narrower they are in this life, for guarding our conduct, the more are they enlarged to greater width in eternal retribution. Whence also it is well subjoined,

And their perfect knowledge.

62. For it is indeed perfect wisdom, for a man to do all these things with anxious care, and to know that he is nothing in his own deserts. Whence even the clouds themselves are instructed in this perfect wisdom, when it is said to them by the voice of Truth; When ye have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants. [Luke 17, 10] It is perfect wisdom to know all things, and yet in a certain way to be ignorant of one's knowledge; by which though we already know the precepts of God, though we are now weighing with anxious attention the power of His words, though we are doing those things, which we believe we have understood; yet we still know not with what strictness of examination these deeds will hereafter be enquired into, nor do we as yet behold the face of God, nor see His hidden counsels. How great then is our knowledge; which, as long as it is pressed down with the weight of mortality, is darkened by the very mist of its own uncertainty? Of which it is well said by Paul, He who thinketh that he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. [1 Cor. 8, 2] While we live, therefore, in this world, we then know perfectly what ought to be known, when, as we make progress in wisdom, we learn that we know nothing perfectly. He says therefore, Dost thou know the mighty paths of the clouds, and their perfect knowledge?

As if he said openly, Dost thou now behold the lofty acts of preachers, who after raising themselves on high by their wisdom, humbly bow themselves down through knowledge of their ignorance? But since it is caused by the gift of the Holy Spirit alone, that the heart of man is perfectly informed not merely of its knowledge, but also of its ignorance; and that it glows with fervent love for things above, while it considers here below that its knowledge is of less worth, it is rightly subjoined,

Ver. 17. Are not thy garments warm, when the earth hath been blown upon by the south wind? [xxxviii]

63. We have often said already that blessed Job stands for a type of Holy Church. But all they, who are joined to it by the unity of the Faith, are the garments of the Church. Of which the Lord says to the same Church by the Prophet, As I live, thou shall be clothed with all these, as with an ornament. [Is. 49, 18] But by the south wind, which is doubtless warm, is designated, not improperly, the Holy Spirit, for when any one is touched by It, he is freed from the torpor of his iniquity. Whence it is well said in the Song of Songs, Arise, O north wind, and come thou south, blow upon my garden, and let its sweet spices flow out. [Cant. 4, 16] For the north wind is ordered to arise, in order, doubtless, that the opposing spirit, who binds the hearts of mortals, may fly away. For the south wind comes, and blows through the garden, that its sweet spices may flow abroad; because, while the mind of man is filled by the coming of the Holy Spirit, a notion of their virtues is soon scattered abroad from it, that the tongue of the Saints, like a garden which is blown upon by the south wind, may now justly say, We are unto God a sweet odour of Christ. [2 Cor. 2, 15] The garments, therefore, of Holy Church are warm, while the earth is breathed upon by the south wind; because they, who cling to her by faith, glow with fervent zeal of charity, while their mind is streamed through by the breath of the Holy Spirit. But nothing hinders this being understood of this same blessed Job; because we so speak of these things in the Church in general terms, as yet specially to confine them to its separate members.

64. For every one; who lives uprightly, and has been wont also to teach this to others, has, as it were, as many garments, as the hearers who cling to him in agreement. For it is the nature of garments, that they cannot be warm of themselves; but that, when applied to a living body, they cover the exuding pores of the limbs, they keep back the heat which flows forth from within, and from this heat they doubtless become warm: but when they have become warm, by retaining the heat they have received, they return it to the body. What then is signified by garments adhering to the living body, but the life of disciples closely united to teachers who live well? Which receives, as it were, warmth through the pores; because it is kindled with the love of God, both by the example of action, and the impulse of exhortation. Which expels, as it were, its own cold, when it departs from its former iniquity; retains the warmth it has received, because it gains strength in that warmth which it has obtained from preaching. But when holy preachers perceive that their hearers are advancing towards the love of God, they themselves glow the more in power of teaching: and from seeing that they are burning and glowing for the highest objects, they are themselves more mightily kindled to announce the good things of the heavenly country.

And if at any time, because they are still passing this corruptible life of human infirmity, they are assaulted by any fault, however slightly, in deed, word, or thought, they look at the progress of their disciples, and are ashamed of being themselves blameable, even in the smallest matters: lest they should by chance set a crooked example to those, whom they are calling to the rule of inward rectitude by the voice of preaching. When hearers then are kindled by the word of their teachers, garments, as it were, become warm from a living body. But when the conduct of the teachers also is improving, from the progress of their hearers, the heat returns, as it were, to the body from the garments which have been warmed. But

let not the teachers attribute it to themselves, that they see their hearers advancing to the highest things, through their exhortation: because, if the Holy Spirit fill not their hearts, the voice of teachers sounds in vain to the bodily ears. For teachers can shape their voice without, but cannot impress it within; For neither is he who planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God Who giveth the increase. [1 Cor. 3, 7] Let it be said then, Are not thy garments warm, when the earth hath been blown upon by the south wind? Because, namely, hearers, who now adhere to teachers who live aright, receive the warmth of heavenly love, when they are roused by the breath of the Holy Spirit.

As if he were saving plainly to blessed Job; Thou in vain attributest it to thyself, if thou beholdest that any have made progress in virtue by thy means; because these, whom thou supposest to have become warm through thee, would be still remaining cold, in their own insensibility, if the warmth of the Holy Spirit did not touch them. But after he spake these things forcibly, he immediately subjoins words of derision, being influenced with levity by arrogance, saying,

Ver. 18. Thou perchance madest with Him the heavens, which are most solid, as if cast in brass. [xxxix]

65. By 'heavens,' those who are created in the heavens, the angelic spirits, can be designated. Whence also we are instructed by the voice of Truth to say in our Prayer, Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth. [Matt. 6, 10] That the will of God may be doubtless observed in all things even by human infirmity, as it is done by the higher creation. Of whom it is well said, They are most solid, as if cast in brass. For it is of the nature of brass, that it is difficult to be consumed by rust. And the angelic powers, which stood fixed in Divine love, when the proud angels fell, received this, as their reward of retribution, that they are no longer consumed by any rust of sin stealing upon them, that they continue in the contemplation of their Creator, without end to their felicity, and exist with eternal stability, in that which they were created. Which the very words of the history in Moses concerning the origin of the world will attest, when both the heaven is said to have been first made, and this is after wards called the firmament. [Gen. l, 17] Because, namely, the nature of Angels was both first fashioned more subtilly, in the regions above, and was afterwards still more wonderfully strengthened, that it might never fall. But, as we have often said, by the 'heavens' can be expressed the minds of the Elect, raised up by inward love from all earthly pollutions.

For though, in the body, they dwell below, yet, because they cleave in their heart, even now, to the highest objects, they truly say, Our conversation is in heaven. [Phil. 3, 20] Who are most solid, as if cast in brass, because they are not wasted away from the integrity of their original strength, by any rust of changeableness. To whom, boldly bearing up against adversities, it is said by the voice of their Maker, Ye are My friends, which have continued with Me in My temptations. [John 15, 14; Luke 22, 28] But though this learned and haughty one, when endeavouring to make a jest of this holy man, blends noble sayings with his derision,

yet he ever falls back, from those noble sayings, into empty words. For he again subjoins deridingly,

Ver. 19. Shew us what to say to Him; for we in truth are involved in darkness. 66. As if He said; Thou, who enjoyest the great light of wisdom, oughtest to teach us, who are involved in the darkness of ignorance. But soon starting away from his derision, he subjoins contemptuously; Ver. 20. Who will tell Him the things which I say? As if he plainly said; The unheard truths which I declare to Him, from an acute sense of His praises, who can repeat, even after he has heard them? But because, when learning and arrogance contend together in the habitation of the same mind, there sounds forth from the mouth of the speaker not merely levity of behaviour, but also gravity of sentiment; after Eliu had been puffed up in levity by arrogance, saying, Who will tell Him the things which I say? he presently subjoined, through his learning,

Even if a man shall speak, he shall he swallowed up. [xl] 67. Every thing which devours any thing, draws it inwards, and conceals it from the eyes of beholders, and hurries into the deep an object which could be seen on the surface. A man, therefore, when he is silent about God, seems to be something on account of the reason with which he was made. But if he begins to speak about God, it is at once shewn how nought he is; because he is devoured by the immensity of His greatness, and is hurried, as it were, into the deep, and is concealed. For wishing to speak of the Ineffable, he is swallowed up by the narrowness of his own ignorance. For flesh speaks of the Spirit, the circumscribed spirit of the Uncircumscribed, the creature of the Creator, the temporal of the Eternal, the mutable of the Immutable, the mortal of the Quickener. And since, being placed in darkness, he knows not the inward light, as it really is, a man wishing to discourse of eternity, speaks as a blind man of the light. If then a man shall speak, he shall be swallowed up: because if a man wishes to speak of eternity as it is, he takes away also from himself even the sense he has of it when silent. But, behold! eternity then became truly known to men, when It shewed Itself to them by assuming man's nature. But because this had not yet been revealed, it is rightly subjoined of the same men;

Ver. 21. But now they see not the light. [xli] 68. Of which light doubtless it is said even by the Prophet, The people which was sitting in darkness, saw a great light. [Is. 9, 2] But he shews how this light is seen by men, when he immediately adds; The air will suddenly be gathered into clouds. For the air is so diffused by its own tenuity, as not to be consolidated with any firmness. But clouds are firmer, the denser they are. What then is designated by the 'air,' but the minds of worldly men, which, given up to the countless desires of this life, are, being fluid, scattered hither and thither like the air? But the air is collected into clouds, when unstable minds are, by the grace of the Divine regard, strengthened with the solidity of virtue, in order that, by thinking of what is right, they may gather themselves within the bosom of their heart, and may not melt away in empty thoughts.

69. Peter had been air, when the occupation of fishing for the life of the flesh used, as a transient breeze to agitate him, distracted still with earthly desires. The Apostles had been air, who had already learned exalted truths by the Law, but who as yet savoured not of

strength by faith. But the air was suddenly gathered into clouds, because, through the look of divine grace, the unstable hearts of fishermen were turned into the solidity of preachers, in order that their infirm thoughts might become firm, by thinking boldly, that they might hold like clouds the waters of wisdom, and irrigate with the words of their preaching the earth lying beneath; and that, when this ministry was completed, they might return to the secret abodes of heaven, and attain, when their labour was passed, to eternal rest. Whence it is presently well subjoined; And the wind passing over will drive them away.

[xlii] 70. For the wind that passes over is the present life. The wind then passes over, and drives the clouds away; because mortal life, passing along, conceals holy preachers from our bodily eyes. The passing wind drives away the clouds: because the onward course of temporal life withdraws the Apostles from the flesh, and conceals them, from the surface of the earth, in secret rest, as if in the centre of the heavens. But because they cease not to preach even to their death, and pass through the space of this present life, like clouds, with the shower of their words, he adds what is wrought by their labours in Holy Church, when he immediately subjoins; Ver. 22. Gold will come from the north. [xliii]

71. What is designated by the 'north,' but the Gentile world, fast bound in the cold of sin? Which he held under the yoke of his tyranny, who proudly said, I will sit in the mount of the covenant, in the sides of the north, I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. [Is. 14, 13. 14. And what is expressed by 'gold,' but faithful souls? Of which it is said by Jeremiah, How is the gold become dim? the finest colour is changed? [Lam. 4, 1] For he lamented that the gold was dimmed, because he beheld in some persons the brightness of innocence changed into the blackness of sin. Gold, therefore, is said to come from the north; because through the favour of the grace of the Redeemer, the life of the faithful, which is precious before God, is increased within Holy Church, from the Gentile world, which had been long frozen in the torpor of unbelief. For gold comes from the north, when the true faith in God shines forth from the very worshippers of idols. But when the Gentiles were converted to the faith, the Jewish people gainsays them; and scorns to admit to the recompense of eternal rewards, those who had been so long worshippers of idols. Whence it is said to Peter, after the conversion of the Gentiles, Wherefore wentest thou in, to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them?

[Acts 11, 3] In contradiction to which, the Lord rightly says by Isaiah, I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back. [Is. 43, 6] For as the Gentile world is signified by the 'north,' so is the Jewish People signified by the 'south,' which was warmed, as it were, by the mid-day sun, because when our Redeemer appeared in the flesh, it first received the warmth of faith. Give up, then, is said to the north, when the Gentile world is ordered to offer to God the gifts of its faith. But the south is commanded not to keep back, because the Hebrews who stood firm in the faith were ordered not to condemn and reject the life of the Gentiles. Whence here also, because it was said, Gold cometh from the north; it is fitly subjoined;

And from God fearful praise. [xliv]

72. For fearful praise is said to come from God, as if it were said to come from those who are on the side of God, that is, the faithful. When gold then comes from the north, fearful praise proceeds from God; because, while the Gentiles offered the brightness of their faith, the multitude of the faithful Hebrews praised with fear the Divine judgments. But how gold comes from the north, and how fearful praise bursts forth from those who are under God, the sacred history itself informs us. For it is written, Cornelius, a centurion of the band, which is called Italian, a religious man, and fearing God with all his house, giving much alms to the people, and praying to God always, saw in a vision manifestly, about the ninth hour of the day, an Angel of God coming in to him, saying unto him, Cornelius. But he looking on him, being seized with fear, said, Who art thou, Lord? But he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms have come up as a memorial in the sight of God. [Acts 10, 1-4] Gold therefore came from the north, when prayer with alms went up from the Gentiles in the sight of God.

But when Peter had related to the brethren, either how Cornelius had seen an Angel, or he himself had seen a linen cloth let down from heaven to him with beasts, and creeping things and birds, or how the Holy Spirit had bedewed the hearts of the Gentiles, even before Baptism, [Acts 11, 5-17] Who had never come into the minds of the Jews, excepting after the water of Baptism, it is immediately written, When they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, God hath therefore granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life. [ib. 18. The multitude therefore of the faithful, which, on the salvation of the Gentiles, restrained itself from its murmurs, by admiring the gifts of heavenly grace offered fearful praise to God. Whence Peter himself also wonders, saying, I have found in truth, that God is no acceptor of persons. [Acts 10, 34]

73. But when the Gentiles receive the faith, why is fearful praise said to come from those who are already believers, when it ought to come from them, joyful rather than fearful? But fearful praise came from the Hebrews who already believed, on the conversion of the Gentiles, doubtless, because Judaea was justly rejected, while the Gentiles were called in mercy; and feared the loss of its own rejection, while it beheld the gain of the others' calling. Whence we also, when we suddenly behold the wicked raised up to an unexpected eminence of life, daily rejoice with fear under the secret judgments of God, lest God should desert by His secret judgments some who are counted worthy, Who calls thereby those to Himself who are considered unworthy. It follows, Ver. 23. We cannot worthily find Him out. [xlv] 74. Even if we can now find Him out, yet not worthily. For whatever we perceive in Him, is of faith, and not of sight. But yet he adds that which he considers he has found, saying;

He is great in power, and judgment, and justice, and cannot be spoken of. For He is great in power, because He overcomes the powerful adversary, and taking from his house the vessels of dishonour, changes them into vessels of mercy. [Matt. 12, 29] Great in judgment; because, though He here brings down His Elect by adversity, yet He raises them at last in the glory of eternal prosperity. Great in justice: for though He here bears long with the reprobate, yet He at last condemns them for ever. But it is well subjoined; And cannot be spoken of. For

if He cannot worthily be thought of, how much less can He be spoken of? But we speak of Him far better, in a measure, if we hold our peace with admiration through fear of thinking upon Him. It follows, Ver. 24. Therefore men will fear Him, and all who seem to themselves to be wise, will not dare to contemplate Him.

[xlvi] 75. Eliu in this place calls those who are strong of understanding 'men.' ['viros'] And we must note that he says not, 'And wise men will not dare to contemplate Him,' but, They who seem to themselves to be wise. By which words, namely, he implies those who are skilful, but arrogant. Eliu, therefore, while he has many forcible sentiments, has touched himself in the close of his speech. For when men, who are learned and arrogant, do not live rightly, but are compelled by the force of doctrine to say right things, they become in a measure the heralds of their own condemnation, because while they enforce in their preaching that which they scorn to do, they proclaim with their own voices that they are condemned. Against whom it is well said by the Psalmist, They were turned into a crooked bow. [Ps. 78, 57] For a crooked bow strikes the very person, by whom it is aimed : but the tongues of arrogant men are in their sayings like a crooked bow ; be- cause when they speak against pride, they fix their arrows in their own makers. Whence we must watch with the utmost care, lest the wisdom we receive should take away the light of humility, when it illuminates the darkness of ignorance, and should not any longer be wisdom. [Acts 10, 1-4] For though it shines forth in might of speech, yet it obscures the heart of the speaker with a covering of pride.

76. For some goods are of the highest, others of a mixed, kind. The highest goods are faith, hope, charity. Which, when they are really possessed, cannot be turned into evil. But prophecy, doctrine, the power of healing, and the rest, are goods of a mixed nature. For they are so placed between each extreme, that at one time the heavenly country only, and at another earthly glory, is sought by their means. We term these, then, virtues of a mixed nature, which we turn to whatever object our mind wishes for; which the mind can use when possessed, just as it does worldly riches. For through earthly riches, some pride themselves in boastful ostentation, others perform offices of mercy upon their indigent neighbours. When outward praise then is sought for by doctrine and prophecy, the height of earthly glory is aimed at, as if by bodily riches. But when doctrine and prophecy are employed for gaining souls, the riches we have received are distributed as it were to our needy brethren. Because then the mind, through want of care, keeps itself aloof from the hand of the Giver, by means of those very gifts which it boasts of possessing, we must with vigilant forethought take care, that our vices are first overcome, and our gifts afterwards secured with circumspection. For if the mind, when amongst them, incautiously forsakes itself, it is not assisted and supported by them, but is rejected, as if already repaid for its former labours. Whence also it happens, that when the virtue we possess is employed in the service of transitory praise, it is no longer virtue, because it takes service with vice. For since humility is the source of virtue, that virtue truly shoots up in us, which remains firm in its proper root, that is, in humility. For if it is torn from it, it doubtless withers away, because it loses the moisture of charity, which quickens it within.

77. But because secret pride of heart is reproved by this, which Eliu says, All who seem to themselves to be wise will not dare to contemplate Him; it seems good to observe what great gifts of virtues David had obtained, and in all these with how firm a humility he maintained himself. For whom would it not puff up, to break the mouths of lions; to rend asunder the arms of bears; to be chosen, when his elder brethren had been despised; to be anointed to the government of the kingdom, when the King had been rejected; to slay with a single stone Goliah who was dreaded by all; to bring back, after the destruction of the aliens, the numerous foreskins proposed by the King; to receive at last the promised kingdom, and to possess the whole people of Israel without any contradiction? And yet, when he brings back the Ark of God to Jerusalem, he dances before the Ark, mingled with the people, as though forgetful that he had been preferred to them all. And because, as is believed, it had been the custom of the common people to dance before the Ark, the king wheels round in the dance, in service to God. Behold how he whom the Lord preferred specially above all, contemns himself beneath the Lord, both by equalling himself with the least, and by displaying abject behaviour. The power of his kingdom is not recalled to his memory; he fears not to be vile in the eyes of his people, by dancing;

he remembers not, before the Ark of Him Who had given him honour, that he had been preferred in honour above the rest. Before God he performed even the extremest vilenesses, in order to strengthen, by his humility, the bold deeds he had performed in the sight of men. What is thought by others of his doings, I know not; I am more surprised at David dancing, than fighting. For by fighting he subdued his enemies; but by dancing before the Lord he overcame himself. And when Michal, the daughter of Saul, still mad with pride at her royal descent, despised him when humbled, saying, How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, uncovering himself before the handmaids of his servants, and made himself naked, as though one of the buffoons were naked: [2 Sam. 6, 20] she immediately heard, As the Lord liveth, I will play before Lord, Who hath chosen me rather than thy father. [ibid. 21] And a little after he says, And I will play, and I will become more vile than I have been, and I will be humble in mine own eyes. [ibid. 22] As if he plainly said, I seek to become vile before men, because I seek to keep myself noble before the Lord, through my humility.

78. But there are some who think humbly of themselves; because, when placed in honour, they consider that they are nothing but dust and ashes; but yet they shrink from appearing contemptible before men, and, contrary to what they think of themselves within, they cover themselves, as it were, with a rigid cloak of beauty without. And there are some who seek to appear vile before men, and contemn every thing that they are, by exhibiting themselves as lowly; but they are yet puffed up in themselves within, as if by the very merit of the mean look they have displayed; and they are the more elated in their heart, the more they seemingly suppress pride. But both these warrings of the one sin of pride, David detected with great circumspection, overcame with wonderful virtue. For he teaches that, though thinking humbly of himself within, he seeks not honour from without, saying, I will play, and I will become more vile. And since he does not swell with pride within, because he made himself vile without, he adds, And I will be humble in mine own eyes. As if he said, Such as

in self-contempt I represent myself without, such also do I keep myself within. What then should they do, whom teaching elates, if David knew that our Redeemer was to come from his flesh, and announced His joys in prophecy, and yet kept down in himself the neck of his heart, by the strong heel of discretion, saying, And I will be humble in mine own eyes?

79. It is well said therefore by Eliu, Therefore men will fear Him, and all who seem to themselves to be wise will not dare to contemplate Him. For they who seem to themselves to be wise, cannot contemplate the wisdom of God; because they are the more removed from His light, the more they are not humble in themselves. Because while the swelling of pride increases in their minds, it closes the eye of contemplation, and by considering that they outshine others, they thence deprive themselves of the light of truth. If, therefore, we seek to be truly wise, and to contemplate Wisdom Itself, let us humbly acknowledge ourselves to be fools. Let us give up hurtful wisdom, let us learn praiseworthy folly. For hence it is written, God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. [1 Cor. l, 27] Hence again it is said, If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. [ib. 3,18] Hence the words of the Gospel history attest, that when Zaccheus could see nothing for the crowd, he ascended a sycamore tree, to see the Lord as He passed by. [Luke 19, 4] For the barren [lit. 'foolish'] fig is called a sycamore. Zaccheus therefore, being small of stature, ascended a sycamore, and saw the Lord, because they who humbly choose the foolishness of the world, do themselves minutely contemplate the wisdom of God.

For the crowd hinders smallness of stature from beholding the Lord, because the tumult of worldly cares keeps the infirmity of the human mind from looking at the light of truth. But we prudently ascend a sycamore, if we carefully maintain in our mind that foolishness which is commanded by God. For what is more foolish in this world, than not to seek for what we have lost; to give up our possessions to the spoilers, to requite no wrong for the wrongs we have received, nay more, to exhibit patience, when other wrongs have been added? For the Lord commands us, as it were, to ascend a sycamore, when He says, Of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again; [ib. 6, 30] and again, If any man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. [Matt. 5, 39] The Lord is seen, as He passes along, by means of the sycamore, because though the wisdom of God is not yet steadily beheld, as it really is, by this wise folly, yet it is seen by the light of contemplation, as though passing by us. But they, who seem to themselves to be wise, according to the words of Eliu, cannot see it; for, hurried away in the haughty crowd of their thoughts, they have not yet found a sycamore, in order to behold the Lord.

Book XXVIII

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF ST. GREGORY THE POPE, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB.

VOLUME III - THE SIXTH PART. — BOOK XXVIII.

The first eleven verses of the thirty-eighth chapter are explained, in various senses, but especially in a moral sense.

PREFACE.

1. After the loss of his goods, the death of his children, the wounds of his body, the words of his wife persuading him to evil, the insulting language of his comforters, and the darts of so many sorrows boldly received, blessed Job ought to have been praised by his Judge for such great power of constancy, if he had been now going to be called out of this present world. But after he is here about to receive back yet two-fold, after he is restored to his former health, to enjoy longer his restored possessions, Almighty God is obliged to reprove with strict justice him, whom He preserves alive, lest his very victory should lay him low with the sword of pride. For what commonly slays a soul more fatally than consciousness of virtue? For while it puffs it up with self-consideration, it deprives it of the fulness of truth; and while it suggests that it is sufficient of itself for the attainment of rewards, it diverts it from the intention of improvement. Job, therefore, was just before his scourges, but he remained more just after his scourges; and, having been praised before by the voice of God, he afterwards increased from the blow. For as a ductile tube is lengthened by being hammered, so was he raised the higher in praise of God, as he was smitten with heavier chastisement. But he who stood thus firm in his virtues, when prostrated by wounds, needed to be humbled.

He needed to be humbled, lest the weapons of pride should pierce that most sturdy breast, which it was plain that even the wounds that had been inflicted had not overcome. It was doubtless necessary to find out a person, by comparison with whom he would have been surpassed. But what is this, which is said of him by the voice of the Lord; Thou hast seen My servant Job, that there is no man like him upon the earth. [Job 1, 8; 2, 3] By comparison with whom then could he be surpassed, of whom it is said, on the witness of God, that he cannot be equalled, on comparison with any man? What then must be done, except for the Lord Himself to relate to him His own virtues, and to say to him, Canst thou bring forth the morning star in its season, and canst thou make the evening star to rise over the sons

of men? [Job 38, 32] And again, Have the gates of death been opened to thee, and hast thou seen the gloomy doors? [ib. 17] Or certainly; Hast thou commanded their dawn after thy rising, and hast thou shewn the morning its place? [ib. 12] But who can do these things, but the Lord? And yet a man is asked, in order that he may learn that he is unable to do these things;

in order that a man, who has increased with such boundless virtues, and is surpassed by the example of no man, may, that he should not be elated, be surpassed on comparison with God. But O how mightily is he exalted, who is so sublimely humbled! O how great is the victory of the man, to have been foiled on comparison with God! O how much greater is he than men, who is proved by testimony to be less than God! For he is very mighty, who is proved by such questioning not to be mighty. But since we are being led to discuss very obscure questions, let us now come to the words of the text.

Chap, xxxviii. ver. 1. But the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said. [i] 1. I see it must be observed, that if the speech were said to have been addressed to one in health and safety, the Lord would not be described as having spoken out of the whirlwind. But because He speaks to one who has been scourged, He is described as having spoken out of the whirlwind. For the Lord speaks to His servants in one way, when He improves them inwardly by compunction, and in another, when He presses on them with severity, lest they be puffed up. For by the gentle address of the Lord, is shewn His affectionate sweetness, but by His terrible, is pointed out His dreadful power. By the one the soul is persuaded to advance, by the other, that which is advancing is checked. In the one it learns what to desire, in the other what to fear. By the one He says, Be glad and rejoice, O daughter of Sion, for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee. [Zech. 2, 10] By the other it is said; The Lord will come in a tempest, and in the whirlwind are His paths. [Is. 66, 15] For He in truth is gentle, Who comes to dwell in the midst of us. But when He makes His way by the tempest and whirlwind, He doubtless disturbs the hearts which He touches; and puts Himself forth to tame their pride, when He is made known as mighty and terrible.

2. It should also be known, that the Divine mode of speaking is distinguished in two ways. For either the Lord speaks by Himself, or His words are adapted to us by means of an angelic creature. But when He speaks by Himself, He is disclosed to us, solely by the power of His inward inspiration. When He speaks by Himself, the heart is instructed in His word, without words and syllables; because His power is known by a kind of inward elevation. At which the mind when full is raised up, when empty is weighed down. For it is a kind of weight, to raise up every mind which it fills. It is an incorporeal light, to both fill the inner parts, and circumscribe them without, when filled. It is a discourse without noise, which both opens the ears, and yet knows not to utter a sound. For in that which is written concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit; Suddenly there was made a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind approaching, and it filled the whole house, where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; [Acts 2, 2. 3. the Lord appeared indeed by the fire, but He spake to them by Himself within.

And neither that sound nor that fire was God; but by that which He displayed outwardly, He expressed what He performed inwardly.

For because He made the Disciples both to glow with zeal, and to be skilful in speech within, He displayed tongues of fire without. The elements, therefore, were applied with significance, that their bodies might feel the fire and the sound, but that their hearts might be instructed by the invisible fire, and the voice without a sound. The fire then which appeared was outward, but that which gave knowledge was inward. And when the eunuch of queen Candace was sitting in his chariot, and journeying, and was holding Isaiah in his hands, without understanding him, the Spirit had doubtless said to Philip in his heart, Join thyself to the chariot. [Acts 8, 29] And when Cornelius had sent soldiers who feared God to summon Peter, Peter doubtless heard in his mind by the Spirit, Behold three men seek thee. Arise therefore, get thee down, and go with them. [Acts 10, 19] For, for the Spirit of God to say, as it were, certain words to us, is for Him to intimate by His hidden power what is to be done, and to instruct in an instant, without the medium of sound or the slowness of speech, the unlearned heart of man in hidden mysteries. For because the hearing does not comprehend at once all the sayings which are addressed to it; since it understands reasons by means of words, and words separately by syllables; but our sight apprehends suddenly and at once the whole object, by turning itself towards it;

the words of God addressed to us from within are seen, rather than heard; because, while He insinuates Himself, without the delay of words, He illumines by His sudden light the darkness of our ignorance. Whence also when Baruch the son of Neriah was explaining, when demanded, how he had heard the words of Jeremiah prophesying, he said, He pronounced all these words from his mouth, as if he were reading, and I wrote them. [Jer 36, 18] For he who speaks when reading, looks in one direction, but utters his words in another; because he speaks that which he sees. The Prophets of God then, because they rather see than hear His words in the heart, speak as if reading.

3. But when God declares His will by an Angel, He points it out sometimes by words, sometimes by things, sometimes by words and things together, sometimes by images presented to the eyes of the heart, sometimes by images taken for the time from the air and presented even before the eyes of the body sometimes by heavenly substances, sometimes by earthly, and sometimes by earthly and heavenly together. But sometimes God so speaks even by an Angel to the hearts of men, that the Angel Himself is presented to the sight of the mind. 4. For God speaks in words by an Angel, when nothing is displayed in outward appearance, but the words of the Heavenly saying are heard; as on the Lord saying, Father, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee; [John 17, 1] it is immediately replied, I have glorified, and will glorify Him again. [John 12, 28] For God, Who speaks without time, by the power of inward impulse, uttered not in time that voice by His own Substance, which voice, circumscribed by time, He made plain by human words. But speaking doubtless from 'heavenly places, He fashioned, by the ministry of a rational creature, those His words which He wished to be heard by men.

5. But sometimes God speaks through Angels by things, when nothing is said in word, but future events are announced by an object taken from the elements; as Ezekiel, hearing no words, saw the appearance of amber in the midst of the fire; [Ezek. 1, 4] in order, namely, that while he was looking on this single object, he might understand the things which were to come to pass in the last times. For amber ['electrum'] is a mixture of the metals of gold and silver, by which admixture the silver indeed is rendered more brilliant, but the brightness of the gold is softened down. What then is pointed out by amber, but the Mediator between God and men? For while He presented Himself to us as a union of the Divine and human natures, He both rendered His human nature more glorious by His Godhead, and tempered the Divine Nature to our sight by His Manhood. For since human nature shone forth with so many miracles by the virtue of the Godhead, the silver was improved by the gold; and because God could be recognised through the flesh, and because He endured therein so many adversities, the gold was, as it were, tempered by the silver. And it is well represented also in the midst of the fire, because the flame of the judgment which follows attends the mystery of His Incarnation. For it is written, The Father judgeth no man, but hath given all judgment to the Son. [John 5, 22]

6. But sometimes God speaks by Angels in words and deeds at once, when He teaches by certain gestures, that which He declares in words. For neither could Adam, after his sin, hear the Lord in the Substance of His Divinity, but he heard the words of reproof by the Angel, of whom it is written; When he had heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden at the wind after mid-day, he hid himself among the trees of the garden. [Gen. 3, 8] For what is it, that God after the sin of man no longer stands, but walks in the garden, except that He points out that He has been driven from the heart of man, by the inroad of sin? What by His so doing at the wind after mid-day, except that the more glowing light of truth had departed, and the frosts of his sin were congealing his sinful soul? He reproved, therefore, Adam, when walking, that He might make known to benighted souls their wickedness, not by words only, but also by His doings; so that sinful man might both hear by His words what he had done, and perceive, by His walking, the inconstancy of his changeableness, on having lost the stability of eternity, and by the wind might observe his own torpor, when the warmth of charity had been driven away, and learn by the declining of the sun that he was drawing near to darkness.

7. Sometimes God speaks through Angels by images presented to the eyes of the heart; as Jacob when sleeping saw a ladder leaning against heaven. [Gen.28, 12] As Peter caught up in trance saw a linen cloth full of reptiles and quadrupeds; [Acts 10, 10. 11.] for he would not have been in a trance, unless he were beholding these things with other than bodily eyes. As a man of Macedonia appeared to Paul in a vision of the night, who asked him to come over into Macedonia. [ib.16, 9] Sometimes God speaks through Angels by images taken for the time from the air, and presented before the eyes of the body. As Abraham was able not only to behold three men, but also to receive them into an earthly habitation, and not only to receive them, but to supply also food for their use. [Gen. 18, 2] For unless the Angels, when announcing some inward truths, assumed for a time their bodies from the air, they

would not, in truth, appear to our outward sight; nor would they take food with Abraham, unless they were bearing for our sake some solid substance from the heavenly element. Nor is it any wonder that they who are there received, are called, at one time 'Angels,' and at another 'the Lord,' because they, who were ministering outwardly, are designated by the word 'Angel;' and He Who was ruling them within, is pointed out by the appellation 'Lord ;' that by this the power of Him Who was ruling, and by the latter the office of these who were ministering might be clearly displayed. [Exod. 3, 2. 4.]

8. Sometimes God speaks through Angels by heavenly substances, as it is written, that when the Lord had been baptized, a voice sounded from the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I have been well pleased. [Matt. 3, 17] Sometimes God speaks through Angels by earthly substances, as when He reproved Balaam, He formed human words in the mouth of a she ass. [Numb. 22, 28] Sometimes He speaks through Angels by earthly and heavenly substances together. As when He declared to Moses the words of His command in the Mount, He brought together the fire and the bush, and added one from above, and the other from below. [Exod. 3, 2] But this is done, only when something is signified by this very conjunction. For what else did He point out by addressing Moses, through the burning bush, except that He would become the ruler of that people, which would feel the flame of the Law, and yet would not avoid the thorn of sin? or that there would come forth from that people, He Who would take away by the fire of His Godhead the sins of our flesh, as the thorns of the bush; and would preserve the substance of our manhood unconsumed, even in the very flame of the Godhead?

9. But sometimes God pours the virtue of His inspiration into the hearts of men, through Angels, by their secret presence. Whence also Zechariah says, And the Angel who was speaking in me, said to me. [Zech. 1, 14] By saying that the Angel was speaking in him, and yet to him, he clearly proved that he who was speaking to him, was not without him by any bodily appearance. Whence also he added a little after, And, behold, the Angel that was talking in me was going out. [ibid. 2, 3] For often they appear not outwardly, but, as they are angelic spirits, they make known the will of God to the senses of the Prophets, and raise them up to sublime thoughts, and whatever events are still future they set forth as present in their original causes. For the heart of man, burdened with the very weight of corruptible flesh, enduring this its bodily part as an obstacle, penetrates not into inward things, and lies as a heavy burden without; because it has no hand within to raise it up. Whence it results, as has been said, that the subtilty of angelic virtue appears itself, as it really is, to the senses of the Prophets, and that their mind is raised up as it is touched by the subtle spirit, and that it is no longer slothful and sluggish below, but, filled with inspiration within, ascends on high, and thence beholds, as from a lofty eminence, the things which are to come, beneath it.

But lest any one should think that, in the aforesaid words of Zechariah, either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, is designated by the word 'Angel,' if he considers the text of Holy Scripture, he quickly amends his opinion. For it never calls the Father, or the Holy Spirit,

an 'Angel,' nor the Son, except when preaching His Incarnation. Whence it is plainly shewn in the words of the same Zechariah, that an Angel, that is a creature, was really speaking in him, when it is said, And, behold, the Angel that was talking in me was going out. And it is immediately subjoined, And another Angel was going on to meet him, and he said to him, Speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall he inhabited without a wall. [Zech. 2, 3. 4. The Angel therefore who is sent, who is ordered by an Angel what words he ought to speak, is not God. But because, in the sight of their Creator, the ordained ministrations of Angels are distinguished by the position of their ranks, (in order that after the common happiness of their blessed state they may rejoice together beholding their Creator, and yet minister to each other according to the position of their dignity,) an Angel sends an Angel to the Prophets, and both teaches and directs him, whom he beholds rejoicing in God in common with himself; because he surpasses him both by his superior wisdom, in power of knowledge, and, by more distinguished grace, in height of power.

10. These points then have been stated, to show in what ways God talks with men. But when the Lord is said to have answered Job from the whirlwind, it is disputed, whether He spoke to him by Himself, or by an Angel. For commotions of the air could have been made by an Angel, and these words, which are subjoined, could have been delivered by him. And again, both an Angel could agitate the air in a whirlwind without, and the Lord could sound into his heart without words the force of His sentence by Himself within; in order that it may be believed that he, who when filled with God, heard these things without words, himself uttered in words the sayings of the Lord which follow. It is therefore said, Ver. 2. Who is this that involves sentences in unskilful words? [ii]

11. As we have said also in the former part, an interrogative of this kind, in which it is said, Who is this? is the beginning of a reproof. For Eliu had spoken arrogantly. And we say not, Who is this, excepting expressly of him whom we know not. But knowledge on God's part is approval; His not knowing is rejection. Whence He says to certain whom He rejects, I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity. [Luke 13, 27] What then is the enquiring about this haughty man, Who is this? except saying openly, I know not the arrogant: that is, I approve not of their life in the loftiness of My wisdom. Because while they are puffed up by human praise, they are deprived of the true glory of eternal retribution. But in that He said sentences, and added not of what kind, we certainly understand them to be good. And He asserts that these were involved in unskilful words, because they had been brought forward with language of boasting. For it is a fault of unskilfulness, to hold what is right in a wrong way, that is, to pervert the heavenly gift to a desire for earthly praise. For as it often happens that good things are stated badly and bad things properly, so the arrogant Eliu brought forward right truths not rightly, because, in defence of God he uttered humble sentiments unhumbly.

Whence he deservedly serves as a type of those who within the Catholic Church are studious of vain-glory: for while they believe themselves to be skilful beyond others, they are in the Divine judgment convicted of unskilfulness; because, as the Apostle said, If any man think

that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. [1 Cor. 8, 2] For since the original folly of the Angel was pride of heart, humility in his own estimation becomes the true wisdom of man. And whoever abandons this by even thinking great things, is the more outrageously foolish, the more he knows not himself. Whence Eliu both uttered sentences, and those involved in unskilful words, because he both knew the truth which he was speaking about God, and yet his silly pride was making foolish the things he said of himself. Having then glanced with contempt on this man, His words are directed to the instruction of Job.

Ver. 3. Gird up thy loins as a man. [iii]

12. Holy Scripture is wont to call those persons 'men,' who follow, doubtless, the ways of the Lord with firm and steady steps. Whence it is said by the Psalmist, Do manfully, and let your heart be strengthened. [Ps. 31, 24] Whence Paul says, Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. [Heb. 12, 12] Whence also Wisdom in the Proverbs, Unto you, O men, I call. [Prov. 8, 4] As if She were saying openly, I do not speak to women, but to men: because they who are of an unstable mind, cannot at all understand My words. But to gird up the loins is to restrain lust either in work, or in thought. For the delight of the flesh is in the loins. Whence it is said to holy Preachers, Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning. [Luke 12, 35] For by the loins is designated lust, but by lights the brightness of good works. They are commanded therefore to gird their loins, and to hold their lights. As if they heard openly; First, restrain lust in yourselves, and then set forth from yourselves examples of good works to others.

But since we have known that blessed Job was endowed with such great chastity, why is it said to him after so many scourges, Gird up thy loins as a man, (that is, as a bold man restrain thy lust,) except that there is one lust of the flesh, with which we pollute our chastity, but another lust of the heart, by which we boast of our chastity? It is said therefore to him, Gird up thy loins as a man: in order that he who had first overcome the lust of corruption, should now restrain the lust of pride; and that he might not, from priding himself on his patience or his chastity, become more fatally lustful before the eyes of God within, the more patient and chaste he appeared before the eyes of men. Whence it is well said by Moses, Circumcise the foreskins of your heart; [Deut. 10, 16] that is, after ye have restrained lust in the flesh, lop off also the superfluities of thoughts. It follows,

I will question thee, and answer thou Me. [iv]

13. Our Maker is wont to question us in three ways; when He strikes us with the severity of the rod, and shews what great patience either exists in, or is wanting to, us. Or when He enjoins certain things which we dislike, and lays open our obedience, or disobedience. Or discloses to us some hidden truths, and conceals others, and makes known to us the measure of our humility. For He questions us by the scourge, when He assails with afflictions the mind which has been properly subject to Him in a time of tranquillity. As the same Job is both praised, on the evidence of his Judge, and yet is given up to the blows of the smiter, in

order that his patience might be the more truly manifested, the more severely it had been examined. But He questions us by enjoining hard things, as Abraham is ordered to go out of his own country, and to go whither he knew not; [Gen. 12, 1] to lead his only son to the mountain, and to offer up him, whom he had received, when old, as a consolation. For it is doubtless said to him, when making a good reply to the question, that is when obedient to the command, Now I know that thou fearest God. [ib. 22, 12] Or as it is written, The Lord your God trieth you, to know if ye love Him. [Deut. 13, 3] For God's trying us, is His questioning us with mighty commands.

His knowing also, is His making us know our own obedience. But God questions us by disclosing some things to us, and shutting out others, as is said by the Psalmist, His eyelids question the sons of men. [Ps.1l, 4] For, when our eyelids are open, we see; when they are closed, we behold nothing. What do we understand then by the eyelids of God, but His judgments? Which in one respect are closed to men, and in another are opened, in order that men who know not themselves, may become known to themselves; so that, while they comprehend some truths in their understanding, and are not at all able to understand others, their hearts may secretly examine themselves, whether the Divine judgments do not stimulate them, when concealed, or puff them up when laid open. For Paul was proved by this questioning, who after he had tasted inward wisdom, after the barrier of paradise had been opened, after the ascent of the third heaven, after the mysteries of Heavenly words, still says, I count not myself to have apprehended. [Phil. 3, 13] And again; I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle. [1 Cor. 15, 9] And again; Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God. [2 Cor. 3, 5] Paul then, when questioned by the open eyelids of God, answered rightly, for he both reached to heavenly secrets, and yet stood sublimely in humility of heart.

And again, when he was discussing the secret judgments of God concerning the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, and could not attain to them, he was questioned, as it were, by the closed eyelids of God. But he returned a thoroughly right answer, who in his ignorant state, wisely bowed himself down to God, saying, O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are his judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? [Rom. 11, 33. 34. For, lo! when questioned by mysteries hidden, as with closed eyelids, he gave fitting and right answers. For knocking at the entrance of the mystery, because he could not through his knowledge be admitted to inward things, he stood before the gates in humble confession, and that which he could not comprehend within, he praised with dread without. Whence blessed Job is now also, after the questioning of the rod, examined by the questioning of the word, to make him consider the things which are above; and in order that, when he does not comprehend them, he may turn back to himself, and learn how he is almost nothing, in comparison with heavenly things. Let him hear therefore, I will question thee, and answer thou Me.

As if it is more plainly said, I rouse thee by My words to consider sublime truths, and whilst thou perceivest that thou knowest not those things that are above thee, I make thee better known to thyself. For then thou answerest Me truly, if thou understandest what things thou knowest not. It follows,

Ver. 4, 5, 6. Where wast thou when I was laying the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measure of it, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened. [v] [ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION] 14. Behold all things are put together in historical narration, as if concerning the origin of the world. But something is immediately subjoined, which seems to be said of the creation, not of the world, but of the Church. For it is said; Or who hath laid the corner stone thereof?

For by this, which was not done at the beginning of the world, it is shewn that that former expression was not used of the creation of the world. For some obscure subjects of a different character are blended with those that are plain and obvious, for this very purpose; that in consequence of that which agrees not with the literal meaning, that also may be examined mystically, which sounds as if spoken literally. For as, by some things which are opened we learn others which are closed; so are we compelled by those which are closed, to knock with a deeper understanding at those which we believed to be open. Let Him say then; Where wast thou, when I was laying the foundations of the earth? In Holy Scripture what else do we understand by foundations but holy preachers? For since God had placed them first in the Church, the whole structure of the subsequent fabric has risen up upon them. Whence also the priest is ordered, when he enters the tabernacle, to bear twelve stones on his breast. [Ex. 28, 21] Because, namely, our High Priest, in offering Himself a sacrifice for us, when He set forth mighty preachers at the very beginning, carried twelve stones under His head in the front of His body. The holy Apostles therefore are stones on the breast, to be displayed as an ornament in front, and foundations in the ground for the first firm basis of the edifice.

And hence when David the Prophet beheld Holy Church established and built on the lofty minds of the Apostles, he says; Her foundations are on the holy hills. [Ps. 87, l] But when in holy Scripture 'foundations' are not spoken of, but 'a foundation,' in the singular number, no one is designated, except the Lord Himself, by the power of Whose Divinity the tottering hearts of our infirmity are made strong. Of Whom also Paul says; Other foundation can no man lay, but that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. For He is in truth the foundation of the foundations, because He is the first commencement of beginners, and the constancy of the strong. Because then they who have borne the freight of our iniquities are our foundations, lest blessed Job should be puffed up with pride by the power of his own virtues, he is, in the very commencement of the Lord's address, tested by the mention of holy preachers; in order that the more worthy of admiration he beheld them approach, the more vilely he might think of himself in comparison with them. But that is described by the Lord, as if already passed: for the very reason that, whatever is outwardly still future in act, has been already effected within by predestination. It is said therefore to him, Where wast thou, when I was

laying the foundations of the earth? As if it were openly said; Consider the virtue of the mighty, and think on Me their Maker before all ages:

and when thou beholdest those wonderful beings whom I made in time, consider how entirely thou oughtest to be subject to Me, Whom thou acknowledgest as the Author of Wonders without time. It follows;

Ver. 4, 5. Tell Me, if thou hast understanding, who hath laid the measures of it, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? [vi] 15. Lines of measures are stretched forth in the partition of lands, in order that fairness of dimension may be observed by their very extension. But the Lord, coming to the Church in the flesh, measured out the measures of the earth with lines, because He marked out the boundaries of the Church with the subtlety of His secret judgment. The secret measures or lines of this earth were being stretched out, when holy preachers were called by the agency of the Spirit to go into some parts of the world, but were kept from approaching other parts. For when Paul the Apostle was neglecting to preach in Macedonia, a man of Macedonia appeared to him in a vision, to say, Come over into Macedonia and help us. [Acts 16, 9] But on the other hand, as it is written, The Apostle essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not. [ibid. 7] When holy preachers then are called to Macedonia, and are kept from going into Asia, this line of secret measure is drawn on that side, and removed from this. It is extended there, that Macedonia may be brought within the limits of Holy Church. It is drawn in from hence, that Asia may be left without the bounds of the faith. For there were then some therein who were not to be gathered in: but, when they had been lost according to their desert, Asia has now been embraced within the measures of the Church, by the bounty of God.

16. Within these measures then are all the Elect, without them are all the reprobate, even if they seem to be within the limit of faith. Whence it is written in the Apocalypse; The court which is without the temple, cast out, and measure it not. [Rev. 11, 2] For what else does the court signify but the breadth of the present life? And they who are designated by the court are rightly without the temple: and they are therefore not to be measured, because narrow the gate that leadeth unto life; [Matt. 7, 14] and the breadth of the life of the wicked is not admitted to the measures and rules of the Elect. These spiritual lines were being stretched in hidden judgment, when to a certain person who said, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest, [Matt. 8, 19] it was replied by the voice of the same Master, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. [ibid. 20] Those measures and lines were being stretched forth, when to a certain person who said, Lord, suffer me to go and bury my father, [Luke 9, 59] it was replied by the voice of the same Master, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. [ibid. 60] Lo! one promises that he will follow Him, and is rejected; another demands to be released, and is retained. Whence is this?

Except that the lines of heavenly judgments were being stretched over the hidden spaces of the heart, in order that their incomprehensible measures might enclose the one within, and

that the other might, not unjustly, remain without. But since no one is ignorant that God stretches forth these lines of hidden judgments, why is it said to Job, Tell Me, if thou hast understanding, who hath placed the measures of it, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Is the question put to remind him of that which he might know, and yet forget; that he should consider more anxiously the weight of the secrets of God, namely, that the ordering of man depends not on human strength, but on the power ['manu'] of the Creator, that so, while considering Who is invisibly performing these works, he may attribute nothing to himself, and no longer attempt any thing of himself, when he dreads the secret judgments of God? But that, considering the measures and lines incomprehensibly stretched out from above, he may remain more firm in the humility of fear, the more he sees every thing depending on the power of the Measurer. It follows;

Ver. 6. Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened? [vii] 17. What else do we understand by the foundations of this earth, but the teachers of Holy Church? For columns are raised on the bases, but on the columns the weight of the whole fabric is raised. Holy teachers are then not improperly designated by the name of bases. For while they preach what is right, and in life accord with their preaching, they uphold the whole weight of the Church by the fixed gravity of their manners; they endure sharp assaults from unbelievers, and, whatever is dreaded by the faithful as difficult in the precepts of God, they shew to be easy by the examples of their works. Whence also, when the tabernacle was being fixed as the type of the Church, it is well said to Moses, Thou shalt make four columns, and their bases thou shalt cover with silver. [Ex. 26, 32] For what else is understood by silver but the brightness of the Divine word? As it is written; The words of the Lord are pure words, silver tried in the fire, purged from the earth, purified seven times. [Ps. 12, 6] Bases therefore covered with silver support the four columns of the tabernacle; because preachers of the Church, adorned with the Divine word, in order to set themselves forth as an example to all, bear the words of the four Evangelists in their mouth, and in their works.

18. Prophets also can be signified by bases; for when they first spoke openly of the Incarnation of the Lord, we behold them rising as bases from the foundation, and bearing the weight of the superimposed fabric. Whence also, when the Lord ordered the boards of the tabernacle to be erected, He ordered Moses that their bases should be cast in silver. For what are signified by the boards, but Apostles spread out in their extended preaching to the world, and what by the bases of silver but the Prophets: who being themselves firm and molten sustain the boards placed upon them? Because while the life of the Apostles is instructed by their preaching, it is also strengthened by their authority. Whence also the bases put together in pairs are placed under the separate boards. Because when the holy prophets agree in their words concerning the Incarnation of the Mediator, they edify without doubt the subsequent preachers of the Church: and when they disagree not with themselves, they establish them more firmly on themselves. But it is not improperly ordered that the bases, by which the Prophets are signified, should be cast of silver. For the brightness of silver is preserved by its being used; when not used it is turned into blackness. The sayings also of the Prophets, because they were not held in the use of spiritual knowledge, remained, as it

were, in blackness before the coming of the Mediator, because they could not be understood by reason of their obscurity.

But after the Mediator, on His coming, wiped them before our eyes with the hand of His Incarnation, whatever light was lurking therein shone forth, and He brought into use the meaning of preceding fathers, because He expounded words by events. Whether He signifies then the prophets, or the teachers who succeed them in the latter times, by the expression 'bases,' let Him say; Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened? Thou understandest, except upon Me, Who hold all things marvellously together, and confer at the first an inward existence on things that are good without. For he who attributes what is good to himself, is not a solid basis; for whilst he rests not on the foundation, he is by his own weight precipitated to the bottom. But since many things are now being said concerning the building of Holy Church, the mind seeks to hear, with what virtue hostile nations are united together, that is, with what skill the different buildings of this house are fitted together. It follows;

Or who hath laid the corner stone thereof? [viii]

19. It is now clear to all by Divine grace, Whom Holy Scripture calls the corner Stone. Him in truth, Who taking into Himself from one side the Jewish, and from the other the Gentile people, unites, as it were, two walls in the one fabric of the Church; Him of Whom it is written, He hath made both one; [Eph. 2, 14] Who exhibited Himself as the corner Stone, not only in things below, but in things above; because He united on earth the nations of the Gentiles to the people of Israel, and both together to Angels in heaven. For at His birth the Angels exclaimed, On earth peace to men of good will. [Luke 2, 14] For they would not offer their joys to men of peace as a great thing at the birth of the King, if they were not at variance with each other. Of this Stone it is said by the Prophet; The Stone which the builders rejected, is made the head of the corner. [Ps. 118, 22] Jechonias the king typified the Stone, whom Matthew when describing fourteen generations, reckoned twice. [Matt. 1, 11. 12. For him, whom he had inserted as the end of the second generation, he inserted again at the beginning of the third. For he himself was removed into Babylonia with the people of Israel; for while he is led from one to the other, he is not improperly counted twice over for the side of each wall.

And by the bending of this migration he designates the corner stone. For where the order is diverted from its right course to go into a different direction, it makes, as it were, a corner. He could therefore rightly be counted twice; for he shewed as it were two sides of himself along either wall. Whence also he properly represented Him, Who born in Judaea, and gathering together the Gentiles, went as it were from Jerusalem to Babylonia, and bound together in His own Person, by the art of charity, that building of faith which before was rent asunder by the animosity of discord.

[MORAL INTERPRETATION] But these things which have been said, as descriptive of Holy Church, it seems good to repeat briefly in a moral sense. For it is right for us to be brought back to our own hearts by those things which we know were said to blessed Job;

because the mind then understands more truly the words of God, when it searches for itself therein. For behold it is said, Ver. 4. Where wast thou when I was laying the foundations of the earth? [ix]

20. If the mind of a sinner is dust, which is borne on the surface, and is swept away by the breeze of temptation, (whence it is written, Not so are the ungodly, not so; but as the dust, which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth; [Ps. 1,4] nothing prevents the earth being understood to mean the soul of a just man, of which it is written, For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth the herbs meet for those by whom it is dressed, receiveth a blessing. [Heb. 6, 7] But the foundation of this earth is faith. The foundation of this earth is laid, when the first cause of firmness, the fear of God, is breathed in the secret places of the heart. This man does not as yet believe the eternal truths which he hears; when faith is given him, a foundation is now laid for the building up of the subsequent work. He now believes eternal truths, but yet fears them not; he despises the terror of the coming judgment: he boldly involves himself in sins of the flesh and of the spirit. But when the fear of future things is suddenly infused into him, in order that the edifice of a good life may rise up, the foundations are now erected.

When the foundation then of a wholesome dread has been laid, and the fabric of virtue is being raised on high, it is necessary for every one to measure his strength, as he is making progress. So that though he has already begun to be great by the Divine building, he may without ceasing look back to what he was; in order that humbly remembering what he was found in merit, he may not arrogate to himself what he has been made by grace. Whence also blessed Job is now brought back to himself by the voice from above, and, that he may not dare to boast of his virtues, he is reminded of his past life. And it is said to him, Where wast thou when I was laying the foundations of the earth? As if the Truth openly said to the justified sinner; Attribute not to thyself the virtues which were received from Me. Exalt not thyself against Me by reason of My own gift. Call to mind where I found thee, when I laid the first foundations of virtue in thee, in My fear. Call to mind where I found thee, when I confirmed thee in My fear. In order then that I may not destroy in thee that which I have built up, thou must not cease to consider with thyself, what I found thee. For whom has the Truth not found either in sins or excesses?

But after this we can well preserve that which we are, if we never neglect to consider what we were. But pride is yet sometimes wont to steal secretly even into careful hearts, so that the thought of good deeds, though slight and feeble, as it advances to a great height of virtue, forgets its own infirmity, and does not recall to mind what it was in sins. Whence also Almighty God, because He sees that our weakness is increased even by salutary remedies, places limits to our very progress, that we may have some excellencies of virtues, which we have never sought for, and that we may seek after others, and yet be unable to possess them. In order that our mind, when unable to attain these things which it desires, may understand that it possesses not of itself those even which it does possess, and that, from those which are present, those which are wanting may be thought of, and that, by means of

those that are profitably wanting, those goods that are present may be humbly preserved. Whence also it is rightly subjoined, concerning His dealings towards this earth, that is, this righteous soul;

Ver. 4, 5. Declare to Me if thou hast understanding, who hath laid the measure thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? [x]

21. For who, but our Creator, lays the measures of this earth? Who, by the secret ordering of His inward judgment, gives to one the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another perfect faith, to another the grace of healing, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of speeches; in order that one man may by one and the same Spirit be mighty in the word of wisdom, and yet not be strengthened with the speech of knowledge, that is, of doctrine, (for he is able to understand and discover even that truth which he does not attain to by study and learning;) and that another may shine with the word of knowledge, and yet not be strong in the word of wisdom, because he is able fully to understand all that he has learnt, and yet cannot rise by himself to understand any subtle question. One man by faith commands the elements, and yet cures not bodily infirmities by the gift of healing. Another removes diseases by the aid of prayer, and yet restores not by his word the rain to the thirsty earth. This man restores even the dead at once to present life, by the working of miracles, and yet, not possessing the gift of prophecy, knows not what things are to befal him. Another beholds all future events as if present, and yet does not display himself in any working of miracles. One man by the discerning of spirits subtilly discerns the minds of men in their doings, but yet knows not tongues of divers kind; another examines into tongues of divers kind, but yet observes not dissimilar hearts in similar doings. One person skilfully examines by interpretation the value of words in one language which he knows, and yet patiently goes without the other goods which he has not.

22. Thus, therefore, does our Creator and Disposer order all things; that he who might be puffed up by the gift which he has, may be humbled by that virtue which he has not. He so regulates all things, that when He exalts any one by the grace bestowed, He also, by a different gift, makes one person inferior to another, and makes every one to look on him who is beneath him, as superior to him in some other gift, and though he feels that he is even in some respects superior, to place himself in others below the very person whom he surpasses. He so regulates all things, that while all possess separate gifts, they become, all of them, the property of each person separately, by a connecting bond of charity, and that every one so possesses in another that which he has not himself, that he humbly confers on the other that which he received as his own possession. For it is hence said by Peter, As every one hath received the gift, ministering, the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. [l Pet. 4, 10] For the manifold grace of God is then well dispensed, when the gift which has been received is believed to belong even to him who does not possess it, when it is considered to have been given to a man's self on account of him in whose behalf it is exerted. Hence it is said by Paul, By love serve one another.

[Gal. 5, 13] For charity then sets us free from the yoke of blame, when it engages us through love in mutual service, when we both believe that the goods of others belong to ourselves, and present our goods to others as though offering them their own. Hence it is again said by Paul, For even the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am therefore not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Became I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? And a little after, But if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. [l Cor. 12, 14-17. 19. 20.]

23. For what is Holy Church, except the Body of its own heavenly Head? Wherein one is the eye, by beholding lofty things; another a hand, by performing right things; another a foot, by running to and fro at command; another an ear, by understanding the voice of the precepts; another a nose, by discerning the foulness of wicked, and the fragrance of good, deeds. And, while they receive and discharge mutual offices, like the limbs of the body, they make of themselves together one single body, and, while they perform different offices in charity, they keep that from being different, in which they are bound together. But were they all to do one and the same work, they would assuredly not be a body, which is composed of many members; because, namely, it would not exist, as compacted of many parts, if this harmonious diversity of members did not bind it together. Because then the Lord divides to the holy members of His Church the gifts of virtues, He places the measures of the earth. Whence Paul says again, As God hath divided to every one the measure of faith. [Rom. 12, 3] And again, From Whom the whole body compacted and connected by that which every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every member, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. [Eph. 4, 16]

24. But since our Creator and Disposer with wonderful wisdom confers gifts on one, which He refuses to another, and refuses to one those gifts which He bestows on another; whoever aims at doing more than he has received, endeavours to exceed the limits assigned to him. As if, perchance, he, to whom it has been only given to discuss the secret meanings of precepts, should attempt also to dazzle with miracles; or, as if he, whom the gift of heavenly virtue strengthens only for miracles, should strive, besides, to lay open the mysteries of the Divine Law. For he puts forth his foot on a precipice, who regards not the limits of his own measures. And he who boldly hastes to grasp those subjects which he is unable to reach, commonly loses that power which was his. For we then use aright the services of our limbs, when we distinctly preserve for them their own offices. For with the eyes we behold the light, with the ears we hear a voice. But if any one, having inverted the order, applies his eyes to the voice, and his ears to the light, both are to him open in vain. If any one wishes to distinguish scents with his mouth, to taste flavours with his nose, he does away with the service of both senses, because he perverts them. For when they are not applied to their proper uses, they both give up their own offices, and do not attain to those which are foreign to them.

25. The Prophet David, then, had rightly confined the foot of his heart within the measure he had received by the Divine bounty, when he said, I have not walked in great matters, nor in things too wonderful for me. [Ps. 131, 1] For he would in truth walk in things too wonderful for him, if he sought to appear mighty beyond his power. For a man is raised above himself in wonderful things, if he endeavours to appear capable even in those things, to which he is unequal. Paul also was rightly confining himself within these limits, even in the wide range of his preaching, when he said, For I do not dare to speak of any of those things, which Christ worketh not by me. [Rom.15, 18] But the measure which has been received is then rightly preserved, when the life of spiritual men is viewed as set before the eyes. Whence it follows;

Ver. 5. Or who hath stretched the line upon it? [xi] 26. For a line is stretched over this earth, when the examples of preceding Fathers are pointed out to each Elect soul, as a rule of life to be adopted; in order for it to consider from their life what to maintain in its own doings; that so, by observing the track of the proper path, it may neither, through neglect, fall short of the smallest matters, nor, through pride, stretch forth beyond the greatest; nor endeavour to do less than it is able, nor grasp at more than it has received; lest it should either not attain to the measure which it ought, or should, by forsaking this measure, fall beyond its limit. For narrow in truth is the gate which leadeth to life, [Matt. 7, 14] and he enters therein, who is, on account of it, carefully confined in all his doings, by his subtlety of discernment. For he who with fearless mind spreads himself abroad through his own wishes, condemns himself to exclusion from the narrow gate. In order, then, for the measure of this earth to be preserved, a line is extended over it from heaven; because the discriminating life of the Saints is spread out before us in Holy Scripture, in order that, either our defects may be corrected, or our excesses moderated; and both what, and how much, is to be done, is marked out by their discrimination which is set before us.

27. Behold a person, fearing either the loss of goods, or bodily affliction, dreads the threats of worldly power, and presumes not to maintain the truth against the might of opponents. Because Peter beholds him hard pressed with fear, he brings him back to the wide space of virtue, by putting before him the line of his examples. For when he had been scourged by the chiefs of the people, and perceived that he had been set free, on condition that he should cease from preaching, when he was commanded not to speak for the future, he did not yield even for the time. [Acts 4, 18; 5, 40] For he immediately answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. [Acts 5, 29] And again, For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. [Acts 4, 20] But he, who before was weak, and fearing present loss, when he contemplates examples of such great courage, now follows the course of Peter, through the authority of the word, now fears not any adversity, and contemns, even with laceration of body, the powers of the world, which oppose God. But yet the more he overcomes the strength of his persecutors by bold endurance, and the more, in the midst of adversities, he yields not to any terms, the more does he in general set himself above others, even in the opinions he has held, when placed among the faithful; the more does he choose his own schemes, and trust himself, rather than others.

He doubtless, while exerting himself in virtue, by not yielding to unrighteous opposition, places his foot beyond the proper limit, by not adopting even the right advice of others. Him does Peter recall within the line of measure, who, after he had overcome the authority of rulers by the freedom of his words, listened, through humility of heart, to Paul's advice about not circumcising the Gentiles. For he desired so to raise himself up against the adversaries by his authority, as yet not to trust himself in those points in which he was wrong; in order that he might overcome haughty powers by the freedom of his boldness, and might exhibit by the humility of his gentleness submission in good counsel even to his younger brethren; and thus at one time oppose himself to others, and at another together with others oppose himself. In the conduct then of Peter a line of authority and humility is extended as it were before our eyes, lest our mind should not attain to the standard through fear, or should exceed the limit through pride.

28. It has been stated, how the line is extended, lest we should fall into a fault in another case, through the boldness of some of our doings. Let it be now stated how we abandon the line of discretion in one and the same virtue, if we know not how to perform it at one time, and how to defer it at another. For a virtue is not always one and the same thing, for the merits of actions are often changed by circumstances. It is hence the case, that when we are properly engaged in any pursuit, we often more properly desist from it; and that the mind more creditably abandons that employment for a time, in which it was creditably employed at its own proper time. For if in consequence of our lesser virtues, (by performing which we make progress, but by intermitting which we are not endangered,) greater evils and trials threaten our neighbours, we necessarily put aside our advance in virtue, lest we should cause losses to the faith in our weaker neighbours; lest what we do should so far not be a virtue, the more it overthrows the foundations of the faith in the hearts of others, for the sake of itself.

29. Which line of sound judgment Paul rightly extended before the eyes of the beholders, who both ordered the Gentiles who were coming to the liberty of the faith not to be circumcised, [Gal. 5, 2] and yet, when at Lystra, and passing through Iconium, himself circumcised Timothy, who had been born of a Gentile father. [Acts 16, 3] For, seeing that he would excite the rage of the Jews even against those who were then present as his companions, if he did not shew that he observed the commands of the letter, he deferred enforcing his assertion, and secured himself and his companions from fierce persecution without loss to the faith. He did that which he ordered not to be done from love to the faith; but he brought back to the service of the faith that which he did as it were unfaithfully. For a virtue is frequently lost, when it is maintained indiscreetly, and when it is discreetly intermitted, it is held the more firmly. And it is no wonder if we understand that that takes place in incorporeal, which we see taking place also in bodily, things. For a bow is intentionally unstrung, in order that at its proper time it may be usefully bent. And if it receives not the rest of being unstrung, it loses its power of striking, from being kept on the stretch. And thus sometimes when a virtue, which is in exercise, is suspended through discretion, it is reserved; in order that it may afterwards strike vices the more powerfully, the more it prudently abstains mean-

while from striking. The subtle line of sound judgment is, therefore, then extended over the earth, when, by setting before each soul the examples of preceding fathers, a virtue is both profitably excited to action, and is sometimes also more profitably restrained.

30. But when boldness of zeal is withdrawn for a while from employment, great consideration is needed, lest we should perchance cease from the exercise of virtue, not from regard to the common good, but through fear for ourselves, or for the sake of some object of ambition. For when this is the case, a man no longer gives way to dispensation, but to sin. Hence when a person so dispenses the work he has undertaken as to cease from virtuous exertion, he must take anxious care, and examine himself first in the depth of his heart, lest he should by this greedily seek something for himself, by this should spare himself alone through fear; and lest the result of his work should turn out ill, as not produced from a proper intention of thought. Whence the Truth well says in the Gospel, The light of thy body is thine eye; if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. [Matt. 6, 22. 23. For what is expressed by the 'eye,' except the intention of the heart going before its work? which, before it exercises itself in action, already contemplates that which it desires. And what is designated by the expression 'body,' except each single action, which follows its intention as the eye with which it sees? The light of the body, therefore, is the eye, because the merits of an action are enlightened by the ray of good intention.

And if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light, because, if in the singleness of our thought we intend rightly, a good work is produced, even though it seem not good. And if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness, because, when even any thing that is right is performed from a wrong intention, though it seem brilliant before men, it is yet obscured by the sentence of the inward Judge. Whence it is rightly subjoined, Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness? [Luke 11, 35; Matt 6, 23] Because, if we obscure by bad intention that which we believe we are doing rightly, how great are those evils, which we are ignorant are evils even when we are doing them? And, if we see nothing in that case, when we hold, as it were, the light of discernment, how blindly do we stumble against those sins which we commit without discernment? Through all our doings then our intention must be considered with watchful care, that it choose not, in what it does, any thing temporal, but that it fix itself entirely on the solid foundation of eternity; lest the fabric of our deeds, if built out beyond the foundation, should be rent asunder by the yawning earth. Whence it is here also fitly subjoined,

Ver. 6. Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened? [xii]

31. For the bases of each single soul are its intentions. For as the fabric rests on columns, but the columns on bases, so is our life based upon its virtues, but our virtues on our inmost intention. And because it is written, Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ; [1 Cor. 3, 11] the bases are then on the foundation, when our intentions are firmly fixed on Christ. But in vain do the bases raise upon themselves lofty

edifices, if they themselves do not stand firm on the solid foundation, because men doubtless perform in vain their deeds, however great, if the intentions of their hearts are turned aside beyond the certainty of eternity, and if they seek not the rewards of the true life, and they raise up upon themselves heavier losses of ruin, the loftier edifices they pile up beyond the foundation. For when they aim not at the rewards of eternal life, the more they raise themselves, as it were, in virtue, the deeper do they fall into the pitfall of vainglory. We must not consider then what the bases support, but where they are supported: because in truth the hearts of men examine, by Divine help, not only what they do, but what they aim at in their doings. Whence, when Paul was describing the strict Judge, and was speaking of the goodness of actions, saying, Who will render to every man according to his deeds; to these indeed according to their patience in well-doing, glory and incorruption;

[Rom. 2, 6. 7. because, having spoken of patience in well doing, he had mentioned the whole fabric, as it were, of Elect actions, he immediately enquired accurately where the bases of this fabric rested, saying, To those who seek for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life. As if he were plainly saying, Although certain persons exhibit patience in well-doing, yet they receive not glory and incorruption, if they place not the intentions of their heart, that is the bases of the fabric, on the foundation. Because, namely, God dwells not in the edifice even of an honest life, which, placed without Himself, He Himself does not support.

32. Because, therefore, the intentions of every Elect soul rest on the hope of eternity, it is rightly said of this earth by the voice of the Lord, Whereupon are the bases thereof fastened? As if He were plainly saying, Except upon Me. For while every righteous soul aims at this, every thing it does temporally, it doubtless builds on Me for no temporal purpose. But since we are then more solidly built on the foundation, when we both follow the words of God in their outward precepts, and consider them with deeper understanding in their inmost meanings, it is rightly subjoined, Or who hath laid the corner stone thereof? [xiii]

33. For the 'corner stone' is a twofold understanding of Holy Scripture. And it is laid by Divine power, when it is not, by strict judgment, bound with the darkness of its ignorance, but enjoys a kind of liberty, whereas it knows sufficiently the precepts of God, either to follow their outward commands, or to learn by contemplation their inner meaning. To which our understanding would never attain, if He, our Creator, did not come to take our nature. For He is called in one sense 'a corner stone,' because He united in Himself two peoples, and in another, because He set forth in Himself patterns of both lives, that is, the active and the contemplative, united together. For the contemplative life differs very much from the active. But our Redeemer by coming Incarnate, while He gave a pattern of both, united both in Himself. For when He wrought miracles in the city, and yet continued all night in prayer on the mountain, [Luke 6, 5] He gave His faithful ones an example, not to neglect, through love of contemplation, the care of their neighbours, nor again to abandon contemplative pursuits, from being too immoderately engaged in the care of their neighbours; but so to keep together their mind, in applying it to the two cases, that the love of their neighbour

might not interfere with the love of God, nor again the love of God cast out, because it transcends, the love of their neighbour.

Because then the Mediator between God and man was manifested to the heart of man, when it knew not what it was doing, in order by His doings to set in order things transitory, and to shew by contemplation whence all things depended, it is rightly said, Or who hath laid the earner stone thereof? As if the Lord were openly saying, Except Myself, Who manifested in time for the salvation of men, Him Whom I begat as My only Son without time, that men might learn in His life that even diverse pursuits are not discordant. And it must be observed, that He does not state that He sent Him out, but that He sent Him away ['non emisisse, sed dimisisse.']. Because in truth the Son, in taking human nature, descended from a lofty, to the lowest, estate. But since even the Elect Angels, who are not redeemed by this mystery, yet marvelled at the mystery of this Incarnation, [1 Pet. 1, 12] it is rightly subjoined,

Ver. 7. When the morning stars were praising Me together. [xiv] 34. For because the nature of rational spirits is believed to have been created first in time, the Angels are, not improperly, called 'morning stars.' But if this is so, whilst the earth was invisible, and in disorder, whilst darkness was over the abyss, they anticipated in their existence the coming day of the following age through the light of wisdom. Nor must we hear negligently the word 'together' which is added; because the morning stars doubtless praise, together with those of the evening, the power of the Redeemer, while the Elect angels glorify even with redeemed men in the end of the world the bounty of heavenly grace. For in order to excite us to praise our Creator, when the Light arose in the flesh, they proclaimed this which we before mentioned; Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will. [Luke 2, 14] They praise then together, because they adapt to our redemption the words of their exultation. They praise together, because when they behold us admitted, they rejoice that their own number is filled up. But they are therefore perhaps also termed 'morning stars,' because they are frequently sent to exhort men, and while they announce the coming morn, they drive away from the hearts of men the darkness of the present life. But behold Angels praise the Divine Power, because the very sight of such great brightness expands them. But with what virtue do we, who though ransomed, are yet weighed down by the corruption of the flesh, praise the gift which we receive? For how will our tongue be able to speak of that, which our mind is unable to understand? It follows,

And all the sons of God exulting for joy. [xv] 35. For it is called 'exultation,' when the joy of the heart is not fully expressed by the power of the voice, but when he who rejoices makes known in certain ways the joy which he can neither conceal, nor fully express. Let Angels therefore praise, who now behold above the loftiness of such great brightness. But let men exult, who still suffer here below the straitness of their speech. But because the Lord knew that these things would certainly happen, He does not speak of them as about to occur, but rather relates them as having occurred. But how is it that, when the good exult in the mystery of their redemption, envy inflames the wicked, and that whilst the Elect make

progress, the reprobate are roused to furious madness, and persecute their rising virtues, because they do not wish to imitate them? And yet he Who has redeemed, forsakes us not even among these trials. For it is written; But God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. [1 Cor. 10, 13] For our Creator knows when to suffer the storm of temptation to arise, when to restrain it on rising. He knows how to restrain, in order to our protection, that which He allows to come forth against us for our exercise; that the raging storm may wash over, and may not overwhelm us. Whence also it follows;

Ver. 8. Who shut up the sea with doors, when it was breaking forth, as if proceeding from the womb? [xvi] [ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION] 36. For what do we understand by the 'sea,' but the world, and what by the 'womb,' but the corruption of carnal thoughts? For in this place by the word 'womb' is designated the secret and evil thought of carnal things. And this womb conceives not a bodily substance in order to produce offspring, but a cause of sorrow, in order to fulfil its wickedness. Of this womb of the heart of the wicked it is said in another place, He hath conceived sorrow, and hath brought forth iniquity. [Ps. 7, 14] By this womb do the wicked conceive when they think evil things. By this womb do they bring forth, when they execute the evils they have thought. The sea then was bursting forth, as if proceeding from the womb, when the waves of worldly threats, conceived in the iniquity of carnal thoughts, were raging for the destruction of Holy Church. But, by God's help, this sea was shut up with doors, because holy men were opposed as a kind of door, against the pride of persecutors, in order that the wrath of persecutors might be crushed by their miracles, and reverence. For when the princes of this world had been brought low, the Lord exalted Holy Church, by their means, above the height of the world, and restrained the assaults of the raging sea, by having raised up the power of the same Church. But let us hear what the Lord did to this raging sea. It follows;

Ver. 9. When I was making a cloud the garment thereof, and was covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes. [xvii]

37. The raging sea is covered with a 'cloud,' because the cruelty of persecutors is covered with the veil of their own folly. For it is unable to behold the clear light of truth, from the interposed darkness of their unbelief; and through the desert of its own blindness, it knows not what it is doing by the impulse of cruelty. For had they known, as says the Apostle, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. [1 Cor. 2, 8] This cloud is wont to cover not only the unbelievers who are placed without the Church, but also to obscure those who live in a carnal manner within it. Whence holy men, who sympathize even with others' negligence, and think that they themselves are also suffering that which they perceive others enduring, pray to God, and say, Thou hast placed a cloud before Thee, that our prayer should not pass through. [Lam. 3, 44] As if they openly said, To our mind accustomed to worldly pleasures Thou presented, by a righteous judgment, the phantoms of its cares, by which Thou confusest it, in the very earnestness of its prayer; and that which Thou art not ignorant is given up to the most degrading desires, Thou rightly repellest, when blinded, from

beholding the brightness of Thy light; so that when it reaches towards Thee, it is turned away from beholding Thee, by the cloud of its own thoughts;

and that that which constantly thinks on these worldly subjects, because it wishes for them, may endure them also in its prayer, when it does not wish for them. Because then the very wickedness of persecutors is so restrained by God's ordering, as not to burst forth as much as it wishes against holy men; after He said, When I was laying the cloud as the garment thereof, He fitly subjoined, And was covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes. For the feet and arms are bound with swaddling clothes, lest they should be thrown about hither and thither with unrestricted liberty. Because, therefore, the persecutors of Holy Church, restless from their instability of heart, and devoted to this world, savour not the things of age, but of childhood; they who are fast bound by darkness and obscurity, (not by a sense of the Divine judgment,) so as to be unable to persecute as much as they wish, are said to be wrapped in swaddling clothes. Because, as has been said, they savour of childish things, and yet, constrained by the Divine dispensation they do not stretch forth their arms wherever they please; and if they desire lightly to perpetrate every kind of sin, yet they are by no means permitted to fulfil all they wish. It follows,

Ver. 10. I surrounded it with My boundaries. The Lord surrounds the sea with His boundaries, because He so restricts the wrath of persecutors by the dispensation of His judgments, that the swelling wave of their mad wrath is broken on the level shore of His secret dispensation. It follows; Ver. 10,11. And I set a bar and doors, and said, Hitherto shall thou come, and thou shalt not proceed further, and here shall thou break thy swelling waves. [xviii]

38. What is designated by 'doors,' but holy preachers, and what by the 'bar,' except the Lord Incarnate? For He has in truth opposed these doors as a firmer barrier against the force of the swelling sea, the more He has strengthened them by barring them Himself. For because these doors of Holy Church are strengthened by this bar being placed against them, they could be battered indeed by the waves, but they could not be broken through: so that though the wave of persecution might dash on them from without, yet it could not penetrate to the centre of their heart. And because holy Preachers open themselves by their preaching to their followers, but close themselves by their authority against those who oppose them, they are, not improperly, called 'doors,' that is, open to the conversation [al. 'conversion'] of the humble, and closed to the terrors of the proud. They are, not improperly, called 'doors:' because they both open an entrance for the faithful, and again oppose themselves to the entrance of the unbelieving. Let us consider what a door of the Church was Peter, who admitted Cornelius, when enquiring into the faith, and rejected Simon when seeking miraculous powers for a price; saying to the one, I have found in truth that God is no respecter of persons, [Acts 10, 34] he graciously opened the secrets of the kingdom. Declaring to the other, Thy money perish with thee, [Acts 8, 20] he closes the entrance of the heavenly court by a sentence of strict condemnation.

What are all the Apostles but doors of Holy Church, when they hear by the voice of their Redeemer, Receive the Holy Ghost; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them;

and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained? [John 20, 22. 23. As if it were plainly said to them; By you, those to whom ye open yourselves shall come in to Me; and those to whom ye close yourselves, shall be rejected. Whilst then the sea rages, the Lord opposes His bar and doors; because whilst the storm of persecution spreads itself out in the world from bitter and faithless hearts, God exalts the glory of His Only Begotten, and the reverence of His preachers; and while He makes known the mysteries of the Divine strength, He breaks in the ungodly the waves of wrath.

39. But it is well said, Hitherto shall thou come, and thou shall not proceed further. Because there is doubtless a limit of the secret judgment, both when the storm of persecution should burst forth, and when it should cease, lest, if not aroused, it should not discipline the Elect, or, if unrestrained, should overwhelm them. But when the knowledge of the faith reaches as far as to the persecutors, the swelling of the troubled sea is appeased, and there does the sea break its waves, because on coming to the knowledge of the truth, it blushes at every thing it has done wickedly. For the broken wave in truth glides back on itself; because wickedness when overcome is accused even by the thought of its own heart; and suffers, as it were, the very violence which it had inflicted, because it feels the stings of guilt, from the depravity which it had committed. Whence it is said to certain persons by Paul, What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? [Rom. 6, 21] As if it were said; Why did the waves of 'your wickedness raise themselves aloft, which being now broken in themselves, overwhelm you when converted, by the same means with which they puffed you up when perverted. It is therefore rightly said, And here shall thou break thy swelling waves. But that the doors are spoken of a second time, in this shutting up of the sea, after the manner of Holy Scripture, a thing once mentioned is repeated by way of confirmation.

40. But if we ought to understand by the 'sea' in this place, not specially the crowd of persecutors, but the world in general; the Lord set up gates against the sea a second time, because He first gave to the human race the precepts of the law, and afterwards the testament of new grace; He a second time confined the violence of this sea by the gates He set against it, since those, whom He chose to obey His will, He first kept from idols, by giving the law, and afterwards delivered from the carnal understanding of things by the revelation of grace. The sea a second time received gates, because God first prohibited mankind from works of iniquity, but afterwards restrained them from the sin of thought. Let us see how God first imposed gates on the swelling sea. For behold it is said by the law, Thou shall not kill. Thou shall not commit adultery. Thou shall not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. [Ex. 20, 13-16; Deut 5, 17-20] Let us see how the Lord confines this sea with second gates. Behold He says in the Gospel, Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. [Matt. 5, 27. 28.] And it is said again, Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and do good to them that hate you. [ib. 43. 44.] He therefore Who first prohibits wickednesses of deeds, and afterwards does away with

the faults of the heart, doubtless twice imposes gates on the swelling sea, that it pass not over the shores of justice which have been drawn around it.

41. But when He was saying, Who hath shut up the sea with doors? He immediately also subjoined the time, When it was breaking forth, as if proceeding from the womb. Because, namely, he then opposed mankind by the precepts of the Law, when the world, though little removed from its first beginning, was going forth even from its very birth to make progress in the carnal life. For to proceed from the womb, is to appear in the flesh in the light of present glory. And it is rightly subjoined, When I was laying the cloud as the garment thereof. Because, doubtless, God did not then present Himself to men in open sight, but while He rescued them from the error of unbelief, and yet laid not open to them the brightness of His own light, He withdrew them, as it were, from darkness, and yet covered them with a cloud, in order that they might forsake their former deeds of wickedness, and yet see not more clearly at present future blessings. Whence also it is filly subjoined, And covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes. For when He taught not ignorant people by the open preaching of the Spirit, but bound them, in figurative language, with the literal precepts, He enveloped them, while yet weak in knowledge, with the darkness of His words, as if with swaddling clothes; in order that they might gain strength by being bound by grosser commands, lest they should perish, through a fatal freedom, in their own pleasures.

And since not love, but fear, was confining them to the way of righteousness, the Divine dispensation kept them close, as it were, in order to nourish them. For when the feeble people unwillingly endured the swaddling bands of precepts, it attained to a stronger condition from its very bondage. For because fear first restrained it from sin, it came forth afterwards, in a fitting condition, into the liberty of the Spirit. These swaddling clothes which He gave to beginners, the Lord Himself blames by the Prophet, saying, I gave them precepts that were not good. [Ez. 20, 25] For evil things cease, as it were, to be evil, by comparison with worse, and good things are, so to say, not good, in comparison with better. For as it is said of Sodom and Gomorrah, to guiltier Judah, Thou hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done, [Ex. 16, 51] so are the good precepts, which were given to the ignorant, spoken of as not good, by reason of the better precepts of the New Testament which succeed them. For neither would minds which were clinging to the practice of the carnal life be raised from their low condition, unless they advanced through a gradual course of preaching. For hence is it, that when they were settled in Egypt, their secret love of gain is condescended to by a considerate and righteous forbearance, and they are ordered to depart, after having first taken away the gold and silver vessels of their neighbours.

But when brought to Mount Sinai, they hear at once, on receiving the Law, Thou shaft not covet any thing that is thy neighbour's. [Ex. 20, 17] And hence it is, that in the same law they are directed to exact an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, [Exod. 21, 24] and yet at last, on the revelation of grace, they are commanded, when struck, to offer the other cheek. [Matt. 5, 38. 39. For because anger exacts more in vengeance than it has suffered in wrong; while they learn not to requite their wrongs in a manifold manner, they would learn at last

to bear them of their own accord, even when multiplied. Hence it is that He prohibited this same ignorant people certain observances, but preserved others after their original use, though He applied them so as to prefigure a better condition. For they used to sacrifice brute animals to idols in Egypt, and He afterwards retained the sacrifice of animals, for their observance, but forbade the worship of idols; in order that, while losing a portion of their customs, their weakness might be comforted by retaining something of them. But by a marvellous dispensation of wisdom the Lord converted into a mightier figure of the Spirit, that carnal custom which He retained. For what do the sacrifices of those animals designate, except the death of the Only-Begotten? What do the sacrifices of those animals signify, except the extinction of our carnal life?

The weakness then of an ignorant people is condescended to, by the same means as the greater strength of the Spirit is announced through the shadowy forms of allegories. It is therefore rightly said, And I was covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes; because He bore with the weaknesses of its tenderness, by the same means as He raised a lofty cloud of spiritual significations.

42. But because He kept them by the limits of the precepts from unrestrained wanderings of mind, He rightly subjoins; I surrounded it with My boundaries. And because He restrained the motions of this human race by sending the Mediator, He fitly subjoins; And I set a bar and doors. For He set in truth a bar and doors; because He confirms the preaching of the new life, by sending our Redeemer to oppose the sins of the guilty. For doors, when closed, are strengthened by a bar being placed against them. God, therefore, placed against them a bar, because against the wanton motives of the human race He sent the Only-Begotten, Who confirmed in His actions the spiritual precepts, which He taught in words. But it is well subjoined; Hitherto shalt thou come, and thou shall not proceed further, and here shall thou break thy swelling waves. For this sea had in truth passed over its former doors, because the wave of human pride used to overleap the barriers of the door opposed to it. But after the world found the Only-Begotten opposed to it, it broke the force of its pride, and could not pass over, because it found the boundary of its fury closed up by His strength. Whence it is rightly said by the Prophet, The sea saw and fled. [Ps. 114, 3] By doors, also, His sufferings which were seen can, not unfitly, be understood. And He secretly placed a bar against them, because He strengthened them by the invisible Godhead. Against which the waves of the world come, but they break and are scattered: because haughty men despise them when they see them, but by experience dread their strength. For when the human race first derided, and then trembled at, the sufferings of the Only-Begotten, it came swelling with pride, like the sea which is about to dash against the opposing doors, and was broken and scattered by their power.

But because this is said to blessed Job, in order that the glorying of his heart, at his many virtues, might be kept down, (lest he should perchance attribute to himself what he knows of his lofty position,) if we consider these words in a moral sense also, we learn how much

they were said for his edification. Let Him say therefore, Ver. 8. Who shut up the sea with doors? [xix] [MORAL INTERPRETATION]

43. What is this sea, except our heart, agitated by fury, embittered by strife, swelling with the haughtiness of pride, darkened by the deceit of wickedness? And how mightily this sea rages, any one observes, who understands in himself the secret temptations of thoughts. For behold we are now abandoning our perversities, we are adhering to proper desires, we are now cutting off, outwardly, our wicked works. But yet we are secretly harassed within, by that tempest of our former life, with which we have come thus far; and unless the barriers of unbounded fear were confining it, with the thought of the judgment, and dread of eternal torment, all the foundations of the work which has been raised up in us would have utterly fallen. For if that which rages within in suggestion, were to burst forth in deliberate act, the whole fabric of our life would have lain utterly overthrown. For being conceived in iniquity and born in sin, we bring with us into this world a contest, through the plague of innate corruptions, which we must strive hard to overcome. Whence it is rightly said also of the sea; When it was breaking forth, as if proceeding from the womb. For youth is the womb of evil thought. Of which the Lord says by Moses, For the sense and thought of the human heart is prone to evil from its youth.

[Gen. 8, 21] For the evil of corruption which each one of us has acquired from the springing up of his carnal desires, he exercises as he advances in years; and unless the hand of Divine fear speedily repress it, sin quickly swallows up all the goodness of created nature. Let no one then attribute the victory over his thought to himself, since the Truth says, Who shut up the sea with doors, when it was breaking forth, as if it was proceeding from the womb? For did not Divine grace restrain the waves of our heart, from the very first beginning of our thoughts, the sea, raging with the storms of temptations, would doubtless have overwhelmed the land of the human heart, so that, washed by the briny waves, it would have become barren; that is, it would have been charmed by the fatal pleasures of the flesh, and have perished. The Lord then alone shuts up the sea with doors, Who opposes to the evil motions of our hearts the barriers of inspired fear. But because we are prohibited following those things which we behold, because we are debarred from the enjoyment of bodily pursuits, we delight to raise the eyes of our mind even to things invisible, and to behold those very things we are ordered to follow. But what do we? These things are not yet open to our feeble sight.

Behold we are invited to their love, and yet are restrained from their sight, because even if we ever see them by stealth and partially, we are in darkness from our still too imperfect sight. Whence it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 9. When I was laying the cloud as the garment thereof, and was covering it with darkness as with swaddling clothes. [xx] 44. This tumultuous sea, (our heart, namely, agitated by thoughts,) is covered with a cloud; because it is so obscured by the confusion of its own restlessness, as not clearly to behold inward peace. This sea is covered with darkness as with swaddling clothes, because it is still kept from the contemplation of sublime truths,

by its weak and tender senses. Let us behold Paul covered as it were with a kind of darkness, as with swaddling clothes, when he says, We now see through a glass darkly: but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known. [l Cor. 13, 12] For did he not perceive that he was a child in the understanding of heavenly things, he would not have first mentioned, on this point, a comparison of his age, saying, When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. [1 Cor. 13, 11] We therefore then attain to the strength of youth, when we behold with strong sight that life to which we are tending. But now, since the keenness of our sight is dazzled, through its infirmity, by the light within, our mind is, as it were, held bound by swaddling clothes. Where it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 10. I surrounded it with my boundaries. [xxi] 45. For the Lord surrounds this sea with His boundaries, because He keeps low within the limits of contemplation our heart which is still agitated by the plague and trouble of its corruption; that (though it desires more) it may not ascend higher than the limit assigned to it. Or certainly the Lord surrounds this sea with His boundaries; because He calms by the secret distributions of His gifts our heart swelling with temptations: at one time keeping a wicked suggestion from arriving at pleasure, and at another a wicked pleasure from breaking out into consent. He then, Who watches the unlawful motions of the heart, and in some cases keeps them from coming as far as to consent, but in others restrains them even from delight, doubtless imposes boundaries on the raging sea, that it burst not forth in act, but that the gently murmuring wave of temptation may dash itself within the secret recesses of the mind. But because it is then mightily restrained, when it is opposed by delight in God and by inspired virtues, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 10, 11. And I set a bar and doors, and said, Hitherto shall thou come, and thou shalt not proceed further, and here shall thou break thy swelling waves. [xxii]

46. For what do we understand by 'doors,' in a moral sense, but virtues, and what by a 'bar,' but the strength of charity? These doors, therefore, that is, these virtuous deeds, the raging sea rends asunder, unless charity of mind, secretly placed against them, holds them together. But all the goodness of virtues is easily destroyed by a temptation of the heart rushing upon them, unless it be kept firm by charity rooted within. Whence also when Paul was, in his preaching, opposing certain doors of virtues to the sea of temptation, he immediately added to them, as it were, the strength of a bar, saying, But above all these things having charity, which is the bond of perfectness. [Col. 3, 14] For charity is called the bond of perfectness, because every good deed which is done, is doubtless fastened thereby, so as not to perish. For any work is speedily plucked up by the tempter, if it is found free from the bond of charity. But if a mind is constrained by the love of God and of its neighbour, when the motions of temptations have suggested to it any wicked thoughts, this very love opposes itself to their progress, and breaks the waves of sinful persuasion by the gates of virtues, and the bar of inmost love. Because therefore the Lord restrains the sins which

spring up in the heart, by the strength of inspired charity, He checks the onset of the rising sea, by barriers barred against it.

Anger, it may be, exasperates within, but, that heavenly peace may not be lost, the aid of the tongue is not lent to the agitation of the mind, so that that which sounds tumultuously in the recesses of the heart does not vent itself in words. Lust is kindled in the secret thoughts, but, that it lose not its heavenly purity, thy mind chastens those limbs, which could help to further the uncleanness conceived within; lest the filthiness of the heart should exhale to the corruption of the body. Avarice excites; but, that it lose not the kingdom of heaven, the mind, contented with its own lot, confines itself within the bounds of parsimony, lest it should break out in wicked deeds, and lest the heat of inward desire should ooze forth into outward acts. Pride puffs up a man; but, that he lose not his true dignity, by considering that he is dust, he brings himself down from the loftiness of his conceived pride; striving, doubtless, that that which he endures in the suggestion of thought, may not burst forth into outward exercise. It is well said, therefore, I set a bar and doors, and said, Hitherto shall thou come, and thou shall not proceed further, and here shalt thou break thy swelling waves, because while each of the Elect is both assaulted by sin, and yet refuses to act upon evil suggestions, the sea is kept, as it were, within bounds.

And though it lashes the mind within, with the tumultuous waves of thoughts, yet it passes not over the appointed bounds of holy living. This sea indeed swells itself up, but when it is dashed against the firm deliberation of the heart, it is broken and retires. That blessed Job, then, may not ascribe it to himself that he stands firmly against the storms of his heart, let him hear by the voice of God; Who shut up the sea with doors, when it was breaking forth as if proceeding from the womb? and the rest: as if it were plainly said to him; In vain thou regardest thyself in thy good deeds without, if thou dost not consider Me within, Who calm in thee the waves of temptation. For that thou art able to withstand the waves in act, is of My might, Who break the waves of temptation in the heart.

Book XXIX

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF ST. GREGORY THE POPE, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB.

VOLUME III - THE SIXTH PART. — BOOK XXIX.

Twenty-two verses of the thirty-eighth chapter, from the twelfth to the thirty-third inclusive, are explained; and many truths are taught, especially concerning the arts and snares of Satan, grace, predestination, reprobation, and the secret judgments of God. [i]

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in that He is the Power and Wisdom of God, is born of the Father before all times, or rather, because He neither began, nor ceased to be born, let us say more truly that He was ever born ['natus']. Yet we cannot say, He is ever being born ['nascitur'], lest He should seem imperfect. But in order that He may be designated both eternal and perfect, let us say that He was even ever born, so that 'born' may relate to His perfection, and 'ever' to His eternity. In order that, in some way or another, that Essence which is without time may be able to be described in words of time. Although in calling Him perfect, we deviate much from the expression of His truth, since that which has not been made ['factum'], cannot be called perfect ['pertectum']. And yet the Lord says, condescending to our words of infirmity, Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect. [Matt. 5, 48] In that Divine Sonship therefore He could not be discerned by the human race, wherefore He came in human nature, to be seen; He wished to be seen, in order to be imitated. Which birth of the flesh appeared contemptible to the wise ones of the world; for they despised the weaknesses of His humanity, judging them unworthy of God. And man was the more His debtor, the more God took on Himself indignities for his sake.

For since the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. [1 Cor. 1, 21] As if He were saying, When the world by its wisdom found not God, Who is Wisdom itself, it seemed good that it should behold God made Man through the foolishness of humanity, in order that His Wisdom might come down to our folly, and that our darkness, when enlightened by means of the clay of its own flesh, might behold the light of heavenly Wisdom. [John 9, 6. 7. Born therefore of the Father, before all time, He deigned to be born of His Mother in time, in order that by confining His birth between a beginning and an end, He might disclose to eyes of the human mind that birth,

which neither rises from a beginning, nor is bounded by an end. Whence it is now well said to blessed Job,

Ver. 12. Hast thou commanded the morning since thy birth, and hast thou shewn to the day-spring its place? [ii] 2. Thou understandest, as I. For the origin of His Divinity has no before and after. And while Its ever being is through all eternity, while It circumscribes every thing which passes away, It bounds within Itself the ebbings and flowings of times. But because the origin of His Humanity began and ended, It received from time a before and after. But because, when He took on Himself the shadows of our temporal being, He shed on us the light of His eternity, after this beginning which the Creator made for Himself in time, the day-spring rightly learned its own place without time. For because the dawn, or day-spring, is turned from darkness into light, the whole Church of the Elect is, not improperly, designated by the name of dawn, or day-spring. For whilst it is brought from the night of unbelief to the light of faith, it is laid open to the splendour of heavenly brightness, as the dawn bursts into day after the darkness. Whence it is also well said in the Song of Songs, Who is she that cometh forth as the rising dawn? [Cant. 6, 10] For Holy Church, seeking for the rewards of the heavenly life, is called the dawn, because, while it leaves the darkness of sin, it shines with the light of righteousness.

3. But we have a deeper point to examine, on considering the nature of the dawn, or day-spring. For the day-spring, or dawn, announces that night has already passed, but yet does not present to us the full brightness of day: but whilst they dispel the one, and take up the other, they keep the light intermingled with darkness. What then are all we who follow the truth in this life, but day-spring, or dawn? Because we now both do some things which are of the light, and yet are hitherto not free from some remains of the darkness. For it is said to God by the Prophet, In Thy sight shall no man living he justified. [Ps. 143, 2] And it is written again, In many things we offend all. [James 3, 2] Paul also says, I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin which is in my members. [Rom. 7, 23] Where then the law of sin is contending with the law of the mind, there is surely still day-break; because the light, which has already shone forth, has not yet entirely overpowered the passing darkness. It is yet day-break; because while the law of the flesh assails the law of the mind, and the law of the mind that of the flesh, light and darkness are contending one against the other. Whence, when Paul was saying again, The night is far spent; [Rom. 13, 12] he did not subjoin, 'The day has come,' but, The day is at hand. For he who says, after the departure of night, not that the day 'has arrived,' but that it is 'at hand,' doubtless proves that he is still in twilight before the sun, and after the darkness.

4. But the Church of the Elect will then be fully day, when the shade of sin will be no longer blended with it. It will then be fully day, when it has been brightened with the perfect warmth of the inward light. It will be then fully day, when tolerating no longer the seducing remembrance of its sins, it will conceal from itself even all the remains of darkness. Whence also this dawn is well pointed out as still only in progress, when it is said, And hast

thou shewn to the day-spring its place? For that, whose place is pointed out, is certainly being called from one condition to another. For what is the place of dawn but the perfect brightness of the eternal vision? And when it has been conducted and has arrived thither, it has no longer any of the darkness of the past night. But now, when it is still enduring the annoyances of temptations, because the Church is in intention of heart hastening to another condition, the dawn is proceeding to its place. But if it did not behold this spot with its mind, it would still remain in the night of this life. But when it is daily striving to be perfected, and daily to be increased in light, it already beholds its place, and seeks for the sun to shine fully upon it. The dawn considers its place, when a holy soul is burning to contemplate the sight of its Creator.

The dawn was busily engaged in reaching its place, when David was saying, My soul thirsteth for the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God? [Ps. 42, 2] The Truth was pointing out its place to the dawn, when It was saying by Solomon, For what hath the wise more than the fool? and what the poor, except to go thither where there is life? [Eccles. 6, 8] And this place our Lord after His birth doubtless manifested even to the Patriarchs who preceded His Incarnation; because unless they knew, by the spirit of Prophecy, that the King of their heavenly country was to become Incarnate, they would not see how desirable are the goods of this same country. The Truth made known its place to the dawn, when in the presence of His disciples He asked His Father, saying, Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am. [John 17, 24] He pointed out its place to the dawn, when saying, Wheresoever the carcase is, there will also the eagles be gathered together. [Matt. 24, 28] The dawn was hastening to arrive at this place, which it had known, when Paul was saying that he had a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. [Phil. 1, 23] And again, To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

[ib. 21] And again, We know that if our earthly house of this habitation were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. [2 Cor. 5, 1] But He well says that He shewed its place to the dawn after His birth, because before He Himself made known the blessedness of future retribution by His own Body, He confined it in the knowledge of a few. But when He took the infirmities of a human birth, He extended the knowledge of coming glory in the love of a countless multitude. But because compassion so carries on the mystery of the Divine work, that anger still attends it, in order that the secret Judge may look favourably on and ransom some, and pass over and ruin others, since we have learnt how He enlightens the Elect by His Incarnation, let us now hear how He condemns the reprobate. It follows;

Ver. 13. Hast Thou held and shaken the ends of the earth, and hast Thou shaken the wicked out of it? [iii] [ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION]

5. The Lord 'held the ends of the earth,' because He came in the end of the world to the synagogue which was now forsaken and subject to foreign kings: and He shook the wicked out of it, because He cast out even from the glory of the carnal sacrifice, those who denied the spiritual preaching of the faith. Or He certainly held the ends of the earth, because He

chose out of Judaea a few abject and humble men. He held the ends of the earth, because He forsook the doctors of the law, and chose fishermen. And while He holds the ends of the earth, He shakes the wicked out of it, because while He strengthens weak believers, He condemns the sturdy unbelievers therein. But the word 'shaking,' He also rightly added: because by His coming He stirred up even the hearts of the reprobates with immeasurable fear. For they in truth were shaken who were saying, We prevail nothing, behold, the whole world is gone after Him. [John 12, 19] But a thing which is shaken is wearied out by being drawn hither and thither. Judaea therefore had been shaken, which was saying of Christ by some, That He is a good Man, and was resisting Him by others, saying, Nay; but He deceiveth the people. [John 7, 12] It was saying by some, If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing.

[John 9, 33] And at last it exclaims by others, If this Man were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee. [John 18, 30] The reprobate were shaken indeed but not prostrated, when at one time they beheld the miracles with wonder, and at another despised and derided the disgraces of His weakness. Had not they been shaken, who were saying, How long dost Thou hold our soul in suspense? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. [John 10, 24] Or He certainly shook and held the ends of the earth, because when He terrified the feeble hearts of the humble with pious fear, He did not abandon them to strict judgment. For the multitude of the believers in God stood more firmly, from the same reason that it was alarmed when humbled in itself. For that God holds firm the person whom He shakes, He teaches by the Prophet, saying, On whom shall My Spirit rest, but on the humble and quiet, and Him who trembleth at My words? [Is. 66, 2. see LXX. That He holds the person whom He shakes, is intimated by the testimony of Solomon, who says, Happy is the man who feareth alway, but he that is of a hard heart shall fall into mischief. [Prov. 28, 14] Because therefore the Lord held the ends of Judaea in the Apostles, and rejected therefrom the Scribes, and Pharisees, and High Priests, as the merit of their iniquity demanded, let us hear what is still added respecting their condemnation.

It follows;

Ver. 14. The seal shall be restored as clay, and shall stand as a garment. [iv] 6. What else but 'clay' did the Lord find the people of Israel, whom He came unto when given up to the practices of the Gentiles, and toiling at bricks in Egypt? And whilst He led it forth by so many miracles to the land of promise, and filled it, when brought thither, with the knowledge of His wisdom, whilst He conferred on it so many secret mysteries by means of Prophecy, what else did He make it but a 'seal' for preserving His mystery? For Divine Prophecy itself kept secret, whatever the Truth revealed of Itself at the end. But when, after so many Divine secrets, after the many miracles which it witnessed at the coming of our Redeemer, it loved its land, in preference to the truth, (saying by the Priests, If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation;) [John 11, 48] it returned, as it were, to those bricks, which it had left in Egypt: and that which had been made the seal of God, turned back again to that which

it had abandoned. And, having been a 'seal,' it appeared as 'clay' in the eyes of the Truth, when it lost, through the wickedness of impiety, the mysteries of the word, which it had received, and chose to savour only of the things of earth, which pollute.

7. Where it is fitly subjoined, And shall stand as a garment. For because garments which are unfinished and of thicker texture, even when put on, do not adhere, nor are well fitted to the limbs of the wearer, they are said to stand. Judaea therefore, even when it seemed to be labouring in the knowledge of the truth, stood as a garment; because it professed to serve God in external commands, but refused to cling to Him by the understanding of love. While it observed the letter only, in the precepts of God, and did not through the Spirit unite itself to their inmost meanings, it did not cling, so to speak, to Him Who had put it on. Where it is also fitly subjoined, Ver. 15. From the wicked their light shall be taken away. [v] 8. Because, while they refuse to believe the truth, they lose for ever the knowledge of the Law, and while they boast of having received the Law, they are, doubtless, blinded by boasting of their knowledge. For it is written, Let their eyes be darkened that they see not. [Ps. 69, 23] And again it is written, Blind the hearts of this people, and make their ears heavy. [Is 6, 10] And again it is written, For judgment I have come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind. [John 9, 39] And because they boasted themselves in the works of the Law against the Giver of the Law, it is fitly subjoined;

And the high arm shall be broken. [vi] 9. For the high arm is broken, when the proud works of the Law are reproved, by preaching the grace of faith, when it is said, By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified. [Rom. 3, 20] 10. But all these words can be understood in another sense also. For Holy Scripture is wont to call the Church 'earth.' The Lord therefore holds and shakes the ends of the earth, because He allows the ends of His Church to be agitated by most cruel persecution through the coming of Antichrist, and yet forsakes her not, by permitting it. Sometimes the Lord holds this earth, and shakes it not; sometimes He holds and shakes it; because He possesses it at one time with the tranquil peace of faith, at another orders it to be disturbed with the assault of persecution.

11. But when saying, Hast thou held and shaken the ends of the earth, He rightly added immediately, And hast thou shaken the wicked out of it? For as Paul bears witness, there are many therein, who profess that they know God, but in works deny Him. [Tit. 1, 16] The Lord therefore shakes the wicked out of it, because those, whom deep-seated sins possess, will then fall into the gulph of open unbelief, and pass over to the heap of chaff, when moved by the breath of that temptation. And though they now conceal themselves within the bosom of the threshing floor, under the semblance of faith, they will then, doubtless, bound forth from the heap of grain, by the fan of strict judgment.

12. Whence it is also fitly subjoined, The seal shall be restored, as clay. As if he were openly saying; They who now appear in the bosom of the Church as a 'seal,' will then in the sight of all men be restored as 'clay:' that is, they deceive not the judgments of men concerning their profession of religion, but it is proved that they savour of earthly things.

For Holy Scripture is wont to use the word 'seal' for faith, and 'clay' for iniquity. For the younger son, who returned to his father, having consumed his substance, received a ring as a present. [Luke 15, 22] For the Gentile people, which returns to 'God, by penitence, having lost its immortality, is defended by the seal of faith. Whence also it is said to the Church by its Bridegroom, Set Me as a seal upon thine heart. [Cant. 8, 6] For a seal is placed on things for the very purpose that they may not be violated by any boldness of plunderers. The Bridegroom therefore is placed as a seal on the heart, when the mystery of His faith is imprinted for the safe keeping of our thought; in order that that unfaithful servant, namely our adversary, observing our hearts sealed by faith, may not presume to break in upon them with temptation. But by 'clay' worldly infection is set forth, as the Psalmist bears witness, who says, He brought me up out of the pit of misery, and the deepest clay.

[Ps. 40, 2] Because many then who are found in worldly infection, are sealed, when brought to the Church, with the sacrament of heavenly faith, and yet depart not from their wicked deeds, and conceal themselves now under the cloke of faith, and yet shew what they really are, when they have found an opportunity, it is rightly said, The seal shall he restored as clay. For those whom we now believe to be faithful, we shall then find to be the very enemies of the faith; and though, when not tempted, they appear to be a 'seal,' they will doubtless, when tempted, be 'clay.' Whence also it is rightly said, Shall be restored: for their reprobate life proves them afterwards to be such, as their conscience could have done before their faith. Of whom it is fitly subjoined, And shall stand as a garment.

13. For Holy Church is now clothed as it were with garments, as many in number as the faithful, by whose veneration she is honoured. Whence also when the Gentiles were shewn to her, it is said by the Lord through the Prophet; As I live, saith the Lord, thou shall surely be clothed with all these, as with an ornament. [Is. 49, 18] But she is now arrayed, in appearance only, with many who seem to be faithful, but when the assault of persecution strikes them, she will be stripped of them and laid bare; of whose fate it is said, And it shall stand as a garment. But to 'stand' is put in this place for persisting in sin. Whence it is written, And stood not in the way of sinners. [Ps. 1, 1] Or certainly every reprobate is said to 'stand as a garment,' to shew that he cannot stand at all. Because, as a garment, when put on, is stretched by the body, in displaying its appearance, but when taken off is bent and folded together; so every one, who has fallen back from the stability of Holy Church, was stretched out, as it were, and beautiful, while being worn, but will lie afterwards, when stripped off, broken down and cast aside. But if by 'standing' we understand 'continuance,' every reprobate person who endures a short time in this life, which he loves, stands as a garment. Whence also it is said by the Prophet, All shall wax old as a garment, and as a covering shall thou change them, and they shall be changed. [Ps. 102, 26] These points therefore, which he introduced veiled in a cloud of allegory, he now makes known in plainer words, adding, From the wicked their light shall be taken away.

[vii] 14. For neither does the light of God now illumine those, who veil the malice of their iniquity with the name of faith. For while they neglect to live according to the preaching of

faith, and yet in appearance reverence it, they seek for the honour of this present life under the name of religion; and they gain this light from faith, as faith cherishes them in the sight of men. But there are some who sincerely believe the eternal truths which they hear, and yet contradict by evil living the very faith which they profess. These also have their light in darkness, for while they act perversely and yet think rightly about God, they are illumined in a measure by the shining of a light, so as not to be quite in darkness. And while they love the things of earth more than those of heaven, those that they see more than those they hear of, when the season of persecution assaults them, they lose that sound belief they seemed to possess. And this is specially the case, in a greater degree, at that time, when the head of the wicked himself arising, in the last persecution, against Holy Church, his boldness attacks it with unrestrained strength. Then is the heart of each one laid open, when whatever lay concealed is exposed, and they who are now holy in words, but unholy in heart, fall headlong, on their wickedness being made public, and lose the light of faith which they had in appearance possessed. But it is necessary, amidst all this, for each of us to return to the hidden recess of his heart, and to fear at the fatal results of his doings, lest he fall, as his merits demand, into the number of such men, by the strict justice of the judgments of God.

15. But let no one inconsiderately flatter himself, and believe that he therefore is exempt from such a fall, because he thinks that he does not reach to the storm of this tempest. O how many have beheld not the times of that temptation, and yet are involved in the storm of his temptation. Cain saw not the time of Antichrist, and yet was deservedly a limb of Antichrist. Judas knew not the fierceness of that persecution, and yet yielded to the might of his cruelty, by the persuasion of avarice. Simon was far removed from the times of Antichrist, and yet joined himself to his pride, by perversely seeking for the power of miracles. [Acts 8, 19. 20. Thus a wicked body is united to its head, thus limbs to limbs, when they both know not each other in acquaintance, and yet are joined together by wicked doings. For neither had Pergamos known the books or the words of Balaam, and yet, following his wickedness, it heard in a voice of reproof from above; Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat and to commit fornication. [Rev. 2, 14] Both times and places separated the Church of Thyatira from the knowledge of Jezebel; but because equal guilt of life had enthralled it, Jezebel is said to dwell therein, and to persist in perverse doings, as the Angel bears witness, who says;

I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. [ib. 20] Behold, because they could be found, who followed the conduct of Jezebel in their reprobate deeds, Jezebel is said to have been found there: because an agreement of habits makes a corrupt body one, even if times or places sever it asunder. Whence it is that every wicked person, who has already gone by, survives in his perverse imitators, and that the author of iniquity, who has not yet come, is already visible in those who do his works. Hence John says; Now are there become many Antichrists, [1

John 2, 18] because all wicked persons are even now his members, which being in truth born in wickedness, have prevented their head, by evil living. Hence Paul says, That he might be revealed in his time; for the mystery of iniquity doth already work. [2 Thess. 2, 6. 7. As if he were saying; Then Antichrist will be manifestly seen; for he now secretly works his hidden works in the hearts of the unrighteous. For, to say nothing of more open crimes, behold one man secretly envies his brother in his heart, and if he find an opportunity, strives to supplant him. Of what other is he a member, but of him, of whom it is written, Through envy of the devil came death into the world?

[Wisd. 2, 24] Another, thinking himself a person of great desert, preferring himself to all, through swelling of heart, believes all to be inferior to him. Of what other is he a member, but of him of whom it is written, He beholdeth every high thing, and is a king over all the children of pride? [Job 41, 34] Another seeks for the power of this world, not that he may profit others, but that he may not be subject to another. Of what other is he a member, than of him, of whom it is written, Who said, I will sit in the mount of the testament, the sides of the north: I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High? [Is. 14, 13. 14. For the Most High alone so rules over all things, as to be unable to be subject to another. Whom the devil perversely wished to imitate, when seeking dominion of his own, he refused to be subject to Him. Whoever therefore seeks for power of his own, imitates the devil, because he loathes to submit to him who is placed over him by Divine ordinance.

16. There are many things besides, to proclaim certain persons to be faithless, though established in the peace of the Church. For I see that some persons so accept the person of the powerful, as not to hesitate, when requested by him, to deny, for his good will, the truth in the cause of a neighbour. And who is Truth, but He who said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life? [John 14, 6] For John the Baptist died not, when questioned about his confession of Christ, but about the truth of justice; but because Christ is the Truth, he therefore went even to death for Christ, because namely for the truth. Let us suppose that a person has, when questioned, accepted the person of the powerful, and has denied the truth, that he might not suffer the wrong even of a word. What, I pray you, would he do in the pain of punishments, who was ashamed of Christ among the scourges of words? Behold, even after this he is still a Christian before the eyes of men, and yet if God resolved to judge him strictly, he is one no longer.

17. But I see others, to whom are assigned, through their position as teachers, the duties of exhorting and reproving, who behold some unlawfulness committed, and who yet, when afraid of losing the good will of certain powerful persons, presume not to reprove it. What else doth he, whoever he be, but see the wolf coming, and flee away? He flies, because he was silent; he was silent, because he despised eternal grace, and preferred temporal glory. Behold he hid himself within the concealments of his silence before the face of a powerful man, and gave way as to open persecution, so also to secret fear. It is well said of such; They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. [John 12, 43] If these things are strictly judged, whoever is such, even though public persecution was wanting, yet denied Christ by

his silence. There are not wanting then, even in the peace of the Church, the temptations of Antichrist. Let no one then dread those times of the last persecution, as though the only ones. For the cause of Antichrist is continually promoted among the ungodly, because he is even now secretly working his mystery in their hearts. And even if many, now seemingly established within the Church, pretend to be what they are not, they will yet at the coming of the Judge be exposed, as they are. Of whom Solomon well says, I saw the wicked buried, who even when they lived here, were in the holy place, and were praised in the city, as men of just works. [Eccles. 8, 10] After it was said then of the wicked; The seal shall be restored as clay, and shall stand as a garment, and their light shall be taken away from the wicked, (which is certainly to take place in that persecution of Antichrist,) he presently, consoling us concerning the destruction of the same Antichrist, says;

And the high arm shall be broken. [viii]

18. For, for what else is the high arm taken, but the proud loftiness of Antichrist, who is so exalted over the reprobate minds of men with the pride of worldly glory, that though a sinful man, and yet scorning to be counted a man, he pretends falsely that he is God above men? Whence the Apostle Paul says; So that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself, as if he were God. [2 Thess. 2, 4] And to shew his pride more fully, he stated before, Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. For even a man can sometimes be called God, according to that which is said to Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh. [Exod. 7, 1] But a mere man cannot be worshipped as God. But because Antichrist sets himself up over all holy men, and over the power of the Godhead Itself, he endeavours to surpass that which is called God, and that which is worshipped as God, by demanding for himself the name of glory. But we must observe into what a depth of pride he has fallen, who remained not in that degree of ruin, in which he fell.

For both the devil and man fell, by pride, from the state of their own creation, either for him to say, I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High, [Is. 14, 14] or for the other to hear and to believe, Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods. [Gen. 3, 5] They fell, therefore, both of them, because they desired to be like God, not by righteousness, but by power. But man who had fallen, by perversely aiming at the likeness of God, discerning, when freed by grace, that he was very different from God, through the guilt of sin, exclaims, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? [Ps. 89, 8] But the devil, having been justly cast aside in his sinful lapse, continued not in his own degree of ruin; but the longer he was deprived of the grace of the Almighty, the more did he add to the guilt of his sins. For he who fell, because he wished, inverting the order of things, to be like God, was brought so far, that entering into Antichrist, he scorned to seem like God, and, when condemned, counts Him as his inferior, Whom he could not in his pride regard as his equal. For when this, which we have stated before, is said of him; Exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;

[2 Thess. 2, 4] it is openly shown, that by seeking at first the likeness of God, he wished, as it were, to exalt himself against God, but that increasing in the sin of pride, he now sets

himself up above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. Because then this his pride will be smitten by the coming of the strict Judge, (as it is written, Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming,) [1 Thess. 2, 8] it is rightly said, And the high arm shall be broken.

[MORAL INTERPRETATION] 19. But all these expressions, which have been twice discussed, can be still understood in another sense. For the words of God are conserves ['pigmenta'], as it were, to give us strength. And just as, the more a conserve is ground, the more does its virtue increase in the cup; so the more we bruise the Divine words by expounding them, the more, when we hear them, are we benefited, as if by the draught. Because therefore the merciful God long bears with the sins of men, and frequently converts the minds of sinners, when He sees the end now approaching, He rightly says of Himself, as suggesting the might of so great affection, Ver. 13. Hast thou held and shaken the ends of the earth, and hast thou shaken the wicked out of it? [ix]

20. For by 'earth' is designated man, who savours of things below; to whom it was said in his sin; Earth thou art, and to earth shall thou go. [Gen. 3, 19] But because the merciful Creator forsakes not His own work, He both bears with the sins of men, by His wisdom, and at last remits them by their conversion. But, when He beholds hard and insensible minds, He scares them at one time with threats, at another with blows, at another with revelations: in order that those which had become hardened by most fatal security may be softened by wholesome fear, so that they may, though at last, return, and blush at least at this, that they have long been waited for. For thus the Lord, because He judges more severely the ends of our life, therefore purges also His Elect more carefully at the close. For it is written; God shall judge the ends of the earth. [1 Sam. 2, 10] He therefore watches more anxiously over our closing deeds, the more He considers that the beginnings of our coming life depend upon them. And because He does this of His mercy; by bringing forward His tenderness, with which He receives even those sinners who have been converted at the last, He instructs the righteousness of blessed Job, saying; Hast thou held and shaken the ends of the earth, and hast thou shaken the wicked out of it?

Thou understandest, As I, Who frequently arouse sinners by alarming them at their last moments, hold them fast by converting them, and pluck from their hearts the wicked motions of their thoughts. And the Lord rightly teaches blessed Job, how He converts sinners at the end. As if He openly said, Observe the power of My mercy, and bring down the pride of thy righteousness. But, that that punishment of former sin accompanies these closing hours of a man, through the death of the flesh, even when he is converted, He immediately teaches, saying;

Ver. 14. The seal shall be restored as clay, and shall stand as a garment. [x] 21. For the Lord made man, whom He fashioned after His own likeness, as a kind of seal of His power. But yet it shall be restored as clay; because, though he may by conversion escape eternal sufferings, yet he is condemned by the death of the flesh, in punishment of the pride he has committed. For man, who has been formed from clay, and adorned with the likeness of the

Divine image, having received the gift of reason, forgets, when swelling with pride of heart, that he was formed of the basest materials. Whence it hath been ordered by the marvellous justice of the Creator, that, because he became proud in consequence of that reasonable sense which he received, he should again by death become earth, which he was unwilling humbly to regard himself. And because he lost the likeness of God by sin, but returns by death to the substance of his own clay, it is rightly said; The seal shall be restored as clay. And because, when the spirit is summoned from the body, it is stripped, as it were, of its kind of covering of flesh, it is fitly subjoined of the same clay; and shall stand as a garment. For, for our clay to stand as a garment is for it to remain empty and stripped off, even till the time of the resurrection. But because even they do not escape this punishment of pride, who overcome this very pride by living humbly, He subjoins what is the special punishment of the proud, saying;

Ver. 15. From the wicked their light shall be taken away, and the high arm shall be broken. 22. For the death of the flesh, which restores the Elect to their light, takes away their light from the reprobate. For the light of the proud is the glory of this present life. And that light is then withdrawn from it, when it is called by the death of the flesh, to the darkness of its own retributions. For then is the high arm there broken, because loftiness of heart, which has been violently seized on, beyond the order of nature, is scattered by the weight of Divine justice which overwhelms it, in order that how [Oxf. Mss. 'quam'] wickedly it had exalted itself for a while, it may learn when it is crushed forever by the weight of judgment. But none of us would know what was to follow after death, did not the Creator of our life come even to the punishment of our death. For did He not of His own mercy seek the lowest condition, He could not justly bring back to the highest, us, who were lost after we had received His likeness. Whence it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 16. Hast thou entered into the depth of the sea, and hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss? [xii] 23. As if He said, As I, Who not only sought the sea, that, is this world, by assuming the flesh and soul of a man, but also descended by that flesh voluntarily subjected to death, to the bottom of the pit, as if to the depths of the sea. For if the 'sea' must be understood to mean the world after the manner of Scripture language, nothing hinders the 'depths of the sea' from meaning the bars of the pit. But the Lord sought this depth of the sea, when He entered the lowest parts of the pit, in order to rescue the souls of His Elect. Whence also it is said by the Prophet, Thou hast made the depths of the sea a way, for the ransomed to pass over. [Is. 51, 10] For this depth of the sea was, before the coming of the Redeemer, not a way, but a prison, because it confined within it even the souls of the good, though not in places of punishment. But the Lord made this depth a way, because He, by coming thither, granted His Elect to pass over from the bars of the pit to heavenly places. Whence it is there fitly said, for the ransomed to pass over. But that which He had called the depths of the sea, repeating in other words He calls the lowest parts of the abyss: because as the abyss of waters is not comprehended by our sight, so are the secrets of the pit not penetrated by us with any sense of our understanding. For we behold who are

withdrawn hence, but we see not what retribution of punishments awaits them according to their desert.

[MYSTICAL INTERPRETATION] 24. But we must carefully notice, that He says that He had walked in the lowest parts of the abyss. For to walk belongs not to one who is bound, but to one who is free. For fetters impede to a like extent the steps of him whom they bind. Because then the Lord endured no bonds of sin, He walked in the pit. For He came unfettered to those who were bound. Whence it is written, I am become as a man without help, free among the dead. [Ps. 88, 4. 5.] For the Lord then to walk in the lowest parts of the abyss is for Him to find nothing to detain Him in the place of damnation, as Peter bears witness, who says, Having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible for Him to be holden of it. [Acts 2, 24] Or certainly, (because, when we are led in walking from place to place, we are found present here and there,) the Lord is said to have walked in the pit, in order to shew that He was present to Elect souls in their several places, by the power of His Godhead. Whence also the spirit of wisdom is described as full of motion, [Wisd. 7, 24] that by means of that which is no where absent, He might be described as meeting us every where. And this descent of His, our Lord regards as more marvellous the more frequently He makes mention of it to ransomed man. For repeating it again, He subjoins;

Ver. 17. Have the gates of death been opened unto thee, and hast thou seen the gloomy doors? [xiii] 25. For the 'gates of death' are the adverse powers. Which the Lord descended and opened, because by dying He overcame their strength. Which are by another appellation called the 'gloomy doors,' because while they are not seen, by reason of their crafty concealment, they open to deceived minds the way of death. Which gloomy doors the Lord beholds; because He both observes and represses the crafty malice of unclean spirits. And did He not, by beholding, restrain them, while we know them not, our mind would both know nothing of their snares, and would be taken and perish by them. But even we behold these gloomy gates, when we are illumined with rays of heavenly light. Whence also it is said by the Prophet, The Lord is my helper, and I shall see mine enemies. [Ps. 118, 7] He therefore Himself beholds our enemies, Who by His gift makes our enemies visible to us. Or certainly, the Lord then beheld the gloomy gates, when penetrating the barriers of the pit, He smote the cruel spirits, and by His death condemned them that presided over death. Which is here spoken of no longer as of a future, but as of a past event; for this reason, because that which He intended to do in deed, He had already done in predestination. But because the Church increased after His death and resurrection, and was extended in all nations, it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 18. Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth? [xiv]

26. For whilst the Lord sought the narrowness of death, He spread abroad His faith in the nations, and extended Holy Church to numberless hearts of believers. To whom it is said by the Prophet, Enlarge the place of thy tent, and extend the curtains of thy tabernacles; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt penetrate to the right hand and to the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles. [Is. 54, 2. 3. But this

breadth of the earth would surely not exist, had He not first despised, in dying, the life which we know, and pointed out by His rising again, the life which we know not. For He opened by His death the eyes of our minds, and shewed us what was the life which was to follow. Whence also, observing this order in the Gospel, He says to His disciples, Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name through all nations. [Luke 24, 46. 47. For few of the people of Israel believed at His preaching, but numberless peoples of the Gentiles followed the way of life, on His death. For He endured the proud, while He was still living in a suffering condition, but He overthrew them when dead to a life of suffering. Which Samson long before well typified in himself, for he slew but few during his life;

but on the destruction of the temple he slew a host of enemies, at his death. [Judges 16, 30] Because the Lord doubtless killed but few from their pride and haughtiness [as we say, 'dead unto sin.'] when alive, but more, when the Temple of His body was broken in pieces: and the Elect from the Gentiles, whom He endured in His life, He subdued all at once by His death. After then He had taught us that He had penetrated the regions below, He rightly subjoined immediately the breadth of the earth to be considered, Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth? As if He were saying to man when scourged, Think on what I have endured, and consider what I have purchased; and complain not thyself of the rod, when thou art ignorant what rewards await thee, in retribution. In the midst then of these words of the Creator, I think it worth while for us to turn away our eyes for a while from the common and public good, and to observe what He secretly does with each of ourselves. For He says;

Ver. 16. Hast thou entered the depth of the sea? [xv] [MORAL INTEPRETATION] 27. For the 'sea' is the mind of man, and God enters its depths, when it is roused from its inmost thoughts to lamentations of penitence through its knowledge of itself, when He calls to its memory the wickednesses of its former life, and rouses the mind which is agitated by its own confusion. God penetrates the depth of the sea, when He changes hearts, which are even despaired of. For He goes into the sea, when He humbles a worldly heart; He enters the depth of the sea, when He disdains not to visit minds which are even overwhelmed with sins. Whence it is rightly added in a question; And hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss? For what abyss is there, but the human mind, which while unable to comprehend itself, is like an obscure abyss, hid from itself, in every thing that it is. Whence it is well said by the Prophet, The abyss uttered its voice from the depth of its thought. [Hab. 3, 10] For whilst the human mind does not dive into itself, it praises more humbly, by comparison with itself, the power of the Divine nature, which it is unable to comprehend.

28. For God then to walk in the lowest parts of the abyss, is for Him to convert the hearts even of the wickedest men, and, by touching minds which are despaired of, with traces of His visitation, wonderfully to refashion them. For when any one feels compunction after enormous sins, what else is beheld but God walking in the lowest parts of the abyss? For God walks, as it were, in the abyss, when He penetrates the gloomy heart, and tramples down the

invisible waves of sins. For we frequently lament some sins past, and are being assaulted by others present; so that we are harassed at one time by pride, at another by anger, at another by lust, and at another by avarice tempting us. But when the Lord suppresses all these in our heart by the fear of His secret visitation, what else doth He but place His steps in the abyss? Which steps we behold with the mind, when we consider how the gifts of His fear stand up to oppose these rebellious sins. For the Prophet had beheld these steps, when He was saying, Thy goings were seen, O God, the goings of my God, my King, is in His holy place. [Ps. 68, 24] For He who beholds the inordinate motions of his mind restrained within him by the memory of the Divine judgments, beholds, as it were, the steps of God walking within him. Let it be said, therefore, to blessed Job;

Hast thou entered the depth of the sea, and hast thou walked in the lowest parts of the abyss? Thou understandest, as I, Who with wondrous pity trample down in the hearts of sinners, at one time anger, at another lust, at another avarice, at another rising pride. As if it were plainly said to him, If thou seest that I alone suppress the lurking vices of the heart, thou wilt cease to be puffed up with self-justification. And because when we are visited by God, we are led to confession concerning even the secret and unlawful motions of our mind, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 17. Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? [xvi] 29. For the gates of death are wicked thoughts: which we open to God, when we confess them with weeping in penitence. For He beholds them even when not confessed; but enters into them, when confessed. For He then in truth opens a way for Himself in the gates of death, when we have put aside evil thoughts, and He comes to us after confession. And they are called the gates of death for this reason, because the way to death is always opened through evil thoughts. Which is again repeated, when it is subjoined; And hast thou seen the gloomy doors? 30. For the gloomy doors are the lurking evils of the mind, which can both exist within, and yet not be observed by another. Which yet the Lord beholds, when He destroys them by the secret look of grace. For it is written, The King Who sitteth in the throne of judgment, scattereth away all evil with His sight. [Prov. 20, 8] And because every vice contracts, and every virtue enlarges the mind, after the destruction of vices it is rightly subjoined, Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth? For did not virtue enlarge the mind, Paul would not say to the Corinthians, Be ye also enlarged, and be not yoked with unbelievers. [2 Cor. 6, 13. 14.] But we must observe carefully that which is said;

Ver. 18. Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth? [xvii]

31. For the extent of the inwardly good is not at all comprehended, unless it is carefully considered. For poverty frequently humbles them outwardly, the torture of punishment straitens them; but yet, in the midst of these things, their inward resolution expands itself ever to hope for heavenly rewards. The Apostles had outwardly been straitened, when they were enduring scourges; but they were standing at liberty in great width within, who had turned, in themselves, these very scourges into joy. For it is written, The Apostles departed from the presence of the council; rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame

for the Name of Jesus. [Acts 5, 41] Paul had found this width, in his straits, who said, But I wish you to know, brethren, that the things which happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel, so that my bonds in Christ were made manifest in all the palace. [Phil. l, 12. 13. David was possessing this width, in the midst of narrowness, when saying, Thou hast enlarged me in tribulation. [Ps. 4, 1] This earth, therefore, that is the conscience of holy men, is then enlarged when it is pressed outwardly with the adversities of this world. For when it is driven away from security in this life, it is beaten inwardly on itself, so as to stretch toward the hope of heavenly things. And when it is not allowed to wander abroad, being brought back, as it were, into its own bosom, it is enlarged.

We however behold what misfortunes good men endure, but see not how much they rejoice within. We learn, on consideration, the breadth of their mind, sometimes in their words, sometimes in their deeds: but yet we know not how great is the range of that breadth in them. Let human wisdom hear then, Hast thou considered the breadth of the earth? and let it learn its own folly. As if he said, As I, Who alone fully consider the secret rejoicing of the holy, when surrounded with scourges, because I alone mercifully fashion them. Or certainly, blessed Job is asked whether he has considered the breadth of the earth, in order that he might be humbled by the example of another's enlargement. As if it were openly said to him, Consider those whom the countless evils of this world cannot confine, and cease to boast, amid thy blows, of the state of thy own heart. It follows;

Ver. 18'20. Tell Me, if thou knowest all things, in what path the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness? that thou mayest take each of them to the bounds thereof, and understand the paths to the house thereof. [xviii]

32. Blessed Job is tried with a weighty question, in that he is examined as to the way of light and the place of darkness, whether he should bring them each to their boundaries, and should understand the paths to the house thereof. For what is understood by the word 'light' but righteousness? and what is designated by 'darkness' but iniquity? Whence it is said to some who had been converted from the wickedness of sins, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. [Eph. 5, 8] And it is stated of some who continue in sin, They that sleep, sleep in the night. [1 Thess. 5, 7] It is said therefore to blessed Job, Tell Me, if thou knowest all things, in what path the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness? As if it were said to him, If thou imaginest that thou hast perfect wisdom, tell Me, either into whose heart that innocency, which is now wanting, is coming, or in whose heart that wickedness, which now exists, remains. In what path the light dwelleth: that is, whose mind righteousness comes and fills. And what is the place of darkness, that is, in whom does blind iniquity remain. That thou mayest take each of them to the bounds thereof, that is, that thou mayest decide whether he who is now seen to be wicked, finishes his life in iniquity, and whether he who is now seen to be righteous, terminates the conclusion of his life with the perfection of righteousness.

And understand the paths to the house thereof: that is, that thou mayest consider and discern, either for whom perseverance in good deeds secures an eternal mansion in the

Kingdom, or whom evil habits, binding to the end, condemn to eternal punishment. For 'house' is put for resting place, and 'path' for conduct. A path therefore leads to a house, because our doings lead on to our resting place. But what man could speak when questioned on these points? who could hear them at least without fear? For we daily see many who shine forth with the light of righteousness, and who are yet at their close obscured with the darkness of wickedness. And we behold many involved in the darkness of sins, and yet at the end of their life suddenly set free and restored to the light of righteousness. We also know that many have preserved entire, even to the end, the path of righteousness which they have once found, and we have beheld that most men have heaped up without ceasing, even to the end, their wickedness which they have once begun.

33. But who, amid these clouds of secret judgments, can so dart forth the light of his mind, as to distinguish with any discernment, either who continues in sin, or who perseveres in righteousness, or who is converted from the highest to the lowest condition, or who relapses from the highest to the lowest? These points are hid from men's senses, nor is aught known of the end of any one, because the abyss of the divine judgments is not at all penetrated by the eye of the human mind. For we see that that Gentile world which was opposed to God was overspread with the light of righteousness, and that Judaea, long beloved, was darkened with the night of unbelief. We know also that the thief passed from the cross to the kingdom, and that Judas sank into hell from the glory of the Apostleship. And again, because destinies once commenced are sometimes not changed, we know that the other thief arrived at punishment, and that the Apostles enjoyed the appointed kingdom, which they had longed for. Who then can examine in what path light dwells, and what is the place of darkness, to bring each of them to its own bounds, and to understand the paths to the house thereof? I see Paul called from that cruelty of persecution to the grace of Apostleship; and yet he is so alarmed in the midst of secret judgments, as to fear that he be cast away, even after he had been called.

For he says, I chasten my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, perchance, having preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away. [l Cor. 9, 27] And again, I count not myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching forth myself unto those things which are before, I follow the destined mark, to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. [Phil. 3, 13. 14. I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which also I am apprehended. [ibid. 12] And it certainly had been already said of him by the voice of the Lord, He is a chosen vessel to Me; [Acts. 9, 15] and yet he still chastens his body, and is fearful of being rejected.

34. Alas for our wretched selves, who have known as yet no voice of God concerning our election, and are still slumbering in ease, as if from security. But there ought, there ought doubtless to be not only security in our hope, but also fear in our conversation, that the one may encourage us in the contest, the other sting us when listless. Whence it is rightly said by the Prophet, Let them that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord. [Ps. 115, 11] As if he were openly saying; He presumes in vain on his hope, who refuses to fear God in his doings. But

why is blessed Job questioned on so mighty an enquiry, which is utterly unknown by men, how he understands the end of the just and of the unjust, except that he should turn to his own end, from being unable to understand that of others; and that from being ignorant of his own end, as well as others', he might be afraid at his ignorance, be humbled through his fear; from being humbled might not be elated at his own doings; and from not being elated, might remain stedfast in the citadel of grace? Let it be said then to him, Tell Me, if thou hast understanding, in what path the light dwelleth, and what is the place of darkness, that thou mayest take each of them to the bounds thereof. As if it were said;

As thou knowest not who are converted from sin to goodness, nor who turn back from goodness to sin; so also thou dost not understand what is doing towards thyself, as thy merits deserve. And as thou dost not at all comprehend another's end, so art thou also unable to foresee thine own. For thou knowest now what progress thou hast made thyself, but what I still think of thee in secret, thou knowest not. Thou now thinkest on thy deeds of righteousness; but thou knowest not how strictly they are weighed by Me. Woe even to the praiseworthy life of men, if it be judged without mercy, because when strictly examined, it is overwhelmed in the presence of the Judge, by the very conduct with which it imagines that it pleases Him. Whence it is rightly said to God by the Prophet, Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. [Ps. 143, 2] Whence it is well said by Solomon, There are righteous and wise men, and their works are in the hand of God: and yet no man knoweth whether he is deserving of love, or of hatred; but all things are kept uncertain for the time to come. [Eccles. 9, 1] Hence again it is said by the same Solomon, What man will be able to understand his own way? [Prov. 20, 24] And any one doing good or evil is doubtless known by the testimony of his conscience.

But it is said that their own way is not known to men, for this reason, because even if a man understands that he is acting rightly, yet he knows not, under the strict enquiry, whither he is going. After He has alarmed him then with this consideration of his end, He goes back to examine his beginning: and, that he may not complain wherefore knows he not his end, He mentions also that he does not even understand with what beginning he came hither. For it follows;

Ver. 21. Didst thou know then that thou wast about to be born, and didst thou know the number of thy days? [xix] 35. As if He were openly saying, What wonder if thou understandest not thine end, since thou dost not comprehend thy beginning? And since thou knowest not with what beginning thou camest hither, what wonder, if thou canst not tell with what end thou art taken away? If therefore it was My work to bring thee forward from secresy to sight at thy beginning, it will be Mine also to bring thee back from sight to secresy. Why complainest thou aught of the dispensation of thy life, who, ignorant of thyself, art supported by the hand of thy Creator? Thou oughtest therefore to boast thyself the less in what thou dost, the more thou art confined within the bosom of eternity, and knowest not either in what order thou earnest hither, nor when, or how thou art taken hence.

36. But these words can yet be understood in another sense also; Didst thou know then that thou wast about to be born, and didst thou know the number of thy days? Thou understandest, As I, Who knew that I was about to be born, because, even before the birth of My Manhood, I always existed substantially in the Godhead. For men begin then to exist, when they are born in the womb of their mothers. For even the very conception is called nativity, according to that which is written, That which is born in her is of the Holy Ghost. [Matt. 1, 20] And they therefore know not that they are about to be born, because they do not exist, before they are created. But God, Who ever existed without beginning, foresaw this of Himself, that He assumed a beginning in the womb of the Virgin; and because He foreknew, He ordained it; and because He ordained, He doubtless endured nothing in human form, except of His own free will. Let man then, who could not foresee his own birth, be reproved for complaining of his scourges, if even He, Who foresaw and ordained His own birth, prepared Himself for scourges amongst men. It follows,

Ver. 22, 23. Hast thou entered into the treasures of snow, or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war? [xx] 37. What else must be understood by the 'snow' or 'hail,' but the cold and hard hearts of the wicked? For as charity is designated by warmth, so also in Holy Scripture wickedness is wont to be designated by cold. For it is written, As a cistern maketh its water cold, so doth its own wickedness make cold the soul. [Jer. 6, 7] And again, Iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold. [Matt. 24, 12] What then can be more fitly understood by the cold of snow, or the hardness of hail, than the life of the wicked, which both waxes cold by torpor, and strikes with the malice of hardness? Whose life the Lord yet tolerates, because He keeps them for the probation of His just ones. Whence also He rightly subjoined, Which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war. In order that, when our adversary the devil endeavours to tempt us, he may make use of their habits as his weapons against us. For by them he tortures us in his rage, but unwittingly purges us. For they become scourges to our sins, and when we are smitten by their life, which is such, we are freed from eternal death. Whence it is so ordered, that even the abandoned life of the reprobate benefits the life of the Elect, and that whilst their ruin furthers our interest, it is thus marvellously ordained, in order that even every thing which is lost, may not be lost to the Elect of God.

38. This also can be understood in another way, so as not to differ from the exposition of the former verse, since it seems connected with the words that precede it. For because He had pointed out that either the good can be changed to sin, or the wicked to goodness, He immediately proceeded to add, Hast thou entered into the treasures of snow, or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war? By either cold, or hard, snow, or hail, we understand, as has been said, the hearts of the wicked. But because Almighty God has chosen His Saints from such, and knows how many of the Elect He has still stored up amongst the life of the wicked, He fitly says, that He has His treasures in snow or hail. For 'thesaurus' (treasure) is so called from qesiV, that is, from its being placed away. And He beholds many long concealed in a

life of coldness, whom He brings out, when He orders it, and exhibits glittering with the brightness of righteousness, through grace from on high. For it is written, Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

[Ps. 51, 7] And He hides them for a long while beneath the seal of His foreknowledge, prepared against the day of war and of battle, but the moment He brings them out, He strikes the opposing breast of the adversaries, with their words and refutations, as if with hailstones. Whence it is written elsewhere, Through the brightness in His presence the clouds passed away, hailstones and coals of fire. [Ps. 18, 12. See S. Aug. ad loc. For coals pass away through brightness, because holy preachers traverse the whole compass of the world with the brightness of their miracles. And they are called, moreover, hailstones, and coals of fire; because they both strike with their reproof, and kindle with the flame of charity. The bold reproof of the Saints is also fitly represented by the nature of hail. For hail strikes as it falls, and waters when it melts. But holy men both strike the hearts of their hearers with dread, and bedew them with comfort. For the Prophet bears witness how they strike, saying, They shall speak of the might of Thy terrible acts, and they shall tell of Thy greatness. [Ps. 145, 6] And he has proceeded to subjoin, how they bedew with gentleness; They shall utter the memory of the abundance of Thy sweetness, and shall exult in Thy righteousness.

[ib. 7] Treasures, therefore, are kept in the snow or hail, because many who were frozen in the torpor of iniquity, when taken up unto heavenly grace, shine forth in Holy Church with the light of righteousness, and smite with the blows of their doctrine the evil wisdom of their adversaries. Whence also it is fitly subjoined, Which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war. For Saul in truth had been snow or hail through cold insensibility; but he became snow and hail against the breasts of his adversaries, either by the brightness of righteousness, or by the reproof of his keen eloquence. O what a treasure did the Lord keep him, stored up in snow or hail, when He already secretly beheld him as His own Elect, though placed among the life of the wicked. And to smite how many breasts of His adversaries did He grasp in His hand this hailstone, by which He laid prostrate so many hearts which resisted Him.

39. Let no one then boast himself of his own deeds; let no one despair of those, whom he sees still cold. For he sees not the treasures of God in snow and hail. For who could believe that that very person, who at his death kept the raiment of all those who stoned, could go before the martyred Stephen through the grace of apostleship? [Acts 7, 58] If therefore we refer to these secret gifts, or judgments, while not desparing utterly of any, we do not prefer ourselves in our hearts to those, to whom for a time we have been preferred. For though we now observe how much we have outstripped them, yet we know not how much we may be surpassed ourselves, when they begin the race. It is well, therefore, said to blessed Job, Hast thou entered the treasures of snow, or hast thou beheld the treasures of the hail, which I have prepared against the time of the enemy, against the day of battle and war? As if it were openly said, Prefer not thyself to any one, by reason of thy doings; for of these, whom

thou beholdest still frozen in sin, thou knowest not what mighty workers of righteousness, and defenders of sound faith I intend to create. But because this is effected by the coming of the Mediator, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 24. By what way is the light scattered? [xxi] 40. For He in truth is the way, Who says, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. [John 14, 6] The light is, therefore, scattered by this way, because all the Gentile world is enlightened by His presence. But He rightly said, Is scattered, because the light of preaching was not contracted or confined, but shone forth with its brightness far and wide by the voices of the Apostles. But because the power of love glows within, when the light of conversion has been received, in order that either our past sins may be anxiously lamented, or future blessings be most ardently sought for, it is suitably added, The heat is divided over the earth. [xxii]

41. For when the light is spread abroad the heat is divided over the earth; because when righteousness is openly preached, the anxious desire of the heart to seek God is spread forth in the practice of virtues; so that one person shines forth in the word of wisdom, another in the word of knowledge; one is mighty in the grace of healing, another in the working of mighty deeds; and that thus, while they severally receive unequally the gifts of the Spirit, they are all necessarily united to each other, and unanimously inflamed. But after the light is said to be spread abroad, it can readily be understood that persecution is designated by 'heat:' because as the light of preaching shone brightly, so the heat of persecution immediately blazed forth from the hearts of the unbelievers. For, that persecution is described by 'heat,' the discourse of the Lord bears witness, speaking of the seeds which had been cast on the rocky ground, When the sun arose they were all scorched, and because they had not root, they withered away. [Matt. 13, 6] And when He expounded it a little after, He called 'heat,' persecution. The heat therefore is divided over the earth, when the light is spread abroad, because, as the life of the faithful became bright, the cruelty of the faithless was kindled. For the heat was divided, when persecution was raging, now at Jerusalem, now at Damascus, and now in other countries far away.

For it is written, At that time there arose a great persecution in the Church, which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria. [Acts 8, 1] And it is written again; Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters for him to take to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he had found any of this way, men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. [Acts 9, 1. 2. Because then persecution had increased, now here, now there, they who had known the light of truth, were panting, as it were, under the burning of the divided heat.

42. But because we have heard blessed Job questioned in the former words, respecting the secret judgment; it now behoves us to examine more accurately this which is said of the scattered light, or divided heat. For he is still examined with lofty questioning, in order that he may at least learn that he is ignorant, and that it may be said to him, By what way is the light spread, the heat divided over the earth? For what is designated by the word

'light' but righteousness? Of which it is written; The people which was sitting in darkness, saw a great light. [Is. 9, 2] But every thing which is scattered, is thrown, not continuously, but with a kind of intermission. And light is therefore said to be 'scattered,' because, though we already behold some things as they really are, yet some things we see not, as they are to be seen. For scattered light had possessed the heart of Peter, who had shone forth with such great brightness of faith, and of miracles, and yet, while he was imposing the weight of circumcision on the converted Gentiles, he knew not what to say aright. [Gal. 2, 11-14] Light, therefore, is 'scattered' in this life, because it is not continuously possessed, to the understanding of every thing. For whilst we comprehend one thing as it is, and are ignorant of another, we both see as it were partially in scattered light, and remain partially in darkness. But our light will then no longer be scattered, when our mind, caught up entirely to God, will shine forth.

43. And because it is not known in what ways this light is insinuated into the heart of man, it is rightly said in a question; By what way is the light scattered? As if it were openly said; Tell Me, in what order I pour My righteousness into the secret recesses of the hearts, when I am not seen, even in My approach, and yet I invisibly change the visible doings of men, when I irradiate one and the same mind, at one time with this, and at another with that virtue, and yet I permit it, through scattered light, still to remain, in a measure, in the darkness of temptation. Let ignorant man be asked, by what way the light is scattered. As if it were openly said, While I soften the hard hearts, bend the rigid, smooth the rough, warm the cold, strengthen the weak, establish the wandering, confirm the wavering, come, if thou canst, incorporeally, and behold, on what minds I shed this light. For all these things we behold when done; for we know not how they are wrought within. The Truth shews in the Gospel, that this way of light is invisible to us, saying; The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, and knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. [John 3, 8]

44. But because, when the light is scattered, temptations presently spring up from the hidden adversary against the enlightened mind, it is rightly subjoined; The heat is divided over the earth. For the crafty foe strives to inflame with unlawful desires the minds of those whom he sees shining forth with the light of righteousness; so that they frequently feel themselves more assaulted with temptations, than at the time when they beheld not the rays of inward light. Whence also the Israelites, after they had been called, complain against Moses and Aaron of their increasing labour, saying; Let the Lord see and judge, because ye have made our savour to stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have given him a sword to slay us. [Exod. 5, 21] For when they wished to depart from Egypt, Pharaoh had taken away the straw, and yet required works of the same amount. The mind, therefore, secretly murmurs, as it were, against the law, after the knowledge of which it endures sharper stings of temptations, and when it beholds its labours increasing, because it is displeasing to its adversary, it grieves that it stinks, as it were, in the eyes of Pharaoh. Heat, therefore, follows after light; because after the illumination of the heavenly gift, the contest of temptation is increased.

45. But the heat is rightly said also to be 'divided: doubtless, because separate persons are not assailed by all vices, but by certain ones which are near, and placed close to them. For the ancient enemy first beholds the character ['conspersionem'] of each person, and then applies the snares of temptations. For one person is of a cheerful, another of a morose, another of a timid, another of a proud disposition. Our secret adversary, in order then to catch us easily, prepares deceptions closely connected with our several characters. For because pleasure borders on mirth, he holds out lust as a bait to cheerful dispositions. And because moroseness easily slides into anger, he offers the cup of discord for the morose. Because the timid dread punishments, he threatens terrors to the fearful. And because he beholds the proud elated with praises, he draws them on to whatever he pleases, by flattering applause. He lays snares therefore against men one by one, by vices adapted to them. For he would not easily lead them captive, if he were either to offer bribes to the lustful, or bodily pleasures to the covetous, or if he were to assail the greedy by the pride of abstinence, or the abstinent by gluttonousness, or if he were to seek to seize the gentle by eagerness for the contest, or the angry by the dread of fear. Because then, when in the heat of temptation, he craftily lurks in ambush against each one by himself, and secretly lays the snares which are akin to their habits, it is rightly said; The heat is divided over the earth.

46. But when it is first stated, By what way the light is scattered: and is there immediately subjoined, The heat is divided over the earth, it is doubtless indicated that the heat is also divided by the same way, by which the light is scattered. For when the lofty and incomprehensible grace of the Holy Spirit irradiates our minds with its light, it also so disposes and modifies the temptations of the adversary, that either they do not come upon us many together, or else that those only which can be endured, assail the mind already illuminated by God; so that they do not burn us with the fire of their full strength, when they torture us with the heat of their touch. As Paul bears witness, who says, But God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. [1 Cor. 10, 13] This heat then our crafty supplanter divides in one way, and our merciful Creator in another. The one divides, in order thereby to slay more speedily; the other, to make it more tolerable. And, because, when we are harassed with temptation, we are not only instructed with the Spirit of God within, but are also assisted with the words of preachers without, after the divided heat, it is rightly added,

Ver. 25. Who hath given a course for the most violent shower? [xxiii]

47. But if, as we said before, that persecution in the regions of Judaea is designated by the name of divided heat, because this very fierceness of persecution kept not from their office of preaching, through any fear, the holy preachers, who were assisted by the gift from on high, He fitly subjoins; Who hath given a course for the most violent showers? As if He were saying, Except Myself. For to have given a course to the most violent showers, when the heat was divided, is to have strengthened the force of preaching, amid the very difficulties of persecution, in order that the power of preachers might the more increase, the more the

cruelty of persecutors stood in their way, so that they might bedew the thirsty hearts of their hearers with drops of rain, and water more abundantly the drought of unbelief; and that though the heat of cruelty was glowing against them, yet the voice of grace might not through them be silent. Paul was both enduring and watering this heat of persecution, when saying, I labour even to bonds, as an evil doer, but the word of God is not bound. [2 Tim. 2, 9] Of this shower it is said elsewhere; I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. [Is. 5, 6] Of this course of the shower which is going on in the hearts of the Elect, the Psalmist witnesses, saying; His word runneth swiftly. [Ps. 147, 15] But it is generally a shower only, and has no course;

because preaching comes to the ears, but inward grace not acting, it passes not through to the hearts of the hearers. And of the words of this preaching it is said, on account of the Elect; For thine arrows passed through. [Ps. 77, 17] For the arrows of God pass through, when the words of His preaching descend from the ears to the hearts. And because this is effected solely by Divine grace, the Lord witnesses that He has given a course to the shower.

48. But I see it must be observed, that He calls this same shower not 'violent,' but 'most violent.' A violent shower is great force; but a most violent one, is the boundless power of preaching. For it was a violent shower, when holy preachers were advising the belief of eternal joy. But 'most violent,' when they were advising men that on account of their hope their interest should be abandoned, all visible objects despised on account of invisible, and that the pains and tortures of this present world should be tolerated for the sake of the joys they have heard of. But when so many of the Elect, having learned the faith, abandoned their possessions, when the heat of persecution was raging, forgot their carnal affection, and exposed their limbs to torture for joy of spirit; what else did the Lord do, but make a course for even the most violent shower, which by bodily words so watered the invisible recesses of the heart, that it performed even the highest commands? Where it is also fitly subjoined;

And a way for the sounding thunder? [xxiv]

49. For what is understood by 'thunder' except the preaching of heavenly terror? And when the hearts of men feel this terror, they are shaken. But sometimes by thunder is set forth the Incarnate Lord Himself, Who was brought to our knowledge by the concurrent prophecy of the ancient fathers, as if by the clashing together of clouds; Who, appearing visibly among us, sounded forth awfully those things which were above us. Whence also the Holy Apostles themselves begotten by His grace were called Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder. [Mark 3, 17] But sometimes, as has been said, 'thunder' is taken for their preaching, by which the terror of the heavenly judgments is heard. But because any preacher can present words to the ears, but cannot open the hearts, and since, unless Almighty God alone grant the words of preachers a hearing invisibly by inward grace in the hearts of their hearers, that preaching is received in vain by the ear of the hearer, which is prevented by his deaf heart from reaching to his inmost soul; the Lord asserts that He grants a way to the sounding thunder: for when He vouchsafes the words of preaching, He pierces the heart with terror. Paul, the illustrious preacher, when he was awfully sounding forth the heavenly mysteries, see-

ing that he could not possess this way by himself, admonished his disciples, saying, Withal praying also for us that God would open to us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ.

[Col. 4, 3] He therefore who was speaking mysteries, but was praying for a door to be opened by the Lord for these same mysteries in the heart of his hearers, possessed indeed the thunder already, but was seeking for a way to be granted it from above. John, who was saying, Ye need not that any man teach you, but as His anointing teacheth you of all things, [1 John 2, 27] knew that he could not give this way. Paul again taught Who could give this way, saying, For neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. [1 Cor. 3, 7] Let us hear then what this shower and thunder effect, when the way has been granted them. It follows;

Ver. 26. That it should rain upon the earth without man, in the desert, where no mortal dwelleth. [xxv]

50. To rain upon the earth without man in the desert, is to preach the word of God to the Gentile world. For whilst it retained no worship of the Godhead, and shewed in itself no appearance of good works, it was plainly a desert. And because there was therein no lawgiver, nor any one who could seek God in a reasonable way, there was, as it were, 'no man;' and it remained as if occupied by beasts alone, void of men. Of this land of the desert it is said elsewhere, He made a way in the desert. [Is. 43, 19] Of this preaching vouchsafed to the Gentiles, the Psalmist witnesses, saying, He made rivers in the desert. [Ps. 107, 33] But we must observe, that after the heat was divided over the earth, the most violent shower received its course, that it might rain in the desert. Because after the harshness of persecution became dreadful in Judaea, so as not only not to receive the faith, but even to assail it with the sword, every preacher who had been sent to Israel, turned aside to summon the Gentiles. Whence the holy Apostles say to the persecuting Hebrews whom they abandon, We ought first to preach the word of God to you, but because ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. [Acts 13, 46] When the heat, then, has been divided, the land which is desert, and without man, is watered; because, when the persecution of the faithful had spread abroad in Judaea, the Gentile world, long since abandoned, and estranged, as it were, from the infusion of reason, is watered by the drops of preaching. But in what state the Gentile world was still found by the preachers, is shewn, when it is added;

Ver. 27. That it should fill the pathless and desolate land. But what it produced when rained on, is shewn, when it is immediately subjoined, And should produce green herbs. [xxvi] 51. For the Gentile world, to which a way was not open for the word of God, was a long while pathless. For on the coming of our Redeemer it so received the calling of grace, as that there had not been in it before the way of Prophecy. It is also rightly called desolate; namely, as being destitute of either the wisdom of counsel, or of the fruit of good works. The Lord therefore gave a course to the most violent shower, and a way to the sounding thunder, that it should rain in the desert, and fill the pathless and desolate land, and should produce

green herbs. That is, He added to outward preaching inward inspiration; that the parched hearts of the Gentiles might become green, the closed might be opened, the empty filled, the unfruitful germinate.

52. For in holy Scripture 'grass' is sometimes taken for the verdure of temporal glory, sometimes for the food of the devil, sometimes for the support of preachers, sometimes for good works, sometimes for the knowledge and doctrine of eternal life. For it is taken for the verdure of temporal glory, as the Prophet says, Let it pass away in the morning like grass, in the morning let it flourish and pass away. [Ps. 90, 6] For to flourish and to pass away in the morning like grass, is in the prosperity of this world for the beauty of temporal glory speedily to dry away. Grass is taken for the food of the devil, as it is said of him by the Lord, For him the mountains bear grass. [Job 40, 20] As if He were saying, Whilst proud and haughty men exalt themselves in unlawful thoughts and actions, they feed him with their iniquities. Grass is pointed out to be the support of preachers, when it is said, He produceth grass on the mountains, and herbs for the service of men. [Ps. 147, 8; Ps. 104, 14] For grass is produced on the mountains, and herbs for the use of men, when the lofty ones of this world, being called to the knowledge of the faith, bestow on holy preachers, in the journey of this life, food for their sojourn. Grass is put for good works, as it is written, Let the earth bring forth the green grass. [Gen.

l, 11] And though we hold that it thus took place historically in the creation of the world, yet we suppose, without impropriety, the earth to have been a type of the Church, which brought forth the green grass, in that it produced, at the command of God, fruitful works of mercy. We sometimes take 'grass' for the knowledge and doctrine of eternal verdure; as it is said by Jeremiah, The wild asses did stand on the rocks, they snuffed up the winds as dragons; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass. [Jer. 14, 6] By which expression the proud and most wicked persecution of the Jews was prophesied. For they are called in truth wild asses, for their pride of mind, and dragons, for their virulent thoughts. And they stood on the rocks, because they trusted, not in God, but, in the chief powers of this world, saying, We have no king but Caesar. [John 19, 15] They snuffed up the winds as dragons, because being puffed up by the spirit of pride they were swollen with malicious haughtiness. Their eyes failed, because in truth their hope fell short of that which it was aiming at. For loving temporal things, it neglected to wait for eternal, and lost earthly goods, because preferred them to God. For they said, If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation.

[John 11, 48] They were afraid lest they should lose their place, if the Lord had not been slain, and yet they lost it, when He was slain. But he adds the reason why these things befel the wretched men, Because there was no grass: that is, because the knowledge of eternity was wanting in their hearts, and did not refresh them with the food of the verdure of inward doctrine. In this place then what else do we understand by green herbs, but the knowledge of heavenly doctrine, or works in accordance? The desert earth then is watered by the rain, for the green herbs to be produced from it, because when the Gentile world

enjoyed the shower of holy preaching, it budded forth with both the works of life, and the herb of doctrine. This verdure is promised to the desert land by the voice of the Prophet, when it is said, In the dens, in which the dragons dwelt before, shall rise up the verdure of the reed and bulrush. [Is. 35, 7] For what is designated by the reed but preachers: and what by the bulrush, which always grows by the moisture of water, but weak and tender hearers of the sacred word? The verdure of the reed and bulrush grows up then in the dens of the dragons, because in those peoples, which the malice of the old enemy used to possess, both the knowledge of teachers and the obedience of hearers is collected together.

[MORAL INTERPRETATION]

53. But these things which have been stated generally of the Gentile world, we see taking place, if we carefully examine, in individuals within the bosom of Holy Church. For there are many, grievously insensible to the words of God, who are counted under the name of faith, who hear the words of life with their ears, but suffer them not to pass through to the inward places of the heart. What else are these than desert land? Which land in truth has not a man, because their mind is void of the sense of reason. And no mortal dwells in this land, because if thoughts of reasonable meanings ever spring up in their conscience, they do not remain there. For evil desires find a resting-place in their hearts, but if good desires have ever come there, they pass away, as if urged on. But when the merciful God deigns to give a course to His shower, and a way to the sounding thunder, being stung with grace within, they open the ears of their heart to the words of life. And the pathless land is filled: for while it grants a hearing to the word, it is overwhelmed with mystery. And it brings forth green herbs: because when watered by the grace of compunction, it not only willingly receives the words of preaching, but returns them back with abundant increase;

so that it is now eager to speak what it could not hear, and that that which had become dry, even within, through not listening, feeds with its verdure as many as are hungry. Whence it is well said by the Prophet, Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created, and Thou shall renew the face of the earth. [Ps. 104, 30] For thus, thus, the face of the earth is changed by the virtue of renewal, when the mind which before was dry, is watered by the coming of grace, and is, after its former barrenness, arrayed with the verdure of knowledge, as though by grass which it had brought forth. Which grace of our Creator is commended still more highly, when it is subjoined;

Ver. 28. Who is the father of the rain? or who hath begotten the drops of dew? [xxvii]
[ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION]

54. As if He were saying, Except Myself, Who sprinkle, of My free grace, the barren earth of the human heart with drops of knowledge. For of this rain is said elsewhere, Thou wilt set apart, O God, a voluntary rain for thine inheritance. [Ps. 68, 9] For God sets apart a voluntary rain for His inheritance, because He grants it to us, not for own deserts, but from the bounty of His own benignity. And He is in this place called the father of this rain, for this reason, because His heavenly preaching is begotten in us, not for our merits, but from

His grace. For the drops of dew, are the holy preachers themselves, who water the fields of our breast, (parched amid the evils of the present life, as though amid the gloom of a dry night,) with the grace of bounty from above. Of these drops it is said to obstinate Judah; Therefore the drops of rains have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain. [Jer. 3, 3] For the drops of dew are the same as the drops of rains. For when they soften down their preaching by any accommodation, they sprinkle, as it were, the tender dew. But when they say what they think of heavenly things, with the power with which they are strong, they pour forth, as it were, the flowing rain abundantly. Paul was sprinkling the dew, when saying to the Corinthians, For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. [1 Cor. 2, 2] And again he was pouring forth the rain, saying, O ye Corinthians, our mouth is opened unto you, our heart is enlarged. [2 Cor. 6, 11] Hence it is, that Moses, who knew that he would say bold things to the strong, and gentle to the weak, observed, Let my speech be waited for as the rain, and let my words descend as the dew. [Deut. 32, 2]

But, lo! we have heard with what favour the Gentiles are called, let us now hear with what severity Judah is rejected. We have heard how He cultivates what is desert, and waters what is barren: let us now hear how He casts forth those which seem to be, as it were, within. For He does not so gather His Elect, as not also to judge the reprobate; nor does He so forgive faults to some persons, as not to punish them in some also. For it is written, For mercy and wrath come from Him. Whence here also, after He had introduced so many gifts of grace, He conceals not the judgments of His wrath. For it follows; Ver. 29. Out of whose womb came the ice, and the frost from heaven, who hath gendered it? [xxviii]

55. For what else do we understand by 'frost' or 'ice,' but the hearts of the Jews frozen and bound with the torpor of unbelief? Who formerly by the receiving of the Law, by the keeping of the commandments, by the ministry of sacrifice, by the mysteries of prophecy, were so kept within the bosom of grace, as if within the womb of the Creator. But because, on the coming of the Lord, being hard bound with the frost of unbelief, they lost the warmth of faith and charity, being cast forth from the secret bosom of grace, they came forth like ice from the womb of the Creator. And the frost from heaven, who hath gendered it What else ought 'heaven' to be here understood to mean but the lofty life of the saints? To which heaven it is said, Give ear, O heaven, and I will speak. [Deut. 32, 1] Of which abode it is elsewhere written, The soul of the just is the seat of wisdom [Perhaps Prov. 12, 23. LXX. where it is read, A prudent man is the throne of sense, In the Syriac version, A cautious man is the seat of wisdom. Ben. On Hom. 38, in Ev. they suggest Wisd. 7, 7, or 27.]. Because then God is wisdom, if the abode of God is heaven, and the soul of the just is the seat of wisdom, the soul of the just is certainly heaven. Abraham was heaven, Isaac was heaven, Jacob was heaven.

But because the persecutors of the Lord, the high priests of the Jews, who were frozen with the torpor of unbelief, sprang from the race of those ancestors, the frost came, as it were, from heaven, because the frozen herd of unbelievers came forth from the lofty offspring

of the saints. For when Caiaphas was born from Abraham, what else was it, but that ice came forth from heaven? Yet this frost the Lord says that He had gendered, for this reason, because He permitted the Jews, whom He Himself naturally created good, to go forth from Him, by a just judgment, frozen through their wickedness. For the Lord is the Author of nature, not of sin. He engendered therefore, by naturally creating, those whom He suffered, by patiently enduring, to remain in sin. And because those hearts of the Jews, which before were tender, and easily penetrated by faith, were afterwards hardened in the obstinacy of unbelief, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 30. The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone. [xxix]

56. For I remember that I have often taught already that 'waters' are taken for peoples. But by a 'stone,' by reason of its very hardness, the Gentile peoples are sometimes designated. For they themselves worshipped stones. And of these it is said by the Prophet, Let them, that make them, become like unto them, and all who trust in them. [Ps. 115, 8] Whence John, beholding that the Jews boasted themselves in their pedigree, and foreseeing the Gentiles passing over to the stock of Abraham, by the knowledge of the faith, says, Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up sons to Abraham. [Matt. 3, 9] Certainly calling 'stones' the Gentiles, who were hardened in unbelief. Because then Judaea first believed in God, while all the Gentile world was remaining in the obstinacy of its unbelief, and because the hearts of the Gentiles were afterwards softened to receive the faith, and the unbelief of the Jews was hardened, it is well said, The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone. As if He were saying, Those soft hearts of the Jews, easily penetrated by faith, are converted into the insensibility of the Gentiles. For when God in His mercy drew to Him the Gentiles, He repelled Judaea in His wrath.

And it came to pass, that as the Gentiles had been at first hardened against the reception of the faith, so, when the Gentiles were afterwards admitted to the faith, was the people of Judaea hardened in the torpor of unbelief. Whence the Apostle Paul says to these very Gentiles, As ye in times past have not believed God, yet now have obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these not believed, in your mercy, that they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all. [Rom. 11, 30-32] And accurately considering this his opinion, first concerning the calling of the Jews, and the rejection of the Gentiles, and afterwards concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, and reflecting that he could not comprehend the secret judgments of God, he subjoined in exclamation, O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are His judgments, and His ways unsearchable. [Rom. 11, 33] Whence here also when the Lord was saying of the unbelief of the Jews, The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone, to shew that His judgments concerning their rejection were secret, He fitly subjoined;

And the surface of the deep is congealed. [xxx] 57. Because the eye of the human mind does not at all penetrate the incomprehensibleness of the Divine judgment, from a kind of veil of

our ignorance having been thrown over it. For it is written, Thy judgments are a great deep. [Ps. 36, 6] Let no one then seek to investigate, why, when one is rejected, another is chosen, or, why, when one is chosen, another is rejected, because the surface of the deep is congealed, and as Paul witnesses, His judgments are inscrutable, and His ways unsearchable. [Rom. 11, 33] [MYSTICAL INTERPRETATION]

58. But by that which is said, Out of whose womb came the ice, and the frost from heaven, who hath gendered it? (ver. 29.) nothing prevents Satan being understood by the frost and ice. For he came forth as if ice from the womb of God, because the teacher of iniquity came forth, frozen with the torpor of sin, from the warmth of His mysteries. He was gendered as frost from heaven, because he was suffered to fall from the highest to the lowest condition, and to go and bind the hearts of the reprobate. And having been fashioned rightly in heaven, when he fell, he bound as frost the hearts of his followers, in the coldness of sin. And what he did amongst men, on coming to the earth, is fully stated, when it is added, The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone. For by 'waters' peoples are designated, but by a 'stone' the hardness of this very Satan. The waters therefore were hardened after the likeness of a stone, when he came on earth, because men, imitating his wickedness, lost the soft bowels of charity. And because his crafty designs cannot be detected by men who have been led astray, it is rightly subjoined; And the surface of the deep is congealed. For one thing lies concealed within him, and another he presents without. For he transforms himself as an angel of light, and with his cunning art of deception frequently proposes laudable objects, in order to lead on to unlawful. The surface of the deep is therefore congealed; for while the fair appearance of his persuasion appears, as it were, like solid ice on the surface, his wickedness, lurking in the depth, is not observed.

[MORAL INTERPRETATION]

59. But we can understand all these in another sense also, if we enquire into them, in their moral meaning. For whilst Almighty God fashions the minds of men in His fear, He conceives them, as it were, and brings them forth to open virtues, when He advances them onwards. But if they are elated by the virtues they have received, He abandons them. And we often know persons to be smitten by consideration of their sins, to glow with fear of the Divine dread, and, commencing in fear, attain to the highest virtues. But when they are elated by these virtues which they receive, being bound with the snare of vain glory, they return to their former torpor. When God therefore casts off such persons, He rightly says, Out of whose womb came the ice? For the ice comes forth, as it were, from the womb of God, when those who had before been warm within, become cold, by reason of the gift of virtue, and, being torpid, seek after outward glory, for the very reason by which they ought to glow with greater warmth to love things within. And whilst one man is powerful in signs, another in knowledge, another in prophecy, and another in mighty works, and seeks by these gifts to please men, he turns all his former inward warmth into torpidity, from loving outward praises. He comes forth therefore as ice from the womb, when, after the favours of gifts, he is separated from the bowels of heavenly compassion.

Are not they 'ice,' who in the virtues they receive seek praise from men? And yet they say to the Judge on His coming, when recalling His own gifts to His mind; Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name have done many mighty works? [Matt. 7, 29] But He shews how the Lord casts out this ice, saying, I know you not whence ye are. Depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity. [ib. 23] The Lord now bears this ice in His womb, because He tolerates it within the bosom of the Church. But He then openly casts it out, when He banishes such from the secret abodes of heaven by the last and public judgment. What is then the plain object: of these words, except that Job should be brought down from his lofty virtues, that he should not, in consequence of his former warmth in good living, grow cold through pride, and be repelled and go forth from the womb of the Godhead, by being swollen up within the bosom of his own heart?

60. And because by a righteous judgment He permits haughty minds to go forth to commit sin, from the virtue they have received, it is rightly added, still farther; And the frost from heaven, who hath gendered it? For He frequently vouchsafes the knowledge of Holy Scripture, but when he who receives it is elated by this knowledge, he is, by the anger of the strict Judge, so blinded in the Scripture itself, that he no longer sees its inward meaning, from seeking thereby for outward applause; and that, though he could be warm by remaining within, he goes forth and becomes frozen, and that he who before, when easily led to the knowledge of God, remained unfrozen at the top, becomes hardened, and sinks to the bottom. Is not Holy Scripture 'heaven,' which opening to us the day of understanding, illuminates us with the Sun of righteousness, and which, while the night of the present life surrounds us, shines for us with the stars of the commandments. But since there must be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest, [1 Cor. 11, 19] when the proud mind is kept back from a sound understanding of Scripture, frost is generated from heaven by the judgment of the strict Judge; in order that, when Holy Scripture itself glows in the hearts of the Elect, it may cast forth from itself in a frozen condition, those who proudly seek to know it. For they err in the very point, in which they should have corrected their faults;

and while they fall away from the heavenly understanding of the resplendent Word, both hardened themselves, and about to deceive others, they sink to the bottom, as ice, and bind others also. But yet the Lord says that He Himself genders this frost, not because He Himself fashions the minds of the wicked to sin, but because He does not liberate them from sin. As it is written; I will harden the heart of Pharaoh. [Exod. 4, 21] For because He refused to soften it in His mercy, He plainly announced that He had hardened it in His severity.

61. But, because the image of virtue is retained for the sake of human praise, when the virtue of Divine fear, which has begun, is itself lost, it is rightly subjoined; The water are hardened after the likeness of a stone, and the surface of the deep is congealed. For waters are hardened by ice at the surface, but remain fluid underneath. And what do we understand by waters but the unstable hearts of the reprobate? For when they are deliberately forsaking virtue, they shew themselves forth, in their hypocrisy, as resolute in good works,

and whilst they are inwardly gliding down into sins, they outwardly feign themselves imitators of the holy and resolute. The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone, and the surface of the abyss is bound together, because their weak and unstable conscience is concealed from men, by a superinduced appearance of sanctity. For when they are inwardly foul in their own sight, they are arrayed before the eyes of others with a kind of comeliness of living.

62. But, lest any one should wish these words of the Lord to be understood in a good sense, we ought to add it, for those also who thus look for it, provided we are not [perhaps, 'so as we be not.' ('dummodo')] considered to have neglected points which needed to be examined. For it is said in the former verse, Who is the father of rain? or who hath begotten the drops of dew? And it is immediately added, Out of whose womb came the ice? and the frost from heaven who hath gendered it? If therefore the following sentence is connected with the preceding words with a similar sense, its meaning is clearly laid open without any obstacle of difficulty even in a good sense. For when the earth is watered by rain, the seeds which have been cast in are pressed down more productively. But again, if the rain waters it too immoderately, it changes the richness and virtue of the corn in the stalk. But if the seed which has been thrown in, is after rain checked by the frost, the more it is kept from appearing too quickly above ground, the more productively does it root itself beneath: and the more it is forbidden to grow, the more it is compelled to multiply: because, when it is kept from too early a growth, being expanded by the slowness of its conception, it is filled more abundantly for fruit.

What is meant then by the Lord first speaking of Himself as the father of the rain, but afterwards saying that the ice comes forth from His womb, and declaring that He genders the frost from heaven? Except that He first waters in a wondrous manner the soil of our hearts for the reception of the seeds of the word, by the secret rain of His grace, and that He afterwards keeps it down by the discipline of His secret dispensation, lest it should bring forth too luxuriantly with the virtues it has conceived, in order that the rigor of discipline may likewise bind that which the rain of grace received irrigates, lest it turn its fruit into grass, if it produce its virtues, either before it ought, or more than is necessary. For, frequently, when a good work is displayed before it ought by beginners, it is emptied of the grain of perfection, and while virtues are more exuberant than is necessary, they frequently dry up. Whence the Lord either refuses the desires even of His Elect, before the fit time, or again restrains at the fit time their unlimited progress, lest, if they advance either sooner, or farther, than they ought, they should fall into the defect of pride by the greatness of their proficiency. For when the heart is pricked with compunction after sin, the earth, which had been dry, is watered by the pouring of rain upon it;

and when it proposes to abandon its iniquities and to follow after good works, it receives, as it were, seed after the rain. And many persons, when they conceive holy desires, are burning to exercise themselves at once in the sublimest virtues, so that sin may not only not infect their doings, but may not even assail their thoughts. They are still indeed living

in the body, but they wish to suffer no further from their connexion with the present life. They seek to aim at inward stability of mind in their intention, but are driven back by interrupting temptations, in order, namely, that they may remember their own infirmity, and may not be elated at the virtues which they receive. And when this is effected by the wonderful constraint of discipline, what else but frost is gendered from heaven over the watered earth? What but ice is produced from the womb of God, when the dispensation comes forth from its secret place within, and our wills are restrained even in their good desires?

63. Let us see with what ice of discipline Paul (that is, the watered earth) is weighed down, when he says, To will is present with me, but to perform what is good I find not. [Rom. 7, 18] For he who asserts that he has the will, makes known what seeds are even now concealed within him by the pouring of grace upon him. But whilst he finds not to do good, he certainly points out how much ice of the heavenly dispensation weighs on him. Had not this ice pressed their hearts, to whom he was saying, So that ye cannot do the things that ye would? [Gal. 5, 17] As if he were plainly saying, The secret seeds of your heart are now seeking to break forth into fruit, but they are kept down by the ice of the heavenly dispensation, in order that they may afterwards shoot forth more productively, the more patiently they bear the weight of the Divine judgment pressing on them.

64. And because the hearts of men, since they are unable to break out into those virtues which they desire, are frequently harassed with the stings of temptation, so far as they shrink back from carrying out their intention, but yet repress these same temptations of their thoughts, and fashion themselves, by the habit of discipline in a kind of strictness of living, it is well subjoined; The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone. Because, though unstable thoughts harass within, yet they do not at all lead to consent in wicked doings. But the mind conceals, under an habitual custom of good living, as if under a kind of exterior hardness, whatever is softened within by the assault of temptation. Whence it is well subjoined; And the surface of the deep is congealed. Because, even if an evil thought comes as far as to suggestion, it does not break out into consent, because the superinduced rigour of holy discipline suppresses the fluctuating motions of the mind.

65. But by 'frost' or 'ice' can also be designated the adversity of this present life, which while it keeps down the holy by its asperity, makes them stronger. For while Almighty God permits us to be exercised with annoyances, and carries us on to the condition of a better life by the intervention of sorrow, He genders with wonderful wisdom the frost and ice over the coming fruit; in order that each of the Elect may endure in this present life, as if in winter, the adversities of winds and frosts, and may exhibit afterwards, as in the serenity of summer, the fruits which he has here conceived. Whence it is said by the voice of the Bridegroom to every soul which is hastening after the whirlwind of this life to those joys of eternity, Arise, hasten, My beloved, My fair one, and come. For the winter has already passed, the shower has departed and gone. [Cant. 2, 10. 11.] But because we are relaxed, if prosperity alone attends us, but are the better strengthened for virtues by means

of adversities, it is rightly subjoined, The waters are hardened after the likeness of a stone. For minds, which had softly melted away through prosperities, become firm when hard pressed by adversities. And water is brought to the likeness of a stone, whenever any one who is weak imitates the sufferings of his Redeemer by endurance received from above. For water had, in truth, hardened after the fashion of stone, when Paul, that former impatient persecutor, was saying, I fill up those things which are wanting of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh. [Col. 1, 24]

66. And because persons, when depressed by adversities, guard more carefully their inward gifts, it is rightly added; And the surface of the deep is congealed. For joy is wont to lay open the secrets of the mind, and, by laying open, to lose them. But when adversities depress us outwardly, they make us more careful within. After frost then or ice, the surface of the deep is congealed, because our mind is strengthened by adversities, to preserve those deep gifts which it has received. For Isaiah had congealed the surface of his abyss, when he was saying; My secret to myself, my secret to myself. [Is. 24, 16. marg.] Paul had congealed the surface of his abyss, who labouring under so many dangers and adversities, under cover of some one else, speaks of himself, saying; I have heard secret words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. [2 Cor. 12, 4] And again, But I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth in me, or heareth any thing of me. [ib. 6] What then had he done, who, when enduring adversity without, was afraid to open the secrets of his heart, lest he should perchance vent himself in praises; what, but covered the abyss of his inward secrets by a congealed surface? It follows,

Ver. 31. Will thou be able to join together the shining stars, the Pleiades, or wilt thou be able to break up the circuit of Arcturus? [xxxi] [LITERAL INTERPRETATION] 67. The stars Pleiades, are so called from pleistoV, that is, from plurality. But they were made so near to each other, and yet so distinct, that they can be near together, and yet cannot possibly be united, since they are united in nearness, but disunited as to contact. But Arcturus so illuminates the seasons of night, as placed in the axis of heaven, to turn itself in divers ways, and yet never to set. For it does not revolve out of its orbit, but placed in its own position, it inclines to all quarters of the world, though it will never set. What then is it, that man, who was formed from the earth, and placed upon the earth, is questioned as to the government of heaven, that he cannot join together the Pleiades, which he sees were made close to each other and almost united, and that he cannot break up the circuit of Arcturus, though he can behold it almost dissipated by its own rapidity of motion? Is it not, that considering in those His servants, the power of their Creator, he should remember his own weakness, and consider how beyond our comprehension is He, in the very government of His heavenly ministers, Whom he cannot as yet behold in His own majesty?

[MYSTICAL INTERPRETATION] 68. But why do we say these things, who are urged by the stimulus of reason, to learn the sense of these words pregnant with mystical meaning? For what else do the shining Pleiades, which are also seven in number, indicate, but all the Saints, who amid the darkness of this present life, illumine us with the light of the Spirit

of sevenfold grace, who, from the first beginning of the world, even to its end, sent at divers times to prophesy, are in some degree united, and in some degree separate from each other? For the stars the, Pleiades, as was before said, are united to each other in their contiguity, and disunited as to contact. They are situated indeed together, and yet pour forth separately the rays of their light. In like manner all the Saints appearing at different times for the purpose of preaching, are both disunited in our sight of their person, and united in their intention of mind. They shine together, because they preach One; but they touch not each other, because they are divided by different times.

69. At what different times did Abel, Isaiah, and John appear! They were separated indeed in time, but not in the subject of their preaching. For Abel offered up a lamb in sacrifice, typifying the passion of our Redeemer; of Whose passion Isaiah says; As a lamb before its shearer He will be dumb, and will not open His mouth. [Is. 53, 7] Of whom John also says; Behold the Lamb of God; behold, Who taketh away the sins of the world. [John 1, 29] Behold they were sent at different 'times indeed, and yet agreeing in their thought of the innocency of our Redeemer, they spake of the same Lamb, John by pointing to Him, Isaiah by foreseeing, and Abel by offering; and Him, Whom John set forth by pointing to Him, and Isaiah set forth in his words, Abel held, in signification, in his hands.

70. Because then we have said how the Pleiades accord together concerning the Humanity of our Redeemer, let us now point out how they shine in concord in setting forth the Unity of the Trinity. For David, Isaiah, and Paul appeared at different periods of the world. But yet none of them thought differently from another; because, though they knew not each other in face, yet they had learned one and the same thing by Divine knowledge. For David, in order to set forth God in Trinity as the Creator of all things, said, Let God bless us, our God, let God bless us. [Ps. 67, 6. 7. And for fear he should be considered to have spoken of three Gods, from his mentioning God three times, he immediately added, teaching thereby the Unity of the same Trinity; And let all the ends of the earth fear Him. For by adding not 'them,' but 'Him,' He intimated that the Three whom He had named were One. When Isaiah also was uttering praises of the Unity of the Trinity, he says, in describing the words of the Seraphim, Holy, Holy, Holy. [Is. 6, 3] But lest he should seem by mentioning 'Holy' thrice, to sever the unity of the Divine Substance, he added, Lord God of hosts. Because then he added not 'Lords,' 'Gods,' but 'Lord God,' he pointed out that that Being, Whom he had thrice called Holy, existed as One. Paul also, to set forth the operation of the Holy Trinity, says;

Of Him, and through Him, and in Him are all things. [Rom. 11, 36] And in order to teach the Unity of this same Trinity, he immediately added; To Him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. By adding then not 'to them,' but to Him, he made Him known as One in nature, Three in Persons, Whom he had thrice addressed by the same word. The Pleiades therefore are both situated as it were in one place, because they think alike concerning God; and yet they touch not each other, because, as has been said, they are distributed through different periods of this world.

71. Which the Prophet Ezekiel well and briefly describes, who, when saying that he had beheld living creatures of different kinds, added; Their wings were joined one to another. [Ez. 1, 9] For the wings of living creatures are joined one to another; because though the things which they do are different, yet the voices and the virtues of the Saints are united together in one and the same sense. And though one may be a man, from doing all things rationally, another, who is bold in suffering, may be a lion, from not fearing the adversities of the world; another, from offering himself through abstinence as a living victim, may be a calf; another, from soaring on high on the wing of contemplation, may be an eagle; yet do they touch each other with their wings, whilst they fly, because they are united to each other by the confession of their words, and the accordance of their virtues. But because it belongs to the power of God alone both to join together in the preaching of the faith those who were sent at different times, and to unite in brightness of intention those that were endued with dissimilar virtues, it is rightly said; Wilt thou be able to join together the shining stars, the Pleiades? As if He said, As I, Who alone fill all things, and Who by filling the minds of the Elect join them in a sense of unity.

72. But by Arcturus, which illumines the night season in its orbit, and never sets, is designated, not the doings of the Saints separately manifested, but the whole Church together, which suffers indeed weariness, but yet does not incline to fall from its own proper position, which endures a circle of toils, but hastens not to set together with time. For Arcturus comes not with the night season to the lowest part of the heavens, but even while it is revolving itself, night is brought to a close. Because doubtless, while Holy Church is shaken with numberless tribulations, the shade of the present life comes to an end; and the night passes by, as it continues stationary, because while the Church remains in her own original condition, the life of this mortal state passes away. There is in Arcturus a point for us to observe more carefully. For it revolves with seven stars, and at one time raises three to the highest point, and depresses four to the lowest; at one time raises four on high, and depresses three below. Holy Church also, when she preaches at one time to unbelievers the knowledge of the Trinity, and at another the four virtues, that is, prudence, fortitude, temperance, justice, to believers, changes, as it were, by a kind of rotation in its preaching, the appearance of its position.

For when she strips of confidence in their own doings those who boast of their own works, and exalts faith in the Trinity, what else does Arcturus, but elevate three stars, and depress four? And when she forbids some, who have no good works, to presume on their faith, and orders them to work out more earnestly the things which are commanded, what else does Arcturus do, but raise up four stars, and bring down three? Let us see how it elevates three, and depresses four. Behold it is said by Paul to those who were priding themselves on their works in opposition to faith; If Abraham were justified by works he hath glory, but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. [Rom. 4, 2. 3. Let us see how it elevates four and depresses three. Behold it is said by James to those that were boasting of faith in opposition to works; As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. [James 2, 26] Arcturus

therefore revolves, because Holy Church turns herself on different sides with skill in preaching, according to the minds of her hearers. Arcturus revolves, because she is whirled round in the tribulations of this night. But the Lord breaks up at last this circuit of Arcturus, because He turns the labours of the Church into rest.

Then does He also more entirely join the Pleiades, when He destroys the orbit of Arcturus, because all the Saints are then doubtless joined to each other even in outward appearance, when Holy Church at the end of this world is released from those labours which she now endures. Let Him say then; Wilt thou be able to join together the shining stars the Pleiades, or wilt thou be able to break up the circuit of Arcturus? Thou understandest As I, Myself, Who then unite the life of the Saints even in outward appearance, when I bodily dissolve the circuit of the Church Universal. And what man is ignorant that this is the act of Divine power alone? But let man, in order that he may know what he is himself, be constantly reminded what it is that God alone can effect.

73. We have still some other meaning to give of the stars the Pleiades, and Arcturus. For the Pleiades rise from the East, but Arcturus on the side of the North. But wherever Arcturus turns itself in its circle, it presents to view the Pleiades; and when the light of the day is now approaching, the order of its stars is extended. By Arcturus, then, which rises in the quarter of the cold, can be designated the Law; but by the Pleiades, which rise from the East, the grace of the New Testament. For the Law had, as it were, come from the North, which used to alarm those subject to it with such asperity of rigor. For while it was ordering some to be stoned for their faults, others to be punished by the death of the sword, it was, like a frozen region, far removed, as it were, from the light of charity, rather nipping the seeds of its precepts with cold, than nourishing them with warmth. Peter had shuddered at the weight of this oppression, when saying; Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? [Acts 15, 10] Nor is it any wonder that the Old Testament is set forth by the seven stars of Arcturus, because both the seventh day was held in veneration under the Law, and the vows of the appointed sacrifice were extended through the whole week.

But the Pleiades, which themselves are also seven, as we have before said, point out the more plainly the grace of the New Testament, the more clearly we all see, that by it the Holy Spirit enlightens His faithful ones with the light of the sevenfold gift. Wherever therefore Arcturus turns, it presents the Pleiades to view, because by every thing the Old Testament says, the works of the New Testament are announced. For under the text of the letter it conceals the mystery of prophecy. And Arcturus inclines itself, as it were, and points them out, because while it bends itself to the spiritual sense, the light of sevenfold grace, which is signified thereby, is laid open. And as the light of day approaches, the order of its stars is extended, because after the Truth became known to us by Itself, It released the precepts of the letter from carnal observance.

74. But our Redeemer, coming in the flesh, joined together the Pleiades; because He possessed the operations of the sevenfold Spirit all at once, and abiding in Himself. Of Whom

it is said by Isaiah: There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall grow up from his root, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of godliness, and the Spirit of the fear of the Lord shall fill Him. [Is. 11, 1-3] Of Whom Zechariah says; Upon one stone are seven eyes. [Zech. 3, 9] And again, And on the golden candlestick seven lamps. [ib. 4, 2] But no man ever possessed all the operations of the Holy Spirit at once, except the sole Mediator between God and man, [1 Tim. 2, 5] Whose is the same Spirit, Who proceedeth from the Father [see Note at end of Book XXIX. before all ages. It is well said, therefore, Upon one stone are seven eyes. For, for this Stone to have seven eyes, is to possess at once in operation every virtue of the Spirit of sevenfold grace. For one receives prophecy, another knowledge, another virtues, another kinds of tongues, another the interpretation of tongues, according to the distribution of the Holy Spirit. But no one attains to the possession of all the gifts of the same Spirit.

But our Creator, in taking our weakness, because He taught us that by the power of His Godhead He possessed all the virtues of the Holy Spirit at once, doubtless joined together the shining Pleiades. But whilst He joins the Pleiades, He breaks up the circuit of Arcturus. Because, when He made it known that He, having become Man, possessed all the operations of the Holy Spirit, He loosened in the Old Testament the burden of the letter, that each of the faithful may now understand that in the liberty of the Spirit, which he used, amid so many dangers, to serve with fear. Let blessed Job therefore hear; Wilt thou be able to join together the shining stars the Pleiades? As if it were openly said, Thou canst indeed possess the light of certain virtues, but art thou able to exercise at once all the operations of the Holy Spirit? Behold Me, therefore, uniting the Pleiades in all virtues, and be kept from boasting thyself of a few only. Hear what is said, Or wilt thou be able to break the circuit of Arcturus? As if it were openly said to him; Even if thou thyself now understandest what is right, canst thou do away by thy power, even in the hearts of others, the labour of grosser understanding?

Consider Me therefore, who correct the follies of the carnal, whilst I manifest myself in the foolishness of the flesh, that thou mayest the more bring down these, which thou countest the mightinesses of thy virtues, the more thou canst not apprehend even the footsteps of My weakness. But, because, in the very mystery of the Lord's Incarnation, the light of truth is manifested to some, but the hearts of others are darkened by an offence; it is lightly subjoined;

Ver. 32. Dost thou bring forth the morning star at its time, and dost thou make the evening star to rise over the sons of earth? [xxxii]

75. For the Father brought forth the morning star in his season, because, as it is written; When the fulness of the time was come, God sent His Son born of a woman, made tinder the Law, to redeem them that are under the Law. [Gal. 4, 4] Who being born of a Virgin, appeared as the morning star, amid the darkness of our night, because, having put to flight the obscurity of sin, He announced to us the eternal morn. But He made Himself known as

the morning star, because He arose in the morn from death, and overcame, by the brightness of His light, the hideous darkness of our mortality. Who [Oxf. Mss. 'Qui.'] is well called by John; The bright and morning star. [Rev. 22, 16] For, appearing alive after death, He became our morning star; because while He furnished us in His own person an instance of resurrection, He pointed out what light comes after. But the Lord makes the evening star to rise over the sons of earth, because He permits Antichrist to hold sway over the unbelieving hearts of the Jews, as their desert demands. And they are therefore justly subjected by the Lord to this evening star, because they chose of their own accord to be the sons of earth. For by seeking after earthly, and not heavenly things, they were so blinded as not to behold the brightness of our morning star;

and while they seek for the evening star to rule over them, they are plunged in the eternal night of subsequent damnation. Hence the Lord says in the Gospel, I came in My Father's name, and ye received Me not; another will come in his own name, and him ye will receive. [John 5, 43] Hence Paul says; Because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, for this cause God shall send them the operation of error, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but consented to iniquity. [2 Thess. 2, 10-12] The evening star therefore would never rise over them, if they had wished to be the sons of heaven. But while they seek after visible things, having lost the light of the heart, they are in darkness under the prince of night.

[MORAL INTERPRETATION]

76. But if we examine this in a moral sense, we find how it is daily occurring; because both the morning star doubtless rises on the Elect, and the evening star, by God's permission, rules over the reprobate. For there is one and the same word of God in the mouth of the preacher. But while these hear it with joy, and those with envy, they change for themselves the brightness of the morning star into the darkness of the evening. Whilst these humbly receive the voice of holy preaching, they open, as it were, the eyes of the heart to the light of the star. But whilst those feel envy at one who advises them well, and seek not the cause of their salvation, but the glory of boasting, when the evening of their iniquity bursts forth, they close their eyes in the sleep of death. By a secret sentence, therefore, he who is the morning star to elect, is the evening star to reprobate hearers. Because by that holy exhortation, with which the good come back to life, the reprobate perish more fatally in sin. Whence it is well said by Paul; We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish, to the one the savour of death unto death, but to the other the savour of life unto life. [2 Cor. 2, 15. 16.

He saw then that his word, by which he beheld some roused from their iniquity, and others on the contrary lulled to sleep in their iniquity, was both the morning and the evening star to its hearers. And because this takes place by the secret judgment of God, which cannot be comprehended by men in this life, he rightly there subjoined; And who is sufficient for these things? As if he were saying; We are sufficient indeed to consider that these things occur, but we are not sufficient to investigate why they occur. Whence also, the Lord in this

place, because He had said that the morning star is brought forth for some, but that the evening star rises for others, that man might not dare to scan the secret judgments of God, immediately subjoins;

Ver. 33. Knowest thou the course of heaven, and wilt thou set down the reason thereof on the earth? [xxxiii]

77. To know the course of heaven, is to see the secret predestinations of the heavenly disposals. But to set down the reason thereof on the earth is to lay open before the hearts of men the causes of such secrets. To set down, namely, the reason of heaven on the earth, is either to examine the mysteries of the heavenly judgments, by consideration, or to make them manifest in words. Which certainly no one can do who is placed in this life. For, to pass from little to greater things, who can understand what is the secret reason, that a just man frequently returns from a trial, not only unavenged, but even punished besides, and that his wicked adversary escapes, not only without punishment, but even victorious? Who can understand why one man, who plots for the deaths of his neighbours, survives, and another, who would be likely to preserve the lives of many, dies ? One man, who is only eager to do hurt, attains the height of power, another only desires to defend the injured, and yet he himself is lying under oppression. One man wishes for leisure, and is involved in innumerable occupations, another wishes to be engaged in employments, and is compelled to be disengaged. One beginning badly is drawn on from worse to worse, even to the end of his life; another beginning well, proceeds through a long period of time to the increase of his merits.

But, on the other hand, one, who is an evil liver, is spared for a long time, in order that he may improve; but another seems to be living properly, but continues in this life till he breaks out into evil ways. One, who has been born in the error of unbelief, perishes in his error; another, who has been born in the soundness of the Catholic faith, is perfected in the soundness of the Catholic faith. But, on the other hand, one, who has come forth from the womb of a Catholic Mother, is swallowed up, at the close of his life, in the gulph of error, but another terminates his life in Catholic piety, who, born in misbelief, had sucked in the poison of error with his mother's milk. One both wishes, and is able, to aim at the loftiness of holy living; another is neither willing nor able. One wishes, and is not able; another is able, and is not willing. Who then can examine into these secrets of the heavenly judgments? Who can understand the secret balance of hidden equity? For no one attains to understand these recesses of secret judgments. Let this be said then to a man, that he may learn his own ignorance; let him know his own ignorance, that he may fear; let him fear, that he may be humbled; let him be humbled, that he may not trust in himself;

let him trust not in himself, that he may seek for the assistance of his Creator, and that he who is dead from trusting in himself, may seek the assistance of his Maker, and live. Let the righteous man, then, who knows himself indeed, but who still knows not those things which are above him, hear the words, Knowest thou the course of heaven, and wilt thou set down the reason thereof upon the earth? That is, Dost thou comprehend the secret courses

of the heavenly judgments, or art thou able to disclose them to the ears of men? Blessed Job therefore is questioned concerning his investigation of the incomprehensible judgments, as if it were plainly said to him, All things which thou sufferest, thou oughtest to endure the more patiently, the more, in thy ignorance of heavenly secrets, thou knowest not why thou sufferest them.

Note from §. 74 above:

St. Gregory speaks here of our Lord as Man, and therefore naturally mentions only the Procession from The Father. Elsewhere he uses the same language with the later Latin Church very distinctly, though there is nothing to shew that he does it in any sense which the more candid Greeks would not allow. We have had already in Mor. i. §. 30. p. 48. the expression, 'He bestowed the Holy Spirit, Which proceeds from Him- self, upon the hearts of His disciples,' and in Mor. xxvii. §. 34. p. 224, an implication to the same effect. In Dial. ii. near the end. Ben. p. 275. Lat. 276, we have, 'Whereas it is acknowledged that the Paraclete Spirit ever proceeds from the Father and the Son, why saith the Son, that He will depart, that He may come Who never departs from the Son?' which stands at present in the Greek, 'ever proceeds from the Father, and abides in the Son.' John Diaconus accuses the Greeks of having falsified Pope Zachary's version. See also p. 375 of this volume. Hom, in Ev. xxvi. p. 1554. B. he has, 'Although 'to be sent' may also be understood after the nature of the Godhead. For thereby is the Son said to be sent by the Father, in that He is begotten (generatur) of the Father. For the Holy Spirit also, Who being coequal with the Father and the Son, yet was not Incarnate, the same Son declareth Himself to send, saying:

When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father. (John 15, 26. For if to be sent must be understood merely to be Incarnate, the Holy Spirit doubtless would by no means be said to be sent, who was not at all Incarnate. But His 'being sent' is the very Procession whereby He proceeds from the Father and the Son. As therefore the Spirit is said to be sent because He proceeds; so also is the Son not unfitly said to be sent because He is begotten.' Which is quoted by Theodulfus, in the 8th century, and could not have been interpolated by simply adding of 'And the Son,' as the context requires those words.

St. Augustine uses sometimes rather the Greek, sometimes rather the Latin way of speaking; the two, fairly understood, not being contradictory. See Enchiridion, §. 3 Tr. p. 90. (where the reading is doubtful) and note g.

Tertullian, against Praxeas, c. iv. has, 'I consider the Spirit not to be other-whence than from the Father, by the Son:' and c. viii. 'The Spirit is Third from God and (qu. 'of,' ex for, et? the Son, as the fruit is of (ex) the tree, third from the root, and the stream, of (ex) the river, third from the Fountain, and the point, of (ex) the ray, third from the sun.' Similarly St. Athanasius explains Ps. 36, 9. In Thy Light shall we see Light, because 'the Son in the Father, is the Fountain of the Spirit.' De Inc. et contr. Ar. §. 9. Ben. p. 877. St. Hilary De Trin. viii. 20. allows liberty of language as to whether the Spirit is of the Father or the Son, but says that His very Procession from the Father is 'receiving that which is the Son's,'

by which he seems to mean, participation of that essence which is already the Son's. This doctrine is what the Greeks would allow, but one which seems also to bear out the Latin form of expression, and to be in fact what is commonly meant by those who make use of it. Thus Petavius De Trin. vii. 3. §. 8, on a passage of St. Cyr. Al. Thes. c. 34. t. v. p. 345. 'When therefore the Holy Ghost, become within us, makes us conformed to God, and proceeds from the Father and the Son;

it is plain that It is of the Divine Essence (or Substance), Essentially (or substantially) in It and from It proceeding. As in fact is the breath that flows forth from the mouth of man, to use a poor illustration.' ' This Procession of the Holy Spirit,' says Petavius, 'can be supposed no other than that Essential, in which He is said to proceed from the Father and the Son, ek PatroV kai Uiou, as he presently explains it, 'Essentially from It proceeding,' making it the same to proceed from the Father and the Son, as to proceed from the Essence of the Father and the Son.' He cites other passages of St. Cyril. St. Leo seems to imply the same doctrine, Ser. 2 de Pentec. where, in explaining John xvi. 13, he says, 'What the Spirit receives, the Father giving, the Son gives.'

The doctrine of St. Basil was a subject of dispute in the Council of Florence, the question turning much on the reading of a passage in book 3, against Eunomius, §. 1, in which according to some copies the Spirit is said to 'have His Being of the Son.' The Benedictines argue that this must have been his meaning, at any rate, from the argument at the end of book 2, against Eunomius ascribing the Spirit to the Son only, as His creature, whereas He is truly the Spirit of the Father and the Son. He also in other places speaks of the Holy Spirit as related to the Son as the Son is to the Father; not, of course, strictly. De Sp. S. §. 43. t. iii. p. 36. That the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father, is acknowledged by all, and hence it is very natural that many should never have written so distinctly on the point as to say whether He is of the Son in the sense of from the Son. St. Epiphanius, however, Ancorat. 67, has, But if Christ is believed to be of the Father, God of God, and the Spirit of (ek) Christ, or from (para) Both; as Christ says, Which proceedeth from the Father, and He shall take of Mine.' And Haer. Ixxiv. 7. 'And the Holy Spirit is from (para) Both, Spirit from (ek) Spirit.' St. Greg. Nyss. end of B. 1, against Eunom. says, that the Son is 'viewed as prior to the Spirit in order of causation,' which comes to the same point. See Petavius 1. c., Leo Allat. Gr. Orthod., Forbes Inst. Hist. Theol. vi. Pearson on the Creed, Art. viii., adds further testimony to the Latin doctrine.

Book XXX

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF ST. GREGORY THE POPE, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB.

VOLUME III - THE SIXTH PART. — BOOK XXX.

Contains an exposition of the last eight verses of the thirty-eighth chapter, and of the same number of the thirty-ninth: where the holy Doctor discusses very many questions in a pious and learned manner, especially concerning the preaching of the Gospel. [i] 1. Blessed Job is asked by God, Who questions him, whether he has done such things as man is surely unable to do; in order that, when he discovers that he cannot do them, he may fly for refuge to Him, Whom he understands to be the only One Who is able to do them, and that he may appear more powerful before the eyes of his Judge, if he learns more truly his own infirmities. Of that then which is well known to be wonderfully wrought by God, Job is questioned by the Divine Voice; and it is said to him; Ver. 34. Wilt thou lift up thy voice in the cloud, and shall the force of the waters cover thee?

2. For God in truth lifts up His voice in the cloud, when He frames His exhortation to the darkened hearts of unbelievers, by the tongues of His preachers. And the force of the waters covers Him, when the crowd of opposing people oppresses His members who are acting rightly. For hence is that which is written, The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, Stand in the court of the Lord's house, speaking to all the cities of Judah, from which men come to worship in the Lords house, all the words that I have commanded thee. [Jer. 26, 1. 2. And a little after, And the priests, and the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. And when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking, the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, took him, saying, Let him surely die, why hath he prophesied in the name of the Lord? [ib. 7-9] Behold, the Lord lifted up His voice in a cloud, because He reproved the darkened minds of the haughty by sending the Prophet against them. Behold, the face of the waters covered Him immediately; because He Himself, Who commanded the words of reproof, suffered all things in the person of Jeremiah from the people who rose against him, and were provoked by reason of their reproof.

The Lord also raised up His voice in a cloud by Himself, when on exhibiting Himself before us in His assumed body, He preached many things to His persecutors, but veiled in enigmatical

figures. He raised up His voice in a cloud, because He uttered His truth, as if in darkness, to unbelievers who would not follow Him. Whence also it is well written in the Books of Kings, The cloud filled the house of the Lord, and the priests were not able to minister because of the cloud. [1 Kings 8, 10. 11. For while the proud high priests of the Jews hear the divine mysteries in parables, as their merits demand, the priests were unable, as it were, to minister in the house of the Lord on account of the cloud. For when they scorn to examine, amid the obscure darkness of allegories, the mystical meanings which are covered with the veil of the letter in the Old Testament, they lost on account of the cloud the ministry which they deserved by their faith. To whom the Lord even now uttered His voice in a cloud, when He spoke even plainly concerning Himself. For what is plainer than, I and My Father are One? [John 10, 30] What plainer to utter, than, Before Abraham was, 1 am? [John 8, 58] But because the darkness of unbelief had filled the minds of His hearers, an intervening cloud was concealing, as it were, the ray of the sun which had been shot forth.

3. For the face of the waters immediately covered Him, at this elevation of voice, because the raging crowd of the people at once rose up against Him. For it is written, Therefore the Jews sought to kill Him, because He not only brake the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. [John 5, 18] Of this force of waters He exclaims by the Prophet, They came round about Me all the day like water, they compassed Me about together. [Ps. 88, 17] And again, Saw Me, O God, for the waters have come in even unto My soul. [Ps. 69, 1] Which waters He surely endured in Himself before His death, but in His own people, even after His Ascension. For hence is that which He exclaims from above, Said, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? [Acts 9, 4] Behold, He had already ascended into heaven, and yet Saul, still pursuing Him with the force of unbelieving waters, was touching Him, even as a wave swelling above the rest. For it is He in truth Who speaks right things by the good, He Who is wounded in the sufferings of the godly. In order then to shew, by the wondrous unity of charity, that it is He Who preaches by the mouths of His Saints to unworthy hearers, the Lord says, Wilt thou lift up thy voice in the cloud?

But to shew that it was He Who was enduring all kinds of adversity in His Saints, He subjoined, And shall the face of the waters cover thee? Thou understandest, As Myself, Whom all the wicked neither understand to be speaking by holy men when preaching, nor see to be suffering by them when dying. The Lord relates therefore what He suffers from men, that the pain of the afflicted man may be mitigated, as if He openly said to him, Weigh carefully My sufferings, and temper thine own with patience. For it is much less for thee to bear wounds, than for Me to bear the sufferings of men. ['humans']

4. But we can consider these words still more minutely, if we anxiously examine our hearts, in the midst of heavenly gifts. We are at this time indeed faithful, we now believe the heavenly truths which we hear, we now love the things which we believe. But when we are oppressed by some unnecessary cares, we are darkened by a confusion spread over us; and when God suggests to us, even when such, some wonderful notions respecting Himself, He lifts up, as it were, His voice in a cloud. While He speaks of Himself to our benighted minds,

He, Who is not seen, is heard, as it were, in a cloud. For most exalted are the truths which we know of Him, but we do not yet behold Him by that secret inspiration, with which we are instructed. He therefore Who speaks indeed to our hearts, but conceals His shape, forms His voice, as it were, in a cloud. But, lo! we now hear the words of God speaking of Himself within, and we now know with what perseverance and with what zeal we ought to cling to His love; and yet we fall back from the height of inward consideration to our usual ways, from the very changeableness of this mortal condition, and are assaulted by the perverse importunity of impending sins. When, therefore, He insinuates subtle thoughts of Himself in our darkened minds, He raises up His voice in a cloud.

5. But when our very notion of God is overpowered by the temptation of sins, God is covered, as it were, in His voice, by the force of waters. For we cast as many waters over Him, as many forbidden thoughts as we dwell on in our heart, after the inspiration of His grace. But yet He 1 'op- forsakes us not even when overwhelmed ['oppressos,' al. 'oppressus.']; for He returns immediately to our mind, He disperses the mists of temptations, He pours on us the shower of compunction, and brings back the sun of subtle understanding. And He thus shews how much He loves us, Who forsakes us not, even when He is rejected; in order that the human mind may, at least when thus instructed, blush to admit temptation within, since its Redeemer ceases not to love it even when wandering. This He endures in us by Himself, this does He daily hear from unbelievers through His preachers. For His gift is cast out by the rising of temptation within us, and yet He is not kept back by our infirmity from pouring into us His gifts. His words are publicly rejected, and yet He is not restrained, by any wickedness of unbelievers, from bestowing the abundance of His grace. For when wicked men despise preaching, He adds miracles also, for them to reverence. Whence after the voice has been uttered, and the force of the overwhelming waters, it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 35. Wilt thou send lightnings, and will they go, and will they return and say to thee, Here we are? [ii]

6. For lightnings come forth from the clouds, just as wonderful works are displayed by holy preachers. Who, as we have often said, are therefore wont to be called 'clouds,' because they flash forth with miracles, and rain with words. And that the hearts of men, after being unmoved by preaching, are confounded by these flashes of miracles, we have learned by the witness of the Prophet, who says, Thou with multiply Thy lightnings, and with discomfit them. [Ps. 18, 14] As if he were saying, Whilst they hear not the words of Thy preaching, they are confounded by the miracles of the preachers. Whence it is written elsewhere, Thine arrows will go in the light, in the splendour of the glittering of Thine arms. [Hab. 3, 11] For the arrows of God to go forth in light, is for His words to resound with manifest truth. But because men frequently despise the words of life, even when understood, miracles are likewise added. Whence he there subjoined, For the splendour of the glittering of Thine arms. For the glittering of arms is the brightness of miracles. For we protect ourselves with arms, we destroy our opponents with arrows. Arms then, with arrows, are miracles

together with preaching. For holy preachers strike their adversaries with their words, as if with darts, but they protect themselves with arms, that is, with miracles;

in order that as far as they are to be heard, they may sound forth by the force of their darts, and as far as they are to be reverenced, glitter with the arms of miracles. It is said therefore to blessed Job, Wilt thou send lightnings, and will they go, and will they return and say to thee, Here we are? Thou understandest, 'As to Me.' For the lightnings go forth when preachers glitter with miracles, and transfix the hearts of their hearers with heavenly awe. But they return and say, Here we are, when they attribute not to themselves, but to the strength of God, whatever they know they have done powerfully. What is then their saying to God, 'Here we are?' For a kind of obedience is declared in this word. For holy preachers then to return and say, 'Here we are,' is for them to ascribe the glory of grace to Him, from Whom they feel that they have received victory in the contest; lest they attribute to themselves that which they do. And lightnings can go forth in doing their work, but they cannot return in pride.

7. Let us see then the lightning going forth. Peter says to a certain lame man; Silver and gold have I none, but what I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and soles received strength, and he leaping up stood, and walked. [Acts 3, 6-8] But when the multitude of the Jews had been disturbed by this which had been done, let us now see the returning lightning, which says; Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this, or why look ye on us, as though by our own strength or power we have made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified His Son Jesus. [ibid. 12] And a little after; Whereof we are witnesses; and His name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong, Whom ye have seen and known; and the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. [Acts 3, 15. 16.] The lightning therefore went forth, when Peter worked a miracle, it returned when he attributed what he had done, not to himself but to its Author. The lightnings go forth when holy preachers display wonderful deeds, but they say on their return, 'Here we are,' when, in that which they do, they refer to the power of its Author.

8. But this can he understood in another sense also. For holy men, as was said before, are sent and go forth as lightnings, when they come forth from the retirement of contemplation, to the public life of employment. They are sent and they go, when, from the secresy of inward meditation, they spread forth into the wide space of active life. But they return and say to God; 'Here we are,' because after the outward works which they perform, they always return to the bosom of contemplation, there to revive the flame of their zeal, and to glow as it were from the touch of heavenly brightness. For they would freeze too speedily amid their outward works, good though they be, did they not constantly return with anxious earnestness to the fire of contemplation. Whence it is well said by Solomon, Unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return, to flow again. [Eccles. 1, 7] For they are there called rivers, who are here called lightnings. For because they water the hearts of the

hearers, they are called rivers, but because they kindle them, they are called lightnings. Of whom it is written elsewhere, The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice. [Ps. 93, 3] And again, His lightnings enlightened the world. [Ps. 97, 4] The rivers therefore return to the place from which they go forth;

because holy men, (though they come forth, for our sakes, from the sight of their Creator, Whose brightness they endeavour to behold with their mind, to the ministry of active life,) yet unceasingly recur to the holy study of contemplation, and if in their preaching they pour themselves into our ears by bodily words from without, yet do they ever return in their silent thoughts to consider the Fount of life Itself. Of whom it is also well said, to flow again. For did they not constantly return with anxious mind to the contemplation of God, their inward drought would doubtless dry up even their outward words of preaching. But while they thirst unceasingly to behold God, rivers are ever springing up, as it were, within, to flow forth without, in order that they may there derive by love the means of flowing down to us in preaching. Let it be said therefore rightly; Wilt thou send forth the lightnings, and will they go, and will they return and say to thee, Here we are? Thou understandest, as Myself, Who adapt My preachers, when I will, after the grace of contemplation, to the ministry of active life. And yet I ever call them back from outward good deeds, to the inward height of contemplation, in order that they may one while go forth, when commanded, to perform their tasks, and that at another they may dwell with Me more familiarly when recalled to the pursuit of meditation.

They return therefore and say, 'Here we are,' because, though they may seem through their outward acts to be deficient for a little in contemplation, yet by the ardent desires which they ever kindle in their minds, they make known their presence to God, by obeying Him. For to say, 'Here we are,' is to shew that they are present by their love. It follows;

Ver. 36. Who hath placed wisdom in the inward parts of a man? or who hath given the cock understanding? [iii]

9. Who else are designated in this place by the name of the cock, but these same holy preachers, mentioned again in another way, who strive amid the darkness of this present life to announce by their preaching, as if by their notes, the approaching light? For they say; the night is far spent, but the day is at hand. [Rom. 13, 12] Who by their voices arouse the sleep of our sluggishness, exclaiming; It is now the hour for us to arise from sleep. [ib. 11] And again; Awake, ye righteous, and sin not. [1 Cor. 15, 34] Of this cock it is written again; There be three things that go well, and a fourth which goeth prosperously: a lion, the strongest of beasts, will not be afraid at the onset of any; a cock girt in the loins; and a ram, whom there is no king who can resist. [Prov. 30, 29-31] For He is in this place mentioned as a lion, of Whom it is written; The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed, [Rev, 5, 5] Who is called the strongest of beasts, because in Him the weakness of God is stronger than men. Who is not afraid at the onset of any one; for He says; The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me. [John 14, 30] The cock girt in the loins, that is, holy preachers announcing the true morn amid the darkness of this night.

Who are girt in the loins, because they keep away from their members the looseness of lust. For it is in the loins in truth that there is lust. Whence it is said to the same persons by the Lord: Let your loins he girt about. [Luke 12, 35] And a ram, whom there is no king who can resist. Whom else in this place do we understand by a ram, but the first rank of priests in the Church? Of whom it is written: Bring to the Lord the offspring of rams; [Ps. 29, 1] who lead the people which is walking after their examples like a flock of sheep following them. And whom, if they live spiritually and rightly, no king is at all able to resist; because whatever persecutor may stand in their way, he is not able to hinder their intention. For they know both how to run anxiously to Him, Whom they long for, and to come to Him by dying. The lion is therefore placed first, the cock second, the ram last. For Christ appeared, next the holy preachers, the Apostles, and then at length the spiritual fathers, the rulers of the Churches, the leaders, namely, of the flocks, because they are the teachers of the peoples who follow them.

10. But we enforce these points still better, if we subjoin an exposition of the remainder of the same passage. For since after these things Antichrist will also appear, he added there a fourth point, saying; And he who appeared a fool, after he had been lifted up on high. For if he had understood, he would have laid his hand on his mouth. [Prov. 30, 32] For he in truth will he lifted up on high when he will feign that he is God. But he will appear a fool when lifted up on high, because he will fail in his very loftiness through the coming of the true Judge. But if he had understood this, he would have laid his hand on his mouth: that is, if he had foreseen his punishment, when he began to be proud, having been once fashioned aright, he would not have been raised up to the boastfulness of such great pride. And let not that move us which has been said of him above; A fourth, which goeth prosperously. For he said that three went well, and a fourth prosperously. For not every thing which goeth 'prosperously' goeth 'well,' nor in this life does every thing which goeth 'well,' go 'prosperously.' For a lion, a cock, and a ram, go indeed well: but not prosperously here, for they suffer the assaults of persecutions. But the fourth goeth prosperously, and not well:

because Antichrist will go on in his craft, but his craft will be prosperous for a short space of this present life, as was said of him under the person of Antiochus by Daniel; Strength was given him against the continual sacrifice by reason of transgression, and truth shall be cast down in the earth, and he shall do and shall prosper. [Dan. 8, 12] That which Solomon says, goeth prosperously: this Daniel says, shall prosper. According to this testimony therefore which is stated by Solomon, A cock girt in its loins, we fitly understood in this place also holy preachers by the cock. The Lord therefore referring all things to Himself, says; Who hath placed wisdom in the inward parts of a man? or who hath given the cock understanding? As if He were saying, Who hath infused into the heart of a man, who savours of human things, the grace of heavenly wisdom? Or who, but Myself, hath given understanding even to holy preachers themselves, to know when, or to whom, they ought to announce the coming morn? For they understand both what to do, and when, for the very reason that they know

it, through My revealing it, within. But it must he observed, that divinely inspired wisdom is placed in the inward parts of a man;

because, doubtless, as far as concerns the number of the Elect, it is given not in voices only, but also in the thoughts, in order that the conscience may live according to what the tongue speaks, and that its light may shine forth the more brightly on the surface, the more truly it glows in the heart.

11. But it is a matter of great labour to examine with still more minute exposition, that which is added; Or who hath given the cock understanding? For the understanding of teachers ought to be the more subtle, the more it exercises itself in penetrating things invisible, the more it discusses nothing material, the more, even when speaking by the voice of the body, it transcends every thing which is of the body. For it would not, in truth, be at all suited to the loftiest subjects, did not the Creator Himself of things above, bestow it on the cock which crows, that is, on the teacher who preaches. The cock also received understanding, first to distinguish the hours of the night season, and then at last to utter the awakening voice. Because, in truth, every holy preacher first considers in his hearers the quality of their life, and afterwards frames the voice of preaching, fitted to instruct them. For to decide on the qualities of sins is, as it were, to distinguish the hours of night, to reprove the darknesses of actions with fit voices of reproof is, as it were, to distinguish the hours of night. Understanding is therefore given to the cock from above, because to the teacher of truth there is given from above the virtue of discretion, for him to know to whom, what, when, or how to introduce his instruction.

12. For one and the same exhortation is not suited to all; because the same kind of habits does not bind all. For those things that benefit some, often hurt others. For frequently even herbs, which refresh some animals, kill others, and a gentle hiss pacifies horses, urges on dogs; and medicine which lessens one disease, gives strength to another: and bread which strengthens the life of the strong, destroys that of the young. The speech therefore of teachers ought to he fashioned according to the quality of the hearers, in order to suit each class according to their own case, and yet never to fail in the art of general edification. For what are the attentive minds of hearers, but certain strings which are strained tight in a harp? which the skilful performer touches in different ways, that they may not produce a discordant sound. And the strings give back an harmonious sound, because they are struck with one plectrum, but with different force. Whence also every teacher, in order to build up all in one virtue of charity, ought not to touch the hearts of his hearers with one and the same exhortation.

13. For men must he admonished in one way, and women in another; the young in one way, the old in another; in one way the poor, and in another the rich; in one way the cheerful, and in another the gloomy; in one way subjects, in another rulers; in one way servants, in another masters; in one way the wise of this world, in another the dull; in one way the shameless, in another the modest; in one way the insolent, in another the retiring; in one way the impatient, in another the patient; in one way the well-wishing, in another the

envious; in one way the pure, in another the unclean; in one way the healthy, in another the sick; in one way those who fear the rod, and therefore live innocently, in another way those who have become so hardened in iniquity, as not to be corrected by the rod; in one way those who are over silent, in another those who give themselves to much talking; in one way the timid, in another the bold; in one way the sluggish, in another the hasty; in one way the gentle, in another the angry; in one way the humble, in another the haughty; in one way the obstinate, in another the inconstant; in one way the gluttonous, in another the abstinent; in one way those who mercifully give away their own, in another those who strive to seize others' goods; in one way those who neither seize the goods of others, nor yet give away their own;

and in another those who both give away their own goods which they have, and desist not from seizing those of others; in one way those who are at variance, in another those who are reconciled; in one way those who sow strifes, in another the peaceful. Those who do not rightly understand the words of the sacred Law must be admonished in one way, in another those who understand them rightly, but speak not of them humbly; in one way those who though they are able to preach in a worthy manner, are afraid from excessive humility, in another those whom imperfection or age excludes from preaching, and whom yet precipitation urges on; in one way those who prosper in their temporal desires, in another way those who desire indeed the things of the world, but who yet are wearied with the toil of adversity: in one way those who are bound in wedlock, in another way those who are free from the bonds of wedlock; in one way those who have had experience of carnal commixtion, in another way those who are ignorant of it; in one way those who deplore the sins of their deeds, in another those who deplore the sins of their thoughts; in one way those who lament their sins and yet do not abandon them, in another those who abandon but yet do not lament them: in one way those who even praise the unlawful deeds which they commit, in another those who blame their misdeeds, and yet do not avoid them;

in one way those who are overcome with sudden concupiscence, in another those who are deliberately fettered with sin; in one way those who commit frequently unlawful deeds though most trifling, and in another those who guard themselves against trifling faults but are sometimes overwhelmed in grievous ones; in one way those who do not even begin good courses, in another those who do not complete what they have begun; in one way those who sin secretly and do right publicly, in another those who conceal the good deeds which they do, and who yet by some things they do publicly allow people to think evil of them. We ought indeed to mention minutely what course of advice should be observed in each particular case, but are hindered by fear of prolixity in our remarks. [S. Greg. Naz. Or. 2. §. 28. But we are anxious to carry that out in another work [The 'Pastorale.'], by God's help, if some small portion of this painful life still remains to us.

14. But we have another point which we ought to consider concerning this understanding of the cock, namely, that it is accustomed to utter its louder and longer-drawn strains in the deeper hours of the night, and that when the hour of morn is now approaching, it utters

altogether more gentle and feeble notes. And a consideration of the discretion of preachers shews us what the understanding of this cock in these respects suggests to us. For when they are preaching to minds which are still wicked, they declare the terrors of eternal judgment with loud and great voices, because, namely, they cry out, as it were, in the darkness of the profound night. But when they know that the light of truth is already present to the hearts of their hearers, they turn the loudness of their cry into the gentleness of sweetness; and bring forth, not so much the terrors of punishment, as the allurements of rewards. And they sing at that time even with diminished tones, because as the morn approaches, they preach all the subtlest mysteries, that their followers may hear more minutely of heavenly things, the nearer they approach to the light of truth, and that the shorter note of the cock may charm those when awake, whom its long drawn note had aroused from sleep; in order that every one who has been corrected, may delight in knowing minutely the sweets of heaven, who used before to dread adversities from the judgment.

Which is well expressed by Moses, when the trumpets are ordered to sound a shorter note, for the summoning forth the host. For it is written, Make thee two trumpets of beaten silver. [Numb. 10, 2] And a little after, When a short blast hath sounded, the camp shall be moved. [ib. 5] For the army is led by two trumpets, because the people is called by two precepts of charity to the girding of faith. But they are commanded to be made of silver, in order that the words of preachers may be clear with the brightness of light, and may not confuse the mind of their hearers, by any obscurity of their own. But to be hammered out, for this reason; because it is necessary that they who preach the life to come, should grow up by the blows of present tribulations. But it is well said, When the short blast hath sounded, the camp shall be moved: doubtless, because when the word of preaching is more subtilly and minutely enforced, the hearts of the hearers are more warmly excited to meet the contests of temptations.

15. But there is something else to be carefully observed in the cock, namely, that when it is preparing to utter its note, it first flaps its wings, and striking itself, makes itself more wakeful. And this we behold plainly, if we look carefully at the life of holy preachers. For they, when they utter the words of preaching, first exercise themselves in holy actions, that they may not, while themselves slothful in act, arouse others with their voice. But they first rouse themselves by lofty deeds, and then they render others anxious for well-doing. They first strike themselves with the wings of their thoughts, because whatever is slumbering uselessly within them, they discover by anxious examination, they correct with severe punishment. They first take care to punish their own faults by tears, and then denounce those doings of others which demand punishment. They flap with their wings, therefore, before they utter their song, because, before they put forth the words of exhortation, they proclaim by their deeds all that they intend to say: and when they are perfectly awake in themselves, they then summon others who are slumbering to awake.

16. But whence is this great wisdom of the teacher, that he is both perfectly awake in himself, and that he also summons the slumberers to awake with a certain elevation of voice; that

he first carefully dispels the darkness of sins, and afterwards manifests discreetly the light of preaching, that he suits each one singly, in manner and in time, and that he shews to all at the same time the result of their doings? Whence is it directed to such great subjects, and with such subtlety, unless it be taught inwardly by Him, by Whom it was created? Because then the credit of such great understanding is not the merit of the preacher, but of his Creator, it is rightly said by the same Creator, Or who hath given the cock understanding? As if He were saying, Except Myself, Who have instructed the minds of teachers, which I marvellously fashioned out of nothing, more marvellously, to understand those things which are secret. Whence also, to shew that He is not only the Inspirer of wisdom in the sayings of teachers, but also the Author of their words, he well adds;

Ver. 37. Who will declare the system of the heavens? But because He withdraws their words, when He presents Himself to us in outward form, He immediately subjoined; And who will make the harmony of heaven to sleep? [iv]

17. For in this life the Lord has spoken to our weakness, not by the outward manifestation of His majesty, but by the voice of His preachers; in order that the carnal tongue might strike those hearts which are still carnal, and that they might the more readily receive unusual things, the more they heard them by the sound of an accustomed voice. But after that the flesh is resolved into dust by death, and the dust is animated by the resurrection, then we seek not to hear words from God, because we now behold in outward appearance that One Word of God, Which fills all things. Which sounds to us still louder, the more it penetrates our minds by the power of inward illumination. For when those words are taken away, which begin, and end, the very image of the inward vision becomes to us a kind of sound of eternal preaching. Whence the Lord now also says rightly to blessed Job; Who will declare the system of the heavens, and who will make the harmony of heaven to sleep? For what is meant by the system of the heavens, but the inward power of secrets? What is signified by the harmony of heaven, but the accordant language of preachers? When our Creator therefore has begun to relate the system of the heavens, He makes the harmony of heaven to sleep; doubtless, because when He is manifested to us in visible appearance, the words of preachers are withdrawn. For hence the Lord says by Jeremiah;

A man shall no longer teach his neighbour and his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord. [Jer. 31, 14] Hence Paul says, Whether prophecies, they shall be made void; whether tongues, they shall cease; whether knowledge, it shall be destroyed. [1 Cor. 13, 8] Or certainly the system of the heavens is that very vivifying power which forms the spirits of angels. For as God is the Cause of causes, and as He is the Life of the living, so is He the Reason ['Ratio.'] of reasonable creatures. The Lord therefore then declares the system ['Rationem'] of the heavens, when He brings Himself before us, as to the way in which He rules over Elect spirits. He then relates the system of the heavens, when the mist of our mind is wiped away, and He manifests Himself to us in bright vision. Whence the Lord also says in the Gospel; The hour cometh when I shall no longer speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall

shew you plainly of the Father. [John 16, 25] For He asserts that He shews plainly of the Father, because by the appearance of His Majesty, which was then manifested, He shews both how He springs from the Father not unequal to Himself, and how the Spirit of Both proceeds coeternal with Both. For we shall then openly behold, how That Which Is by an origin, is not subsequent to Him from Whom It springs;

how He Who is produced by procession, is not preceded by Those [Plural. see note at end of Book XXIX] from Whom He proceeded. We shall then behold openly how both The One is divisibly Three, and the Three indivisibly One. The tongue of God then Who then speaks, is the visible brightness of God exalting us. And the harmony of heaven will then sleep, because when the Rewarder of our works appears in judgment, the words of exhortations will at once cease. Whence also the very period of the resurrection is openly subjoined, when it is stated immediately;

Ver. 38. When the dust was hardened into earth, and the clods were bound together. [v] 18. For the sacred language describes, after its custom, things still future, as though already passed: observing, namely, in itself, that which is said by it; Who made the things that are to come. [Is. 45, 11] The dust is therefore hardened at that time into earth, because it is brought back to solid limbs. And the clods are bound together, doubtless, because solid bodies arise together gathered from the dust. But after we have stated how these words of the Lord are to be understood of the future, let us now point out what they mean concerning the present. 19. Who will declare the system of the heavens, and who will make the harmony of the heaven to sleep? The Lord declares the system of the heavens, whilst He now illuminates the minds of His Elect by teaching heavenly secrets. But He makes the harmony of heaven to sleep, whilst by a righteous judgment He conceals from the hearts of the reprobate the harmonious hymns of angels, and those joys of heavenly virtues. For this harmony of heaven, though inwardly wakeful in itself, yet slumbers outwardly through the very ignorance of the reprobate. The system of the heavenly mystery is therefore proclaimed, and yet the harmony of heaven is permitted to sleep; because to some the knowledge of the heavenly retribution is disclosed by inspiration, and what is the sweetness of inward praise is concealed from others.

20. The system of the heavens is set forth, because to the minds of the Elect there is unceasingly laid open what is the recompense of heavenly rewards; in order doubtless that they may unceasingly advance, and, passing over visible things, may stretch themselves forward to invisible. For every visible object which arrests the reprobate in this life, urges the Elect onward to other things. For whilst they behold the good deeds which have been done, they burn with love towards Him by Whom they have been done; and they love Him the more surpassingly, the more they consider that He was prior to that which He Himself created good. For the silently sounding invisible tongue of compunction speaks this to them within. And they hear it the louder within, the more entirely they turn away from the din of outward desires. To these then the harmony of heaven sleeps not, because their mind learns, by applying the ear of love, how great is the sweetness of heavenly praise. For they hear

within that which they desire, and are, by their very longing for the Godhead, instructed in the rewards of heavenly blessings. Whence also they bear this present life, not only when opposing, but even when favouring them, as a heavy burden; because every thing which they behold is burdensome to them, whilst they are kept from enjoying that which they hear within. Every thing which is near them they deem heavy, because it is not that for which they pant.

But their mind which is unceasingly wearied by the very labours of this temporal condition, hangs on the hope of being taken up to that heavenly joy, while, as the harmony of heaven bursts forth within on the ear of the heart, they daily expect for themselves the society of the heavenly citizens. That harmony of heavenly praise had burst forth in the ear of him, who was saying, I will enter into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even to the house of God, in the voice of exultation and confession, the sound of a feasting city. [Ps. 42, 4] What else therefore but the harmony of heaven was awakening him, who had heard within the voice of exultation and confession, and the sound of a feasting city?

21. But this harmony sleeps for the reprobate, because it does not at all make itself known to their hearts by the voice of compunction. For they do not strive to think of that much longed for multitude of heavenly citizens, they behold with no ray of warmth those banquets of inward revelry, they are not borne up within by any wing of contemplation. For they are enslaved to visible objects alone, and therefore they hear within nought of inward sweetness; because, as we said before, the deafening tumults of worldly care oppress them in the ear of their hearts. Because then in the dispensation of the secret judgment that, which is laid open to some, is closed to others; and that which is disclosed to some is concealed from others, let it he rightly said; Who will declare the system of the heavens, and who will make the harmony of heaven to sleep? But this was then more fully disclosed to us, when our Redeemer, appearing in the mystery of the dispensation, both conferred mercy on the unworthy, and excluded those from Him, who seemed to be worthy. Whence it is here also fitly subjoined;

Ver. 38. When the dust was hardened into earth, and the clods were bound together. [vi] 22. Whom do we understand by dust but sinners, who, steadied by no weight of reason, are hurried away by the blast of any temptation? Of whom it is written; Not so the ungodly, not so, but as the dust which the wind sweepeth away from the face of the earth. [Ps. 1, 4] The dust therefore was hardened into earth, when sinners, having been called in the Church, were confirmed by the system of transmitted faith: in order that they, who before, being fickle through inconstancy, were raised up by the breath of temptation, might afterwards remain unmoved against temptations, and, constantly adhering to God, might hold a firm weight of good living. But clods are composed of moisture and of earth. The clods therefore are bound together in this earth, because sinners, when called and watered by the grace of the Holy Spirit, are joined together in the union of charity. These clods are therefore bound together in the earth, when people, who were before of different sentiments, as it were, in the dispersion of the dust, having received afterwards the grace of the Spirit, so agreed in

that most peaceful concord of unanimity, that, when there were three thousand, or again five thousand, it was said, as Scripture witnesses, That there was in them one heart and one soul. [Acts 4, 32] The Lord therefore daily binds together these clods in the earth, of one dust indeed, but distinguished, as it were, by different size; because, having preserved the unity of the sacrament, He collects together faithful people in the Church according to the difference of their customs and languages. The Lord already designated these clods at that time, when He ordered them to sit down fifty or a hundred together, to eat the bread and fishes. [Mark 6, 4]

23. But if we observe these clods in the Church according to the diversity of their merits, we are perhaps able to distinguish them still more minutely. For while there is one order of preachers, another of hearers; another of rulers, and another of subjects; one of the married, another of those who abstain from marriage; one of penitents, another of virgins; there is, as it were, a diversely distinguished form of clods from the same earth, when in the one faith, and in the one charity, the merits of good workers are shewn to be unequal. That people, who with the same zeal offered different gifts for the construction of the tabernacle, signified these clods; of which it is written; Whatever was necessary for the worship of the tabernacle, and for the holy garments, men with women furnished, bracelets and earrings, rings and armlets. Every golden vessel was set apart for the offerings of the Lord. If any man had blue, purple, and twice dyed scarlet, fine linen, and goats' hair, &c. [Ex. 35, 21, 23]

24. For the adorning, therefore, of the tabernacle men offer gifts together with women, because in fulfilling the service of Holy Church, both the lofty deeds of the strong and the lowliest works of the weak are reckoned. But what is designated by bracelets which bind the arms, except the works of sturdily labouring rulers? And what is expressed by earrings, but the obedience of subjects? What by rings, but the seal of secrets? For teachers commonly put a seal on that which they consider cannot be understood by their hearers. And what is spoken of by armlets, but the ornaments of the first works? What is understood by a golden vessel set apart for the offerings of the Lord, except the understanding of the Godhead? which is the more detached from the love of inferior objects, the more it is raised to love those things only which are eternal. What by blue, but the hope of heavenly things? What by purple, but blood, and endurance of sufferings, displayed from love of the eternal kingdom? And what is pointed out by the twice dyed scarlet, but charity, which is twice dipped in order to its perfection, because it is adorned with the love of God, and one's neighbour? What by fine linen, but the immaculate purity of the flesh? And what is designated by the goats' hair, of which the roughness of the hair cloths is woven, except the hard affliction of penitents?

Whilst some therefore exercise their resolute authority by bracelets and rings, and others by earrings and armlets display devoted obedience, and upright conduct; some by the golden vessel which has been set apart possess a surpassing and more accurate knowledge of God; others by the blue, purple, and scarlet, cease not to hope for, believe, and love the heavenly things they have heard of, even those which they do not yet understand with more accurate

knowledge; some by the fine linen offer the purity of the flesh; others by the goats' hairs bewail with severity that which they have committed with pleasure; innumerable clods are produced, as it were, from one earth, because unlike actions of the faithful proceed from one and the like obedience. But these clods would doubtless not be bound together and rise from the dust, did not the dust first receive water, and become solid from the moisture it has imbibed: because if the grace of the Holy Spirit did not bedew sinners, the unity of charity would not keep them firmly bound to deeds of faith. Let the Lord then make known when He will declare the system of the heavens, or make the harmony of heaven to sleep. For He says; When the dust was being hardened into earth, and the clods were being bound together.

As if He were saying, My calling and My choice being then first manifested, I both disclosed, not without compassion, spiritual secrets to some, and hid them, not without justice, from others, when I was rejecting some, and was uniting others within the Church in the concord of unity. But because this Holy Church, when rejected by the unbelief of the Jews, betook herself to spoil the Gentiles, and to convert them in her own body, (which she did indeed not in her own strength, but that of the Lord,) it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 39. Wilt thou seize the prey for the lioness, and fill the soul of her whelps? [vii] 25. She is doubtless that lioness, of which Job was saying, when he saw proud Judaea passed over by the preaching of the Church; The children of the dealers have not trodden it, nor hath the lioness passed through it. [Job 28, 8] The Lord therefore seizes the prey for this lioness, to fill the soul of her whelps, because for the increase of this Church, He has carried off many from the Gentile world, and has, by the gain of souls, satisfied the ravenous wishes of the Apostles. For they are in truth called whelps from the tenderness of their mind, and the weakness of their fear, because, after the Lord had suffered, they used to sit with closed doors, as is written of them; When it was late on that day, the first of the week, and the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst of them. [John 20, 19] Whence it is here also fitly subjoined of these same whelps;

Ver. 40. When they couch in their dens, and lie in wait in their caves. [viii] 26. For when the holy Apostles did not at all rise up against the limbs of the devil in the voice of bold preaching, and, not being yet strengthened after the Lord's Passion with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, did not preach their Redeemer with firm authority, they were still lying in wait, as it were, in dens against their adversaries. For when the doors were closed, the whelps who were about to ravage the world were couching, as it were, in certain secret caves: in order that they might afterwards boldly seize the prey of souls, of whom it was then certain, from their very concealment, that they were afraid of the assault of the world on themselves. These whelps in ambush with those closed doors sought for the death of our death, that so they might destroy our guilt, and kill all the life of sin within us. To the chief of these, that famished, but still vigorous whelp, it is said, when the Gentiles had been set before him by the linen sheet, as though the prey had been pointed out to him, Kill and eat.

[Acts 10, 13] These whelps, as though they were still weak, are ordered to couch in their dens, when it is said to them by the voice of the Lord, Tarry ye here in the city until ye be endowed with power from on high. [Luke 24, 49] Are not they rightly called the whelps of the lioness, who, having been born in the Church, seized with their mouth the opposing world?

27. And these things we know were done by the holy Apostles, these also we now see done by perfect teachers. For though they are the fathers of the people that follow them, yet are they the sons of those who go before; whence they are not improperly called whelps. Or certainly because though they are the teachers of certain of the faithful, yet they boast that they are the disciples of the Church universal. The Lord, therefore, seizes the prey for the lioness, because by the virtue of His inspiration He seizes the life of offenders from error; and He fills the soul of her whelps, because by the conversion of many He satisfies the holy longings of teachers. Of which whelps it is well subjoined; When they couch in their dens, and lie in wait in their caves. For all seasons are not fitted for teaching. For the value of sayings is commonly lost, if they are brought forward out of season. And frequently even that which is said gently, is animated by the concurrence of a fitting season. He therefore knows how to speak well, who knows also how to be silent at proper times. For of what use is it to reprove an angry man, at the time when with estranged mind he is not only unable to listen to the words of others, but is hardly able to hear himself. For he who reproves an angry man by inveighing against him, inflicts, as it were, blows on a drunken man who feels them not.

Teaching therefore, in order to be able to reach the hearts of the hearers, must consider what seasons are suitable to it. It is therefore well said of these whelps, When they couch in their dens, and lie in wait in their cares. For when holy teachers perceive things to be reproved, and yet confine themselves in their thoughts by silence, they lurk, as it were, in caves, and cover themselves, as if in dens; because they are concealed in their own thoughts. But when they have found a fit season, they suddenly leap forth, they suppress nothing which ought to be said, and seize with the grasp of severe reproof the neck of the haughty. The Lord is therefore daily seizing the prey for this lioness, whether by Apostles, or by teachers whom He has appointed in the place of the Apostles; and by those whom He has seized, He ceases not to seize others also. For the righteous seize the sinners of this world for this purpose, that others also may be snatched from the world by them when they are converted. Whence the Gentile world itself also, which was seized by the holy mouth of the Apostles, is now ravenous after others, with the same hunger, as it knows that it was itself desired by the Apostles. Wherefore it is also fitly subjoined;

Ver. 41. Who prepareth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry to God, wandering because they have not meat? [ix] 28. For what is designated by the name of the raven, and its young ones, but the Gentile world blackened with sin? Of which it is said by the Prophet; Who giveth to beasts their food, and to the young ravens which call on Him. [Ps. 147, 9] For the beasts receive food, when minds before brutal, are satiated with the food of Holy

Scripture. But food is given to the young ravens, namely, to the sons of the Gentiles, when their longing is refreshed by our conversion [al. 'conversation.']. This raven was food, while Holy Church was seeking for it. But it now receives food, because it seeks out others for conversion. 29. And its young, that is, the holy preachers which are sprung from it, truly trust not in themselves, but in the strength of their Redeemer. Whence it is well said: When his young ones cry to God. For they know that they can do nothing by their own strength. And though in their pious wishes they hunger for the gain of souls, yet they desire these effects to be wrought by Him Who works all things within. For they understand by true faith, that neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God Who giveth the increase. [1 Cor. 3, 7]

30. But in that which is said, Wandering because they have no meat, nothing else is designated by this wandering but the wishes of eager preachers. For while they desire to receive people into the bosom of the Church, being kindled with great warmth, they put forth their desire now to gather in these, and now those. For this very agitation of thought is, as it were, a kind of wandering; and they pass over as if to different places, with change of will, whilst they run here and there with ravenous mind, in numberless ways, and into different parts, for uniting souls together.

31. This wandering the young ones of the ravens, that is the sons of the Gentiles, learned from the teacher of the Gentiles himself. For in proportion to the strong love with which he burns, does he pass with rapid wandering from place to place; he wishes to pass from one place to another, because the love itself which fills him, urges him on. For when placed far away from the Romans, he writes, I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come to you: for I long to see you. [Rom. l, 9-11] When kept at Ephesus, he writes to the Corinthians, Behold this third time I am ready to come to you. [2 Cor. 12, 14] Again, when tarrying at Ephesus, he speaks to the Galatians, saying, I desire to be with you now, and to change my voice. [Gal. 4, 20] When he was shut up also at Rome in the close keeping of the prison, because he is not permitted to go himself to the Philippians, he promises to send a disciple, saying, I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good heart, having known your state. [Phil. 2, 19] When bound also in chains, and detained at Ephesus, he writes to the Colossians, For though I be absent in body, yet am I with you in the Spirit.

[Col. 2, 5] Behold how he wanders, as it were, in his holy longing; he is detained here in body, he is led thither in the Spirit; and exhibits the affection of fatherly love to those who are present, makes it known to those who are absent; bestows his labours on those who are before him, expresses his wishes for those who only hear him [so nearly all copies. Ben. prefers 'the absent.']; efficaciously present to those with whom he was, and yet not absent from those with whom he was not. But we gain a better notion of his wandering, if we consider still further his words to the Corinthians; for he says, I will come to you, when I shall have passed through Macedonia ; for I shall pass through Macedonia; but I shall

perhaps remain with you, or even winter. [1 Cor. 16, 5. 6. Let us consider, I pray you, what is this wandering. For behold in one place he remains for a while, in another he says that he will go, and in another he promises that he will turn aside. Why is it that he so anxiously distributes himself through so many places, except that he is bound around all with one love? For love, which is wont to unite things that are divided, compels the one heart of Paul to be divided amongst many things. And yet he gathers it together the more closely in God, the more widely he scatters it forth in holy longings.

Paul therefore wishes to say all things at once in his preaching, to behold all men at once through his love; because he both wishes, by remaining in the flesh, to live for all, and, by passing out of the flesh, to profit all by the sacrifice of faith. Let therefore the young ones of the ravens wander, that is, let the sons of the Gentiles imitate their master, let them shake off the torpor of their mind, and when they find not the gain of souls, that is, their food, let them not rest; let them stretch themselves forth to advancement after advancement; and, toiling for the benefit of many, let them wander, as it were, and hunger for their own refreshment. But because, in running to and fro by the works of preaching, they cease not to feed the Gentile world with the refreshment of faith, let it be rightly said, Who prepareth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry to God, wandering because they have no meat.

32. But by the name of 'raven,' the people of the Jews, black with the demerit of unbelief, can also he designated. For its young ones are said to cry to God, that food might be prepared for this very raven by the Lord; doubtless, because the holy Apostles, begotten of the flesh of the people of Israel, while they were pouring forth prayers to the Lord for their nation, fed with spiritual wisdom their parent people, as the young ravens feed him from whom they are sprung in the flesh. While therefore his young ones cry out, food is provided for the raven; because, while the Apostles entreat, the people, which was before unbelieving, is led to the knowledge of the faith: and from the preaching of its sons is fed, as it were, by the voice of its young ones. But we ought in this verse carefully to notice that point, that food is said to be prepared for this raven, first when his young ones are crying, and afterwards when they are wandering. For food is prepared for the raven, at the cry of his young ones, while at the preaching of the Apostles, Judaea, on hearing the word of God, was filled with spiritual wisdom, at one time in three, and at another in five thousand persons. But when, through the multitude of the reprobate, it was exercising its cruelty against the preachers, and was destroying, as it were, the life of the young ravens, they were dispersed also into every quarter of the world.

Whence also they say to these their fathers in the flesh, who were opposing their spiritual preaching, We ought to speak the word of God to you first, but since ye reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles; [Acts 13, 46] knowing full surely that after the Gentiles believed, Judaea also would come to the faith. Whence also it is written, Until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in, and so all Israel should be saved. [Rom. 11, 25. 26. Because therefore the holy Apostles especially endeavoured, first

to preach to those who heard them, and afterwards to set before those that resisted the example of the converted Gentiles; the hungry young ones sought its food for this raven, first by crying, and afterwards by wandering. For the raven finds food from the quarter where the young ones wander; for whilst the Jewish people beholds the Gentiles converted to God by the labour of preachers, it blushes sometime at the last, at the folly of its own unbelief, and then understands the sentences of Holy Scripture, when it perceives that they were known to the Gentiles before they were known to itself. And the wandering of its young ones having been fulfilled, it opens the mouth of its heart to take in the holy word; because when the courses of the Apostles through the world have been completed, it at last spiritually understands those things, from which it had long abstained through the bondage of unbelief.

But because the virtue of Divine Power alone effects all these things, it is rightly said, Who prepareth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry to God, wandering because they have no meat. Thou understandest, Except Myself, Who both bear with the unbelieving people, when its sons entreat, and feed it by their preaching, and support it, to be converted at length in the end, when they wander to other places.

[MORAL INTERPRETATION]

33. There is something further, which can be understood of this raven in a moral sense. For when its young are hatched, it declines, as is said, to give them food to the full, before they become dark in their plumage, and allows them to suffer from want of food, until its own resemblance appears in them, through the blackness of their wings. But they wander hither and thither in the nest, and seek for the support of food with open mouth. But when they have begun to get black, it seeks the more eagerly for food to be given them, the longer it has deferred feeding them. Every learned preacher, who cries with a loud voice, whilst he carries the memory of his own sins and the knowledge of his own infirmity, as a kind of black shade of colour, is doubtless a raven. To whom disciples indeed are born in the faith, but perhaps they still do not know how to consider their own infirmity: perchance they turn away their memory from their past sins, and thus display not that blackness of humility which ought to be assumed against the pride of this world. But they open their mouth, as it were, to receive food, when they seek to be instructed in sublime secrets. But their own teacher supplies them the more scantily with the food of sublime instruction, the more he perceives that they bewail inadequately their past sins.

He wails for them in truth, and warns them, first to become black, from the brightness of this life, by the lamentations of penitence, and then to receive afterwards the suitable nourishment of most subtle preaching. The raven beholds in the young ones their gaping mouths, but he first looks for their bodies to be covered with the blackness of wings. So too a discreet teacher imparts not inward mysteries to the understanding of those, whom he considers to have not yet in any way cast themselves off from this world. The less black then his disciples are, as it were, outwardly, through devotion to the present life, the less

are they filled with the food of the word within: and the less they strip themselves of bodily glory, the more are they bereft of spiritual refreshment.

34. But if in the confession of their past life, they put forth the groans of their lamentation, as darkening plumage, the teacher immediately flies in contemplation, to bring down food from on high, as a raven thinking of the refreshment of its young ones; and brings back to them in his mouth the food they are gaping for: whilst with that wisdom which he has begun [al. 'gotten'], he supplies by his teaching the food of life to his hungry disciples. And he refreshes them the more eagerly from above, the more truly he perceives that, by the lamentation of penitence, they are turning black from the brightness of the world.

35. But whilst the young are clothing themselves in the dark hue of their wings, they also give promise of flying; because the more disciples think meanly of themselves, the more they despise and afflict themselves, the more do they hold out the hope of advancing to higher things. Whence also the teacher takes care to feed those more speedily, whom by certain marks he now foresees to be capable of assisting others. For hence Paul admonishes Timothy to nurture, as it were, with greater anxiety the newly fledged young, while he says; And the things that thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. [2 Tim. 2, 2] And while this discretion in teaching is carefully preserved by a preacher, a more abundant power of preaching is given him from above. For whilst he knows through love how to sympathize with his afflicted disciples, whilst through discretion he understands the fit season for teaching, he enjoys the greater gifts of his understanding, not only for himself, but for those also, to whom he devotes the efforts of his labour. Whence it is here also fitly said; Who prepareth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry to God, wandering because they have no meat. For when the young ones cry to be filled, food is prepared for the raven; because while good hearers hunger after the word of God, greater gifts of understanding are given to their teachers for their refreshment. It follows ;

Chap, xxxix. ver. 1. Knowest thou the time when the wild goats (ibices) bring forth in the rocks, or hast thou observed the hinds when they calve? [x]

36. The southern part of the world calls birds, which inhabit the streams of the Nile, 'ibices.' But the eastern and western quarters term small quadrupeds, 'ibices,' whose custom also it is to bring forth in the rocks, because they know not how to dwell except in the rocks. And if they ever fall down, even from the lofty tops of the mountains, they catch themselves without hurt on their own horns. For in falling they strike their head, and while they present the tips of its horns, the whole body is exempt from the injury of the fall. But it is the custom with hinds to destroy the serpents which they have found, and to mangle their limbs with their bites. But it is said that, if ever they cross rivers, they rest the weight of their heads on the backs of those in front, and that, succeeding in turn to each other, they do not feel at all the labour of the weight. Why is it then that blessed Job is questioned concerning the bringing forth of the wild goats, and the hinds, except that by wild goats, and hinds, is signified the character of spiritual masters? For they in truth bring forth as wild goats in

the rocks; because by the teaching of the fathers, who are called rocks for their solidity, they bring forth souls to conversion. They, like wild goats, feel not the losses of any fall, when they are caught on their own horns;

because whatever temporal ruin befals them, they support themselves on the testaments of Holy Scripture, and are saved, as it were, by being caught on their horns. For of these testaments it is said, Horns are in His hands. [Hab. 3, 4] They fly therefore to the consolation of Scripture, when they are struck with the loss of any temporal fall. Did not Paul, when sinking through the adversities of this world, catch himself, like the wild goats, on his horns; when he was saying, Whatsoever things were written were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. [Rom. 15, 4] They are also called hinds, as is said by Jeremiah of teachers carelessly deserting the children who were born to them; The hind calved in the field, and forsook it. [Jer. 14, 5] They, like hinds, live on destroyed sins, as on dead serpents; and from this very destruction of their sins are they more eagerly ardent for the fountain of life. Whence the Psalmist says, As the hart longeth for the fountains of water, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. [Ps. 42, 1] They also, while they pass over the gliding moments of this temporal state, as if they were streams, place their burdens each on the other, being compassionate from love; because they keep with careful observation that which is written; Bear ye one anothers burdens, and so ye will fulfil the law of Christ.

[Gal. 6, 2] But because after the coming of the Lord, spiritual teachers were scattered through the world, who were able by their preaching to travail with souls in conversion; and because this very season of the Lord's Incarnation was not known, before the voices of the Prophets, though His coming Incarnation was foreknown to all the Elect, blessed Job is well questioned concerning the time when the wild goats and hinds bring forth, and it is said to him; Knowest thou the time when the wild goats bring forth in the rocks, or hast thou observed the hinds when they calve? As if it were said to him; Thou believest thyself to have acted in some sublime manner, because thou foreseest not, as yet, that time, when spiritual masters, sent into the world, beget children by the doctrine of the ancient fathers, and by their labours gather together for Me the gain of souls. For wert thou to behold their fruit, like the offspring of wild goats and hinds, thou wouldest think very humbly of thine own virtue. For the great things which we do, we regard as the very least, when we balance them with nobler examples. But they then increase in their merits with God, when through our humility they become less to ourselves.

37. But teachers can he understood by the designation of 'hinds,' but hearers by the term 'wild goats,' which are very small animals. But the wild goats bring forth in the rocks, because they are made fruitful in order to the performance of good works, by the examples of preceding fathers, in order that, if they hear perchance sublime precepts, and, conscious of their own infirmity, doubt their ability to fulfil them, they may look to the doings of their elders, and from considering their boldness, bring forth the offspring of good works. For to speak of a few instances among many, that the studious reader may learn much in few

words, when such an one is hard pressed with insulting words, and is unable to maintain the virtue of patience, let him recal to his memory the conduct of David, who, when Semei was assailing him with so many insults, and the armed chieftains were striving to avenge him, says, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Saruia? Let him curse; for the Lord hath ordered him to curse David; and who is there who dareth to say, wherefore hath he done so. [2 Sam. 16] And a little after, Let him alone, that he may curse according to the command of the Lord, if perchance the Lord may look on my affliction, and requite me good for this cursing to-day.

[ibid. 11, 12] In which words he plainly shews, that, when flying from his son rebelling against him, in consequence of the sins committed with Bethsabee, he recalled to his mind the evil which he had committed, and patiently submitted to what he heard, and that he believed insulting words to be not so much reproaches, as means of assistance, by which he considered that he could be purified, and have pity shewn to him. For we then bear patiently reproaches heaped on us, when we recur in the secrecy of our mind to what we have done wrong. For it will seem a light thing that we are assailed undeservedly, when we perceive in our conduct that what we deserve is much worse. And thus it comes to pass that the insults deserve our thanks rather than our anger, by whose occurrence we trust that a greater punishment can he avoided in God's judgment.

38. Behold, while another person is advancing in worldly prosperity, he feels himself assaulted with the provocations of lust, as the joy of his heart panders to his wishes; but he recals to his memory the conduct of Joseph, and maintains himself in the stronghold of chastity. For he, when he saw that he was persuaded by his mistress to forfeit his chastity, says; Behold my master, having given all things to me, knoweth not what he hath in his house, nor is there any thing which is not in my power, or which he hath not delivered to me, except thee, who art his wife; how then can I do this wickedness, and sin against my lord? [Gen. 39, 8. 9. By which words there is shewn one who suddenly brought to mind the good things he had obtained, and overcame the evil which was assailing him; and who, by bringing to mind the favour he had received, crushed the power of imminent sin. For when slippery pleasure assails us in prosperity, this very prosperity must be opposed to the sting of temptation; in order that we may be the more ashamed at committing sin, the more we call to mind that we have as a free gift received good things from God, and that we may convert the gift of outward blessings which has been conferred, into arms of virtues; that the goods we have received may be before our eyes, and that we may overcome those things that allure us.

For because pleasure itself arises from prosperity, it must he struck down by a consideration of the same prosperity, in order that our enemy may perish by that same from which he takes his rise. For we must use consideration, lest we should turn into sin the gift we have received, and so, lest the whirlpool of wickedness should swallow us up, through the favour of life. For we kindle inextinguishably against us the wrath of the Heavenly Judge, if, even from His very bounty we fight against His goodness.

39. Another, seeking after the sweetness of inward knowledge, and unable to attain its secrets, looks at the life of Daniel as a pattern, and attains the desired eminence of wisdom. For he in truth who is afterwards called, by the voice of the angel, in consequence of his eagerness after inward knowledge, a man of desires, [Dan 10, 11] is said to have first tamed within him the desires of the flesh in the king's court, so that he touched none of the delectable meats, but preferred a harder and rougher fare to that which was sumptuous and more delicate, [ib. 1, 8] in order that he might attain to the delight of inward nourishment, while taking from himself the pleasures of outward food, and that he might 'enjoy more eagerly the taste of wisdom within, the more firmly he had outwardly restrained his fleshly taste, for the sake of this same wisdom. For if we cut off a pleasure from the flesh, we presently find a spiritual delight. For if outward wandering is shut out, an inward retreat is laid open to the earnestness of the mind. For the more the mind is unable, on account of its discipline, to spread itself beyond itself, the more is it able to extend and advance above itself: because even a tree is compelled to grow in height, which is prevented from spreading out into branches: and when we obstruct the streams of a fountain, we provoke the streams to rise to a higher level.

Whilst then thoughtful persons look at the life of Saints as a model, the wild goats drop their young on the rocks. Hence it is that Paul was exhorting his hearers to bring forth as wild goats in the rocks, when, after having enumerated the virtues of their ancestors, he was saying; Having so great a cloud of witnesses placed over laying aside every weight, and the sin which surrounds us, let us run with patience to the contest set before. [Heb.12, 1] And again; Whose faith imitate, considering the end of their conversation. [ib. 13, 7]

40. But when we conceive in our heart the Divine precepts, we do not bring them forth at once, as if already compacted solidly by thought. Whence also blessed Job is questioned not as to the bringing forth of the wild goats, but as to the time of their bringing forth. For if in truth we hardly comprehend this time in ourselves, we are much more ignorant of it in the mind of another. For the seeds of heavenly fear having been first conceived in the womb of the heart, are consolidated by studious meditation in order to remain; after that, when, having been kept firm by strict attention of thought, they proceed to reasonable discretion, they are formed, as it were, into distinct limbs; next, having been conformed by a habit of perseverance, they come, as it were, to the solidity of bones, but lastly, when strengthened by perfect authority, they proceed, as it were, to the birth. But no one observes these growths of the Divine seeds in another's heart, save Him Who creates it. For though we know, from the evidence of certain facts, that a person has conceived the might of heavenly desire, yet, when it comes forth to the birth, we cannot tell.

41. But the seeds which have been conceived in the mind frequently cannot arrive at perfection; because they precede, in their coming forth, the proper time of their birth. And because they come before the eyes of men not yet fully fashioned in thought, they die as if born out of due time. For the tongue of man frequently extinguishes virtues which are still tender, when it praises them as though already strong. For they perish the more rapidly, the more

unseasonably they come forth to the knowledge of applause. But sometimes, when our imperfect and feeble thought is brought too soon before men, it is dissipated by the assault of opponents, and when it endeavours to appear to exist before the time, it causes itself not to be. But because holy men take care that all their good thoughts gain strength in secret, and first form within the womb of their mind the offspring which is about to be produced, blessed Job is rightly questioned concerning the season for bringing forth; because, namely, it is not known to any one, excepting to the Creator, what is the fitting season in each case. But He, when He looks to the secret recesses of the heart, discovers at what time our good deeds are properly brought forth to the knowledge of men. It is therefore well said; Knowest thou the time when the wild goats bring forth in the rocks? As if He openly said, As I, Who therefore cause the progeny of the Elect to live, because I bring them forth at the time foreknown. But when the birth of the hearers has been completed, it is well subjoined; Or hast thou observed the hinds when they calve? For to observe the hinds when they calve, is to examine with careful consideration those labours of fathers, who beget spiritual children.

42. For it should be carefully noticed, that this language is so strictly attended to, that it is said, Hast thou observed? Because it is in truth the habit of very few to consider what labour there is in the preachings of the fathers, with what great pains, and efforts, as it were, they bring forth souls in faith and conversation; with what careful circumspection they watch themselves, that they may be resolute in their commands, sympathizing in infirmities, fearful in threats, gentle in exhortations, humble in displaying their authority, overbearing in their contempt for temporal goods, unbending in the endurance of adversity, and yet weak, when they ascribe not to themselves their own strength; how great is their pain for those that fall, how great their fear for those who stand, with what ardour they seek to gain some things, with what anxiety they preserve others which they have gained. Because, therefore, it is the habit of very few to consider these things, it is well said to him,

Or hast thou observed the kinds when they calve? 43. But it is no objection, that God, when speaking of teachers, describes them under the type, not of stags, but of hinds. Because, doubtless, they are true teachers, who, while they are fathers through the vigour of their discipline, know how to be mothers through their bowels of compassion. Who endure the labours of holy conception, and bear within the womb of love children to be brought forth to God. For in the production of offspring mothers endure the greater labour, who bear for a long period of months the growing conception within their womb, and who deposit it, not without great pain, when it comes forth from the womb. Whence it is here also subjoined with fit consideration; Ver. 2. Hast thou numbered the months of their conception? [xi]

44. For when holy men think of the improvement of their hearers, they bear already a conception, as it were, in their womb. But when they put off some things which ought to be said, and seek a season fit for their exhortations, they are detained, as it were, by a weary length of months, from that birth which they wish to take place. And frequently when they are unwilling to express some of their sentiments to their hearers unseasonably; by this very slowness in declaring their opinion they are strengthened with greater wisdom,

whether for giving this advice, or for reproving these faults. And while the life of their children is considered, but the tongue utters not the thoughts of the mind before the time, the offspring which has been already conceived grows, as it were, within the womb; in order that the sentiment of their heart may then come forth to the knowledge of the hearers, when being usefully uttered it can live, as if at the fit season for its birth. But since men are ignorant when, or how, these things take place in the mind of teachers, but God, in order to the glory of retribution, considers not only the effects, but also the seasons of thoughts, it is rightly said to blessed Job, Hast thou numbered the months of their conception? Thou understandest, As I, Who count in holy preachers not only the fruits of their outward doings, but their long-continued meditations themselves; Who reserve them also for retribution.

45. By months, because they are an aggregate of days, multiplied virtues can be likewise understood. In months also the moon is new born; and there is no hindrance, if the new creating of regeneration is understood by months. Of which the Apostle Paul says, In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. [Gal. 6, 15] When holy men, therefore, prepare themselves for preaching, they first renew themselves within with virtues, in order to accord in their living with that which they teach in words. They first consider their own internal state, and cleanse themselves from all the filth of sin; taking special care to shine forth against anger with the light of patience, against the lust of the flesh to glitter with cleanness even of the heart, against torpor, to be bright with zeal, against the confused motions of precipitation to glow with serene gravity, against pride to shine with true humility, against fear to be brilliant with the rays of authority. Because therefore they first accumulate such attention on themselves, months of virtues pass, as it were, in the conception of holy preaching. And the Lord alone numbers these months, because no one but He Who has given these virtues, values them in their hearts. And because the produce of fruit follows according to the measure of their virtues, it is rightly subjoined;

And hast thou known the time when they bring forth? [xii] 46. Thou understandest, As I, Who, when I number months in the thought of virtues, know when they are able to bring forth that which they wish to perform; because, doubtless, whilst I behold the secrets of the heart, I judge from the weight of thought within, the future result of the work without. It follows; Ver. 3. They bow themselves for the birth, and bring forth, and utter roarings. [xiii]

47. For they roar in truth, whilst by bending themselves down, they bring forth the souls of their hearers in the conversation of light; because they cannot release us from eternal punishments, except by tears and pain. For holy preachers sow in tears now, that they may afterwards reap a crop of joys. They are now like hinds in the pangs of bringing forth, that they may afterwards be fruitful in spiritual offspring. For, to speak of one out of many, I see Paul, like a hind, uttering roarings of great pain in his pangs of birth. For he says, My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, till Christ be formed in you, I desire to be with you now, and to change my voice, since I am perplexed for you. [Gal. 4, 19. 20. Lo, he wishes to change his voice in his child-birth, that the voice of preaching may he turned

into the roaring of pain. He wishes to change his voice, because those whom he had already brought forth by preaching, he was again bringing forth with groans in forming them anew. What a roaring did this travailing hind utter, when he was compelled to exclaim to these same persons, returning after him, saying, O senseless Galatians! who hath bewitched you? and are ye so foolish, that when ye have begun in the Spirit, ye are now made perfect by the flesh? [Gal. 3, 1. ib. 3] Or certainly; Ye did run well; who hindered you that ye should not obey the truth?

[Gal. 5, 7] What a roaring was there in the birth-pains of this hind, which brought forth with so many difficulties her young so long conceived, and which knew they had returned, when at length brought forth, to the womb of wickedness? Let us consider what pain, what labour she suffered, who after she had had strength to bring forth what she had conceived, was, again, obliged to resuscitate them when dead.

48. But it must be particularly observed, that these hinds bow down to bring forth; doubtless, because they would not have strength to bring forth, if they were standing erect. For unless holy preachers were to come down from that boundlessness of inward contemplation which they embrace, by bending, as it were, to our infirmity, in the humblest preaching, they would surely never beget sons in the faith. For they could not benefit us, if they continued in the uprightness of their own height. But let us see the hind bending herself to bring forth. It says, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; as unto babes in Christ, I have given you milk and not meat. [1 Cor. 3, 1. 2. And presently it mentions the causes of this bending, For hitherto ye were not able, neither yet now are ye able. [ibid. But this hind, which has been bent on our account, let us, I pray you, behold erect says; We speak wisdom among them that are perfect. [1 Cor. 2, 6] And again, Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God. [2 Cor 5, 13] But when it is beside itself to God, we do not at all understand its transport. It therefore bows down to us, in order to gain us. Whence it fitly subjoins in that place, Whether we be sober, it is for your cause. [ibid.

For if holy men were to choose to preach to us those things which they hear, when they are intoxicated with heavenly contemplation, and did not rather temper their knowledge with some moderation and sobriety, who could receive those streams of the heavenly fount, in the still contracted channel of his understanding? But these bended hinds are called elsewhere 'heavens,' of which it is said, Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down. [Ps. 144, 5] For when the heavens are bowed down, the Lord descends, because, when holy preachers bend themselves in their preaching, they pour the knowledge of the Godhead into our hearts. For the Lord would not at all descend to us, if His preachers were to remain inflexible in the rigour of contemplation. The heavens are therefore bowed down, for the Lord to descend, the hinds are bent, for us to be born in the new light of faith. These bended hinds are in the Song of Songs called the breasts of the Bride, as it is written, Thy breasts are better than wine. [Cant. 1, 2] For they are the breasts, which, fixed on the casket of the bosom, feed us with milk; because they themselves clinging to the secrets of loftiest contemplation nourish

us with subtle preaching. In order therefore to bring us back from eternal groaning and pain, the hinds are now bent down, and utter roarings as they bring forth.

But because those very persons who are born by the holy preaching of fathers, sometimes precede their teachers in suffering, so that while these are still remaining in this life, they themselves are already consummated by martyrdom, it fitly follows;

Ver. 4. Their young ones are weaned, and go to their pasture; they go forth, and return not unto them. [xiv]

49. Holy Scripture terms 'pasture' that food of eternal verdure, where our refreshment will no longer waste away with any dryness of failing. Of which pasture it is said by the Psalmist, The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want nothing; He hath placed me there in a place of pasture. [Ps. 23, 1] And again, But we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. [Ps. 96, 7] And of these pastures, doubtless, the Truth says, by Itself; By Me, if any one hath entered in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and shall find pasture. [John 10, 9] They go therefore to the pasture; because, on going forth from their bodies, they find those refreshments of eternal verdure. They go forth, and return not unto them; because, when they have been caught up in that contemplation of joys, they no longer need to hear the words of teachers. Having gone forth, therefore, they do not return to them; because, escaping the difficulties of this life, they require no longer to receive from teachers the preaching of life. For then that is fulfilled which is written, Each man shall no longer teach his neighbour, and each his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least of them even unto the greatest, saith the Lord. [Jer. 31, 34] Then is fulfilled that which the Truth says in the Gospel, I shall declare to you plainly of My Father. [John 16, 25] For the Son in truth plainly declares of the Father; because, as we have said before, in that He is the Word, He enlightens us by the nature of the Godhead. For men seek not then for the words of teachers, which are streamlets, as it were, from the tongue of man, when they are themselves already derived from the fount of Truth Itself.

After much then had been said, under the figurative bending down of hinds, concerning the virtue of teachers, His words are now directed to the conduct of those, who seek for the secresy of retired conversation; to whom, since they obtain their very rest of cessation by the Divine aid, and not by their own strength, it is said by the Lord; Ver. 5. Who hath sent out the wild ass free, and who hath loosed his bands? [xv]

50. Understand, Except Myself. For the wild ass, who dwells in solitude, signifies, not inaptly, the life of those who dwell far removed from the crowds of people. And it is fitly also called free, because great is the drudgery of secular pursuits, with which the mind is grievously wearied, though it toil therein of its own accord. And to be freed from the condition of this slavery is no longer to desire any thing in this world. For prosperity while sought for, and adversities also while dreaded, oppress, as it were, with a kind of servile yoke. But if any one has but once freed the neck of his mind from the dominion of temporal desires, he enjoys already a kind of liberty even in this life, whilst he is affected by no longing

for happiness, and is constrained by no dread of adversity. The Lord beheld this heavy yoke of slavery set hard on the necks of worldly men, when He was saying, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for My yoke is sweet, and My burden light.

[Matt. 11, 28-30] For it is, as we have said, a rough yoke, and weight of heavy bondage, to be subject to temporal concerns, to court the things of earth, to retain things which are gliding away, to wish to stand in things which stand not, to seek after passing objects, but yet to be unwilling to pass away with what are passing. For while all things, contrary to our wish, fly away, those things which had previously distressed the mind from its longing to acquire them, oppress it afterwards with the fear of loss. He therefore is set free, who, having trampled down earthly desires, is exonerated, in security of mind, from seeking after temporal things. And who hath loosed his bands? Thou understandest, Except Myself.

51. But the bands of each one are loosed, when by Divine help the inward bonds of carnal desires are burst asunder. For when a holy intention calls to conversion, but the infirmity of the flesh still calls back from this intention, the soul is fettered and impeded, as it were, by certain bonds. For we often see many desiring indeed a life of holy conversation, but fearing at one time the onset of present mishaps, and at another future adversities, so as to be unable to attain it. And while they look forward, as if with caution, to evils which are uncertain [read 'incerta.'], they are incautiously retained in the bands of their own sins. For they place many things before their eyes, on the occurrence of which in their course of life, they are afraid that they can not stand firm. Of whom Solomon well says; The way of the slothful is as an hedge of thorns. [Prov. 15, 19] For when they seek the way of God, the suspicions of their fears stand in their way, and wound them, as the thorns of hedges which oppose them. But since this obstacle is not wont to oppose the Elect, he there proceeds to add, The way of the righteous is without an obstacle. [ibid.] For whatever adversity may have fallen in their way of life, the righteous stumble not against it. Because with the bound of eternal hope, and of eternal contemplation, they leap over the obstacles of temporal adversity. The Lord therefore looses the bands of the wild ass, when He tears off from the mind of each of His Elect the bonds of weak thoughts, and kindly rends asunder every thing which was binding his enchanted mind. It follows ;

Ver. 6. To whom I have given a house in the solitude, and his tabernacles in the land of saltness. [xyi] 52. Ought we in this place to understand the solitude of the body, or the solitude of the heart? But what avails the solitude of the body, if the solitude of the heart be wanting? For he who lives bodily removed from the world, but yet plunges into the tumults of human conversation with the thoughts of worldly desires, is not in solitude. But if any one be bodily oppressed with crowds of people, and yet suffers from no tumults of worldly cares in his heart, he is not in a city. To those therefore of good conversation solitude of mind is first granted, in order that they may keep down within the rising din of worldly desires, that they may restrain by the grace of heavenly love the cares of the heart which

bubble up from its lowest depths, and drive away from the eyes of the mind with the hand of gravity, all the motions of trifling thoughts which importunately present themselves, as flies which are flitting around them: and may seek for themselves some secret spot with the Lord within, there to speak with Him silently by their inward longings, when the noise is still from without.

53. Of this secret place of the heart it is said elsewhere; There became silence in heaven for about half an hour. [Rev. 8, 1] For the Church of the Elect is called 'heaven,' which, as it rises to eternal and sublime truths by the elevation of contemplation, abates the tumults of thoughts which are springing up from below, and makes a kind of silence within itself for God. And since this silence of contemplation cannot be perfect in this life, it is said to have been made for half an hour. For whilst the tumultuous noises of thoughts force themselves into the mind against its will, they violently draw the eye of the mind, even when steadily fixed on things above, to view again those of earth. Whence it is written; The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly habitation weigheth down the sense that museth on many things. [Wisd. 9, 15] This silence is therefore well described as having been made not for a whole, but for 'a half hour:' because contemplation is never perfected here, however ardently it be begun. Which is also suitably described by the Prophet Ezekiel, who witnesses that he saw in the hand of a man, for the measure of the city built on the mountain, a reed of six cubits and a span. [Ez. 40, 5] For the Church is in truth situated on the mountain of the Elect, because it is not founded on the lowest desires.

But what is pointed out by the cubit, except work, and what by the number six but the perfection of the work, because the Lord also is said on the sixth day to have completed all His works? What therefore does the span beyond the six cubits suggest, but the power of contemplation, which shews to us already the beginning of the eternal and seventh rest? For because the contemplation of eternal things is not here perfected, the measure of the seventh cubit is not completed. Because therefore the Church of the Elect completes all things which require to be done, the city presents itself as placed in six cubits on the mountain. But because it here beholds as yet only the beginnings of contemplation, of the seventh cubit it reaches only the span.

54. But it ought to be known that we do not at all reach the height of contemplation, if we cease not from the oppression of outward care. We do not at all look into ourselves, so as to know that there is within us one rational part that rules, another animal part which is ruled, unless we are made dead to all outward disturbance by returning to the secresy of this silence. Which silence of ours Adam also when sleeping rightly typified, out of whose side the woman presently came. [Gen. 2, 21. 22.] Because, whoever is hurried forward to the understanding of things within, closes his eyes to visible objects: and he then distinguishes in himself those qualities which ought either to rule manfully, or those which, as being weak, can submit: that there is one part of him which has power to rule as a man, another to be ruled, as a woman. In this silence of the heart, then, while we are awake inwardly by contemplation, we are sleeping, as it were, outwardly. Because then men who are separated,

that is who are freed from carnal desires, inhabit this silence of the heart, the Lord gave to this wild ass a house in the solitude, that he might not be oppressed with a crowd of temporal desires.

55. It follows, And his tabernacles in the land of saltness. Saltness is wont to kindle thirst. And because holy men, as long as they dwell in the tabernacles of this life, are inflamed by the daily warmth of their desire to seek their heavenly country, they are said to have their tabernacles in the land of saltness. For they are in truth incessantly inflamed, in order to thirst, they thirst to be satisfied, as it is written, Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. [Matt. 5, 6] It follows; Ver. 7. He scorneth the multitude of the city. [xvii]

56. To scorn the multitude of the city, is to avoid the evil employments of human conversation, so as no longer to take pleasure in imitating the abandoned manners of earthly men, who, through the abundance of iniquity, are many. For they desire to enter, with the few, the narrow gate, and seek not, with the many, to enter the broad roads which lead to destruction. For they carefully behold by Whom, and for what, they are created; and from a right consideration of the image they have received, they disdain to follow the vulgar herd. Whence it is said by the voice of the Bridegroom to the Bride, in the Song of Songs, If thou knowest not thyself, O beautiful among women, go forth, and go thy way after the footsteps of the flocks, and feed thy kids. [Cant. 1, 8] For she who is beautiful among women knows herself, when every Elect soul, though placed amongst sinners, remembers that it was fashioned after the image and similitude of its Creator, and goes on, in accordance with the similitude it has perceived. But if it knows not itself, it goes forth; because, being expelled from the secret recess of its own heart, it is dissipated by outward objects of desire. But when it has gone forth, it goeth after the footsteps of the flocks, because namely, forsaking its own inward thoughts, it is led to the broad way, and follows the examples of the peoples. And it no longer feeds lambs, but kids, because it strives to nourish, not the harmless thoughts of the mind, but the evil motions of the flesh. Because then every Elect and continent person scorns to go after the footsteps of the herds, let it be rightly said, He scorneth the multitude of the city. Where it is also fitly subjoined; He heareth not the cry of the exactor.

[xviii] 57. What other exactor can be understood, but the devil, who once offered to man in paradise the coin of evil persuasion, and seeks to exact from him daily the guilt of this debt? The word of this exactor is the beginning of evil persuasion. The cry of this exactor is temptation, no longer gentle, but violent. This exactor cries out, when he tempts mightily. Not to hear then the voice of the exactor, is not at all to consent to the violent emotions of temptations. For a man would hear, if he were to do the things which he suggests. But when he scorns to do perversely, it is rightly said, He heareth not. the cry of the exactor.

58. But some persons in this place wish the belly to be understood by the exactor. For it exacts from us a kind of debt; because it requires even by nature the daily fruit of human labour to be spent on it. Whilst abstinent men, then, who in this place are typified by the

word 'wild ass,' repress by force the desires of the appetite, they contemn, as it were, the words of the clamouring exactor. But since many contests of virtues against innumerable vices befal the continent man, why, in speaking of the cry of the exactor being despised, is it said of the belly alone, that he restrains its impulse and assault, except that no one gains the palm of the spiritual contest, unless he has first conquered the incentives of the flesh, by afflicting the concupiscence of the belly? For we cannot stand up to the conflict of the spiritual contest, unless the enemy who is posted within, that is to say, the appetite of gluttony, is first conquered; because if we overthrow not those evils which are nearer to us, we doubtless proceed in vain to attack those which are further off. For war is in vain waged in the plain against outward foes, if a treacherous citizen is retained within the very walls of the city. The mind also of the combatant is itself kept back, by the grievous disgrace of confusion, from engaging in the spiritual contest, when, feeble in its battle with the flesh, it is wounded and overcome by the swords of gluttony. For when it sees itself defeated by trifles, it is ashamed to engage in greater dangers.

59. But some, ignorant of the order of the contest, neglect to tame their appetite, and proceed at once to spiritual battles And though they sometimes display many acts of great bravery, yet from the sin of gluttony ruling over them, they lose, by the allurement of the flesh, all that they have done boldly; and, while the belly is not restrained, all their virtues are overwhelmed at once by the lust of the flesh. Whence it is written also of the victory of Nahuchodonosor, The chief of the cooks destroyed the walls of Jerusalem. [2 Kings 25, 8] For what does Scripture signify and express by the walls of Jerusalem, but the virtues of a soul which is tending to the vision of peace? [Jer. 52, 12. Oxf. Mss. om. 'de.'] Or who is understood by the chief of the cooks, but the belly, which is served with most diligent care by cooks? The chief of the cooks then destroys the walls of Jerusalem, because the belly, when it is not restrained, destroys the virtues of the soul. Hence is it that Paul was withdrawing the strength of the chief of the cooks, who was contending against the walls of Jerusalem, when he was saying, I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection, lest perchance having preached to others, I myself become a cast-away. [l Cor. 9, 27] Hence he also premised, saying, I so run, not as uncertainly, so fight I, not as if beating the air.

[ib. 26] Because when we restrain the flesh, we beat with these blows of our abstinence not the air, but unclean spirits; and when we subject that which is within us, we inflict blows ['pugnos'] on adversaries set without. Hence is it that when the king of Babylon orders the furnace to be kindled, he commands a heap of bitumen, tow, pitch, and firebrands to be furnished. But yet he consumes not in this fire the abstinent youths; [Dan. 4, 27] because, though the ancient enemy presents to our view innumerable desires of dainties, to increase the fire of lust, yet the grace of the Holy Spirit breathes into holy minds, in order that they may remain uninjured by the heats of carnal concupiscence: so that though the flame may burn so far as to tempt the heart, yet the temptation may not blaze forth as far as to consent.

60. It should also be known, that the vice of gluttony tempts us in five ways. For it sometimes anticipates the seasons of want: but sometimes does not anticipate them, but seeks for

daintier food. Sometimes it looks for those things, which must be taken, to be prepared more carefully; but sometimes it agrees with both the quality of, and the season for, its food, but exceeds, in the quantity of what is to be taken, the measure of moderate refreshment. But sometimes that which it longs for is even of a baser kind, and yet it sins more fatally through the heat of unbounded desire. For Jonathan deserved in truth the sentence of death from the mouth of his father, because in staking honey he anticipated the time which had been fixed for eating. [l Sam. 14, 44] And the people which had been brought out of Egypt, died in the desert, because it despised the manna, and sought for fleshly food, which it counted more delicate. And the first fault of the sons of Eli arose from this, that the servant, at their desire, would not receive cooked meat for the priest, after the ancient custom, but sought for raw flesh, for him to serve up with greater daintiness.

[1 Sam. 2, 15] And when it is said to Jerusalem, This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance, [Ez. 16, 49] it is plainly shewn that she forfeited her salvation, because, with the sin of pride, she exceeded the measure of moderate refreshment. And Esau lost the glory of the birth-right, because he desired mean food, namely, lentils, with great eagerness of longing; and when he preferred this, even to selling his birth-right, he shewed with what eagerness he was panting after it. [Gen. 25, 34] For it is not the food, but the desire that is in fault. Whence also we frequently take some delicate fare without blame, and take a taste of meaner food, not without guilt of conscience. For this Esau, whom we have spoken of, lost in truth his birth-right, through lentils, and Elias preserved the virtue of his body by eating flesh in the desert. Whence also the ancient enemy, because he knows that it is not food, but the desire of food, that is the cause of damnation, both subjected the first man to himself, not with flesh, but an apple; and tempted the second Man not with flesh, but with bread. Hence it is that the fault of Adam is commonly committed, even when mean and worthless food is taken. For it is not Adam alone who has received the prohibiting command to abstain from the forbidden fruit.

For when God points out certain aliments as injurious to our health, He, by a kind of sentence, forbids us to use them. And while we desire and taste noxious food, what else do we do in truth but eat of what is forbidden?

61. Those things must therefore be taken, which the necessity of nature requires, and not those which gluttony suggests. But it is a great effort of discretion to give this exactor something, and yet to refuse him something: both to restrain gluttony by not giving, and by giving to support nature. And this discretion is perhaps suggested, when it is said; He heareth not the cry of the exactor. For the word of this exactor is the necessary demand of nature. But his cry is the appetite of gluttony going beyond the measure of necessity. This wild ass then hears the word of this exactor, and hears not his cry; because a discreet and abstinent man both supplies his belly so far as to temper his need, and restrains it from pleasure.

62. But it should be known that pleasure so veils itself under necessity, that a perfect man can scarce discern it. For whilst necessity asks for a debt to he paid, pleasure secretly de-

mands a longing to be fulfilled; it hurries the appetite onward the more fearlessly, the more it conceals itself under the creditable profession of relieving a necessity. But frequently pleasure secretly attached follows behind in the very course of eating; though sometimes impudently free it endeavours even to go first. But it is easy to discover when pleasure anticipates its necessity, though very difficult to discern when it secretly connects itself with that very eating which is necessary. For because it follows the natural appetite which goes first, it seems, as it were, to advance slowly behind. For at that time, when the demand of necessity is paid, because pleasure is, through eating, blended with necessity, it is not known what necessity demands itself, and what (as has been said) pleasure secretly demands. But we frequently both distinguish them, and yet, from knowing that they are mutually connected together, take pleasure, when hurried beyond proper bounds, in being wittingly deceived: and whilst the mind flatters itself on the necessity, it is deceived by pleasure. For it is written; Make not provision for the flesh in the desires thereof. [Rom. 13, 14] That therefore which is forbidden to be done in desire, is yielded in necessity.

63. But often, whilst we incautiously condescend to necessity, we are enslaved to desires. And sometimes, while we endeavour to oppose our desires too immoderately, we increase the miseries of necessity. For it is necessary for a man so to maintain the citadel of continence, as to destroy, not the flesh, but the vices of the flesh. For frequently, when the flesh is restrained more than is just, it is weakened even for the exercise of good works, so as to be unequal to prayer also or preaching, whilst it hastens to put out entirely the incentives of vices within itself. For this very man, whom we hear outwardly, we have as the assistant of our inward intention, and both the motions of wantonness are within it, and there also abound in it the appliances of good works. But often, whilst we attack an enemy therein, we kill a citizen also whom we love; and often while we spare, as it were, a fellow-citizen, we nurture an enemy for battle. For our vices become proud upon the same food, on which our virtues are nourished and live. And when a virtue is nourished, the strength of our vices is frequently increased. But when unbounded abstinence weakens the power of vices, our virtue also faints and pants. Whence it is necessary for our inward man to preside, as a kind of impartial arbiter between itself, and him whom it hears without:

in order that its outward man may both be always able to serve at its appointed ministry, and never proudly oppose it with unshackled neck; nor be moved if it whispers any suggestion, provided it always tramples it down with the heel of authority stamped upon it. And thus, whilst we allow our vices, when checked, to struggle against us, and yet prohibit their engaging with us on equal terms, it comes to pass that neither our vices prevail against our virtue, nor does our virtue again settle down to rest with entire extinction of our vices. In which way alone our pride [or 'pride alone'] is utterly extinguished, because though it may serve for victory, yet a continual fight is reserved for us, to keep down the pride of our thoughts. And hence, because every abstinent person both complies with the demands of necessity, and yet opposes violent pleasure, it is well said in this place also by the voice of the Lord, He heareth not the cry of the exactor. But since a discreet person raises him-

self the more to the understanding of higher things, the more he chastises in himself the incentives of the flesh, after his scorning the cry of the exactor, it is rightly subjoined ;

Ver. 8. He looks round on the mountains of his pasture. [xix] 64. The mountains of his pasture are the lofty contemplations of inward refreshment. For the more holy men abase themselves outwardly with contempt, the more abundantly are they supported within with the contemplation of revelations. Whence it is written; He hath disposed the ascents in his heart in the valley of tears; [Ps. 84, 6] because those, whom the valley of humility outwardly imprisons in tears, the ascent of contemplation elevates within. The mountains of pasture are also the lofty powers of angels: which therefore refresh us here by ministering and assisting, because they are fattened there with the inward dew of contemplation. And because, by the bounty of God, they protect us in every contest, they are well said to be beheld around. For we behold them present on all sides around us, by whose defence we are protected against our adversaries on every side. The mountains of pasture can be taken, still further, for the lofty sentences of Holy Scripture, of which it is said by the Psalmist; The high hills for the stags, [Ps. 104, 18] because those who know already how to make the leaps of contemplation, ascend the lofty summits of the Divine sentences, as the tops of mountains. And because the feeble cannot reach in truth to these tops, it is there rightly subjoined, the rock is a refuge for the urchins, because, namely, their understanding does not sublimely exercise the feeble, but faith alone in Christ humbly keeps them in. It follows;

He searcheth after every green thing. [xx] 65. For parched in truth are all things, which, fashioned for a time, are dried up from the sweetness of the present life by the coming end, as if by the summer sun. But those are called green, which fade not away by any shortness of existence. For this wild ass then to seek every green thing, is for each holy man, despising transitory things, to long for those which are to endure for ever. But all these things which have been said of the wild ass, can be understood in another way also. Which we explain, having repeated the former verse, in order to leave to the judgment of the reader what he believes is to be preferred. After, then, the dispensation of preachers has been described under the figure of hinds, to shew by Whom this same virtue of preaching is given, the mention of our Lord's Incarnation is immediately subjoined, so that it is said,

Ver. 5. Who hath sent out the wild ass free? [xxi]

66. Nor let any consider it unbecoming that the Incarnate Lord can be typified by such an animal; whilst it is admitted by all that He is spoken of, in Holy Scripture, as, in a certain sense, both a worm and a beetle. As it is written; But I am a worm, and no man. [Ps. 22, 6] And as it is said by the Prophet in the Septuagint, A beetle cried out from the wood. [Hab. 2, 11. LXX. Since then He is typified by the mention of such vile and abject things, what is said offensively of Him, of Whom it is admitted that nothing is said appropriately? For He is called a lamb, but it is for His innocence. He is called a lion, but it is for His might. He is also sometimes compared to a serpent, but it is for His death, or for His wisdom. And He can therefore be spoken of figuratively by all these, because none of all these can be essentially believed of Him. For were He to be really one of these essentially, He could no longer be

termed another. For were He properly called a lamb, He could no longer be called a lion. If He were properly called a lion, He would not be signified by a serpent. But we say all these things of Him in figure, with the greater latitude, the further removed they are from His essence. The wild ass can therefore designate the Incarnate Lord.

For the wild ass is an animal of the fields. And because the Incarnate Lord profited the Gentiles more than the Jews, when, assuming a living body ['corpus animale'], He went, as it were, not into the house, but rather into the field. Of which field of the Gentiles it is said by the Psalmist; The beauty of the field is with Me. [Ps. 50, 11] The Incarnate Lord therefore, Who in the form of God is equal to the Father, is in the form of a servant less than the Father, in which He is also less than Himself. Let it be said therefore by the Father of the Son in the form of a servant; Who hath sent out the wild ass free, and who hath loosed his bands? For every one who sins is the servant of sin. And because the Incarnate Lord was made partaker of our nature, not of our sin, He is said to have been sent forth free, because He is not held under the dominion of sin. Of Whom it is written elsewhere; Free among the dead. [Ps. 88, 5] He is said to have been sent forth free, because taking our nature, He is not at all held by the yoke of iniquity. And though the stain of our guilt touched Him not, yet the suffering of our mortality bound Him. Whence also after He is said to have been sent forth free, it is rightly added of Him; And who hath loosed His bands?

[xxii] 67. For His bands were then in truth loosened, when the infirmities of His Passion were changed into the glory of His Resurrection. For the Lord had those infirmities of our mortal state, which we endure as the desert of our iniquity, as a kind of bands with which He wished of His own accord to be bound, even to death, and which He loosed marvellously by His Resurrection. For to be hungry, to thirst, to be weary, to be bound, to be scourged, and to be crucified, was the bond of our mortality. But when on the completion of His death the veil of the temple was rent, the rocks were cleft, the tombs were opened, the barriers of hell were laid bare, what else is shewn by so many arguments of such mighty power, but that those bands of our infirmity were loosened, that He, Who had come to take on Him the form of a servant, might return in freedom to heaven even with His members? Of which bonds of His the Apostle Peter witnesses, saying, Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of hell, because it was not possible for Him to be holden of it. [Acts 2, 24] And because after His Death and Resurrection He deigned to call the Gentiles to the grace of faith, after His bands are said to have been loosened, it is fitly subjoined ;

Ver. 6. To Whom I have given a house in the solitude, and His tabernacle in the land of saltness. [xxiii]

68. For in the Gentile world, in which there was no Patriarch, no Prophet, there was hardly a man to exercise his reason to gain a knowledge of God. Of this solitude it is said by Isaiah; The desert and the pathless land shall rejoice, and the solitude shall exult and blossom as the lily. [Is. 35, 1] And again it is said of the Church; He will make her desert as delights, and her solitude as the garden of the Lord. [Is. 51, 3] But this same solitude, which, before it knew the true wisdom of God, had brought forth saltness, is mentioned again as a land of

saltness; because it produced no verdure of good understanding, and savoured only of what was wrong. He receives therefore his house in the solitude, and His tabernacle in the land of saltness, because God when Incarnate for men, forsook Judaea, and possessed the hearts of the Gentiles. Whence it is said to Him by the voice of the Father, through the Prophet; Ask of Me, and I will give thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Thy possession. [Ps. 2, 8] Who, as He is God, gives all things with the Father, as He is Man, receives of the Father among all things, as it is written; He hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. [John 5, 27] And it is written again; Knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands.

[John 13, 3] Or as He Himself says; All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me. [John 6, 37] But if it is now asked what is the difference between a house and a tabernacle; a house is for a dwelling place, a tabernacle for a journey. He possessed therefore on His coming the hearts of the Gentiles as if they were tabernacles, but, strengthening them by righteousness, He made them His house by inhabiting. And because He scorned to imitate the conduct of those to whom He had come, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 7. He scorneth the multitude of the city. [xxiv]

69. That is, He despises the customs of human conversation. For having been made a Man amongst men, He refused to observe the practice of men. For He was therefore made a Man amongst us, not only to redeem us by the shedding of His blood, but also to change us by setting an example. He found therefore one thing in our conversation at His coming, and taught us another by His life. For all the progeny of the haughty race of Adam were striving to seek after the prosperity of the present life, to avoid its adversities, to escape disgrace, to follow glory. The Incarnate Lord came amongst them courting adversity, scorning prosperity, embracing insults, flying from glory. For when the Jews had wished to make Him their king, He shrunk from being a king. But when they were endeavouring to kill Him, He came of His own accord to the scaffold of the cross. He therefore avoided that which all seek after, He sought after that which all avoid; He caused all to marvel that both He Himself rose again when dead, and by His death raised others from death. For there are in truth two lives of a man who exists in the body, one before death, the other after the resurrection; one of which all practically knew, but knew not the other; and mankind were directing their thoughts to that only which they knew. The Lord came in the flesh, and while He took on Himself the one, He pointed out the other.

While He took on Himself that which was known to us, He pointed out to us that which was unknown to us. For by His dying He practised that life which we possess, by rising again He disclosed that life for which we are to seek, instructing us by His example, that this life which we pass before our death, is not to be loved on its own account, but to be tolerated on account of the other. Because then, by practising a new conversation amongst men, He followed not the customs of Babylon, it is well written of Him, He scorneth the multitude of the city.

70. Or certainly, because He forsook the many who were wandering along the broad way, and chose the few who were walking through narrow paths. For to 'scorn the multitude of the city,' is to reject from a share in His Kingdom that portion of mankind which enters the broad way, which also through the abundance of iniquity is many. It follows; He heareth not the cry of the exactor. [xxv] 71. As was said before, what exactor can be understood in this place, but the devil? who by his wicked persuasion held out the hope of immortality, but by deceiving exacted the tribute of death; who by his persuasion introduced sin, by his cruelty exacts punishment. The word of this exactor is his crafty persuasion of man before death, but his 'cry' is his violent seizure of him after death. For those whom he secretly intercepts before death, he violently hurries to share with him his punishment after death. But because the Lord when drawing near to death feared not the violent assaults of this exactor, (as He Himself says, For the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me,) [John 14, 30] it is well said, He heareth not the cry of the exactor. For the exactor of mankind came to Him, because he saw Him to be a man. But Him Whom He believed to be a man despised for His weakness, he felt, by his power, to be above man.

72. Laban doubtless represented this exactor, when coming with wrath, he demanded his idols which were with Jacob. [Gen. 31, 30] For Laban is interpreted 'whitening.' But the devil is appropriately understood by whitening, who though dark through his deserts, transforms himself into an angel of light. [2 Cor. 11, 14] Him did Jacob serve, that is, the Jewish people, on the part of the reprobate, from whose flesh the Lord Incarnate came. But by Laban can this world also be represented, which follows Jacob with fury, because it endeavours to oppress by persecution all the Elect, who are members of our Redeemer. Jacob carried off the daughter of this person, that is, either of the world or of the devil, when Christ united to Himself the Church from the Gentile world. Whom he takes away also from the house of her father, because He says to her by the Prophet; Forget thine own people, and thy father's house. [Ps. 45, 10] But what is designated by idols but avarice? Whence it is said by Paul; And covetousness, which is idolatry. [Col. 3, 5] Laban therefore on coming found not the idols upon Jacob, because when the devil displayed the treasures of the world, he found not in our Redeemer the traces of earthly concupiscence. [Gen. 31, 33] But those idols which Jacob had not, Rachel covered by sitting. [ib. 34] For by Rachel, which also means 'a sheep,' is typified the Church. But to sit, is to seek after the humility of penitence, as it is written;

Arise, after ye have sat down. [Ps. 127, 2] Rachel therefore covered the idols by sitting, because Holy Church, by following Christ, covered, with penitence, the vices of earthly concupiscence. Of this covering of vices it is said by the Psalmist; Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. [Ps. 32, 1] That Rachel then signified us, who press down idols by sitting, if we condemn the sins of covetousness by penitence. But this covetousness is not wont to befal those, who run like men in the way of the Lord, to whom it is said; Do manfully, and let your heart he strengthened;[Ps. 31, 24] but those especially who walking, as it were, with effeminate step, are relaxed by the blandishments of the world. Whence also in that place these are the words of this same Rachel, According

to the custom of women it now is happening to me. [Gen. 31, 35] Laban therefore finds not the idols upon Jacob, because the crafty exactor found nothing to blame in our Redeemer. Of which exactor it is said to our Redeemer by the Prophet, when He was delivering the Gentile world from his dominion; For thou hast overcome the yoke of his burden, and the rod of his shoulder, and the sceptre of his oppressor, as in the day of Madian. [Is. 9, 4] For the Lord in rescuing the Gentile world, overcame the yoke of its burden, when He delivered it, by His coming, from that bondage to the tyranny of the devil.

He overcame the rod of its shoulder, when He kept his blow, which was oppressing it heavily in consequence of wickedness, from redeemed mankind. He overcame the sceptre of its oppressor, when He swept away from the heart of the faithful, that kingdom of the same devil, who had been wont to exact the due tribute of punishments for the fatal perpetration of sins.

73. But let us hear how these things were done. It is immediately subjoined, As in the day of Madian. I think it will not be amiss if we consider at greater length this war of the Madianites, which was intentionally introduced by the Prophet in comparison with the coming of the Lord. For in the book of Judges Gedeon is described as having fought against the Madianites. [Judg. 7, 1-22] When he was bringing forth the multitude of the army to war, he was ordered by a Divine admonition, to remove from the conflict of battle all whom on coming to the water he beheld drinking the water with bended knees. And the result was, that only three hundred men remained, who had drunk the water in their hands, standing. With these he proceeds to the battle, and he equipped them not with arms, but with trumpets, lamps, and pitchers. For, as is there written, they placed the lighted lamps in the pitchers, and held their trumpets in their right hand, but their pitchers in their left, and on coming close to their enemies, they sounded with the trumpets, they brake the pitchers, the lamps appeared: and their enemies alarmed on one hand with the sound of the trumpets, and on the other by the glittering of the lamps, were turned to flight. Why then is it that such a battle is brought forward by the Prophet, and why is victory in that battle compared to the coming of our Redeemer?

Did the Prophet intend to point out to us that that victorious battle under the command of Gedeon was a type of the coming of our Redeemer? Such deeds were doubtless there wrought, which, the more they exceed the usual mode of fighting, are the less removed from the mystery of prophecy. For who ever went forth to battle with pitchers and lamps? Who, when going against arms, ever abandoned his arms? These things would have been truly absurd to us, had they not been terrible to the enemies. But we have learned by the evidence of the victory itself, not to regard these things which were done as of little account. Gedeon, therefore, coming to the battle, signifies to us the coming of our Redeemer, of Whom it is written; Lift up, O princes, your gates, and be ye lift up,? ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty. The Lord mighty in battle. [Ps. 24, 7. 8. He prophesied of our Redeemer, not only by his doings, but also by his name. For Gedeon is interpreted 'going about in the womb.' For our Lord

embraces all things by the power of His majesty, and yet He came, through the grace of the dispensation assuming man's nature in the womb of the Virgin. Who then is He Who goes about in the womb, except Almighty God, redeeming us by His own dispensation, embracing all things by His Godhead, and taking man's nature in the womb?

In which womb He was both Incarnate, and not confined; because He was both within the womb by the substance of His infirmity, and beyond the world by the power of His majesty. But Madian is interpreted 'from judgment.' For that His enemies were to be repulsed and destroyed, was not from the imperfection of their conqueror, but from the judgment of Him, Who judgeth rightly. And for this reason they are called 'from judgment:' because, being aliens from the grace of the Redeemer, they bear, even in their designation, the desert of just condemnation.

74. Against these Gedeon proceeds to battle with three hundred men. The plenitude of perfection is usually understood by the number 'hundred.' What then is designated by the number hundred taken thrice, except the perfect knowledge of the Trinity? For with those our Lord destroys the adversaries of the faith, with those comes down to the contests of preaching, who can understand Divine truths, who know how to think accurately of the Trinity, Which is God. But we must observe, that this number three hundred is comprised in the letter Tau ['T' or in the Greek but not in the Hebrew character], which bears a resemblance of the cross. For if there were added over the transverse line, the projecting part of the cross, it would no longer be a resemblance of the cross, but the cross itself. Because then that number of three hundred is comprised in the letter Tau, and by the letter Tau, as we have said, a resemblance of the cross is set forth, by those three hundred followers of Gedeon, those persons are not inappropriately designated, to whom it is said, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. [Luke 9, 23] And these take up the cross more truly, as they follow the Lord, the more severely they both tame themselves, and are tortured with the compassion of charity towards their neighbours. Whence it is said also by the prophet Ezekiel, Mark Tau upon the foreheads of the men that groan and lament.

[Ez. 9, 4] Or certainly, by these three hundred who are comprised in the letter Tau, it is expressed that the sword of the enemy is overcome by the wood of the cross. And they are brought to the river, to drink the waters; and whoever drank the waters with bended knees, were removed from the struggle of war. For by the waters is designated the doctrine of wisdom, but by the unbended knee righteous conduct. They therefore who are reported to have bent their knees, while drinking the water, retired from the strife of battles, having been forbidden; because Christ proceeds to battle against the enemies of the faith, with those who when they drink the streams of doctrine, distort not the uprightness of their actions. For all are said at that time to have drunk the water, but not all to have stood with unbended knee. And they who bent their knees, while they were drinking the waters, were rejected, because, as the Apostle witnesses, For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law will be justified. [Rom. 2, 13] For since dissoluteness

of conduct is, as we have said, signified by this very bending of the knees, it is rightly again said by Paul, Lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight steps with your feet.

[Heb.12, 12] They therefore proceed, under Christ as their leader, to battle, who exhibit in their conduct that which they profess with their mouths, who drink spiritually the streams of doctrine, and yet are not carnally distorted by wicked works; because, as it is written, Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner. [Ecclus. 15, 9]

75. They go forth therefore to battle with trumpets, with lamps, and with pitchers. This, as we have said, was an unusual order of battle. They sounded with the trumpets, and the pitchers were held in their left hands. But lamps were placed within the pitchers; but, when the pitchers were broken, the lamps appeared, and by their flashing light the affrighted enemies are put to flight. By the trumpets is designated therefore the loud voice of preachers, by the lamps the brightness of their miracles, by the pitchers the frailness of their bodies. For our Leader led forth with Him, to the contest of preaching, such as by making light of their bodily safety, would overthrow their enemies by dying, and would overcome their swords, not by arms, not by words, but by patience. For our Martyrs came armed under their Leader to battle, but armed with trumpets, with pitchers, with lamps. And they sounded with their trumpets, when preaching; they broke their pitchers, when exposing their bodies to dissolution by the swords of the enemy in their suffering; they shone forth with lamps, when after the dissolution of their bodies they flashed forth with miracles. And their enemies were presently put to flight, because, when they beheld the bodies of dead Martyrs glittering with miracles, they were overpowered by the light of truth, and believed that which they had impugned. They sounded therefore with the trumpets, that the pitchers might he broken; the pitchers were broken, that the lamps might appear; the lamps appeared, that the enemies might be put to flight. That is, the Martyrs preached, till their bodies were dissolved in death; their bodies were dissolved in death, that they might shine forth with miracles; they shone forth with miracles, that they might overthrow their enemies with divine light; so that they might no longer stand up and resist God, but submit to, and be afraid of, Him.

76. And it must he observed, that the enemies stood firm before the pitchers, but fled before the lamps; doubtless because the persecutors of Holy Church resisted the preachers of the faith while yet in the body, but were put to flight by the miracles which were manifested after the dissolution of their bodies, because, terrified by fear, they ceased from persecuting the faithful. They were afraid, in truth, at the lamps of miracles which appeared, when the pitchers of their bodies had been broken, at the preaching of the trumpets.

77. We must also notice that which is there written; that they held the trumpets in their right hand, but the pitchers in their left. For we are said to have on the right hand, whatever we consider a great thing; but on the left, that which we regard as nothing. It is therefore well written in that place, that they held the trumpets in their right hand, but the pitchers in their left; because the Martyrs of Christ consider the grace of preaching as a great thing,

but the benefit of their bodies as of the least moment. But whoever thinks more of the benefit of the body, than of the grace of preaching, holds the trumpet in his left hand, but the pitcher in his right. For if the grace of preaching is attended to in the first place, and in the next place the benefit of the body, it is certain that the trumpets are held in the right hand, and the pitchers in the left. Hence the Lord says in the Gospel, Neither do they light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick. [Matt. 5, 15] For by a bushel is understood temporal advantage, but by a candle the light of preaching. To place therefore a light under a bushel, is, for the sake of temporal advantage, to conceal the grace of preaching, which none of the Elect surely does. And it is well there added, But upon a candlestick.

For by a candlestick is designated the position of the body, on which a candle is placed above, when the duty of preaching is preferred to the body. It is therefore well said by the Prophet, Thou hast overcome the sceptre of his oppressor, as in the day of Madian. [Is. 9, 4] But since we have made a long digression for the sake of expounding the testimony of the Prophet, let us return to the regular order of our work. After, therefore, it was said, He heareth not the cry of the exactor; because, namely, our Lord when manifested in the flesh despised the snares of the great enemy, He rightly subjoins what He did further in behalf of His Elect, saying;

Ver. 8. He looketh around on the mountains of His pasture. [xxvi]

78. Mountains we understand to be all the lofty ones of this world, who were swollen in their hearts with earthly loftiness. But since the Lord engrains ['inviscerat'] even such, when converted, into the body of His Church, and, turning them from their former pride, transforms them into His own members, these are mountains of His pasture; doubtless, because He is satisfied with the conversion of the wandering, and the humility of the proud. As He Himself says, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me. [John 4, 34] And as He commanded the Apostles, when sent forth to preach, saying, Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life. [John 6, 27] Of these mountains it is said by the Prophet, The Lord will not reject His people, for in His hand are all the ends of the earth, and the heights of the hills He beholdeth. [Ps. 95, 4. LXX.] For the heights of the mountains are surely the loftinesses of the proud. Which the Lord is said to behold, that is, to change from their iniquity for the better. For the Lord converts the person whom He looks on. Whence it is written, The Lord turned, and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny Me thrice; and he went out, and wept bitterly. [Luke 22, 61. 62.] And as Solomon says, A King that sitteth on the throne of judgment, scattereth away all evil with His look. [Prov. 20, 8] Of this looking at the mountains it is said again by the Prophet, The mountains melted like wax from the face of the Lord; [Ps. 97, 5] because, after the hardness of their perversity, they were melted by the Divine fear, and subsided from their former rigid swelling.

79. But we must observe, that He does not say, 'beholdeth,' but looketh round on the mountains of His pasture. For the Lord was in truth Incarnate in Judaea, which was placed in the midst of the nations. And He therefore looked round on the mountains, because He

gathered together, from the whole body of the Gentiles, the proud of this world situated every where around. He feeds therefore in these mountains; because He is satiated with the good works of the converted, as if with green herbs. Hence is it that it is said to Him by the voice of the Bride in the Song of Songs, Shew me where Thou feedest, where Thou liest at noon. [Cant. 1, 7] For the Lord is fed, when He is delighted with our good deeds. But He lies down at noon, when, after the heart of the reprobate burning with carnal desires, He finds the cool refreshment of holy thought in the breasts of His Elect. For Matthew had been a kind of mountain, when he was swelling with the profits of the custom house; of whom it is also written, that after he believed, he invited our Lord into his house, and made a great feast. [Luke 5, 29] This mountain therefore produced for this wild ass the herbs of green pasture, because he fed Him outwardly with a feast, and inwardly with banquets of virtues. And this is set forth still more fully, when it is subjoined;

He searcheth after every green thing. [xxvii] 80. For He deserts the parched places, and searches for every green thing. For parched are those hearts of men, which, planted in the perishing hope of this world, have no assurance of eternity. But those flourish, which cling to that inheritance of which the Apostle Peter says; To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. [1 Pet. 1, 4] For they are more truly green, the more they plant the root of thought in the portion of an inheritance that fadeth not away. Let every one therefore, who dreads being parched within, fly from the barren desires of this world without. Let every one who longs to be sought for by the Lord, seek for his eternal home, and become verdant in the inward plantation of his heart. 81. Let this twofold exposition of the wild ass he sufficient. But it must he left to the judgment of the reader, which he thinks best to select. But if he chance to scorn the meaning of either exposition, I will willingly myself follow my reader, as a pupil his master, if he thinks more accurately and truly. Because whatever I find he knows better than myself, I believe it to be vouchsafed as a special gift to myself. For all we, who endeavour, full of faith, to utter something concerning God, are organs of truth: and it is in the power of this same Truth, whether It utters Its voice through me to another, or through another to me. For dwelling in the midst of us it deals alike with all, even though they live not alike, and often touches one person to hear plainly what It has spoken by another, but often touches another, to utter something clearly to be heard by others.

82. Power of speech is often given to a teacher, for the sake of his hearer, and skill in speaking is often taken away from a teacher, on account of the guilt of his hearer. Let not the teacher then be puffed up with pride in these cases in which he preaches copiously, lest his tongue be perchance filled, not for his own, but for his hearers' sake; and let not a hearer be angry, in cases in which a teacher speaks barrenly, lest the tongue of the teacher perchance be dumb, not for his own, but his hearers' rejection. For power of speech is given even to bad teachers for the sake of a good hearer, just as words of preaching were able to abound to the Pharisees, though it was written of them, All therefore whatsoever they have said to you, observe and do: but do not after their works. [Matt. 23, 3] But skill in speaking is taken away even from good teachers, for the rejection of their hearers. As is

said to Ezekiel against Israel; I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be as a man reproving, for it is a provoking house. [Ez. 3, 26]

82. But the word of preaching is sometimes granted on account of both, sometimes withdrawn on account of both. For it is given on account of both, as is said by the voice of God to Paul amongst the Corinthians; Be not afraid, but speak. [Acts 18, 9] And a little after, For I have much people in this city. [ibid. 10] But it is withdrawn on account of both, as Eli the priest both knew the wicked conduct of his children, and exercised not the fitting language of reproof, when these the guilt of their sin, and him the punishment of his silence, was plainly about to mulct with the suffering of death. When we know not therefore, amongst these cases, either for whom the fervour of speech is given, or on whose account it is withdrawn, the one safe remedy is, neither to pride ourselves on those gifts which we have received beyond others, nor yet to make jest of another for having received less: but to walk gravely and steadily, with the firm-fixed foot of humility. Because we are in this life the more truly learned, the more we know that our learning cannot be supplied to us from ourselves. Why should therefore any one be proud of his learning, who knows not either when it is given to any one by a secret sentence, or when it is withdrawn? For though fear seems to be always far removed from security; yet there is nothing safer for us than ever to feel fear, under the prevalence of hope, lest our mind should from want of caution plunge itself into sin through desperation, or fall headlong through boasting of its gifts. For the more humbly a man trembles for himself, together with hope, before the eyes of the strict and merciful Judge, the more firmly does he stand in Him.

Book XXXI

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF ST. GREGORY THE POPE, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB.

VOLUME III - THE SIXTH PART. — BOOK XXXI.

The ninth, with the remaining verses of the thirty-ninth chapter, is explained, the last three only being omitted; and the efficacy of Divine Grace, in the preaching of the Gospel, and in the conversion of sinners, is especially demonstrated. [i]

1. The devil, through envy, inflicted the wound of pride on healthful man in Paradise; in order that he, who had not received death when created, might deserve it when elated. But since it is competent for Divine power, not only to make good things out of nothing, but also to refashion them from the evils which the devil had committed; the humility of God appeared amongst men, as a remedy against this wound inflicted by the proud devil, that they who had fallen through imitation of their haughty enemy, might rise by the example of their humbled Creator. Against, therefore, the haughty devil, God appeared amongst men, having been made a humble Man. The mighty of this world, that is, the members of the haughty devil, believed Him to be as despicable, as they saw Him to be lowly. For the more the wound of their heart swelled up, the more it despised the soothing remedy. Our medicine therefore being spurned by the wound of the proud, came to the wound of the humble. For, God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. [1 Cor. 1, 27] And a work was wrought upon the poor, for the wealthy proud ones afterwards to wonder at. For while they behold in them new virtues, they were afterwards astounded at the miracles of those, whose life they before despised. And thence, returning immediately with fear to their own hearts, they dreaded that sanctity in miracles, which they had scorned in precepts. Mighty things were therefore confounded by the weak; because while the life of the humble rises to veneration, the pride of the haughty has fallen. Because therefore blessed Job is a type of Holy Church, and Almighty God foresaw that, in the early times of the rising Church, the mighty of this world would refuse, with the stubborn neck of their heart, to undertake its light burden, let Him say;

Ver. 9. Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve thee? [ii]

2. For the rhinoceros is quite of an untamed nature, so that, if it is ever taken, it cannot in any way be kept. For, as is said, it dies immediately from being unable to bear it. But its name when interpreted means in the Latin tongue, 'a horn on the nostril.' And what else is designated by the nostril, but folly; what by the horn, but pride? For that folly is usually understood by the nostril, we have learned on the evidence of Solomon, who says; As a ring of gold in a swine's nostrils, so is a beautiful and foolish woman. [Prov. 11, 22] For he saw heretical doctrine shining with brilliancy of eloquence, and yet not agreeing with the proper understanding of wisdom, and he says, A ring of gold in a swine's nostrils; that is, a beautiful and involved expression in the understanding of a foolish mind: from which gold depends, through its eloquence, but yet, through the weight of earthly intention, like a swine, it looks not upwards. And he proceeded to explain it, saying, A beautiful and foolish woman: that is, heretical teaching; beautiful in words, foolish in meaning. But, that pride is frequently understood by a horn, we have learned on the evidence of the Prophet, who says; I said to the wicked, deal not wickedly, and to the sinners, lift not up your horn.

[Ps.75, 4] What is, therefore, designated by this rhinoceros, but the mighty of this world, or the supreme powers themselves of the kingdoms therein, who, elated by the pride of foolish boasting, whilst they are puffed up by false honour without, are made inwardly destitute by real miseries? To whom it is well said; Why boastest thou, O dust and ashes? [Ecclus. 10, 9] But at the very beginning of the rising Church, when the might of the wealthy was raising itself against her, and was panting for her death, with the unboundedness of so great cruelty, when, anxious from so many tortures, and pressed by so many persecutions, she was giving way; who could then believe that she would subdue those stiff and stubborn necks of the haughty, and would bind them, with the gentle bands of faith, when tamed by the yoke of holy fear? For she was tossed about, for a long while, in her beginnings, by the horn of this rhinoceros, and was struck by it, as though to be utterly destroyed. But by the dispensation of Divine grace, she both gained life and strength by death, and this rhinoceros, wearied with striking, bowed down his horn. And that which was impossible to men, was not difficult to God, who crushed the stubborn powers of this world, not by words, but by miracles. For behold we observe daily the rhinoceroses becoming slaves, when we see the mighty of this world, who had before, with foolish pride, relied on their own strength, now subject to God.

The Lord was speaking, as it were, of a certain untamed rhinoceros, when He was saying; A rich man will hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. [Matt. 19, 23] And when it was replied to Him; And who will be able to be saved? He immediately added; With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. [ib. 25. 26. As if He were saying; This rhinoceros cannot be tamed by human strength, but yet it can be subdued by Divine miracles. Whence it is here also fitly said to blessed Job, as representing Holy Church; Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve thee? Thou understandest, As Myself, Who bore for a long while with his resisting the preaching of men, but yet suddenly overpowered him with miracles, when thus I willed it. As if He said more plainly; Are they who are proud with foolish haughtiness, subjected to thy preaching, without My assistance? Consider therefore

by Whom thou prevailest, and in every thing wherein thou prevailest bow down thy feeling of pride. Or certainly, what wondrous works are wrought at last by the Apostles, who subject the world to God, and bend the pride of the mighty of this world, when subdued to His power, is brought before the notice of blessed Job, to bring down his confidence, in order that blessed Job may think the less highly of himself, the more he beholds such stubborn souls gathered together to God by others, Let Him say then; Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve thee?

Thou understandest, As it will serve Me, by means of those, whom I shall have sent. It follows;

Or will it abide by thy crib? [iii]

3. By 'crib' in this place, Holy Scripture itself is, not unfitly, understood; in which holy animals are fed with the food of the word. Of whom it is said by the Prophet; Thine animals will dwell therein. [Ps. 68, 10] Hence also our Lord, when born, was found by shepherds in a manger, because His Incarnation is learned in that Scripture of the Prophets, which refreshes us. This rhinoceros therefore, that is to say, every haughty person, in the beginning of the rising Church, when it heard the sayings of the Patriarchs, the mysteries of the Prophets, and the secrets of the Gospel, made jest of them; because it scorned the more to be confined and fed in the manger of the Preachers, the more it gave itself up to its own pleasures, and occupied the wide plain of its own desperation. It is this wide plain of the proud that Paul well speaks of, when saying, Who despairing, have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. [Eph. 4, 19] For every one gives himself wider range in present evil, the more he despairs of attaining eternal blessings after this life. But Almighty God bore for a long time with this rhinoceros, wandering through the plain of sinful pleasure, and yet, when He willed, suddenly fastened it to His own manger, that being safely confined it might receive the food of life, lest it should entirely lose its life through fatal liberty?

For behold we now see that the mighty men of this world, and its chief rulers, willingly hear the preachings of the Lord, that they constantly read them, and every where depart not from His manger; because they transgress not, in their conduct, the precepts of the Lord, which they know either by reading or by hearing, but contentedly submit to stand confined, as it were, near the food of the word, that by feeding and abiding there, they may become fat. But, when we behold this wrought by God's agency, what else do we behold but this rhinoceros abiding at the manger? But since this rhinoceros, after it has received the food of preaching, ought to display the fruit of good works, it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 10. Wilt thou bind the rhinoceros with thy band to plough? [iv] 4. The bands of the Church, are the precepts of discipline. But to plough, is to cleave with the ploughshare of the tongue the soil of the human breast by earnestness of preaching. This rhinoceros therefore, which was before proud and stubborn, is now bound and fastened by the bands of faith; and he is led from the manger to plough, because he endeavours to make known

to others also that very preaching, with which he has himself been refreshed. For we know with what cruelty this rhinoceros, that is to say, this earthly prince, raged against the Lord; and now we know with what humility he prostrates him beneath Him, by the power of the Lord. This rhinoceros was not only bound, but bound to plough: because, in truth, when bound by the bands of discipline, he not only keeps himself from wicked works, but also exercises himself in preaching the holy faith. For behold, as was before said, when we see the rulers and chiefs themselves of human concerns fearing God in their actions, what else do we see them than bound with bands? But when, by the enacting of laws, they cease not to preach that faith which they recently assaulted with persecution, what else do they, but toil at the labours of the plough?

5. We are permitted to see this rhinoceros, that is, this prince of the earth, bound with the bands of faith; how he both wears his horn, by the power of the world, and bears the yoke of faith, by the love of God. This rhinoceros were greatly to be feared, unless he were bound. For he has in truth a horn, but yet he is bound. The lowly have therefore something to love in his bands, the proud have something to fear in his horn. For, as fast bound with thongs, he preserves the gentleness of meekness; but, as supported by the horn of earthly glory, he exercises the dominion of power. But frequently, when he is hurried on by the provocation of anger to strike, he is recalled by heavenly fear. And he rouses himself to fury, by his power being provoked; but because he calls to mind the eternal Judge, he bends himself down with fastened horn. I remember, that I myself have frequently seen, that when this rhinoceros was rousing himself to strike a heavy blow, and was threatening, as it were, with elevated horn, death, banishment, and condemnation to the smaller animals, who were suffering under unbounded dread, he extinguished all the blaze of fury within, on the sign of the cross being suddenly imprinted on his brow, that he was converted and laid aside his threats, and, as bound, acknowledged that he could not proceed to his resolutions.

And not only does he subdue all wrath within himself, but he hastens to implant also every thing which is right, in the feelings of his subjects; in order to shew himself, by the example of his own humility, that all should reverence Holy Church from their inmost thoughts. Let it be said therefore to blessed Job; Wilt thou bind the rhinoceros with thy band to plough? As if He plainly said; Dost thou direct the mighty ones of this world, trusting in their foolish pride, to the labour of preaching, and restrain them under the bonds of discipline? Thou understandest, As Myself, who did that, when I willed; Who made My very persecutors, whom I first endured as enemies, to be afterwards themselves the defenders of sound faith. It follows;

Or will he break the clods of the valleys after thee? [v]

6. The overlying clods of cultivated land are wont to press down the seeds which have been thrown in, and to stifle them when springing up. By which clods are signified in this place those, who through their own hardness, and deadly life, neither receive themselves the seeds of the word, nor yet allow others to bring forth fruits of the seeds they have received. For every holy preacher, on coming into the world, had, by preaching the Gospel to the

poor, ploughed, as it were, the soft lands of the valleys. But the Church, unable to break down the hardness of some of the haughty, was bearing them when oppressed, as clods thrown upon her labours. For many of perverse mind, relying on this very unbelief of earthly princes, were oppressing the rising Church with the weight of evil living, when they were destroying, for a long while, those whom they could, at one time by their damnable examples, at another by threats, at another by blandishments, lest the cultivated soil of the heart of their hearers should attain to the fruit of spiritual seed. But when Almighty God subdued this rhinoceros with his bands, He broke at once by his aid the hardness of the clods. For He presently subjugated the princes of the earth to His faith, and crushed the hard hearts of persecutors, that the broken clods might, as it were, no longer oppress with their hardness, but might crumble and bud forth on receiving the seeds of the word. Whence He now rightly says;

Or will he break the clods of the valleys after thee? As if He were saying, As after Me, Who, after I enter the mind of any lofty power, not only render it subject to Me, but also train it to crush the enemies of the faith, that the mighty of this world, being bound with the bands of My fear, may not only continue believers in Me, but may also from zeal for Me crush the hardness of another's heart.

7. But this, which we have said of unbelievers, we observe also in many who are reckoned by the name of faith. For many, placed in the midst of lowly brethren, hold the faith in word only, but while they abandon not the swelling of pride, while they oppress those, whom they can, by the infliction of violence, while they themselves receive not at all the seeds of the word, while others are bearing fruit, but turn the ear of their heart from the voice of the adviser, what else are they, but hardened clods lying in the cultivated valleys? Who are the more wicked, inasmuch as they neither bring forth themselves the fruit of humility, and, what is worse, oppress the lowly who are producing it. To break down the hardness of these, Holy Church, because she suffices not with her own strength, sometimes seeks the assistance of this rhinoceros, that is, of an earthly prince, for him to break down the overlying clods, which the humility of the Churches, like the level of the valleys, is bearing. These clods, therefore, the rhinoceros presses and crushes with his foot, because the religion of the prince crumbles, by its power, the hardness of the wicked and powerful, which the humility of the Church is unable to withstand. And since it is the effect of Divine power alone, that the loftinesses of earthly sovereignty are bowed down, to advance the kingdom of heaven, it is now rightly said, Or will he break the clods of the valleys after thee? But that Job may think humbly of his virtues, and, under the name of the rhinoceros, still discern sublime truths concerning the powers of this world, it follows;

Ver. 11. Wilt thou have confidence in his great strength, and wilt thou leave to him thy labours? [vi] 8. The Lord asserts that He has confidence in the strength of the rhinoceros; because He inclined the powers, which He had conferred for a temporal purpose on an earthly prince, to minister to His reverence, in order that by the power he had received, through which he had, heretofore, been puffed up against God, he might now bestow on

God religious obedience. For the more powerful he is toward the world, the more does he prevail for the Creator of the world. For because he is himself dreaded by his subjects, he persuades them the more readily, the more he points out with his power, Who is truly to be feared. Let it be said then; Wilt thou have confidence in his great strength? As if it were said, As I, Who see, that the powers of earthly princes are about to submit to My worship. For I regard those things which thou art now doing, as of so much the less consequence, the more I now foresee, that I shall bend down to Myself even the greater powers of this world. But it is well subjoined; And wilt thou leave to him thy labours? For the Lord left His labours to this rhinoceros, because He entrusted to an earthly prince, on his conversion, that Church which He purchased by His own death, because, namely, He committed to his hand the great anxiety of preserving the peace of the faith. It follows;

Ver. 12. Wilt thou trust him, to bring back thy seed to thee, and to gather thy floor? [vii]

9. What else is meant by 'seed,' but the word of preaching? As the Truth says in the Gospel, A sower went forth to sow; [Matt. 13, 3] and as the Prophet says; Blessed are ye who sow upon all waters. [Is. 32, 20] What else but the Church, ought to be understood by the threshing floor? Of which it is said by the voice of the Forerunner; And He will throughly purge His floor. [Matt. 3, 12] Who therefore could believe, in the beginning of the rising Church, when that unconquered sovereignty of the world was raging with so many threats and tortures against her, that this rhinoceros would bring back seed to God, that is, repay by his works the word of preaching which he had received? Which of the infirm could then believe, that he would gather His floor? For behold, he is now promulgating laws for the Church, who was before raging against it with various torments. Behold, whatever nations he has been able to seize, he brings by persuasion to the grace of faith; and points out eternal life to those, to whom, when captured, he secures their present life. Why is this? Because he is now, in truth, gathering the floor, which before he used to winnow, by scattering it with his proud horn. Let blessed Job therefore hear what the princes of the Gentiles do, and not exalt himself in himself with the glory of his own so great virtue. Let the powerful prince hear also, with what devotion the mightier princes of this world become the servants of God, and let not him who has a pattern in others, pervert his virtue, in consequence of its singularity, into the sin of pride. For though God beheld no one like him at that time, yet He foresaw many, by whom to repress his boasting.

10. Because, therefore, earthly princes prostrate themselves before God with great humility, wicked men, who were before ranked in unbelief against the Church, and were raging with open hostility, now turn to other arguments of fraud. For since they see that those reverence religion, they themselves adopt a respect for religion, and under a despicable garb oppress the conduct of the good, by their wicked habits. For they are in truth lovers of the world, and make a show of that in themselves which man can admire, and unite themselves, not in heart, but in garb, to those who truly despise themselves. For since, though loving present glory, they cannot attain to it, they follow it, as if despising it. But they would manifest what they think against the good, if they were to find a fitting opportunity for their wickedness.

But even these devices of the wicked tend to the purification of the Elect. For Holy Church cannot pass through the season of her pilgrimage, without the labour of temptation, and though she has no open enemies without, yet she endures false brethren within. For she is ever in array against sin, and, even in the season of peace, has her own contest. And she is perhaps more grievously afflicted, when she is assaulted, not by the blows of strangers, but by the manners of her own children. Whether therefore at that, or this time, she is always engaged in a struggle. For, both in the persecution of princes she is afraid that the good should lose, what they really are, and in the conversion of princes she bears with the wicked pretending to be good, which they are not. Whence Almighty God, because He stated that this rhinoceros had been bound with thongs, immediately subjoined the hypocrisy of the wicked, saying;

Ver. 13. The wing of the ostrich is like the wings of the heron, and of the hawk. [viii]

11. Who can be ignorant how much the heron and the hawk surpass all other birds in the swiftness of their flight? But an ostrich has the likeness of their wing, but not the celerity of their flight. For it cannot in truth rise from the ground, and raises its wings, in appearance as if to fly, but yet never raises itself from the earth in flying. Thus, doubtless, are all hypocrites, who, while they simulate the conduct of the good, possess a resemblance of a holy appearance, but have no reality of holy conduct. They have, in truth, wings for flight, in appearance, but in their doing they creep along the ground, because they spread their wings, by the semblance of sanctity, but, overwhelmed by the weight of secular cares, they are not at all raised from the earth. For the Lord in reprobating the appearance of the Pharisees, reproves, as it were, the wing of the ostrich, which did one thing in action, and made a show of another in its colour; saying, Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful to men outwardly, but are within full of dead men's bones; even so do ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of covetousness and iniquity. [Mat 23, 27. 28. As if He were saying: The beautiful show of your wings seems to raise you up, but the weight of your conduct weighs you down to the lowest depths.

Of this weight it is said by the Prophet, Ye sons of men, how long will ye be heavy in heart? [Ps. 4, 3] The Lord promises that He will convert the hypocrisy of this ostrich, when He says by the Prophet; The beasts of the field shall honour Me, the dragons and the ostriches. [Is. 43, 20] For what is expressed by the word 'dragons,' but minds openly wicked, which ever creep along the earth in most grovelling thoughts? But what is designated by the word 'ostriches,' but those, who pretend that they are good, who retain a life of sanctity in appearance, as a wing for flight, but use it not in act? The Lord, therefore, says that He is glorified by the dragon, or by the ostrich, because He frequently converts both the openly wicked, and the pretendedly good, to obey Him from their inmost thought. Or certainly, the beasts of the field, that is the dragons and ostriches, glorify the Lord, when that Gentile people, which had before been a member of the devil in this world, exalts the faith which is in Him. And this He both upbraids with the name of 'dragon,' on account of its wickedness,

and brands with the term 'ostriches,' on account of its hypocrisy. For the Gentile world received, as it were, wings, but was unable to fly; which both possessed the nature of reason, but knew not the operation of reason.

12. We have still something to examine more attentively, respecting the hawk and heron, in considering this ostrich. For the bodies of the hawk and the heron are small, but they are supported with thicker wings; and they therefore fly along with swiftness; because there is little in them which weighs them down, and much which supports them. But the ostrich, on the other hand, is endowed with scantier wings, and is weighed down with a huge body, so that though it desires to fly, yet the very fewness of the feathers supports not in the air the mass of so huge a body. The character of the Elect is, therefore, well signified by the heron and the hawk; for as long as they exist in this life, they cannot be without some infection of sin, however small. But since there is little in them which weighs them down, they have abundant virtue of good doing which exalts them on high. But the hypocrite, on the contrary, though he does many things to raise him up, yet perpetrates many things to weigh him down. For it is not, that the hypocrite does no good things, but he commits many wickednesses, with which to weigh them down. Its few feathers, therefore, raise not up the body of the ostrich, because a multitude of evil doings weighs down the little virtue of the hypocrite. This very wing of the ostrich has also a resemblance in colour to the wings of the heron and the hawk, but has no resemblance to their power.

For the wings of these are close and firmer, and in flying can press down the air by the power of their solidity. But the loosely-formed wings of the ostrich, on the contrary, are unable to take flight, because they are overpassed by the very air, which they ought to keep down. What else then do we observe in these, except that the virtues of the Elect fly forth solid, so as to beat down the winds of human applause? But however right the conduct of the hypocrites may appear, it is not able to fly, because, namely, the breath of human praise passes through the wing of unstable virtue.

13. But behold, when we observe the garb of the good and the evil to be one and the same, when we see the very same appearance of profession in the Elect and the reprobate, whence is our understanding able to discern in its comprehension the Elect from the reprobate, the true from the false? But we learn this the sooner, if we stamp upon our memory the words of our Teacher which have been intimated to us, Who says; By their fruits ye shall know them. [Matt. 7, 20] For we must not consider what they display in appearance, but what they maintain in conduct. Whence after having mentioned in this place the appearance of this ostrich, He immediately subjoins its doings, saying; Ver. 14. Which leaveth her eggs in the earth. [ix]

14. For what is expressed by 'eggs,' but the still tender offspring, which must be long cherished, in order to be brought to a living bird? For eggs are, in truth, insensible in themselves, but yet when warmed are changed into living birds. And so, doubtless, it is certain, that young hearers and children remain cold and insensible, unless they are warmed by the earnest exhortation of their teacher. That they may not, therefore, when abandoned, be-

come torpid in their own insensibility, they must be cherished by the frequent instruction of their teacher, till they have strength, both to live in understanding, and to fly in contemplation. But because hypocrites, though they are ever working perversity, yet cease not to speak right things, but bring forth children in faith and conversation by speaking rightly, though they cannot nourish them by good living, it is rightly said of this ostrich, Who leaveth her eggs in the earth. For the hypocrite neglects the care of his children, because he gives himself up, with his inmost love, to outward objects, and the more he is elated by them, the less is he pained at the loss of his children. To have left eggs, therefore, in the earth, is not to raise above earthly actions the children which have been born by conversion, by interposing the nest of exhortation. To have left the eggs in the earth, is to furnish to his children no example of heavenly life.

For, since hypocrites glow not with the bowels of charity, they never grieve at the torpor of the offspring which has been born to them; that is at the coldness of their eggs; and the more willingly they engage in worldly pursuits, the more carelessly do they permit those, whom they beget, to pursue earthly courses. But, because the care of heaven deserts not the forsaken children of hypocrites, for it warms some even of such, foreknown in secret election, by the regard of grace bestowed, it is rightly subjoined;

Wilt thou perchance warm them in the dust? [x] 15. As if he said, As I, Who warm them in the dust;

because, namely, I kindle with the fire of My love the souls of the young, even when placed in the midst of sinners. What is understood by 'dust,' but the sinner? Whence also that enemy is satiated with the perdition of this sinner, of whom it is said by the Prophet, For the serpent, dust is his bread. [Is. 65, 25] What is pointed at by dust but the very instability of the wicked? Of which David says, Not so the ungodly, not so, but as dust which the wind sweepeth away from the face of the earth. [Ps. 1, 4] The Lord therefore warms the eggs, which have been left in the dust; because He kindles, with the fire of His love, the souls of His little ones, bereft of the anxious care of their preachers, even when dwelling in the midst of sinners. Hence is it, that we behold many, both living in the midst of multitudes, and yet not adopting the conduct of the sluggish people. Hence is it, that we behold many both not flying the crowds of the wicked, and yet glowing with heavenly ardour. Hence is it, that we behold many, if I may so speak, glowing in the midst of cold. For whence do some, living amidst the sluggishness of earthly men, burn with desires of heavenly hope;

whence are they kindled, even amidst frozen hearts, except that Almighty God knows how to warm the forsaken eggs even in the dust, and, having dispelled the insensibility of their former coldness, so to animate them with the feeling of spiritual life, that they no longer lie torpid on the earth; but changed into living birds, raise themselves by contemplation, that is, by their flight, to heavenly objects? But we must observe, that in these words not only is the wicked conduct of hypocrites reprobated, but the pride of even good teachers, if any has crept in, is also kept down. For when the Lord says of Himself, that He Himself warms the forsaken eggs in the dust; He certainly plainly indicates, that He Himself works inwardly by

the words of a teacher, Who, even without the words of any man, warms whom He will, in the cold of the dust. As if He openly said to teachers; That ye may know that I am He, Who work by you when speaking, behold, when I will, I speak even without you to the hearts of men. When the thoughts then of teachers have been humbled, His discourse proceeds to describe a hypocrite, and, with what folly he is stupified, is pointed out still more fully by the doings of the ostrich. For it follows;

Ver. 15. She forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the beast of the field may break them. [xi]

16. What is understood by 'foot,' but the passing over of active work? What is signified by the 'field,' but this world? Of which the Lord says in the Gospel, But the field is the world. [Matt. 13, 38] What is expressed by the 'beast,' but the ancient enemy, who, lying in wait for the spoils of this world, is daily satiated with the death of men? Of which it is said by the Prophet, the Lord promising; No evil beast shall pass through it. [Is. 35, 9] The ostrich, therefore, deserting her eggs, forgets that the foot may crush them; because, namely, hypocrites abandon those whom they beget as their children in conversation [al. 'in conversion.'], and care not at all, lest the examples of evil in doings should lead them astray, when deprived of either the earnestness of exhortation, or of the care of discipline. For see next did they love the eggs, which they produce, they would doubtless be afraid, lest any one should crush them by pointing out evil doings. This foot Paul was fearing for his weak disciples, as for eggs which he had laid, when he said, Many walk, of whom I told you often, but now I tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ. [Phil. 3, 18] And again, Beware of dogs; beware of evil workers.

[ib. 2] And again, We command you, brethren, in the name of our 'Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us. [2 Thess. 3, 6] This foot John was dreading for Caius; for when he had mentioned before many wickednesses of Diotrephes, he added, Dearly beloved, imitate not that which is evil, but that which is good. [3 John 11] This the leader of the Synagogue himself was fearing for his feeble flock, saying, When thou hast entered the land, which the Lord thy God shall give thee, take heed that thou wish not to imitate the abominations of those nations. [Deut. 18, 9] She forgets also, that the beast of the field may break them, because the hypocrite doubtless cares not at all, if the devil raging in this world carries off his children who are brought forth in good conversation. But this beast of the field Paul was fearing for the eggs, which he had laid, saying, I fear, lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your senses should be corrupted from the love that is in Christ Jesus. [2 Cor. 11, 3] This beast of the field Peter was fearing for his disciples, saying, Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, stedfast in the faith. [l Pet. 5, 8. 9. Faithful teachers therefore have over their disciples the bowels of fear, from the virtue of charity.

But hypocrites fear the less for those committed to them, the more they discover not what they ought to fear for themselves. And because they live with hardened hearts, they ac-

knowledge not even the sons whom they beget, with any affection of the love which is due to them. Whence it is added still further under the figure of the ostrich;

Ver. 16. She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers. [xii]

17. For he whom the grace of charity bedews not, looks upon his neighbour as a stranger, even though he has himself begotten him to God. As doubtless are all hypocrites, whose minds in truth, while ever aiming at outward objects, become insensible within: and while they are ever seeking their own, in every thing they do, they are not softened by any compassion of charity, for the feelings of their neighbour. O what bowels of tenderness was Paul bearing, when he was panting for his children, with so great a warmth of love, saying, We live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. And, God is my witness, how I wish for you all in the bowels of Christ Jesus. [1 Thess. 3, 8] To the Romans also he says, God is my witness, Whom I serve in my spirit, in the Gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request, if by any means, now at length, I may have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come to you; for I long to see you. [Rom. 1, 9-11] He says also to Timothy, I thank my God, Whom I serve from my forefathers in pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers, night and day desiring to see thee. [2 Tim. 1, 3. 4.

He says also, pointing out his love to the Thessalonians, But we, brethren, being taken away from you for a short time, in presence, not in heart, hastened the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. [l Thess. 2, 17] Who when pressed by hard persecutions, and yet anxious for the safety of his children, added, We sent Timotheus our brother, and minister of God in the Gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to exhort you concerning your faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions. For ye yourselves know that we were appointed thereunto. [1 Thess. 3, 2. 3. He says also to the Ephesians, I desire that ye faint not in my tribulations for you, which is your glory. [Eph. 3, 13] Behold, when in the midst of tribulations, he exhorts others, and in that which he himself endures, he strengthens others. For he had not, like the ostrich, forgotten his children, but was greatly afraid, that his disciples, observing so many reproaches of persecutions in their preacher, would in him despise the faith, against which innumerable insults of sufferings were prevailing. And therefore he felt less pain at his torments, but was more afraid for his children, from the temptation of his torments. He was lightly regarding the wounds of his body in himself, whilst he was fearing for his children the wounds of the heart. He was himself patiently enduring the wounds of torments, but, by consoling his children, he was healing the wounds of their hearts.

Let us consider, therefore, of what charity he was, to have feared for others, in the midst of his own sorrows. Let us consider of what charity he was, to seek for the welfare of his children, amidst his own losses, and to guard, even from his own abject condition, firmness of mind in those who were near him.

18. But hypocrites know not these bowels of charity. Because the more their mind is let loose on outward subjects by worldly concupiscence, the more is it hardened within, by its want of affection. And it is frozen by benumbing torpor within, because it is softened by fatal love without; and is unable to consider itself, because it strives not to think of itself. But a mind cannot think on itself, which is not entirely at home in itself. But it is unable to be entirely at home in itself, because by as many lusts as it is hurried away, by so many objects is it distracted from itself; and scattered, it lies below, though with collected strength it might rise, if it willed, to the greatest heights.

19. Whence the mind of the just, because it is restrained, by the guardianship of discipline, from the shifting desire of all visible objects, is compacted in itself and inwardly entire; and it fitly beholds how it should conduct itself towards God, or its neighbour, because it leaves nothing of its own without, and the more it is withdrawn and restrained from outward objects, the more is it increased and kindled within; and the more it burns, the more brightly does it shine for the detection of vices. For hence it is, that while holy men gather themselves within themselves, they detect even the secret faults of others, with a wonderful and penetrating keenness of sight. Whence it is well said by the prophet Ezekiel, The likeness of a hand was put forth, and took me by a lock of my head, and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me, in the vision of God, into Jerusalem, by the inner door, that looked towards the north, where was placed the idol of jealousy to provoke jealousy. [Ez. 8, 3] For what is a lock of the head, but the thoughts of the mind gathered together, so as not to be scattered and dispersed, but to remain bound by discipline? A hand is therefore put forth from above, and the Prophet is lifted up by the lock of his head; because when our mind collects itself by watchfulness, a heavenly power raises us upward from things below.

He therefore well says, that he was lifted up between earth and heaven; because every holy man, when living in mortal flesh, does not as yet indeed fully arrive at heavenly objects, but yet at once abandons those that are below. But he is brought in the vision of God into Jerusalem, because in truth every one who is making progress through the zeal of charity, beholds what the Church ought to he. It is also well added, By the inner door, that looked towards the north: doubtless, because, while holy men look through the approach of inward contemplation, they detect more evil than good going on within the Church. And they turn their eyes in the quarter of the north, that is, to the left of the sun, because they warm themselves with the stimulants of charity against the frosts of sins. Where it is also rightly subjoined; Because there was there placed the idol of jealousy to provoke jealousy. For when they behold rapine and wickedness perpetrated within Holy Church, by some, who are faithful only in appearance, what else do they see, but an idol in Jerusalem? And it is called the idol of jealousy, because by this the jealousy of heaven is provoked against us: and it smites offenders the more severely, the more affectionately the Redeemer loves us.

20. Hypocrites, therefore, because they collect not the thoughts of their mind, are not held by a lock of their head. And when do they, who are ignorant of their own faults, detect the faults

of those committed to them? These are therefore dead to heavenly things, for which they ought to burn; and burn anxiously for earthly objects, to which they would laudably have been dead. For thou mayest often behold them, having put aside the care of their children, prepare themselves for dangers of immense labour, cross seas, approach tribunals, assail princes, burst into palaces, frequent the wrangling assemblies of the people, and defend with laborious watchfulness their earthly patrimony. And if it is perchance said to them, Why do ye, who have left the world, act thus? they immediately reply, that they fear God, and that therefore they labour with such zeal in defending their patrimony. Whence it is well added still further concerning the foolish labour of this ostrich;

Ver. 16. She hath laboured in vain; no fear compelling her. [xiii]

21. For, There they trembled with fear, where no fear was. [Ps. 14, 5] For behold it is commanded by the voice of God; If any one hath taken thy coat, and wished to contend with thee in judgment, give up to him thy cloak also. [Matt. 5, 40] And again; If one hath taken away that which is thine own, ask it not again. [Luke 6, 30] The Apostle Paul also, when he was wishing his disciples to despise outward things, in order to be able to retain those that are within, admonishes them, saying; Now there is utterly a fault in you, because ye have trials among yourselves. Why do ye not rather take wrong, why do ye not rather suffer fraud? [1 Cor. 6, 7] And yet a hypocrite, having assumed the garb of holy conversation, abandons the charge of his children, and seeks to defend, even by wrangling, all his temporal goods. He is not afraid to ruin their hearts by his example, and is afraid of losing his earthly patrimony as if by negligence. His disciple falls into error, and yet the heart of the hypocrite is wounded with no sorrow. He beholds those committed to him plunging into the gulph of iniquity, and passes by these things, as though he had not heard them. But if he has felt any temporal loss slightly inflicted on him, how does he suddenly burst forth, from his inmost soul, into the anger of revenge. His patience is soon broken down;

the grief of his heart is soon let loose in words. For while he hears with equanimity the loss of souls, but hastens, even with agitation of spirit, to repel the loss of temporal goods, he truly indicates to all, by this evidence of his emotion of mind, what he loves. For great earnestness of defence is there exercised, where the power of love is also mightier. For the more he loves earthly things, the more vehemently is he afraid of being deprived of them. For we learn not with what feeling we possess any thing in this world, except when we lose it. For, whatever is possessed without love, is lost without pain. But those things, which we ardently love, when possessed, we sigh for heavily when taken away. But who can know not that the Lord created earthly things for our use, but the souls of men for His own? A person is, therefore, convicted of loving himself more than God, who protects those things which are peculiarly his own, to the neglect of what are His. For hypocrites fear not to lose those things which belong to God, that is, the souls of men, and, as if about to render an account to a strict Judge, are afraid of losing those which are their own, things namely which are passing away together with the world. As if they would find Him favourably disposed, for Whom they

preserve senseless and undesirable objects, having lost those which are desirable, that is, which are rational.

We wish to possess something in this world, and behold the Truth exclaims, Unless a man hath renounced all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple. [Luke 14, 33]

22. How then ought a perfect Christian to defend by disputing those earthly goods, which he is not ordered to possess? When we lose therefore our own possessions, we are lightened of a great burden in this journey of life, if we perfectly follow God. But when the necessity of this same journey imposes on us the care of possessions, some persons are only to he submitted to, while they seize them from us, but others are to he prevented, without violation of charity, not however merely from anxiety lest they should take away from us our goods, but lest they should ruin themselves by seizing what are not their own. For we ought more to fear for the plunderers themselves, than to be eager in defending irrational possessions. For these we lose, at our death, even though not stolen from us; but we are one with the others, both now in the rank of creation, and, if they strive to amend, after their reception of the gift. But who can he ignorant that we ought to love the goods, which we use, less, and that, which we are ourselves, more. If therefore we speak to plunderers, even for their own benefit, we now no longer merely claim for ourselves those things which are temporal, but, for them also, those that are eternal.

23. But we must in this matter carefully watch, that covetousness steal not on us, through fear of necessity; and that a prohibition, kindled by zeal, when strained by immoderate force, may not break out into the disgracefulness of hateful contention. And whilst peace with our neighbour is torn from our hearts, for the sake of an earthly good, it appears plainly, that our property is loved better than our neighbour. For if we have no bowels of charity even towards our neighbour who plundered us, we persecute ourselves worse, than the spoiler does himself, and ravage ourselves more fatally, than the other could do; because by abandoning, of our own accord, the blessing of love, we lose for ourselves that which is within, though we lost, through him, those only which are without. But a hypocrite knows not this form of charity; for, preferring earthly to heavenly possessions, he inflames himself with furious hatred, in his inmost heart, against him who spoils his temporal possessions.

24. But it ought to be known, that there are some, whom mother Church tolerates, nursing them in the bosom of charity, and whom she would carry on even to the advanced growth of spiritual age, who sometimes both wear the garb of sanctity, and yet cannot attain to the merit of perfection. For they rise not to spiritual gifts, and therefore they assist those who are connected with them, in the preservation of earthly goods, and sometimes transgress in anger in this defence. But we must not believe that these persons fall into the numbers of hypocrites, for it is one thing to sin from infirmity, and another from wickedness. There is therefore this difference between these persons and hypocrites, that these, conscious of their own infirmity, prefer being reproved by all for their faults, to being praised for pretended sanctity. But those are both sure that they are doing wrong, and yet in the judgments of men are puffed up with the name of sanctity. These fear not to displease wicked men, even

by a virtuous action, provided only they are approved by the judgments of heaven; but those never consider what they are doing, but how by every action they can please men. These, according to the measure of their understanding, contend for the causes of God, even in things of the world; but those subserve the design of the world, even in the causes of God; because in the very midst of the holy deeds they make a shew of doing, they seek not the conversion of men, but the breath of applause.

25. When therefore we behold any persons of no mean conversation defending worldly interests passionately or immoderately, we ought to reprove this fault of theirs charitably, and yet not to despair of them, while reproving them. Because there frequently exist in one and the same person certain censurable points which are apparent, and great qualities which lie concealed. But in ourselves our great qualities often come forth openly, and those which are reprehensible are sometimes concealed. Hence, therefore, our pride of mind must be brought low, because, both their weaknesses are public, and ours are secret: and again, their strong points are concealed, and ours are divulged and made public. Those therefore, whom we blame for their open weakness, it remains for us to venerate from our opinion of their hidden strength, and if our own mind is elated at their open weakness, let it keep itself down in humility, from considering its own secret infirmities. For some persons frequently obey many precepts, and pass over a few; and we pass over many, when we keep but a few. Whence it is frequently the case that, when we see others neglect a command, which we know we observe ourselves, our mind immediately exalts itself with pride, forgetting how many commands it passes over, when there are very few which it observes. It is therefore necessary for us in cases where we reprove others, to bring down the pride of our anxious thought. For if our mind sees that it is more exalted than others, being led, as it were, to headlong heights of singularity, it falls the more fatally. But why the hypocrite abandons heavenly lucre, and labours for that of earth, He still subjoins, under the description of the ostrich, saying:

Ver. 17. God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath He given her understanding. [xiv]
26. Although to deprive is one thing, and not to give is another, yet His first expression 'deprived,' He repealed by subjoining, 'hath not given.' As if He were saying, My expression 'deprived' means not that He has unjustly taken away wisdom, but that He has justly not given it. Whence the Lord is described as having hardened the heart of Pharaoh, not because He Himself inflicted hardness, but because, according as his deserts demanded, He softened it not by any sensibility of heaven-infused fear. But now, because the hypocrite pretends that he is holy, and conceals himself under the semblance of good works, he is kept down by the peace of Holy Church, and is therefore, before our eyes, arrayed with the appearance of religion. But if any temptation of his faith springs up, the rabid mind of the wolf strips itself of its garb of sheep's skin; and shews by persecution, how greatly it rages against the holy. Whence it is also rightly subjoined;

Ver. 18. When the time shall be, she raiseth her wings on high, she scorneth the horseman and his rider. [xv]

27. For what do we understand by the wings of this ostrich, except the thoughts of the hypocrite, kept close at this time as if folded together? But when the time shall come, he raises them on high; because when an opportunity is found, he makes them manifest by his pride. To raise the wings on high, is to disclose his thoughts with unbridled haughtiness. But now, because he pretends that he is holy, because he confines what he thinks to himself, he folds, as it were, his wings on his body, by humility. But it must be observed, that He says not, The horse and his rider, but, The horseman and his rider. For the horse is the body which belongs to each holy soul, which it knows in truth both how to restrain from unlawful pursuits by the bit of continence, and again to let loose by the impulse of charity, in the exercise of good works. By the name, therefore, of 'horseman' is expressed the soul of a holy man, which keeps the body, its beast of burden ['jumentum corporis.'], under good control. Whence also the Apostle John, in the Apocalypse, having beheld the Lord, says; And the armies which are in heaven, were following Him on white horses. [Rev. 19, 14] For he rightly calls an army, the multitude of the Saints, which had toiled in this war of martyrdom.

And they are said, for this reason, to sit on white horses, because their bodies doubtless were brilliant with both the light of righteousness, and the whiteness of chastity. The hypocrite therefore scorns the horseman, because, when he has burst forth in open iniquity, he despises the sanctity of the Elect; and in his pride calls those fools, whom he used to imitate with cunning art, when kept down by the peace of the faith. But who else is the rider of this horseman, but Almighty God, Who both, foreseeing, created those things which were not, and possessing, rules over those which are? For he surely mounts the horseman, because He possesses the soul of every holy man, who possesses his own members aright. For this hypocrite then to scorn the horseman, is for him to despise the saints: but to scorn the rider of the horseman, is for him to leap forward even to do wrong to the Creator.

28. For since in every lapse, men always begin with the smallest faults, and as defects secretly grow up, attain to more grievous sins, the iniquity of this hypocrite is rightly distinguished by a statement of his losses, so that he is said first, to set himself forth as the good thing, which he is not; that he afterwards openly scorns the good; and lastly, that he leaps forth even to do wrong to his Creator. For a soul never lies in the spot where it has fallen; because having once fallen of its own accord, it is carried on to greater sins by the weight of its own iniquity, so that, as it sinks into the deep, it is ever overwhelmed still deeper. Let the hypocrite then go, and seek for his own praises, let him afterwards oppress the life of his neighbours, and exercise himself at last in deriding his Creator: in order that, as he ever cherishes prouder thoughts, he may overwhelm himself thereby in more awful punishments. O how many such does Holy Church now tolerate, whom open temptation makes manifest, when the time has suddenly arrived. But because they do not now put forth their wills against her, they meanwhile press close, as it were, the folded wings of their thoughts. For since this life is passed in common by the good and the evil, the Church is now visibly made up of a number of each of these.

But it is distinguished in God's invisible judgment, and, at its end, is separated from the society of the wicked. But at present the good cannot exist therein without the wicked, nor the wicked without the good. For at this time the two parts are necessarily united and fitted to each other, in order that both the wicked may be changed by the examples of the good, and the good be purified by the temptations of the wicked. And therefore, the Lord, after having introduced under the image of the ostrich many remarks on the rejection of the hypocrites, immediately turns to speak of the lot of the Elect, in order that they who had heard in those what to fly from and endure, might hear in these what to imitate and love. It follows;

Ver. 19. with thou give the horse strength, or with thou surround his neck with neighing? [MYSTICAL INTERPRETATION]

29. But perhaps before we discuss this strength and neighing of the horse, some persons are desirous of having both the strength of the rhinoceros, and the folly of this ostrich explained in another way, putting aside their moral meaning. For the word of God is manna, and gives, in truth, that taste in the mouth of the eater, which the wish of him who partakes it rightly desires. The word of God is the earth, which produces fruit more abundantly, the more the labour of the enquirer demands. The meaning, therefore, of Holy Scripture should be sifted with manifold enquiry, for even the earth, which is often turned by the plough, is fitted to produce a more abundant crop. We therefore briefly touch upon our other view of the rhinoceros and ostrich, because we are hastening onward to unravel those questions which are more complicated. This rhinoceros, which is called also the 'monoceros' in Greek copies, is said to be of such great strength, as not to be taken by any skill of hunters. But, as those persons assert, who have striven with laborious investigation in describing the natures of animals, a virgin is placed before it, who opens to it her bosom as it approaches, in which, having put aside all its ferocity, it lays down its head, and is thus suddenly found as it were unarmed, by those by whom it is sought to be taken.

It is also described as being of box colour, and whenever it engages with elephants, it is said to strike with that single horn, which it bears on its nostrils, the belly of its opponents, in order to easily overthrow its assailants, when it wounds their softer parts. By this rhinoceros, or certainly monoceros, that is, the unicorn, can therefore be understood that people, who when it adopted, not good works, but merely pride among all men, at its reception of the Law, carried, as it were, a singular horn among other beasts. Whence the Lord, foretelling His Passion by the voice of the Prophet, says; Save Me from the lion's mouth, and My humility from the horns of the unicorns. [Ps. 22, 21] For as many unicorns, or certainly rhinoceroses, existed in that nation, as many as were those who with singular and foolish pride confided in the works of the Law, in opposition to the preaching of the truth. It is said therefore to blessed Job, as a type of the Church;

Ver. 9. Will the rhinoceros be willing to serve thee? [xvi]

30. As if it were said more plainly; Dost thou bend under the rule of thy preaching that people whom thou beholdest boasting, with its foolish pride, in the death of the faithful?

Thou understandest, As Myself, Who both behold it raised against Me with its single horn, and yet subdue it to Myself, at once, whenever I will. But we set forth this point the better, if we pass from generals to particulars. Let that Paul therefore be brought before our notice, out of this people, both first in his pride, and afterward as a striking witness in his humility; who when he unwittingly exalted himself against God, as if on his keeping the Law, carried a horn on his nostril. Whence also, when afterwards he was bowing down this horn of his nostril by humility, he says; Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly. [1 Tim. 1, 13] He who trusted that he would please God by his cruelty, carried a horn on his nostrils, as he himself afterwards says, when condemning himself; And profited in the Jews' religion, above many my equals in years, in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. [Gal. l, 14] But every hunter feared the strength of this rhinoceros; because every preacher dreaded the cruelty of Saul. For it is written;

Saul yet breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that, if he found any of this way, men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. [Acts 9, 1. 2. When a breath is drawn in by the nostril in order to be given back, it is called 'breathing,' and we often detect by its smell with our nostril that which we behold not with our eyes. This rhinoceros was therefore carrying a horn on his nostril, with which to strike; because, breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, after he had killed those who were present, he was seeking for those who were absent. But behold every hunter hides himself before him; that is, every man, who savours of what is reasonable, is put to flight by his opinion of his terror. In order then that he may take this rhinoceros, let the virgin open her bosom, that is, let the Wisdom of God Itself, inviolate [al. 'enveloped'] in the flesh, of Itself, disclose to him Its mystery. For it is written, that, when he was journeying to Damascus, suddenly there shone round him, at mid-day, a light from heaven, and a voice was uttered, saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? [Acts 9, 4] And he, prostrate on the earth, answered, Who art Thou, Lord? And it is immediately said to him, I am Jesus of Nazareth, Whom thou persecutest.

[ib. 5] The Virgin doubtless opened her bosom to the rhinoceros, when the Uncorrupted Wisdom of God disclosed to Saul the mystery of His Incarnation by speaking from heaven and the rhinoceros lost its strength, because, prostrate on the ground, he lost all his swelling pride and when, having lost the sight of his eyes, he is led to Ananias, it is now discovered with what hands of God this rhinoceros is bound: because, namely, he is bound at once with blindness, with preaching, and with Baptism. And he abode by the manger of God, because he scorned not to ruminate on the words of the Gospel. For he says; I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. But I went up by revelation, and communicated my Gospel with them. [Gal. 2, 1, 2] And he, who had first heard, when famished, It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks, [Acts 9, 5] having been afterwards tamed by the wonderful power of his rider, obtained strength from the food of the word, and lost the heel of pride.

31. But he is not only restrained from violence by the hands of God, but, what is more wonderful, is bound to plough; so as not only not to attack men with the horn of cruelty, but, ministering also to their support, to draw the plough of preaching. For he himself speaks of those who are preaching the Gospel, as if they were ploughing: For he that ploweth should plow in hope, and he that thresheth, in hope of partaking the fruit. [1 Cor. 9, 10] He therefore, who had just inflicted tortures on the faithful, and afterwards willingly endures scourges for the faith, who also, by writing his Epistles, preaches in lowliness and contempt the truth which before he fiercely assailed, is doubtless firmly fastened to the plough, and labours for the crop, who used to live in the plain, fatally exempt from fear. Of whom it is rightly said;

Ver. 10. Or will he break the clods of the valleys after thee? [xvii] 32. The Lord had, in truth, already entered the minds of some, who believed Him to be truly the Redeemer of mankind. But yet, when they departed not from their former observance, when they kept to the harsh preaching of the letter, the illustrious preacher says to them; If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. [Gal. 5, 2] What else then did he, who in the humble mind of the faithful crushed by refutation the harshness of the law, but break the clods in the valley after the Lord? in order, namely, that the grains of the seeds, which the furrow of the heart, cleft by the plough of faith, was receiving, might not perish by being kept down by the observance of the letter. Of whom it is still rightly subjoined, Ver. 11. Wilt thou have confidence in his great strength, and wilt thou leave to him thy labours?

[xviii] 33. The Lord had confidence in the strength of this rhinoceros; because the more He endured him cruelly inflicting hardships upon Him, the more firmly He foresaw him enduring adversities for His sake. To whom also He left the labours, which He Himself had endured in the flesh; because He led him when converted even to the imitation of His own Passion. Whence also it is said by the same rhinoceros, I fill up those things which are lacking of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh. [Col. 1, 24] Of whom it is further added; Ver. 12. Wilt thou trust him to bring back thy seed to thee, and to gather thy floor? [xix]

34. Let us consider what Saul was, when, from his very youth, he was engaged in aiding those who stoned, when he was laying waste some places of the Church, and, having received letters, was seeking for others to lay waste, when no single death of the faithful sufficed him, but, after the destruction of some, he was ever panting for the death of others: and we know for certain, that none of the faithful, at that time, believed that God would bend to the yoke of His fear the might of such haughty pride. Whence also Ananias, even after he had heard by the voice of the Lord that he had been converted, was afraid, saying, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, what evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem. [Acts 9, 13] And yet, suddenly changed from being an enemy, he is made a preacher: and in all quarters of the world announces the name of his Redeemer, endures punishments for the truth's sake, exults at suffering himself what he had inflicted; invites some by allurements, and recals others by terrors, to the faith. To these he promises the kingdom of the heavenly country, to those he threatens the fire of hell. The one he corrects by authority, the others he attracts

by humility to the path of rectitude: and bends himself on every side to the hand of his ruler, and collects the threshing floor of God with as great skill, as he used before to winnow it with pride.

35. But not even is this at variance with Paul, that the rhinoceros is said to be of box colour, and is stated to strike with his horn the bellies of elephants. For, because he was wont to live under the rigour of the Law, the observance of every virtue grew up more strictly in him than in others. For what is expressed by box colour, but the paleness of abstinence? To which he himself witnesses, that he tenaciously adheres, saying; I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection, lest perchance, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway. [1 Cor. 9, 27] Who, when, being endowed with knowledge of the Divine Law, he reproves the greediness of others, strikes elephants in their belly with his horn. For he had in truth struck elephants in the belly, when he was saying; Many walk, of whom I told you often, but now I tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame. [Phil. 3, 18. 19. And again, They that are such serve not the Lord Christ, but their own belly. [Rom. 16, 18] This rhinoceros, therefore, no longer strikes men, but beasts, with his horn; when Paul no longer assaults the humble who are to be destroyed with that might of his doctrine, but slays the proud worshippers of their belly.

It remains for us, therefore, to believe that those things, which we know were written of Paul, were done in others also. For many in truth were converted from the pride of that people, to the grace of humility; and whilst the Lord made their cruelty to submit to the yoke of His inspired fear, He doubtless subjected to Himself the might of the rhinoceros. But since we have heard what God's marvelous power has wrought with His Elect, let us now hear what His marvellous forbearance has endured in those whom He rejects.

Ver. 13. The wing of the ostrich is like the wings of the heron and the hawk. [xx] 36. What is signified by the name 'ostrich,' but the synagogue, which had indeed the wings of the law, but from grovelling in its heart in things below, never raised itself from the earth? But what is expressed by the 'heron' and the 'hawk,' but the ancient fathers, who had power even in their living to soar to those truths, which they were able to perceive by understanding? The wing, therefore, of the ostrich is like the wings of the heron and the hawk; because the voice of the synagogue maintained in its words the doctrine of the early teachers, but knew it not in its living. Whence also the Truth warns the people of this same synagogue against the Scribes and Pharisees, saying; The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all therefore whatsoever they have said to you, observe and do: but do not ye after their works. [Mat. 23, 2] We could say much of the habits of the heron, but since its wing only is brought to our memory, we are prevented speaking of its habits.

Ver. 14. When she leaveth her eggs in the earth, wilt thou perchance warm them in the dust? [xxi] 37. In 'eggs' there is one thing which is seen, another which is hoped for: and hope cannot be seen, as Paul witnesses, who says, What a man seeth, why doth he hope for? [Rom. 8, 24] What then is designated by the 'eggs' of the ostrich, but the Apostles born of

the flesh of the synagogue? who whilst they present themselves as despised and lowly in the world, teach us to look for glory in heavenly places. For regarded by the haughty as abject, and as if of no account, they lay, like eggs on the ground; but the power of living, and of soaring to heavenly places, upborne by the wings of hope, lay hid within them. Which eggs the ostrich leaves in the earth; because the synagogue, scorning to listen to those Apostles, whom it had begotten in the flesh, gave them up to the Gentiles who were to be called. But the Lord with wonderful power warms these very same eggs in the dust; because He roused to life the progeny of the Apostles, in that Gentile world, which had hitherto been cast off; and they, whom the synagogue had despised as void of sense and life, now live and soar aloft, in the veneration of the Gentiles, by the authority of doctrine. The ostrich leaves her eggs in the dust; because the synagogue raised not from earthly desires those whom it begat by preaching. And because the ancient enemy finds those desires conceived in the heart, he doubtless hurries the minds assailed by them even into sins. Whence it is also subjoined;

Ver. 15. She forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the beast of the field may break them. [xxii] 38. The foot crushes, and the beast of the field breaks, the eggs at the time, when they are forsaken on the earth; because, namely, while the hearts of men seek to be ever thinking on earthly things, ever to be employed on things below, they throw themselves down for the beast of the field, that is, the devil, to trample on: so that, after they have been long degraded by the basest thoughts, they are at length crushed by the perpetration of even greater crimes. The synagogue, therefore, neglected to raise up from the earth by good living the eggs which it laid. But, though Almighty God found many of its children dead and chilled by earthly desires, yet he animated them with the warmth of His love. But that life, which the synagogue gave not its children, it grudged them afterwards, when it was striving to extinguish by persecution, those whom it remembered not to have by cherishing brought forth to good works. Whence it is also fitly added of this ostrich;

Ver. 16. She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers. 39. It despises, as though they were not its own, those whom it discovers to be living otherwise than it has itself taught, and, as its cruelty becomes obdurate, it applies terrors, and exercises itself in torturing them, and, inflamed by the firebrands of envy, it labours that they should perish, for whom it laboured not that they should live. And, when it persecutes the members of the Lord, it suspects that by this it is pleasing God. Whence also the Truth says to the same eggs of the ostrich, The hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you, thinketh that he doeth God service. [John 16, 2] Because, therefore, when the synagogue is led by cruelty to persecution, it thinks that it is acting thus by the impulse of divine fear, it is rightly subjoined; She hath laboured in vain, no fear compelling her.

40. For not fear, but cruelty, has compelled it to pant in the labour of persecution. But because vices, when tinged with the colour of virtues, are commonly the more abominable, the less they are known even to be vices; the synagogue was more harsh in persecution, as it believed that it was becoming more religious by the deaths of the faithful. And therefore it could not at all discern what it was doing, because it shut out from itself the light of

understanding, by putting pride in the way. Whence it is also well subjoined; Ver. 17. God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath He given her understanding. 41. For strict is the enquiry of secret retribution; and because it knowingly lost its humility, it also lost, unwittingly, the understanding of the truth. But the wounds, which it inflicted on the faithful at the coming of the Redeemer, are much less than those with which it still aims to smite the Church, by the coming of Antichrist. For it is preparing itself for that time, in order to oppress the life of the faithful with accumulated strength. Whence it is also fitly subjoined;

Ver. 18. When the time shall come, she raiseth her wings on high, she scorneth the horseman, and his rider. [xxiii]

42. The ostrich raiseth her wings on high, when the synagogue opposes its Creator, not as before by dreading, but by now openly withstanding, Him. For being changed into the limbs of the devil, and believing the man of lies to be God, it exalts itself the higher against the faithful, the more it boasts also, that it is itself the body of God. And because it despises, not only the Manhood of the Lord, but also His very Godhead, it scorns, not merely the horseman, but the rider of the horseman also. For, without violating the unity of the Person, it can be understood that the Word of God then mounted the rider, when he created for Himself a living Body within the womb of the Virgin. He then mounted the horseman, when, by creating Himself, He brought under the yoke of Divine worship a human soul, possessing power over its own flesh. For the Godhead assumed the flesh, by the intervention of the soul, and by this means He held together the whole horseman; [S. Aug. de Fid. et Symb. §. 10. because He joined together in Himself, not that only which was ruled, but that also which ruled. Judaea therefore, because, having been caught in the snare of seduction, by the coming of haughty Antichrist, it scoffs at our Redeemer, for having been lowly among men, scorns the horseman. But because it, in every thing, denies His Godhead, it scorns equally his rider also.

But our Redeemer is, in one and the same person, both the horseman and the rider of the horseman; and, when He came into the world, He set forth mighty preachers against the world; and when, in the end of the world, He endures the craft of Antichrist, He supplies strength to those, who contend in His behalf: that so, when our ancient enemy is set free in that liberty of his which is speedily to be terminated, our faithful ones may receive so much greater strength, the more they have to fight against an adversary who has been let loose. Whence in this place, when the ostrich is described as raising her wings, and scorning the horseman and his rider, the mention of mighty preachers is immediately subjoined, and it is said;

Ver. 19. Wilt thou give the horse strength, or wilt thou surround his neck with neighing? [xxiv] 43. In Holy Scripture there is sometimes expressed under the term 'horse,' the slippery life of the wicked, sometimes temporal dignity, sometimes this present world itself, sometimes the preparation of right intention, sometimes a holy preacher. For under the term 'horse' is signified the slippery life of the wicked, as it is written; Be ye not as the

horse and mule. [Ps. 32, 9] And as is said by another Prophet, They were made wanton horses, and stallions, every one was neighing after his neighbour's wife. [Jer. 5, 8] By the name 'horse' is understood temporal dignity, as Solomon witnesses, who says, I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth. [Eccles. 10, 7] For every one who sins is the servant of sin, and servants are upon horses, when sinners are elated with the dignities of the present life. But princes walk as servants, when no honour exalts many who are full of the dignity of virtues, but when the greatest misfortune here presses them down, as though unworthy. Hence it is said again; They have slumbered who mounted horses. [Ps. 76, 6] That is, in the death of the soul, they, who trusted in the honour of the present life, have closed the eyes of their mind to the light of truth.

Under the name of 'horse' is designated this present world, as is said by the voice of Jacob; Let Dan be a serpent by the way, a horned snake in the path, that biteth the horses' hoofs, that his rider falleth backward. [Gen. 49, 17] In which testimony we set forth more plainly what 'horse' signifies, if we consider the circumstances somewhat more minutely. For some say, that Antichrist is coming out of the tribe of Dan, because in this place Dan is asserted to be a serpent, and a biting one. Whence also, when the people of Israel were choosing their position, in the partition of the camp, Dan most rightly first pitched his camp to the north; signifying him in truth, who had said in his heart; I will sit upon the mount of the testament, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the height of the clouds. I will be like the Most High. [Is. 14, 13. 14. Of whom also it is said by the Prophet; The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan. [Jer. 8, 16] But he is called not only a serpent, but a horned serpent, (cerastes. For keVata in Greek are called 'cornua' in Latin. And this serpent, by whom the coming of Antichrist is fitly set forth, is said to be horned: because, together with the bite of pestilent preaching, he is armed also against the life of the faithful with the horns of power.

But who can be ignorant that a path is narrower than a way? Dan therefore becomes a serpent in the way, because he compels those, whom he flatters by seeming to spare them, to walk in the broad way of the present life: but he bites them in the way, because he destroys with the poison of his error those on whom he confers liberty. He becomes a horned serpent in the path, because those whom he finds to be faithful, and to be confining themselves to the narrow paths of the heavenly precept, he not only assails with the wickedness of crafty persuasion, but also oppresses with the terror of his power. And, after the kindness of pretended sweetness, he employs the horns of his power in the torture of persecution. In which passage, the 'horse' signifies this world, which foams through its pride in the lapse of passing times. And, because Antichrist strives to seize the latter end of the world, this horned serpent is said to bite the horses' hoofs. For, to bite the horses' hoofs, is to reach the ends of the world by striking them; That its rider falleth backward. The rider of the horse, is every one who is exalted in worldly dignities; who is said to fall backwards, and not on his face; as Saul is said to have fallen. For, to fall on his face, is for each one to confess his own faults, in this life, and to bewail them with penitence.

But to fall backward, where one cannot see, is to depart suddenly out of this life, and to know not to what punishments he is being led. And because Judaea, entangled with the snares of its own error, is looking for Antichrist, instead of Christ, Jacob, in the same passage, rightly turned round suddenly in the language of the Elect, saying; I will wait for Thy salvation, O Lord; [Gen.49, 18] that is, I do not, as the infidels, believe in Antichrist, but I faithfully believe Him, Who is about to come for our redemption, even the true Christ.

By the name 'horse' is understood the preparation of right intention, as it is written, The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but the Lord giveth safety; [Prov.21, 31] because the mind prepares itself indeed against temptation, but contends not healthfully, unless it he assisted from above. By the name 'horse' is understood each holy preacher, as the Prophet witnesses, who says; Thou sentest Thine horses into the sea, disturbing many waters. [Hab. 3, 15] For the waters, in truth, lay quiet, because the minds of men were lulled to rest a long while, beneath the torpor of their sins. But the sea was disturbed by the horses of God; because, when holy preachers had been sent, every heart which was benumbed with fatal security, was alarmed by the shock of wholesome fear. In this place, therefore, a holy preacher is understood by the name 'horse,' when it is said to blessed Job; Wilt thou give the horse strength, or with thou surround his neck with neighing?

44. But what is meant by the Lord's saying, that He first gives strength to this horse, and afterwards surrounds his neck with neighing? For by neighing is set forth the voice of preaching. But every true preacher receives, first, strength, and afterwards neighing, because, when he has first extinguished sin in himself, he then attains to the voice of preaching, for the instruction of others. This horse hath strength, because he firmly endures adversity. He hath neighing, because by blandishment he invites to heavenly things. The Lord declares, that He gives both strength and neighing to this horse, because unless both life and teaching meet together in His preacher, the virtue of perfection will never appear. For it avails not much, though he is supported by the doings of an exalted life, if he is yet unable to rouse others by his words to his own sentiments. Or, what avails it to kindle others by his speaking well, if he makes it plain that he has himself become slothful by living ill. Because therefore it is necessary for both these to meet together in a preacher, for his perfection, the Lord confers on His horse both the neighing of voice, with boldness of action, and boldness of action, with neighing of voice. And we must observe, why neighing, which is doubtless uttered inwardly through the throat, is said to be placed round the neck of the horse, that is, to be drawn in a circle outwardly. Because, namely, the voice of preaching emanates from within, but encircles from without.

For as it rouses others to good living, it binds also the conduct of the preacher to good deeds, in order that his conduct may go not beyond his words, nor his life contradict his speech. The neighing then is placed round the neck of the horse, because the life of a preacher is restrained, even by his own words, from breaking forth into deeds of wickedness. Hence is it, that a collar is given as a reward to men who fight with all their power; in order that they may ever perform greater deeds, because they bear the tokens of valour; and may fear to

incur the charge of weakness, while that, which they display on themselves, is already the reward of their bravery. Whence it is rightly said by Solomon to every hearer, in praise of wisdom; Thou shall receive a crown of grace for thy head, and a collar of gold for thy neck. [Prov. 1, 9] It follows,

Ver. 20. Will thou rouse him as the locusts? [xxv] 45. By the name 'locusts' is sometimes signified the Jewish people, sometimes the converted Gentiles, sometimes the tongue of flatterers, but sometimes, by comparison, the Resurrection of the Lord, or the life of preachers. For, that locusts express the people of the Jews, the life of John points out to us; of whom it is written; He did eat locusts and wild honey. [Mark 1, 6] For John proclaims, even in the kind of his food, Him, Whom he foretells with the authority of prophecy. For in himself he designated the Lord, Whom he preceded. And He, doubtless, coming for our redemption, ate wild honey, because He took of the sweetness of the unfruitful Gentiles. But, because He partly converted the people of the Jews, in His own body, He took locusts for food. For the locusts, which give sudden leaps, but fall immediately to the ground, signify them. For they were leaping, when they were promising to fulfil the precepts of the Lord; but they were falling speedily to the ground, when, by their wicked works, they were denying they had heard them. Let us behold in them a kind of leaping of locusts; All the words, which the Lord hath said, will we both do and hear. [Ex. 19, 8] But let us see how they speedily fall to the ground; Would we had died in Egypt, and not in this vast wilderness. Would we may perish, and that the Lord may not lead us into that land. [Numb. 14, 2] They were therefore locusts, because they used to leap in their words, but fall in their doings.

46. By the name of 'locusts' is the Gentile people also designated, as Solomon witnesses, who says; The almond tree shall flourish, the locust shall become fat, the caper tree shall he destroyed. [Eccles. 12, 5] For the almond shews its blossom before all other trees. And what are designated by the flower of the almond, except the beginnings of Holy Church? which expanded the primitive flowers of virtues in her preachers, and, in order to bring forth the fruits of good works, preceded the saints which were to come, as shrubs which were to follow. And in this was the locust soon made fat; because the dry barrenness of the Gentile world was watered by the fatness of heavenly grace. The caper tree is destroyed; because when the Gentile world attained, on its call, the grace of faith, Judaea, remaining in its barrenness, lost the course of good living. Hence it is said again by the same Solomon; The locust hath no king, and they go forth, all of them, by their bands. [Prov. 30, 27] Because, namely, the Gentile world was forsaken, while it continued estranged from the Divine government, but yet, afterwards marshalled in order, it proceeded to the battle of faith against opposing spirits.

47. By the word 'locust' is expressed the tongue of the flatterer; as the plagues of Egypt, displayed from heaven, attest; which were once inflicted in a bodily manner, as their deserts demanded; but signified spiritually, what evils smite day by day the minds of the wicked. For it is written; A burning wind was bringing up the locusts, which went up over all the land of Egypt, and covered the whole face of the earth, laying waste all things. The herb of the land,

therefore, was devoured, and whatever fruit was on the trees. [Ex. 10, 13-15] For Egypt was affected by these plagues, in order that being roused, and smarting thereby from an outward blow, it might consider, what losses of devastation it was enduring by inward neglect, and that, while it beheld things most trifling, but more highly esteemed, perishing without, it might feel, through looking at them, the heavier losses it had sustained within. But what do locusts, which injure the fruits of men more than any other smaller animals, portend by their signification, but the tongues of flatterers, which corrupt the mind of earthly men, if they ever observe them producing any good fruits, by praising them too immoderately? For the fruit of the Egyptians is the doings of the vain-glorious, which locusts destroy, when flattering tongues incline the heart of him who does them to seek for transitory praises. But the locusts eat up the grass, whenever any flatterers extol with applauses the words of speakers. They devour also the fruits of the trees, when by empty praises they weaken even the doings of some who now seem to be strong.

48. By the name 'locust' is designated by comparison the Resurrection of our Redeemer. Whence it is said also by the Prophet in His voice; I am cast out as the locust. [Ps. 109, 23] For He submitted to be held by His persecutors, even unto death, but He was cast forth as a locust, because He flew away from their hands by the leap of a sudden resurrection.

49. Which can be referred also to the body of preachers. For He was cast out in them as a locust, because, while Judaea was raging in its persecution, as they fly into different directions, they leaped, as it were, into their retreat. But because that preacher is raised to the height of perfection, who is made firm, not only by the active, but also by the contemplative life; this very perfection of preachers is rightly expressed by 'locusts,' which, as often as they endeavour to raise themselves into the air, first impel and raise themselves with their legs, and afterwards fly with their wings. Thus doubtless are holy men, who, when they aim at heavenly things, rely in the first place on the good works of active life, and afterwards raise themselves in flight to sublime truths by the spring of contemplation. They plant their legs firmly, and spread their wings, because they strengthen themselves by good doings, and are exalted to lofty things by their way of life. But, while dwelling in this life, they cannot remain long in divine contemplation, but, as if like locusts, they catch themselves on their feet from the leap they have given, when, after the sublimities of contemplation, they return to the necessary doings of active life; but yet are not content to remain in the same active life. But when they eagerly spring forth to contemplation, they again, as it were, seek the air in flight: and they pass their life, like locusts, soaring up and sinking down, while they ever unceasingly endeavour to behold the highest objects, and are thrown back on themselves by the weight of their corruptible nature.

50. There is a still further resemblance which locusts bear to holy preachers. For, in the morning hours, that is, at the time of moderate heat, they hardly raise themselves from the earth. But, when the heat has blazed forth, they soar aloft, the higher the more cheerfully they fly. But every holy preacher, when he beholds quiet periods of the faith, appears lowly and contemptible, and, like a locust, hardly rises, as it were, from the earth. But if the heat

of persecution should wax warm, clinging in his heart to heavenly things, he soon shews how great is his sublimity: and he who seemed before to have quietly sunk to rest below, now flaps his wings, and is hurried aloft. Of that horse, therefore, that is, His preacher, the Lord says to blessed Job, Wilt thou rouse him as the locusts? Thou understandest, As I, Who by exciting raise him up to higher objects, as I suffer him to be tortured by a fiercer fire of persecution; in order that his virtue may be more strong and wakeful, when the cruelty of unbelievers dashes itself against him more furiously.

But when a holy preacher suffers many things without, when he is tortured by the dire assault of persecutions; who can discern what it is that he beholds within, who feels not his many losses without? For were there not wonderful encouragements to supply him with health within, those torments, which are applied outwardly, would doubtless reach to his heart. But his mind raises itself aloft on the citadel of hope, and therefore it fears not the weapons of the siege which has been laid to it. Whence also in this place, the Lord, in order to shew what sweet odours this horse inhales within, when suffering outwardly so many adversities, rightly adds, The glory of his nostrils is terror. [xxvi]

51. In Holy Scripture by the word 'nostrils,' is understood sometimes folly, sometimes the instigation of the ancient enemy, but sometimes foreknowledge. For folly is sometimes designated by 'nostrils,' as we have already taught before, on the evidence of Solomon; who says; A ring of gold in a swine's nostril is a beautiful and foolish woman. [Prov. 11, 22] By the name 'nostrils' are understood the exhaling snares and instigation of the ancient enemy; which the Lord witnesses concerning him in this very book, saying; From his nostrils proceedeth smoke. [Job 41, 20] As if He said, From his perverse instigation arises a mist of most wicked thought in the heart of men, by which the eyes of those who see are darkened. Foreknowledge is also designated by 'nostrils,' as is said by the Prophet; Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; because he himself is counted lofty. [Is. 2, 22] For we often detect by the smell that, which we see not, so that some things, even when lying far off, become known to us by the fragrance of their nature. And, when we draw our breath through our nostrils, we frequently foreknow some things, even when not seen. The breath of our Redeemer is, therefore, said to be in His nostrils; in order, namely, that His knowledge might be pointed out to exist in foreknowledge; because whatever things He declared that He knew in the nature of His Manhood, He doubtless foreknew before all ages by His Godhead.

And, whence He possessed the breath in His nostrils, He immediately subjoined by the Prophet, saying; Because He Himself is counted lofty. As if He were saying; He foresaw from above, what would come to pass below; because He came from heaven to earth. Holy men likewise, because they have believed what they heard from Him, foresee themselves also what things are to come; and, while they faithfully obey His precepts, wait for His coming with certain hope. Whence also in this place, by the nostrils of this horse are designated the foreknowledge and expectation of a holy preacher. For while he seeks for the last judgment

to arrive, for the heavenly country to be manifested, and for the rewards to be paid to the righteous, he draws, as it were, through his nostrils a breath from what is to come.

52. But the glory of his nostrils is terror; because the unrighteous dreads the coming of the vision of the strict Judge, which the righteous earnestly expects. For he, considering his labour, looks for the reward of retribution, and, knowing the merit of his cause, seeks for the presence of his Judge; and most ardently desires Him to come in flame of fire, inflicting vengeance on the ungodly, and granting the godly, in recompense, the sight of His contemplation. But he, who calls to mind his unrighteousness, shudders at coming to judgment, and dreads the examination of his actions: because he knows, that, if they are inquired into, he is convicted. The glory, therefore, of his nostrils is terror; because the righteous glories on the same ground as the sinner is convicted. Let us behold the horse, how he already draws through his nostrils a breath from those things which as yet he sees not; let us behold with what glory he is elated, when he is waiting for things that are yet to come. Behold the illustrious preacher, in looking at his labours, exclaims; I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my dissolution is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me in that day. [2 Tim. 4, 6-8] Where also he fitly subjoins;

But not to me only, but to those also who love His coming. As if he said; But to all also, who are conscious to themselves of good works. For none love the coming of the Judge, except those who know that they have in their cause the merit of righteousness. Because, therefore, the righteous boasts for the same reason, that the unrighteous is alarmed, let it be rightly said; The glory of his nostrils is terror. But let us hear, how this holy preacher meanwhile acts when placed in this life, whilst he is waiting for the coming glory, whilst striving to come before the face of his Judge, and whilst he is still put off from the reward of his labour. It follows;

Ver. 21. He diggeth up the earth with his hoof. [xxvii]

53. By the 'hoof of the horse,' the strength of labour is usually understood. What then is designated by the 'hoof,' except the perfection of virtues in a holy preacher? And with this hoof he, in truth, digs up the earth, when, by the example of his own works, he ejects worldly thoughts from the heart of his hearers. With his hoof he digs up the earth, because, when a good teacher shews by his conduct that the world is despised, he empties the minds of his hearers of secular cares. Let us see Paul, with what hoof of displayed virtue he digs the soil of the hearts of his hearers. For he himself says to his disciples; Think on these things, which ye hate received, and heard, and seen in me, do these things; and the God of peace shall be with you. [Phil. 4, 8. 9. And again; Brethren, be ye imitators of me, as I also am of Christ. [1 Cor. 11, 1] He therefore, who corrects others by the example of his own conduct, doubtless digs up the earth with his hoof. We have another point, to treat still more minutely, concerning the digging of this hoof. For though holy men watch with the eye of their mind intent on heavenly things, though they spurn with the foot of hard contempt

all things, which flow by and sink beneath: yet from the corruption of the earthly flesh, to which they are still bound, they frequently endure in their heart a thick dust of thoughts.

And when they persuade others without to seek for the things of heaven, they ever examine, with searching enquiry, themselves within, that they may not be polluted by any degrading thought long abiding in them. This horse, therefore, digs up the earth with his hoof, when every preacher examines with bold enquiry earthly thoughts within him. The horse digs up the earth with his hoof, when he, over whom the Lord now rules, considers the mass which is heaped on him from his former thoughts, and ceases not to empty himself of it by tears. Whence also Isaac is well described, as having dug wells in a strange nation. [Gen. 26, 18] By which example we learn, in truth, when dwelling in the sorrow of this pilgrimage, to penetrate the depths of our thoughts; and that, until the water of true wisdom comes in answer to our efforts, the hand of our enquiry should not desist from clearing away the soil of the heart. Yet the aliens lying in ambush, fill up these wells, because doubtless, when unclean spirits behold us studiously digging into our heart, they pile upon us the accumulated thoughts of temptations. Our mind must accordingly be always emptied out, and unceasingly dug up, lest the soil of our thoughts, if left undisturbed, should be heaped upon us, even to a mound of evil deeds. Hence it is said to Ezekiel; Son of man, dig in the wall: [Ez. 8, 8] that is, break through hardness of heart by frequent blows of examination.

Hence the Lord says to Isaiah; Enter thou into the rock, hide thyself in a ditch in the ground, from the face of the fear of the Lord, and from the glory of His Majesty. [Is. 2, 10] For we enter the rock, in truth, when we penetrate the hardness of our heart; and we are hid in a ditch in the ground from the face of the fear of our Lord, if, casting out worldly thoughts, we are concealed from the wrath of the strict Judge in the humility of our mind. For the more the earth is thrown out by digging, the lower is the surface always laid open beneath. Whence also, if we carefully cast out from ourselves earthly thoughts, the humbler spot do we find, in which to lie hid within ourselves.

54. For behold, because the day of divine judgment is imminent, the very face of His fear is already visible; and it is the more necessary for every one to fear Him with greater dread, the more the glory of His Majesty is now approaching. What then must be done, or whither must we fly? For which way can any one be concealed from Him, Who is every where? But behold we are commanded to enter the rock, to be concealed in a ditch in the ground; in order, namely, that breaking through the hardness of our heart, we may escape the invisible anger, as we withdraw, in our heart within ourselves, from the love of visible objects: and that, when the soil of evil thought is cast out, our mind may be concealed within itself, the more safely, the lower it is. Hence the people of Israel were commanded by the Lord through Moses, to place a paddle in their belt, when they went out for the necessities of nature, and to cover in a ditch in the ground, whatever had been voided. For burdened as we are by the weight of a corruptible nature, certain superfluities of thought burst forth from the womb of our mind, like the heavy burden of the belly.

But we ought to carry a paddle under our belt, in order, namely, that being always ready to reprehend ourselves, we may have about us the sharp sting of compunction, to pierce unceasingly the soil of our mind with the pain of penitence, and to conceal the fetidness which breaks forth from us. For the voidance of the belly is concealed by a paddle, in a ditch in the ground, when the superfluity of our mind, examined with minute conviction, is concealed, before the eyes of God, by the sting of its own compunction. Because, therefore, holy men cease not to blame, and to sentence whatever useless thoughts they entertain, let the Lord say of His horse; He diggeth up the earth with his hoof, that is, whatever earthly thought he beholds dwelling in his mind, he doubtless breaks, with the hard blows of superinduced penitence. But when they judge themselves within with strict minuteness, there is no longer any thing for them to fear without. For they are less alarmed at present evils, the more fully they provide themselves with future goods. Whence it is also added;

He exulteth boldly, he goeth on to meet the armed men. [xxviii]

55. He exults boldly; because he is not broken by adversity, just as he is not elated by prosperity. For adversities cast not down him, whom no prosperities corrupt. This horse is, therefore, both bold and under the rein; he has the strength of boldness, so as not to be weighed down by adversity; he has the weight of a rider, so as not to be elevated by prosperity. For times pass on, but they are therefore unable to draw along the righteous man, because they cannot raise him up. They, doubtless, lead those along, whom they elevate: they cast down, in their wrath, those whom they exalt by their blandishments. But a man, who is thoroughly subject to God, knows how to remain fixed, among transient things, knows how to plant firmly the footsteps of his mind, amid the lapses of passing years, knows how to be neither elated at victories, nor to be afraid of opposition. But frequently, because he knows that he is more profitably exercised with the pains of his contrition, he is cheerful in adversity, and while he endures them with firmness, for the truth's sake, he rejoices that the merit of his virtue is increased. Hence it is that we read, that the Apostles then rejoiced, when it befel them to have endured scourges for Christ's sake, as it is written; They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus.

[Acts 5, 41] Hence, when Paul had been oppressed by hard persecutions in Macedonia, in insinuating that he had been afflicted, he proves that he had also been filled with joy, by saying; For when we had come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest. [2 Cor, 7, 5] As if he were plainly saying; because my spirit had rest, when my flesh endured the punishments of persecutions, through the advancement of the soul. Against this horse, therefore, there are prepared swords, by the adversaries of Holy Church, from the agony of punishments; there are prepared arms, from the patronage of secular powers. For heretics are wont to protect themselves, with the defences of the powerful of the world, as if by a kind of arms: all unbelievers are wont to impugn the preaching of the faith, by rousing also the powers of the world. But the horse of God exults boldly, and fears not outward torments, because he seeks inward delight; he dreads not the wrath of the powers of the world, because, by

the rapture of his mind, he tramples down the desire even of the present life itself. Hence it is said by Solomon; Whatever shall befal the just, it will not make him sad. [Prov. 12, 21] Hence it is again written of him; The righteous, confident as a lion, will be without fear. [Prov. 28, 1] The lion is therefore not afraid in the onset of beasts, because he knows well that he is stronger than them all.

Whence the fearlessness of a righteous man is rightly compared to a lion, because when he beholds any rising against him, he returns to the confidence of his mind; and knows that he overcomes all his adversaries, because he loves Him alone, Whom he cannot in any way lose against his will. For whoever seeks after outward things, which are taken from him even against his will, subjects himself, of his own accord, to outward fear. But unbroken virtue is the contempt of earthly desire, because the mind is both placed on high, when it is raised above the meanest objects, by the judgment of its hopes, and is the less affected by all adversities, the more safely it is fortified by being placed on things above.

56. This horse, therefore, not only fears not those who come against him, but even goes forth to meet them. Whence it is here properly added; He goeth on to meet the armed men. For we frequently are left in peace, and unassailed, if we are not eager to oppose the wicked in behalf of righteousness. But, if the mind has ever glowed with the desire of eternal life, if it beholds already the true light within, if it kindles in itself the flame of holy fervor; we ought, as far as the place admits, as far as the cause requires, to expose ourselves in defence of righteousness, and to oppose the wicked, who are breaking forth into deeds of unrighteousness, even when we are not sought after by them. For when they assail in others the righteousness which we ourselves love, they wound us equally with their assault, even if they seem to reverence us. Because then a holy man opposes himself to the wicked and evil doers, even when he is not sought after, it is rightly said of the horse of God; He goeth on to meet the armed men.

57. Let us behold him urged on, by the spurs of his rider, against the armed enemies; what fervour had inflamed Paul, when the flame of zeal was hurrying him on at Ephesus to break through the crowds of the theatre. For it is written, They were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians, and the city was filled with confusion; and having caught Caius and Aristarchus, Paul's companions, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. [Acts 19, 28. 29.] And it is immediately subjoined; And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. But some also of the chiefs of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre. [ib. 30. 31.] In which words we, doubtless, learn with what fury he would rush against the opposing array, unless the reins of love had restrained him, by means of his friends and disciples.

58. But if we ought to go to meet our enemies, of our own accord to seek the contest, and always to abandon ourselves in the course of our zeal, why is it that this same illustrious preacher confesses of himself, saying, At Damascus, the governor of the nation under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes, in order that he might apprehend me;

and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and so escaped his hands? [2 Cor. 11, 32. 33. Why is it, that this horse attacks at one time, of his own accord, the ranks of armed men, and at another retires, as if through fear, from the armed enemies; except this, that it is necessary for us to learn, from his cunning valour, both at one time resolutely to seek for battle with our adversaries, and at another prudently to avoid it? For it is necessary for us, during every thing we do, to consider that there is placed in the balance of our mind on one side the weight, and on the other the fruit of our labour, and that when the weight outweighs the benefit, any one may innocently decline the labour; provided he employs himself on other pursuits in which the weight of the labour is outweighed by the gain of the benefits. But when the amount of labour is either equalled, or outweighed, by the subsequent amount of benefits, the labour is not avoided without great blame.

Whence the holy preacher, when he perceived that the minds of his persecutors at Damascus were grievously obstinate, was unwilling to engage with their opposition; because he saw that he himself, who, he knew, would be profitable to many, could fall, and that he could be of use to none or but few there. He, therefore, sought for a retreat from the contest, and reserved himself for other battles, to fight with greater success. For courage was not wanting to the opportunity, but an opportunity for his courage; and therefore the most courageous soldier sought, from the closeness of the siege, the field of battle. But, wherever he beheld many necks of his adversaries to be brought into subjection to his own King, he feared not to engage in battle even with death, as he himself, (when he was going to Jerusalem, and the disciples were hindering him, having foreknown his suffering by prophecy,) witnesses to himself, saying, I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus. [Acts 21, 13] Neither count I my life dearer than myself. [ib. 20, 24] He therefore who sought undauntedly, in this place, the ranks of the enemy, even when he foreknew his suffering, taught in the other that it was of dispensation, not of fear, that he fled.

59. On which subject we must consider that he, who boldly endures other greater labours for God's sake, laudably declines certain labours, through the judgment of dispensation. For feeble fear is often called, by men, cautious dispensation; and they declare that they have avoided the onset as if through prudence, when, flying disgracefully, they are wounded in their backs. Whence it is necessary in a cause of God, when a question of dispensation is discussed, for the fear of the heart to be weighed most accurately in the balance; lest fear should steal in through infirmity, and feign itself to be reason, through a semblance of dispensation; lest a fault should term itself prudence, and the mind should return no more to penitence, when it calls that which it does wrong, a virtue. It remains, therefore, for every one involved in doubts, when any adversity hangs over him, to contend first within himself against fear and precipitation; in order that he may neither withdraw himself through fear, nor yet precipitately oppose himself. For he is very precipitate, who always opposes himself to adversities; and he is very cowardly, who always hides himself.

60. But we learn these things the better in contests of the spirit, if we adopt our form of exercise from contests of the body. For he is not a wise leader, who always precipitately advances his army against the ranks of the enemy; nor is he a bold leader, who always withdraws it, through caution, from the face of the enemy. For a general ought to know how, at one time carefully to withdraw his army from the assault of the enemy, and at another, to press him close by drawing his wings around him. And perfect preachers doubtless carefully exhibit this skill, when at one time, avoiding the rage of persecution, they know how to retire, wisely, but not weakly; and when at another, despising the assault of persecution, they know how to meet it boldly, but not precipitately. But, because a holy man, when he sees it fitting, exposes his breast to blows, and beats back, even when dying, the shafts that are coming against him, it is righty said, He goeth on to meet the armed men. Of whom it is still further rightly subjoined;

Ver. 22. He mocketh at fear, and yieldeth not to the sword. [xxix] 61. Let us see how he mocks at fear, who, as he counts, tramples under foot the swords of the adversaries. For he says, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or persecution? [Rom. 8, 35] In fear, coming punishment is dreaded; but in the sword, pain is felt already from a present blow. Because therefore a holy man dreads not coming evils, he despises fear: but because he is not overcome even by a blow as it comes upon him, he yields not at all to the sword. Against this horse then there are as many swords of enemies as there are kinds of persecutions, all which he meets and overcomes, because from the love of life, he prepares himself for destruction. But since we have heard how so very sturdy a breast exposes itself to the shafts, let us now hear what is done by the adversaries. It follows;

Ver. 23. Over him will rattle the quiver. [xxx]

62. In Holy Scripture by the word 'quiver' is designated, sometimes the just and hidden counsel of God; but sometimes the clandestine machination of the wicked. By 'quiver' is expressed the just and hidden counsel of God, as this same blessed Job in a former part bears witness, saying, Because He hath opened His quiver, and afflicted me. [Job 30, 11] That is, He has disclosed His hidden counsel, and has wounded me with an open blow. For as arrows lie hid in the quiver, so do sentences lie hid in the secret counsel of God: and an arrow is drawn, as it were, from the quiver, when God launches forth an open sentence from His secret counsel. The machination of the wicked is also designated by the word 'quiver,' as is said by the Prophet, They have made their arrows in the quiver, that they may shoot in darkness at the upright in heart. For when the wicked conceal by secret machinations the schemes, which they plan against the good, they prepare, as it were, arrows in the quiver, and in this gloom of the present life, as if in darkness, they strike the upright in heart; because their malicious shafts can both be felt by their wound, and yet cannot be discovered as they are coming. Because therefore the horse of God is alarmed by no adversity, and the more he is opposed, the more ardently is he led against the armed enemies by the power of his intention;

his persecutors, who perceive that they are defeated even when striking him, being confounded, have recourse to skill, prepare stratagems, and conceal, as it were, their wounds by launching them from a distance; whence it is now rightly said, Over him will rattle the quiver; that they may strike him from a distance, by secret machination, whom they approach in vain with open onset. This quiver had rattled over the horse of God, when forty men who had conspired for his death, were seeking for Paul to be brought out of prison; that they might kill him, with the blows of their designs, as though secretly, by the craft of arrows, whom they could not at all overcome by the attack of public persecution. The quiver therefore rattled; because the cause of secret machination came to Paul.

63. Although if we attentively enquire, we find a still deeper meaning in the sound of the quiver. For adversaries frequently enter into designs against the good, rely on wicked inventions, betake themselves to devise schemes; but yet themselves engage, themselves send persons, who should disclose these same schemes to the good; in order that, while the preparation of punishment is secretly, as it were, made known to the credulous, it may be the more dreaded; and that wounds suspected may the more disturb the mind of the bearer, than if inflicted. For, while arrows are concealed, and rattle in the quiver, they threaten death even though unseen. The quiver, therefore, rattles against the horse, when the hidden machination of the wicked against a holy preacher discloses, even more fraudulently, the design which it fraudulently conceals; in order that, by launching its threats beforehand, it may frighten, as if by the sound of the quiver, when the preacher of God fears not open insults, as weapons which strike him close at hand. But when he is not alarmed by these same threats, the cruelty of persecutors soon proceeds to open punishments. Whence, after it is said, Over him will rattle the quiver, it is immediately rightly added;

The spear will shake. [xxxi] 64. The spear is shaken against the preacher of God, after the rattling of the quiver, when, after terrors have been displayed, open punishment is now brought forward, striking near at hand. But holy preachers, when they are undergoing punishments in defence of the faith, cease not, even in the midst of blows, to seize those, whom they are able, to the same faith. And when they patiently receive wounds, they skilfully return the arrows of preaching against the hearts of unbelievers. Whence it is sometimes the case, that the very persons who are raging in persecution, grieve not so much, because they do not soften the heart of the preacher, as because, by his words, they lose others also. Because then they do not overcome him by striking him, lest others who hear him should forsake them, they soon prepare, against the words of the speaker, the shield of reply. Whence when He was saying, The spear will shake, He rightly subjoins;

And the shield. 65. For, after the raging persecutor smites with punishment the body of the preacher, he protects the heart of his hearers with the words of his disputation, as if with a shield. The spear, then, is shaken, that the holy man may be smitten; but the shield is placed in the way, that he may not be heard. For the defenders of God have their own arrows in the battle, which they launch more speedily into the hearts of their hearers, as they draw them from the bow of the spirit, that is, from the inmost tension of the heart.

For Paul had armed himself with these, in the contest of faith, when saying, I suffer, even to bonds, as an evil doer; but the word of God is not bound. [2 Tim. 2, 9] As if he were saying; I am struck indeed with the spear of punishments, but yet cease not to launch forth the arrows of my words. I receive the wounds of cruelty, but I transfix the hearts of the unbelievers, by speaking the truth. Let it be said therefore; Over him will rattle the quiver, the spear will shake, and the shield. For the quiver rattles against the horse of God, because the counsels of the wicked resound about him; because open punishment is sought for, the spear is shaken; but because he is opposed by disputation also, the shield is wielded before him. But is he at all restrained from his warmth by these means? For with the greater persecution a holy man is oppressed, the more eagerly is he urged on to preach the truth; and, while he submits patiently to his persecutors, he eagerly hastens to attract his hearers to himself. Whence it is still further rightly added concerning the horse of God,

Ver. 24. Raging and snorting he swalloweth the earth, neither believeth he that the blast of the trumpet soundeth. [xxxii] 66. For it was said to the first man when he sinned; Earth thou art, and to earth shalt thou go. [Gen. 3, 19] But the trumpets sound, when the powers of this world awfully prohibit holy men from preaching. Because, therefore, a preacher, inflamed by the zeal of the Holy Spirit, ceases not, even when set in the midst of punishments, to attract any sinners whomsoever to himself, he doubtless in his rage swalloweth the earth, but because he fears not at all the threats of persecutors, he believeth not that the blast of the trumpet soundeth. For what else is the 'trumpet,' which announces the peril of the contest, but the voice of worldly powers, which prepares when contemned the contest of death for those who resist? 67. This trumpet had been sounded by the chief priests, when they commanded the Apostles, when scourged, not to speak of God; as it is written; They commanded them, when they had been scourged, that they should not preach in the name of Jesus. [Acts 5, 40] But let us see how the blast of the trumpet frightens not the horse of God. Peter says; We ought to obey God, rather than men. [ib. 29] Who says also to others who were persecuting him; For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. [Acts 4, 20] The horse of God, therefore, fears not the blast of the trumpet, because the illustrious preacher, having despised the powers of the world, fears not the sounds of any threats.

68. Let us see how another horse of God swalloweth the earth, and how no dread of the trumpet reaches him. For it is written; There came down certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, and, having persuaded the multitude, they stoned Paul, and drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. But, as the disciples stood about him, he rose up, and came into the city, and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned to Lystrum, and Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples. [Acts 14, 19-22] Let us consider, therefore, what threats could check this horse, when even death itself cannot keep him from his intention. Behold, he is overwhelmed with stones, and yet is not moved away from the word of the truth. He can be killed, he cannot be overcome. He is cast forth without the city as though he were dead. But he is found within the city another day an uninjured preacher.

Oh ! what a noble weakness is there in this man! how victorious his punishment! how triumphant his endurance! He is by repulse stimulated to action: he is roused by blows to preach salvation, he is refreshed by punishment to cast off the weariness of toil. What adversity then can overcome him, whom punishment refreshes. But this horse of God both despises the arrows of the quiver, because he contemns the counsels of wickedness;

he overcomes the brandished spear, because he strengthens his breast even against the wounds of open persecution; he breaks through the opposed shield, because he subdues by reasoning the disputation of opponents; he swalloweth the earth, because, by exhortation, he converts sinners into his own body: he believeth not that the blast of the trumpet soundeth, because he tramples down every voice of terrible prohibition. But that which is said of him, that he boldly perseveres in labours, is a smaller matter; he, besides, (which is a greater thing,) exults in adversities. Whence it follows;

Ver. 25. When he heareth the trumpet, he saith, Vah. [xxxiii] 69. By which words this also is plainly shewn, that, in this place, nothing is said by the Lord of the irrational horse. For a brute animal cannot say, 'Vah;' but while it is said to say that, which it is quite unable to say, it is pointed out whom it designates. For 'Vah' is a word of exultation. The horse, therefore, says 'Vah,' on hearing the trumpet, because every bold preacher, when he thinks the contest of suffering approaching, exults in the exercise of virtue: and is not alarmed at the peril of the contest, because he rejoices in the triumph of victory. For the horse, therefore, to say, 'Vah,' is for a holy preacher to rejoice in his approaching suffering. But if a bold preacher seeks the glory of suffering, if he seeks with joy to undergo the peril of death for the Lord's sake; why is it that the Truth declared to Peter, that boldest preacher, who from his sturdy heart, adopted his virtue in his name; When thou shall be old, thou shall stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldest not? [John 21, 18] How does he rejoice in his suffering, who being girt by another, will not go whither he is led? But if we consider how the mind is shaken by the approach of suffering, and the fear of death, and yet rejoices at the coming reward of the kingdom, we understand how it is willingly unwilling to undergo the peril of a glorious contest: because it both considers in death what to endure and fear, and it beholds in the fruit of death what to long and seek for.

70. Let us see how Paul loves what he shrinks from, how he shrinks from what he loves. For he says, I have a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. [Phil. 1, 23] And, To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. [ib. 21] And yet he says, We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. [2 Cor. 5, 4] Behold he both longs to die, and yet is afraid of being stripped of the flesh. Why is this? Because, though victory makes him joyful for ever, punishment nevertheless disturbs him for the present: and though the love of the subsequent gift prevails, yet the blow of sorrow grazes the mind, not without pain. For as a bold man, when he girds himself with arms, as the strife of battle is now approaching, both palpitates, and is in haste, trembles, and is wroth; seems, through his paleness, as

if afraid, but is urged on vehemently by his anger; in like manner a holy man, when he sees himself drawing near to his suffering, is both agitated by the weakness of his nature, and strengthened by the firmness of his hope; both trembles at approaching death, and yet exults at living, through his death, a truer life. For he cannot pass over to the kingdom, except by the intervention of death;

and is therefore doubtful, as it were, in his confidence, and confident, as it were, in his doubts; both fears with joy, and rejoices with fear; because he knows that he cannot arrive at the prize of rest, without passing with labour that which intervenes. Thus we, when we wish to repel diseases from our body, take with sorrow, indeed, the bitter cup of purgation; but rejoice as being certain of subsequent health. For since our body cannot otherwise attain to health, we are pleased even with that which is offensive in the draught. And when the mind beholds that life dwells in the bitterness, it rejoices when agitated with sorrow. Let it be said then, when he heareth the trumpet, he saith, Vah; because a bold preacher, on hearing tidings of the contest, though, as a man, he trembles at the violence of persecution, yet, through the certainty of hope, exults at the reward of the recompense. But he would not remain unmoved at this contest of suffering, if he did not anticipate this same suffering by meditating intently in thought upon it. For an evil, which is anticipated by wisdom, is, by reason, overcome by the mind which is struggling against it. Because a person is less overcome by adversity the more he is found prepared against it, by knowing it beforehand. For a heavy burden of fear is frequently made lighter by habit. Death itself, as it frequently startles when unexpected, so does it give us joy when anticipated by deliberation.

Whence it is also rightly subjoined concerning this horse;

He smelleth the battle afar off. 71. As if it were said more plainly; He overcomes in every contest whatsoever, because before the contest he prepares his mind for the contest. For to 'smell the battle afar off,' is so to foresee in thought misfortunes when yet far distant, that they may not, by being unexpected, be able to overcome him. Paul was admonishing his disciples to smell this battle afar off, when he was saying, Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves. [2 Cor. 13, 5] As if he were openly charging them, saying, Call to mind the contests of persecutions, and considering the inmost and secret thoughts of your hearts, discover, what ye are able to continue in the midst of sufferings. Holy men smell this battle from afar, when dwelling even in the peace of the Church Universal, they behold either contests with heretics, or the tortures of persecutions hanging over them from unbelievers. Who while they live uprightly, often receive evil for good, and bear contentedly the insults of detractions, in order that if an occasion of persecution should arise, their open enemies may find them the more resolute, the more the shafts of false brethren also within the Church overcome them not. For he, who falls from a state of patience before the wounds of tongues, witnesses for himself, that he stands not firm against the swords of open persecution. Because therefore a man of God, being exercised by present trials contends against future, and exercised by the smallest trials contends against greater; it is rightly said of the horse of God, that he smelleth the battle afar off. It follows;

The exhortation of the captains, and the howling of the army. [xxxiv]

72. The captains of the adverse part are the authors of error, of whom it is said by the Psalmist, Contention is poured forth over their princes, and their vain things led them astray, and He caused them to wander in the pathless place, and not in the path. [Ps. 107, 40] Of whom the Truth says by Itself, If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. [Matt. 15, 14] But an army follows these captains, that is to say the crowd of the wicked, which obeys their unjust commands. It must also be observed, that He says that the captains exhort, and that the army howls; because, namely, they who rule over unbelievers or heretics enforce, as if by reason, the wicked practices they order to be observed. But the crowd subject to them, because it follows their commands without judgment, whilst it clamours through the madness of confusion, is said to howl with bestial mind. For howling properly belongs to wolves. And, because the bands of the reprobate are eager with rapacity alone, against the life and habits of the faithful, they shout as if with howling. The horse of God, therefore, smelleth afar off the exhortation of the captains, and the howling of the army, when each holy preacher considers long beforehand, either what the authors of errors are able to command against the Elect, or how fiercely the crowd which is subject to them can rage.

Paul was smelling this exhortation of the captains, when saying, By sweet words and fair speeches they seduce the hearts of the innocent. [Rom. 16, 18] He was smelling this howling of the army, when saying, After my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you. [Acts 20, 29] Peter had smelled out the exhortation of the captains, when he was warning the disciples against certain persons, saying, Through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandize of you. [2 Pet 2, 3] He was smelling the howling of the army, when he was premising, saying, And many will follow their lasciviousnesses, by whom the way of truth is evil spoken of. [ib. 2]

73. Because, therefore, we have related, what kind of person each holy preacher, and leader of the faith in the war of persecution, is able to display himself, let us now describe, under the figure of this horse, each single soldier of Christ: that he also, who considers that he has not yet arrived at the height of preaching, may yet know, that he is described by this voice of the Lord, if he has already begun to live aright; in order to infer from hence, how much he may be known to God, if he attain to greater things, if God omits not to speak of him significantly, even in his smallest deeds. Let us repeat, therefore, the particulars which have been mentioned of the horse, and make known how the soldier of God advances from his original conversation, how he increases, from the least to greater things, or by what steps he arrives from the lowest to the highest. Let it be said, then,

Ver. 15. Wilt thou give the horse strength, or wilt thou surround his neck with neighing. [xxxv] 74. Upon every soul, over which the Lord mercifully rules, He confers, above all things, the strength of faith: of which Peter says, Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, strong in the faith. [l Pet. 5, 8. 9.] But neighing is joined to this strength, when that takes place which is written, With

the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. [Rom. 10, 10] It follows; Ver. 20. with thou rouse him as the locusts? [xxxvi] [MORAL INTERPRETATION] 75. Every one, who follows God, is, at his beginning, roused as a locust, because, though in some of his doings he clings to the earth, like the locusts, with bended knees, yet in some of them he raises himself up into the air with expanded wings. For the beginnings of conversions are a mixture of good and evil habits, whilst both the new life is carried on in intention, and the old life is still retained from habit. But we are so much the less injured by the evil being meanwhile mixed up with us, the more we daily contend against it without ceasing. Nor does the fault, whose evil habit our mind anxiously opposes, claim us any longer as its own. And therefore, worldly pursuits injure us less, when beginners; because they are forbidden to remain any longer within us. Accordingly, because the Lord mercifully tolerates some weaknesses in us in the very beginning of our conversion, that He may lead us at length to heavenly things, by perfection, He rouses us at first as locusts; because though He raises us aloft by the flight of virtue, He yet despairs not at our falling by worldly doing. It follows;

The glory of his nostrils is terror. [xxxvii]

76. Because a thing, which is not seen, is detected by its smell, by the word 'nostrils' are expressed, not improperly, the thoughts of our hope; by which we already foresee in hope the coming judgment, though we as yet behold it not with our eyes. But every one, who begins to live righteously, on hearing that the righteous are, by the last judgment, summoned to the kingdom, is joyful; but because he considers that some evils are still remaining within him, he dreads the approach of this very judgment, about which he is beginning to rejoice. For he beholds his life to be a mixture of good and evil, and confuses his thoughts, in a measure, with hope and fear. For when he hears what are the joys of the kingdom, happiness immediately elevates his mind; and again when he considers what are the torments of hell, fear immediately disturbs his mind. The 'glory of his nostrils' is therefore well called 'terror:' because being placed between hope and fear, whilst he beholds in his mind the future judgment, he dreads the very thing, from which he glories. His own glory is itself his terror; because, having commenced good deeds, he rejoices in hope at the judgment, and, not having yet put an end to his evil doings, he is not entirely free from anxiety.

But he meanwhile anxiously turns back to his own mind, casting away the storms of so great strength, and, composing himself in the calmness of peace alone, endeavours with all his powers to be found free by the strict Judge. For he counts it slavish to dread the presence of the Lord; and, that he may not fear the sight of his Father, he does those things, by which He may recognise him as His son. He learns therefore, to love his Judge with full expectation, and, so to speak, through fear he casts away fear. But he considers, that fear arises in the heart, by reason of carnal conduct, and therefore, before all things, he chastens his flesh with firm discipline. Whence, after it has been said, The glory of his nostrils is terror; it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 21. He diggeth up the earth with his hoof. [xxxviii] 77. For to dig the earth with the hoof, is to tame the flesh by strict abstinence. But the more the flesh is kept down, the more fearlessly does the mind rejoice, from the hope of heaven. And hence, when the earth has been dug out, it is fitly subjoined; He exulteth boldly. For since he firmly represses that which contends against him, he exults boldly at those things, which he longs for in everlasting peace; and his mind is the better disposed to seek for heavenly objects, the more strictly the body is restrained from unlawful pursuits. Whence it is rightly said by Solomon, Diligently cultivate thy field, that thou mayest afterwards build thine house. [Prov. 24, 27] For he rightly builds the house of his mind, who first cleanses the field of his body from the thorns of vices; that the whole fabric of virtues may not be destroyed within, as the famine of good works increases, if the thorns of desires make head in the field of the flesh. But any one, who is engaged in the very height of the battle, discerns more skilfully the fraud of the enemies, the more strictly also he keeps under his own body, as though it were a confederate of the foe. Whence also after the bruising of the body, after the joy of the heart, it is rightly subjoined;

He goeth on to meet the armed men. [xxxix] 78. Armed enemies are unclean spirits, girded with count- less frauds against us. For, when they cannot persuade us to what is wrong, they present it to our sight under the guise of virtues, and cover themselves, as it were, under certain arms, that they may not appear before us in their own naked wickedness. And we proceed to meet these armed men, when we foresee their stratagems afar off. To go forth, therefore, to meet the armed enemies, after the earth has been dug up, is, after the pride of the flesh has been tamed, to search out wonderfully the crafts of unclean spirits. To go forth to meet the armed enemies, after the earth has been dug up, is, after the wickedness of the flesh has been overcome, to engage in contest with spiritual vices. For he, who as yet contends but feebly with himself, vainly rouses against himself contests from without. For how does he, who subjugates himself to sins of the flesh, contend against those of the spirit? Or how does he seek to triumph from the labour of an outward contest, who still gives way in himself to the inward battle with lust?

79. Or certainly we go out to meet armed enemies, when, by zeal of exhortation, we prevent their stratagems even in the heart of another. For we go, as it were, from the place in which we were, to another place, to meet our enemies, when we put aside the care of ourselves in regular course, and keep off the approach of evil spirits from the mind of our neighbour. Whence it is frequently the case, that crafty enemies tempt the more terribly, concerning himself, the soldier of God, who is already victorious in the contest within, the more they see that he is mightily prevailing against them even in the heart of another; in order that, when they call him back to defend himself, they may the more freely attack the hearts of others, which were protected by his exhortation. And since they cannot overcome, they endeavour, at least, to employ him, so that, while the soldier of God is staggered about himself, not he himself, but he, whom he had been wont to defend, may perish. But his mind, immovably fixed on God, despises the darts of temptations, and fears not the shafts of any terror. For,

relying on the aid of grace from above, he so tends the wounds of his own infirmity, as not to neglect those of others. Whence it is also well subjoined concerning this horse;

Ver. 22. He mocketh at fear, and yieldeth not to the sword. [xl]

80. He mocketh at fear, because he is not so far alarmed by fear of any temptation, as to keep silence. And he yieldeth not to the sword; because though violent temptation assails him, it yet drives him not away from the care of his neighbour. Whence also Paul, teaching us an example of resolute conversation, both states what swords he endures from the enemy, and shews how he yields not to these same swords. For he had endured from the enemy the sword of carnal temptation, after every contest with the works of the flesh had been already overcome, who said; I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin, which is in my members. [Rom. 7, 23] But to that sword, which he had overcome in himself, he yielded not in others also, when saying in truth, to those about him; Let not sin reign in your mortal body, to obey the desires thereof. [Rom. 6, 12] And again; Mortify your members, which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence. [Col. 3, 5] There smote him more heavily the sword of those temptations, of which he himself says, In more numerous labours, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, by night and by day I have been in the deep of the sea.

[2 Cor. 11, 23-25] And other sufferings, which he was able to endure, and we are weary of enumerating. But how, from love to his neighbour, he yields not to this sword, after stating many things, he himself subjoins; Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches. [ib. 28] The horse of God is therefore smitten with the sword, and yet is not, by this blow, kept from his course, whilst the bold soldier in the spiritual contest both receives himself wounds from the enemy, and yet binds [or 'smites.' (strength)] others, for their salvation. But, against this so hard breast of the heavenly soldier, the ancient enemy seeks the more for sharper weapons, as he beholds himself more resolutely despised. Whence it also follows;

Ver. 23. Over him will rattle the quiver, the spear will shake, and the shield. [xli] 81. For since he sees that the zeal of a holy mind helps others also against him, he labours to wound it with multiplied temptation. Whence it frequently happens, that they who rule over others under them, endure severer struggles with temptations; in order, that when the leader himself is put to flight, after the manner of bodily contests, the associated unanimity of the resisting host may be dispersed without an effort. Therefore the crafty enemy, devising divers wounds of blows against the heavenly soldier, wounds him at one time by stratagem, by an arrow from the quiver, at another brandishes a spear before his face; because, namely, he both conceals some vices under the guise of virtues, and presents others to his sight openly as they are. For where he perceives the soldier of God to be weakened, he there requires not the veil of deceit. But where he observes that he firmly opposes him, he there doubtless contrives stratagems against his strength. For when he sees any one weak in an

allurement of the flesh, he openly sets before his sight the appearance of a body capable of being desired. But if perchance he sees that he is mighty against avarice, he importunately suggests to his thoughts the want of those of his family; in order that, while the mind is directed, with seeming piety, to the care of providing for them, it may be secretly seduced and hurried into sin by seeking after wealth. The arrow then insidiously assails the horse of God, when the crafty enemy conceals for him a vice beneath a virtue. But the spear wounds in close combat, when open wickedness tempts him, even aware of it.

82. But the heavenly soldier is often opposed by the enemy in both ways, at one and the same time; in order that he may be destroyed by some one blow. For the crafty adversary endeavours to strike at the same time, both raging openly, and lurking in ambush; in order that while the arrow is dreaded from a secret spot, the spear may be less feared before his face; or that, while he withstands the spear before his face, the arrow may not be observed when coming from a secret place. For he often puts forward the temptation of lust, and suddenly desisting, more craftily suggests pride at chastity having been preserved. And there are some, who when they observe that many have fallen, from the stronghold of chastity, into the pit of pride, neglecting to watch over their life, are plunged into the filthiness of lust. But there are some, on the other hand, who, while they avoid the uncleanness of lust, plunge, through the height of chastity, into the gulph of pride. A fault therefore, which springs from a vice, is, as it were, a spear striking openly; and a fault which springs from a virtue, is, as it were, an arrow from the quiver wounding in secret. But the horse of God both overcomes the spear before his face, when he tramples down lust; and looks round at the arrow on the side, when, in the cleanness of chastity, he keeps himself from pride.

Whence also it is well said by Solomon to one engaged in both contests; The Lord shall be on thy side, and will keep thy foot, that thou be not taken. [Prov. 3, 26] For the foot stretches out to things in front. But he, who beholds those things which are on the side, sees not those things which are before him. And again, he, who from looking forward to guard his foot, beholds what are before, gives up keeping watch at his side. But whilst we perform any act of virtue before our face, we look forward, as it were, where our foot ought to be placed; but when a fault secretly rises up from this virtue, whilst we look forward, as it were, our side is laid open to the arrow. But frequently, when we are afraid of a rising fault, we decline the virtue, which ought to be put in act; and when the side is, as it were, looked round upon, we see not how the foot is to be placed in front. It is, therefore, well said, The Lord shall be on thy side, and will keep thy foot that thou be not taken; because the soldier of God, protected by the shield of Divine grace, both observes, by looking round, what dangers can come forth on the side, and, by advancing forwards, ceases not to place his footsteps before his face.

And the crafty enemy who envies him, because he sees that he prevails not at all by quiver and spear, opposes to him his shield; in order that, if he pierces not the breast of his opponent by striking it, he may at least obstruct his onward course by some obstacles. For to his efforts

he opposes certain difficulties; and when he is unable to overcome, he however resists him. But let us hear, what the horse of God does against the arguments of so many contests;

Ver. 24. Raging and snorting, he swalloweth the earth, neither believeth he that the blast of the trumpet soundeth. [xlii] 83. The blast of the trumpet sounds against the horse, when any sin, placed nigh, fearfully assails the mind of an Elect one, in that which he does boldly. But raging and snorting he swalloweth the earth, because he rouses himself by his violent ardour; and consumes, by daily advancing, whatever earthly things he finds within him. And he believeth not that the blast of the trumpet soundeth; because he carefully avoids, by firm consideration, all evil which arises from the glory of his virtue. For he would believe that the blast of the trumpet soundeth, if he were, perchance, to be afraid of doing other things which are right, on account of something else which wickedly springs from them. Because, therefore, he is not afraid of acting boldly, even in the presence of temptations sounding against him; he does not, when in his rage, dread the blast of the trumpet. But often, when he sees that he is prosperous in virtues, lest that very prosperity of virtues should exalt him, he rejoices that he is assaulted with temptations. Whence it is also fitly subjoined;

Ver. 25. When he heareth the trumpet, he saith, Vah. [xliii] 84. For their own good fortune has more fatally over-thrown many, and a long-continued peace has rendered many slothful; and the unexpected enemy has struck them the more heavily, the more he has found them careless, from being long used to quiet. Whence holy men, when they observe that they are advancing in great prosperity of virtues, rejoice that they are exercised also with temptations, by a kind of adjustment of heavenly dispensation; because they guard the more firmly the glory received in their virtues, the more humbly they acknowledge their own infirmity, from being assaulted with the shock of temptation. The horse, therefore, says, 'Vah,' when he has heard the trumpet, because, namely, the warrior of God, when he beholds the force of temptation pressing on him, considering the benefit of the heavenly dispensation, is more firmly confident, from his very adversity. And the assaults of this adversity therefore do not overcome him, because they never attack him unexpectedly. For he marks long beforehand, from each circumstance, of what vice the assault is coming on. Whence it also follows;

He smelleth the battle afar off. [xliv] 85. For, to 'smell the battle afar off,' is to discern from preceding causes, what contests of vices succeed. For because, (as has been already frequently said,) a thing which is not seen, is discerned by its smell, to smell the battle afar off is to search out lurking wickedness, by the looking forward of our thoughts, as if by the breath of our nostrils. Of which power of scent the Lord rightly says in the praise of His Church, Thy nose is as the tower, which is in Libanus. [Cant. 7, 4] We distinguish also by the nose between odours and foul smells. And what is designated by the nose, but the farseeing discernment of the saints? But a watch-tower is placed on high, that the approaching enemy may be seen from far. The nose of the Church is therefore rightly said to be like the tower in Libanus; because while the far-seeing discernment of the saints, being placed on high, looks anxiously on all sides, it discovers a fault before it arrives; and as it watchfully marks

it beforehand, so it boldly avoids it. Hence Habakkuk says, I will stand upon my watch. [Hab. 2, 1] Hence Jeremiah, admonishing the soul of each Elect one, says, Set thee up a watch-tower, place thyself bitternesses. [Jer. 31, 21] For, to set one's self a watch-tower, is to foreknow by lofty considerations the approaching struggles of vices. And the soul of an Elect person places itself bitternesses, when firmly rooted even in the peace of virtues, it consents not to rest secure, on beholding evils in ambush.

86. But he takes thought, first, not to commit any evils, and secondly, not to do good things inconsiderately; and, after he has subdued wickednesses, he strives also to subject to himself his very virtues, lest they should be converted into the sin of pride, if they should get beyond the control of the mind. For since, as has before been said, evils frequently spring from good deeds, through the vice of negligence; he observes with watchful zeal how arrogance rises from learning, cruelty from justice, carelessness from tenderness, anger from zeal, sloth from gentleness. And, when he performs these good deeds, he observes that these enemies are by these means able to rise against him. For when he is labouring diligently in acquiring learning, he anxiously prepares his mind for the struggle with arrogance. And when he desires to punish justly the faults of offenders, he most skilfully avoids the severity of punishment exceeding the measure of justice. When he endeavours to restrain himself by tenderness, he carefully provides not to be overcome by any relaxation of discipline. When he rouses himself by the stimulants of right zeal, he specially takes care, that the flame of anger may not kindle him more than is necessary. When he controls himself with great tranquillity of gentleness, he keeps careful watch, not to be chilled by torpor. Because, therefore, in the thought of the spiritual soldier every vice is detected before it can steal in secretly, it is rightly said of the horse of God; He smelleth the battle afar off. For he considers what a crowd of iniquities would rush on him, were he to allow ever so few sins to enter within him. Whence it also follows;

The exhortation of the captains, and the howling of the army. [xlv] 87. For the tempting vices, which fight against us in invisible contest in behalf of the pride which reigns over them, some of them go first, like captains, others follow, after the manner of an army. For all faults do not occupy the heart with equal access. But while the greater and the few surprise a neglected mind, the smaller and the numberless pour themselves upon it in a whole body. For when pride, the queen of sins, has fully possessed a conquered heart, she surrenders it immediately to seven principal sins, as if to some of her generals, to lay it waste. And an army in truth follows these generals, because, doubtless, there spring up from them importunate hosts of sins. Which we set forth the better, if we specially bring forward in enumeration, as we are able, the leaders themselves and their army. For pride is the root of all evil, of which it is said, as Scripture bears witness; Pride is the beginning of all sin. [Ecclus. 10, 1] But seven principal vices, as its first progeny, spring doubtless from this poisonous root, namely, vain glory, envy, anger, melancholy, avarice, gluttony, lust. For, because He grieved that we were held captive by these seven sins of pride, therefore our Redeemer came to the spiritual battle of our liberation, full of the spirit of sevenfold grace.

88. But these several sins have each their army against us. For from vain glory there arise disobedience, boasting, hypocrisy, contentions, obstinacies, discords, and the presumptions of novelties. From envy there spring hatred, whispering, detraction, exultation at the misfortunes of a neighbour, and affliction at his prosperity. From anger are produced strifes, swelling of mind, insults, clamour, indignation, blasphemies. From melancholy there arise malice, rancour, cowardice, despair, slothfulness in fulfilling the commands, and a wandering of the mind on unlawful objects. From avarice there spring treachery, fraud, deceit, perjury, restlessness, violence, and hardnesses of heart against compassion. From gluttony are propagated foolish mirth, scurrility, uncleanness, babbling, dulness of sense in understanding. From lust are generated blindness of mind, inconsiderateness, inconstancy, precipitation, self-love, hatred of God, affection for this present world, but dread or despair of that which is to come. Because, therefore, seven principal vices produce from themselves so great a multitude of vices, when they reach the heart, they bring, as it were, the bands of an army after them. But of these seven, five namely are spiritual, and two are carnal.

89. But they are, each of them, so closely connected with other, that they spring only the one from the other. For the first offspring of pride is vain glory, and this, when it hath corrupted the oppressed mind, presently begets envy. Because doubtless while it is seeking the power of an empty name, it feels envy against any one else being able to obtain it. Envy also generates anger; because the more the mind is pierced by the inward wound of envy, the more also is the gentleness of tranquillity lost. And because a suffering member, as it were, is touched, the hand of opposition is therefore felt as if more heavily impressed. Melancholy also arises from anger, because the more extravagantly the agitated mind strikes itself, the more it confounds itself by condemnation; and when it has lost the sweetness of tranquillity, nothing supports it but the grief resulting from agitation. Melancholy also runs down into avarice; because, when the disturbed heart has lost the satisfaction of joy within, it seeks for sources of consolation without, and is more anxious to possess external goods, the more it has no joy on which to fall back within. But after these, there remain behind two carnal vices, gluttony and lust. But it is plain to all that lust springs from gluttony, when in the very distribution of the members, the genitals appear placed beneath the belly. And hence when the one is inordinately pampered, the other is doubtless excited to wantonness.

90. But the leaders are well said to exhort, the armies to howl, because the first vices force themselves into the deluded mind as if under a kind of reason, but the countless vices which follow, while they hurry it on to every kind of madness, confound it, as it were, by bestial clamour. For vain glory is wont to exhort the conquered heart, as if with reason, when it says, Thou oughtest to aim at greater things, that, as thou hast been able to surpass many in power, thou mayest be able to benefit many also. Envy is also wont to exhort the conquered heart, as if with reason, when it says, In what art thou inferior to this or that person? why then art thou not either equal or superior to them? What great things art thou able to do, which they are not able to do! They ought not then to be either superior, or even equal, to thyself. Anger is also wont to exhort the conquered heart, as if with reason, when it says, The things that are done to thee cannot be borne patiently; nay rather, patiently to

endure them is a sin; because if thou dost not withstand them with great indignation, they are afterwards heaped upon thee without measure. Melancholy is also wont to exhort the conquered heart as if with reason, when it says, What ground hast thou to rejoice, when thou endurest so many wrongs from thy neighbours?

Consider with what sorrow all must be looked upon, who are turned in such gall of bitterness against thee. Avarice also is wont to exhort the conquered mind, as if with reason, when it says, It is a very blameless thing, that thou desirest some things to possess; because thou seekest not to be increased, but art afraid of being in want; and that which another retains for no good, thou thyself expendest to better purpose. Gluttony is also wont to exhort the conquered heart, as if with reason, when it says, God has created all things clean, in order to be eaten, and he who refuses to fill himself with food, what else does he do but gainsay the gift that has been granted him. Lust also is wont to exhort the conquered heart, as if with reason, when it says, Why enlargest thou not thyself now in thy pleasure, when thou knowest not what may follow thee? Thou oughtest not to lose in longings the time thou hast received; because thou knowest not how speedily it may pass by. For if God had not wished man to be united in the pleasure of coition, He would not, at the first beginning of the human race, have made them male and female. This is the exhortation of leaders, which, when incautiously admitted into the secresy of the heart, too familiarly persuades to wrong.

And this a howling army in truth follows, because when the hapless soul, once captured by the principal vices, is turned to madness by multiplied iniquities, it is now laid waste with brutal cruelty.

91. But the soldier of God, since he endeavours skilfully to pursue the contests with vices, smells the battle afar off; because while he considers, with anxious thought, what power the leading evils possess to persuade the mind, he detects, by the sagacity of his scent, the exhortation of the leaders. And because he beholds the confusion of subsequent iniquities by foreseeing them afar off, he finds out, as it were, by his scent the howling of the army. Because, then, we have learned, that either the preacher of God, or any soldier in the spiritual contest, is described in the account of the horse, let us now behold the same person under the signification of a bird; that we, who have learned his strength by the horse, may learn his contemplation also by the bird. For since we have heard in the description of the greatness of the horse, how much a holy man endures through patience against the assaults of vices, let us now learn by the appearance of birds, how high he soars by contemplation. It follows;

Ver. 26. Doth the hawk gel feathers by thy wisdom, stretching her wings toward the South? [xlvi]

92. That the hawk casts off its old feathers every year, as the new grow up, and gets a plumage without intermission, hardly any one is ignorant. But that time of plumage, when it is clothed in the nest, is not here spoken of; because, namely, at that time, being doubtless

yet but young, it is not able to stretch its wings towards the South. But that annual plumage is described, which is renewed, as the old feathers become loose. And for domesticated hawks, moist and warm spots are sought out, for them to get their plumage the better. But it is the custom, with wild hawks, to stretch their wings, when the south wind blows, in order that by the mildness of the wind their limbs may become warm, so as to loosen the old feathers. But when there is no wind, they make for themselves a warm air by stretching and flapping their wings against the rays of the sun, and when the pores have thus been opened, either the old feathers fall out, or the new ones grow up. What is it then for the hawk to get its plumage in the south, except that every Saint glows, when he is touched by the breath of the Holy Spirit, and, casting off the habit of his old conversation, assumes the form of the new man? Which Paul advises, saying, Stripping yourselves of the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new man. [Col. 3, 9] And again;

Though that outward man of ours be corrupted, yet that which is within is renewed day by day. [2 Cor. 4, 16] But to cast off the old feathers, is to give up the inveterate pursuit of crafty conduct; and to assume the new, is, by good living, to maintain a gentle and simple feeling. For the feather of old conversation weighs down, and the plumage of the new change raises up, to render it the lighter for flight, as it makes it newer.

93. And He well says, It stretches its wings towards the South. For to stretch out our wings towards the South, is, by the coming of the Holy Spirit, to open our hearts in confession, so as no longer to take pleasure in concealing ourselves by defence, but in exposing ourselves by accusation. The hawk, therefore, then gains its plumage, when it has stretched out its wings towards the South, because every one then clothes himself with the feathers of virtues, when, by confession, he subjects his thoughts to the Holy Spirit. For he, who lays not open his old deeds by confession, brings not forth the works of a new life. He who knows not how to lament that which weighs him down, is unable to produce that which raises him up. For the very power of compunction opens the pores of the heart, and pours forth the plumage of virtues. And, when the mind studiously convicts itself of a sluggish old age, it gains the fresh newness of youth. Let it be said then to blessed Job, Doth the hawk get plumage by thy wisdom, stretching her wings towards the South? That is, Hast thou conferred understanding on any of the Elect, to expand the wings of his thoughts, at the breath of the Holy Spirit, in order to cast off the weight of the old conversation, and assume the feathers of virtues for the purpose of a fresh flight? In order, namely, for him to gather from hence, that the vigilance of sense which is in him he has not of himself, who is unable to confer it from himself on others. But, by this hawk the renewed Gentile people can also be designated. As if it were plainly said to blessed Job; Behold the future plumage of virtues in the Gentiles, and cast off the old feathers of pride. It follows;

Ver. 27. Will the eagle mount up at thy command, and make for thee her nest in high places. [xlvii] 94. In Holy Scripture, by the word 'eagle' are sometimes designated malignant spirits, the spoilers of souls, sometimes the powers of the present world, but sometimes either the very subtle understandings of the Saints, or the Incarnate Lord, swiftly flying over things

below, and presently seeking again those on high. By the name 'eagle' are set forth the spirits, which lie in wait, as Jeremiah witnesses, who says, Our persecutors were swifter than the eagles of the heaven. [Lam. 4, 19] For our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven, when malignant men perform so many things against us, as to seem to surpass even the powers of the air themselves in the inventions of their malice.

By the word 'eagle,' earthly power is also typified. Whence it is said by the Prophet Ezekiel, A great eagle, of great wings, long limbed, full of feathers and variety, came to Libanus, and took away the marrow of the cedar, and plucked off the top of his branches. [Ez. 17, 3. 4.] For by this eagle who else is, in truth, designated but Nabuchodonosor, the king of Babylon? Who, in consequence of the immensity of his army, is described as of great wings; in consequence of the length of his continuance, as of long extent of limbs; for the multitude of his riches, as full of feathers, and because of the countless things that made up his earthly glory, as full of variety. Who came to Libanus, and took away the marrow of the cedar, and plucked off the top of his branches, because he attacked the loftiness of Judah, and carried off the nobility of its kingdom, as the marrow of the cedar. And whilst he took away captive the most delicate offspring of kings from the lofty height of their power, he plucked off, as it were, the top of his branches.

By the word 'eagle' is expressed either the subtle understanding of the Saints, or the flying of the Lord's Ascension. Whence the same Prophet, when describing that he had seen the four Evangelists under the appearance of living creatures, declares that in them there had appeared to him the face of a man, of a lion, of an ox, and of an eagle. Doubtless designating by an eagle, the fourth living creature, John, who left the earth in his flight, because, through his subtle understanding, he penetrated, by beholding the Word, inward mysteries. With which sentence of the Prophet concerning himself, John himself, in his Revelation, does not disagree, saying, The first beast was like a lion, the second beast like a calf, the third beast having a face as of a man, the fourth beast like a flying eagle. [Rev. 4, 7] And though these several points are well suited to each particular Evangelist, (while one teaches the order of His human Nativity; another, by the offering of the sacrifice of the world, suggests, as it were, the death of the calf; another the might of His power, as the roaring of the lion; another, beholding the Nativity of the Word, gazes like the eagle at the risen sun; yet these four living creatures can signify Him their very Head, of Whom they are members. For He Himself is both a Man, because He truly took our nature; and a calf, because He patiently died for our sakes;

and a lion, because, by the strength of His Godhead, He burst the band of the death He had undergone; and, lastly, an eagle, because He went back to heaven, from whence He had come. He is called therefore a man, from His being born; a calf, from His dying; a lion, from His rising again; an eagle, from His ascending to the heavens. But in this place under the name 'eagle' is typified the subtle understanding of the Saints, and their sublime contemplation. For the sight of the eagle surpasses the vision of all birds, so that the sun's ray does not, by striking on its eyes, which are fixed upon it, close them by any coruscation

of its light. The eagle therefore mounts up at the command of God, when the life of the faithful, obeying the Divine commands, is suspended on high. And it is also said to place its nest in high places, because, despising earthly desires, it is already nourished, in hope, with heavenly things. It places its nest on high; because it constructs not the habitation of its mind in abject and grovelling conversation. Hence is that which is said to the Cinite, by Balaam when prophesying, Strong indeed is thy dwelling place, but if thou hast placed thy nest in the rock. [Numb, 24, 21] For Cinite is interpreted 'possessor.' And who are they who possess present things, except those who are skilled in the ability of worldly wisdom?

And they truly build themselves therein a strong dwelling place, if becoming, by humility, as little children in their own sight, they are nourished in the sublimity of Christ; if they feel themselves to be weak, and give up the confidence of their mind, to be cherished by the lofty humility of the Redeemer Who is known to them; if they seek not after things below; if they pass over, with the flight of their heart, every thing which passes away.

95. Let us behold the eagle building itself the nest of hope in high places. He says; Our conversation is in heaven. [Phil. 3, 2] And again; Who hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in heavenly places. [Eph. 2, 6] He has his rest in high places, because in truth he fixes his thought on things above. He wishes not to degrade his mind to the lowest objects, he wishes not, by the baseness of human conversation, to dwell in things below. Paul was, perhaps, then confined in prison, when he was witnessing that he was sitting together with Christ in heavenly places. But he was there, where he had already fixed his ardent mind, not there, where the sluggish flesh was still necessarily detaining him.

96. For this is wont to be a special mark of the Elect, that they know how so to travel along the journey of the present life, as well aware, by the certainty of hope, that they have already attained to things above; so that they see all things which flow by to be beneath them, and trample down, through love of eternity, all that is eminent in this world. For hence it is that the Lord says, by the Prophet, to the soul which follows Him; I will raise thee above the high places of the earth. [Is. 58, 14] For losses, insults, poverty, contempt, are, as it were, some lower places of the earth, which even the very lovers of the world, as they walk along the level of the broad way, cease not to trample down, by avoiding them. But the high places of the earth are, gain of goods, flattery of inferiors, abundance of riches, honour, and loftiness of dignities; along which whoever walks with his desires still grovelling, he considers them high, just as he counts them great. But if the heart is once fixed on heavenly things, it is seen at once how lowly are those things which seemed to be high.

For as he, who ascends a mountain, looks down for a little while on all other objects which lie beneath, the more he advances his step to higher ground, so he who strives to fix his attention on things above, as he finds by the very effort that the glory of this present life is nothing, is raised above the high places of the earth: and that which at first he believed to be above him, when plunged in grovelling desires, he afterwards discerns to be beneath him, as he advances in his ascent. The things then which the Lord there promises that He

will do, saying, I will raise thee above the high places of the earth, these very things He witnesses to blessed Job, that He alone is able to do, saying; Will the eagle mount up at thy command, and make for thee her nest in high places? As if He were saying; As at Mine, Who inspire within by the grace of hidden bounty, that which I command from without. It follows;

Ver. 28. She abideth in the rocks. [xlviii] 97. In Holy Scripture, when a 'rock' is mentioned in the singular number, who else is understood but Christ? As Paul witnesses, who says, But the rock was Christ. [1 Cor. 10, 4] But when 'rocks' are spoken of, in the plural number, His members are described, namely, holy men, who are confirmed by His strength. Whom the Apostle Peter doubtless calls stones, saying, Ye as lively stones are built together as spiritual houses. [1 Pet. 2, 5] This eagle, therefore, which raised the eyes of her heart to the rays of the true sun, is said to abide in the rocks, because she is planted, in the firmness of her mind, in the sayings of the ancient and mighty fathers. For she recals to memory the life of those, whom she sees to have gone before in the way of God; and by studying in the loftiness of their strength, she builds herself a nest of holy meditation. And when she thinks silently on their deeds and words, when she considers the glory of the present life, how mean it is in comparison with eternal excellence, she sits, as it were, on the rocks, and beholds the lower places of the earth to be beneath her.

98. Rocks can also be understood to be the lofty powers of heavenly virtues, which the wind of our mutability now bends not hither and thither, like trees. Because being like rocks, placed on high, they are exempt from every motion of mutability, and fastened to the solidity of their height, they have become firm, by the very eternity to which they adhere. When a holy man, therefore, despises the things of earth, he raises himself, like an eagle, to higher things; and, elevated by the spirit of contemplation, waits for the eternal glory of Angels, and, being a stranger in this world, by seeking after the things he beholds, is already fixed on things above. It is therefore rightly said, She abideth in the rocks; that is, by intention of heart she dwells among those heavenly virtues, which are already, even by the strength of their eternity, fixed with such great solidity, as not to be bent on any side to sin by the variableness of change. Whence also it fitly follows;

And she dwelleth in the abrupt flints, and in the inaccessible rocks. [xlix]

99. For who else are those abrupt flints, but those firmest choirs of Angels, who, though not in their integrity, yet remained firmly fixed in their own estate, when the devil fell with his angels? For they are abrupt, because part of them fell, part remained firm. Who stand indeed entire, as to the quality of their deserts, but broken off, as to the quantity of their number. This breaking off the Mediator came to restore, that, having redeemed the human race, He might repair these losses of the angels, and might perhaps heap up more richly the measure of the heavenly country. By reason of this breaking off it is said of the Father: He purposed in Him, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, to restore all things in Christ, which are in heaven, and which are on earth, in Him. [Eph. 1, 9. 10. For in Him are restored those things, which are on earth, when sinners are converted to righteousness.

In Him are restored those which are in heaven, when humbled men return to that place from which apostate angels fell by pride. But in that He says, In inaccessible rocks, those doubtless, who are abrupt flints, are themselves inaccessible rocks. For the brightness of Angels is very inaccessible to the heart of sinful men, because the more it has fallen down to bodily attractions, the more it has closed its eyes to spiritual beauty.

But, whoever is so rapt by contemplation, as, being raised up by Divine grace, already to engage his thought on the choirs of Angels, and, fixed on things above, to keep himself aloof from every grovelling deed, is not contented with beholding the glory of angelic brightness, unless he is able to behold Him also, Who is above Angels. For the vision of Him is alone the true refreshment of our mind. And hence, when He had said, that this eagle abides in the rocks, and remains in the abrupt flints and inaccessible rocks, He immediately added;

Ver. 29. From thence she beholdeth her food. [l] 100. That is, from these choirs of Angels he directs the eyes of his mind to contemplate the glory of the Majesty on high: and, not seeing it, he is still hungry: and seeing it, at length, he is satisfied. For it is written, Because his soul, hath laboured, he shall see and be satisfied. [Is. 53, 11] And again, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. [Matt. 5, 6] But who is the food of our mind is plainly pointed out, when it is said; Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. [Matt. 5, 8] And because, from being weighed down by the interposition of the corruptible flesh, we cannot behold God as He is, it is rightly subjoined; Her eyes behold afar off. [li]

101. For whatever progress any one may have made, when placed in this life, he cannot as yet behold God in His real appearance, but darkly, and through a glass. But when we look close at hand, we see more truly, but when we turn our sight further off, we are darkened by our uncertain sight. Because, therefore, holy men raise themselves up to lofty contemplation, and yet cannot behold God as He is, it is well said of this eagle; Her eyes behold afar off. As if He were saying; They resolutely direct the keenness of their intention, but they cannot, as yet, behold Him nigh, the greatness of Whose brightness they are not at all able to penetrate. For the mist of our corruption darkens us from the incorruptible light, and when the light can both be seen in a measure, and yet cannot be seen as it is, it shews how distant it is. But if the mind were not to see it in any way, it would not see that it was far off. But if it were already to behold it perfectly, it would not in truth see it through a mist. Because then He is neither completely seen, nor again completely hidden, it is rightly said, that God is beheld from far.

102. Let us bring forward the words of Isaiah, and point out how they and these are uttered by the same Spirit. For when he was describing the virtues of active life, saying; Who walketh in righteousnesses, and speaketh the truth, who casteth off the gain from oppression, and shaketh his hand from every bribe, that stoppeth his ears, lest he hear blood, and shutteth his eyes not to see evil; [Is. 33, 15] he immediately added to what heights of contemplation he can ascend by these steps of active life, saying; He shall dwell in high places, his loftiness shall be the munitions of rocks; bread is given him, his waters are sure. His

eyes shall see the King in His beauty, they shall behold the land afar off. [ib. 16] For to dwell in high places, is to set our heart on heavenly things. And our loftiness is the munitions of rocks, when we look back to the precepts, and examples of mighty fathers, and separate ourselves from grovelling thoughts. Our loftiness is the munitions of rocks, when we are joined in mind to the choirs and camp of heaven, and, standing in the citadel of our heart, expel, as though placed beneath us, the malignant spirits who lie in wait. Then also bread is given to us; because our attention, raised to things above, is refreshed with the contemplation of eternity. Our waters are also sure, because that, which the teaching of God here promises through hope, it then offers as a gift.

For the wisdom of this world is not trustworthy, because it is not likely to remain after death. Our waters are sure, because that, which the words of life teach us before death, the same they point out to us also after death. Our eyes behold the King in His beauty, because our Redeemer is, in the judgment, beheld as Man, even by the reprobate; but those alone who are Elect are exalted to behold the loftiness of His Divinity. For, to behold the servile form alone, in which He is despised by the wicked, is to see, as it were, a kind of deformity of the King, But the King is seen, by the Elect, in His beauty; because, being rapt above themselves, they fix the eyes of their heart on the very brightness of His Godhead. And because, as long as they are in this life, they cannot behold that land of the living, as it really is, it is rightly added; They shall behold the land afar off. That then, which He says here; The eagle will mount up, and make its nest in high places, is there expressed, He shall dwell in high places. That which is here said, She abideth in the rocks, and dwelleth in the abrupt flints, and inaccessible rocks, is there added, His loftiness shall be the munitions of rocks.

That again which is here introduced, From thence she beholdeth her food, is here also subjoined, Bread is given him, his waters are sure, his eyes shall see the King in His beauty. And that which is here subjoined, Her eyes behold afar off, is there fitly added, They shall behold the land afar off.

103. Let us consider, what a lofty eagle was Paul, who flew even to the third heaven, yet, when dwelling in this life, he still beholds God afar off, who says, We now see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. [1 Cor. 13, 12] And again; I count not myself to have apprehended. [Phil. 3, 13] But, though he himself beholds eternal things much short of what they really are, though he knows that he cannot perfectly understand them; yet he cannot instil by preaching, into his weak hearers, those very things, which he is able to behold only through a mirror and an image. For he speaks of himself, as if of another person, saying, He heard secret words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. [2 Cor. 12, 4] Although therefore the smallest, and most extreme, inward truths are seen, yet to mighty preachers they are most exalted, but beyond the capacity of weak hearers. Whence also holy preachers, when they see that their hearers cannot receive the statement of His Divinity, come down to speak only of the Lord's Incarnation. And hence here also, when the eagle is said to be raised on high, and to see from far, it is immediately rightly subjoined;

Ver. 30. Her young ones suck up blood. [lii] 104. As if it were plainly said; She herself indeed feeds on the contemplation of His Godhead, but because her hearers cannot understand the mysteries of the Godhead, they are satiated with hearing of the blood of the Lord Crucified. For to suck up blood, is to reverence the weaknesses of the Lord's Passion. Hence it is, that the same Paul, who, as we said a little before, had soared to the secrets of the third heaven, said to his disciples; For I have determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. [l Cor. 2, 2] As if this eagle were plainly saying; I indeed behold as my food the power of His Godhead afar off, but to you, who are still young, I give the blood only of His Incarnation to be sucked up. For he, who in his preaching had been silent as to the loftiness of the Godhead, and informs his weak hearers of the Blood alone of the Cross, what else does he do, but give blood to his young ones? But, because the soul of every holy preacher is, when stripped of the corruption of the flesh, led directly to Him, Who of His own accord submitted to death for us, and rose from death, it is fitly added of this eagle,

And wheresoever the carcase shall be, she is immediately present. [liii] 105. For a carcase is so called from its fall [cadaver, a casu]. And the body of the Lord is, not undeservedly, called a carcase, on account of the fall of death. But that which is here said of this eagle; Wheresoever the carcase shall he, she is immediately present; this same thing the Truth has promised will take place, in souls as they depart from the body, saying, Wheresoever the body shall he, thither will the eagles also be gathered together. [Luke l7, 37] As if He plainly said, I, your Incarnate Redeemer, Who preside over the heavenly abode, will exalt the souls of the Elect also, to heavenly places, when I shall have released them from the flesh.

106. But this which is said of this eagle; Wheresoever the carcase shall be, she is immediately present, can be understood in another sense also. For every one, who has fallen into the death of sin, will be able, not inappropriately, to be called a carcase. For he, who has not the quickening spirit of righteousness, lies, as it were, without life. Because, then, every holy preacher anxiously flies to the spot, where he thinks there are sinners, to shew the light of revival to those who are lying in the death of sin, it is well said of this eagle; Wheresoever the carcase shall be, she is immediately present. That is, he proceeds to the place, where he foresees the utility of preaching; in order that, because he already lives a spiritual life, he may benefit others who are lying in their death, whom he devours, as it were, by reproving, yet, by converting them from iniquity to innocence, he changes them, as it were, by eating them, into his own members. Lo, the very Paul, whom we have already frequently brought forward for a testimony, when he was going at one time to Judaea, at another to Corinth, at another to Ephesus, at another to Rome, at another to the Spains, that he might announce the grace of eternal life to those who were lying in the death of sin; what else did he prove himself to be but an eagle; which, swiftly flying over every thing, was seeking for the carcase wheresoever lying;

in order that, while he was performing the will of God, in having gained sinners, he might find, as it were, his own food in the carcase? For the food of the righteous is the conversion

of sinners, of which it is said, Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life. [John 6, 27] Having heard, therefore, such numerous virtues of holy men, blessed Job is understood to have been astonished, and to have been silent, from the awe of admiration. For it follows,

Ver. 31, 32. The Lord added, and spake to Job; Doth he that contendeth with God, so easily remain quiet? He that reproveth God, ought certainly also to answer Him. [E.V. 40, 1. 2.]

107. The holy man did not consider that his merits were being increased, but that his vices were being cut away by this so great severity of the scourge. And since he knew that there were no vices within him, he believed that he was unjustly smitten; and, to murmur at the blow, is altogether to reprove the Smiter. But the Lord, considering that what he brought forward, he had gathered, not from the swelling of pride, but from the character of his life, gently reproves him, saying, Doth he that contendeth with God, so easily remain quiet? He that reproveth God, ought certainly also to answer Him. As if He were plainly saying; Why hast thou, who hast said so much of thy own conduct, remained silent on hearing of the life of the Saints? For to doubt of My smiting, whether it was just or not, was to reprove Me. And thou hast stated thy own good qualities truly, but thou hast not known the tendency of these scourges. For though thou hast no longer any thing to correct, yet thou hast still something in which to increase. But, behold, thou hast learned from My narrative, to what a height of virtue I exalt very many. Thou wast considering thine own loftiness, but wast ignorant of that of others. Having heard then the virtues of others, answer Me, if thou canst, concerning thine own.

But we know that he, who, when he acts rightly, omits looking at the merits of his betters, extinguishes the eye of his heart, by the darkness of pride. But, on the other hand, he who carefully weighs the good qualities of others, enlightens his own deeds, by a powerful ray of humility; because when he sees the things he has done himself, done by others also without, he keeps down that swelling of pride, which strives to break forth within from singularity. Hence is it that it is said by the voice of God to Elias, when thinking that he was solitary, I have left Me seven thousand men, who have not bent their knees before Baal; [1 Kings 19, 18] in order that by learning that he remained not solitary, he might avoid the boasting of pride, which might arise in him, from his singularity. Blessed Job therefore is not blamed for having done any thing perversely, but he is informed of the good deeds of others besides, in order that while he considers that he has others also equal to him, he may humbly submit himself to Him, Who is specially the Highest.

Book XXXII

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF ST. GREGORY THE POPE, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB.

VOLUME III - THE SIXTH PART. — BOOK XXXII.

The two last verses of the thirty-ninth chapter having been explained, the first fourteen verses of the fortieth chapter are expounded, and many things are taught, both concerning the infinite power of God, and the hurtful designs of Satan against men. [i]

1. The higher holy men advance with God, in the dignity of virtues, the more accurately do they discover that they are unworthy; because while they become close to the light, they find out whatever escaped their notice in themselves, and they appear to themselves the more deformed without, in proportion as that is very beautiful, which they see within. For every one is made known to himself, when he is illumined with the touch of the true light, and by the same means as he learns what is righteousness, he is also instructed to see what is sin. Hence is it that though our mind is often benumbed with cold in converse with men's doings, though it sins and is ignorant in some points, though it regards some sins as though they were none; yet when it raises itself by the compunction of prayer to aim at things above, having been roused by the eye of its compunction, it returns to observe itself with greater vigilance after its tears. For when it deserts itself in neglect, and is torpid with fatal lukewarmness, it fully believes that idle words or unprofitable thoughts are of lesser guilt. But if warmed by the fire of compunction, and touched by the sudden breath of contemplation, it starts from its lukewarmness, it soon begins to dread, as grave and deadly offences, those things which but a little before it believed to be trifling. For it avoids, as most atrocious, all things which are in the very least degree hurtful;

because, namely, being pregnant with the conception of the Spirit, it no longer allows any vanities to enter in unto it. For from that which it beholds within, it feels how dreadful are those sins which clamour without; and the more it has advanced when raised up, the more does it shrink from the grovelling pursuits, in which it sank prostrate. For nothing in truth supports it, but that which it has beheld within, and it endures the more heavily whatever thrusts itself on it from without, the more it is not that which it beheld within; but from those inward objects which it has been able to catch a glance of, it forms a standard for judging of those outward things which it has to bear with. For it is rapt above itself, when it

contemplates sublime objects, and now beholding itself, by going out of itself more freely, it comprehends more minutely whatever remains to it, of itself, under itself. By which means it is wonderfully brought to pass, as was before said, that it appears the more unworthy to itself, by the very means by which it is rendered more worthy; and that it then feels itself far removed from uprightness, when it is approaching near it. Whence Solomon says, I have tried all things by wisdom, and said, I will become wise, and it departed the farther from me. [Eccles. 7, 23] For wisdom which is sought after is said to depart far off, because it seems higher to a person approaching it.

But those who do not seek it, think themselves the nearer it, the more they know not also its standard of uprightness; because, living in darkness, they know not how to admire the brightness of the light, which they have never seen, and since they do not tend towards the comeliness of its beauty, they willingly become more deformed every day in themselves. For whoever is touched by its rays, his deformity is more manifestly pointed out to him, and he finds the more truly how much he is distorted in sin, the more keenly, from considering the highest objects, he beholds how far distant he is from uprightness. Whence blessed Job, surpassing in virtues the race of men, overcame his friends in speaking; but when instructed more highly, by God speaking to him, on knowing himself, he remained silent. For he overcame those who spoke unjustly, but at the words of the voice within he knew that he was justly condemned. And he knows not indeed why he was scourged, but yet he proved by silence why he reverenced not the scourges. For when the Divine judgments are not known, they are not to be discussed with bold words, but to be venerated with awful silence; because even when the Creator of all things discloses not His reasons in inflicting the scourge, He shews them to be just, by pointing out that He inflicts them Who is perfectly just.

Let the holy man, then, who has been reproved both first for his words, and afterwards for his silence, make known what he thinks of himself. For he says;

Ver. 34. I who have spoken lightly, what can I answer? [E.V. 40, 4] [ii] 2. As if he said, I would defend my speech, if I had uttered it with weight of reason. But after a tongue is convicted of having used levity, what remains for it but to be restrained with silence? It follows, I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

In the usage of Holy Scripture, work is wont to be understood by the hand, speech by the mouth. To lay therefore the hand upon the mouth, is by the virtue of good living to conceal the faults of incautious speech. But who can be found, however perfect, who has not offended in idle words? As James witnesses, who says, Be not many masters, for in many things we offend all. [James 3, 1] And again, The tongue can no man tame. [ib. 8] And the Truth, exposing its faults by Its own mouth, says, But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall have spoken, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. [Matt. 12, 36] But holy men study to conceal before the eyes of God the faults of the tongue by the merits of their life, they study to keep down their immoderate words by the weight of good works. Whence in Holy Church the hand is laid upon the mouth, when the sin of idle talk is daily

covered in its Elect by the virtue of good actions. For it is written; Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. [Ps. 3. 21] But since it is written again; All things are naked and opened unto His eyes, [Heb. 4, 13] how can they be concealed which can never be at all hid from the eyes of Him, to Whom all things are naked?

But since we place lower, that which we conceal, and doubtless spread that over, with which we cover it, in order to cover that which is placed beneath, we are said to cover our sins, which we place, as it were, beneath, when we give them up; and we draw something else over them, when we choose afterwards to prefer for this end the work of good deeds. He therefore who abandons his former evil deeds, and afterwards does good works, by this addition covers his past iniquity, over which he spreads the merits of good deeds. Let blessed Job therefore, as typifying Holy Church, and in what he says alleging his own circumstances, but designating ours, say for us; I will lay mine hand upon my mouth: that is, that of my words in me which I consider to have displeased the strict Judge, I conceal before His eyes under the veil of upright conduct. It follows;

Ver. 35. One thing have I spoken, which I would I had not said; and another, to which I will add no further. [E.V. 40, 5] [iii] 3. If we examine the former words of blessed Job, we find that he has said nothing wickedly. But if we distort his words, which were uttered with truth and freedom, into a sort of sin of pride, there will no longer be two only; because there will be many. But since our speaking is the laying open to men our secret meaning in words; but our speaking to the ears of God is the exhibiting the motion of our mind even by an expressive action; blessed Job, on weighing himself by the balance of most accurate examination, confesses that he had a second time offended in his speech. For to 'say one thing' unlawfully, is to do things worthy of the scourge, to 'say another' is to murmur too at the scourge. He therefore, who was preferred above men in all his doings before the reproof of the Lord, rising higher by this very reproof, acknowledged that he was in the first place far from right in his conduct, and afterwards far from patient under the rod. Whence he reproves himself, saying, One thing have I spoken, which I would I had not said; and another, to which I will add no further. As if he said, I believed myself to be righteous indeed among men, but, as Thou wert speaking, I found myself to be both wicked before the scourges, and stubborn after the scourges. To which I will add no further, because now, the more accurately I understand Thee speaking, the more humbly I search out myself.

4. And because blessed Job typifies Holy Church, these words of his can be applied to all the Elect, who knowing the Lord, feel that they have offended in one and another point, because they understand that they have sinned either in thought and deed, or in neglecting the love of God and their neighbour. To which they promise to add no further, because through the grace of conversion, they take care to purge away daily by penitence even their former deeds. And yet blessed Job, by convicting himself in his penitence of two points, plainly shews, that every sinner ought in his penitence to have two groans, because, in truth, he has both not done the good which he ought, and has done the evil which he ought not. For hence is it that it is said by Moses, of him who took an oath to do any thing, either evil or good, and

has transgressed it through forgetfulness, Let him offer a she lamb from the flocks, or a she goat, and the priest shall pray for him, and for his sin. But if he is not able to offer a lamb, let him offer two turtle doves, or two young pigeons, one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. [Lev. 5, 6. 7. For to take an oath is to bind ourselves with a vow of servitude to God. And when we promise good works, we pledge ourselves to do well.

But when we vow abstinence and the torture of our flesh, we swear to do ill to ourselves for the present. But because no one in this life is so perfect, however devoted to God, as not to sin in ever so small a degree in the midst of these pious vows, a she lamb of the flocks, or a she goat, is ordered to be offered for his sin. For what is signified by the she lamb, except the innocence of active life? what by the she goat, which often feeds as it is hanging on the summits and extremities of the rocks, but a life of contemplation? He therefore who sees that he has not fulfilled what he has promised and proposed, ought the more studiously to prepare himself for the sacrifice of God, either by the innocence of good works, or by the lofty food of contemplation. And a she lamb is well ordered to be offered from the flocks, but a she goat not from the flocks; because an active life is the lot of many, a contemplative of few. And when we do those things which we see many are doing, or have done, we offer, as it were, a she lamb from the flocks. But when the power of the offerer is not equal to a she lamb, and she goat, it is added as a remedy for the penitent, that two young pigeons or two turtle doves may be offered.

We know that young pigeons or turtle doves utter moans instead of a song. What then is designated by two young pigeons, or two turtle doves, except the twofold groaning of our penitence? That so when we rise not to the offering of good works, we may bewail ourselves in two ways, both because we have not done right, and have also wrought evil things. Whence also one turtle dove is ordered to be offered for a sin offering, but the other for a burnt offering. For a holocaust means 'entirely burnt.' We offer therefore one turtle dove for a sin offering, when we groan for our fault, but we make a holocaust of the other, when, because we have neglected good works, thoroughly inflaming ourselves, we glow with the fire of grief. Because therefore a twofold groaning is required in penitence, blessed Job, making progress by the chiding of God's voice, and increasing in self-reproach, confesses with penitence that he has said one and another thing. As if he openly said, I have through negligence been slothful in good works, and through audacity have broken out into evil.

Chap. xl. ver. 1, 2. But the Lord answered unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Gird up thy loins as a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto Me. [E.V. 6, 7] What is the Lord answering out of the whirlwind, what blessed Job girding up his loins, what the demand of God, and the declaration of man, has been already treated of in the first address of the Lord. Because therefore we forbear to weary our reader, we are especially careful not to repeat our words. It follows; Ver. 3. Wilt thou disannul My judgment, and condemn Me, that thou mayest be justified? [E.V. 8] [iv]

5. Whoever strives to defend himself against the scourges of God, endeavours to set aside the judgment of Him Who inflicts them. For when he says that he is not smitten for his

own fault, what else does he but accuse the injustice of the Smiter? The scourges of heaven therefore smote not blessed Job to extinguish in him his faults, but rather to increase his merits, in order that he who in the season of tranquillity had shone forth in so great sanctity, might also manifest from the blow what virtue of patience lay concealed within him. But he, not detecting his fault during the scourges, and yet not discovering that those very scourges were the cause of increasing his merit, believed that he was unjustly smitten, when he found nothing in himself which required to be corrected. But, lest his very innocence should be puffed up into the swelling of pride, he is reproved by the Divine voice; and his mind, free from iniquity, but weighed down by scourges, is recalled to the secret judgments; in order that the sentence of heaven, though not understood, may not be considered unjust: but that he may at least believe that every thing which he suffers is just, as it is doubtless plain that he is suffering at the hands of God. For the righteous will of our Maker, is a great satisfaction for the blow. For since it is wont to do nothing unjust, it is acknowledged to be just even though hid.

For when we are smitten for the sin of injustice, if we are conjoined to the Divine will in our smiting, we are soon released from our injustice by this very conjunction. For whoever now endures the blow, but still knows not the causes of the blow, if he welcomes this very sentence against him, believing it to be just, he is at once released from his unrighteousness, just as he rejoices that he has been justly smitten. For by associating himself with God in his own punishment, he sets up himself against himself; and great already is his righteousness, because he accords with the will of God in his punishment, from which he differed in sin. The holy man, therefore, because he had not disagreed with God through any sin, with difficulty, as it were, agreed with Him when in the midst of his punishments. For he believed not that the scourges, which commonly extinguish vices, were in him only increasing his merits. Whence he is now justly reproved, in order that even unwittingly he might be brought under the Divine judgments: and it is said to him; Wilt thou disannul My judgment, and wilt thou condemn Me, that thou mayest be justified? As if it were plainly said; Thou considerest indeed thine own good deeds, but thou knowest not My secret judgments. If therefore thou disputest against My scourges, on account of thy merits, what else dost thou, but hasten to convict Me of injustice, by justifying thyself? It follows;

Ver. 4. Hast thou an arm like God, and dost thou thunder with a voice like Him? [E.V. 9] [v] 6. Because blessed Job transcended in merits the race of men, his merciful Creator and Teacher challenges him to consider the resemblance of His greatness, in order that, having known the great dissimilarity, he may keep himself down in humility.

7. But when a voice and arm are spoken of in God, we must take the greatest care that our mind imagines nothing corporeal in Him. For to confine Him within the lineaments of a body, Who without circumscription fills and embraces all things, is to fall into the heresy of the Anthropomorphites. But Almighty God, in drawing us to His own things, humbles Himself even to ours, and, to teach lofty, condescends to lowly things; in order that the mind of little ones, being nourished with the things it knows, may rise to enquire into

those it knows not, and hearing from Him Who is far above it, some truths nigh itself, may move, as it were, some steps towards Him. Whence it happens, that in His own Scripture He sometimes from the bodies of men, sometimes from their minds, but sometimes from birds, and sometimes even from insensate objects, applies to Himself some very unlikely resemblances. For He frequently applies to Himself a resemblance from the bodies of men, as the Prophet says of Him to the Israelites, He that hath touched you, toucheth the apple of His eye. [Zech. 2, 8] And as it is said again of Him by the Prophet to a man who trusts in Him; He will make a shadow for thee with His shoulders. [Ps. 91, 4] It is doubtless admitted that God in His own nature has neither eye, nor shoulders;

but since we see with our eye, but support burdens on our shoulders, God, because He sees all things, is said to have an eye; but because He carries us, and by carrying preserves us, He is said to make a shadow for us with His shoulders. For he says, He will make a shadow for thee with His shoulders. As if He were saying to man who was a sinner, and, after his sin asking pardon, The Lord protects thee with the same affection, with which He endured thee. For He shadows thee with His shoulders, because while He carries, He defends thee. But sometimes He applies to Himself a resemblance from our minds, as He to, says by the Prophet to Israel; I have remembered thee, having pity on thy youth. [Jer. 2, 2] And again speaking by the comparison of a wife, He says; Even if she shall have forgotten, yet will I not forget thee. [Is. 49, 15] For who can be ignorant, that the memory of God is neither broken off by oblivion, nor yet repaired by recollection? But when He neglects and passes over some things, He is said, after the manner of minds, to forget, and when, after a long time, He visits the things He wills, He is said, after the fashion of our changeableness, to have remembered. For how does oblivion weaken the strength of that Godhead, with Which even praiseworthy memory itself has no essential agreement. For men remember no things, except those which are either past or absent.

How then does God remember past things, when the very things which in themselves pass away, stand ever present at His beck? Or how does He call to mind things absent, when every thing that is, is present to Him, from the fact that it exists in Him? For if it were not present to Him, it would not exist at all; for things nonexistent He creates, by looking on them, things existent He keeps together, by looking on them. Whatever, therefore, the Creator beholds not, is bereft of the essence of subsistence. But sometimes a resemblance is applied to Him from birds, as is said by Moses, He spread abroad His wings, and took them. [Deut. 32, 11] And the Prophet says; Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings. [Ps. 17, 8] For because when we are young He nourishes us, as He protects us, and cherishes us with no heavy and burdensome, but with light and gentle, protection, when He puts forth His mercies towards us, He extends His wings over us, as if after the manner of birds. He sometimes, with deep condescension, compares himself, on account of our infirmity, with objects without sense; as He says by the Prophet, Behold, I will shriek over you, as a cart creaketh laden with hay. [Amos 2, 13] For since the life of the carnal is hay, as it is written, All flesh is hay; [Is. 40, 6] in that the Lord endures the life of the carnal, He declares that He carries hay as a cart.

And to creak under the weight of the hay is for Him to bear, with murmuring, the burdens and iniquities of sinners. When therefore He applies to Himself very unlike resemblances, we must carefully observe that some things of this kind are sometimes spoken of concerning God, on account of the effect of His doings, but sometimes to indicate the substance of His Majesty. For when an eye, shoulders, a foot, and wings, are said to be in God, the effect of His operation is set forth. But when hand, arm, right hand, or voice, is said to belong to God, by these words His Consubstantial Son is pointed out. For He is in truth both hand, and right hand, of Whose Ascension the Father speaks by Moses, saying, I will lift up My hand to heaven, and I will swear by My right hand. [Deut. 32, 40] He is the arm, of Whom the Prophet says, And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? [Is. 53, 1] He is the voice, because the Father said when He begat Him, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. [Ps. 2, 7] And of Whom it is written, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [John 1, 1] By this Word David declares that the Father made all things, saying, He spake, and they were made. [Ps. 33, 9] For God, therefore, to have an arm, is for Him to beget a Son that worketh;

to thunder with His voice, is for Him to manifest fearfully to the world His Consubstantial Son. When therefore the Lord says to blessed Job, Hast thou an arm like God, and dost thou thunder with a voice like Him? by a wonderful dispensation of mercy He exalts, while He reproves him. Because He proves him to be superior to all, whom He surpasses only by comparison with Himself. To whom He subjoins with this proposal;

Ver. 5. Surround thyself with beauty, and raise thyself on high, and be full of glory, and array thyself with beautiful garments. [E.V. 10] [vi] 8. Thou understandest, As I. For He surrounds Himself with beauty, of Whom it is written, The Lord hath reigned, He hath put on beauty. [Ps. 93, 1] He is raised aloft in us, when He is proved to be in His own Nature unsearchable by our minds. But He is glorious, Who while He enjoys Himself, needs not any added praise. He is arrayed in beautiful garments, because He assumed for the service of His beauty, the choirs of the holy Angels, whom He created, and sets forth His Church as a kind of glorious garment, not having wrinkle or spot. Whence it is said to Him by the Prophet, Thou hast put on confession, and beauty, clothed with light as with a garment. [Ps. 104, 1. 2.] For here He puts on confession, there beauty; because those whom He has here made to confess by penitence, He will there set forth refulgent with the beauty of righteousness. He is clothed, therefore, with light as with a garment, because in that eternal glory He will be clothed with all the Saints, to whom it is said, Ye are the light of the world. [Matt. 5, 14] Whence also it is said by the Evangelist, that when the Lord was transfigured in the mountain, His raiment became white as snow. In which transfiguration what else is announced but the glory of the final resurrection? For in the mountain His raiment became as snow, because in the height of heavenly brightness all Saints will be joined to Him, refulgent with the light of righteousness. But since He teaches, under the expression beautiful garments, how He unites the righteous to Himself, He shews also how He separates from Himself the unrighteous. It follows;

Ver. 6. Scatter the proud in thy wrath. [E.V. 11] [vii]

9. Thou understandest, As I, Who in the season of tranquillity bear with them united against Me, and when I come at last with severity, I scatter them in My wrath. But we must carefully observe on these subjects, that a grievous error of misbelief is admitted, if any one perchance thinks, that in that Substance of the Godhead, wrath and tranquillity are variable. For the Creator of all is supremely immortal, in that He is not changeable, like a creature. Hence it is said of Him by James, With Whom is no variableness, nor shadow of change. [James 1, 17] Hence again it is written, But Thou, O Lord, judgest, with tranquillity. [Wisd. 12, 18] Hence the Prophet says, The land is made desert from the face of the anger of the Dove, from the face of the fury of the Lord. [Jer. 25, 38] For that which he had first called the anger of the dove, he afterwards called the fury of the Lord. For the dove is a very simple animal; and because no inequality of fury steals in upon God, He called the fury of the Lord the anger of the dove. For to point out the inalterable might of the Divine severity, he termed it both 'anger,' and that of 'the Dove.' As if he were saying more plainly; He Who still continuing gentle punishes the unrighteous, inflicts unmoved a severe judgment. Whence also in the last Judgment, remaining immutable in Himself, He is not altered by any vicissitude or change;

but yet He is not manifested to the Elect and reprobate under the same appearance of unchangeableness, because He will appear calm to the righteous, but wrathful to the unrighteous. For by the witness of conscience within they bring themselves to a point, from which their minds behold alike One Person, but are not alike affected, because to the one their former righteousness represents Him as gentle, and to the others their sin represents Him as terrible. But who can explain their dread, when it falls to the lot of these wretched men, both to discern faults within themselves, and to see the righteous Judge before themselves? And it is doubtless the case in the daily course of the present life, that the hearts of men are being instructed in the character of the coming Judge. For when two persons are going to trial, the one conscious of his innocence, the other of his fault, even before the sentence is passed, they both look at the judge when still silent, and yet the guilty one suspects that this very silence of the judge is heavy wrath against him. Which wrath, his remembrance of his wickedness, and not the passion of the Judge, denounces against him: for though the sentence does not as yet outwardly proclaim him guilty, yet his conscience heavily accuses him within.

But, on the other hand, the friend of justice beholds the countenance of him who is giving sentence, but rejoices within from the testimony of a good conscience, and as he has had nothing to fear in himself, he looks on every thing which is done to him as kind. In this place then the wrath of God means not any agitation of the Substance of the Godhead, but the enquiry of righteous vengeance upon sinners conscious of their guilt. For though they see Him to be calm in judgment, yet, from not doubting that they will be smitten by Him, they think that He is agitated in their emotions. It follows;

And behold every one that is arrogant, and abase him. [viii] 10. As if He said, As I. But as to the order of punishment, the sin of the proud is fitly mentioned before the arrogant; because in truth pride is not generated by arrogance, but arrogance by pride. But every sinner is looked upon in two ways by the Lord, when he is either converted from sin, or punished for sin. Of looking in order to conversion it is said, that the Lord looked upon Peter; and Peter, remembering the word of Jesus, wept bitterly. [Luke 22, 61] With regard to punishment it is said again; The countenance of the Lord is upon them that do evil, to destroy the remembrance of them from the earth. [Ps. 34, 16] But in both ways is the arrogant brought down in humility, because he either acknowledges his fault with penitence, or by perishing suffers punishment.

Ver. 7. Look on all the proud, and confound them, and I tread down the wicked in their place. [E.V. 12] [ix] 11. Thou understandest, As I. For the proud are confounded at the look of the Lord, either here, by His mercy, when acknowledging and condemning their faults, or there, by suffering punishments from His justice. But pride itself is the place of the wicked; for, since it is written, Pride is the beginning of all sin, [Ecclus. 10, 13] it is comprised in that place, whence impiety arises; although impiety hardly differs from pride. For to be very proud is to think impiety of our Maker. The impious then is trodden down in his place, because he is crushed by that very pride, by which he is raised up; and when by boasting he raises himself in his thoughts, he hides from himself the light of righteousness, which he ought to find. But frequently when he is outwardly advancing his false glory against God, he is inwardly wasting away in real misery. Whence the Prophet says; Thou castedst them down while they were being raised up. [Ps. 73, 18] For he says not, Thou castedst them down after they were raised up, but while they were being raised up; because the very fact, that the proud happen to be exalted outwardly by false glory, is their being cast down within. For in the course of the divine judgment here, one thing is not their fault, and another their punishment; but their very fault is to them converted into punishment, so that when they are exalted with the haughtiness of pride, that which appears outwardly their progress, is itself in truth their inward fall. It follows;

Ver. 8. Hide them in the dust, and at the same time plunge their faces into the pit. [E.V. 13] [x]

12. As if He said, As I. For God by a just judgment hides the proud and impious in the dust, because He permits their hearts to be overwhelmed with those earthly employments, which they choose, having scorned the love of their Creator. Whence also when He enquires into their conduct, He acknowledges it not, as though it were hid from Him saying; I know not who ye are. [Luke 13, 27] The life of the wicked is hidden under the dust, because it is weighed down by mean and grovelling desires. For whoever still desires these things that are of the world, appears not, as it were, before the face of the true light, because he is in truth concealed under the dust of earthly thought. The burdened mind endures this dust of wicked thoughts, which the wind of most evil temptation brings with it. For hence it is that it is said by the Prophet, of every soul which is weighed down by earthly desires, under the

character of Ephraim, Ephraim has become as bread under the ashes, which is not turned. [Hos. 7, 8] For by nature our intention is well fashioned, to rise towards God; but from an evil habit of conversation pleasure arises, to weigh us down towards the present world. But bread under the ashes, is cleaner on that side, which it conceals beneath, and dirtier on that, on which it bears the ashes from above.

Whoever therefore neglects the effort with which he ought to seek God, presses down the cleaner side, like bread under the ashes, and when he willingly endures the cares of the world, he bears, as it were, above him a heap of ashes. But the bread under the ashes would be reversed, if he were to throw off the ash of carnal desires, and display above that good intention, which he had, by neglecting it, kept under in himself. But he refuses to be turned, when a mind, weighed down with the love of secular cares, neglects to throw off the mass of ashes which lies upon it; and when it seeks not to rise up to a good intention, it presses under the cleaner surface.

13. But it is fitly subjoined; And at the same time plunge their faces into the pit. As if He said, As I. For by a just judgment the Lord plunges the faces of the proud into the pit; because He casts down the intention of their heart, when it raises itself above men. For he whose face turns to the pit, looks towards things below. And it is well said of the proud, that their faces are plunged into the pit; because they are sinking lower, when through pride they are seeking higher things; and the more they raise themselves in their exaltation, the lower do they tend in their fall. For they seek earthly glory, and the things to which they look forward are of the basest kind, whilst they follow after high things in their pride. Whence it comes to pass in a wonderful and contrary manner, that the humble seek after heaven, whilst they cast themselves down the lower, and that the proud pursue the lowest objects, while by despising others they are raised, as it were, higher. The one, while they despise themselves, are united to heavenly things, the latter, while they exalt themselves, are separated from higher things. And, so to speak, the one, by elevating, depress, the other, by depressing, elevate themselves. And it is well said of the proud by the Psalmist; But He humbleth the sinners even to the earth;

because by seeking after those things that are below, while they raise and extol themselves, what else do they, but, having lost heaven, fall to the earth? For their having already fallen to the bottom is their having sought after things below, having forsaken things above. Their faces are therefore rightly said to be plunged into the pit, because by following after things below, they tend to the pit of hell. For it comes to pass by a just judgment, that those whom wilful aversion benightens here, the well-deserved pit of punishment there excludes from the view of the true light. Because therefore the holy man is questioned with so great a dread of Divine Power, as to have it said to him, Hast thou an arm like God, or dost thou thunder with a voice like Him? Scatter the proud in thy wrath, and behold every one that is arrogant, and abase him, and other things which God is able to do, but man is hardly able to hear; the Lord shews with what intention He first spoke of all these things, by the end of the conclusion subjoined; saying,

Ver. 9. And I will confess that thy right hand can save thee. [E.V. 14] [xi]

14. As if He were openly saying, If thou art able to do these terrible things, which I Myself have displayed, I attribute to thee, and not to Myself, all the good things thou hast done. But if thou canst not destroy others, that sin, by a look, it is plain that thou canst not set thyself free from the guilt of wickedness, by thy own power. Behold! it is said by the Divine voice to blessed Job, that he is not saved by his own right hand, and yet certain men, who are far from the strength of this man, despising the assistance of God, trust that they can be saved by their own strength. And for these what else ought we to pray, except that, if they have already received the gifts of good works, they may receive also this gift, to know from Whom they have received them? But since the Lord in the preceding words mentioned the greatness of His power, He now in what follows points out the wickedness of the ancient enemy: in order that the good servant, having first heard of the virtues of the Lord, might know how much to love, and having known afterwards the craft of the devil, might learn how much to fear. Whence it is well said by the Prophet, The lion will roar, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who will not prophesy?

[Amos 3, 8] For after the power of his Creator has been made known to him, the strength of his adversary ought not to be concealed from him, in order that he might submit himself the more humbly to his defender, the more accurately he had learned the wickedness of his enemy, and might more ardently seek his Creator, the more terrible he found the enemy to be, whom he had to avoid. For it is certain that he who less understands the danger he has escaped, loves his deliverer less; and that he who considers the strength of his adversary to be feeble, regards the solace of his defender as worthless. Whence the Prophet rightly said, ascribing his deliverance to the Lord; I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength, [Ps. 18, 1] plainly saying, that is, I love Thee the more, the more, feeling my own infirmity, I acknowledge Thee to be my strength. Hence he says again, Make Thy loving-kindness marvellous, O Thou that savest them that trust in Thee: [Ps. 17, 7] because the loving-kindnesses of the Lord doubtless then become wonderful to us who are delivered, when, by the same loving-kindnesses, it is found how grievous were the perils we have escaped.

15. And because the Lord, in the preceding part of His speech, disclosed to blessed Job the marvellous works of subsequent Saints, that he might learn, on hearing them, how humbly he ought to think of the height of his own virtues; it is now shewn him with what enemy he is waging war, and his strength and his crafts are more accurately pointed out, in order that he who has been led to converse with his Maker, may know plainly the arguments of the adversary. For in the words which follow, the Lord makes known to His faithful servant all the machinations of the crafty enemy, all wherein he seizes by oppressing, all wherein he flies around with insidiousness, all wherein he frightens by threatening; all wherein he allures by persuasion, all wherein he crushes by desperation, all wherein he deceives by promising. He commences therefore all his contests of craftiness, saying;

Ver. 10. Behold Behemoth, which I made with thee. [E.V. 15] [xii]

16. Whom does He suggest, under the name 'Behemoth,' except the ancient enemy? which being interpreted from the Hebrew word, means 'Animal' in the Latin tongue. For when his malice is added below, his person is plainly pointed out. But since it is written of God that He made all things together, why does He declare that He made this animal at the same time with man, when it is plain that He made all things at once? Again, we must enquire how God created all things at once, when Moses describes them as created separately with the varying change of six days. But we learn this the more readily, if we enquire minutely into the actual cases themselves of their beginnings. For the substance of things was indeed created at once, but the form was not fashioned at once: and that which existed at the same time in the substance of matter, appeared not at the same time by the figure of its shape. For when heaven and earth are described as made at the same time, it is pointed out that things spiritual and things corporeal, whatever arises from heaven, and whatever is produced from earth, were created all of them together. For the sun, the moon, and the stars, are said to have been created in the heaven on the fourth day: but that which on the fourth day came forth in appearance, existed on the first day in the substance of heaven by the creation.

The earth is said to have been created on the first day, and the trees and all the green things of the earth are described as being made on the third. But that which on the third day put itself forth in appearance, was doubtless created on the first day in the substance of the earth, from which it sprung. Hence it is that Moses distinctly related the creation of all things in separate days, and yet added that all were created at the same time, saying, These are the generations of the heaven and the earth, when they were created, in the day that the Lord made the heaven, and the earth, and every plant of the field, before it sprung up in the earth, and every herb of the region. [Gen. 2, 4, 5] For he who had related that the heaven, and the earth, the trees and herbs, were created on different days, now declares that they were made on one day; in order clearly to point out that every creature began to be at the same time in substance, although it came not forth at the same time in appearance. Hence also it is written there, God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them. [Gen. 1, 27] For Eve is not as yet described as having been made, and yet man is already said to be male and female.

But because woman was certainly about to come forth from the side of Adam, she is already reckoned as being in him in substance, from whom she was hereafter to come forth in form. But we can consider these points in the smallest matters, in order from the smallest to consider greater. For when the herb is created, neither fruit, nor the seed of its fruit, as yet appears in it. But fruit and seed exist therein, even when they appear not; because they doubtless exist together in the substance of the root, which appear not together in the increase of time.

17. But because we say that those things are created at the same time in substance, which we find come forth the one from the other, in what way is Behemoth declared to be created together with blessed Job, when, neither is the substance of an angel, and of a man the same, and man springs not forth from an angel, nor an angel from a man? But if Behemoth

is said to be created together with blessed Job, because every creature is without question created at the same time by a Maker, Who is not spread out in His doings in extent of time, why is that specially said of Behemoth, which is possessed in common with all creatures in general? But if we weigh the causes of things with accurate enquiry, we learn that Angels and men were created together; together, that is, not in unity of time, but in the knowledge of reason; together, by receiving the image of wisdom, and not together by the union of the substance of their form. For it is written of man, Let us make man after Our image and likeness. [Gen. 1, 26] And it is said to Satan by Ezekiel, Thou wast a seal of similitude, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty in the delights of the Paradise of God. [Ez. 28, 12] In the whole creation, then, men and angels came into being together, because they came forth distinct from every irrational creature.

Because then in all the creation there is no rational being but men and Angels, whatever can not exercise reason, is not made together with Man. Let it be said then to man, let it be said of the angel, who although he lost the power of his high estate, yet lost not the subtlety of a rational nature; Behold, Behemoth, which I made with thee. In order that while man considers that he who was made together with him in reason has perished, he may, from the ruin of him who is near him, fear that the fall of pride is nigh himself also. But we must carefully notice that in these words, the wicked doctrine of Manich'us is plainly reproved by the voice of the Lord; for he, when he speaks of two principles, endeavours to establish that the 'race of darkness' was not created. For how is that most wicked race said to have not been made, when the Lord declares that He created that Behemoth, the author, namely, of wickedness, who was rightly fashioned by nature? But because we have heard with whom that Behemoth was made, let us hear what he does, when ruined. It follows;

He will eat hay as an ox. [xiii] 18. If we carefully examine the words of the Prophets, we discover that these and they were put forth by the same Spirit. For when Isaiah observed the life of sinners devoured by the ancient and insatiable enemy, he said, the lion shall eat straw like the ox. [Is. 11, 7] But what is signified by the words hay, and straw, except the life of the carnal? Of which it is said by the Prophet, All flesh is hay. [Is. 40, 6] He then who here is 'Behemoth,' is there a 'lion;' they who are here called 'hay,' are there called 'straw.' But the mind strives to enquire why this lion in Isaiah, or Behemoth as he is called by the voice of the Lord, is in both passages compared not to a horse, but an ox. But we ascertain this the sooner, if we consider what is the difference of foods in the two animals. For horses eat hay, however dirty, but drink clean water only. But oxen drink water, however filthy, but feed only on clean hay. What then is it, for which this Behemoth is compared to an ox, which feeds on clean food, except that which is said of this ancient enemy by another Prophet; His food is choice. [Hab. 1, 16] For he rejoices not in seizing those whom he beholds lying of their own accord in the lowest depths with himself, involved in wicked and filthy actions. He therefore seeks to eat hay as an ox, because he seeks to wound with the fang of his suggestion the pure life of the spiritual.

19. But I see we must enquire, how this Behemoth, who eats hay like an ox, is said to destroy the life of the spiritual, when, as was before said, by the word 'hay' is designated the life of the carnal. His food also will no longer be choice, if, in eating hay, he seizes the carnal. But it occurs at once in reply, that some men are both hay in the sight of God, and among men are counted under the name of holiness, when their life displays one thing before the eyes of men, and before the Divine judgment their conscience intends another. They therefore in the opinion of men are 'choice,' ['electi'] but in the accurate judgment of the Lord are 'hay.' Was not Saul hay in the sight of God, of whom the Prophet Samuel said to the people, Ye surely see him whom the Lord hath chosen, [1 Sam. 10, 24] and of whom it is said just above, He is choice and good? [ib. 9, 2] For he whom the sinful people deserved, was both reprobate in the sight of God, and yet in the order of causes was choice and good. That many are hay, and suspect that they are Elect from the opinion of men, is well said by Solomon; I saw the wicked buried, who even while they were still living were in the holy place, and were praised in the city as if of good works.

[Eccles. 8, 10] That many are hay, but yet are protected by the favour of sanctity, a certain wise man well points out, saying, Pass over, O stranger, and furnish a table. [Ecclus. 29, 26] For a stranger is said by passing over to furnish a table; because if any one standing at the altar of God seeks his own glory by good works, both the praise of the altar is extended by the display of his sanctity, and yet he himself is not counted by God in the number of the citizens. His opinion advances with others, and yet he himself 'passes over as a stranger' from God. He therefore 'adorned the table in passing over,' because he would not remain at the sacrifice, who in all he studied to do descended in thought to the praises of men. Because then some persons studiously lead a clean life, but seek not thereby to approve themselves within, his food is both rightly said to be choice, and yet this Behemoth is said to eat hay as an ox. For clean hay lies, as it were, on the ground, and below, before the mouth of this Behemoth, when both a life is passed, as it were, in innocence through keeping the commandments, and yet in the midst of conduct which is set forth as good, the heart is not raised to seek after things above.

What useful purpose then does he effect, who guards purity of life in himself, if by his base intention, he leaves himself on the earth to be found by the mouth of this Behemoth? Because therefore Almighty God informs us what our enemy is doing, let Him now make known to us how he prevails, in order that the more the wickedness of his cunning is known, the more easily it may be overcome. It follows;

Ver. 11. His strengthen is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly. [xiv] 20. The places for the seed of coition are said to be in the loins with men, but in the navel with women. For hence it is that the Truth says to His disciples; Let your loins be girded about. [Luke 12, 35] Hence Peter, when keeping away lust from the heart, admonished, saying, Girded up in the loins of your mind. [1 Pet. 1, 13] Hence Paul, when saying that the priesthood of Levi was tithed by the sacrifice of Abraham in the time of Melchisedec, said, in shewing where Levi was then concealed in the body of his father; For he was yet in the

loins of his father. But that the seed-vessel of lust is with women contained in the navel, the Prophet witnesses, who, reproving the wantonness of Judaea, under the character of a prostituted woman, says; In the day of thy birth thy navel was not cut. [Ez. 16, 4] For to cut the navel in the day of birth, is to cut off the lust of the flesh at the time of conversion. For since it is difficult to correct evil beginnings, and to mould into a better shape things that have once been shapen amiss, Judaea is blamed from her birth, as having, while born of God, retained her navel unsevered, because she lopped not off the loosenesses ['fluxa'] of lust. Because therefore both sexes are grievously overcome by the infirmity of lust, through the power of the devil, his strength is both said to be in his loins, against men, and his force in his navel, against women.

21. But why, when He had first mentioned this Behemoth as eating hay, did He subjoin the fatal effects of lust, as the first arguments of his deception? Except that it is plain to all, that after pride has once seized the spirit of a man, he immediately stretches forth to the pollution of the flesh. Which we observe even in the first man and woman; who, by covering their shameful parts, after the commission of pride, plainly shewed that after they had endeavoured in themselves to grasp at high things within, they presently were subject in the flesh to what bringeth shame without. This Behemoth therefore, who rages insatiably, and seeks to devour the whole man at once, at one time exalts his mind to pride at another corrupts his flesh with the pleasure of lust. But his strength is well said not to be in the loins or the navel of them who are overcome; but, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly. As if it were plainly said, His strength is in his own loins, and his force is in the navel of his own belly; because they doubtless specially become his body, who, being deceived by the blandishments of base suggestions, submit to him through the loosenesses of lust. It follows,

Ver. 12. He setteth fast his tail, like a cedar. [E.V. 17] [xv]

22. There are in these words many points, to be brought forward for moral instruction. But we examine in the first place the violences of this Behemoth, in order afterwards to detect more accurately his crafts. In Holy Scripture under the name 'cedar,' sometimes the lofty excellence of heavenly glory is expressed; but sometimes the stubborn pride of the wicked is designated. By the name 'cedar' is expressed the loftiness of heavenly glory, as the Psalmist witnesses, The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree, he shall be multiplied like a cedar in Libanus. [Ps. 92, 12] Again, under the name 'cedar' is designated the haughty power of the wicked, as is said by the same Prophet; The voice of the Lord breaking the cedars. [Ps. 29, 5] But what is meant by the tail of this Behemoth, except that latter end of the ancient enemy, when he enters, doubtless, that ruined man, his peculiar vessel, who is specially called Antichrist? For since he is permitted, at one time by the honours of the world, at another by signs and prodigies of pretended sanctity, to be elevated to the swelling of power, his tail is rightly compared by the voice of the Lord to a cedar. For as a cedar leaves behind other trees by increasing in height, in like manner will Antichrist, possessing in temporal

things the glory of the world, surpass at this time the standard of man both in the height of his honour, and in the power of his miracles.

For there is in him a spirit, who having been created in high estate, lost not, even when cast down, the power of his nature. But his power is at present very little displayed, because it is held bound by an exercise ['dispensatione'] of Divine strength. Whence it is said by John; I saw an Angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand: and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand gears, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him. [Rev. 20, 1-3] For he is said to be bound, and cast into the bottomless pit; because he is thrust back and bound in the hearts of the wicked by Divine power, so as not to be unchecked, as far as he is able to hurt; that, though he may secretly rage by them, he may not break forth into the violent ravages of pride. But it is there intimated how he is to be loosed at the end of the world; And after the thousand years shall have been completed, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out, and seduce the nations. [ib. v. 7] For by the number 'thousand,' on account of its perfection, is expressed this whole period, whatever it be, of Holy Church.

On the completion of which the ancient enemy, given up to his own strength, for a short time, but with much power is let loose against us.

23. But though his fierceness makes him break forth into cruelty, yet the Divine pity confines him with fewness of days. For hence the Truth says by Itself, Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, nor shall be. [Matt. 24, 21] Hence again It says, Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved. [ib. v. 22] For since the Lord beholds us to be both proud and weak, those days, which He spoke of as singularly evil, He, in His mercy, says were shortened; in order doubtless to alarm our pride by the adversity of the time, and to comfort our weakness by the shortness of the days.

24. But it must be greatly considered, in what way that Behemoth, when he raises his tail as a cedar, arises with greater fierceness than he now exerts himself. For what kinds of punishments do we know, at which we rejoice not as having already exercised the strength of Martyrs? For the sword plunged in the neck prostrated some with a sudden blow; the cross torturing ['crucis patibulum'] fastened some, in which death is both repelled when courted, and courted when repelled; some the saw ground with its rugged teeth; some the iron-armed hoof trampled on and mangled ['carpsit,' al. sparsit,' 'dashed in pieces']; some the rage of beasts tore limb from limb with their bite; some the force of blows imprinted through the skin pierced from their inmost entrails; some the deep dug earth buried alive; some the precipice crushed when hurled headlong to death; some the water drowned and swallowed up when plunged into it; some the devouring flame fed upon and consumed to ashes. When therefore this Behemoth expands his tail more fatally, in the end of the world, what greater cruelty can spring up in these torments, except that which the Truth says Itself

in the Gospel; There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, so that, if possible, even the Elect may be led into error.

[Matt. 24, 24] For now our faithful ones do wonders, when they suffer wrongs, but at that time the ministers of this Behemoth are about to do wonders, even when they inflict wrongs. Let us consider therefore what will be that temptation of the mind of man, when both the pious martyr submits his body to tortures, and yet his torturer works miracles before his eyes! Whose resolution would not then be shaken, from the very bottom of his thoughts, when he who tortures with the scourges, glitters also with miracles? Let it be rightly said then; He setteth up his tail as a cedar, because he will doubtless be exalted from reverence for the prodigy, and harsh with the cruelty of his torture.

25. For he is then not exalted only in power, but is supported also by the display of miracles. Whence is it also said by David; He lieth in wait in secret, as a lion in his den. [Ps. 10, 9] For for open power, it would have sufficed, if he had been a lion, even though he had not lain in wait: and again for secret craft, it would have sufficed for him to have spoiled secretly in ambush, even if he had not been a lion. But because this ancient enemy is unchecked in all his strength, he is permitted to rage in both ways, so as that he is let loose in contest against the Elect both by fraud and strength; in strength by his power, in fraud by his miracles. He is therefore rightly said to be both a lion, and lying in wait: lying in wait by the splendour of his miracles, a lion by his secular power. For in order to draw those who are openly wicked, he displays his secular power; but in order to deceive even the just, he pretends sanctity by his miracles. For he persuades the one by the height of his greatness, he deceives the others by a display of sanctity. Of this tail of this Behemoth, it is said by John, under the form of a dragon; And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth.

[Rev. 12, 4] For heaven is the Church, which in this night of the present life, when it contains within it the countless virtues of the Saints, glitters from above with radiant stars. But the tail of the dragon casts down the stars to the earth, because that latter end of Satan, exalted by the boldness of the man it has assumed, by gaining possession of some, whom it finds in the Church as if the Elect of God, shews them to be reprobates. For stars therefore to fall from heaven, is for some, having abandoned the hope of heavenly things, to be eager, under his guidance, for the pursuit of secular glory.

26. Hence Daniel speaks against this tail of the dragon in the person of Antiochus, saying, It cast down some of the strong host, and of the stars, and stamped upon them, and magnified himself even to the prince of the strong host, and took away from him the perpetual sacrifice, and cast down the place of his sanctification. But strength was given him against the perpetual sacrifice, by reason of transgressions; and truth will be cast down in the earth, and he will do, and prosper. [Dan. 8, 10-12] For he casts down some of the strong host ['de fortitudine'], and of the stars, when he crushes some who both are resplendent with the light of righteousness, and strong through the virtue of their works. And he magnifies himself as far as to the prince of the host, because he sets himself up against the Author of virtue Himself. He takes away the perpetual sacrifice; because he breaks off the desire of conver-

sation in the Church in those whom he has seized. But strength is given him against the perpetual sacrifice by reason of transgressions; because unless the deserts of those who are perishing demanded it, the adversary would never be able to gain possession of those who were believed to be righteous. Truth is cast down in the earth, because belief in heavenly things is then perverted into a longing for temporal life. And he will do and prosper;

because he will then do his violence not only on the minds of the reprobate, but also on the bodies of the Elect with incalculable cruelty, without any opposition. Hence again it is said by Daniel, A king of shameless face, and understanding dark sentences shall rise up, and his power shall be rendered strong, but not in his own strength. [Dan. 8, 23. 24. For the power of that man is not strengthened by his own strength, because by the might of Satan he is exalted to the glory of perdition. Hence again he says; He shall slay the mighty and the holy people, according to his will, and craft shall be directed aright in his hand. [ib. 24. 25. For he slays the mighty, when he overcomes, in their bodies, those who are unconquered in mind. Or he certainly slays the mighty, and the people of the Saints, according to his will, when he draws at the beck of his will those who were believed to be mighty and holy. And craft is directed aright in his hand, because in him craft is helped on by his doings. For that which he says in his craft, be supports by working wonders; for whatever his lying tongue pretends, that does the hand of his work set forth, as if true.

27. Hence again he says; He will rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken without hand. [ib. 25. Hence Paul says, So that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself, as if he were God. [2 Thess. 2, 4] Hence again he says; Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. [ib. 8] For that which is said by Daniel, He will rise up against the Prince of princes, is expressed by Paul, So that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God. And that which is subjoined by Daniel, He shall be broken without hand, is expressed by Paul, Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of His mouth. For he will be broken without hand, because he will be smitten with eternal death, not in battle with the Angels, not in contest with the Saints, but through the coming of the Judge, by the breath of His mouth alone. Of the pride of this Behemoth it is also said by Paul, Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.

[2 Thess. 2, 4] Of whom Daniel, when saying that the fourth beast was strengthened with ten horns, immediately added, I was considering the horns, and behold there came up from the midst of them another little horn, and three of the first horns were plucked up from before its face, and behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. [Dan. 7, 8] He is described in truth as the eleventh horn of this beast, because the power of his kingdom is strengthened by iniquity. For every sin belongs to the number eleven, because while it does perverse things, it goes beyond the precepts of the decalogue. And because sin is bewailed in goats' hair, hence it is that in the Tabernacle there are made eleven veils of goats' hair. [Ex. 26, 7] Hence it is said in the eleventh psalm, Save me, Lord, for the godly man hath ceased. [Ps. 12, 1] Hence Peter, being afraid of the Apostles continu-

ing in the number eleven, sought, by casting lots, for Matthias as the twelfth. [Acts 1, 15-26] For unless he observed that fault was signified by the number eleven, he would not be so hastily anxious for the number of the Apostles to be completed to that of twelve. Because therefore transgression is expressed by the number eleven, the author of transgression himself is indicated by the eleventh horn of this beast. Which springs up of small size in truth, because he is born a mere man;

but it increases hugely, because he advances even to the power of angelic strength united to himself. And it plucks up the three horns, which are before its face, because he subjects to his power the same number of kingdoms which are near him. And its eyes are like the eyes of a man, but its mouth speaketh great things, because there is seen in him the form indeed of a man, but in his words he is exalted above men. That then which is said by Paul, Exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, [2 Thess. 2, 1] this the Prophet Daniel witnesses, saying, A mouth speaking great things. [Dan. 7, 8] But Daniel's declaring that he speaks great things, or Paul that he is exalted above the worship of the Godhead, is the very thing which in the words of God to blessed Job is compared to a cedar. For, like a cedar, he strives after high things, when, in all the pride of deceit, he prospers both in strength of might, and in height of elevation. But he is well said to set fast his tail, because his whole power is brought together and condensed in that one ruined man, in order that he may the more perform mighty and marvellous things through him, the more he urges him on by his collected strength. But since we have heard of what kind is the head of the wicked, let us now learn what members cleave to this head. It follows;

The sinews of his stones are wrapped together. [xvi]

28. This Behemoth has as many 'stones,' as he possesses preachers of his iniquity. Are not they who corrupt the hearts of men with evil persuasions, by pouring in the poisonous seeds of their error, his stones? But it is fitly said, that the sinews of his stones are wrapped together, because, namely, the arguments of his preachers are bound together with cunning assertions, as to pretend to be right, which persuade perverse things, so that though the entanglement of their assertions can be seen, like the wrapping together of sinews, yet it cannot be unravelled. His 'stones' have their 'sinews wrapped together,' because the acuteness of his preachers is concealed beneath ambiguous assertions. But generally when they infect hearts with their words, they display innocency in their conduct. For they would not attract the good to them by their persuasion, if they were to exhibit themselves as perverse in their conduct also. But because they are the stones of this beast, and are bound by sinews wrapped together, they both display themselves as upright in order to escape notice, and preach perverse things in order to corrupt, imitating, doubtless, their head, who, as a lion in ambush, both rages by the power of earthly dignity, and flatters by a show of sanctity. But would that this beast were acting thus then only, and that he had not now also these testicles of lust to corrupt the inner parts of the faithful.

For not only is that which is evil infused with the speaking of the mouth, but that which is worse is held by more in the example of conduct. For how many have not beheld Antichrist,

and yet are his testicles: because they corrupt the hearts of the innocent by the example of their doings! For whoever is exalted with pride, whoever is tortured by the longings of covetousness, whoever is relaxed with the pleasures of lust, whoever is kindled by the burnings of unjust and immoderate anger, what else is he but a testicle of Antichrist? For while he willingly engages himself in his service, he furnishes by his example the progeny of error to others. The one works wickedly, the other cleaves to those who work wickedly; and so far from opposing, even favours them. What else then but a testicle of Antichrist is he, who having cast aside the authority of the faith he has pledged to God, witnesses in favour of error? But if any reprove these persons, they presently conceal themselves under some cloke of defence; for since their sinews are wrapped together, and entangled for evil, they cannot be released from corruption. It follows;

Ver. 13. His bones are as pipes of brass. [E.V. 18] [xvii] 29. In the body they are bones which hold the members together, and members which are held together. This beast then has flesh, it has bones also; because there are some wicked persons, who are yet retained in error by others, and others still more wicked who retain others also in error. What else then do we understand by the bones of Antichrist, but some more powerful persons in his body? in whose hearts while iniquity has become greatly hardened, the whole framework of his body is held together by them. For there appear to be many rich in this world, who while relying on their possessions and wealth, are consolidated, as it were, by strength, but by lavishing these goods by which they were supported, they lead others into their own error. At one time they allure others by their gifts to become wicked, at another they bind others by their presents to continue in wickedness. What then are these but bones of Antichrist, who while they multiply the wicked by keeping them together, support the flesh in his body? These sometimes exhibit a sweetness of speech in deceiving their hearers, because even thorns produce flowers, and that in them which smells sweetly is seen, that which wounds is hid. They blend the sweet with the bitter, the soothing with the hurtful, and though they strive to be admired, by reason of their power, yet through their skill in deceiving, they abase themselves, as if humbly, by their easy address, and by their speech insinuate that of themselves, which they deny by their outward conduct.

30. Whence also the 'bones' of this Behemoth are rightly compared to pipes of brass, because doubtless like insensible metal, they have the sound of right speech, but not the sense of right living. For they assert, as if humbly, that in words, which they set at nought by living haughtily. Whence it is well said by Paul; Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charily, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. [l Cor. 13, 1] For he who speaks good things, but pursues not the same good things through love, utters a sound like brass or a cymbal; because he himself feels not the words which he utters. But there are some in the body of this beast, not illustrious from honours, not supported by riches, not adorned with the beauty of virtues, not skilled in the science of cunning, who yet aim at appearing such as they are not, and who are therefore more hurtful to the life of the righteous. Of whom it also follows,

His cartilage as plates of iron. [xviii] 31. For cartilage has indeed the appearance of bone, but has not the strength of bone. What is meant then by his cartilage being compared to plates of iron, except that those in him who are most feeble, are more evilly disposed for the perpetration of wickedness? For other metals are cut by iron, and his cartilage is said to be like iron, because those in his body who are unequal to the display of mighty powers, are the more violently inflamed to cause the death of the faithful. For because they consider that they cannot with him work signs and prodigies, they prove themselves faithful to him by their cruelty, and instead of being able to corrupt by their persuasion the hearts of the innocent, they glory in destroying the bodies of the good manifoldly more than others. It is therefore well said; His cartilage is as plates of iron; because that which any one would believe to be the weaker part of his body, is the very thing which wounds the more fatally. And they are rightly compared not to iron only, but to 'plates of iron,' because while they go about to spread themselves out on every side in cruelty, they extend themselves, as it were, into plates of iron.

32. It seems good to us to examine with a stricter hand of enquiry these same words of the Creator, which seem already discussed, and to gather more abundant fruits of understanding for moral instruction. For since we have heard what the ancient enemy effects against men, by the man he has assumed, it remains for us now to examine what he works in men even by himself, without the aid of men. For behold it is said, Ver. 12. He setteth fast his tail, like a cedar. [E.V. 17] [xix] [MORAL INTERPRETATION]

33. The first suggestion of the serpent is soft indeed, and tender, and easily to be crushed by the foot of virtue. But if it is carelessly allowed to gain strength, and access is freely allowed it to the heart, it increases itself with such great power, as to weigh down the enslaved mind, and to increase to intolerable strength. He is said therefore to set fast his tail like a cedar, because his temptation when once received in the heart, in all subsequent assaults, rules as if by right. The head of this Behemoth therefore is grass, his tail a cedar, he fawns and humbles himself at this first suggestion, but gaining great strength by habit, he is hardened in the increasing close of temptation. For every thing which he suggests at first is easily overcome; but thence there follows, that which can hardly be overcome. For he first addresses the mind in gentle terms, as if advising it: but when he has once fastened on it the fang of pleasure, he is afterwards bound to it almost indissolubly, by powerful habit. Whence also he is well said to 'set fast his tail.' For he wounds with his tooth, but binds with his tail; because he strikes with the first suggestion, but binds the mind, once struck, with the increasing close of temptation, that it cannot escape. For since sin is admitted in three ways, namely, when it is perpetrated by the suggestion of the serpent, with the pleasure of the flesh, with the consent of the spirit;

this Behemoth first puts forth his tongue, suggesting unlawful thoughts, afterwards alluring to delight, he infixes his tooth; but lastly, gaining possession by consent, he clenches his tail. Hence it is that some persons blame in themselves sins which have been committed through long habit, and avoid them in judgment, but cannot even though contending

against them avoid them in act; because when they do not crush the head of this Behemoth, they are frequently, even against their will, bound by his tail. And this has become as hard as a cedar against them, because it has grown up from the alluring pleasure of its beginning even to the violence of retention. Let it be said then; He clencheth his tail like a cedar; in order that every one should the more avoid the beginnings of temptation, the more he understands that it cannot be easily escaped from at the last.

34. It should be known also, that to those whom he has seized, he commonly suggests more grievous sins, when he knows that they are drawing near the close of this present life: and that the more he considers that he is about to consummate the temptation, the more heavy burdens of iniquities does he heap upon them. Behemoth, therefore, clenches his tail like a cedar, because those whom he has seized by evil beginnings, he makes worse at the end; in order that the sooner his temptations are to cease, the more mightily they may be fulfilled. For since he is busied to make their suffering equal to his own punishment, the more ardently does he strive to exaggerate every sin, before their death. But frequently this Behemoth possesses a heart already fatally subject to him, but yet Divine grace repels him; and the gift of mercy ejects him whom the captive will brought in to itself. And when he is expelled from a heart, he strives to inflict sharper wounds of sin, in order that the mind may feel, when assaulted by him, those waves of temptations, which it knew not even when possessed by him. Which is well expressed in the Gospel, when the unclean spirit is said at the Lord's bidding to go forth from a man. For when the boy, which was possessed by the spirit, was presented to Him, it is written;

Jesus rebuked the foul spirit, saying, Thou deaf and dumb spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And it cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him. [Mark 9, 25. 26. Behold, it had not rent him, when it possessed him, it rent him when it came out; because he doubtless then harasses the thoughts of the mind more fearfully, when, compelled by Divine power, he draws near his departure. And him whom he had possessed as a dumb spirit, he was leaving with cries: because frequently, when in possession, he inflicts smaller temptations; but when he is expelling from the heart, he disturbs it with sharper assaults. It is therefore well said, He clencheth his tail like a cedar, both because when possessing a heart, he always increases in malice at the end; and when leaving a heart, he smites it with severer wounds of thoughts. But, through the wonderful compassion of the Creator, the more subtle arguments of this Behemoth are also laid open, when it is subjoined;

The sinews of his stones are wrapped together. [xx] 35. The sinews of his stones are the deadly arguments of his machinations. For by these he rouses the strength of his cunning, and corrupts the unstable hearts of men. His stones are wicked suggestions, with which he rages in the corruption of the mind, and begets in the debauched soul the progeny of wicked works. But the sinews of these stones are wrapped together, because the arguments of his suggestions are bound together by complicated devices; so as to make many sin in such a way, that, if they wish perchance to escape a sin, they cannot escape it without

being entangled in another sin; and that they commit a fault in avoiding it, and that they are unable to release themselves from one, unless they consent to be bound by another. A point which we make clearer, by bringing forward some instances of this ensnaring from the common doings of men. But because Holy Church consists of three orders, namely, the married, the continent, and rulers, (whence both Ezekiel saw three men set free, namely, Noah, Daniel, and Job, [Ez. 14, 14] and the Lord in the Gospel, by saying that there were some in the field, some in the bed, and some in the mill, [Luke 17, 34-36] doubtless points out three orders in the Church,) it is plainly sufficient for us to select an instance out of each class.

36. For, behold, one man, while seeking the friendships of the world, binds himself by an oath to another, leading a similar life, to conceal his secrets with perfect silence; but he, to whom the oath has been sworn, is discovered to be guilty of adultery, so as even to endeavour to kill the husband of the adulteress. But he who has taken the oath, turns back to his own mind, and is assailed by different thoughts on one side and the other, and is afraid of being silent in this matter, lest by silence he should be an accomplice in adultery and homicide at the same time; and is afraid to disclose it, lest he should involve himself in the guilt of perjury. He is bound therefore by the sinews of stones wrapped together, because to whichever side he inclines, he is afraid of not being free from the taint of transgression.

37. Another, forsaking all worldly things, and seeking in all things to crush his own will, wishes to submit himself to the authority of another. But he does not carefully enquire into and discern the character of him who is to rule over him in the Lord. And when he, perhaps, who is injudiciously selected, has begun to rule over him, he forbids the things of God to be done, and enjoins the things of the world. The person under him considering, therefore, either what is the sin of disobedience, or what is the pollution of secular life, both trembles to obey, and fears to disobey; lest by obeying he should forsake God in His commands, or again by disobeying should despise God in the superior he has chosen; and lest by obeying unlawful commands, He should exercise against God that which he chooses for God's sake; or again, by disobeying, should postpone to his own judgment him whom he had sought for as his own judge. He is, therefore, through the fault of his indiscretion, bound by the sinews of stones wrapped together, because either by obeying, or certainly by disobeying, he is bound with the sin of transgression. He was studying to break down his own will, and he takes care even to strengthen it by despising his superior. He resolved entirely to abandon the world, and he is compelled to return to the cares of the world even through the will of another. The sinews, therefore, are wrapped together, when the arguments of the enemy so bind us, that the knots of sins hold the firmer, the more they are sought to be disentangled.

38. Another, neglecting to think of the weight of ecclesiastical distinction, ascends by bribes to a place of rule. But because every eminent position in this world is more affected by griefs, than delighted by its honours, when the heart is weighed down by tribulations, its fault is recalled to its memory: and a man laments that he has attained to a laborious post by wrong means, and he learns how wrong is his conduct, by being crushed by the very difficulty.

Acknowledging, therefore, that he is guilty with the bribes he has expended, he wishes to abandon the lofty position he has gained: but he is afraid it should be a more grievous sin to have resigned the charge of the flock he had undertaken. He wishes to take care of the flock committed to him, but he is afraid it should be a greater fault to hold the authority of pastoral grace which he purchased. He perceives therefore that, through seeking for distinction, he is hampered by sin on every side. For he sees that neither course is without the imputation of guilt, if either the flock he has once taken charge of be abandoned, or again if a sacred office be retained, when purchased in a secular way.

He is afraid in every direction, and is suspiciously fearful on every side, either lest remaining in his purchased office he should not properly bewail his not correcting his fault by even abandoning it, or certainly, lest, while endeavouring to lament one fault, by resigning his authority, he should again commit another, by this very forsaking of his flock. Because, therefore, this Behemoth binds with such entangled knots, that a mind, when brought into doubt, binds itself firmer in sin by the very means it attempts to free itself from sin, it is rightly said; The sinews of his stones are wrapped together. For the more the arguments of his machinations are loosened, as if to release us, the more are they entwined to hold us fast.

39. There is, however, a plan which may be usefully adopted to overthrow his craft, namely, that when the mind is held in bondage between less and greater sins, if no outlet for escape is open without sin, the less evils should always be preferred: because even he who is shut in by a circuit of walls on every side, lest he escape, there throws himself down in flight, where the wall is found lowest. And Paul when he observed certain incontinent persons in the Church, conceded the smallest faults, in order that they might avoid greater, saying, On account of fornication, let every man have his own wife. [1 Cor. 7, 2] And because married people are then only without sin in their connection, when they come together, not for the gratification of lust, but for the begetting of children, in order to shew that this which he had conceded was not without sin, though of least degree, he immediately added, But I speak this by indulgence, not by commandment. [ib. 6] For that which is pardoned, and is not commanded, is not without fault He surely saw that to be a sin, which he foresaw he was able to concede [al. 'could be excused.']. But when we are constrained by doubts, we profitably yield to the least, for fear of sinning unpardonably in great, faults. The entanglement of the sinews of this Behemoth is therefore frequently unravelled, when we pass to the greatest virtues through the commission of smaller faults. It follows,

Ver. 19. His bones are as pipes of brass. [E.V. 18] [xxi]

40. What are designated by the 'bones' of this Behemoth, except his counsels? For as the uprightness ['positio'] and strength of the body subsist in the bones, so does his whole malice exalt itself in crafty designs. For he does not oppress any one by force, but he destroys him by the craftiness of his deadly persuasion. And again, as the marrow strengthens the bones which it moistens, so also does the subtlety of his genius, infused by the power of a spiritual nature, strengthen his designs. But in this his 'testicles' differ from his 'bones,' that is, his

suggestions from his designs, that by the former he openly inserts what is noxious, but by the latter, when counselling as if for good he leads into sin; by the former he overcomes in fight, but by the latter he supplants by advising. Whence also his 'bones,' that is, these very designs, are well compared to pipes of brass. For pipes of brass are usually adapted to sonorous tunes, and when on being applied to the ears they delicately utter a soothing strain, they attract the mind within to outward delights; and when the sound is sweet which they utter to the cars, they weaken the manliness of the heart with the flow of pleasure. And when the hearing is drawn on to delight, the understanding is relaxed from the firmness of its strength.

So also when his crafty designs counsel, as it were, with gentle forethought, they withdraw the heart from its resolute intention, and when they utter sweet sounds, they dispose to hurtful things. They are like pipes of brass then, which when heard with pleasure plunge the mind from its inward resolution into the pleasure of outward life. For it is this, which this Behemoth specially labours at in prosecuting his deception, to be able to utter sweetly what he says, when he puts forth his scheme of wickedness as if for our good, in order that he may beguile the mind by putting forward its usefulness, and corrupt it by concealing its iniquity.

41. And we make this plainer in every respect, by briefly laying open a few of the arguments of his counsels. For behold, a person, content with his own possessions, has resolved not to be entangled with any of this world's occupations, being greatly afraid of losing the advantages of his ease, and utterly disdaining to accumulate wealth with sin. The crafty enemy in approaching him, in order to undermine his intention of sincere devotion, secretly offers a suggestion as if for his benefit, saying, Those things which thou hast are sufficient at present, but what dost thou intend to do when these fail? For if nothing is provided after these, thou hast what must be expended at once on thy children, but yet goods must be acquired to be laid up in store. Even what thou hast can soon fail, if anxious forethought ceases to provide what is wanting. Cannot worldly business be discharged, and yet sin be avoided in the doing it, in order that it may both furnish outward means, and yet not pervert inward rectitude? He insinuates these thoughts, and flatters the while; and is already secretly concealing the snares of sin in the worldly business, which he provides. His bones are therefore like pipes of brass, because his pernicious suggestions flatter their hearer with the sweetness of a voice which is giving them counsel.

42. Another also has resolved not merely not to seek for worldly advantages, but even to resign all that he possesses, in order to exercise himself the more freely in the discipline of heavenly training, the more he has disburdened himself, and abandons and tramples under foot the things which could weigh down their possessor. The lurking enemy addresses his heart with secret suggestion, saying, Whence has arisen the boldness of such great temerity, as for thee to dare to believe that thou canst subsist, by resigning every thing? Thy Creator formed thee in one way, and thou disposest of thyself in another: He would make thee more strong and robust, if He had wished thee to follow His footsteps with the neediness of

want. Do not most men never give up their earthly patrimonies, and yet purchase by these, through works of compassion, the eternal goods of a heavenly inheritance? He suggests these things with flattery; but secretly in his deceit annexes deadly pleasures to the very things he advises him to retain, before the eyes of him who retains them, in order that he may attract the deluded heart to outward pleasures, and may draw aside its secret vows of perfection. His bones, therefore, are like pipes of brass, because when his crafty designs utter outwardly a soothing sound, they inflict deadly destruction within.

43. Another having given up all his outward possessions, prepares also to crush his inmost wishes, in order that, by submitting himself to the sounder judgment of another, he may renounce not merely his evil desires, but, (to add to his perfection,) himself also even in good resolves, and may observe all his duties at the will of another. The crafty enemy addresses him the more gently, the more ardently he endeavours to push him down from his loftier position, and presently, fawning on him with deadly suggestions, he says, O what great marvels thou wilt be able to perform by thyself, if thou dost not submit thyself in any way to the judgment of another. Why dost thou check thy progress, from a desire for improvement? Why dost thou crush the goodness of thy intention, when thou endeavourest to extend it further than is necessary? For what wickednesses didst thou perpetrate, when exercising thy own will? Why then dost thou require the judgment of another over thee, since thou wilt be of thyself fully sufficient for holy living? He suggests these things in a flattering tone, but he secretly prepares, in the indulgence of his own will, causes for the exercise of pride, and, while he praises his heart for its inward rectitude, he craftily seeks out where to undermine it with sin. His bones are, therefore, like pipes of brass, because his clandestine designs, by the very means with which they flatter, as it were, and delight the mind, fatally divert it from its right intention.

44. Another, having entirely subdued his will, has already corrected many sins of the old man, both by change of life, and by the lamentation of penitence; and is inflamed with greater zeal against the sins of others, the more he is entirely dead to himself, and is not held captive by his own iniquities. The crafty enemy, observing that by his zeal for righteousness he is benefiting others besides himself, attacks him with words which advise him as if for his advantage, saying, Why dost thou extend thyself to attend to others' concerns? Would thou mayest have strength to consider thine own! Dost thou not consider, that when thou art stretched forth to the concerns of others, thou art found unequal to attend to thine own? And of what use is it to wipe off the blood of another's wound, and by neglect to extend the corruption of thine own? While he speaks thus, as if giving advice, he takes away the zeal of charity, and destroys, with the sword of secretly instilled sloth, all the good which could result from charity. For if we are commanded to love our neighbours as ourselves, it is right for us to be kindled against sin, with zeal for them, as for ourselves. Because then he estranges the mind from its own resolution, while he pleasingly offers advice, it is rightly said, His bones are as pipes of brass. For when by his crafty designs he utters a pleasing sound to the mind of the hearer, he sings, as it were, with a pipe of brass, so as to deceive by means of his allurements. But this Behemoth engages much more gently in the contest,

when, under the cloke of infirmity, he exercises himself in ambush. But he then arouses harder temptations, when he conceals the sources of iniquity, before the eyes of him who is tempted, under the semblance of virtue. Whence it is also rightly subjoined,

His cartilage as plates of iron. [xxii]

45. For what but his simulation is understood by cartilage? For cartilage presents the appearance of bone, but it has not the strength of bone. And there are some vices which present an appearance of rectitude, but which proceed from the weakness of sin. For the malice of our enemy clokes itself with such art, as frequently to make faults appear as virtues before the eyes of the deluded mind; so that a person expects, as it were, rewards, for the very conduct for which he deserves to meet with eternal punishments. For cruelty is frequently exercised in punishing sins, and it is counted justice; and immoderate anger is believed to be the meritoriousness ['meritum'] of righteous zeal; and when sinners ought to be carefully made straight from their crooked habits, they are snapped by being violently bent. Frequently negligent remissness is regarded as gentleness and forbearance, and while delinquents are spared temporally more than is proper, they are cruelly reserved to eternal punishments. Lavishness is sometimes believed to be compassion, and though it is a fault to be over saving, there is no fear of that which has been given being more wickedly lavished. Tenacity is sometimes considered frugality, and since it is a grievous fault not to give, it is considered a virtue to retain what has been received. The pertinacity of the wicked is often termed constancy, and when a mind does not submit to be turned from its wickedness, it glories as if in defending what is right.

Inconstancy is often regarded as tractability, and because a person does not keep his word to any one, he considers himself on that account a friend to all men. Sometimes incompetent fear is believed to be humility, and when any one, oppressed by temporal fear, shrinks in silence from the defence of the truth, he thinks, that, according to the order of God, he demeans himself humbly to his superiors. Sometimes haughtiness of voice is counted freedom for the truth; and when through pride the truth is spoken against, forwardness in speaking is thought a defence of the truth. Sloth is frequently looked upon as a maintenance of peace, and though it is a grievous fault not to be zealous in doing what is right, it is believed to be a most meritorious virtue, merely to abstain from evil conduct. Restlessness of spirit is frequently termed a watchful solicitude, and when a person cannot endure rest, he thinks that he performs an exercise of virtue which is due from him, by doing what he likes. Incautious precipitation in things which must be done, is believed to be the warmth of praiseworthy zeal, and though a desired advantage is marred by unseasonable acting, it is considered that the quicker a thing is done, the better. Slowness in promoting goodness, is counted judgment, and when progress is expected to le made by reconsideration, delay lurks in ambush and disappoints it.

When a fault then appears like virtue, we must needs consider that the mind abandons its fault the more slowly, in proportion as it does not blush at what it is doing; and that the mind abandons its fault the more slowly, in proportion as, having been deceived by the

semblance of virtue, it seeks therefrom the recompense of rewards. But a fault is easily corrected, which is also blushed at; because it is felt to be a fault. Since, therefore, error is corrected with more difficulty, when it is believed to be a virtue, it is rightly said, His cartilage as plates of iron. For the more craftily this Behemoth exhibits his cunning under the cloke of virtue, the more firmly does he enthral the mind in sin.

46. Hence it is that sometimes those who seek after the way of holiness, when they have fallen into error, are improved but slowly. For they consider what they do to be right, and devote their perseverance to the practice of vice, as they do to the cultivation of virtue. They consider what they do to be right, and therefore promote the more earnestly their own judgment. Accordingly when Jeremiah said, Her Nazarites were whiter than snow, purer than milk, more ruddy than old ivory, more beautiful than the sapphire: their visage is made blacker than coals; and they are not known in the streets; he rightly added immediately, Their skin cleared to their bones, it is withered, and has become as a stick. [Lam. 4, 7. 8. For what is signified by the word 'Nazarites' but the life of the abstinent, and continent, which is said to be whiter than snow and milk? For snow is congealed from water, coming as it does from above; but milk is squeezed from flesh which is nourished by things below. What then is pointed out by 'snow' but the brightness of the heavenly life, and what by 'milk' but the ordering of the temporal stewardship? And because continent men in the Church frequently perform such wonderful works, that many who have maintained a heavenly life, many who have dispensed aright the things of earth, seem to be surpassed by them, they are said to be both whiter than snow, and purer than milk.

And since they sometimes appear by the fervour of their spirit to surpass the conduct of the ancient and mighty fathers, it is rightly subjoined, More ruddy than old ivory. For where the word 'ruddiness' is used, the flame of holy desire is signified. But we are not ignorant that ivory is the tusk of great animals. They are therefore more ruddy than old ivory, because they frequently appear before human eyes as of more fervent zeal than some of the preceding fathers. Of whom it is added, that the whole may be set forth at once; More beautiful than the sapphire. For the sapphire is of the colour of the heaven. And because they surpass many who precede them, and who are aiming at things above by a heavenly conversation, they are said to have been more beautiful than the sapphire. But when the abundance of virtues increases more than is expedient, the mind is frequently led to a kind of self-confidence, and, deceived by presuming on itself, is suddenly darkened by sin stealing it away. Whence it is rightly subjoined; Their visage is made blacker than coals. For they become black after whiteness, because having lost the righteousness of God, when they presume about themselves, they fall soon even into those sins which they understand not; and because, after the fire of love, they come to the chill of numbness, they are, in comparison, preferred to extinguished coals. For sometimes when they lose the fear of God through self-confidence, they become even colder than cold minds.

Of whom it is rightly subjoined; They are not known in the streets. For a street (platea), according to the Greek tongue, is put for breadth [platea from platuV.]. But what is straiter

for the mind of man, than for it to crush its own will? Of which crushing the Truth says; Enter ye in at the strait gate. [Matt. 7, 13] But what is broader than not to struggle against any of our wills, and to spread one's self forth without restraint, wherever the impulse of choice may have led? They, therefore, who through confidence in their holiness follow themselves, and put aside the opinion of their betters, proceed as it were along the broad streets ['plateas.']. But they are not known in the streets, because they had made their life appear different, when by crushing their own wills they used to keep themselves in the narrow path. And it is well added; Their skin cleaved to their bones. What is expressed by 'bone,' but the hardness of strength; what by 'skin,' but the softness of infirmity? Their skin is said, therefore, to cleave to their bones, because through their depraved judgment the infirmity of vice is considered by them the hardness of virtue. For their doings are weak, but from being deceived by the confidence of pride, they connect them with notions of strength, and because they think highly of themselves, they scorn to be reformed of their wickedness. Whence it is also rightly added; It hath grown dry, and is become as a stick.

For their fault is rendered the less perceptible, the more it is considered by them to be even deserving of praise. And He rightly declares that it is 'dry,' because it never grows green by self-reflection. That then which by Jeremiah is called 'skin' by reason of its weakness, is called 'cartilage' by blessed Job by reason of its frailness; and that which there is termed 'bones' from its hardness, is here said to be 'plates of iron.' But let us hear of what nature, and what origin ['conditionis'] is this Behemoth, who by his members exerts himself against the Elect of God with such skill in iniquity at the last time, and who also in his own person displays himself with such great craftiness of stratagems. For he would not be able to work such wonders even in working wickedness, if he did not exist from some mighty origin. Whence also the Lord, as if accounting for such great cunning, and such mighty strength, added with great consideration, saying,

Ver. 14. He is the chief of the ways of God. [E.V. 19] [xxiii]

47. As if He were plainly saying, He has strength sufficient for so many purposes, because in the nature of things the Creator made him first, when creating him in his substance. For what do we understand by the 'ways' of God, but His doings? Of which He says by the Prophet; For My ways are not as your ways. [Is. 55, 8] And Behemoth is said to be the chief of the ways of God, because doubtless when He was performing all the work of creation, He created him first, whom He made more eminent than the other Angels. The Prophet is looking at the eminence of this superiority ['primatus.'], when he says, The cedars in the paradise of God were not higher, the fir trees equalled not his summit, the plane trees were not equal to his branches, nor any tree in the paradise of God was like him and his beauty, since He made him beautiful with his many and thick branches. [Ez. 31, 8. 9. For who can be understood by cedars, fir trees, and planes, unless those bands of heavenly virtues of lofty height, planted in the verdure of eternal joy? But these, though created lofty, were yet neither preferred nor equalled to him. And he is said to have been made beautiful with his

many and thick branches, because when set above the other legions, a comeliness, as great as the subject multitude of Angels which adorned him, rendered him the more beautiful.

This tree in the paradise of God had, as it were, as many crowded branches, as were the legions of heavenly spirits, it beheld placed beneath it. And therefore, when sinning, he was condemned without pardon, because he had been created great beyond comparison. Hence it is again said to him by the same Prophet, Thou wast a seal of the likeness of God, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty in the delights of the paradise of God. [Ez. 28, 12. 13. For having many things to say of his greatness, he comprehended all in the first word. For what good had he not, if he was the seal of the similitude of God? For from the seal of a ring such a likeness is impressed in image, as exists in essence in the seal itself. And though man was created after the likeness of God, yet as if ascribing something greater to an Angel, he says not that he was made after the likeness of God, but that he was the very seal of the likeness of God; in order that, as he is more subtle in nature, the likeness of God may be believed to have been more fully impressed on him.

48. Hence it is that the same Prophet, still speaking of the power of his superiority, subjoins; Every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, and topaz, and jasper, the chrysolite, the onyx, and the beryl, the sapphire, the carbuncle, and the emerald. [Ez. 28, 13] He mentioned nine kinds of stones, doubtless because there are nine; orders of angels. For when in the very words of Scripture, Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, Virtues, Princedoms, Powers, Cherubim, and Seraphim, are plainly spoken of and mentioned, it is shewn how great are the distinctions of the citizens of heaven. And yet this Behemoth is described as being covered by them, because he had those as a vesture for his adornment, by comparison with whom he was more brilliant, when he transcended their brightness. Of whose description he further adds in that passage, Gold the work of thy beauty, and thy holes [read 'foramina.'] were prepared in the day that thou wast created. [Ez. 28, 13] Gold existed as the work of his beauty, because he shone forth with the brightness of the wisdom, which he received when created aright. But holes are made in stones in order that when bound together by gold, they may be united in the composition of an ornament, and that they may not be separated from each other, which the gold binds together by being poured between and filling the holes. The holes of this stone were prepared then in the day of its creation, because, namely, he was created capable of love.

And had he wished to be filled therewith, he would have been able to cling firm to the Angels who stand, as to stones placed in the ornament of a king. For had he given himself up to be penetrated by the gold of charity, when associated with the holy Angels, he would still be remaining, as we said, a stone firmly fixed in the ornament of a king. This stone then had holes, but, through the sin of pride, they were not filled with the gold of charity. For since they are fastened with gold, so as not to fall, he therefore fell, because, even though perforated with the hand of the artificer, he scorned to be bound with the bands of love. But now, the other stones, which had been perforated similarly with him, were bound together by charity mutually penetrating them, and obtained, on his fall, this, as a gift, that they

should now be never loosened by falling from the ornament of the King. The same Prophet, still gazing on the loftiness of his superiority ['principatus.'], subjoins, Thou, the outspread and covering Cherub in the holy mountain of God, hast walked perfect in the midst of the stones of fire. [Ez. 28, 14] For Cherub is interpreted, 'Plenitude of knowledge,' and he is therefore called a Cherub, because he is not doubted to have surpassed all in his knowledge.

And he walked in perfection in the midst of the stones of fire, because he dwelt amid the hearts of Angels, which were kindled with the fire of love, bright with the glory of his creation. And he rightly speaks of him as outspread and covering. For we overshadow every thing which we protect when stretched out. And because he is believed to have overshadowed the brightness of the others, through comparison with his brightness, he is said to have been himself outspread and covering. For he who transcends the greatness of others by his great excellence, has covered them, as it were, by overshadowing. That then which is said in one place to be beautiful with branches, in another a seal of similitude, in another a Cherub, and in another covering, is in this place declared by the voice of the Lord to be this Behemoth, the chief of the ways of God.

49. But He mentions these wondrous things of him, in what he had, and in what he lost, expressly to shew to awestruck man, what, if guilty himself of pride, he is likely to suffer from the sin of his haughtiness; if He would not abstain from smiting him, whom He exalted at his creation to the glory of such great brightness. Let man then consider what he deserves for his pride on earth, if even an Angel, placed above other Angels, is cast down in heaven. Whence it is also well said by the Prophet, My sword is made drunk in heaven. [Is. 34, 5] As if He were plainly saying, Consider with what wrath I shall smite the haughty of the earth, if I have not forborne to smite for the sin of pride, those even, whom I have created next to Myself in heaven. Having heard then these many powers of the ancient enemy, having known the greatness of the state in which he was made; who would not fall down with unbounded fear, who would not sink under the blow of desperation? But because the display of our enemy's power keeps down our pride, the Lord comforts our infirmity also by disclosing the dispensation of His grace. Hence when calling him 'the chief of His ways,' He immediately added;

He that made him, hath bended up his sword. [xxiv]

50. For the 'sword' of this Behemoth is his malice in doing hurt. But his sword is bended by Him, by Whom he was created naturally good. Because his malice is so restrained by Divine dispensation, as not to be permitted to strike the minds of men, as much as he wishes. Because, therefore, our enemy both has great power, and strikes a less blow, the kindness of our Creator restrains his sword, so that it is bent back, and lies hid in his own conscience, and that his malice does not extend itself further for the death of men, than it is righteously ordered from above. The great strength therefore which he has for many things, he possesses from the original ['principio'] of his mighty creation; but so far as he is defeated by some, his sword is doubtless bent back by his Creator. For when this Behemoth, who is the chief of the ways of God, received permission to practise temptation against the

holy man, he roused the nations, he took away the flocks, he cast down fire from heaven, he agitated the air and roused the winds, he shook and overthrew the house, he killed his sons, when feasting together, [Job 1, 19] he employed the mind of the wife in the craft of evil persuasion, he pierced the flesh of the husband with the wounds he inflicted. [ib. 2, 9. 10. But his sword is bent back by his Creator, when it is said, Save his life. [ib. 6.

And how great is his weakness, when his sword has been bent back, is described by the witness of the Evangelist, that he was not able to continue in the man he had possessed, and again that he presumed not, unbidden, to assail the brute animals, saying, If Thou cast us out, send us into the herd of swine. [Matt. 8, 31] For it is shewn how much his sword of malice is bent back, since he would not be able to assail even the herd of swine, unless the supreme Power gave him permission. When then can he venture of his own accord to injure men who are made after the likeness of God, of whom is it doubtless quite plain, that he cannot presume to touch the swine, without permission? ['non jussus.']

51. We must observe also, that when Behemoth is called the chief ['principium'] of the ways of God, the insane doctrine of Arius is overthrown by plain reason. For he confesses that the Son of God is a creature, and behold Behemoth is set forth as the first created in the creation of things. It remains therefore for Arius either to assert that the Son is not made, or to believe in his folly that he was created after Behemoth. But since every thing which is folded ['applicatur.'] is turned back on itself, Behemoth is rightly said to be a sword bent back. For his malice is steeped in itself, when, on being forbidden, it does not exert itself according to its wish, against the life of the Elect. But it is permitted to strike many, as their merits deserve, in order that when they forsake God they may serve His cursed enemy. But he is defeated the more powerfully by the Elect, the more they bow themselves with greater humility before the sole Author of all things. Since therefore from being called the chief of the ways of God, from being proved to be very insupportable, when the Lord permits it, we know plainly with how strong an enemy we are fighting; it remains therefore for each of us, to subject himself more entirely to his Maker, the more truly he considers the mighty power of his adversary against him. For what are we but dust?

But what is he, but one of the heavenly spirits, and what is still greater, their chief? What then can he venture on his own strength, when he contends, though dust, against the chief of angels? But because the Creator of heavenly spirits has assumed an earthly body, lowly dust now rightly overcomes the haughty angel. For by adhering to True Strength he gains powers, which the apostate spirit lost by following himself. And it is meet for him, who believed that he was strong, when he had forsaken his Creator, to be conquered by dust, in order that he may learn on defeat, that he has failed through pride. But he pants with furious rage, because when sufferings torture him below, man ascends to the highest happiness; because flesh is exalted to, and abides in, that loftiness, from which he, that great spirit, lies cast forth for ever. But their relative deserts changed the positions of their minds. Thus, thus did pride deserve to be cast down, thus humility to be exalted, so as that a heavenly spirit

might endure hell, by exalting himself, and earth, through humility, reign for ever above the heavens.

Book XXXIII

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF ST. GREGORY THE POPE, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB.

VOLUME III - THE SIXTH PART. — BOOK XXXIII.

Sets forth an exposition of the fifteenth, and remaining verses of the fortieth chapter, and also of the first twelve verses of the forty-first chapter: where the various arts of the devil are exposed, and predestination of free grace is taught, and reconciled with free will. 1. The proud become the more familiarly devoted to the ancient enemy, who is described by the voice of the Lord, under the name Behemoth, the higher they swell with pride within, at the successes of this life. For their pride increases with their distinction, but with their pride is added care; the mind is distracted hither and thither, because their desires also increase together with their possessions. And when they bring forth thoughts without number as the hay of the field, they feed the hunger of this Behemoth with these thoughts, as if with food which he longed for. Whence it is now rightly said;

Ver. 15. The mountains bring him forth grass. [E.V. 20] [i]

2. In Holy Scripture, when 'mountain' is put in the singular number, there is designated sometimes the Incarnate Lord, sometimes Holy Church, sometimes the covenant of God, sometimes the apostate angel, sometimes any particular heretic. But when 'mountains' are named in the plural number, there is expressed sometimes the high estate of Apostles and Prophets, but sometimes the pride of worldly powers. For a mountain designates the Lord, as it is written, And in the last days the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains. [Is. 2, 2] For the mountain on the top of the mountains is the Incarnate Lord, transcending the loftiness of Prophets. Again, by a mountain is designated Holy Church, as it is written, They that trust in the Lord are as mount Sion. [Ps. 125, 1] For Sion means looking out, and by this looking out is typified the Church contemplating God. Again, by a mountain is expressed the covenant of God, as Habakkuk says, God will come from Libanus, and the Holy One from the shady and thick mountain. [Hab. 3, 3] For He Who by the pages of His covenant has promised that He will come, came, as it were, from that by which He held Himself, as it were, under a promise. And this covenant is well said to be a shady and thick mountain, because it is darkened by the thick obscurities of allegories.

Again, by a mountain is designated the apostate angel, as is said to preachers concerning the ancient enemy under the character of the king of Babylon, Lift ye up a banner upon the gloomy mountain. For holy preachers lift up a banner above the gloomy mountain, when they exalt the virtue of the cross against the pride of Satan, which is frequently concealed under the mist of hypocrisy. Again, by a mountain any kind of heretic is expressed, as the Psalmist says with the voice of the Church, In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Pass over as a sparrow to the mountain? [Ps. 11, 1] For when a faithful soul is bidden to abandon unity, and to trust in the swelling doctrine of an heretical preacher, it is persuaded, as it were, to forsake the Lord, and to migrate to the mountain. Again, by mountains is designated the loftiness of Apostles and Prophets, as it is written, Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God. [Ps. 36, 6] And it is said by the voice of Paul, That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. [2 Cor. 5, 21] Or as the Psalmist again says by the voice of the Church in hope, I have lifted up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence will come my help. [Ps. 121, 1] Again, by mountains is expressed the pride of secular powers, of whom the Psalmist says, The hills melted like wax from the presence of the Lord:

[Ps. 97, 5] because many, who had before been swollen up with stubborn pride, were melted through penitence with great fear, when God was manifested in the flesh. Or as the same Prophet says again, They go up, mountains and go down, plains. [Ps. 104, 8] For many persecutors of the Lord come against Him in pride, but return from Him in humility. And these go up, mountains, by the swelling of power; but come down, plains, namely, by becoming level, through acknowledgment of sin.

3. But because some continue in the height of their pride, and disdain to bend humbly to the Divine commands, and that, because they cease not to think and perpetrate wickedness according to the desire of the ancient enemy; it is rightly said of Behemoth in this place; The mountains bring him forth grass. For the proud men of the world bring forth grass to this Behemoth, because they refresh him by that which they work wickedly. They bring forth grass to this Behemoth, because they offer him their unstable and treacherous pleasures. For men, says the Apostle, shall be lovers of their own selves. [2 Tim. 3, 2] And he summed up their description, saying; Lovers of pleasures more than of God. [ib. 4] What then is the grass of the mountains, except unstable pleasure, which is begotten from the heart of the proud? For if they did not despise God in their pride, they would never commit so many wantonnesses ['lubrica'] in their lasciviousness, by which grass this Behemoth is doubtless fed; because by hungering in them after the punishment of eternal death, he is pampered with their evil habits. For the proud of this world, even if ever, hindered by the course of God's dispensation, they desist from fulfilling their wicked works, yet multiply wickednesses in thought; at one time to make themselves appear superior to others in wealth and honour; at another, to exercise this very power in endeavouring to injure others;

at another, to melt away in light deeds and pleasures, when influenced by wanton emotions. For since they never think of doing right, but always wrong, things, from the favours they have received from God, what else do they but fight against God with His own gifts? Because

then this Behemoth always discerns in the minds of the proud his own desires, he finds, as it were, grass on the mountains, with which he replenishes and swells the belly of his malice. But it is well subjoined,

All the beasts of the field will play there. [ii]

4. What are designated by 'beasts' but unclean spirits, what by the 'field,' but the present world? Whence it is said against Ephraim, of the chief of the malignant spirits himself; The beasts of the field shall tear them. [Hos. 13, 8] Or as Isaiah says; No evil beast shall go up thereon. [Is. 35, 9] But that the world is understood by the word field, the word of the Lord witnesses in the Gospel, which says, But the field is the world. [Matt. 13, 38] The beasts of the field, then, play in the grass of the mountains, because in this world the devils, who have been cast forth from above, delight in the evil doings of the proud. The beasts play in the grass, when the reprobate spirits draw away the hearts of men into unlawful thoughts. Is it not sport for evil spirits, to deceive at one time by false promises the minds of men which were made after the image of God, at another to make mock at them with empty terrors, at another to urge upon them transitory pleasures as if lasting, at another to make light of lasting punishments as if transitory? He had doubtless feared being the sport of these beasts, who said, O my God, I trust in Thee, let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies make a jest of me.

[Ps. 25, 2] Because then the heart of the proud is overcome by every sin, so as to be ready for every malignant spirit which assails it with evil thoughts, it is rightly said of the grass of the mountains, All the beasts of the field will play there. For since the proud pass over no wickedness in their thoughts, there is no beast of the field which is not satiated with the grass of these mountains. For even if at any time they avoid the lust of the flesh, yet they commit the sin of inward lust by boasting of their very chastity. If at any time they do not covetously grasp at any thing without them, they are by no means free from the allurement of avarice; for though they are not eager after any thing, yet they strive to grasp at praise, for their forbearance, from human applause. The mountains, therefore, bring forth grass for this Behemoth, and all the beasts of the field play there, because every malignant spirit feeds at greater liberty in the heart of the proud, in proportion as every sin is generated from pride. But since we have heard what this Behemoth feeds on, we must now needs hear where it is that he rests meanwhile through his evil desire. It follows,

Ver. 16. He sleepeth under the shadow, in the covert of the reed, in moist places. [E.V. 21] [iii]

5. Overshadowing is sometimes used in Holy Scripture for the Incarnation of the Lord, or the cooling of the mind from the heat of carnal thoughts; whence by the expression 'shadow' this cooling of the heart in consequence of heavenly protection is usually spoken of. But sometimes 'shadow' is taken to mean the numbness of the frozen minds when charity departs. For that the Incarnation of the Lord is signified by the term overshadowing, still preserving the truth of the history, the word of the Angel attests, who says to Mary, The

Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. [Luke 1, 35] For because a shadow is caused in no other way than by a light and a body, the Power of the Highest overshadowed her, because the incorporeal Light assumed a body in her womb. By which overshadowing in truth she received in herself every refreshment of mind. Again, by 'shadow' is expressed the refreshment of the heart by reason of heavenly protection, as the Psalmist says, Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings. [Ps. 17, 8] Or as the Bride in the Song of Songs, having waited for the coming of the Bridegroom, announces, saying, I sat down under the shadow of Him, Whom I had longed for. [Cant. 2, 3] As if she said, I rested under the protection of His coming from the heat of carnal desires. Again, by 'shadow' is expressed the numbness of the frozen mind, when charity departs, as is said of sinful man, that he sought the shadow.

For man, flying from the warmth of charity, has forsaken the sun of truth, and hid himself under the shade of inward cold. Whence it is said by the voice of the same Truth, Iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold. [Matt. 24, 12] Whence the first man, after his sin, is found hid amidst the trees of paradise at the cool after midday ['ad auram']. [Gen. 3, 8] For since he had lost the midday warmth of charity, he was already benumbed beneath the shadow of sin, as if under the cold of the air.

6. Because then this Behemoth finds a kind of rest in those, whom he chills by withdrawing from the light of the true Sun, he is said to sleep under the shadow. But sometimes by 'shadow,' if used with the addition of the word 'death,' is expressed either the death of the flesh, or any reprobates, who by their eagerness in evil doing imitate the darkness of the ancient enemy. Whence it is said by the Psalmist with the voice of the Martyrs; Thou hast humbled us in the place of affliction, and the shadow of death hath covered us. [Ps. 44, 19] For the shadow of death covers the Elect of God, when the death of the flesh, which is the image of eternal death, cuts them off from this life; because as that separates the soul from God, so does this separate the body from the soul. Or certainly the shadow of death covers them, because it is written of the ancient enemy, His name was death. [Rev. 6, 8] All reprobates are therefore the shadow of death, because they imitate the malice of his wickedness, and shadow forth his image, as it were, when they take in themselves a resemblance of his malice. And they cover the Elect of God, when they gain strength against them for a time, in the cruelty of persecution.

But in this place 'shadow' is taken for the slumber of wickedness, and this Behemoth slumbers therein, because he watches anxiously against hearts glowing with charity, but lies securely in minds benumbed with cold. For he cannot slumber in the minds of Saints, because, even if he places himself therein for a short moment, the very warmth of heavenly desires wearies him, and he is pricked, as it were, to make him depart, as often as they sigh after eternal things with inmost love. And as many holy thoughts as cry aloud from their minds unto heaven, are as so many voices to rouse him. Whence it is, that, frightened by the arms of good deeds, and smitten with the darts of sighs, he takes his flight, and that, returning to the frozen hearts of the reprobate, he seeks for that shadow of wickedness to oc-

cupy in security. And where it is found by him, is shewn by its being immediately subjoined, In the covert of the reeds.

7. In Holy Scripture, by the expression 'cane' ['calamus'] or 'reed' ['arundo'] is sometimes understood the Abiding Word, sometimes the skill of the learned, sometimes the changeableness of the mind, sometimes the brightness of temporal glory. For by 'cane' is designated the eternity of the Word, when it is said by the Psalmist with the voice of the Father, My tongue is the reed ['calamus'] of a swift writer. [Ps. 45, 1] For since that which we speak passes away, but that which we write remains, the tongue of the Father is called the reed of a writer, because from Him is the Word Coeternal with Himself, and begotten without transition ['transitu']. Again, by 'reed' is expressed the learning of writers, as the Prophet promises concerning Holy Church, saying, In the lairs in which dragons used before to dwell, there will spring up the greenness of the reed, and rush. [Is. 35, 7] For in this sentence, as we said a long way above in this work, by 'reed' is expressed the doctrine of writers, by 'rush' the freshness of hearers [see Bk. 29, '. 51]. Again, by 'cane,' or certainly by 'reed,' is expressed changeableness of mind, as is said by the Lord to the crowds of the Jews in praise of John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind?

[Matt. 11, 7] in order, namely, that it should be understood, 'No.' For John was not in truth a reed shaken with the wind, because no breath of tongues inclined on different sides his mind, which was made firm by the Holy Spirit. Again, by 'rush' or 'reed' is expressed the brightness of temporal glory, as is said of the righteous by Wisdom, the righteous shall shine, and run to and fro like sparks in the reed-bed. [Wisd. 3, 7] For He terms a 'reed-bed' the life of the worldly, who like reeds, outwardly increase to a height by temporal glory, but are inwardly bereft of the solidity of truth. Whence also the kingdom of the Jews is compared to a reed, when it is said by the Prophet, on the Lord appearing in the truth of the flesh, A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench. [Is. 2, 43] For what does he set forth by the name 'reed' but the temporal kingdom of the Jewish people, brilliant indeed without, but empty within? And because in this people the royal race had already failed, and a stranger was possessing its kingdom, He fitly calls the same kingdom a broken reed. But what is expressed by 'flax,' except it be its priesthood, which doubtless wore linen vestments? And because at the coming of the Lord, it had lost the warmth of charity, it was not burning but smoking, having already lost, as it were, the fire of faith.

But the Incarnate Lord broke not the bruised reed, and quenched not the smoking flax, because He smote not with the might of judgment the kingdom of Jud'a, which had been already well nigh destroyed, and its priesthood which retained not the fire of faith, but endured them with the long-suffering of patience.

8. What else, therefore, is designated in this place by the term 'reed' but the minds of the worldly, which are devoted to temporal glory? For they are the more empty in themselves within, the more they appear tall and beautiful without; for while they melt away into external glory on the surface, they are not strengthened by any solidity within. For like reed they are, through their folly, hollow within, but are outwardly beautiful through show

and appearance; but the more studiously outward glory is sought for by them, the more are their minds agitated with sharper pangs of thought. Whence this Behemoth is now rightly said to slumber in the covert of the reed, because he silently possesses the hearts of those, whose desires he excites to seek after temporal splendor and dignity; and he himself sleeps, as it were, quietly in that spot, where he does not allow those whom he possesses to remain at rest. For whilst they go about to surpass others by the loftiness of their goods, while through the brightness of outward cleanliness they surpass the righteous in appearance, as a reed surpasses the bark of solid trees; by remaining hollow within, they make a fitting place for this Behemoth to rest within them. Whence also the Lord says in the Gospel, that the spirit who went forth and found no rest in barren and dry places, because he found the house which he had left empty, and swept clean, entered it in more abundant measure. [Matt. 12, 43-45] For because the earth which is watered becomes moist, the barren and dry places are the hearts of the righteous, which by the power of discipline are drained dry of all the moisture of carnal concupiscence. Whence here also the place where this Behemoth slumbers is still further pointed out, where it is immediately added, In moist places.

9. For 'moist places' are the minds of earthly men, which the moisture of carnal concupiscence makes fluid, because it fills them. In which this Behemoth plants deeper the footsteps of his iniquity, the more as in passing he sinks ['pertransitus ejus'] in their minds as in wet earth. For 'moist places' are voluptuous deeds. For the foot does not slip on dry ground, but when planted in slippery ground it is hardly supported. They therefore journey through this life in moist places, who cannot herein stand upright in righteousness. Behemoth, therefore, sleeps in these moist places, because he rests in the slippery doings of reprobate men. But some suppose that by 'moist places' are meant the genitals. But if this is so, what else is plainly designated by moist places but lust, so that by a 'reed' is expressed the glory of pride, and by 'moist places' the lust of the body? For these in truth are two sins, which hold cruel sway over the human race, one, namely, of the spirit, and the other of the flesh. For pride exalts the spirit, lust corrupts the flesh. The ancient enemy, therefore, specially oppressing mankind either by pride or by lust, sleeps in the covert of the reed, and in moist places, because he holds ruined man under the sway of his domination, either by pride of spirit, or by corruption of flesh.

But some he possesses in both ways, because when the spirit of pride exalts them, not even shame for their corruption brings them down from pride at their high estate. But are not the teachers of virtues continually watchful against them within the bounds of Holy Church? Do they cease to reprove grovelling pleasures, and to recommend the joys of the heavenly country? But the minds of the wicked refuse the more obstinately to listen to the highest things, the more closely they have cleaved to those that are basest. Nor are they contented with merely perishing themselves, but, (which is worse,) when they see others convinced and improved, they also oppose the reproofs of the righteous, to keep others at least from being corrected. Whence it is well subjoined;

Ver. 17. The shadows cover his shadow. [E.V. 22] [iv]

10. For all the wicked are in truth shadows of the devil: for while they give themselves up to imitate his iniquity, they derive, as it were, a form of resemblance from his body. But as the reprobate are his 'shadows' in the plural number, so each separate sinner is his 'shadow' in the singular. But when the wicked gainsay the teaching of the just, when they do not permit any wicked person to be corrected by them, the shadows of this Behemoth cover his shadow; because sinners, whenever they are conscious to themselves of sin, support another sinner in the same course. His shadows cover his shadow, when the more wicked support by their misdirected patronage the doings of the most wicked. And this they doubtless do with this object, that, while the fault, with which they themselves are bound, is corrected in others, they may not at last be reached themselves. They cover themselves therefore, when they protect others, because they foresee that their own conduct is attacked, by the same means as they see others confounded with bold reproof. And thus it happens, that while the aggregate of sins is defended, it is also increased, and that the guilt of each person is more easy of commission, the more difficult it is of punishment. For the evil doings of sinners derive so much greater increase, the longer they are permitted, through the defence of the powerful, to remain unpunished.

But such persons, whether they seem to be within or without Holy Church, display themselves more openly as the enemies of God, the greater patrons they are of sins. For in defending themselves they fight against Him, Who is displeased with those doings, which they multiply, by defending them. Which conduct the Lord by the Prophet well reproves, under the character of Babylon, saying; Thorns and nettles shall spring up in her houses, and the bramble in the fortresses thereof. [Is. 34, 13] For what do we understand by 'nettles,' but the irritations of thoughts, and what by 'thorns,' but the piercings of sins? Nettles therefore and thorns spring up in the houses of Babylon, because in the disorder of a reprobate mind there arise longings of thoughts which exasperate, and sinful deeds which wound. But they who act thus have others also more wicked than themselves as their defenders. Whence he there fitly subjoined immediately, And the bramble in the fortresses thereof. For the bramble is crowded with such a circle of thorns, that it can hardly be touched from its roughness. The nettle and the thorn therefore spring up within, but both of them are fortified without by the bramble: because, namely, smaller offenders commit any kinds of evil, but greater and most abandoned ones defend them. Whence it is here also well said, His shadows protect his shadow. For whilst a greater sinner defends a wicked person, a shadow, as it were, darkens a shadow, that it be not irradiated with the light of truth. It follows;

The willows of the brook will compass him about. [v]

11. 'Willows' are trees which bear indeed no fruit; but are of such great greenness, as hardly to dry up, even when cut off by the roots and torn up. Whence in Holy Scripture by the name 'willows,' the good are sometimes designated, from their greenness, and sometimes the reprobate from their sterility. For unless by their continual greenness they typified the life of the Elect, the Prophet would not have said concerning the children of Holy Church, They shall spring up among the grass, as willows by the water courses. [Is. 44, 4] For the

children of Holy Church spring up as willows among the grass, when amidst the withering life of carnal men, they last on in manifold numbers, and perpetual greenness of mind. And they are well said to spring up by the water courses, because each of them derives its fruitful productiveness from the teaching of Holy Scripture, which runs along in this temporal state. And again, if the life of sinners were not signified by the sterility of willows, the Psalmist would not have said against Babylon by the voice of preachers; We hanged our instruments upon the willows in the midst thereof. [Ps. 137, 2] For the willows are described as being in the midst of Babylon, doubtless because the unfruitful, and those estranged from the love of their heavenly country, are rooted with all the affections of their heart in this confusion of the world.

Whence also holy preachers do not play, but hang their instruments in these willows, because when they see minds unfruitful and reprobate, they display not the power of their preaching, but rather weep and are silent. What also is expressed by the brook except the course of this mortal life? Of which it is said again by the Prophet, He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up his head. [Ps. 110, 7] Because, namely, our Redeemer tasted the punishment of mortal life, as though in a passage through it, and therefore did not long abide in that death to which he had yielded of his own accord. Whence on the third day he lifted up at His resurrection that Head which He had laid down at His death. What then is the meaning of that which is said of this Behemoth, the willows of the brook will compass him about? except that lovers of this mortal life, unfruitful in good deeds, cleave the closer to him, the more abundantly the delight of transitory pleasure waters them. For a brook waters them, as it were, at their roots, when the love of a carnal life intoxicates them in their thoughts. And like willows they bring forth in truth no fruit, but are green in their leaves, because they sometimes utter words of propriety, which are not burdensome to be said, but display by their good works no weight of life.

It is therefore well said, The willows of the brook will compass him about, because when they who bear no fruit devote themselves to the love of this temporal life, they comply too familiarly with the depraved customs of the ancient enemy. But since we have heard what is rendered him by his clients, let us now hear what he works in them. It follows;

Ver. 18. He will drink up a river, and will not wonder, and trusteth that Jordan can flow into his mouth. [E.V. 23] [vi]

12. For what is in this place designated by the name of 'river,' except the downward course of the human race, which rises at its birth, as if from the source of its fountain, but passes down, as if flowing to its lowest level at its death? But who are signified by the expression 'Jordan,' except those who have been already imbued with the sacrament of Baptism? For since our Redeemer deigned to be baptized in this river, all who have been baptized must needs be expressed by the name of that stream, in which this very sacrament of Baptism happened to be begun. Because, therefore, this Behemoth has drawn to himself like a river the human race flowing downward from the beginning of the world, even to the times of redemption, but a few Elect ones escaping him, it is now well said; He will drink up a river,

and will not wonder. But since even after the coming of the Mediator he seizes some even of the faithful, who neglect to live righteously, it is rightly subjoined; And trusteth that Jordan can flow into his mouth. As if it were plainly said, Before the coming of the Redeemer of the world, he drank up the world without wondering, but, which is far worse, even after the coming of the Redeemer, he trusts that he is able to swallow up some, who have been sealed with the sacrament of Baptism.

For he devours some who have been placed in the profession of Christians, because he supplants them by causing error in their faith itself. But others he does not turn aside from the uprightness of the faith, but inclines to the practice of wicked works. Others he is unable to bend as much as he wishes in deeds of impurity, but he inwardly turns them aside from the zeal of their intention; so that, when they sever their minds from charity, whatever they may do outwardly may not be right. And they retain the faith, but they retain not the life of faith; because they either openly do those things which are unlawful, or else from their perverted heart, their doings are wicked, even though they seem to be holy. For since some persons are faithful in their professions, but not in their lives, it is said by the voice of the Truth, Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. [Matt 7, 21] Hence He says again; But why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? [Luke 6, 46] Hence Paul says, They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him. [Tit. 1, 16] Hence John says, He that saith that he knoweth God, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar. [1 John 2, 4] Hence it is that the Lord complains of His own ancient people; This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.

[Mark 7, 6; Is. 29, 13] Hence also the Psalmist says, They loved Him with their mouth, and they lied unto Him with their tongue. [Ps. 78, 36] But it was no wonder that this Behemoth before the water of the laver, before the heavenly sacraments, before the corporeal presence of the Redeemer, drank up, with the yawning gulph of his deep persuasion, the river of the human race. But it is very wonderful, it is very terrible, that even after the knowledge of the Redeemer, he seizes many with his open mouth, that he pollutes them after the water of the laver, that after heavenly sacraments he hurries them away to the depth of hell. Let it be said then, let it be said fearfully by the voice of the Truth; He will drink up a river, and will not wonder, and trusteth that Jordan can flow into his mouth. For the devil counted it not a great thing that he seized unbelievers, but he now rouses himself with all his efforts to destroy those, whom he pines at seeing regenerated against him. Let no one then trust that faith without works can be sufficient for him, when we know that it is written; Faith without works is dead. [James 2, 20] Let no one think that he has entirely escaped the bite of Behemoth by a mere confession of faith. Because he has already drunk up a river, but still thirsts after Jordan. And Jordan flows into his mouth as often as any Christian sinks down into iniquity.

We have now escaped his mouth, by the aid of faith, but we must take earnest heed, not to fall therein by slippery doings. If care in walking is neglected, it is in vain that we keep the

straight road by faith. Because the way of faith leads indeed to the heavenly country, but it does not carry to the close those who stumble therein.

13. We have another point to consider more minutely on this head. For those who we said were expressed by 'Jordan,' can also be designated by the 'river.' For they who have already confessed their belief in the truth, but neglect to live faithfully, can rightly be called a 'river:' namely, because they flow downwards. But 'Jordan' in the Hebrew word means 'the descent of them.' And there are some who in seeking the way of truth cast away their own selves, and come down from the pride of their former life. And when they desire eternal things, they entirely estrange themselves from this world, by not only seeking after the goods of others, but even abandoning their own. And so far from seeking glory therein, they despise it even when it offers itself. For hence is that which is said by the voice of the Truth, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself. [Luke 9, 23] For a man denies himself, if, having trampled down the haughtiness of pride, he shews before the eyes of God that he is strange to himself. Hence the Psalmist says, I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites. [Ps. 42, 6] For Jordan, as I said, is interpreted 'Descent,' but Hermonites, Anathema, that is, 'Alienation.' He therefore remembers God from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, who by humbling himself, and by living estranged from himself, is recalled to think on his Creator.

But the ancient enemy considers it no great matter, that he holds under the rule of his tyranny those who seek after earthly things. For we know, as the Prophet witnesses, that His food is choice. [Hab. l, 16] Nor does he count it a wonderful thing if he swallows up those whom pride exalts, covetousness wastes away, pleasure relaxes ['dilatat'], wickedness contracts ['angustat'], anger inflames, discord separates, envy exulcerates, lust pollutes and kills. He will therefore swallow up a river, and will not wonder, because he counts it no great thing, when he devours those, who by the very pursuits of their life run downwards. But he earnestly endeavours to seize those whom he sees already united to heavenly things, from their contempt of the things of earth. And hence, when the river has been swallowed up, it is rightly subjoined, And he trusteth that Jordan can flow into his mouth, because he is anxious to lurk in ambush, and seize those, whom he sees casting themselves down from the glory of the present life through love of their heavenly country. For some in truth forsake the world, abandon the vanities of transient honours, and, seeking the lowliness of humility, transcend by good living the custom of human conversation; and advance in such lofty pursuits ['tanta studiorum arce'], as even now to perform mighty wonders. But because they neglect to protect themselves by circumspection, they are wounded by the shaft of vain glory, and fall the more fatally from on high.

For hence it is that the eternal Judge, Who weighs the secrets of the heart, foretells this same fall and ruin, and threatens, saying, Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name have cast out devils, and in Thy Name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them that I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity, I know not who ye are. [Matt. 7, 22. 23.

Hence also it is said by the Prophet, The Lord called judgment to the fire, and it devoured the great abyss, and will eat up a part of the house of the Lord. [Amos 7, 4] For judgment is called to the fire, when the sentence of justice is already displayed for the punishment of eternal burning. And it devours the great abyss, because it consumes the wicked and incomprehensible minds of men, which now conceal themselves from men even under the miracles of signs. But a part of the house of the Lord is eaten up; because Gehenna devours those also, who now boast, as it were, by their holy deeds, of being in the number of the Elect. They therefore who are here called 'Jordan,' are there called 'a part of the house of the Lord.' The ancient enemy therefore trusts that even Jordan can flow into his mouth, because he sometimes destroys, by the stratagems of his cunning, those even who are now considered Elect.

But whose hardness of heart would not these words of the Lord arouse? Whose firmness of mind would not be shaken from the inmost depths of his thoughts, when our enemy is shewn to be of such great power against us? Will there be no aid of consolation? There will surely be, for it is subjoined;

Ver. 19. In his eyes He will take him as with a hook. [E.V. 24] [vii]

14. It is much to be observed, that the Lord, tempering in His mercy the words of His Scripture, alarms us at one time with sharp excitements, comforts us at another with gentle consolations, and blends terror with comforts, and comforts with terror; in order that, while they are both tempered towards us with wonderful skill of management, we may be found neither to despair through fear, nor yet incautiously secure. For when He had pointed out in manifold expressions the cunning crafts, and the unrestrained strength of Behemoth, He immediately sets forth the coming of His Only-begotten Son our Redeemer, and teaches in what way this Behemoth is to be destroyed; in order that, having oppressed our heart by recounting his might, He might speedily alleviate our sorrow by pointing out his destruction. Therefore, after He had said, He will drink up a river, and will not wonder, and trusteth that Jordan can flow into his mouth, He immediately announces the coming of the Lord's Incarnation, saying, In his eyes He will take him as with a hook. Who can be ignorant that in a 'hook' a bait is shewn, a point is concealed? For the bait tempts, that the point may wound. Our Lord therefore, when coming for the redemption of mankind, made, as it were, a kind of hook of Himself for the death of the devil; for He assumed a body, in order that this Behemoth might seek therein the death of the flesh, as if it were his bait.

But while he is unjustly aiming at that death in His person, he lost us, whom he was, as it were, justly holding. He was caught, therefore, in the 'hook' of His Incarnation, because while he sought in Him the bait of His Body, he was pierced with the sharp point of His Divinity. For there was within Him His Humanity, to attract to Him the devourer, there was there His Divinity to wound; there was there His open infirmity to excite, His hidden virtue to pierce through the jaw of the spoiler. He was, therefore, taken by a hook, because he perished by means of that which he swallowed. And this Behemoth knew indeed the Incarnate Son of God, but knew not the plan of our redemption. For he knew that the

Son of God had been incarnate for our redemption, but he was quite ignorant that this our Redeemer was piercing him by His own death. Whence it is well said, In his eyes He will take him as with a hook. For we are said to have in our eyes that which we see placed before us. But the ancient enemy of mankind saw placed before him the Redeemer, Whom he confessed in knowing, feared in confessing, saying, What have we to do with Thee, Thou Son of God? Hast Thou come to torment us before the time? [Matt. 8, 29] He was taken therefore with a hook in his eyes, because he both knew, and seized it;

and he first knew Whom to fear, and yet afterwards feared Him not, when hungering in Him for the death of the Flesh, as if it were his proper bait. Because then we have heard what our Head has done by Himself, let us now hear what He is doing by His own members. It follows;

And bore through his nostrils with stakes. [viii]

15. What else do we understand by stakes ['sudes'], that is, poles ['palos'], (which are sharpened indeed in order to be fixed in the ground,) but the sharp counsels of the Saints? And these perforate the nostrils of this Behemoth, while they both watchfully behold on every side his most ingenious stratagems, and pierce, by overcoming them. But a scent is drawn through the nostrils, and by drawing our breath deep, an object is detected even when placed at some distance. By the nostrils of Behemoth are, therefore, designated his cunning stratagems, by which he most ingeniously endeavours both to learn the secret good qualities of our heart, and to scatter them by his most fatal persuasion. The Lord, therefore, perforates his nostrils with stakes, because, penetrating his crafty stratagems by the acute senses of the Saints, He takes from them their power. But he often hovers about the paths of the righteous with such insidious art, as to seek to approach them for their hurt, even by means of the good qualities which he knows to exist in them. For from observing the liberality of one person, he inflames another with the fire of discord; and when he sees one person compassionate, he persuades another to be angry, in order that, by suggesting that a good deed has not been done in common, he may cut off accordant minds from the benefit of a common favour.

For since he is not able to break down the resolutions of the just by persuading them to sin, he is busy in sowing evils therein by means of their good deeds. But holy men overcome these his stratagems the more speedily, the more acutely they detect them. A point which we set forth the better, if we bring forward Paul, one of many maintainers of the truth in evidence. For when a certain Corinthian under his care had committed the sin of incest, the illustrious teacher delivered him up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, for the satisfaction of penance, and reserved his spirit to be saved to the day of the Lord Jesus. [1 Cor. 5, 5] For by great skill in discipline he was forcibly delivered for punishment to the very person, to whom he had in his sin voluntarily submitted; in order that he who had been the author of the sin of wickedness, might himself become the scourge of discipline. But when this penance had been well gone through, on learning that the Corinthians had been already moved with compassion towards him, he says, To whom ye forgive any thing, I

also; for I forgave any thing, for your sakes I forgave it in the person of Christ. [2 Cor. 2, 10] As thinking of the blessing of communion, he says, To whom ye forgive any thing, I also. As if he were saying, I agree with your good doings; may whatever you have done be counted as mine.

And he immediately added, And if I forgave any thing, for your sakes I forgave it. As if he were saying, Whatever I have done compassionately, has added further good to your doings. My goodness is, therefore, your profit, your goodness is my profit. And he immediately added and subjoined that binding of hearts ['compagem cordium'], in which he is thus held, In the person of Christ. For as if we were presuming to say to him, Why dost thou so carefully couple thyself with thy disciples? why dost thou so anxiously conform either thyself to them, or them to thyself in thy doings? he immediately subjoined, That we may not be circumvented by Satan. [ib. 11] And with what acuteness he penetrates his crafty stratagems, he teaches, adding, For we are not ignorant of his devices. As if he said in other words, We are sharp stakes of the Lord's making, and we penetrate the nostrils of this Behemoth by subtle circumspection, lest he should pervert to an evil end that which the mind enters on aright.

16. By 'stakes' can be signified the acute words of Wisdom Himself manifested in the flesh, so that by the nostrils of Behemoth may be typified (since scent is drawn in by the nostrils) that prying search of the ancient enemy. For when he doubted whether God were incarnate, he wished to ascertain this by tempting and asking of Him miracles, saying, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. [Matt. 4, 3] Because then he wished to learn the scent of His Divinity from the evidence of miracles, he drew in the breath, as it were, by his nostrils. But when it is immediately said to him in answer, Man liveth not by bread alone, and, Thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God, [ib. 4, 7] because the Truth repelled the searching enquiry of the ancient enemy by the sharpness of his sayings, he pierced his nostrils, as it were, with stakes. But because this Behemoth spreads forth with various arguments of deceit, he is marked still further by the addition of another name; for it is subjoined,

Ver. 20. Wilt thou be able to draw out Leviathan with a hook? [E.V. 41, 1] [ix]

17. For Leviathan means 'their addition.' Of whom, in truth, but of men? amongst whom he introduced once for all the guilt of sin, and carries it onward to eternal death by the most evil suggestions day by day. And while he multiplies their guilt by the usury of sin, he doubtless without ceasing adds to their punishment. He can also be called Leviathan by way of mocking. For he declared in his cunning persuasion that he would confer a divine nature on the first man, but he took away immortality. [Gen. 3, 4. 5. He can therefore be called ironically 'The addition to men,' for when he promised them to bestow that which they were not, he even took away by his craft that which they really were. But this Leviathan was caught with a hook, because when in the case of our Redeemer he seized through his satellites the bait of His Body, the sharp sting of His Godhead pierced him through. For a hook held as it were the throat of its swallower, when both the bait of the flesh appeared for

the devourer to seize, and at the time of His passion His Godhead was concealed, in order to kill him. For in this abyss of waters, that is, in this boundlessness of the human race, this whale was rushing hither and thither with open mouth, eager for the death, and devouring the life of almost all.

But a hook for the death of this whale was suspended by a marvellous arrangement in this gloomy depth of waters. The line of this hook, is that genealogy of the ancient fathers recorded in the Gospel. For when it is said, Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob, and the other descendants are described, with the insertion of the name of Joseph, down to Mary, the betrothed Virgin, a kind of line is spun, for the Incarnate Lord, that is to say, this hook to be bound to the end of it; [Matt. 1, 2-16] Whom this whale would catch at with open mouth when hanging in these waters of the human race, but when it was bitten by the cruelty of his satellites, he would no longer have power to bite. That this whale then, who is lying in ambush for the death of men, might no longer devour whom he wished, this hook held firm the jaws of the spoiler, and wounded him that bit it. God, therefore, as pointing out to his faithful servant the Incarnation of His Only-begotten Son, says, Wilt thou be able to draw out Leviathan with a hook? Thou understandest, As I; Who send My Only-begotten Son in the flesh for the death of the spoiler; in Whom while mortal flesh is seen, and the power of His immortality is not seen, a kind of hook destroys, as it were, him who swallows it, by concealing the keenness of the power, with which He wounds. It follows;

And wilt thou bind his tongue with a cord? [x]

18. Thou understandest, As I. For Holy Scripture is wont to designate by a 'cord,' sometimes measured allotments, sometimes sins, sometimes faith. For on account of the hereditary measured allotments, it is said, The lines have fallen unto me in goodly places, for I have a goodly heritage. [Ps. 16, 6] For lines fall for us in goodly places, when through humility of life the lot of a better country awaits us. Again, because sins are signified by a 'cord,' it is said by the Prophet; Woe unto you that draw iniquity with the cords of vanity. [Is. 5, 18] For iniquity is drawn with cords of vanity, when sin is drawn out by increase. Whence it is also said by the Psalmist; The cords of sins [or, sinners, as S. Aug. ad loc. have twined about me. [Ps. 119, 61] For since a cord, when added to, is twisted, in order to increase, sin is not unfitly figured by a cord, since it is frequently multiplied, when it is defended with a perverse heart. Again, by a 'cord' faith is expressed, as Solomon witnesses, who says; A threefold cord is not easily broken; [Eccles. 4, 12] because faith in truth which is woven by the mouth of preachers from the knowledge of the Trinity, remaining firm in the Elect, is broken ['dissipatur'] only in the heart of the reprobate.

In this place, therefore, nothing prevents either faith or sin being understood by the word 'cord.' For our Incarnate Lord bound the tongue of Leviathan with a cord, because He appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned all his erroneous preaching. Whence it is said, as Paul witnesses; And from sin He condemned sin. [Rom. 8, 3] He bound his tongue with a cord, because by means of the likeness of sinful flesh He swept away all his deceitful arguments from the hearts of His Elect. For behold, when the Lord appears in the

flesh, the tongue of Leviathan is bound, because, when His truth had become known, those doctrines of falsehood were silenced.

19. For where is now the error of the Academicians, who endeavour to establish on sure grounds that nothing is sure, who with shameless brow demand from their hearers belief in their assertions, when they declare that nothing is true? Where is the superstition of the Mathematicians, who, looking up at the courses of the constellations, make the lives of men to depend on the motions of the stars? Though the birth of twins often scatters their doctrine to the winds; for though born at one and the same moment, they do not abide in the same kind of conversation. Where are those many false teachings, which we abstain from enumerating, for fear of digressing far from the course of our commentary? But every false doctrine has now been silenced, because the Lord has bound the tongue of Leviathan by the cord of His Incarnation. Whence it is also well said by the Prophet; And the Lord shall lay waste the tongue of the Egyptian sea. [Is. 11, 15] For the 'tongue of the sea,' is the knowledge of secular learning. But it is well called 'the Egyptian sea;' because it is darkened with the gloom of sin. The Lord, therefore, laid waste the tongue of the Egyptian sea, because by manifesting Himself in the flesh, He destroyed the false wisdom of this world. The tongue of Leviathan is, therefore, bound with a cord, because the preaching of the old sinner was bound by the likeness of sinful flesh.

20. But if faith is signified by a 'cord,' the same meaning is again suggested to us; because when faith in the Trinity became known to the world by holy preachers, the doctrine of the world ceased to break forth against the mind of the Elect. Whence it is well said to the Lord by the Prophet; Thou hast cloven fountains and torrents, Thou hast dried up the rivers of Ethan. [Ps. 74, 15] For Ethan is interpreted 'strong.' And who is this strong man, except him of whom the Lord says in the Gospel; No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, unless he first bind the strong man. [Mark 3, 27] The Lord, therefore, clave the fountains and the torrents, when He spread in the hearts of His Apostles the streams of truth. Of whom it is said again by another Prophet; With joy shall ye draw water from the fountains of the Saviour. [Is. 12, 3] For we go in our thirst to their teaching, that we may bring back the pitcher of our hearts full of truth. But He dried the rivers of Ethan by the springing forth of His own fountains, when He withered the doctrine of the mighty and malignant spirit by displaying the ray of His own truth. The tongue, therefore, of Leviathan is bound with a cord, because by the spreading of faith in the Trinity, the preachings of errors were silenced. But since he cannot now raise himself openly, he goes about hither and thither, and bites by stealth. But the Lord watches against him in our behalf with wonderful pity, and defeats him even in his treacherous designs. Whence it is subjoined;

Ver. 21. Wilt thou put a ring into his nostrils? [E.V. 41, 2] [xi]

21. As stratagems are signified by 'nostrils,' so by a 'ring' is designated the omnipotence of Divine Power. For when it keeps us from being seized by temptations, it encircles around and holds firm in wondrous ways the snares of the ancient enemy. A ring is, therefore, put into his nostrils, when by the strength of heavenly protection drawn around us, his cunning

is so restrained, as not to prevail so far against the weakness of man, as far as it secretly searches out its fatal arguments. But by the name 'ring' can be designated also the aid of the secret judgments, which is put into the nostrils of this Behemoth when he is restrained from his artful cruelty. Whence it is well said by the Prophet to the King of Babylon, when he is kept from injuring the Israelites; I will put a ring in thy nostrils. [Is. 37, 29] As if it were plainly said; Thou breathest hard with thoughts of guile; but from being unable to fulfil thy desires, thou bearest in thy nostrils the ring of My omnipotence, in order that when thou pantest more eagerly for the death of the righteous, thou mayest return unsatisfied from their life. But that which Holy Scripture calls in this place a 'ring,' it calls a 'sickle' by John in the Apocalypse. For he says, I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sitting like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

[Rev. 14, 14] For the power of Divine judgment is called a 'ring,' because it binds on every side; but because in its cutting it embraces all things within it, it is marked out by the term 'sickle.' For whatever is cut by a sickle falls within it, in whatsoever direction it is turned. And because the power of the heavenly judgment cannot be in any way avoided, (for we are in truth within it, wherever we may endeavour to escape,) when the Judge Who is to come is represented, He is rightly said to hold a sickle. Because when He comes to meet all things in His might, He surrounds them in cutting them off. The Prophet saw that he was within the sickle of judgment, when he said, If I ascend into heaven. Thou art there: if I descend into hell, Thou art present. If I take my wings before the light, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. [Ps. 139, 8. 9. He saw himself to be within a kind of sickle, when he knew that there was no way of escape open to him from any place, saying, For neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the desert mountains, [Ps. 75, 6] thou understandest, 'a way of escape is open.' And he proceeded immediately to speak of this all-embracing comprehension of the Divine power, saying, For God is the Judge.

[ib. 7] As if he were saying, A way of escape is wanting on every side, because He judges Who is every where. Therefore as the Divine judgments are signified by a sickle, because they encircle and cut down, so are they expressed by a ring, because they bind on every side. A ring is, therefore, put by the Lord in the nostrils of Leviathan, because he is restrained by the power of His judgment from prevailing as much as he wishes in his stratagems. Let it be said then, Wilt thou put a ring into his nostrils? Thou understandest, As I, Who restrain by Almighty judgment his crafty stratagems, so that he neither attempts as much as he wishes, nor succeeds as far as he attempts. It follows,

Or wilt thou bore through his jaw with a bracelet? [xii]

22. A 'bracelet' differs not in meaning from a 'ring,' because this also binds and encircles the spot where it is placed. But because a bracelet extends wider, by a bracelet is designated the more careful protection of His secret judgment over us. The Lord, therefore, bores through the jaw of this Leviathan with a bracelet, because by the ineffable power of His mercy He

so thwarts the malice of the ancient enemy, that he sometimes loses even those whom he has seized, and they, as it were, fall from his mouth, who after the commission of sin return to innocence. For who that had once been seized by his mouth would escape his jaw, if it were not bored through? Had he not seized Peter in his mouth, when he denied? Had he not seized David in his mouth, when he plunged himself into such a gulph of lust? But when they returned each of them through penitence to life, this Leviathan let them escape, as it were, through the holes of his jaws. Those, therefore, are withdrawn from his mouth through the hole of his jaw, who after the perpetration of such great wickednesses have come back with penitence. But what man can escape the mouth of this Leviathan, so as not commit any thing unlawful? But hence we know how much we are indebted to the Redeemer of mankind, Who not only restrained us from falling into the mouth of Leviathan, but granted us also to return from his mouth;

Who bereft not the sinner of hope, because He pierced his jaw that He might make a way to escape, so that he, who at first was incautious and not afraid of being bitten, might at least escape after the bite. The heavenly remedy, therefore, every where comes to our aid, because He both gave man precepts, that he should not sin, and yet furnished him with remedies when in sin, that he should not despair. There must, therefore, be exercised the greatest caution; that no one through pleasure in sin be seized by the mouth of this Leviathan. And yet, if he has been seized, let him not despair, because if he thoroughly bewails his sin, he finds a hole in his jaw, by which to escape. He is even now being crushed with his teeth; but if a way of escape is still sought for, a hole is found in his jaw. He who would not keep a look out, so as not to be taken, has, even when taken, a place to escape at. Let every one then who is not yet taken, avoid his jaw; but let every one who has been already taken, seek for a hole in his jaw. For our Creator is merciful and just.

23. But let no one say, Because He is merciful, I sin venially. And let no one who has sinned say, Because He is just, I despair of the remission of my sin. For God looses the sin which is bewailed; but let every one be afraid of sinning, because he knows not whether he can worthily bewail it. Before sinning then, let him fear His justice; but after sinning, let him presume on His mercy; and let him not so fear His justice, as not to be strengthened by any consolation of hope, nor be so confident of His mercy, as to neglect to apply to his wounds the medicine of worthy penitence. But let him always think also, that He Who he ventures to hope spares him in mercy, judges also with severity. Let the hope of the sinner then rejoice in His mercy, but let the correction of the penitent tremble under His severity. Let the hope, therefore, of our confidence have also a sting of fear, in order that the justice of the Judge may frighten into the correction of his sins him whom the grace of the Forgiver invites to the confidence of pardon. For hence it is said by a certain wise man; Say not, the mercies of the Lord are many, He will not be mindful of my sins. [Ecclus. 5, 6] For he immediately speaks of His mercy and justice, saying, For mercy and wrath are from Him.

[ib. 7] The Divine clemency, therefore, by piercing the jaw of this Behemoth, comes to the aid of mankind on every side, both mercifully and powerfully, because it did not abstain from

giving them caution and admonition when free, nor took from them the remedy of escape when they had been captured. For the sins of such persons, that is, of David and Peter, are recorded in Scripture for this end, that the fall of their betters may be a caution to inferiors. But the penitence and the pardon of both are alike inserted to this end, that the recovery of the lost may be the hope of the perishing. Let no one boast then of standing firm himself, when David falls. Let no one also despair of his own fall, when David rises. Behold how marvellously Holy Scripture humbles the proud with the same word with which it raises up the humble. For it recorded but one circumstance, and recalled, by a different effect, the proud to the fearfulness of humility, and the humble to the confidence of hope. O the surpassing value of this new kind of remedy! which applied in one and the same manner, dries up the swollen by pressing on it, and restores the withered by upraising it. For it alarmed us at the fall of our superiors, but strengthened us by their restoration.

24. For thus, in truth, thus does the mercy of the Divine dispensation ever check us when proud, and support us from sinking into despair. Whence He also warns us by Moses, saying, Thou shalt not take either the upper or the nether millstone to pledge. [Deut. 24, 6] For by 'take' we sometimes mean 'take away.' Whence also those birds which are eager in seizing other birds are called hawks [accipitres, ab accipio]. Whence the Apostle Paul says, For ye suffer, if a man devour you, if a man take. [2 Cor. 11, 20] As if he said, If any one takes away. But the pledge of the debtor is the confession of a sinner. For a pledge is taken from a debtor, when a confession of sin is obtained from a sinner. But the upper and nether millstone are hope and fear. For hope raises up the heart, but fear weighs it down lower. But the upper and the nether millstone are so necessarily joined together, that one is possessed in vain without the other. Hope and fear, therefore, ought to be unceasingly united in the breast of a sinner, because he hopes in vain for mercy, if he does not also fear justice; he in vain fears justice, if he does not also rely on mercy. The upper or the nether millstone is, therefore, ordered not to be taken as a pledge; because he who preaches to a sinner, ought to order his preaching with such management, as not in leaving hope to remove fear, nor yet in withdrawing hope, to leave him in fear only. For the upper or the nether millstone is removed, if by the tongue of the preacher, either fear is severed from hope, or hope from fear, in the breast of the sinner.

25. But since on having brought forward David, as the case demanded, we have made mention of so great a sin, the mind of our reader is perhaps moved to enquire, why Almighty God does not keep uninjured by bodily sins, those whom He has elected for ever, and has also taken up to the height of spiritual gifts. To which, because we believe they will be speedily satisfied, we give a brief reply. For some through the gifts of virtues they have received, through the grace of good works bestowed on them, fall into the sin of pride, but yet know not whither they have fallen. Accordingly, the ancient enemy, because he already rules over them within, is permitted also to rage against them from without, in order that they who are elated in thought, may be brought down by the lust of the flesh. But we know that it is sometimes much less to fall into corruption of body, than to sin in our silent thought from deliberate pride. But when pride is believed to be less disgraceful, it is less avoided. But

men are more ashamed of lust, the more they all alike know it to be disgraceful. It is hence frequently the case that some persons on falling into lust after pride, are, from their open fall, ashamed of the guilt of their latent sin. And they then also correct their greater faults, when they are more sorely confounded from having been overcome in those that are less.

For they who believed that they were free when living in greater sins, behold that they are guilty even amid smaller ones. This Behemoth then, when let loose by the merciful dispensation of God, leads on from sin to sin, and while he strikes the more heavily, loses thereby him whom he has seized, and is conquered by the very means by which he seems to have triumphed. It is pleasing to consider within the well guarded bosom of grace, with what great favour of compassion God surrounds us. Behold! he who prides himself on his virtue, through sin comes back to humility. But he who is puffed up by the virtues he has received, is wounded not with a sword, but, so to say, with a remedy. For what is virtue but a remedy, and what is vice but a wound? Because, therefore, we make a wound of our remedy, He makes a remedy of our wound; in order that we who are wounded by our virtue, may be healed by our sin. For we pervert the gifts of virtues to the practice of vice; He applies the allurements of vices to promote virtues ['in artem virtutem'], and wounds our healthy state in order to preserve it, and that we who fly from humility when we run, may cling to it at least when falling. But it should be understood in these matters, that the more the greater number of men fall in many things, the more firmly are they bound;

and that when this Behemoth smites them with one sin to make them fall, he binds them also with another to keep them from rising. Let a man, therefore, consider with what an enemy he is waging war; and if he perceives that he has already offended in any matter, let him at least be afraid of being drawn from sin to sin, in order that the wounds may be carefully avoided, with which he frequently destroys. For it is very seldom that our enemy subserves the salvation of the Elect by actual wounds.

26. But the perforated jaw of this Behemoth can be understood in another sense also; so that he may be said to hold in his mouth not those whom he has already completely entangled in sin, but those whom he is still tempting by the persuasions of sin: so as that his chewing any one may be his tempting him with the pleasure of sin. He had received Paul to be chewed, but not swallowed, when he was harassing him, after so many sublime revelations, with thorns of the flesh. [2 Cor. 12, 7] For when he received permission to practise temptation against him, he then held him in his jaw, which yet had been pierced through. But he who could perish through pride, was tempted, that he might not perish. That temptation was, therefore, not an abyss of vices, but a protection of his merits; because this Leviathan by wearying him crushed him with affliction, but did not devour by involving him in sin. But he would not lose men who were elated by their sanctity, unless he tempted them. For they would not be holy, if they boasted of the glory of their sanctity, and would fall the more under his power, the more they extolled themselves for their virtues. But by the wonderful course of the dispensation, when they are tempted, they are humbled; when they are humbled, they cease at once to be his.

The jaw of this Behemoth is, therefore, well said to have been pierced through, because he loses the Elect of God by crushing them, by attempting to destroy, he keeps them from perishing. The ancient enemy, therefore, subserving the secret dispensations of God, willingly tempts the souls of the holy to their ruin, but, by tempting, unwillingly preserves them for the kingdom. His jaw is, therefore, pierced through, because those whom he crushes by tempting, that is, by chewing them, he loses as it were, when he goes to swallow. But since it is the work not of human, but divine, forethought, that the very craft of the ancient enemy promotes ['suffragetur'] the benefit of the just, (so that when he tempts the Elect he protects them the more by his temptation,) it is well said to blessed Job; Or wilt thou bore through his jaw with a bracelet? Thou understandest, As I; Who providently disposing all things, preserve My Elect more firmly in their integrity, by permitting them to be moved ['labefactari'] in a measure from their integrity by the jaw of this Leviathan. It follows;

Ver. 22. Will he multiply prayers to thee, or will he speak soft words to thee? [E.V. 41, 3] [xiii] 27. Thou understandest, As to Me. For if these words are referred to the person of the Son, he spake soft words to Him Incarnate, when he said, I know Thee, Who Thou art, the Holy One of God. [Luke 4, 34] And this Leviathan multiplied prayers to Him, when he said by the legion which was subject to him; If Thou cast us out, send us into the herd of swine. [Matt. 8, 31] Although it can be understood in a still more plain manner, because he multiplies prayers to the Lord, when the wicked, who are his body, pray, on the day of the last judgment, that they may be spared; when his members, that is, the reprobate, cry out too late, and say, Lord, Lord, open unto us. To whom it is said immediately, I know you not, whence ye are. [Luke 13, 25] Then also he will say by his members soft words to the Lord, when many of his body are about to say, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name have cast out devils, and in Thy Name have done many wonderful works? [Matt. 7, 22] They say soft words in deprecation, when they say in reply what they have done in His Name, but when they did these very deeds with hard heart, they claimed them for their own credit. Whence they shortly hear, I know you not, who ye are. It follows;

Ver. 23. Will he make a covenant with thee? Thou understandest, As with Me. And wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? [E.V. 41, 4] [xiv]

28. Thou understandest, As I. But it must be carefully observed, that this Leviathan makes a covenant with the Lord, in order to be counted His servant for ever. For in a covenant the wishes of parties who are at variance are fulfilled, that each attains to what it desires, and terminates its quarrels by the desired result. The ancient enemy, therefore, when kindled by the torch of his malice, is at variance with the purity of the Divine innocence, but even in his variance, disagrees not with His judgment. For he is ever maliciously seeking to tempt righteous men. But yet the Lord permits this to take place, either mercifully, or righteously. This liberty to tempt is, therefore, called a 'covenant,' wherein the desire of the tempter is effected, and yet the will of the righteous Dispenser is thereby wonderfully fulfilled. For, as we have lately said, the Lord frequently subjects His Elect to the tempter, in order to be instructed; just as after the barriers of Paradise, after the secrets of the third

heaven, an angel of Satan was given to Paul that he might not be exalted by the greatness of the revelations. [2 Cor. 12, 7] But, as we have said before, it is so ordered in this very temptation, that they who could perish from pride, are, by being humbled, preserved from destruction. In the secret course, therefore, of the dispensation, by the iniquity of the devil being permitted to rage, the kindness of God is brought about in mercy.

And from this covenant which he is said to make with God, he is rightly described as being taken for a servant. Because he obeys the commands ['nutibus'] of the heavenly grace, just as he exercises the wrath of his most evil will. He is, therefore, a servant by agreement, who when permitted to fulfil his own will, is restrained by the will of the counsel of heaven, so as willingly to tempt the Elect of God, as was before said, and unwittingly to prove them by his temptation.

29. But because he promotes in this life the interests of the Elect, as long as he is able to exercise in temptations the evil of his malice; but is said in this place to be taken by the Lord not merely as a servant under an agreement, but a servant for ever; we are compelled to investigate how we can prove that even after the close of the present life, he is a servant of the Lord for ever. For he is no longer permitted to tempt the righteous who are powerful in heavenly happiness, when he is condemned before their eyes to the eternal fires of hell. Because in that heavenly country, in which they are now rewarded for the labours of their temptations, they need not to be disciplined by temptations. But at that time this Leviathan with his body, namely all the reprobate, is consigned to the avenging flames, to be tortured therein for ever. And while the just behold these torments, they praise God in truth more and more, because they both see in themselves the blessing with which they have been rewarded, and in the others witness the punishment which they have themselves escaped. For so will the universe be full of beauty, when both hell justly tortures the ungodly, and eternal felicity justly rewards the righteous. For as a black colour is put as the back ground of a picture, in order that the white or red which is put over it may seem more beautiful;

so at that time, God by rightly disposing even of the wicked, increases the happiness of the blessed, by displaying before their eyes the sufferings of the reprobate. And although the joy they derive from the vision of the Lord is not of a kind to increase, yet they feel themselves to be more indebted to their Creator, when they both behold the good with which they perceive they have been justly rewarded, and the evil they have overcome from having been mercifully assisted. If then the temptation of this Leviathan here, and his damnation there, contributes to the benefit of the just, he is a servant for ever, when he unwittingly promotes the glory of God; yea both his just punishment there, and his unjust will here. It follows;

Ver. 24. Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? [E.V. 41, 5] [xv]

30. Why is it that our adversary is first called Behemoth, afterwards Leviathan, but is now compared to a 'bird,' in ridicule at his destruction? For Behemoth, as we have said, is interpreted 'monster,' ['bellua'] and it is shewn to be a quadruped, when it is said to eat hay

as an ox. But Leviathan, as he is taken with a hook is doubtless set before us as a serpent in the waters. But now he is brought into comparison with a bird, when it is said, Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Let us examine, therefore, why he is called a 'monster,' or a 'beast,' why a 'dragon,' and why a 'bird.' For we learn more quickly the meaning of his names, if we accurately examine the craft of his cunning. For he comes from heaven to earth, and no longer raises himself by any aspiration to the hope of heavenly things. He is, therefore, an irrational and four-footed animal by the folly of his unclean doings, a dragon by his malice in doing hurt, a 'bird' by the levity of his subtle nature. For because he knows not what he is doing against himself, he is a monster with brute sense; because he maliciously seeks to hurt us, he is a 'dragon;' but because he exalts himself haughtily on the subtlety of his nature, he is a 'bird.' Again, because he is in his wicked doings employed by the Divine power for our benefit, he is a 'beast;' because he secretly bites, he is a 'serpent;' but because he sometimes through his indomitable pride feigns himself to be an Angel of light, he is a 'bird.' For though he harasses mankind with his inexplicable skill in wickedness, yet he specially tempts by three sins; in order, namely, to subdue to himself some by lust, some by malice, and some by pride.

31. He is, therefore, deservedly designated by the very name of his doings, in what he attempts to do, when he is called a 'beast,' a 'dragon,' or a 'bird.' For in those whom he excites to the folly of lust, he is a 'beast;' in those whom he inflames to do malicious injury, he is a 'dragon;' but in those whom he exalts to the haughtiness of pride as though they understood high things, he is a 'bird.' But in those whom he pollutes equally with lust and malice and pride, he exists as a 'beast,' ['jumentum'] a 'dragon,' and a 'bird' at the same time. For he has insinuated himself into the hearts of those deluded by him in as many shapes as the wickednesses in which he entangles them. He is, therefore, called by the name of many things, because he is changed into various kind of shapes before the eyes of those who are deluded by him. For when he tempts this one by the lust of the flesh, and yet does not overcome him, he changes his suggestion, and kindles his heart into malice. Because, therefore, he was unable to approach him as a 'monster,' ['bellua'] he comes near as a 'dragon.' He is unable to corrupt him with the poison of malice, but yet he places his good qualities before his eyes, and exalts his heart to pride.

He could not, therefore, steal up to this man as a dragon, but yet by bringing before him the phantom of vain glory, he flew before the sight of his thought as a bird. And this bird is doubtless raised up the more cruelly against us, the less it is impeded by any weakness of its own nature. For because it is not overcome by the death of the flesh, and saw our Redeemer was mortal in the flesh, it was puffed up with greater haughtiness of pride. But where it raised itself against its Maker with the wing of pride, it there found the snare of its death. For he was overcome by that very death of His flesh, which in pride he sought, and suffered from the snare by his very seeking the death of the Just One, as the prey of his malice. Let it he said then, Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? For the Lord in truth played with him as with a bird, when in the passion of His Only-Begotten Son He shewed him the bait, but concealed the snare. For he saw that which he was taking in his mouth, but he saw not

what he was holding in his throat. For though he had himself confessed Him to be the Son of God, yet he believed that He was dying as a mere man, for whose death he had roused the minds of the persecuting Jews.

But he is understood to have learnt at last too late, at the very moment of His betrayal, that he would be punished by that His death. Whence also he frightened the wife of Pilate by dreams, in order that her husband might desist from the persecution of the Just One. [Matt. 27, 19] But the plan which had been by the secret dispensation ordained, could not he by any machination overthrown. For it was expedient that the death of a Just Man dying unjustly should be a ransom for the death of sinners dying justly. But because this Leviathan was ignorant of this even to the time of His passion, he was deluded as a bird, and suffered from the snare of His Godhead, when he seized the bait of His Manhood. It follows;

Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? [xvi]

32. Thou understandest, As I. Though the condition of male servants is despicable, their manhood is strong. But in maid servants their sex lies low, together with their condition. The Lord, therefore, well declares that He binds this Leviathan not for his male servants, but for his maidens. Because when He came for our redemption, and sent His preachers against the pride of the world, He chose the foolish, and left the wise; the weak, and left the strong; the poor, and left the rich. The Lord, therefore, bound the strength of this Leviathan for His maidens, because, as Paul witnesses, God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. [l Cor. 1, 27] Whence it is well said by Solomon; Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out seven pillars, she hath slain her victims, she hath mingled wine, she hath set forth her table, she hath sent her maidens to summon to the citadel, and to the walls of the city. [Prov. 9, 1-3] For Wisdom in truth built her a house, when the Only-Begotten Son of God, through the intervention of His soul [Note: 'Mediante anima.' He means to say, not that the Human Soul of our Lord was the means of creating the Body, but that it is the medium through which that Body is personally united with the Godhead. See Bk. xxxi. §. 42], created Himself a human body within the womb of the Virgin.

For the body of the Only-Begotten is called the house of God, just as it is also called a temple; but so, that that one and the same Son of God and Man, is Himself the Inhabitor, Himself the Inhabited. But this can be rightly understood in another sense also, if the Church is called the house of Wisdom. And She hath hewn out Herself seven pillars, because She has severed the minds of preachers from the love of the present world, and has raised them up to bear the fabric of this selfsame Church. And these, because they are supported by the virtue of perfection, are designated by the number seven. She hath slain her victims, because she allowed the life of preachers to be sacrificed by persecution. She hath mingled her wine, because she has announced to us the mysteries of the Godhead and Manhood alike. She hath also set forth her table, because She hath laid open and prepared for us the food of Holy Scripture. She hath likewise sent her maidens, to summon us to the citadel and to the walls of the city, because she studied to have weak and abject preachers, to gather the

faithful people to the heavenly edifices of their spiritual country. Whence the Lord praises Nathaniel in the Gospel, [John 1, 47] but yet does not number him in the class of preachers, because such as had nothing praiseworthy of their own, ought to come to preach Him;

in order that that which they were doing might be known more surely to be of the truth, the more plainly it was also seen that they were not sufficient of themselves to effect it. In order then that His wonderful power might shine forth by the tongues of His preachers, it was first ordered still more wonderfully, that these preachers should have no merit of their own. The Lord, therefore, sent 'maidens' and bound the strength of this Leviathan, because He set forth to the world feeble preachers, and confined with the bond of His terror all the mighty, who had been of his body. And this Leviathan is bound in His own person by maidens, when, on the light of truth shining forth by weak preachers, the ancient enemy is not permitted to rage, at his will, against the minds of the Elect, but is restrained by signs and mighty wonders from holding all whom he desires under the bondage of unbelief. He, therefore, who gives strength against him to the weak, works this mightily by Himself. But because the Lord informs us whom He sends against him, He now also adds what they do who are sent. It follows;

Ver. 25. His friends shall cut him in pieces; the merchants shall divide him. [E.V. 41, 6] [xvii]

33. This Leviathan is cut in pieces, as often as his members are severed from him by the sword of the Divine Word. For when wicked men hear the word of truth, and, smitten with holy fear, suspend their imitation of the ancient enemy, he, from whom those who wickedly adhered to him are withdrawn, is himself divided in his own body. But He terms those His 'friends,' whom before He calls 'maidens,' those also He calls 'merchants,' whom He had termed 'friends.' For holy preachers are first 'maidens' through their fear, afterwards 'friends' through faith, at last 'merchants' also through their actions. For it is said to them when weak; Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased the Father to give you a kingdom. [Luke 12, 32] It is said to them again, growing strong, But I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you. [John 15, 15] Lastly, they are ordered when going forth to carry on their business; Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. [Mark 16, 15] For in the preaching of the faith a kind of traffic is, as it were, carried on; when the word is given to, and faith received from, the hearers. They make as it were a kind of traffic, who make a venture ['pr'rogant'] with their preaching, and bring back faith from the people. They impart to them faith, and immediately receive back their holy life.

For if the preaching of the righteous had not been a traffic, the Psalmist surely would not be saying, Take a psalm, and give a timbrel. [Ps. 81, 2] For in a timbrel, leather is dried, in order that it may sound. What is meant then by saying, Take a psalm, and give a timbrel, except this? Take ye the spiritual song of the heart, and give back the temporal maceration of the body. If heavenly preaching had not been a traffic, Solomon would never say of Holy Church under the type of a virtuous woman, She made fine linen, and sold it, and delivered

a girdle to the Canaanite. [Prov. 31, 24] For what is signified by a garment of fine linen, but the subtle texture of holy preaching? In which men rest softly, because the mind of the faithful is refreshed therein by heavenly hope. Whence also the animals are shewn to Peter in a linen sheet, [Acts 10, 11. 12. because the souls of sinners mercifully gathered together are inclosed in the gentle quiet of faith. The Church, therefore, made and sold this fine garment, because she imparted in words that faith which she had woven by belief; and received from unbelievers a life of upright conversation. And she delivered a girdle to the Canaanite, because by the might of the righteousness she displayed, she constrained the lax doings of the Gentile world, in order that that might be maintained in their doings which is commanded, Let your loins be girded about.

[Luke 12, 35] The Lord, therefore, in searching out for His preachers finds them as 'maidens,' by changing them He makes them 'friends,' by enriching sets them forth as 'merchants.' For they who in their infirmity were at first afraid of the threats of the world, ascend afterwards to know the Divine counsels. But when enriched with virtues, they are led as far as to carry on the traffic of faith, in order that by their threats and persuasions they may smite the members of this Leviathan the more severely, the more truly, having become even friends, they unite themselves to the love of the Truth; and that they may withdraw from him more quickly the souls of sinners, the more, having become skilful traffickers, they display in themselves the most ample treasures of virtues. For that the possession of this Leviathan is, much to their praise, taken from him by the preachers of God, the voice of Truth promises by the Prophet, saying, And if thou wilt separate the precious from the vile, thou shall be as My mouth. [Jer. 15, 19] For he in truth separates the precious from the vile, who cuts off the minds of men from accursed ['reproba'] imitation of the ancient enemy. He is rightly called the mouth of God, because by him doubtless the divine words are uttered. It follows,

Ver. 26. Wilt thou fill nets with his skin, and the cabin of fishes with his head? [E.V. 41, 7] [xviii]

34. What is designated by 'nets,' or a 'cabin of fishes,' except the churches of the faithful which make one Catholic Church? Whence it is written in the Gospel, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net cast into the sea, and gathering of every kind of fishes. [Matt. 13, 47] The Church is in truth called the kingdom of heaven, for while the Lord exalts her conduct to things above, she already reigns herself in the Lord by heavenly conversation. And it is also rightly compared to a net cast into the sea, gathering of every kind of fishes; because when cast into this gentile world, it rejected no one, but caught the wicked with the good, the proud with the humble, the angry with the gentle, and the foolish with the wise. But by the 'skin' of this Leviathan we understand the foolish, and by his 'head,' the wise ones of his body. Or certainly by the 'skin,' which is outermost, are designated those who serve him as inferiors in these meanest offices, but by the 'head' those placed over them. And the Lord observing the proper order rightly declares that He will fill these 'nets,' or 'cabin of fishes,' that is, His Church, and the wishes of the faithful with his 'skin' first, and afterwards with his 'head.' Because, as we said before, He first chose the weak, that He

might confound the strong afterwards. [l Cor. l, 27] He chose in truth the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise.

For He gathered together the unlearned first, and philosophers afterwards; and He taught not fishermen by means of orators, but with wondrous power He subdued orators by means of fishermen. He says therefore, Wilt thou fill nets with his skin, or the cabin of fishes with his head? Thou understandest, As I, Who first gather within the Church of the faithful the most distant, and the lowest, as the 'skin' of the devil, and afterwards subdue to Myself his 'head,' that is, wise adversaries. It follows; Wilt thou lay thine hand upon him? That is, As I, Who restraining him by My mighty power, permit him not to rage more than is expedient, and Who, as far as I shall have permitted his cruelty, turn it to the benefit of My Elect. For certainly to lay a hand upon him, is to subdue him by the might of virtue. It is said then to blessed Job in a question;

Ver. 27. Wilt thou lay thine hand upon him? [E.V. 41, 8] As if it were openly said, wilt thou restrain him with thine own strength? Whence it is also fitly subjoined; Remember the battle, and speak no more. [xix] 35. The deep dispensation of God's judgment for this reason often either assails His well-deserving servants with threats, or presses on them with scourges, or weighs them down by some superimposed burdens, or entangles them in laborious employments, because it foresees with wonderful power, that if they were to remain quiet, and in freedom under tranquillity, they would sink beneath the wounds of the mind from being unable to endure the temptations of the adversary. Whilst then it engages them in scourges or burdens to be endured without, it protects them from receiving the darts of temptations within. For it is frequently a practice for a physician to draw out the inflammation of the bowels into an itching on the skin; and he often effects a cure within, by causing an outward wound. In like manner the medicine of the Divine dispensation frequently causes the removal of an inward wound by outward pains, and the throwing out of that inward corruption of sins, which would otherwise occupy the mind, by the deep wounds of scourges. And yet frequently, when men are not conscious to themselves of an open sin, and are either tortured by pain, or weighed down by labours, they break out into complaints against the Just and Almighty Judge; from not observing against how mighty an adversary they are waging war. But did they but observe anxiously his irresistible strength, they would not murmur at the outward sufferings they endure.

36. But these seem to us grievous, for the very reason that we do not like to consider our still more grievous contests with our secret adversary. From which assaults, as we said, we are frequently defended, when scourged, and concealed when afflicted. For if our flesh is afflicted with no pain, before it is strengthened with the incorruption of the resurrection, it is unchecked in temptations. But who can be ignorant that it is much better to burn with the heat of fevers, than with the fire of sins? And yet when we are seized with a fever, because we neglect attending to the heat of sins, which might possess us, we murmur at the blow. Who can be ignorant, that it is much better to be held in bondage by cruel men, than to be under the power of the flattering spirits of devils? And yet when we are galled by the

yoke of our human condition [perhaps 'of subjection to man'], in the deep judgment of God, we break out into complaint, doubtless because we do not consider that if no condition of bondage oppressed us, our mind, more fatally free, would perchance be in bondage to many iniquities. We believe then the sufferings we endure to be weighty, because we see not how severe and irresistible are the assaults of the crafty enemy against us. For every weight would be as nothing to our mind; if it considered the assaults of the secret adversary which might oppress it.

But what if Almighty God were to lighten the burdens we suffer, and yet withdraw from us His assistance, and leave us amid the temptations of this Leviathan? Where shall we betake ourselves, when so mighty an enemy is raging against us, if we are not defended by any protection of our Creator? Because, therefore, blessed Job was not conscious to himself of a fault, and yet was enduring severe scourges, lest he should haply exceed in the sin of murmuring, let him be reminded what to fear, and let it be said to him, Remember the battle, and speak no more. As if it were plainly said to him, If thou considerest the contest of the secret enemy against thee, thou dost not blame whatever thou sufferest from Me. If thou beholdest the sword of the adversary assailing thee, thou dost not at all dread the scourge of a Father. For thou seest with what scourge I smite thee, but thou omittest to look from how great an enemy I keep thee free by My scourging. Remember therefore the battle, and speak no more: that is, keep thyself the more silent under the discipline of a Father, the more thou seest that thou art weak for the assaults of the enemy. Whilst then thou art smitten by My correction, in order that thou mayest bear it with patience, recal thine enemy to mind, and consider not that every thing thou sufferest is hard, when by outward tortures thou art freed from inward suffering.

But because this Leviathan flatters himself with a false promise of the Divine compassion, after He had spoken of the terror of his strength, and had roused the mind of blessed Job with circumspection towards Him, (saying, Remember the battle, and say no more; in order to shew his unpardonable guilt, He immediately added;

Ver. 28. Behold, his hope shall disappoint him. [E.V. 41. 9] [xx]

37. But this ought to be so understood, as to be referred to his body also; because all wicked men who fear not the strictness of Divine justice, flatter themselves in vain on His compassion. And He presently returns to console us, and foretels his coming destruction at the last judgment, saying; And in the sight of all he shall be cast down. For he will be cast down in the sight of all, because when the eternal Judge then terribly appears, when legions of Angels stand at His side, when the whole ministry of heavenly Powers is attending, and all the Elect are brought to behold this spectacle, this cruel and mighty monster is brought captive into the midst, and with his own body, that is, with all reprobates, is consigned to the eternal fires of hell, when it is said, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. [Matt. 25, 41] O what a spectacle will that be, when this most huge monster will be displayed to the eyes of the Elect, which at this time of contest, could he but be seen, might have too much terrified them! But it is

so ordered by the secret and wonderful judgment of God, that he is now conquered by His grace, though not seen by the combatants, and that then he is beheld by the joyful victors as already captive.

But they then learn more fully how much they are indebted to the Divine assistance, when they have once seen so mighty a beast, whom they have now conquered in their weakness; and behold in the huge size of their enemy, how much they owe to the grace of their Defender. For our soldiers then return from this battle bringing back the trophies of their virtues; and when, having recovered their bodies, they are now about to obtain, in that judgment, an admission to the heavenly kingdom, they behold first the most monstrous strength of this ancient serpent, that they may not esteem lightly the danger they have escaped. It is therefore well said; And in the sight of all he will be cast down, because the sight of his death then causes joy, whose life, being now endured, daily engages with tortures in contest with the just. But as if we should immediately complain on hearing these things, and should say to the Lord, 'O Lord, Who art not ignorant that this Leviathan is of such great strength, why dost Thou arouse him to engage in contest with our weakness?' He immediately added;

Chap. xli. ver. 1. I will not rouse him as one that is cruel. And as if the ground of the reason were immediately asked by us, 'How dost Thou not arouse him, as one that is cruel, since we know that Thou permittest him to devour and to destroy so many?' He immediately added, saying, Ver. 2. For who can resist My countenance? and who hath first given to Me that I should repay him? [E.V. 10. and 11.] [xxi]

38. In which two verses He fully stated both the might of His own power, and the whole weight of the reason. For on account of His power He said, For who can resist My countenance? And on account of the reason He added; Who hath first given to Me, that I should repay him? As if He said, I do not rouse him up as one that is cruel, because I both rescue by My might My Elect from his power, and again, I condemn the reprobate not unjustly, but with good reason. That is, I am both able to rescue marvellously those whom I mercifully elect, and those whom I reject, I do not unjustly abandon. For no one has first given any thing to God, in order that the Divine Grace should follow him. For if we have prevented God by our good works, where is that which the Prophet says; His mercy shall prevent me? [Ps. 59, 10] If we have given any good works, in order to deserve His grace, where is that which the Apostle says, By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God, not of works? [Eph. 2, 8] If our love prevented God, where is that which John the Apostle says; Not that we loved God, but that He first loved us? [l John 4, 10] Where is that which the Lord says by Hosea; I will love thee of My own accord?

[Hos. 14, 4] If without His gift, by our own strength we follow God, where is that which the Truth protests in the Gospel, saying, Without Me ye can do nothing? [John 15, 5] Where is that which He says; No man can come to Me, except the Father, Which hath sent Me, hath drawn him? [ib. 6, 44] Where is that which He says again; Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you? [ib. 15, 16] If we only prevent the gifts of good works by thinking aright through our own strength, where is that which is again said so salutarily by Paul, that all

self-confidence of the human mind might be cut away from the very root of the heart, when he says; Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God? [2 Cor. 3, 5] No one therefore prevents God by his merits, so as to be able to hold Him as his debtor. But the All-just Creator has in a wonderful manner both chosen some beforehand, and justly leaves some in their own wicked habits.

39. But yet He does not display to His Elect mercy without justice, because He here weighs them down with hard afflictions. Nor again does He exercise on the reprobate justice without mercy, because He here patiently endures those, whom He condemns hereafter for ever. If therefore both the Elect follow the grace which prevents them, and the reprobate receive according to that which they deserve; both the Elect find something to praise in His mercy, and the reprobate have nothing to blame in His justice. It is, therefore, well said; Who hath first given to Me, that I should repay him? As if it were plainly said; I am not compelled by any reason to spare the reprobate, because I am not bound to them as a debtor by any doings of theirs. For they therefore receive not the eternal rewards of the heavenly country, because now, when they could deserve, they have of their free will despised them. But this very free will is fashioned aright in the Elect, when their mind is raised above earthly desires, by the inspiration of grace.

40. For the good which we do belongs both to God, and to ourselves. It is God's by preventing grace, our own by the free will which follows. For if it is not of God, why do we return Him thanks for ever? Again, if it is not our own, why do we hope for rewards to be conferred on us? Because then we do not give thanks undeservedly, we know that we are prevented by His grace. And again, because we do not seek for recompense undeservedly, we know that by the compliance of free will, we have chosen good deeds to perform. It follows; All things that are under heaven are Mine. It is clear to all persons, that not only those things that are under heaven, but that those very things, which from being created above the heavens, are called heavenly, subserve the will of Him by Whom they remember they were created. Why then does He speak only of things below and say,

All things that are under the heaven are Mine? [xxii] 41. But because He is speaking of Leviathan, who no longer dwells in the abode of the ethereal heaven, He asserts that all things that are under the heaven are His, in order to teach that he also who has fallen from heaven, is subject to His power. As if He said, This Leviathan has lost indeed My blessedness, but he has not escaped My authority: because even those very powers, which oppose Me by their evil doings, are subservient to Me. It follows; Ver. 3. I will not spare him, nor his mighty words, and framed for entreaty. [E.V. 12] [xxiii] 42. Who can think this, which he knows he has never read, that the devil is about to ask pardon for his faults? But perhaps that man, whom this Leviathan in the end of the world makes his peculiar vessel, (whom, as Paul attests, the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming,) [2 Thess, 2, 8] alarmed at the presence of such great majesty, because he is unable to exercise his strength, bends himself ['inclinatur'] to prayer. But this can be more fitly understood of his body, that is of all the wicked, who

have recourse at last to words of supplication, because they now scorn to perform its deeds. Whence the Truth says in the Gospel, Last of all come also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. [Matt. 25, 11] To whom it is immediately replied, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. [ib. 12] But when he is said to compose words mighty for entreaty, he urges us the more to understand at this time that which we have said of his body in time to come.

43. For there are some within Holy Church who offer to God long prayers, but have not the conduct of those who entreat. For they follow after heavenly promises in their petitions, but avoid them in their deeds. These sometimes feel even tears in their prayer, but when after the seasons of prayer pride has struck their mind, they immediately swell up with the haughtiness of high-mindedness; when avarice urges them, they frequently glow with the heat of covetous thought; when lust has tempted, they pant at once with unlawful desires; when anger has persuaded them, the flame of madness soon consumes their gentleness of mind. As we have said then, they both experience tears in prayer, and yet at the close of their prayers, when they are assaulted with the suggestions of sins, they remember not that they had wept for desire of the heavenly kingdom. Which Balaam openly stated concerning himself, who says, on beholding the tabernacles of the just, Let my soul die with the death of the just, and let my last end be like theirs. [Numb. 23, 10] But when the time of compunction passed, he gave counsel against the life of those, to whom he had asked to be made like even in death; and when he found an occasion of avarice, he immediately forgot whatever he had wished for himself in the way of innocence. A prayer, then, which the perseverance of continual love does not hold fast, has not the weight of virtue.

And, as the contrary of this, it is well said of Hannah when weeping, And her countenance was no more changed to a different form; [1 Sam. 1, 18] namely, because her mind lost not after her prayers, by wantoning in foolish joy, that which at the season of its prayer, it sought for with hardness of groans. But by some the labour of prayer is turned to the purpose of traffic. Of whom the Truth says in the Gospel, Which devour widows houses under the pretence of long prayers. These shall receive greater judgment. [Mark 12, 40] Because therefore the prayers of the wicked, who are the body of this Leviathan, are in no way spared, when their prayers are destroyed by their conduct, it is now rightly said, I will not spare him, nor his mighty words, and framed for entreaty. Although from the words being said to be mighty, and framed for entreaty, the emptiness of their prayer is plainly pointed out. For truly to pray is to utter bitter groans in compunction, and not well arranged words. But because the more severely the ancient enemy is crushed, the more does he expand in wickedness by manifold arguments; and because the Lord manifests his snares the more mercifully, the more artfully He observes them to be concealed, it is rightly subjoined,

Ver. 4. Who will uncover the face of his garment? [E.V. 13] [xxiv]

44. This Leviathan tempts in one way the minds of men which are religious, and in another those which are devoted to this world. For he presents openly to the wicked the evil things they desire; but he secretly lays snares for the good, and deceives them under a show of

sanctity: he presents himself to the one more manifestly as wicked, as though they were his friends, but to the others he covers himself, as it were, with a cloke of comeliness, as if they were strangers, in order to introduce secretly, concealed beneath the cover of a good action, the evils which he cannot publicly effect. Whence also his members, when they are unable to injure by open wickedness, often assume the guise of a good action, and display themselves to be wicked in conduct, but yet deceive by their appearance of sanctity. For if the wicked were openly evil, they would not be received at all by the good. But they assume something of the look of the good, in order that while good men receive in them the appearance which they love, they may take also the poison, which they avoid, blended with it. Whence the Apostle Paul, on beholding some men under the cloke of preaching devoting themselves to the service of the belly, says, For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. What wonder then if his ministers are transformed as the ministers of righteousness?

[2 Cor. 11, 14] Joshua feared this transformation when, on seeing an Angel, he asked him on which side he was, saying, Art thou ours, or our adversaries? [Josh. 5, 13] in order, namely, that if he were of the adverse force ['virtutis'], he might, from knowing that he was suspected, shrink from practising deception. Because therefore this Leviathan, in attempting a work of iniquity, frequently clothes himself with a semblance of sanctity, and because the garb of his simulation cannot be detected except by Divine grace, it is well said, Who will uncover the face of his garment? Thou understandest, except Myself, Who inspire into the minds of My servants the grace of most subtle discernment, in order that, on the unveiling of his malice, they may see his face exposed, which he conceals closely covered under the garb of sanctity. And because he endeavours to corrupt the minds of the faithful sometimes by openly shewing himself, sometimes by suggestion, (for he acts at one time by deed, at another by persuasion,) it is rightly subjoined;

And who will enter into the midst of his mouth? [xxv] 45. Thou understandest, But I, Who by the discreet minds of the Elect examine the words of his suggestions, and prove that they are not such as they sounded. For they seem to promise what is good, but they lead to a fatal end. To enter, therefore, into the middle of his mouth is so to penetrate his words of cunning, as to make, not their sound, but their meaning, to be considered. Adam would not enter into the middle of his mouth, when he neglected to consider carefully the purpose of his persuasion. For he believed in truth that he was receiving Divinity through him, and he lost his immortality. From incautiously remaining then external to the meaning of his words, he utterly exposed himself to be devoured by his mouth. It follows; Ver. 5. Who will open the gates of his face? [E.V. 14]

[xxvi] 46. The 'gates of his face' are wicked teachers, who are called the gates of his face for this reason, because, every one enters through them, in order that this Leviathan may be seen, as it were, in the princedom of his power. For as sacred Scripture is wont to call holy men gates of Sion, [Ps. 87, 2] (for Sion is by interpretation, 'watching,' and we deservedly call holy preachers the gates of Sion, because by their life and doctrine we enter the secrets of heavenly contemplation,) so also are the teachers of errors signified by the gates of this

Leviathan; for when their false preaching is received, the way of perdition is opened to their wretched hearers. But these gates are generally opened before the eyes of men, in order to admit, but yet are closed in order to seize; because in appearance they present right things, but in their doings they persuade evil things. They are closed therefore in order to seize, because they are kept by outward hypocrisy from being discerned within. But yet the Lord opens them with wonderful power; because He makes the hearts of hypocrites comprehensible to His Elect. Who, therefore, will open the gates of His face? Thou understandest, except Myself, Who make manifest with clear understanding to My Elect the teachers of errors who are concealed beneath the semblance of sanctity. And because Antichrist, who rages with a twofold error, and endeavours both to draw the hearts of men to himself by sending his preachers, and to bend them by exciting the powers of the world, will also gain possession of these chief powers, the Lord well added concerning this Leviathan, saying,

In a circle is the terror of his teeth. [xxvii] 47. For He wished to change the expression, and, in another phrase, to call these his 'teeth,' whom He had above called 'gates.' For false preachers are his 'gates,' because they open the entrance to perdition. They are his 'teeth,' because they break down from the solidity of truth those whom they seize in error. For as by the teeth of Holy Church we understand those who crush by their preachings the hardness of sinners, (whence it is said to her by Solomon, Thy teeth as flocks of sheep that have been shorn, coming up from the washing; [Cant. 4, 2] and they are deservedly compared to shorn and washed sheep, because when assuming an innocent life they laid aside the old fleeces of their former conversation in the laver of Baptism,) so also the teachers of errors are typified by the teeth of this Leviathan. Because they mangle with their bite the life of the reprobate, and offer them, when withdrawn from the integrity of truth, in the sacrifice of falsehood. Their preaching might easily be despised by their hearers, but the additional terror of worldly powers exalts it in the judgment of men.

48. It is, therefore, rightly said, In a circle is the terror of his teeth, that is, the corrupted powers of this world protect the wicked preachers of Antichrist. For many of the powerful strive to alarm by cruelty those whom they seek to seduce with their words. In a circle, therefore, is the terror of his teeth. As if it were openly said, These false preachers crush some by their persuasions, because there are others around them, who afflict with their terrors the minds of the weak. What a season of persecution will that appear, then, when some rage with words, and others with swords, to pervert the piety of the faithful? For who would not despise, even if he were weak, the teeth of this Leviathan, if terror did not defend them by a circle of worldly powers? But they are proceeded against with twofold cunning, because that which is said to them by some with nattering words, is enforced by others with the blows of swords. And the conduct of both of these, that is, of the powerful, and the persuasive ['potentium atque loquentium'], is summed up in the Apocalypse of John, in a short sentence, wherein it is said, The power of the horses was in their mouth, and in their tails. [Rev. 9, 19] For by the 'mouth' is typified the knowledge of the learned, but by the 'tail' the power of men of the world.

For by the 'tail' which is behind is designated the temporal condition of this world which must be put behind us, of which the Apostle Paul says, But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. [Phil. 3, 13] For every thing which passes by, is behind; but every thing which coming abides, is before. The power therefore of these horses, that is, of most evil preachers, who are hurrying on every where by carnal impulse, is in their mouth and their tail. Because they themselves indeed preach perverse things in their persuasion, but, by relying on temporal powers, exalt themselves by means of those things which are behind. And because they themselves may possibly appear despicable, they exact respect to themselves from their wicked hearers, by means of those, by whose patronage they are supported. Whence in this place also fear is rightly described as being in the circle of his teeth, because it is caused by many terrors that temporal power, though not the sentence of truth, is certainly dreaded in their perverse preachings. Whence the Psalmist well described this same Antichrist, saying, Under his tongue is labour, and sorrow: he sitteth in ambush with the rich in secret places. [Ps. 10, 7, 8] For, on account of his perverse doctrines, labour and sorrow is under his tongue. But on account of his display of miracles he sitteth in ambush; but on account of the glory of secular power, with the rich in secret places.

But because he uses at the same time both the craft of miracles, and earthly power, he is said to sit both in secret places, and with the rich.

Ver. 6. His body as molten shields. [E.V. 15] [xxviii]

49. Holy Scripture is wont to use the word 'shield,' sometimes in a favourable, sometimes in an unfavourable way. For the defence of a shield is often put for Divine protection, but it is sometimes used for the opposition of man. For it is put for Divine protection, as is said by the Psalmist, Thou hast crowned us with the shield of Thy good will. [Ps. 5, 12] The Lord is said to crown as with a shield, because those whom He assists by protecting, He crowns by rewarding. Again, a 'shield' is put by the same prophet for the opposition of man, as he says elsewhere, There brake He the horns, the bow, the shield, the sword, and the battle. [Ps. 76, 3] For by 'horns' is designated the haughtiness of the proud, by the 'bow' the snares of those who strike from far; but by a 'shield' obstinate hardness in defence, by a 'sword' a blow near at hand; but in 'battle' the movement of the mind itself against God. And the whole of this is doubtless crushed in Holy Church, when the minds of those who resist God are tamed by the yoke of humility placed upon them. Hence it is again said by the same Psalmist, He will break the bow, and snap the arms, and burn the shields in the fire. [Ps. 46, 9] For the Lord breaks the bow, when He scatters the secret machinations of those who lie in wait.

He snaps the arms, when He crushes the patronage of man, which had been raised up against Him. He burns the shields in the fire, when by the heat of the Holy Spirit He kindles into the warmth of penitence and confession the minds of sinners which defend themselves with stubborn hardness. But because the body of this Leviathan is in this place compared to 'molten' shields, it is suggested to us to enquire, that every vessel which is molten is indeed hard, but yet when it falls it is usually fragile. If shields then are molten,

they are strong in bearing the blows of arrows, but are fragile when they fall. They are not indeed penetrated by the blow of those that strike them, but shiver into fragments by their own fall. The body therefore of this Leviathan, that is, all the wicked, because they are hardened by obstinacy, but fragile in their life, are compared to molten shields. For when they hear the words of preaching, they permit not any shafts of reproof to penetrate them; because in every sin which they commit they oppose the shield of proud defence. For when any one of such persons is reproved for the guilt of his iniquity, he does not think at once how to correct his fault, but what to oppose in aid of his defence. He is therefore not penetrated by any arrow of truth; because he receives the words of holy reproof on the shield of proud defence.

Whence it is well said by Jeremiah concerning the Jews who were guarding themselves against the precepts of the Lord by a proud defence, Thou wilt render unto them a recompense, O Lord, according to the work of their hands. [Lam. 3, 64] And he immediately mentioned this same recompense more expressly, saying, Thou wilt give them a shield of heart, Thy labour. [ib. 65] For the labour of the Lord which appeared among men was His passible Humanity, which the Jews despised, when they beheld it, with their proud thoughts; and they scorned to believe Him to be immortal, Whom in His passible nature they saw to be mortal. And when they beheld His humility, being hardened with the haughtiness of pride, they laboured with the greatest care that the holy words of preachers should not penetrate their minds. Whilst the Lord then was rendering them a recompense for their evil deeds, He 'gave them as a shield of heart His labour:' because by a righteous judgment He proved them to be obstinately proud against Him, by His very labouring in infirmity for our sakes. For they rejected in truth the words of preachers, because they disdained in the Lord the weaknesses of His sufferings. They had therefore the labour of the Lord as a shield of heart against the Lord Himself, because He appeared despicable to men of haughty thoughts, even in that He became humble for their sake.

50. This shield, as we have already said above, that first sinner held up; who, when the Lord asked him, why he had touched the forbidden tree, referred not the fault to himself, but answered that he had received it from the woman whom the Lord had given him; in order indirectly to throw back his guilt on his Maker, Who had given him a woman to offer such advice. The woman also when questioned held up this shield, when she also referred not the blame to herself, but replied that it was by the persuasions of the serpent, saying, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat; [Gen. 3, 13] in order that she also might indirectly refer her guilt to her Maker, for having permitted the serpent to enter in thither to persuade them thus. But the serpent is not questioned at this time, because his repentance was not sought for. But they, whose repentance was sought for, held up the shield of most sinful defence against the words of most righteous reproof. Whence it is now become even a habit with sinners, for a fault to be defended, when it is reproved, and for guilt to be increased by the very means by which it ought to be terminated. It is therefore well said, His body as molten shields; because all the wicked prepare shields of defence as if against the shafts of

enemies, that the words of their reprovers may not reach them. But He lays open to us still more expressly this very body of his, when He subjoins;

Compacted with scales pressing each other. [xxix] 51. It is said that the body of the dragon is covered with scales, to keep it from being quickly penetrated with shafts. In like manner the whole body of the devil, that is, the multitude of the reprobates, when reproved for its iniquity, endeavours to excuse itself with whatever evasions it can, and opposes, as it were, some scales of defence, that it may not be transfixed with the arrow of truth. For whoever, when reproved, seeks to excuse rather than to lament his sin, is covered, as it were, with scales, when assailed by holy preachers with the sword of the word. He has scales, and therefore the sword of the word has no way of reaching his heart. For the spiritual sword is kept by the hardness of the flesh from being plunged into him.

52. Saul had become hardened against the Lord with carnal wisdom, when no arrow of Gospel preaching penetrated his heart. But after he had been smitten by severe reproof from heaven, and blinded by the heavenly vision, (for he had lost light in order to receive it,) on coming to Ananias he is illuminated. And because in this illumination he lost the stubbornness of his defence, it is well written of him; There fell from his eyes as it had been scales. [Acts 9, 18] The hardness of a carnal integument had in truth pressed upon him, and therefore he saw not the rays of the true Light. But after his haughty resistances were overcome, the scales of his defences fell off. They fell indeed under the hands of Ananias from the eyes of his body, but they had already fallen before, at the reproof of the Lord, from the eyes of his heart. For when he was lying wounded with the shaft of deep reproof, he asked with heart already humble and penetrated, saying, Lord, what Wilt thou have me to do? [Acts 9, 6] The arrow of truth had already reached the inmost parts of the heart, on the removal, namely, of the scales, when he had laid aside the haughtiness of pride, confessing that Lord Whom he had assailed, and not knowing what to do, was thus enquiring. Let us behold, where is that cruel persecutor, where the ravenous wolf.

Behold, he is already turned into a sheep, which asks for the path of the shepherd in order to follow it. And it is to be observed, that when he said, Who art Thou, Lord? [ib. 5] the Lord does not reply to him; I am the Only-Begotten of the Father, I am the Beginning, I am the Word before all ages. For because Saul scorned to believe in the Incarnate Lord, and had despised the weaknesses of His Humanity, he heard from heaven that which he had despised; I am Jesus of Nazareth, Whom thou persecutest. [ib. As if He were saying, Hear from Me this from above, which thou despisest in Me below. Thou hadst scorned the coming of the Maker of heaven on earth, therefore learn from heaven of the Man from earth, in order that thou mayest more greatly fear in Me the mysteries of My infirmity, the more thou beholdest even them exalted in heavenly places to excellence of power. In humbling thee, therefore, I teach thee not that I am God before all worlds; but thou hearest from Me that which thou disdainest to believe of Me. For after He had said, Jesus, He added, still farther to express His earthly abode, of Nazareth. As if it were openly said, Bear with the infirmities of My humility, and lose the scales of thy pride.

53. But it should yet be known, that though these scales of defences cover nearly the whole of mankind, yet that they specially weigh upon the minds of hypocrites, and crafty men. For they shrink the more vehemently from confessing their own faults, the more they are foolishly ashamed of appearing as sinners before men. When their pretended sanctity is therefore reproved, and their hidden wickedness is detected, it opposes the scales of defence, and repels the sword of truth. Whence it is well said by the Prophet against Judaea, There the lamia hath lain down, and hath found rest for herself, there the hedgehog had its hole. [Is. 34, 14. 15. For by the 'lamia' are designated hypocrites, but by the 'hedgehog' all the wicked who protect themselves by divers defences. For the 'lamia' is said to have the face of a man, but the body of a beast. Thus also in the first appearance which all hypocrites present, there is a kind of fashion of sanctity; but that which follows is the body of a beast, because the deeds which they attempt under the show of goodness, are very wicked. But under the name of 'hedgehog' is designated the defence of wicked minds; because, namely, when a hedgehog is being seized, his head is seen, and his feet appear, and all his body is beheld; but presently, as soon as he has been seized, he gathers himself up into a ball, draws his feet inward, hides his head;

and the whole which was before seen at once, is lost at once in the hands of him that holds it. Thus, doubtless, thus are wicked minds, when they are caught in their own excesses. For the head of the hedgehog is seen, because it is seen with what beginnings the sinner made his approach to sin. The feet of the hedgehog are seen, because it is seen with what footsteps his wickedness has been perpetrated; and yet the wicked mind, by suddenly adducing its excuses, draws its feet inward, because it conceals all the footsteps of its iniquity. It withdraws its head, because, by its extraordinary defences, it shews that it has never even begun any thing wicked; and it remains as a ball in the hand of him that holds it, because he who reproves a sinner, suddenly losing all which he had before known, holds the sinner involved within his conscience, and he who had before seen the whole, by detecting it, being deceived by the evasion of a wicked defence, is equally ignorant of the whole. The hedgehog therefore has a hole in the reprobate, because the wicked mind, gathering itself within itself, hides in the darkness of its defence. But the Divine discourse shews us also how the sinner, in thus excusing himself, and in thus clouding over, by his defences which serve to obscure ['caliginosis'], the eye of his reprover which is fastened upon him, is supported by those who are like him. It follows;

Ver. 7. One is joined to another, and not even a breath comes between them. [E.V. 16] [xxx] 54. These scales of sinners are both hardened and joined together, so as not to be penetrated by any breath of life from the mouth of preachers. For those whom a like guilt associates, the same does a perverse defence also crowd together in obstinate agreement, in order that they may protect each other with mutual defence for their sins. For every one fears for himself, when he beholds another admonished or corrected, and therefore arises with the like feeling against the words of reprovers, because, in protecting another, he protects himself. It is therefore well said; One is joined to another, and not even a breath comes between them; because while they mutually shield each other in their iniquities by their proud defence,

they suffer not the breath of holy exhortation in any way to reach them. But He added still more plainly their deadly agreement, saying;

Ver. 8. They will adhere one to another, and holding each other they will not be separated. [E.V. 17] [xxxi] 55. For they who might be corrected, if divided, persevere, when united, in the obstinacy of their iniquities: and are day by day the more easily separable from the knowledge of righteousness, the more they are not mutually separated from each other by any reproach. For as it is wont to be injurious if unity be wanting to the good, so is it fatal if it be not wanting to the wicked. For unity strengthens the perverse, while it makes them accord; and it makes them the more incorrigible, the more unanimous. Of this unity of the reprobate it is said by a wise man; The congregation of sinners is tow gathered together. [Ecclus. 21, 9] Of this the Prophet Nahum says; As thorns embrace each other, so is the feast of those who drink together. [Nahum 1, 10] For the feast of the reprobate is the delight of temporal pleasures. In which feast they doubtless drink together, who make themselves drunk alike with the allurements of their delight. Because therefore an equal guilt unites, for their own defence, the members of this Leviathan, that is, all the wicked, whom the word of God compares to scales compacted together, it is well said; They will adhere one to another, and holding each other, they will never be separated. For they cannot be separated when holding each other, because they are the more bound together for their mutual defence, the more they remember that they are like each other in all things. Having described then his body, the discourse goes back to his head, and what power the ancient enemy exercises by himself in the time of the closing persecution, is set forth. For it follows;

Ver. 9. His sneezing is the splendour of fire. [E.V. 18] [xxxii]

56. This passage we expound the better, if we first enquire, how sneezing is produced. For in sneezing the breath rises up from the breast, and when it finds no pores open for its escape, it touches the brain, and, passing out condensed through the nostrils, it shakes at once all the head. In this body therefore of Leviathan, that is, in either malignant spirits, or reprobate men, who have adhered to him through resemblance in their guilt, a breath rises, as it were, from the breast, when pride exalts itself through the power of the present world. And it finds as it were no pores for escape; because in this raising up of itself against the just, it is kept, by God's provision, from prevailing as much as it desires. But it ascends and touches and shakes the brain, because the collected pride of Satan strikes the sense more closely at the end of the world, and disturbs the head, when it excites more vehemently the author himself of malignant spirits to the persecution of the faithful, by him who is called Antichrist. Then does the condensed breath come forth through his nostrils, because the iniquity of his pride is fully set forth by the open blasts of his malice.

Because therefore sneezing especially shakes the head, that last commotion of this Leviathan, with which he enters into that accursed man, and by him rules over the reprobate, is called his 'sneezing.' And he rouses himself at that time with such power, as to confound, if possible, even the Elect members of the Lord: he makes use of such signs and prodigies, as to seem to glitter with the power of miracles, as if with a kind of light

of fire. Because his head then strives, when aroused, to shine forth with miracles, his sneezing is rightly called the splendour of fire. For in rousing himself to persecute the just, he shines forth before the eyes of the reprobate with mighty signs. And because the wise ones of the world adhere to his tyranny, and he exercises by their advice every evil which he attempts, it is rightly subjoined,

And his eyes as the eyelids of the morning. [xxxiii]

57. For by his 'eyes,' which are fixed in his head, and serve the purpose of sight, his counsellors are not improperly designated, who, when they foresee in their perverse machinations in what manner what things are to be done, point out to his evil workers a way, as it were, for their feet. And they are rightly compared to the eyelids of the morning. For by the 'eyelids of the morning' we understand the last hours of the night, in which the night opens, as it were, its eyes, when now setting forth the beginnings of the coming light. The prudent then of this world, who adhere to the perverse counsels of the malice of Antichrist, are, as it were, the eyelids of the morning, because they declare that the faith in Christ which they meet with is, as it were, the night of error, and profess that veneration for Antichrist is the true morning. For they promise to banish the darkness, and to announce the light of truth by brilliant miracles; because they cannot persuade what they wish, unless they profess to offer better things. Whence also this very snake, when speaking to our first parents in paradise, by pretending to provide something better for them, opened as it were the eyelids of the morning, when he reproved in their innocent minds the ignorance of humanity, and promised the knowledge of Godhead. For he banished, as it were, the darkness of ignorance, and announced the divine morning of eternal knowledge, saying;

Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. [Gen. 3, 5] In like manner when coming then in that accursed man, his eyes are compared to the eyelids of the morning, because his wise ones reject the simplicity of the true faith, as if the darkness of the night which is past, and display his lying wonders as the rays of the rising sun. But because this Leviathan not only has eyes to foresee evil things with malignant designs, but also opens his mouth to pervert the minds of men, (since by his wicked preachers he inflames the hearts of his hearers to love the deceit of error,) it is fitly subjoined;

Ver. 10. Out of his mouth proceed lamps. [E.V. 19] [xxxiv] 58. For those who look forward are called his 'eyes,' but those who preach, his 'mouth.' But lamps proceed from this 'mouth,' because they inflame the minds of their hearers to the love of misbelief, and from seeming to shine by wisdom, they doubtless thence burn with wickedness. But what kind of light their wisdom is, is shewn, when it is immediately subjoined, As kindled torches of fire. [xxxv]

59. Behold the hypocrisy of those is now plainly described, whose preaching is compared to lamps of torches. For when a torch is lighted, it has a sweet scent, but a dismal light. And so because these preachers of Antichrist claim to themselves a show of sanctity, but yet practise works of iniquity, the smell, as it were, which they emit is pleasant, but the light they give is dark. For they smell sweetly through their pretence of righteousness, but

burn gloomily by their perpetration of iniquity. The malice of their hypocrisy John sums up in a brief description in the Apocalypse, saying; I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb's, and he spake as a dragon. [Rev. 13, 11] He had spoken indeed of the first beast, that is, Antichrist, in a former description; after whom this other beast is said to have also come up, because the multitude of his preachers after him boasts in his earthly power. For to come up from the earth is to boast in earthly glory. And it has two horns like a lamb, because, through his pretended sanctity, he falsely asserts that that wisdom and conduct exist in him, which the Lord truly possessed in Himself in a special manner. But because under the appearance of a lamb he infuses into his reprobate hearers the poison of serpents, it is there rightly subjoined; And he spake as a dragon. If this beast therefore, that is, the multitude of preachers, were to speak openly as a dragon, he would not appear like a lamb. But he assumes the appearance of a lamb, in order to perform the works of a dragon. Both of which points are here expressed by lamps of torches; because they both burn mistily by their malicious doings, and smell, as it were, sweetly, by the hypocrisy of their life.

60. But we must not suppose that the preachers of Antichrist will appear then only, and that now they take no part in the deception of men. For even now, before he appears himself, some preach him in words, but most by their conduct. Are not they the preachers of his hypocrisy, who while they hold the holy orders of God, grasp with all their desires the fleeting world, who profess that all their doings are virtues, but every thing they do is sin? But the more the mind of the Elect keeps close to the light, the more keenly does it see how it should distinguish virtues from vices. But what wonder is it that we do that spiritually, which we see money-changers daily performing in the body? Who, when they receive a coin, examine first its quality, afterwards its shape, but last of all, its weight, lest either brass should be concealed under the appearance of gold, or lest the shape of counterfeit coin should disgrace that which is truly gold, or lest deficient weight should prove that to be light, which is both gold, and of the proper shape. When therefore we behold the wonderful works of men whom we know not, we ought, as skilful money-changers, to betake ourselves to the scales of our heart, in order for our judgment first to weigh the gold, lest sin should conceal itself under the cloak of virtue, and lest that which is done with evil intention should be veiled under the appearance of what is right.

And if the character of its intention is approved, we must next look for the shape of the stamp which has been impressed on it, whether it is stamped by approved moneyers, that is, by the ancient fathers, and is not distorted, by any error, from a resemblance to their life. But when both its quality is ascertained by its intention, and its right shape by a model, it remains for us to examine its full weight. For if a good deed which is brilliant with signs and miracles, possesses not the full amount of perfection, it ought to be anxiously considered with careful circumspection, lest an imperfect thing, when taken for a perfect one, should turn to the loss of the receiver. How then do the preachers of Antichrist, who know not in what they do the power of right intention, possess the quality of a true coin? For they seek not thereby their heavenly country, but the height of temporal glory. How do they, who, by

persecuting the just, disagree with all the piety of the just, differ not from the shape of a true coin? How do they, who have not only not attained the perfection of humility, but have not even reached its threshhold, display in themselves the weight of full amount? Hence, then, hence let the Elect know how to despise the wonders of those persons, whose conduct plainly impugns every thing which is said to have been done by the holy fathers.

But even the very Elect, on beholding so many wonders, and in trembling at his many miracles while they despise his life, suffer in their heart a kind of mist of doubt. Because while his wickedness exalts itself by prodigies, their clearer sight is in a measure obscured. Whence it is rightly subjoined;

Ver. 11. Out of his nostrils goeth smoke. [E.V. 20] [xxxvi] 61. For the sight of the eyes is pained by smoke. Smoke is therefore said to go out of his nostrils; because by the craft of his miracles a darkening doubt is generated for an instant even in the heart of the Elect. A smoke goes out of the mouth of Leviathan, because, on account of his lying wonders, a mist of alarm confuses the eyes even of good minds. For when his terrible signs have been seen, then do gloomy thoughts crowd together in the hearts of the Elect. It is hence that that which we have already brought forward is spoken by the mouth of Truth in the Gospel; False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, so as even for the Elect, if possible, to be led into error. [Mark 13, 22] In which subject it must be specially enquired, how either those who are Elect can be led into error, or why the words 'if possible' are subjoined, as if doubtingly, when the Lord, Who foresees all things, looks forward to what is to be done. But since both the heart of the Elect is shaken with anxious thought, and yet their constancy is not moved, the Lord included both points in this one sentence, saying, So as even for the Elect, if possible, to be led into error. For to stagger in thought is, as it were, to err already. But it is immediately subjoined, If possible; because it is without question impossible for those who are Elect to be fully involved in error. But in this mist of smoke the warmth of their minds is also well expressed, when it is immediately subjoined;

As of a heated and boiling pot. [xxxvii] 62. For at that time every soul is as a boiling pot, sustaining the assaults of its thoughts, like the foam of boiling waters, which both the fire of zeal puts in motion, and temporal oppression, after the manner of a pot, keeps confined within. Whence John also, when relating the wonders of this beast, added, So that he maketh fire come down from heaven. [Rev. 13, 13] For for fire to come down from heaven, is for flames of zeal to pour forth from the heavenly souls of the Elect. But because this Leviathan is called in another place not merely a serpent, but also a basilisk [quasi 'little king.'], because he rules over unclean spirits, or reprobate men, as Isaiah says, Out of the serpent's root shall come forth a basilisk, [Is. 14, 29] must attentively observe how a basilisk destroys, that by the doings of the basilisk, his malice may be more plainly made known to us. For a basilisk does not destroy with its bite, but consumes with its breath. It often also infects the air with its breath, and withers with the mere blast of its nostrils whatever it has touched, even when placed at a distance.

63. We are hence then, we are hence compelled to consider, because smoke is said to proceed from his nostrils, even before he appears openly, what he is daily working in the hearts of men by the smoke of his pestilent breath. For because, as we said also above, the sight of the eyes is weakened by smoke, smoke is rightly said to proceed from the nostrils of him, by whose hurtful inspirations an evil thought arises in the hearts of men, by which the keenness of the mind is blunted, so that the inward light is not seen. For he breathes forth darkness, as it were, from his nostrils, because from his crafty inspirations he heaps up, in the hearts of the reprobate, the heat of many thoughts, from love of this temporal life. And he multiplies, as it were, clouds ['globos'] of smoke, because he crowds together in the mind of earthly men the most trifling anxieties of this present life. This smoke, which comes forth from his nostrils, sometimes affects for a time the eyes even of the Elect. For the Prophet was enduring this smoke within, when he said, Mine eye is disturbed because of anger. [Ps. 6, 7] He was oppressed by its pouring in upon him, saying, My heart is troubled within me, and the light of mine eyes is not with me. [Ps. 38, 10] For this smoke deadens in truth the keenness of the heart, because with the cloud of its darkness it disturbs the serenity of inward peace.

But God cannot be recognised, except by a tranquil heart. Whence it is again said by the same Prophet, Be still, and see that I am God. [Ps. 46, 10] But that mind cannot be at ease ['vacare'], which is oppressed with inundations of this smoke; because volumes of earthly thoughts are crowded therein from love of the present life. The light of inward rest is therefore lost through this smoke, because the eye of the heart is darkened, when it is confused by the irritation of cares.

64. But this smoke annoys the minds of the Elect in one way, and blinds the eyes of the reprobate in another. For it is dispersed from the eyes of the good by the breath of spiritual desires, so as not to become dense, through the prevalence of wretched thoughts. But in the minds of the reprobate the more freely it collects itself by means of foul thoughts, the more entirely does it remove from them the light of truth. This smoke as it crowds into the hearts of the reprobate so many unlawful desires, swells out, as it were, into so many clouds before them.

65. And we certainly know that in clouds of smoke, when some are fading away ['inanescunt'] above, others rise up from below: so too in carnal thoughts, though some evil desires pass away, yet others succeed. But frequently the wretched mind beholds what has already passed, but does not behold where it is still detained. It rejoices in being no longer subject to some sins, but neglects to be careful, and to lament, because others have succeeded in their place, to which perhaps it yields more sinfully. And so it is that, while some sins pass away, and others succeed, the heart of the reprobate is possessed without intermission by this serpent. Whence it is well said by the Prophet Joel, That which the palmer-worm hath left, the locust hath eaten; and that which the locust hath left, the canker-worm hath eaten; and that which the canker-worm hath left, the mildew hath eaten. Awake, ye drunkards, and weep. [Joel 1, 4] For what is designated by the palmer-worm ['eruca'], which creeps

with all its body on the ground, except it be lust? which so pollutes the heart which it possesses, that it cannot rise up to the love of heavenly purity. What is expressed by the locust, which flies by leaps, except vain glory, which exalts itself with empty presumptions? What is typified by the canker-worm ['bruchus'], almost the whole of whose body is gathered into its belly, except gluttony in eating? What but anger is indicated by mildew, which burns as it touches?

That therefore which the palmer-worm hath left, the locust hath eaten, because, when the sin of lust has retired from the mind, vain glory often succeeds. For since it is not now subdued by the love of the flesh, it boasts of itself as if it were holy through its chastity. And that which the locust hath left, the canker-worm hath eaten, because when vain glory, which came as it were from holiness, is resisted, either the appetite, or some ambitious desires are indulged in too immoderately. For the mind which knows not God, is led the more fiercely to any object of ambition, in proportion as it is not restrained by any love even of human praise. That which the canker-worm hath left, the mildew consumes, because when the gluttony of the belly is restrained by abstinence, the impatience of anger holds fiercer sway, which, like mildew, eats up the harvest by burning it, because the flame of impatience withers the fruits of virtues. When therefore some vices succeed to others, one plague devours the field of the mind, while another leaves it.

66. But it is there well subjoined; Awake, ye drunkards, and weep. [Joel 1, 5] For they are called 'drunkards,' who, confused with the love of this world, feel not the evils which they suffer. What then is meant by saying; Awake, ye drunkards, and weep, but 'shake off the sleep of your insensibility, and oppose by watchful lamentations the many plagues of sins which succeed one to the other in the devastation of your hearts?' The smoke therefore rises in as many clouds from the nostrils of Leviathan, as are the plagues by which he consumes the fruit of the reprobate heart with his secret breathing. But the Lord carefully explains still further the power of this smoke, when He immediately subjoins; As of a heated and boiling pot. For the pot is heated when the mind of man is instigated by the persuasion of the malignant enemy. But the pot boils, when it is already inflamed by consent with the desires of evil persuasions. And it throws out, as it were, as many waves in boiling, as are the wickednesses by which it extends itself into outward action. For the Prophet had beheld this heat of carnal concupiscence (that is, of the pot) arising from the smoke of Leviathan, when he said; I see a heated pot, and its face from the face of the north. [Jer. 1, 13] For the pot of the human heart is heated from the face of the north, when it is inflamed with unlawful desires by the instigation of the opposing spirit.

For he who says; I will sit on the mount of the covenant, in the sides of the north, [Is. 14, 13] inflames with the malignant blasts of his persuasion, as with fires placed beneath it, the mind of which he has once gained possession; in order that being discontented with what is before it, it may be so unceasingly agitated by desires, as to seek some things presently to be contemned, and to contemn other things which it has obtained; at one time to be eager for its own profit, at another to oppose another's advantages, even to its own loss; at one time to

satisfy the allurements of the flesh, and at another to be hurried as it were on high by pride of thought, to put aside all concern for the flesh, and to raise itself up altogether with the haughtiness of exaltation. Because then a heart, which is inflamed by the instigations of this Leviathan, is led astray by various desires, its smoke is rightly said to be like a heated and boiling pot. Because its conscience, being blasted by his temptations, rouses itself by as many boilings, as are the thoughts by which it is puffed up within. But this point the Truth proceeds to speak of more plainly in other words, when it is subjoined;

Ver. 12. His breath kindleth coals. [E.V. 21] [xxxviii] 67. For what does He call 'coals,' but the minds of reprobate men, kindled with earthly desires. For they are on fire when they seek after any temporal object; doubtless because their longings, which suffer not their mind to be quiet and whole ['integrum'], inflame them. The breath of Leviathan therefore kindles the coals, as often as his secret suggestion allures the minds of men to unlawful pleasures. For it inflames some with the torches of pride, some with those of envy, some with those of lust, some with those of avarice. For he applied in truth the torch of pride to the mind of Eve, when he instigated her to despise the words of the Lord's command. [Gen. 3, 6] He kindled the mind of Cain with the flame of envy, when he was grieved at his brother's sacrifice being accepted, and in this way arrived as far as the sin of fratricide. [Gen. 4, 5] He inflamed the heart of Solomon with the torches of lust, whom he overcame with such great love for women, that by having been led to the worship of idols, he forgot the reverence due to his Maker, when he was pursuing the pleasure of the flesh. [1 Kings 11, 4] He also burnt up the mind of Ahab with the fire of avarice, when he urged him with impatient desires to seek for the vineyard of another, and drew him on in this way even to the guilt of homicide. [ib. 21, 2] This Leviathan therefore blows on the coals, with a breath as great as the effort of secret suggestion with which he inflames the minds of men to aim at what is forbidden. Whence also it is immediately subjoined;

And a flame goeth out of his mouth. [xxxix]

68. For the flame of his mouth is in truth the very instigation of secret suggestion. For he addresses the words of evil persuasion to the mind of each person, but that which goes out of his mouth is a flame; because the mind burns with desires, when it is instigated by his suggestions. These he daily suggests, these he ceases not to suggest even to the end of the present life: but he then expands himself more wickedly when coming in that accursed man, he displays himself more openly in the glory of this world. A mightier smoke proceeds then from his nostrils, because a greater instigation assails the hearts of men when frightened at the marvels of his wonders. Then does his breath make the coals to burn more fiercely, because, on finding the minds of the reprobate already warm with the love of temporal glory, he inflames them with the breath of his suggestion, even to the wickedness of exercising cruelty. Then does a flame go forth from his mouth, because whatever he says by himself or by his preachers, is a fire with which unfruitful trees are burnt up. But the mind of those who do not at all wish to become precious metals, is touched by the fire of earthly concupiscence. Whosoever therefore wishes not to suffer from the flame of his

mouth should take care, according to the expression of the teacher of truth, to be found, not wood, hay, stubble, but gold, silver, and precious stone.

[1 Cor. 3, 12] Because the fire of his persuasion burns them the more fiercely, the softer every one has rendered himself to yielding his consent. But because a mind, when placed in this corruptible flesh, is in no way permitted not to be touched by the heat of his persuasion, it remains for it, when parched by its malignant blasts, to betake itself unceasingly to the aid of prayer. For a wave of tears quickly extinguishes the flame of his suggestions.

Book XXXIV

THE BOOKS OF THE MORALS OF ST. GREGORY THE POPE, OR AN EXPOSITION ON THE BOOK OF BLESSED JOB.

VOLUME III - THE SIXTH PART. — BOOK XXXIV.

The thirteenth, with the remaining verses of the forty-first chapter is explained, chiefly with reference to the pride of the Devil, and the most cruel persecutions of Antichrist against the Saints. [i]

1. Because we bear about us a body from this world, let us consider the end of the universe, from the part of it in which we ourselves are [al. 'which we are']. For we learn more quickly of what kind is the end of the world, if we carefully consider that which we bear about us from the world. For our age flourishes more vigorously in our youthful years, but in the time of old age it is shrivelled up by increasing diseases, and while its existence is extended to greater length, instead of dying it daily fails every moment of its life. So also as the duration of the world increases in years, it suffers under increasing evils, and it feels the loss of its health, as it obtains increase of age. For its tribulations increase together with its years, and it endures with greater weakness the losses of life, the more it lasts on, as it were, to a more advanced age. For the ancient enemy is let loose against it with all his strength, who, although he has already perished, as having lost the happiness of his heavenly condition, is yet at that time more fully extinguished, when he is deprived of his permission to tempt, and is fast bound in eternal fires. He is about, accordingly, to assail the ends of the world with severer temptations, because he becomes more raging in his cruelty, the nearer he perceives himself to punishment.

For he considers that he is just about to lose his privilege of most fatal liberty. And the more he is confined by the shortness of the time, the more does he spread forth with multiplicity of cruelty, as is said of him by the voice of the angel to John; Woe to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time. [Rev. 12, 12] He then spreads himself forth into the fury of great wrath, in order that he, who could not remain in his state of happiness, may not fall into the pit of his damnation with a few only. He then searches out with greater craft whatever power of iniquity he has gotten, he then exalts more highly his neck of pride, and by means of that

accursed man whom he wears, displays for the purpose of evil, all the temporal power he possesses. Whence also it is now rightly said by the Divine voice;

Ver. 13. In his neck will remain strength. [E.V. 22] [ii] 2. For what is designated by the 'neck' of that Leviathan, except the stretching out of his pride, with which he raises himself up against God, when, with pretended sanctity, he is exalted also by the pride of power? For that pride is expressed by the 'neck,' the Prophet Isaiah witnesses, who reproves the daughters of Jerusalem, saying, They have walked with stretched forth neck. [Is. 3, 16] Strength then is said to remain in the 'neck' of this Leviathan, because power is also subjoined and ministers to his pride. For all his haughty pride, all his crafty machinations, he prosecutes at that time by the strength also of secular power. Which the prophet Daniel observing, says, Craft will be directed aright in his hand. [Dan. 8, 25] For craft in his hand, is fraud in his strength; for all his wicked designs he is able also, for the time, to carry out with strength. But his craft is said to be 'directed,' because the malice of his fraud is impeded by no difficulty. For this Leviathan or his vessels are wont frequently to possess this peculiarity, that, to add to their iniquity, they are able to carry out more wickedly what they wickedly desire.

3. For when the Elect perchance are weakened, and rush headlong in their unlawful desires, they are frequently restrained by the hand of the Divine gift, so as to find no results from their wretched will. And when a strong opposition arises to their wishes, they are frequently corrected by the very impossibility, and by the wonderful course of the inward disposal, a change of their evil will succeeds through conversion, while through their infirmity perfection [or 'through their weakness fulfilment'] is denied them. For hence is that which the Lord says, under the character of every soul, to Jud'a who is weak, and walking in evil ways; Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and I will hedge it up with a wall, and she shall not find her paths, and she shall follow after her lovers, and she shall not overtake them, and she shall seek them, and not finding them shall say, I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now. [Hos. 2, 6. 7. For the ways of the Elect are hedged up with thorns, when they find the pain of piercing in that which they desire in this world. He obstructs, as it were, by interposing a wall, the ways of those, whose desires the difficulty of attainment opposes. Their souls truly seek their lovers, and find them not, when by following malignant spirits, they do not gain hold of those pleasures of this world, which they desire.

But it is well added that she says immediately in consequence of this very difficulty; I will go and return to my former husband, for then it was better with me than now. For the Lord is the first husband, Who united to Himself the chaste soul, by means of the love of the Holy Spirit. And the mind of each one then longs for Him, when it finds manifold bitternesses, as thorns in those delights, which it desires in this world. For when the mind has begun to be stung by the adversities of the world which it loves, it then understands more fully, how much better it was for it with its former husband.

4. Those then, whom an evil will perverts, adversity frequently corrects. Whence also it is much to be feared, lest prosperity should follow, when unjust things are longed for, because an evil, which is supported also by the prosperity of attainment, is with more difficulty corrected. Both craft then is directed aright in the hand of this Leviathan, who with his members is consigned to eternal tortures, and strength remains in his neck, because that which he longs for in this world with evil resolve against the good, he consummates with more evil ability, in order that no present adversity may oppose him, in proportion as no prosperity awaits him for the future. And because every one who, from depraved habits, is familiar with his friendship, loses first the true riches of the mind, it is fitly subjoined; And want will go before his face. [iii]

5. For acquaintance is wont to be designated by the 'face.' Whence it is written; And My Face shall go before thee, [Ex. 33, 14] that is, knowledge of Me will give thee guidance. But it should be known, that the want of the Elect is used in one sense in Holy Scripture, the want of the reprobate in another. For it is the want of the Elect, when the true riches of the heavenly country recur to their mind, and when, placed in the sorrowful banishment of this present life, they remember that they are poor. For they sigh in truth unceasingly after those riches, of which Paul says; That ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints. [Eph. 1, 18] And because as yet they do not behold them, they earnestly groan, the mean while, in the sorrow of this poverty. Jeremiah had doubtless gained a sight of this poverty, when he was saying; I am a man who behold my poverty by the rod of His indignation. [Lam. 3, 1] For the rod of the indignation of God is the blow of severity. And man then endured this indignation, when he was expelled from Paradise, and lost the true riches of inward joy. But because all the Elect continually behold that they have fallen into the poverty of the present life from that faculty of innate strength, it is well said, I am a man who behold my poverty.

For whoever still longs after these visible things, understands not the misery of his pilgrimage, and has not skill to see the very evil which he is suffering. The prophet David, beholding this poverty, says, My strength is weakened in my poverty. [Ps. 31, 10] For strength is said to be weakened in poverty, because the mind which has fallen in this pilgrimage, and has been assaulted by the annoyances of its own corruption, is hindered from beholding that which it has lost.

6. But the reprobate know not how to think of this poverty, because, while they pursue those things which they behold, they neglect to think of the invisible things which they have lost. Whence it is rightly called their 'want;' for while they are filled with sins, they are emptied of the riches of virtues. And it is frequently their lot, that, when, from being lifted up by the madness of pride, they consider not the losses of their fall, they discern not that they are poor also in good deeds. Whence it is said by the voice of the Angel to the preacher of Laodicea; Thou sayest that I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. [Rev. 3, 17] He who is elated through pride at his sanctity, declares himself, as it were,

to be rich, but is proved to be poor, blind, and naked. Poor, assuredly, because he has not the riches of virtues; blind, because he sees not the poverty which he is suffering; naked, because he has lost his first garment, but in a worse way, because he knows not that he has lost it. Because then, as we have said, the 'want' of the reprobate is their being stripped of their merits, it is rightly said of Leviathan; Want will go before his face. For no one is joined to the knowledge of him, unless he is first stripped of the riches of virtues.

For he first steals away good thoughts, and afterwards infuses in them a clearer knowledge of his own iniquity. Want is therefore said to go before his face, because the faculty of strength is first destroyed, in order that a knowledge of him may be afterwards gained, as if through familiarity. Or certainly, because he steals upon many in so crafty a manner, that he cannot be detected by them, and so makes void their virtues as not to display the evil design of his cunning, want is said to go before his face. As if it were openly said, Because when he tempts by lying in ambush, he spoils men before he is perceived. For hence is that which is said of Ephraim by the Prophet, Strangers have devoured his strength, and he hath known it not. [Hos. 7, 9] For by 'strangers' are usually understood apostate angels, who devour our strength, when they consume the virtue of the mind by perverting it. Which Ephraim both endured, and knew it not, because through the temptation of malignant spirits he both lost the strength of his mind, and understood not that he had lost it. Want therefore goes before the face of Leviathan, because he spoils by his temptation the minds of the careless, before he who is tempted knows his snares. By this then which is said, In his neck will remain strength, is set forth the power of his violence.

But by this which is added, And want will go before his face, is designated the subtlety of his craft.

7. Although with regard to our knowing that want goes before his face, there is another point for us to expound in a more melancholy manner. For by the awful course of the secret dispensation, before this Leviathan appears in that accursed man whom he assumes, signs of power are withdrawn from Holy Church. For prophecy is hidden, the grace of healings is taken away, the power of longer abstinence is weakened, the words of doctrine are silent, the prodigies of miracles are removed. And though the heavenly dispensation does not entirely withdraw them, yet it does not manifest them openly and in manifold ways as in former times. And this is so caused by a wonderful dispensation, in order that the Divine mercy and justice may be fulfilled together by one and the same means. For when Holy Church appears as if she were more abject, on the withdrawal of signs of power, both the reward of the good increases, who reverence her for the hope of heavenly things, and not on account of present signs; and the mind of the wicked is the more quickly displayed against her, who neglect to pursue the invisible things which she promises, when they are not constrained by visible signs. When therefore the humility of the faithful is deprived of the manifold manifestation of wonders, by the terrible judgment of the secret dispensation, there is heaped up more abundant mercy for the good, and just anger for the evil, by the same means.

Because these signs of power cease, in great measure, in Holy Church, before this Leviathan manifestly and visibly comes, it is now rightly said; Want will go before his face. For the riches of miracles are first withdrawn from the faithful, and then that ancient enemy displays himself against them with visible prodigies, in order that as he boasts himself on his wonders, he may be overthrown more mightily and more honourably by the faithful without wonders. For though signs will not be wanting to the faithful in their contest with him, yet his will be so great, that those of our people will seem to be rather few or none at all. But their virtue doubtless becomes mightier than all signs, when it crushes with the heel of inward resolution all his terrible deeds which it beholds. But the malignant enemy displays himself against them with so much the fiercer cruelty, the more he grieves that he is despised even with the brightness of his miracles. He therefore gathers himself together for their destruction, and unites all the reprobate with unanimous cruelty for the death of the faithful; in order that he may put forth his cruelty with so much greater power, in proportion as all the members of his body agree with him in the things he seeks perversely to effect. Whence also it is rightly said;

Ver. 14. The members of his flesh cling to each other. [E.V. 23] [iv]

8. The 'flesh' of this Leviathan are all the reprobate, who rise not in their longing to a knowledge of their spiritual country. But the 'members of his flesh' are those, who are united to these very persons, when acting wickedly, and preceding them in the way to iniquity. As is said on the other hand by Paul to the Lord's body; Ye are the body of Christ, and members of a member. [1 Cor. 12, 27] For a member of a body is one thing, a member of a member is another. For a member of the body is a part referred to a whole, but a member of a member is a particle to a part. For a member of a member is a finger to the hand, the hand to the arm, but a member of the body, is the whole of this together to the body at large. As therefore in the spiritual body of the Lord we term 'members of a member' those who in His Church are governed by others; so, in that reprobate congregation of this Leviathan, those are the 'members of his flesh,' who by their wicked deeds are joined to some more wicked than themselves. But because the malignant enemy agrees with himself in his perverse doings from first to last, the Divine discourse speaks of the members of his flesh clinging to each other in him. For they so agree in their wicked opinions, as not to be divided by any mutual disputations with each other.

No quarrel of disagreement then divides them, and they therefore prevail mightily against the good, because they keep themselves together with close agreement in evil. For as we have already said above, that it is fatal if unity is wanting to the good, so it is more fatal if it is not wanting to the evil. For the unity of the reprobate obstructs more firmly the path of the good, the more firmly it opposes itself to it by being collected together.

9. Paul had beheld this unity of the reprobate destructive to himself, when being seized in the midst of the Sadducees and Pharisees he was saying; Of the hope and resurrection of the dead, I am judged. [Acts 23, 6] And struck by this voice, the crowd of his hearers immediately mutually started asunder against itself. And when the tumultuous multitude

is divided into two parts, a way of rescue is opened to Paul, because the crowd of persecutors when divided released him whom it had held fast when united together. The righteous are therefore rescued, when the unrighteous are divided, and the wishes of the Elect arrive at completion, when the hosts of the reprobate are confounded by discord. And this is also well designated by the dividing of the Red Sea. [Ex. 14, 21] For when the wave is divided into two parts, the Elect people journeys on to the land of promise, because, when the unity of the wicked is rent asunder, holy minds attain to, that which they desire. If the unity of the wicked had not been hurtful, Divine Providence would never have divided the tongues of the proud with such great diversity. [Gen. 11, 9] If the unity of the wicked had not been hurtful, the Prophet would not say of the enemies of Holy Church; Cast down, O Lord, and divide their tongues.

[Ps. 55, 9] Because then this Leviathan is then let loose in his might against the Elect of God, to increase his power of hurting, he is permitted also to have unity among the reprobate, in order that he may put forth his might more powerfully against us, the more he assaults us not merely with the blow of strength, but also with the weight of unity. But who can be sufficient against these things? What mind must not tremble at the weight of such pride and compactness, from the very bottom of his thought? Whence, because the Divine Clemency sees that we are trembling through weakness, It immediately adds what It does for us, by Itself. For it follows; He shall send lightnings against him, and they shall not be carried to another place.

[v] 10. What is designated by the appellation of 'lightnings,' except those tremendous sentences of the last judgment? And they are, therefore, called 'lightnings,' doubtless, because they consume for ever those whom they strike. For Paul had beheld lightnings coming down on him, when he was saying, Whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. [2 Thess. 2, 8] But these lightnings which are sent against him, are not carried to another place, because they then smite the reprobate only, while the righteous rejoice. For after the threshing of the present life, in which the wheat now groans beneath the chaff, such a separation is made by that fan of the last judgment between the wheat and the chaff, that neither does the chaff pass into the garner of the wheat, nor do the grains of the garner fall into the fire of the chaff. Those lightnings then touch not another place, because, namely, they burn with their fire not the grains, but the chaff. But He teaches us, that punishment does not correct this Leviathan, when he adds;

Ver. 15. His heart shall be hardened as a stone. [E.V. 24] [vi] 11. For the heart of the ancient enemy will be hardened as a stone, because it will never be softened by any penitence of conversion. And because he will be fitted only for the blows of eternal punishment, it is rightly immediately added; And he will be bound as the anvil of the hammerer. For the hammerer puts up an anvil fitted to receive blows only. For an anvil is erected for the very purpose of being struck with frequent blows. Leviathan therefore will be bound as the anvil of the hammerer, because he will be confined by the chains of hell, in order to be beaten with

the continual blows of eternal punishment. And he is struck also even now, when any of the just are saved, as he is watching in ambush, but wasting away with pain. But in an anvil other vessels are wrought into shape, while the anvil itself by its many blows is not changed into a vessel of another kind. This Leviathan is therefore rightly compared to an anvil, because we are wrought into shape by his persecutions, but he is both always struck, and is never changed into a useful vessel. We abandon him to eternal blows, and we, who have been smitten through his temptation by the hand of the heavenly Artificer, come out by his means properly shaped vessels. For on him we are beaten, but it is that we may come into use for the House above. But he is bound as an anvil, because, though he now goes about the world with his temptations, yet when placed in the pit, under the blow of his sentence, he wanders no more. It follows;

Ver. 16. When he shall be taken away, the angels shall fear, and being affrighted shall be purified. [E.V. 25] [vii] 12. Holy Scripture often so mixes up past and future times, as sometimes to use the future for the past, sometimes the past for the future. For it uses the future for the past, when there is pointed out to John a woman, who is about to bring forth a male child, to rule the Gentiles with a rod of iron. [Rev. 12, 5] For since this had already taken place by the coming of the Lord in the flesh, an event which had occurred was being announced. Again, it was the past for the future, as the Lord speaks by the Psalmist, saying; They have dug My hands, and My feet, they have numbered all My bones. [Ps. 22, 16. 17.] For by these words in truth, the nature of the Lord's Passion is described as already past, but yet it is announced as still far future. In this place then in which it is said; When he shall he taken away, the angels shall fear, nothing prevents its being understood, that past events are described under the form of the future tense. Nor do we give up the sense of its true meaning, if we believe that when this Leviathan was falling from the height of blessedness, the Elect Angels also were greatly terrified at his fall, in order that, as the fall of pride was casting him out from their number, their very fear might give them strength to stand more firmly. Whence it also follows;

And being affrighted shall be purified. 13. But they are purified; doubtless because, when he went forth with his reprobate hosts, they alone, who were to live in happiness for ever, remained in the abodes of heaven. His fall then alarmed and purified them; it alarmed them, in order that they might not proudly despise their Creator. But it purified them, because it was so ordered, that when the reprobate went forth, the Elect alone remained. And because God, the Maker of all things, knows how to apply even the evil doings of the reprobate to the protection of the good, He converted the lapse of those who fell to the benefit of those who remain; and the fault of the proud is punished, by the same means by which the increased merits of the humble Angels were discovered and confirmed. For on the fall of these, it was granted as a special gift to those that they should never in any wise fall. For while the holy Angels behold in them the ruin of their own nature, they stand with greater caution and firmness in their own persons. Hence it is ordered, by the Lord the Maker of all, marvellously arranging all things, that even the losses of its ruin are of service to that

abode of Elect spirits, when it is more firmly built up, in consequence of its having been partially destroyed.

14. But because Holy Scripture is frequently accustomed to designate the preachers of the Church, by the name of 'Angels,' because they announce the glory of the heavenly country, we can in this place understand 'Angels' to mean holy preachers. For this cause it is that John, in the Apocalypse, writing to the seven Churches, speaks to the Angels of the Churches, that is, to the preachers of the peoples. [Rev. 2, and 3] Hence the Prophet says; And the angels of peace shall weep bitterly. [Is. 33, 7] Hence again the Prophet Malachi says; The priest's lips keep knowledge, and they seek the law at his mouth, for he is the angel of the Lord of hosts. [Mal. 2, 7] Hence Paul says; Great is the mystery of godliness, which was manifested in the flesh, was justified in the spirit, appeared unto angels, hath been preached unto the Gentiles, is believed on in this world, is received up into glory. [1 Tim. 3, 16] He therefore, who, after he had said that the mystery of the dispensation appeared to Angels, added also that it had been preached unto the Gentiles, certainly by the name 'Angels' designated holy preachers, that is, the messengers of truth.

15. If therefore the expression, When he shall be taken away, the angels shall fear, and being affrighted shall be purified, is referred to future time, there is here pointed out the last damnation of this Leviathan, in this world, on the coming of the strict Judge. Because he, who is now tolerated by the wonderful longsuffering of gentleness, is taken out of this world by the wrath of judgment. But he is cast out from thence with so great a weight of terror, that even the strength of holy preachers is disturbed; For when he shall he taken away, the angels shall fear. Because when he is swept away with the whirlwind of judgment, even those messengers of the heavenly country, who shall be found in their bodies, are staggered with unbounded fear, and tremble. For though they now are strong and perfect, yet, as still living in the flesh, they cannot fail of being agitated with fear, at the whirlwind of such great terror. But when this Leviathan is swept away, and when all the elements are shaken at his destruction, the hope of the approach of the kingdom fills those holy preachers with joy, whom, as I have said, that time of judgment shall find still in their bodies, and the infirmity of their flesh alarms them at the display of wrath. There will therefore be in them, in a certain way, a joyful trembling, and a fearless fear; because they are sure of being rewarded in the heavenly kingdom, and through fear of so great a whirlwind they tremble from the infirmity of the flesh.

16. Let us consider therefore how greatly the conscience of the wicked is then agitated, when the life even of the just is disturbed. What will they do, who hate the coming of the Judge, if even they who love tremble at the terror of so great a judgment? And because, whatever rust of slight sins could possibly exist in holy preachers, is burnt out by this dread, after He had said, When he shall be taken away, the angels shall fear, He fitly subjoined immediately; And being affrighted shall be purified. But because we have learnt these things concerning the end of this Leviathan, let us hear what he does meanwhile, before he perishes. It follows;

Ver. 17. When a sword has reached him, it will not be able to remain, nor a spear, nor a breastplate. [E.V. 26] [viii]

17. In Holy Scripture by a 'sword' is sometimes designated holy preaching, sometimes eternal damnation, sometimes temporal tribulation, sometimes the wrath or persuasion of the ancient enemy. For a 'sword' is put for holy preaching, as Paul says, And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. [Eph. 6, 17] By the word 'sword' is designated eternal damnation, as is written of an heretical preacher; If his children be multiplied, they will be in the sword; [Job 27, 14] because in whatever great number they here shoot forth, they are consumed with eternal damnation. A 'sword' is taken for temporal tribulation, as is said to Mary concerning tribulations which are about to follow; And a sword shall pass through thine own soul. [Luke 2, 35] Again, by 'sword' is expressed the wrath or persuasion of the malignant enemy, as the Psalmist says; Who hast delivered David Thy servant from the malicious sword. [Ps. 144, 10] For kind is the sword of holy preaching, with which we are struck that we may die from sin. But the sword of diabolical persuasion is malicious, with which a man is fatally wounded, that he may he deprived of rectitude of life. The sword then of the ancient enemy is, at that time, that accursed man, assumed for the purpose of his service. For he sharpens him through the malice of cunning, and pierces the hearts of the feeble. The sword therefore of this man reaches Leviathan, when his own accursed man has taken him up.

But if by the word 'sword' his wrath is designated, he is rightly described, not as seizing the sword, but as seized by the sword. For he is then turned into such madness, that, seeking to rule over all, he is unable to control his own anger. For we, when we assume wrath in the exercise of justice, hold a sword; because we control it by keeping it under the moderation of judgment. But he, because he is hurried on through the precipices of fury, is said not to seize his sword, but to be seized by his sword. For he does not keep and control his anger, but, in his fury, is possessed by his anger.

18. But it is plain to all, that we strike our adversary with a spear, but are protected from our adversary by a breastplate. By a spear we inflict wounds, by a breastplate we are protected from wounds. What therefore is designated by a 'spear' but the shaft of preaching; what by a breastplate but the strength of patience? This Leviathan then, because by taking that reprobate man to himself, he is let loose in the wrath of every kind of cruelty, is said to be 'seized by a sword.' For by the display of his immense strength, he then exhibits whatever power of wickedness he possesses. And neither the spear nor the breastplate will be able to stand, because entering into Antichrist, he will seem to be of such great strength, as (if heavenly assistance were wanting) to blunt the keenness of preachers, and to overthrow the long-suffering of the patient. For unless heavenly grace strengthens the life of the righteous, the spear does not stand, because the strength of preachers is broken; the breastplate does not resist, because the patience of the constant is burst through and penetrated. Whence it is also subjoined,

Ver. 18. For he shall esteem iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. [E.V. 27] [ix] 19. That which above He called a 'spear,' he mentioned again below under the appellation of 'iron:' and that which He spoke of as a 'breastplate,' He again designated by mentioning it as 'brass.' For iron is sharpened, that the adversary may be wounded; but brass is hardly destroyed by any rust. Whence also it is said by Moses of Holy Church under the character of Asher; His shoe is iron and brass. [Deut. 33, 25] For by 'shoe' is understood in Holy Scripture the defence of preaching; as it is written, Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. [Eph. 6, 15] Because then strength is expressed by 'iron,' but perseverance by 'brass;' her shoe is said to be iron and brass, when her preaching is protected by sharpness, and firmness at the same time. For by iron she penetrates opposing evils, but by brass she patiently preserves the blessings she has set before her. Whose perseverance he there in truth more plainly points out, saying, As the days of his youth, so also shall his old age be. [Deut. 33, 25] But when this Leviathan has taken that sword, whom the Holy Scriptures call Antichrist, for the sake of practising his iniquity, he will esteem both iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood; because, unless Divine grace gives protection, he will both consume with the fire of his wickedness the strength of preachers as straw, and will reduce to dust the constancy of the patient like rotten wood. And therefore the keenness of iron and the strength of brass fail, when by the violence of his might both the understanding of preaching is blunted, and the long-suffering of patience is scattered.

20. Unless then the Divine assistance strengthens its Elect, where will the weak then be, if the strong are counted as straw? What will this Leviathan then do with the straw, if he will count the iron as straw? What is he about to do with the rotten wood, if he will break as rotten wood the strength of brass? But O! how many who think that they are in their own strength iron or brass, in that fire of tribulation then find that they are straw; and how many who from their own infirmity are afraid that they are straw, when supported by the Divine help are strengthened with the solidity of brass or iron, so as to be the stronger in God against their adversary the more they remember that they are weak in themselves. But the higher this Behemoth rises against the Elect of God by miracles, the more earnestly do the saints gird themselves for the words of preaching against him. But yet he so possesses the minds of the reprobate, as not to leave them though he is wounded by all the darts of the truth. Whence it is also subjoined,

Ver. 19. The archer shall not put him to flight. [E.V. 28] [x]

21. For what do we understand by 'arrows' but the words of preachers? For when they are drawn forth by the voice of holy livers, they transfix the hearts of the hearers. With these arrows Holy Church had been struck, who was saying, I am wounded with love. [Cant. 2, 5] Of these arrows it is said by the voice of the Psalmist, The arrows of children are made their wounds; [Ps. 64, 7] because, that is, the words of the humble have penetrated the minds of the proud. Of these arrows it is said to the coming champion, Thine arrows are sharp, O Thou most mighty, people shall fall under Thee in their heart. [Ps. 45, 5] An 'archer' then is he, who by the bow of holy intention fixes in the hearts of his hearers the words of sound

exhortation. Because then this Leviathan despises the words of preachers, and when he has wounded the minds of the reprobate by his evil persuasions, does not, in his hardness, in any wise abandon them even in the midst of darts, it is rightly said, The archer shall not put him to flight. As if it were plainly said, The arrow of a holy preacher does not dislodge him from the hearts of the reprobate; because, whoever is seized by him, scorns at once to listen to the words of preachers.

Whence the Lord, being deservedly angry for their former sins, says by the Prophet of those whom He abandons in the hands of the ancient enemy, I will send among you serpents, basilisks, for whom there is no charm. [Jer. 8, 17] As if He were saying, I will deliver you up by just judgment to such unclean spirits, as cannot be shaken off by you, by the exhortation of preachers, as if by the word of charmers. But because this Leviathan is not driven from the hearts of the reprobate by the darts of holy preaching, his very contempt for holy men is also added, when it is immediately observed;

The stones of the sling are turned with him into stubble. [xi]

22. What is typified by the 'sling,' but Holy Church? For when a sling is whirled round, so do stones fly out of it, for the breasts of the adversaries to be struck therewith. In like manner when Holy Church is led through a circuit of tribulations, in the whirl of time, mighty men come forth from her, by whom the hearts of the wicked are to be beaten as if by the blows of stones. Whence the Lord says to the Prophet concerning good teachers, They shall devour, and subdue with sling stones. [Zech. 9, 15] For holy teachers who train others also in virtue, devour their enemies, when they change them within [one Ms. 'into'] their own body by the power of conversion. And they subdue them with sling stones, because while they train all the mighty men in Holy Church, they crush by their means the hard breasts of proud adversaries. Whence also the giant Goliath is killed by the stone of the sling; [l Sam. 17, 49] because the lofty height of the devil is overcome by a single stone of Holy Church. Because then this Leviathan, when he has assumed that accursed man, despises all the mighty ones of the Church, as if they were weak, and crushes their strength for a season, is it now rightly said, The stones of the sling are turned with him into stubble.

As if it were plainly said, He reduces as it were into the softness of stubble the strength of Saints, whose tongue before smote his breast with hard blows. For then putting forth all the strength of his iniquity, the more he grieves at being vanquished by them spiritually, the more fiercely does he prevail against them bodily. And because he considers that he has no power against their spirit, he carries out in their flesh all the methods of his cruelty. But what wonder if he despises the strength of men, since he scorns even the very torments of the heavenly judgment against him. Whence it is also subjoined,

Ver. 20. He will esteem the hammer as stubble. [E.V. 29] [xii]

23. As if he were saying, He despises even the weight of that reproof, which strikes him by a punishment coming from above. For in Holy Scripture by the name 'hammer' is sometimes designated the devil, by whom the faults of offenders are now smitten. But it is sometimes

taken for the smiting of heaven, by which even the Elect feel blows from above, in order to amend their evil ways: or it strikes the reprobate with just indignation, in order that by now anticipating eternal punishments, it may shew them what they also deserve hereafter. For that the ancient enemy is expressed by the term 'hammer' the Prophet witnesses, when he observes the power of the last judgment upon him, and says, How is the hammer of the whole earth broken and crushed? [Jer. 50, 23] As if he were saying, Who can imagine with what a whirling stroke, at the coming of the last judgment, the Lord shatters him with eternal damnation, by whom He smites those vessels of His which are to he fashioned for the use of His service? Again, by a 'hammer' is expressed a blow from heaven, which is signified by Solomon building the temple, when it is said, And the house when it was in building, was built of stones hewn, and made ready, and neither hammer, nor hatchet, nor any tool of iron was heard in the house, while it was in building.

[1 Kings 6, 7] For what did that house typify but Holy Church, which the Lord inhabits in heavenly places? To the building of which the souls of the Elect are brought, as if they were some polished stones. And when it is built in heaven, no hammer of discipline there any longer resounds, because we are brought thither, as stones hewn, and made ready to he arranged in places fitted for us according to our desert. For here we are beaten outwardly, in order that we may arrive thither without reproach. Here does the hammer, here the hatchet, here do all the iron tools of blows resound. But in the house of God no blows are heard, because in the eternal country the noises of smitings are now hushed. There the hammer strikes not, because no punishment afflicts. The hatchet cuts not, because no sentence of severity casts out those who have been once received within. The instruments of iron resound not, because not even the slightest scourges are any longer felt. Because then the weight of the heavenly blow is expressed by a hammer coming down from above, what is meant by this Leviathan despising the hammer, except that he scorns to dread the blows of the heavenly punishment? And he counts the hammer as stubble, because he prepares himself for the weight of just wrath, as if against the lightest alarms. Whence it is also added still more expressly;

And will laugh at Him that shaketh the spear. [xiii] 24. For the Lord shakes a spear against Leviathan, because He threatens a severe sentence in his destruction. For to 'shake a spear' is to prepare for him eternal death through strict punishment. But the apostate spirit, despising the Author of his life, even with his own death, laughs at Him that shaketh the spear; because whatever severe, whatever horrible fate he foresees approaching from the strict judgment, he fears not to suffer it: but the more he perceives that he cannot escape eternal torments, with the greater cruelty does he rise up in practising his wickedness. And when the wise ones of this world behold him made firm with such perseverance, and such might, in all that he desires, they, most of them, incline their hearts to yield to his tyranny; and all that they know by the gift of God, do they turn against Him and apply to the service of His enemy. Whence it is also rightly subjoined;

Ver. 21. The rays of the sun will be under him. [E.V. 30] [xiv]

25. For in Holy Scripture when the 'sun' is used figuratively, there is designated sometimes the Lord, sometimes persecution, sometimes the display of an open sight of any thing, but sometimes the understanding of the wise. For by the 'sun' the Lord is typified, as is said in the Book of Wisdom, that all the ungodly in the day of the last judgment, on knowing their own condemnation, are about to say; We have erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun rose not upon us. [Wisd. 5, 6] As if they plainly said: The ray of inward light has not shone on us. Whence also John says; A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet. [Rev. 12, 1] For by the 'sun' is understood the illumination of truth, but by the moon, which wanes and is filled up every month, the changeableness of temporal things. But Holy Church, because she is protected with the splendour of the heavenly light, is clothed, as it were, with the sun; but, because she despises all temporal things, she tramples the moon under her feet. Again, by the 'sun' is designated persecution, as the Truth says in the Gospel, that the seeds which sprang up without roots withered when the sun arose. [Matt. 13, 6] Because, namely, the words of life which flourish for a moment of time in the heart of earthly men, are dried up by the heat of persecution coming upon them.

Again, by the 'sun' is designated the setting forth of a clear view, as the Prophet announces the Lord of all things appearing to our eyes, saying; He hath set His tabernacle in the sun. [Ps. 19, 4] As if he were saying, He displayed in the light of clear vision the mystery of His assumed humanity. And as it is said to the same Prophet by the Divine voice by Nathan; For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing in the sight of all Israel, and in the sight of the sun. [2 Sam. 12, 12] For what does he mean by the sight of the sun, except the knowledge of manifest vision. Again, by the name 'sun' is expressed the understanding of the wise, as it is written in the Apocalypse; The fourth angel poured forth his vial upon the sun, and it was given unto him to afflict men with heat and fire. [Rev. 16, 8] To pour forth a vial upon the sun is in truth to inflict the punishments of persecution on men shining with the splendour of wisdom. And it was given unto him to afflict men with heat and fire. Because when wise men, overcome by tortures, are smitten with the error of evil living, the weak, being persuaded by their example, burn with temporal desires. For the falls of the strong increase the destructions of the weak. That the acuteness of wisdom is designated by the 'sun,' is said also in the way of comparison by Solomon;

A wise man continueth as the sun, a fool changeth as the moon. [Ecclus. 27, 11] What then is pointed out in this place by the rays of the sun, but the acuteness of wise men? For because many, who seemed to be resplendent in Holy Church with the light of wisdom, either caught by persuasions, or alarmed by threats, or overpowered by tortures, submit themselves at that time to the power of this Leviathan, it is rightly said, The rays of the sun will be under him. As if it were plainly said, These, who within Holy Church seemed by the acuteness of wisdom to shed, as it were, rays of light, and by the authority of rectitude to be resplendent from above, submit themselves under the power of this Leviathan by their evil doings, so as no longer to shine from above by sound preaching, but to submit to him by obeying him in perverse ways. The rays therefore of the sun are under him, when some,

even learned men, do not exalt the acuteness of their wisdom by acting freely, but bend themselves down, both by the perversity of their doings, and by the fawning of adulation, to the steps of this Leviathan; so that their understanding, which by the gift of heaven was like a sun to them from above, is cast down, by earthly desire, beneath the feet of the ancient enemy.

And accordingly even now when any of the wise or learned, for the sake of advantage, or of the glory of temporal life, submits, by falling into flattery, to the powers of the world who work wickedness, a ray of the sun casts itself, as it were, beneath the feet of the coming Antichrist. And Behemoth humbles, as it were, beneath himself the light of heaven, when he tramples under foot, through their fatal assent, the minds of the wise. The rays, therefore, of the sun submit themselves to the feet of this Leviathan, as often as those who seem to be resplendent with the light of doctrine derive, through excessive acuteness, wrong opinions from Holy Scripture, and by their perverse opinions yield themselves up to his errors. For when they set themselves up against the faithful preaching of the truth, they follow by their false opinions the footsteps of this Leviathan. The rays of the sun are under him, as often as those who are learned, or powerful with the light of understanding, either exalt themselves in pride, to the contempt of others, or putting aside the lofty thoughts they feel, are polluted with the filthy desires of the flesh, or, forgetting heavenly things, pursue those of earth, or, not remembering that they are earth, boast vainly of their knowledge of heavenly things. Whence it is there also rightly subjoined,

He will strew gold under him like clay. [xv]

26. For by the term 'gold' in Holy Scripture is understood sometimes the brightness of Divinity, sometimes the splendour of the heavenly city, sometimes charity, sometimes the brightness of secular glory, sometimes the beauty of sanctity. For by the name 'gold' is designated the very inmost brightness of Divinity, as the appearance of the Bridegroom is described in the Song of Songs; His head is the most fine gold. [Cant. 5, 11] For because God is the Head of Christ, but in metals nothing is brighter than gold, the Head of the Bridegroom is said to be gold, because His Humanity rules over us from the brightness of His Divinity. Again, by the name 'gold' is understood the splendour of the heavenly city, as John bears witness that he saw it, saying; The city itself was of pure gold, like unto clear glass. [Rev. 21, 18] For the gold of which that city consists is said to be like glass, in order that by the gold it may be described as being bright, and by the glass as being clear. Again, by the name 'gold' charity is suggested, as the Angel, whom the same John beheld talking with him, he saw girt at the paps with a golden girdle. [Rev. 1, 13]] Doubtless because when the breasts of the citizens of heaven are no longer subject to the fear of punishment, and are not separated by any rent the one from the other, they bind themselves together by charity alone. [see Bk. xxi. '5. comp.

Acts 7, 30] But to 'have a golden girdle about the paps,' is to restrain all the movements of our changeful thoughts by the hands of love alone. Again, by the name of 'gold' is expressed the brightness of secular glory, as is said by the Prophet, Babylon is a golden cup. [Jer.

51, 7] For what is designated by the name of Babylon, but the glory of this world? And this 'cup' is said to be 'golden,' because while it shews the beauty of temporal things, it so intoxicates foolish minds with its concupiscence, that they desire temporal display, and despise invisible beauties. For in this golden cup Eve was the first who was made drunken of her own accord, of whom the history of truth says, that when she desired the forbidden tree, she saw that it was beautiful to the sight, and delightful to the look, and ate thereof. [Gen. 3, 6] Babylon is therefore a golden cup; because while it displays a look of outward beauty, it steals away the feeling of inward rectitude. Again, by the name of 'gold' is understood the splendor of sanctity, as Jeremiah deplores the change of the Jewish people from the splendor of righteousness to the gloom of wickedness, saying, How is the gold become dim, the finest colour is changed? [Lam. 4, 1] For as we said before, gold is dimmed, when the beauty of righteousness is forsaken, as the darkness of iniquity succeeds.

The finest colour is changed, when the splendour of innocence is turned into the foulness of sin.

27. By the name also of 'clay 'is designated in Holy Scripture sometimes the multiplicity of earthly goods, sometimes wicked teaching which savours of filth, sometimes the allurement of carnal desire. For by 'clay' is typified the multiplicity of earthly goods, as is said by the Prophet Habakkuk, Woe to him that multiplieth those things which are not his; how long doth he heap against himself the thick clay? [Hab. 2, 6] For he weighs himself down with thick clay, who multiplying earthly goods by avarice, confines himself with the oppression of his sin. Again, by the name of 'clay' is designated teaching which savours of faith, as is said to the Lord by the same Prophet; Thou madest a way in the sea for thy horses, in the clay of many waters. [Hab. 3, 15] As if he were saying, Thou hast opened a way for thy preachers amid the doctrines of this world which savour of filthy and earthly things. By 'clay' is designated also the desire of filthy pleasure, as the Psalmist says in entreaty; Take me out of the clay, that I stick not. [Ps. 69, 14] For to stick in the clay, is to be polluted with the filthy desires of carnal concupiscence.

28. In this place therefore 'gold' is taken for the brightness of sanctity; but nothing hinders our understanding by 'clay,' either covetousness in earthly things, or the infection of wicked doctrines, or the filth of carnal pleasures. For because this Leviathan subjects at that time to himself many, who seemed within Holy Church to be resplendent with the brightness of righteousness, either by the desire of earthly things, or by the infection of erroneous doctrine, or by carnal pleasures, he doubtless strews the gold under him like clay. For to strew gold as clay, is to trample down in some persons purity of life by unlawful desires; so that even they may follow his filthy footsteps, who used before to flash forth against him with the splendour of their virtues. The ancient enemy then deceives some at that time under a show of sanctity, but intercepts others by the foul sins of a carnal life. But he will then openly attack in these ways, but now he rules secretly in the hearts of many, as the Apostle Paul says, That he may he revealed in his time; for the mystery of iniquity doth already work. [2 Thess. 2, 6. 7.] He therefore even now throws gold under him as clay, as often as

he overthrows the chastity of the faithful through the sins of the flesh. He tramples on gold as clay, as often as he distracts the understanding of the continent by unclean desires. And this he performs the more vehemently at that time, the more unrestrainedly he perpetrates all that he desires, as given up to his own abandoned liberty.

29. And it may perhaps disturb some one, why the merciful Lord permits those things so to happen, that this Leviathan either now by crafty suggestions, or then by that accursed man whom he fully possesses, subjects to himself even the rays of the sun, that is, the learned and wise, or strews gold (that is, holy men refulgent with the brightness of sanctity) as clay beneath him, by polluting them with sins. But we reply at once, that the gold which could be strewed as clay by his evil persuasions, was never gold before the eyes of God. For they who can at any time be seduced so as never to come back again, seem in the eyes of men to lose the sanctity they possessed; but they never had it in the sight of God. For a man is often involved secretly in many sins, and he seems great in some one virtue. And this virtue itself also becomes weak and fails, because, when it is observed by men, it is doubtless praised, and its praise is eagerly sought after. Whence it comes, that even that very virtue is no virtue in the eyes of God, while it conceals that which displeases, puts forward that which pleases Him. What merits then can there possibly be with God, when both sins are concealed, and good qualities made public? For frequently, as we have said, pride is hidden, and chastity is publicly known;

and therefore the chastity which has been long made a shew of, is lost towards the end of life, because the concealed pride is sustained unamended even to the end. Another is busy in almsgiving, he distributes his own goods; but he is yet a slave to many acts of injustice, or perhaps employs his tongue in detraction. And it is frequently the case, that he, who had been compassionate, is inflamed, at the end of his life, with the stimulants of rapacity and cruelty. And it is the effect of a most righteous judgment, that he loses before men, even that by which he pleased men, who was never careful to amend that, by which he was displeasing to God. Another studies patience; but while he does not avoid envying others, and keeping malice in his heart, he at last becomes impatient, who for a long while grieved in secret. These therefore are in some measure 'gold,' and in some measure 'clay.' And this 'gold' is strewed as 'clay,' when even the virtue, which had shone brightly before men, is scattered by the force of secret sins. But we think it worth while to consider more accurately the excellence of the heavenly dispensation in these cases.

30. For Almighty God often tolerates the secret sins of some persons, in order that He may so make use of their known virtues as to promote the interests of His own Elect. For some persons do not entirely forsake the world, and lay hold on the narrow way, not so as to persevere. But yet by their example they inflame those, who are about to persevere, to seek the narrow way. Whence it frequently happens that this good life which they seem to live, they live not for themselves, but rather for the Elect alone, when, though not about to persevere themselves, they excite others, who will persevere, to zeal in holy living. But we often behold some persons enter on a way, and hasten to the proposed spot; and others follow

them, because they see them on the way, and they go on together to the same place. But it frequently happens that when any difficulty assails them, those who were going before, return back, and that those who were following reach the appointed spot. So doubtless are those who lay hold on the way of holiness, though not about to persevere. For they enter on the way of virtue, though not about to reach its end, for the very purpose of shewing to those who are about to reach it, the way in which they should walk. And even the fall of these promotes, with no slight benefit, the advancement of the Elect.

Because while they behold their fall, they tremble for their own state, and the ruin which condemns those, humbles these. For they learn to trust in the protection of heavenly assistance, when they see that many have fallen from their own strength. When therefore the reprobate seem to be acting rightly, they are pointing out as it were a level road for the Elect who are following them; but when they fall and lapse into wickedness, they shew, as it were, to the Elect who are journeying after them, the pitfall of pride to be guarded against. Let this Leviathan then go his way, and 'put beneath himself the rays of the sun,' and 'cast under him the gold like clay.' Almighty God knows how to use aright the sin of the reprobate for the comfort of His own Elect, when they who are about to reach Him, both advance toward Him by their own merits, and are frequently corrected in their proud thoughts by the lapses of others. But if this Leviathan acts thus even with those whom some virtue distinguishes, what is he likely to do with those whose mind is not in any degree raised up above earthly desires? These persons however the divine discourse plainly mentions, when it subjoins,

Ver. 22. He will make the deep sea to boil like a pot. [E.V. 31] [xvi] 31. What is expressed by the 'sea' but the life of the worldly, what by the 'deep' ['profundum'] but their deep and hidden thoughts? And this deep sea this Leviathan makes to boil like a pot, because it is doubtless quite plain, that in the time of the last persecution he studies to excite the minds of the reprobate against the life of the Elect by the flame of cruelty. Then does the deep sea boil as a pot, when he inflames with strong heat the hearts of the lovers of this world, and when those who in this time of peace kept their malice close within itself, then boil over with the heat of most savage persecutions, and with the headlong liberty of open cruelty breathe forth that hatred of ancient envy, which they had long suppressed. But because, when persuaded by deadly error they so serve Antichrist in these doings, as to imagine that they are the more truly doing service to Christ; after he had said, He will make the deep sea to boil like a pot, be fitly subjoined,

He will make it as when ointments boil. [xvii]

32. For ointments when they boil give forth the fragrance of sweetness. Because then this Leviathan will so seduce the hearts of the reprobate, that, whatever they do from the wickedness of unbelief, they imagine they are doing it for the truth of the right faith, that which they do with zeal for religion, smells, as it were, sweetly to them. Whence the Truth says to His disciples in the Gospel; That every one that killeth you, will think that he doeth God service. [John 16, 2] They, therefore, boil as a pot, while they cruelly persecute: but this

very persecution smells, to their sense, with the fragrance of ointments, when their mind, deceived by vain imaginations, thinks that it is doing God service. For in Holy Scripture by the sweet smell of ointments is usually signified an opinion of virtues. Whence the Bride in the Song of Songs, longing for the Bridegroom, says, We run in the odour of Thy ointments. [Cant. 1, 3] And hence the Apostle Paul, knowing that he was fragrant with the praise of virtues, says, We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ. [2 Cor. 2, 15] Because, therefore this Leviathan involves the ministers of that accursed vessel of his in deeds of cruelty, under the notions of praise, and the pretext of virtue, after He had said, He will make the deep sea to boil as a pot: He immediately rightly adds, He will make it as when ointments boil.

For the sea which boils with the fire of cruelty, He shews to boil as ointments, in the judgment of those same persons, who are excited by the feigned name of virtue; in order that they may become more atrocious in their cruelty, the more they believe that they even deserve rewards for their zeal for religion. And in the Divine judgment it is just that they, who neglect to consider and guard the power of piety, should be deceived by the odour of their own fancy. Whence, to increase the illusion, signs also and prodigies attend them when committing their cruelties, as it is also rightly subjoined;

Ver. 23. A path will shine after him. [E.V. 32] [xviii] 33. For a 'path' is said to shine after Leviathan, because wherever he passes along, he leaves behind him great astonishment from the brightness of his miracles, and wherever he goes forth, either by himself or by his ministers, he glitters with lying wonders. Whence the Truth says in the Gospel, that which we have already frequently quoted; There will arise false Christs, and false prophets, and will give signs and wonders, so as even for the Elect, if possible, to be led into error. [Mark 13, 22] A path, therefore, shines after Leviathan, because he enlightens by prodigies the deeds of those, whose hearts he penetrates; in order, doubtless, to keep their minds more deeply involved in the darkness of error, the more powerfully he displays, as it were, by their means the light of miracles without. But there are some, who retaining in their memory both the words of the Prophets, and the precepts of the Gospel, know that both the wonders he displays are false, and that the punishments, to which he leads them on by his deceit, are true. Because, therefore, this Leviathan does not deceive their hearts by a display of sanctity, he presents himself to them with another illusion. For he observes some persons, though knowing these things, yet loving the present life; to whose minds he proceeds to make light of future punishments; he asserts, that the sentence of severity will at length terminate; and hurries them on, when craftily deceived, to present pleasures. Whence it is also immediately fitly subjoined;

He will esteem the deep ['abyssum'] as growing old. [xix] 34. That the eternal and incomprehensible judgments are usually designated by the name 'deep' the Psalmist witnesses, saying, Thy judgments are a great deep. [Ps. 36, 6] But old age is sometimes put for the approach of the end. Whence the Apostle says, That which decayeth and waxeth old, is near to destruction. [Heb. 8, 13] This Leviathan, therefore, will look on the deep as growing old, because he so infatuates the hearts of the reprobate, as to infuse in them a suspicion that

the approaching judgment may come, as it were, to an end. For he considers that the abyss is growing old, who thinks that the heavenly infliction of punishment will ever he brought to a close. This ancient deceiver, therefore, makes light in his members, that is, in the minds of the wicked, of future punishments, which he bounds, as it were, by a certain limit, in order that he may prolong their faults without any limit from reproof, and that they may not here put an end to their sins, the more they imagine that the punishments of sins will be there brought to a close.

35. For there are those even now, who neglect to put an end to their sins, for the very reason that they suspect that the future judgments upon them will, some time or another, have an end. To whom we briefly reply; If the punishments of the reprobate will at any time be ended, the joys of the blessed will also be ended at last. For the Truth says by His own mouth, These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. [Matt. 25, 46] If, therefore, this is not true which He has threatened, neither is that true which He has promised. But they say, He threatened eternal punishment to sinners, in order to restrain them from the perpetration of sins; because He ought to threaten, not inflict, eternal punishments on His creature. To whom we reply at once: If He has made false threats in order to withdraw ['corrigere'] from unrighteousness, He has also made false promises, in order to encourage to righteousness. And who can tolerate this madness of theirs, who, while they assert in their fair offers that the punishments of the reprobate are terminated, overthrow by their assertion the rewards, and recompenses, of the Elect also? Who can tolerate their madness, who endeavour to establish that that is not true which the Truth has threatened concerning eternal fire, and who, while busy in declaring God to he merciful, are not ashamed to proclaim Him to be false?

36. But they said, A fault, which has an end, ought not to he punished without end. Almighty God is doubtless just, and that which is not committed with eternal sin, ought not to be punished with eternal torment. To whom we reply at once, that they would say rightly, if the just and strict Judge at His coming considered not the hearts, but only the doings of men. For the wicked have sinned with a limit, because their life had a limit. For they would have wished to live without end, in order that they might continue in their sins without end. For they are more eager to sin than to live; and they therefore wish to live for ever here, in order that they may never cease to sin, as long as they live. It pertains then to the justice of the strict Judge, that they should never be free from punishment, whose mind desired when in this life never to be free from sin; and that no end of punishment should be granted to the wicked, because as long as he was able he wished to have no end to his sin.

37. But they say, No just person revels in cruelty, and an offending servant is ordered by his just master to be scourged, in order to be corrected of his wickedness. He is, therefore, scourged for some object, when his master delights not in his tortures. But to what end will the wicked ever burn, who have been consigned to the fires of hell? And because it is certain that the Merciful and Almighty God revels not in the tortures of the wicked, why are the wretched put to torture, if they make not expiation? To whom we reply at once,

that Almighty God, because He is merciful, revels not in the torture of the wretched; but because He is just, He ceases not, even for ever, from punishing the wicked. But all the wicked are punished with eternal suffering, and indeed by their own iniquity; and yet they are burnt for some purpose, in order, namely, that all the just may behold in God the joys they experience, and may see in them the punishments they have escaped; in order that they may acknowledge that they are the more indebted to Divine grace, the more they see the eternal punishment of the sins, which by His help they were able to avoid.

38. But they say, And where then is their saintship, if they will not pray for their enemies, whom they will then see burning, though it is expressly said to them, Pray for your enemies? [Matt. 5, 44] But we reply at once, They pray for their enemies at that time when they are able to convert their hearts to fruitful penitence, and save them by this very conversion. For what else must we pray for our enemies, except that which the Apostle says, That God may give them repentance, and that they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil, by whom they are held captive unto his will? [2 Tim. 2, 25. 26. And how will prayers be made at that time for them, when they can no longer be in any degree turned from iniquity to works of righteousness? There is, therefore, the same reason for not praying then for men condemned to eternal fire, as there is now for not praying for the devil and his angels who have been consigned to eternal punishment. And this is now the reason for holy men not praying for unbelieving and ungodly men who are dead; for they are unwilling that the merit of their prayer should be set aside, in that presence of the righteous Judge, when in behalf of those whom they know to be already consigned to eternal punishment.

But if even now the just when alive do not sympathize with the unjust who are dead and condemned, (when they know that they themselves are still enduring from their flesh that which will be called into judgment,) how much more severely do they then regard the torments of the wicked, when, stripped of every sin of corruption, they will themselves cleave more closely and firmly to righteousness? For the power of severity so absorbs their minds, by means of their cleaving to the most righteous Judge, that they take no pleasure whatever in any thing which is at variance with the strictness of that inward rule. But because we have made these brief remarks against the followers of Origen [See Huetii Origeniana, B. 2. q. 11.], as the opportunity occurred, let us go back to the course of exposition, from which we have digressed. After the merciful Lord had pointed out the crafty machinations of this Leviathan, openly announcing all the fierce oppressions he inflicts outwardly on the Elect, and every thing which he infuses into the reprobate within by his flattering suggestion, He immediately subjoins, in speaking briefly of the hugeness of his strength;

Ver. 24. There is no power upon earth, which can be compared to him. [E.V. 33] [xx] 39. His power upon earth is said to be preeminent over all, because though he has fallen below men by the merit of his doings, yet he transcends the whole human race by the condition of his angelic nature. For though he has lost the happiness of eternal felicity, yet he has not lost the greatness of his nature; by the strength of which he still surpasses all human things, though he is inferior to holy men, by the baseness of his deserts. Whence also

the meritorious recompense of the Saints, who are contending against him, is the more increased, the more he is defeated by them, who boasts that, by the power of his nature, he has as it were a right to rule over men. It follows; Who was made to fear no one.

[xxi]

40. He was indeed so made by nature, as to be bound to feel a chaste fear for his Creator; that is to say, with a subdued and fearless fear, not with the fear which love casts out, but with the fear which remains for ever and ever, that is, which love begets. For a loving wife fears her husband in one way, an offending handmaid fears her master in another. He had therefore been so created, as, with joyful dread, to fear his Maker with love, and to love Him with fear. But by his own perversity he was made such as to fear no one. For he scorned to be subject to Him by Whom he had been created. For God is in such way above all, as to be Himself subject to no one. But this Leviathan, beholding the height of His loftiness, aimed at the privilege of the fatal liberty of ruling over others, and being subject to no one, saying, I will ascend above the height of the clouds, and I will be like the Most High. [Is. 14, 14] But he lost His likeness, because he proudly desired to be like Him in loftiness. For he who was bound to imitate His charity, in subjection, aimed at gaining His loftiness, and lost through pride that which he was able to imitate. He would, doubtless, have been lofty, if he had been willing to cleave to Him Who is truly lofty.

He would have been lofty, if he had been contented with a participation in true loftiness. But while he proudly aimed at high estate by himself, he rightly lost that which was participated. For having left that First Cause, to Whom he was bound to adhere, he aimed at being, in a sense, his own first cause ['principium']. Having forsaken Him, Who was able truly to be sufficient for him, he decided that he was able to be sufficient for himself, and fell the more beneath himself, the more he raised himself up against the glory of his Creator. For him, whom a slavery akin to freedom exalted, a slavish freedom cast down. With which liberty he is so let loose, as to fear no one, but he is grievously restrained by this very want of restraint. For, by the heavenly judgment which wisely ordains all things, the liberty which he desired, fettered him; because he, who was able to subdue even the elements, if he had been willing to fear the One Whom he ought, is now, though in every way not fearing, subject to every punishment. He doubtless would fear One with possession of all things, who now, by not fearing One, suffers all things.

41. He was therefore made to fear no one, no one, that is, because not even God. But he neither feared that which he was about to suffer. But it had been doubtless more blessed for him to avoid punishments, by fearing them, than by not fearing, to endure them. He changed therefore his desire after high estate into hardness of heart, in order that he, who sought in his ambition to rule over others, might feel not, through hardness of heart, that he has wrought wickedly. For because he did not obtain the right of the power he sought for, he found the madness of insensibility a kind of remedy for his pride; and because he was not able, by going beyond, to surpass all things, he, by making light of these, prepared himself

to meet all things. But his pride is still further carefully described, when it is immediately observed;

Ver. 25. He beholdeth every high thing. [E.V. 34] [xxii]

42. That is, he looks down as if from above on all, who are, as it were, placed beneath him; because while he strives in his intention against his Maker, he scorns to think any one like himself. And this fitly suits his members also, because all the wicked, elated through swelling of heart, despise with the haughtiness of pride all whom they behold. And if they ever respect them outwardly, yet within, in the secret of their heart, where they are great in their own estimation, they consider the life and the merits of others inferior to themselves. And they look on them as beneath themselves, because, through the lofty thought of their heart, they have placed themselves on a kind of high eminence. To whom it is well said by the Prophet; Woe unto you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight. [Is. 5, 21] Hence also Paul says; Be not wise in your own conceits. [Rom. 12, 16] Hence it is said to Saul by the Divine reproof; When thou wast little in thine own eyes, did I not make thee a head in the tribes of Israel? [1 Sam. 15, 17] For he is little in his own eyes, who in considering himself, regards himself as inferior to the merits of others. For whoever in the loftiness of his thought extends himself above the merits of others, looks, as it were, on himself as great.

But the reprobate Saul remained not in the good which he had begun, because he was swollen with pride at the power he had received. But, on the other hand, David, ever thinking humbly of himself, and counting himself inferior, in comparison with the same Saul, after he had met with an opportunity of striking, and spared this same raging adversary, prostrated himself with humble profession, saying; Whom dost thou pursue, O king of Israel? whom dost thou pursue? A dead dog, and a single flea. [l Sam. 24, 15] And he had been already certainly anointed as king, and had already learned by Samuel praying, and pouring the oil upon his head, that Divine Grace, having rejected Saul, was preserving him to hold the helm of the kingdom. And yet with humble mind he was prostrating himself to his persecuting adversary, to whom he knew that he had been preferred in the Divine judgment. He therefore humbly placed himself beneath him, to whom he knew that he was incomparably superior through the grace of election. Let those then, who are still ignorant in what rank they are held by God, learn in what way they should humble themselves to their neighbours, if even His Elect thus humble themselves before those, to whom they know they are already preferred in His secret judgments.

43. But it is a usual mark of the Elect, that they ever think more meanly of themselves than they really are. For hence it is said by the same David; If I did not think humbly, but exalted my soul. [Ps. 131, 1] Hence Solomon invites the little ones to wisdom, saying; If any is a little one, let him come to her. [Prov. 9, 4] But he who as yet despises not himself, does not lay hold of the humble wisdom of God. Hence the Lord says in the Gospel; I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. [Matt. 11, 25] Hence again the Psalmist

says; The Lord keeping little ones. [Ps. 116, 5] Hence the teacher of the Gentiles says; We became little ones in the midst of you. [1 Thess. 2, 7] Hence advising his disciples, he says; Each esteeming others better than themselves. [Phil. 2, 3] For, because every wicked person considers every one whom he knows, to be inferior to himself, the righteous, on the contrary, endeavours to regard all his neighbours as superior to himself. And lest, when one person humbles himself before another, this humiliation should tend to the pride of the other, he rightly admonished both parties, saying; Each esteeming others better than themselves: in order that in the thoughts of the heart I should prefer him to myself, and he in return should prefer me to himself; so that, when the heart is kept down on either side, no one may be elated by the honour bestowed on him.

44. But the reprobate, because they are members of this Leviathan, scorn either to know or to maintain this form of humility. Because, though they sometimes shew themselves outwardly humble, yet they neglect to maintain the power of humility within. And it often happens to them that if they ever perform one single good thing, however trifling, they immediately turn away the thought of their mind from all their faults, and ever look with all their attention at even this last good thing they may have done, and that from this they regard themselves as already holy, forgetting all the wickedness they have committed, keeping in mind only their one good action, which perhaps they were able but imperfectly to execute. As, on the other hand, it is usually the case with the Elect, that though powerful in the grace of many virtues, one sin, however inconsiderable, greatly harasses and assails them, in order that, by considering that they are weakened in one quarter, they may not pride themselves on those virtues in which they are powerful. And while they tremble at their weakness, they also maintain more humbly that point in which they are strong. The wicked, therefore, by thus incautiously looking at their one inconsiderable good quality, discern not the many and grievous sins in which they are plunged. And it is so ordered by a marvellous dispensation, that the Elect from the fear of being weakened by even their most minute sin, lose not the great virtues to which they have advanced.

45. It is so ordered then by the rule of the righteous and secret judgment, that their evils are of service to the one, and that their good things are injurious to the others; when these make use of their slight sins for their advance in virtue, and those avail themselves of their smallest good deeds to add to their sin. For these advance to greater perfection in virtue from the fact that they are tempted to sin. But those fall back into greater sin, from the fact that they boast of then goodness. The reprobate therefore applies what is good to a bad purpose, and the virtuous applies what is had to a good purpose. As it frequently happens that one person falls into the evil of sickness from wholesome food taken improperly, and that another, by taking the poison of a serpent in a medicine of proper composition, gets the better of his troublesome sickness. He therefore who would not use his wholesome food aright, perishes fatally by the very means from which others live in health. But he who took care to use the serpent's poison cautiously, lives in health by the very means by which others perish fatally. We call then not the wickedness itself, but the suggestion of wickedness, with which we are often tempted against our will and efforts, the poison of the

serpent. But this is then turned into a remedy, when the mind which is raised on high by its virtues, is brought low by the temptations it sees ranged against it.

Whatever works then the wicked, and those who are rejected from the approval of inward examination, may perform, with whatever virtues they may shine forth, they are utterly ignorant of the sense of humility; doubtless because they are members of this Leviathan, of whom it is said by the voice on high, He beholdeth every high thing. Because not only by himself, but by the hearts of those whom he has possessed, he looks down as from an high place on all beneath him.

46. But it must be observed, that this Leviathan, who is described by a beast which possesses a body, is described as looking on high, because, namely, when pride of heart extends outwardly as far as to the body, it is first indicated by the eyes. For they, being puffed up by the swelling of pride, look, as it were, from on high, and the more they depress, the higher they raise, themselves. For unless pride shewed itself through the eyes, as if through certain outlets ['fenestras'], the Psalmist would never say to God, Thou wilt save the humble people, and wilt bring down the eyes of the proud. [Ps. 18, 27] Unless pride poured forth through the eyes, Solomon would not say also concerning the pride of Judaea; A generation, whose eyes are lofty, and their eyelids lifted up on high. [Prov. 30, 13] Because then this Leviathan is designated by an animal possessing a body, and pride, when it comes forth into the body, more plainly rules over the eyes, the ancient enemy is described as seeing all men, as it were, from on high. But because many points are brought forward to set forth the enemy of the human race, the mind is very desirous, that some one point should be more plainly stated, in the end of the Lord's speech, by which his members can be pointed out by a brief description. It follows;

He is a king over all the children of pride. [xxiii] 47. This Leviathan, in order to fall in all the points mentioned above, smote himself with pride alone. For he would not wither up, through those many branches of sins, had he not first, through this, become rotten in the root. For it is written, Pride is the beginning of all sin. [Ecclus. 10, 13] For by this he himself fell, by this he overthrew men who followed him. He assaulted the health of our immortality with the same weapon as he destroyed the life of his own blessedness. But God introduced it at the end of His speech, for this reason, that by mentioning the pride of this Leviathan after all his sins, He might point out what was worse than all sins. Although further, from the fact of its being placed at the bottom, it is pointed out to be the root of vices. For as a root is covered over beneath, but yet branches expand outwardly from it, so pride conceals itself within, but open vices immediately shoot forth from it. For no evils would come forth to view, if this did not fetter the mind in secret. This is that which makes the mind of this Leviathan to boil as a pot. And by this he agitates also the minds of men with a kind of glow of madness, but he shews by their outward deeds how he subverts the mind of the person he agitates. For that first boils with pride within, which afterwards foams forth in works without.

48. But because an opportunity has offered itself of speaking about pride, we ought to examine into it with greater minuteness and anxiety, and to point out with what power or in what way it enters the minds of men, and on whom, and in what way, it commits ravages. For other sins assail those virtues only by which they themselves are destroyed; as, namely, anger patience, gluttony abstinence, lust continence. But pride, which we have called the root of vices, far from being satisfied with the extinction of one virtue, raises itself up against all the members of the soul, and as an universal and deadly disease corrupts the whole body. So that whatever is doing when it makes its assaults, even if it appears to be a virtue, vain-glory alone, and not God, is served thereby. For when pride assaults the mind, a kind of tyrant closely invests, as it were, a besieged city: and the wealthier is any one he has seized, the more harshly does he rise up in his authority; because the more largely the business of virtue is transacted without humility, the more widely does pride exercise its sway. But whoever has with enslaved mind admitted its tyranny within, suffers this loss first of all, that from the eye of his heart being closed, he loses the equitableness of judgment. For even all the good doings of others are displeasing to him, and the things which he has done, even amiss, alone please him.

He always looks down on the doings of others, he always admires his own doings; because whatever he has done, he believes that he has done with singular skill; and for that which he performs through desire of glory, he favours himself in his thought; and when he thinks that he surpasses others in all things, he walks with himself along the broad spaces of his thought, and silently utters his own praises. But the mind is sometimes brought to such haughtiness, as in his pride to be unrestrained even in boastfulness of speech. But ruin follows the more easily, the more shamelessly a man is puffed up in his own mind. For hence it is written, The heart is exalted before a fall. [Prov. 16, 18] Hence it is said by Daniel, The king was walking in the palace of Babylon, and he answered and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, in the glory of my beauty? [Dan. 4, 29] But how vengeance swiftly aroused repressed this pride, he immediately added, saying, While the word was yet in the king's mouth, there fell voice from heaven, To thee it is said, O king Nabuchodonosor, the kingdom shall depart from thee, and they shall drive thee out from men, and thy habitation shall be with cattle, and wild beasts: thou shalt eat hay as an ox, and seven times shall be changed over thee.

[ib. 31] Behold, because the pride of mind vented itself even in open words, the forbearance of the Judge immediately burst out in his sentence; and smote him the more severely, the more immoderately his pride exalted itself; and because he enumerated and mentioned the goods in which he flattered himself, he heard the evils enumerated with which he was to be smitten.

49. But it should be understood, that this very pride, of which we are speaking, possesses some persons in secular, and others in spiritual concerns. For one prides himself on gold, another on eloquence, one on weak and earthly things, another on the highest and heavenly virtues. And yet one and the same thing is going on before the eyes of God, though, as it

comes to the hearts of men, it is clothed in their sight with a different garb. For when he who was at first proud of earthly glory, is afterwards elated at his sanctity, pride has never forsaken his heart, but, coming to him as usual, it has changed its garment, that it may not be recognised.

50. It should be known also, that it attacks rulers in one way, and subjects in another. For it suggests to the thoughts of a ruler, that he has by the sole merit of his life risen above others; and if he has ever done any things well, it suggests them unseasonably to his mind. And when it suggests that he has specially pleased God, in order the more easily to enforce its suggestion, it brings forward in evidence, the recompense of the power entrusted to him; saying, That unless Almighty God perceived thee to be better than these men, He would not have given them all under thy power. And it presently exalts his mind, points out that those who are under his power are vile and worthless, so that he no longer regards any body as fit for him to speak to on equal terms. And hence the calmness of his mind is soon turned into wrath; because when he despises all, when he blames without any moderation the understanding, and the conduct of all, he swells out the more unrestrainedly into anger, the more he considers that those who are committed to his charge, are not worthy of him.

51. But, on the other hand, when pride urges on the heart of subjects, it strives especially to make them neglect entirely the consideration of their own conduct, and in their silent thoughts always to become judges of their ruler. For when they look unseasonably for what they ought to blame in him, they never notice what to correct in themselves. And hence they perish the more dreadfully, the more they avert their eyes from themselves; because they stumble and fall in the journey of this life, while they fix their attention elsewhere. They declare that they are sinners indeed, but not to such a degree that they should be delivered up to the control of so hurtful a person. And while they despise his doings, while they scorn his precepts, they are plunged into such madness, as to think that God does not care for the concerns of men; because they grieve that they have been put under the charge of one, who is, as it were, deservedly blamed. And while they are thus proud against their ruler, they also rise up against the sentence of their Maker. And whilst they pass sentence on the conduct of their pastor, they impugn also the wisdom of Him who orders all things. But they often oppose the commands of their ruler impertinently, and term this haughtiness of language, liberty. For pride frequently thus presents itself, as if it were proper liberty, just as fear frequently puts itself in the place of humility.

For, just as many are silent through fear, and yet consider that they are silent from humility, so do some speak from the impatience of pride, and yet think that they are speaking with rightful freedom. But sometimes inferiors utter not the impertinencies which they feel; and they whose loquacity is hardly restrained, are sometimes silent solely from the bitterness of their inward rancour. But, by suppressing through grief of mind their words of impertinence, though they are wont to speak wickedly, they are more wickedly silent. Because when on having sinned they hear any correction, they keep back, through indignation, the words of reply. Whenever they are treated harshly, they frequently break out into words of complaint

at this very harshness. But when their teachers prevent them with gentleness, they are more grievously indignant at this very humility, with which they are prevented. And their mind is the more vastly inflamed, the more considerately it is regarded as weak. These doubtless, because they are ignorant of humility, which is the parent of virtues, lose the benefit of their labour, even if there are any good things which they seem to do; because the height of the rising fabric is not strongly fixed, which is not by the strength of its foundation made fast on the rock. That then which they build rises up only to fall, because before they erect the fabric they do not first prepare the foundations of humility.

But we thoroughly lay open their inmost character, if we shew what they are in a few outward points.

52. For to all who swell within with proud thoughts there is noisiness in their speech, bitterness in their silence, dissoluteness in their mirth, wrath in their sorrow, unseemliness in their conduct, comeliness in their appearance, erectness in their gait, rancour in their reply. Their mind is ever strong in inflicting, weak in enduring, contumely; sluggish in obeying, importunate in provoking others; slothful in those things which it ought, and has power, to do, but ready for those which it neither ought, nor is able, to do. In that which it seeks not of its own accord, it is turned by no exhortation, but it seeks to be compelled to do that which it secretly longs for, because while it fears to become cheap from indulging its desire, it wishes to suffer compulsion even in its own will.

53. Because then we have said that the minds of men are tempted in one way by carnal, and in another by spiritual, concerns, let those hear; All flesh is grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of grass. [Is. 40, 6] And let these hear that which is said to some persons after their miracles; I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity. [Luke 13, 27] Let those hear; If riches increase, set not your heart upon them. [Ps. 62, 10] Let these hear that the foolish virgins, who come with empty vessels, are shut out from the marriage within. [Matt. 25, 12] Again, because we have said before, that rulers are tempted in one way, and subjects in another, let those hear that which is said by a certain wise man; Have they made thee a ruler? Be not lifted up, but be among them as one of them. [Ecclus. 32, 1] Let these hear; Obey them that have the rule over you, and be subject to them, for they watch as if about to give an account for your souls. [Heb. 13, 17] Let those, when they boast of the power they have received, hear that which is said by the voice of Abraham to the rich man in flames; Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things.

[Luke 16, 25] Let these, when they break into complaints against their rulers, hear that answer which is given to the murmuring people by the voices of Moses and Aaron; Nor is your murmur against us, but against the Lord. For what are we? [Ex. 16, 8] Let those hear; They shall be troubled in the sight of Him Who is the Father of orphans, and the Judge of widows. [Ps. 68, 4] Let these hear what is said against the contumacy of subjects; Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. [Rom. 13, 2] Let all together hear; God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. [James 4, 6] Let all hear; Every one that exalteth his heart is unclean before God. [Prov. 16, 5] Let all hear; Why art

thou proud, O earth and ashes? [Ecclus. 10, 9] Against the plague of this sickness, let us all hear that, which the Truth our Instructor teaches, saying; Learn of Me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart. [Matt. 11, 29]

54. For for this end the Only Begotten Son of God took on Him the form of our infirmity; for this the Invisible appeared not only visible, but even despised; [Phil. 2, 5-8] for this He endured the jests of contumely, the reproaches of derisions, and the torments of sufferings, that God in His humility might teach man not to be proud. How great then is the virtue of humility, since for the sole purpose of truly teaching it, He Who above estimation is great, became little, even to suffering? For since the pride of the devil caused the origin of our fall, the humility of God was found out as the instrument of our redemption. For our enemy who was created great among all things, wished to appear exalted above all things. But our Redeemer remaining great above all things, deigned to become little among all things.

55. But we both detect more readily the cause of pride, and lay bare the foundations of humility, if we briefly mention and run over what the author of death, and what the Creator of life declare. For the one says; I will ascend into heaven. [Is. 14, 13] But the Other says by the Prophet, My soul is filled with evils, and My life hath drawn nigh unto hell. [Ps. 88, 4] The one says; I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven. [Is. 14, 13] The Other says to mankind expelled from the abodes of Paradise; Behold, I come quickly, and I will dwell in the midst of thee. [Zech. 2, 10] The one says; I will sit in the mount of the testament, on the sides of the north. [Is. 14, 14] The Other says; I am a worm, and no man, the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people. [Ps. 22, 7] The one says; I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. [Is. 14, 14] The Other; When He was in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant; [Phil. 2, 6] and He speaks by His members, saying; Who is like unto Thee, O Lord? [Ex. 15, 11] The one speaks by his members, saying; I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. [Ex. 5, 2] The Other says by Himself;

If I should say I know Him not, I shall be a liar, like unto you: but I know Him, and keep His saying. [John 8, 55] The one says; The rivers are mine, and I have made them. [Ez. 29, 9] The Other says; I can of Mine own Self do nothing. [John 5, 30] And again; My Father that abideth in Me, He doeth the works. [John 14, 20] The one, when shewing all kingdoms, says; All this power will I give Thee, and the glory them, for they are delivered to me, and to whom I will give them. [Luke 4, 6] The Other says; Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, but to sit on My right hand, or on My left, is not Mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared of My Father. [Matt. 20, 23] The one says; Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. [Gen. 3, 5] The Other says; It is not for you to know the times or the moments which the Father hath put in His own power. [Acts 1, 17] The other, in order that the Divine Will might be despised, and his own enforced, says; Why hath God commanded you, that ye should not eat of every tree of Paradise? [Gen. 3, 1] And a little after; For God doth know, that in whatsoever day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened. [ib. 5] The Other says;

I seek not Mine own will, but the will of Him Which hath sent Me. [John 5, 30] The one speaks by his members, saying; Let there be no meadow, which our luxury does not pass through, let us crown ourselves with roses before they be withered, let us leave every where tokens of our joy. [Wisd. 2, 2] The Other announces to His members, saying, Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. [John 16, 20] The one teaches the minds who are subject to him nothing else but to aim at the height of loftiness, to transcend all their equals in swelling of mind, to surpass with lofty pride the society of all men, and to exalt themselves even against the might of their Creator: as is said of these very persons by the Psalmist; They have passed into the affection of the heart, they have thought and spoken wickedness, they have spoken iniquity on high. [Ps. 73, 7] The Other when approaching the spitting, the palms of the hands, the buffets, the crown of thorns, the cross, the spear, and death, admonishes His members, saying; If any man serve Me, let him follow Me. [John 12, 26]

56. Because then our Redeemer rules the hearts of the humble, and this Leviathan is called the king of the proud, we know plainly, that pride is a most evident token of the reprobate, but humility, on the contrary, of the Elect. When it is known then which any one possesses, it is found out under what king he is fighting. For every one bears as it were a kind of inscription ['titulum'] in his work, to shew thereby easily under the power of what ruler he is serving. Whence it is also said by the Gospel; Ye shall know them by their fruits. [Matt. 7, 16] Lest then the members of this Leviathan should deceive us by performing even wonders, the Lord has pointed out a plain token by which they can be detected, saying; He is a king over all the children of pride. For though they sometimes assume a pretended appearance of humility, yet they cannot conceal themselves in every point. For since then pride cannot bear to be long concealed, when it is concealed by one action it is exposed by another. But they who war under the king of humility, ever fearful, and circumspect on every side, fight against the darts of pride, and specially guard, as it were, the eye only of their body against the coming blows, when in themselves they principally defend their humility.

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