# Register of Epistles (part 2 of 2)

Gregory the Great (c. AD 540–604)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

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# Epistle LXII.

TO Romanus, Guardian (Defensorem). Gregory to Romanus, &c. It has come to our ears that the tonsuratores in Sicily, with wicked presumption, take to themselves the name of defensores, and that they not only are of no utility for the interests of the Church, but also take occasion hence to commit many irregularities. Consequently we enjoin thy Experience by this present authority to enquire diligently into this. And, if thou findest any, besides those who have letters to empower them in such business , usurping henceforth this title, put a stop to this thing by strict correction. If, however, thou shouldest discover any who have proved themselves active and faithful in ecclesiastical affairs, thou must send us a full and particular report of them, that we may judge whether they are worthy of a letter . Furthermore, we desire thee to make a thorough examination of the accounts of Fortunatus; and, when he has satisfied all the debts that appear against him, allow him no longer to have to do with the patrimony, or with any action of our Church, seeing that, as we have heard, he has conducted himself in such a manner that he ought not henceforth to have any communication with our people.

Furthermore, it has been reported to us that one Martianus, who has assumed to himself the name of a defensor, has declined to pay obedience to our brother and fellow-bishop John, to whom we had committed the charge of our patrimony. Inquire therefore; and, if it is true, let him be sent into exile, that his disobedience to him from whose Church he has seized for himself a false title of honour, and who is promoting the interests of the same, may not go unpunished. But, if there are also any others disobedient to the orders of our said brother, thou wilt by all means visit them with strict punishment.

# Epistle LXV.

TO Januarius, Bishop OF Caralis (Cagliari). Gregory to Januarius, Bishop of Sardinia. It has come to our ears that some of your clerics, inflated with a spirit of elation (which is a serious thing to be said), neglect obedience to the commands of your Fraternity, and occupying themselves rather in the services and labours of others, desert the business of their own Church in which they are needed. For this reason we greatly wonder why you do not keep up the rule of discipline, and restrain them, when wandering dissolutely at large, with a rein of strict control to the requirements of the office they have undertaken. It is said also that some of these contumacious clerks, in order to obtain support against you, resort to the patronage of our guardian (defensoris) Vitalis. Wherefore we have sent a letter to him, telling him not to dare henceforth to support any one of your clerks against you unreasonably; but, if any case of fault should arise which is not a serious one but merits pardon, to approach you rather as an intercessor than as a supporter of the culprit. Be on your guard, then, that no such report shall hereafter reach us of your subjects despising you.

We have learnt also that a certain widow left her substance to the monastery of St. Julian, and that this substance has been plundered by one of your clerks who used to direct the actions of the deceased woman while she lived, and that he now evades making restitution. We therefore exhort thee that, if what is said should prove to be true, you cause him to be constrained by strict proceedings, to the end that he may make haste to restore without diminution the property left to the monastery, and be compelled to give up, even with the loss of his reputation, that which, preserving the purity of his honour, he ought not to have dared to take. But what a cause for shame it. is that we should appear as admonishing your Fraternity to restrain your clerk under the vigour of discipline, this I believe that you yourself feel in your own heart.

Also against worshippers of idols, and soothsayers, and diviners, we very earnestly exhort your Fraternity to be on the watch with pastoral vigilance, and publicly among the people hold forth against the men who do such things, and recall them by persuasive hortation from the contagion of so great sacrilege, and such temptation of divine judgment, and peril in the present life. If, however, thou shouldest find them unwilling to amend and correct themselves from such doings, we desire thee to lay hold of them with fervent zeal, and, in

case of their being slaves, to chastise them with blows and torments, whereby they may be brought to amendment. But, if they are freemen, they should be directed to penitence by suitable and strict confinement; so that they who scorn to listen to salutary words reclaiming them from peril of death may at any rate be brought back by bodily torments to the desired sanity of mind. We have also been informed that, you having committed the care of your patrimony to certain laymen, they, after having been detected in depredations on your peasants and flight in consequence, both refuse to restore the property which, as not being subject to your control, they indecently retain as though it were in their own power, and also scorn to render you an account of their doings. If this be so, it is fitting that the matter be strictly investigated by you, and the case between them and the peasants of your Church be thoroughly examined.

And whatever fraud may be discovered in them let them be compelled to make restitution for with the penalty appointed by the laws. But for the future your Fraternity must take care that ecclesiastical property be not committed to secular men not living under your rule, but to approved clerics holding office under you; in whom if any wrong doing should be found, you may be able to correct what has been unlawfully done, as in the case of persons under you, whom the obligation of their condition convenes before you rather than excuses.

# Epistle LXVII.

TO Constantius, Bishop OF Milan . Gregory to Constantius, &c. Maximus, the prevaricator of the Church of Salona, after he had failed to obtain anything through the greater powers of the world, has betaken himself to the lesser ones; and by a superfluity of prayers and by attestation to his good works he strives to prevail with us. This being so, I have thought it would be inhuman in me, if he who says that he fears me much were quite unable to find me in some degree more indult. And I have therefore decided that our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Marinianus should take cognizance of his cause in the city of Ravenna. If, however, by any chance his person is suspected, we desire that your Fraternity also, if it is not too laborious for you, should take the trouble of repairing to the same city, and sit together with our aforesaid brother in the same trial. Whatever, then, may seem good to each of your Holinesses, know that it will seem good to me; and your judgment I accept as my own; and what things you both think should be remitted, be assured that I remit; taking, however, careful heed that we may not appear to be either sinfully remiss or austere to the injury of Holy Church. We have enjoined the execution of this matter on the Chartulary Castorius, that he may fully report to us all that has been done.

# Epistle LXVIII.

TO Eusebius OF Thessalonica. Gregory to Eusebius of Thessalonica, Urbicus of Dyrrachium, Andrew of Nicopolis, John of Corinth, John of Prima Justiniana, John of Crete, John of Larissa and Scodra, and many other bishops.

We are constrained by the care of government which we have undertaken to extend vigilantly the solicitude of our office, and to instruct the minds of our brethren by addresses of admonition, that no wrongful presumption. may avail to deceive the ignorant, nor any dissimulation to excuse those who know. Be it known then to your Fraternity that John, formerly bishop of the city of Constantinople, against God, against the peace of the Church, to the contempt and injury of all priests, exceeded the bounds of modesty and of his own measure, and unlawfully usurped in synod the proud and pestiferous title of oecumenical, that is to say, universal. When our predecessor Pelagius of blessed memory became aware of this, he annulled by a fully valid censure all the proceedings of that same synod, except what had therein been done in the cause of Gregory, bishop of Antioch, of venerable memory; taking him to task with most severe rebuke, and warning him to abstain from that new and temerarious name of superstition; even so as to forbid his deacon to go in procession with him, unless he should amend so great a wickedness. And we, adhering in all respects to the zeal of his rectitude, observe his ordinances, under the protection of God, irrefragably, since it is fitting that he should walk without stumbling along the straight way of his predecessor, whom the tribunal of the eternal Judge awaits for rendering an account of the same place of government.

In which matter, lest we should seem to omit anything that pertains to the peace of the Church, we once and again addressed the same most holy John by letter, bidding him relinquish that name of pride, and incline the elation of his heart to the humility which our Master and Lord has taught us. And having found that he paid no regard, we have not desisted, in our desire of concord, from addressing the like admonitions to our most blessed brother and fellow-priest Cyriacus, his successor. But since it is the case, as we see, now that the end of this world is near at hand, that the enemy of the human race has already appeared in his harbingers, so as to have as his precursors, through this title of pride, the very priests who ought to have opposed him by living well and humbly, I exhort and entreat that not one of you ever accept this name, that not one consent to it, that not one write it,

that not one admit it wherever it may have been written, or add his subscription to it; but, as becomes ministers of Almighty God, that each keep himself from this kind of poisoned infection, and give no place to the cunning lier-in-wait, since this thing is being done to the injury and rendering asunder of the whole Church, and, as we have said, to the contemning of all of you. For if one, as he supposes, is universal bishop, it remains that you are not bishops.

Furthermore, it has come to our knowledge that your Fraternity has been convened to Constantinople. And although our most pious Emperor allows nothing unlawful to be done there, yet, lest perverse men, taking occasion of your assembly, should seek opportunity of cajoling you in favouring this name of superstition, or should think of holding a synod about some other matter, with the view of introducing it therein by cunning contrivances,-though without the authority and consent of the Apostolic See nothing that might be passed would have any force, nevertheless, before Almighty God I conjure and warn you, that the assent of none of you be obtained by any blandishments, any bribes, any threats whatever; but, having regard to the eternal judgment, acquit ye yourselves salubriously and unanimously in opposition to wrongful aims; and, supported by pastoral constancy and apostolical authority, keep out the robber and the wolf that would rush in, and give no way to him that rages for the tearing of the Church asunder; nor allow, through any cajolery, a synod to be held on this subject, which indeed would not be a legitimate one, nor to be called a synod. We also at the same time admonish you, that if haply nothing should be done with mention of this preposterous name, but a synod be by any chance assembled on another matter, ye be in all respects cautious, circumspect, watchful, and careful, lest anything should therein be decreed against any place or person prejudicially, or unlawfully, or in opposition to the canons.

But, if any question arises to be treated with advantage, let the question in hand take such a form that it may not upset any ancient ordinances. Wherefore we once more admonish you before God and His Saints, that you observe all these things with the utmost attention, and with the entire bent of your minds. For if any one, as we do not believe will be the case, should disregard in any part this present writing, let him know that he is segregated from the peace of the blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles. Let, then, your Fraternity so act that when the Shepherd of shepherds comes in judgment, you may not be found guilty with respect to the place of government which you have received.

# Epistle LXXVIII.

TO Eulogius, Patriarch OF Alexandria. Gregory to Eulogius, &c. I have received at the hands of the bearer of these presents the letter of your most sweet Holiness, speaking to me about your cause being terminated speedily. But, as soon as he had come, he learnt how the possession which he sought from our Church was held, and soon satisfied himself about it. The business he had with others he settled without contention. But concerning the matter which ought by all means to have been written about to me, your Holiness has written nothing, considering me also to be tardy therein. And indeed, for fear of its breaking out into the scandal of division, I have been unwilling to be the author of such division. For I have chosen that whatever may follow should ensue through others. But in time to come, God granting it, you will have proof that in a cause wherein I desire to please God I am not afraid of men. Concerning this I took care to write to you before now, even when you went to Constantinople.

As to the timber, I had prepared pieces of a larger size, as your Blessedness had requested in your letter; but so small a ship has been sent here that it could not carry them, unless they had been cut. But I was unwilling to have them cut, and have reserved for your judgment what should be done about them. If you do not require them, we will adapt them for other uses here. Moreover, I beg of your Holiness to pray for me earnestly, since I am incessantly pressed down by pares of gout, and swords of barbarians, and distressing cares. But, if you bestow on me the help of your prayer, I believe that you will strongly aid me against all adversities.

# Epistle LXXIX.

TO Marinianus, Bishop OF Ravenna . Gregory to Marinianus, &c. What is to be done in the ease of Maximus you have learnt from the letters which we have before sent to you. But, since we have ascertained from the report of our Chartulary Castorius, the bearer of these presents, what is the wish, or rather the request, of your Fraternity in this matter, therefore if the said Maximus, in the presence of you and our aforesaid Chartulary, shall purge himself on oath from simoniacal heresy, and with respect to other charges shall, before the body of Saint Apollinaris, as we have written, reply only, when interrogated, that he is guiltless, we commit his cause to the judgment of your Fraternity, with regard to his having presumed to celebrate the solemnities of mass while excommunicated, as to what penance such fault shall be purged by. And so, whatever according to God seems good to you, do you settle without fear, and entertain no doubt with regard to us. For whatsoever may be ordained by you concerning this cause we both thankfully accept and willingly allow. Yet we exhort you that you should be careful, and so temper what you provide for being done as both to deal kindly with him, if so it shall seem fit, and by a suitable arrangement to observe, as you ought, the genius of ecclesiastical vigour. We have instructed the above-named bearer, while present with us, how he is to act with you; and, having learnt all thoroughly from him, do you so acquit yourselves in all respects that in your anxious care we may feel that our presence has been with you.

# Epistle LXXX.

TO Castorius, Notary . Gregory to Castorius, &c. The more thou seest thyself to be trusted by us, and charged with the conduct of cases when need arises, the more oughtest thou to shew thyself energetic and solicitous. Accordingly, if Maximus of Salons, having taken oath, shall affirm that he is not guilty of simoniacal heresy, and, as to other matters, when merely questioned before the body. of Saint Apollinaris, shall reply that he is innocent, and shall have done penance, as we have directed, for his disobedience, we desire that, to console him, thy Experience should give him the letter which we have written to him , wherein we have signified that we have restored to him both our favour and communion. For, as it befits us to be severe to those who persist in contumacy, so to those who are again humbled and penitent we ought not to deny a place of pardon.

Furthermore, as to our brother Sabinianus, bishop of Jadera , and Honoratus , archdeacon of Salons, or others who have had recourse to the Apostolical See, Maximus must be very earnestly dealt with, so that he may receive them with becoming charity, and in no way retain in his heart any grudge against them, but live with them with pure goodwill and sincere affection.

# Epistle LXXXI.

TO Maximus, Bishop OF Salona . Gregory to Maximus, &c.

Although to what was faulty in thy ordination at the first thou hast added serious evil through the fault of disobedience, yet we, tempering with becoming moderation the authority of the Apostolic See, have never been incensed against thee to the extent that the case demanded. But our displeasure which thou hadst excited against thyself continued the longer in that a sense of the responsibility entrusted to us tormented us exceedingly, lest we might seem to be passing over without attention certain unlawful doings of thine that we had heard of. And, if thou considerest well, thou wilt see that thou thyself, by deferring to satisfy us, didst confirm these reports, and thereby didst exasperate us the more against thee. But now that, following wholesome counsel, thou hast submitted thyself humbly to the yoke of obedience, and that thy love, in doing penance , has purged itself, as we directed, by fitting satisfaction, understand thou that the favour of brotherly charity is restored to thee, and give thanks that thou art received into our fellowship: for, as it becomes us to be strict with those who persevere in a fault, so does it to be kind in pardoning those who return to a better mind. Now, therefore, that thy Fraternity knows that he has recovered the communion of the Apostolic See, let him send some one to us, according to custom, to receive and convey to him the pallium. For, whilst we do not suffer unlawful things to be perpetrated, we no less refuse not what is customary. Further, though the discharge of the duties of our position might have called upon us to concede this, yet we are greatly constrained thereto by the request of our most sweet and excellent son, the lord Exarch Callinicus, that we would treat thee with moderation. His most dear wish we cannot resist, nor can we cause him sorrow.

# Epistle LXXXII.

TO Anatolius, Constantinopolitan Deacon . Gregory to Anatolius, &c.

To good and devoted sons it is worth our labour so to respond as to double, because we are paying a debt, what it would befit us of our own mere motion to bestow upon them. Seeing, then, that the bearer of these presents, our son the magnificent Marcellinus , has demeaned himself as he has in the cause of our brother and fellow-bishop Maximus and in that of the Istraians, and is anxious to employ himself for the advantage of our Church, therefore, that he may be able more and more to shew his sincere affection not only in words but also in deeds, we hereby exhort thy Love to co-operate with him when he comes to the royal city with entire zeal and earnestness, and to be at pains so to assist him with all the succour in thy power, that, supported by the aid of Almighty God and thine, he may have the less difficulty to contend with there. Thou wilt also study so to attend to him as to one who is in very truth our own, and so to bestow on him the efficiency of thy charity, that he may both recognise a return made to him for the past, and also be able to entertain a great hope of retribution in the future for his devotion which he promises to exhibit in the service of the Church.

But inasmuch as, so far as we have learnt, the most serene lord the Emperor had commanded our aforesaid magnificent son to hasten to wait upon him immediately, it is fitting for thee to seek an opportunity of intimating that it was no faulty disobedience, but the cause of our brother and fellow-bishop Maximus, that has detained him: which cause, though late, has nevertheless through his exertions been brought to a conclusion. But this we desire thy Love to attend to carefully; not to allow thyself to be mixed up in any cause whatever where there is oppression of the poor; lest haply, under pressure to some extent from persons in power, thou shouldest be driven to do what could not be of advantage to thy soul. Dealing, then, with all matters in the fear of God, consider especially the eternal reward.

# Epistle XCI.

TO Fortunatus, Bishop OF Neapolis(Naples). Gregory to Fortunatus, &c. Inasmuch as the Father of God's servants whom I had sent to the city of Naples has, by the ordering of God as it hath pleased Him, departed this life, it has seemed good to me to send the bearer of these presents, the monk Barbatianus, for the government of the same monks. For the present we decide that he shall be Prior, so that, if his life should approve itself to thy Fraternity, thou mayest after a little time ordain him as their Father. For he has some good qualities that commend him. But he has this great fault, that he is exceedingly wise in his own conceit. And it is evidently known how many branches of sin may spring from this root. Let thy Holiness, therefore, keep careful watch over him; and if you shall find him become wary in government and humble in his own mind, then, with the permission of God, advance him to the dignity of Abbot. But, if he makes little progress in humility, defer his ordination, and report to me .

# Epistle XCIII.

TO Gulfaris, Magister Militum . Gregory to Gulfaris, &c.

The bearers of these presents, who come to us from the Istrian parts, have reported such good things of your Glory as to inflame us ardently to return you thanks. For we learn that, among the cares of the government of those parts which has been committed to you, you are especially anxious to Win souls, and that you so take pains to recall the hearts of wanderers to the unity of the Church that, as far as your desire goes, you would have no one there separated from the Apostolic Church; and that so great love of Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, inflames you that you long with all your heart to restore the sheepfold of him to whom the keys were delivered by the Lord the Creator of all. Have, glorious son, from such and so great a work, a confident anticipation of divine retribution, wherein not only our admonition but also the words of the apostle confirm thee, since he who shall have caused a sinner to be converted from the error of his way shall save his soul from death, and cover a multitude of sins (James v.). For, however great be temporal affluence, or at any rate prosperity, it has its end,-the limit of death. But this pursuit of winning souls, which you have taken up, retains the certainty of its hope fixed; to wit, the retribution of eternal life.

Wherefore, greeting you with fatherly affection, we exhort your Glory that you the more earnestly give effect to the zeal for the unity of our holy faith which the Author of unity Himself has given you; and that, recalling whomsoever you can from the error of their schism into the bosom of Mother Church, you cherish them with continual admonition. And accomplish this also,-so to protect with the succour of your defence those whom the Lord through you may grant to be restored to His fold that there may be no quarter to which those who are still in error may be able to resort for the accusation of such as return to sound counsels. For, while you uphold the cause of God on earth, He Himself will prosperously direct your actions here with the aid of His protection, and there will remain for you, in the eternal life which you long for, retribution for your so great well-doing.

# Epistle XCIV.

TO Romanus The Guardian (Defensorem). Gregory to Romanus, &c. The bearers of these presents, who came hither from the parts of Istria to find their bishop who is now living in the parts of Sicily, have asked us to speed them in their way, and we have arranged for their journey hence. Let, then, thy Experience receive them, and arrange for their reaching their said bishop as soon as possible; lest, as they allege may be the case, others of the schismatics in those parts should be beforehand to persuade them. For, so far as they indicate, the bishop himself has a desire to come to us in behalf of the unity of the faith. Assistance therefore should be given them, that, with the help of the Lord, they may accomplish the good things they desire. But let thy Experience, in person if he is near at hand or otherwise by letter, exhort this same bishop to lose no tithe in hastening, with the Lord's good favour, to the threshold of the Apostles, being assured that he will be received by us with all affection. We also desire thee to pay him the cost of his journey to enable him to come to us. But, if he finds coming here burdensome, and arranges to live in Sicily, and consents, with his security given, to remain in the unity of the Church among the perverters of Scripture, this also do not thou delay to inform us of, that we may arrange, with the help of the Lord, how provision may be made for his expenses there. But lend also thy concurrence and succour for the bearers of these letters to come to their said bishop, so that after leaving us they may experience no less attention.

# Epistle XCVIII.

TO Theodore, Curator OF Ravenna. Gregory to Theodore, &c. Although from the report of our responsalis we have long heard many things of you to rejoice our heart, yet now our son the abbot Probus, who has returned to us, has reported still further such things of the charity of your Glory as it is becoming should be told of a really good and most Christian son. And, since he has told us of such kind feeling on your part, and such earnestness in arranging the peace as has not appeared even in our own citizens who have previously been in your parts, we beg the mercy of heavenly protection to recompense you for this in body and in soul both here and in the world to come, seeing that you have not ceased to act advantageously for the weal of many. We inform you therefore that Ariulf has sworn to the observance of the peace, not as his King swore , but under the condition that no excess should in any way be committed against himself, and that no one should march against the army of Aroges . This begin altogether unfair and crafty, we take it as if he had not sworn,-since to some extent he will easily find for himself an occasion of exceeding, and will deceive us the more if we are not on our guard against him.

But Warnilfrid, according to whose advice this same Ariulf acts in all respects, has scorned to swear at all. And so it has come to pass that from the peace which we so much desired, we in these parts can have hardly any remedy, since we must still, and for the future, be on our guard against the same enemies that we have been on our guard against so far. Furthermore, be it known to your Glory that the King's men who have been sent hither press us to subscribe to the compact, But remembering the insults which, to the injury through us of the blessed Peter, Agilulph is said to have addressed to the most illustrious Basilius, though Agilulph himself has entirely denied this, we have still thought it prudent to abstain from subscription, lest we, who are petitioners and mediators between him and our most excellent son the lord Exarch, should find ourselves deceived in any respect, in case of anything being perchance secretly with drawn (i.e. from the compact), and he should find an occasion of not assenting to our petition. And so we beg, as we have requested also of our aforesaid most excellent son, that your Glory, with the charity whereby you are united to us, would take measures to the end that, before these men return from Arogis, the king may send them letters posthaste, to be, however, handed on to us, ordering them not to call on us to subscribe. But, if it serves the purpose, we will cause our glorious brother, or one of the bishops, or at any rate an archdeacon, to subscribe.

With regard to Augustus we thank you, and are giving attention to his settling his cause with his adversary in accordance with equity; having been unwilling that the trouble of putting in an appearance with you should be imposed upon him, yet so as not to deny justice to his adversary. With regard to other matters since it has not been so far in our power to thank you adequately, we will for the future send to you our responsalis, through whom, by the mercy of God, we may be the more bound together in the charity wherein we are knit to each other. Moreover, the sorrow of your Glory affects us exceedingly; but since a wise man knows all that can be said in the way of comfort, we omit comforting you with words; but we attend you with our prayers, beseeching Almighty God to guard the life and health of yourself and all yours under the protection of His loving-kindness, and to console your heart while in a state of affliction.

# Epistle CV.

TO Serenus Bishop OF Massilia,(Marseilles). Gregory to Serenus, &c. That we have been so long in sending a letter to your Fraternity attribute not to sluggishness, but to press of business. We now commend to you in all respects the bearer of these presents, our most beloved son Cyriacus, the Father of our Monastery, that no delay may detain him in the city of Massilia, but that he may proceed under God's protection to our brother and fellow-bishop Syagrius with the succour of your Holiness. Furthermore we notify to you that it has come to our ears that your Fraternity, seeing certain adorers of images, broke and threw down these same images in Churches. And we commend you indeed for your zeal against anything made with hands being an object of adoration; but we signify to you that you ought not to have broken these images. For pictorial representation is made use of in Churches for this reason; that such as are ignorant of letters may at least read by looking at the walls what they cannot read in books. Your Fraternity therefore should have both preserved the images and prohibited the people from adoration of them, to the end that both those who are ignorant of letters might have wherewith to gather a knowledge of the history, and that the people might by no means sin by adoration of a pictorial representation .

# Epistle CVI.

TO Syagrius, Aetherius, Virgilius, Anddesiderius, Bishops . Gregory to Syagrius of Augustodunum (Autun), Etherius of Lugdunum (Lyons), Virgilius of Aretale (Arles), and Desiderius of Vienna (Vienne), bishops of Gaul. A paribus. Our Head, which is Christ, has to this end willed us to be His members, that through the bond of charity and faith He might make us one body in Himself. And to Him it befits us so to adhere in heart, that, since without Him we can be nothing, through Him we may be able to be what we are called. Let nothing divide us from the citadel of our Head, lest, if we refuse to be His members, we be left apart from Him, and wither like branches cast off from the vine. Wherefore, that we may be counted worthy to be the dwelling-place of our Redeemer, let us abide in His love with entire earnestness of mind. For He Himself says, He that loveth me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him (Joh. xiv. 23). But, since we cannot keep close to the author of all good, unless we cut away from us covetousness, which is the root of all evil, we therefore by these present writings (which associate us together mutually as in the alternate discourse of a wished for visitation) approach your Fraternity in accordance with apostolic institutes, that, leaning on the rules of the Fathers and the Lord's commands, we may banish from the temple of faith avarice, which is the service of idols, so as to suffer nothing hurtful, and nothing disorderly, to be in the house of the Lord.

I apprize you to wit, that we have long heard it currently reported how that in the regions of Gaul sacred orders are conferred through simoniacal heresy. And we are affected with sorrowful disgust, if money has any place in ecclesiastical offices, and that which is sacred is made secular. Whosoever, then, sets himself to buy this thing by the giving of a price, having regard not to the office but to the title, covets not to be a priest, but only to be called one. What forsooth? What comes of this but that there is no trial of a man's conduct, no carefulness about his moral character, no enquiry into his life, but that he only is counted worthy who has the means to give a price? Hence it ensues, if the matter be weighed in a true balance, that, while one wickedly makes haste to snatch a place of utility with a view to vain glory, he is all the more unworthy from the very fact of his seeking dignity. Moreover, as one who refuses when invited and flies when sought should be brought up to the sacred altar, so one that sues of his own accord and pushes himself forward importunately should without doubt be repelled. For whoever thus strives to climb to higher places, what does

he but decrease in increasing, and in rising outwardly sink low inwardly? Wherefore, dearest brethren, in ordaining priests let sincerity prevail, let there be simple consent without venality, let a pure election be preferred, so that advancement to the highest place of the priesthood may be believed to be due, not to the suffrage of sellers, but to the judgment of God. For that it is a grievous crime to wish to procure or to sell the gift of God for a price evangelical authority is witness (Matth. xxi.).

For, when our Lord and Redeemer went into the temple, He overthrew the seats of them that sold doves. What else is it to sell doves but to receive a price for the laying on of hands, and to put to sale the Holy Spirit whom Almighty God gives to men? And that the priesthood of such as do so falls before the eyes of God is plainly signified by the overthrowing of the seats. And yet the perverseness of this iniquity still puts forth its strength. For it drives those to sell whom it deceives into buying. And, while attention is not paid to what is enjoined by the divine voice, Freely ye have received, freely give (Matth. x. 8), it is brought to pass that it increases, and becomes doubled in one and the same contagion of sin, to wit of the buyer and of the seller. And, it being welt known that this heresy crept into the Church with a pestiferous root before all others, and was condemned in its very origin by apostolic detestation, why is it not guarded against? Why is it not considered that blessing is turned into a curse to him who is promoted to the end that he may become a heretic?

For the most part, then, the adversary of souls, when unable to insinuate into them what is wrong on the face of it, endeavours to supplant them by throwing over it as it were a show of piety, and persuades them, perhaps, that money ought to be received from those who have it, so that there may be wherewith to give to those who have it not, if only he may even so infuse mortal poisons concealed under the appearance of almsgiving. For neither would the hunter deceive the wild beast, nor the fowler the bird, nor the fisherman catch the fish, if the former were to set their snares in open view, or if the latter had not his hook hidden by the bait. By all means, then, the cunning of the enemy is to be feared and guarded against, lest those whom he cannot subvert by open temptation he should succeed in slaying more cruelly by a hidden weapon. For indeed it is not to be accounted almsgiving if that be dispensed to the poor which is got by unlawful dealings, since he who with this intention receives amiss as though with the view of dispensing well is the worse for it rather than the better. The alms that please the eyes of our Redeemer are not those that are gathered together in unlawful ways and from iniquity, but such as are bestowed out of what has been granted to us and well acquired.

Hence this also is certain, that, though monasteries or hospitals or aught else be built with the money given for sacred orders, it profits not for reward; since, when one that is perverse and a buyer of dignity is transferred to a holy place, and constitutes others after the likeness of himself for a consideration given, he destroys more by his evil administration than he who has received money from him for ordination can build up. That we should not, then, try to get anything with sin under pretence of almsgiving we are plainly warned by Holy Scripture, which says, The sacrifices of the impious are abominable which are offered of wickedness

(Prov. xxi. 27). For whatever in God's sacrifice is offered of wickedness appeases not, but provokes, the anger of Almighty God. Hence again it is written, Honour the Lord from thy just labours (Prov. iii. 9). Whoso, then, takes evilly that he may, as he supposes, give well, it is evident without doubt that he honours not the Lord. Hence also it is said through Solomon, Whoso offers a sacrifice of the substance of the poor is as though he slew a son in his father's sight (Ecclus. xxxiv. 24). Now let us consider how great is a father's grief if his son be killed in his sight: and hence we easily understand how much God is grieved when a sacrifice is given Him out of pillage. Exceedingly to be shunned then, most beloved brethren, is the perpetration of the sins of simoniacal heresy under pretence of almsgiving.

For it is one thing to do alms on account of sins, but another to commit sins on account of alms.

This also, which has reached our ears, we include as worthy of no dissimilar detestation; that some persons, inflated with desire of dignity, are tonsured on the death of bishops, and from being laymen are suddenly made priests, and shamelessly snatch at the leadership of religious life, not having as yet even learnt to be soldiers. What good do we suppose these will do their subjects, who, before touching the threshold of discipleship, fear not to occupy the place of mastership? In such a case it is needful that, even though any one were of unquestioned merit, he should be exercised in ecclesiastical offices by passing through distinct orders. He should see what he is to imitate, he should be formed into the shape he is to retain, so that afterwards he may not err, when chosen for shewing the way of life to the erring He should, then, be polished long by religious meditation, that he may be well-pleasing, and so shine as a candle placed on a candlestick that the adverse force of winds driving against the kindled flame of erudition may not extinguish it, but increase it. For, since it is written, That one should first be proved, and so minister ( 1 Tim. iii. 10), much more ought he first to be proved who is taken as an intercessor for the people, lest bad priests should become the cause of the people's ruin.

There can therefore be no excuse, no defence against this, since it is clearly known to all how solicitous about diligent attention to this matter is the holy and excellent teacher, who forbids that a novice should accede to sacred orders (1 Tim. iii.). But, as then one was called a novice who had been newly planted in the conversation of the holy faith, so one is now to be held to be a novice who, having been suddenly planted in the habit of religion, creeps on to canvass for sacred dignities. Orders, then, should be risen to in an orderly way: for he courts a fall who seeks to rise to the topmost heights of a place by steep ascents, disregarding the steps that lead to it. And, seeing that the same apostle teaches his disciple, among other directions with regard. to sacred orders, that hands are to be laid hastily on no man (1 Tim. v.), what can be more hasty or what more headlong than to begin at the top, and that a man should commence by being a bishop before he has been a minister? Whosoever, then, desires to obtain priesthood, not for the pomp of elation but for doing good, let him first measure his own strength with the burden he is to undergo, that, if unequal to it, he may abstain, and also approach it with fear, even if he thinks himself sufficient for it.

Further, it will not be beside the mark, if, in addition to the argument from rational beings we draw one from our use of irrational things. For timber Suitable for buildings is cut from forests, and yet the weight of the building is not imposed on them while they are yet green, or till a delay of many days has dried their greenness, and rendered them fit for necessary use. And, if by any chance this precaution is neglected, they are soon broken by the mass imposed upon them, and the material provided for support begets ruin. For hence also medical men, whose care is for the body, do not offer certain remedies to him that needs them while recently concocted, but leave them to be macerated for some time. For, should any one give them immaturely, there is no doubt that the means of health become a cause of danger. Let them learn, therefore, let priests in their office learn, those namely to whom the cure of souls is entrusted, to observe what men of various arts under the teaching of reason attend to, and restrain themselves from ambition, if not of fear, yet at any rate of very shame.

But, lest perchance any one should still wish to defend himself on the pretext of an evil custom, let the discretion of your Fraternity restrain them with the rein of reason, and not allow them to lapse into unlawful doings, since whatever is deserving of punishment ought not to be adduced as an example for imitation, but for correction. Nor, further, can we suffer you to pass over neglectfully this other matter, which alike requires correction. For of what profit is it to have guarded all besides if through one place pernicious access be afforded to the enemy? Therefore let women be prohibited from living with those who are constituted in any sacred order. With regard to them, lest the old enemy of the human race should exult, it must be laid down by the consent of all that they may have no other women with them but those whom the sacred canons include And, though this interdiction is perhaps hitter for the time to some, there is no doubt that it will afterwards grow sweet from its very benefit to their souls, if the enemy be overcome in that whereby he might have overcome them.

In this part of our solicitude also we must not leave unnoticed what has been ordained by the provision of the Fathers, for the sake of advantage, concerning the holding of councils throughout dioceses. Wherefore, test there should be any dissension among brethren, or any fomentation of discord between superiors and subordinates, it is necessary that priests should assemble together, so that there may be discussion about cases that arise, and salutary conference about ecclesiastical observances; to the end that, while things past are corrected and things future regulated, the Almighty Lord may be praised on all sides in one accord by brethren. Know ye whose presence will be with you, seeing that it is written, Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them (Matth. xviii. 20). If, then, He will vouchsafe to be present where there are two or three, how much more will He not be wanting where many priests have come together? And indeed it is not unknown what is appointed by the rules of the Fathers as to the holding of a council twice in the year. But, lest haply any necessity should not allow this rule to be carried out, we decree that still one shall meet, without any excuse allowed, once; so that nothing wrong, nothing unlawful, may be ventured on while a council is being expected. For

commonly, though not from love of justice, yet from fear of enquiry, people abstain from that which it is known may displease the judgment of all.

Let us, most beloved brethren, keep this observance to be left to our posterity; and let us meditate on all that is written in the sacred writings for our instruction, and incite all we can to follow it. For it is certain that, if with all our heart we attend to these salutary precepts, we escape all taint of vices, since, while we lean on these whereby we are built up, we shut out, no doubt, all place for deception.

Therefore for the purposes mentioned above, we desire your Fraternity, God willing, to assemble a synod, and in it, through the mediation of our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Aregius , and our most beloved son Cyriacus, let all things that are, as we have before said, opposed to the sacred canons, be strictly condemned under the ban of anathema; that is, that any one should presume to give any consideration for acquiring ecclesiastical orders, or receive any for conferring them; or that any one should all at once from a lay condition dare to enter on a place of rule; or that any other women should live with priests but such as are allowed, as aforesaid, by the sacred canons. Concerning all these things let our most reverend brother the bishop Syagrius, with the whole synod, when our most beloved brother Cyriacus returns to us, take care to send us word of what has been done; in order that, knowing accurately what has been decreed, and with what safeguards and in what manner, we may render thanks without ceasing to Almighty God for your life and manners.

# Epistle CVII.

TO Aregius, Bishop OF Vapincum . Gregory to Aregius, Bishop in Gaul. The affliction of your Fraternity, which we have learnt that you have had for the loss of your people, has given us such cause of grief that, since charity makes us two one, we feel our heart to be especially in your tribulations. But in the midst of this we have been much consoled by your having brought your mind to discern how it becomes you to bear sorrow patiently, and, in the hope of another life, not to have long continued grief for death. Still, lest some tribulation should still maintain itself in your soul, I exhort you to rest from sorrow, to cease to be sad. For it is unseemly to addict oneself to wearisomeness of affliction for those of whom it is to be believed that they have attained to true life by dying. Those have perhaps just excuse for long continued grief who know not of another life, and have no trust that there is a passing from this world to a better. We, however, who know this, who believe it and teach it, ought not to be too much distressed for them that depart, lest what in others has a show of affection, be to us rather a matter of blame. For it is, as it were, a kind of distrust to be tormented by sadness in opposition to what everyone preaches, as the Apostle says, But we would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope (1 Thess. iv. 12).

Having, therefore, this reason before us, dearest brother, we should try, as we have said, not to afflict ourselves about the dead, but bestow affection on the living, to whom pity may be of advantage and love bear fruit. Let us henceforth hasten, by reproving, exhorting, persuading, soothing, comforting, to profit all we can. Let our tongue be an encouragement to the good, a goad to the bad; let it beat down the puffed up, appease the angry, stir up the slow, kindle the idle by exhortation, persuade the shrinkers back, soothe the rough, comfort the despairing; that, as we are called leaders, we may shew the way of salvation to them that are advancing forward. Let us be vigilant in keeping guard, let us defend all approaches against the snares of the enemy. And, if ever error should have drawn aside a sheep of the flocks committed to us through devious ways, let us strive with all our endeavours to recall it to the Lord's sheepfolds, so that from the name of shepherd which we bear we may reap not punishment, but a reward. Seeing, then, that in all this there is need of the help of divine grace, let us implore the clemency of Almighty God with continual prayers, to the end that for doing these things He may give us the will and grant us the power, and, with the fruit of good work, direct us in that way in which He has declared Himself to be the

Shepherd of shepherds; that so, through Him, without whom we cannot rise to the doing of anything, we may be able to accomplish all

Furthermore, our common son, Peter the deacon, has given us to understand that your Fraternity at the time when you were here requested that we would grant to yourself and your archdeacon license to use dalmatics . But, because compelled by the sickness of your people, you departed in such haste that the very grief that weighed upon you did not suffer you to press the matter any longer, as was fit and as the nature of your request required; and because we had many engagements, and consideration of ecclesiastical propriety did not allow us to concede a new thing inconsiderately and suddenly; for these reasons the carrying into effect of the thing demanded has been long postponed. Now, however, recalling to mind your Charity's good deservings, by the tenor of this our authority we grant you your request, and have granted to thee or to thy archdeacon to be decorated by the use of dalmatics; and we have sent the same dalmatics by the hands of our most beloved son, the abbot Cyriacus.

Furthermore, at the synod which we have decreed should be assembled through our brother and fellow-bishop Syagrius against simoniacal heresy, we desire thee to be present; and we have ordered the pallium which we have sent for our said brother to be accordingly given him, on condition of his promising to remove from holy Church, by a definition of the synod, the unlawful things which we have prohibited. Concerning which synod we desire thy Fraternity to report to us fully by letter all its proceedings, that thou thyself, whose holiness we are well acquainted with, mayest inform us about everything.

# Epistle CVIII.

TO Syagrius, Bishop. Gregory to Syagrius, Bishop of Augustodunum (Autun). Mistress of all good things is charity, which savours of nothing extraneous, nothing rough, nothing confused; which so exercises and strengthens hearts that nothing is heavy, nothing difficult, but all that is done becomes sweet. Since, then, it is its peculiar quality to foster things that are concordant, to preserve things that are united, to join together things that are dissociated, to set right things that are wrong, and to consolidate all other virtues by the bulwark of its own perfection, whosoever grafts himself into its roots neither falls away from greenness, nor becomes empty of fruits, because effective work loses not the moisture of fecundity. And so I am much delighted with thee, and rejoice with thee in the Lord, most beloved brother, for that I find thee, by the testimony of many, so endowed with this same charity that thou both thyself becomingly exhibitest what befits a priest, and laudably shewest an example for imitation to others.

Inasmuch, then, as in the work of preaching (which after long thought I have taken care to supply to the nation of the Angli through Augustine, then provost (praepositum) of my monastery, and now our brother and fellow-bishop), I have found thee to be, as was right, so solicitous, devoted, and in all ways helpful, as to lay me under a great debt to thee in this matter, therefore moved by the consideration of so great an obligation, I cannot bear to put aside thy Fraternity's petition, lest I should appear towards thee unprofitable. Consequently, according to the tenor of thy request, we have provided under God for thy being dignified by the use of the pallium , to be worn within thy church, in the celebration of mass only. Nevertheless we have decided that it should be given thee only on condition of thy first promising to amend by the definition of a synod the things that we have ordered to be corrected; for we certainly deem it fit that, with the gravity of mind in which by the mercy of God we have learnt that thou excel-lest, a more distinguished adornment of outward apparel should accrue to thee; especially as we think that thou hast asked for it, not with a view to the pomp of needless elation but with regard to the character and dignity of thy Church.

And, lest in this vestment we should seem to be bestowing as it were a bare bounty, we have taken thought at the same time for the granting of this also;-that, while the Metropolitan has in all respects his place and dignity preserved to him, the Church of Augustodunum

should be next after the Church of Lugdunum (Lyons), and should claim to itself this place and rank by the indulgence of our authority. But as to the other bishops, we decree that they shall take their places according to the date of their ordination, whether for sitting in council, or for subscribing, or in any other matter, and shall claim to themselves the prerogative of their several ranks: for it seems to us consonant to reason that with the use of the pallium we should together with it, as we have said, bestow some privileges.

But, since with augmentation of dignity the sense of responsibility ought also to increase, that the adornments of action may agree with the decoration of vestments, your Fraternity should exercise yourself the more earnestly in all your pursuits. Be vigilant with regard to the doings of those who are under you; let your example be their instruction, and your life their teacher. By the exhortation of your tongue let them learn what to fear, and be taught what to love; that, when thou givest up the talents entrusted to thee with multiplied gain, in the day of retribution thou mayest be counted worthy to hear, Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy lord (Matth. xxv. 23).

# Epistle CIX.

TO Brunichild, Queen OF The Franks. Gregory to Brunichild, &c. Now that your Excellency's royal solicitude is in all matters of government praiseworthy, you ought, for the increase of your glory, to show yourself more watchful, and careful not to allow those whom you rule with counsel outwardly to perish inwardly among themselves. So may you, through the fruit of your pious solicitude, after occupying this topmost height of a temporal kingdom, attain under God to kingdoms and joys that are eternal. And this we trust you will be able after the following manner to succeed in; if, among other good deeds, you pay attention to the ordination of priests ; whose office, as we have learnt, has come in your parts to be such an object of ambition that priests are ordained all at once from being laymen. This is a very serious matter. For what can they effect, I what good can they do the people, who covet being made bishops, not for doing good, but for distinction? These, then, who have not yet learnt what they have to teach-what do they effect, but that the unlawful advancement of a few becomes the ruin of many, and that the observance of ecclesiastical government is brought into confusion, seeing the no regular order is observed? For whoso comes to the control thereof inconsiderately and hurriedly, with what admonition can he edify those who are put under him, his example having taught them, not reason, but error? It is a shame in truth, it is a shame, for one to command others what he knows not how to observe himself.

Nor do we pass over that other thing which in like manner requires amendment, but detest it as utterly execrable and a most serious matter; that in your parts sacred orders are conferred through simoniacal heresy, which was the first to arise against the Church, and was condemned with a rigorous malediction. Hence, therefore, it is brought about that the dignity of the priesthood comes into contempt, and holy honour under condemnation. And so reverence perishes, discipline is destroyed, since he who ought to have corrected faults committed them; and by nefarious ambition the honourable priesthood is brought under censure and disparagement. For who will any more venerate what is sold, or not think worthless what is bought? Hence I am greatly distressed, and condole with that land; since, while they scorn to have as a divine gift, but compass by bribes, the Holy Spirit which Almighty God deigns to bestow on men through the imposition of hands, I do not think that the priesthood can long subsist there. For where the gifts of heavenly grace are sold, the life is not sought for God's service, but rather money is venerated in opposition to God. Seeing then that so great a wickedness is not only a danger to them, but also in no small degree

injurious to your kingdom, greeting your Excellency with fatherly affection we beseech you to make God propitious to you by the correction of this enormity.

And, that there may be henceforth no opportunity of committing it, let a synod be held by your order, at which, in the presence of our most beloved son, the abbot Cyriacus , it shall be interdicted strictly under pain of anathema that any one should dare to pass suddenly from a lay condition to the degree of the Episcopate, or any one whatever dare to give or receive anything for ecclesiastical orders; that so our Lord and Redeemer may so deal with the things that are yours as He shall see you to be solicitous with pious devotion in the things that are His. But we have taken special care to delegate the charge and management of this synod, which we have decided should be held, to our brother and fellow-bishop Syagrius, whom we know to be peculiarly your own; and we beg you to deign both to lend a willing ear to his supplication, and to support him by your aid; to the end that what may redound to your reward, namely a pious and God-pleasing ordination of priests, the contagion of this evil being removed, may take effect within all the limits of your jurisdiction.

To this our brother, in that he has shewn himself exceedingly devoted with regard to the mission which has been sent, under God, to the nation of the Angli, we have sent a pallium to be used in the solemnities of mass, so that, having given aid in things spiritual, he may find himself advanced by the favour of the Prince of the apostles in the spiritual order itself. Furthermore, we have altogether wondered why in your kingdom you allow Jews to possess Christian slaves. For what are all Christians but members of Christ? And we all know that you sincerely honour the Head of these members. But let your Excellency consider how inconsistent it is to honour the Head and to allow the members to be trampled on by his enemies. And so we beg that your Excellency's ordinance may remove the mischief of this iniquity from your kingdom; so that you may prove yourself the more to be a worthy worshipper of Almighty God, in that you set his faithful ones free from His enemies.

# Epistle CX.

TO Theoderic And Theodebert, Kings OF The Franks . Gregory to Theoderic, &c. Since the renown of your kingdom has been resplendent of old among all others by the grace of the Christian religion, great pains should be taken that, wherein you stand out more glorious than other nations, you should therein please more perfectly the Almighty Lord who gives health and wealth to kings, and have the faith which you observe in all ways helpful to you. We had wished indeed, most excellent sons, to address to you a discourse of friendly greeting only, so as to shew our fatherly affection in offices of charity. But, seeing that an unlawful proceeding distresses us exceedingly, it befits us so to exhibit one thing as by no means to pass over in silence the other which needs amendment. If you give diligent attention, you will find that we speak entirely for the security of your well-being.

Now it is said that simoniacal heresy (which was the first to creep in by the devil's planting against the Church of God, and was at its very rise smitten and condemned by the weapon of apostolical vengeance) prevails within the limits of your kingdom, though faith together with good life ought to be chosen in priests.

If good life is wanting, faith has no merit, as the blessed James attests, who says, Faith without works is dead (Jam; ii. 18). But what can be the works of a priest who is convicted of obtaining the dignity of so great a sacrament by a bribe? Thus it is brought about that even the very persons who are desiring sacred orders take no pains to amend their lives or order their conduct, but busy themselves in amassing wealth wherewith to buy sacred dignity. Hence also it comes to pass that the innocent and poor recoil from sacred orders, being debarred and looked down upon. And while the innocence of the poor man displeases, there is no doubt that the bribe in the other case commends delinquencies; for, where gold pleases, so does vice. Hence, therefore, not only is a deadly wound inflicted on the souls of the ordainer and of the ordained, but also the Kingdom of your Excellence is weighed down by the fault of your bishops, by whose intercessions it ought rather to have been aided. For, if he is thought worthy of the priesthood who is supported, not by the merits of his doings, but by the abundance of his bribes, it remains that neither gravity nor industry can put in any claim for ecclesiastical dignities, but that the profane love of gold obtains all. And, while vices are remunerated with dignity, he is promoted to the place of the avenger who perhaps ought to have vengeance executed on himself;

and hence priests are shewn not to profit others, but rather themselves to perish. For, when the shepherd is wounded, who may apply medicine for healing the sheep? Or how shall he protect the people with the shield of prayer who exposes himself to be stricken by hostile darts? Or what kind of fruit shall he produce out of himself, whose root is infected by sore disease? Greater calamity, then, is to be apprehended in those places where such intercessors are promoted to places of rule, being such as to provoke the more the anger of God against themselves which they ought, through themselves, to have appeased in behalf of the people.

Moreover, we have heard that the farms of the Churches do not pay tribute; and we are consequently lost in great surprise, if unlawful payments be sought from those to whom even lawful ones are remitted .

Nor does our solicitude allow us to pass over this evil also; that some, lured by the instigation of vain glory, snatch all at once, from a lay condition of life, at the dignity of priesthood, and (what it shames one to say, though it is too serious a matter to pass over in silence) those who require to be ruled neither blush nor fear to appear as rulers, and those that require to be taught as teachers. Persons assume shamelessly the leadership of souls to whom the whole way to be taken by the leader is unknown, and who know not whither even they themselves are walking. How bad and how venturesome this is, is shewn even by secular order and discipline. For, seeing that a leader of an army is not chosen unless he has been tried in labour and carefulness, let those who desire with immature haste to mount to the height of episcopacy consider, at any rate by the aid of this comparison, of what sort leaders of souls should be; and let them abstain from attempting suddenly untried labours, lest a blind ambition for dignity both be to their own penalty and also sow seeds of pestiferous error to others, they themselves not having learnt what they have to teach. Accordingly, greeting you with fatherly affection, we beg, most excellent sons, that you would be at pains to banish this so detestable an evil from the limits of your kingdom, and that no excuse, no suggestion against your soul, find place with you;

since he who neglects to amend what he is able to correct, undoubtedly has the guilt of the doer. Wherefore, that you may be able to offer a great gift to Almighty God, order a synod to be assembled, in which (as we have enjoined our brethren and fellow-bishops), in the presence of our most beloved son the abbot Cyriacus, it may be ordained under the obligation of anathema that no one may ever give and no one ever receive anything for an ecclesiastical order, nor any one of the laity pass all at once to the priesthood; that so our Redeemer, whose priests you suffer not to be ruined among themselves by the enemy, may recompense you for this service both here and in the life to come.

Furthermore, we are altogether astonished that in your kingdom you allow Jews to possess Christian slaves. For what are all Christians but members of Christ? The Head of these members we all know that you honour faithfully: but let your Excellency consider how inconsistent it is to honour the Head and to allow His members to be trodden on by His enemies. And so, we beg that an ordinance of your Excellency may remove the evil of this wrong-doing

from your kingdom, that you may thus shew yourselves the more. to be worthy worshippers of Almighty God, in that you set free His faithful servants from His enemies.

# Epistle CXI.

TO Virgilius, Bishop OF Arelate (Arles). Gregory to Virgilius, &c.

Inasmuch as the desire of a pious purpose and the bent of a laudable devotion ought always to be aided by the earnest endeavours of priests, anxious care should be taken that neither remissness, neglect nor presumption disturb whatever has been ordained for the quiet of monks and of religious conversation. But, as it was right that what reason required should be profitably prescribed, so what has been prescribed ought not to be violated. Now Childebert of glorious memory, King of the Franks, inflamed by love of the Catholic religion, in founding for his own reward a monastery for men within the walls of the city of Arelate, as we find set down in writing, granted certain things there for the sustentation of its inmates. And, lest his purpose should ever be frustrated, and what had been arranged for the quiet of the monks be disturbed, he prayed in his letters that whatever rights he conceded to the said monastery might be confirmed by apostolical authority; adding this also to his petition, that certain privileges might at the same time be accorded to the same monastery, as well in the management of its affairs as in the ordination of its abbot. This he did as knowing such reverence to be paid by the faithful to the Apostolic See that what had been settled by its decree no molestation of unlawful usurpation would thereafter shake.

Hence, since the royal purpose as well as the thing desired, urgently demanded effect to be given to it, letters were sent by our predecessor Vigilius, bishop of the Roman See, to your predecessor Aurelius, wherein all things that a desire to embrace that purpose demanded were willingly confirmed by the support of apostolical authority, inasmuch as a thing of this kind, when requested, could not be allowed to encounter difficulty. But, that your Fraternity may know what was decreed at that time, we have seen to the written orders of our aforesaid predecessor being added to this letter. These having been perused, we exhort thee to keep them all inviolate with priestly earnestness, as becomes thee, and to allow nothing undue or unlawful to be imposed on that monastery, or the said orders to be infringed by any usurpation. For, though what has once been sanctioned by the authority of the Apostolic See has no lack of validity, yet we do, over and above, once more corroborate by our authority in all respects all things that were ordained by our predecessor for quiet in this matter. Let your Fraternity, then, so acquit yourself in observing them as both to shut out all occasion of

disturbance, and also to persuade others to carry these things out, while you shew yourself careful and devoted, as becomes yon, in observing the most pious will of the departed one.

# Epistle CXIV.

TO Virgilius And Syagrius, Bishops. Gregory to Virgilius, Bishop of Arelate (Arles), and Syagrius, Bishop of Augustodunum ( Autun).

The nature of the office committed to me, dearest brethren, drives me to break out into a cry of grief, and to sharpen your love with the anxiety of charity, for that it is said that you in your parts have been too negligent and remiss, where the rectitude of justice and zeal for chastity ought to have inflamed your earnestness. Now it has come to our ears that a certain Syagria had entered on a religious life, having even changed her dress, and was afterwards united by force to a husband (a thing iniquitous to be told), and that you have been moved by no sorrow to interfere in her defence. If this is so, I groan for it the more heavily for fear lest with the Almighty Lord (which God forbid) you should have the office of hirelings, and not the merit of shepherds, as having left without a struggle a sheep in the mouth of the wolf to be torn. For what will ye say, or what account will ye give of yourselves to the future judge; you whom the lewdness of ravishment has not moved, whom regard to the religious habit has in no wise excited to stand up in defence, whom priestly consideration has not roused to protect the purity of virgin modesty? Even now, then, let your neglect return to your memory; let remembrance of this fault stir you, and consideration of your office impel you to exhortation of the aforesaid woman. And, lest haply in course of time constraint should have passed into willing consent, let your tongue be her cure, and through your exhortations let her give herself diligently to prayer; let not the lamentations of penitence depart from her memory; let her exhibit a penitent heart to our Redeemer; and let her make amends with weeping for the loss of chastity, which in her body it was not allowed leer to preserve.

Wherefore, inasmuch as the aforesaid woman desires, as it is said, even now to devote her property to pious uses, we exhort you that she experience the favour and enjoy the support of your Fraternity in this thing, and that it be lawful for her, a competent portion being reserved for her children, to decide as she will about her substance. For without doubt you do good yourselves, if you render aid to those who wish to do good. Consider, therefore, most beloved brethren, from how great love these things which we speak proceed, and take them all in the same spirit of charity that inspires them. For, we being one body in Christ, I burn with you in this which I feel to be to your hurt. And with what earnestness, and what affection I send you this epistle, may the Author of truth disclose to your hearts. And so

let not this brotherly admonition distress you, since even a bitter cup is taken gladly, when offered with a view to health. Finally, dearest bethren, let us with united prayers implore the mercy of our God, that He would favourably order our life in His fear, to the end that we may both serve Him here as priests should do, and be able to stand in His sight hereafter secure and without fear.

# Epistle CXV.

TO Syagrius, Bishop OF Augustodunum (Autun). Gregory to Syagrius, &c. If in secular affairs every man should have his right and his proper rank preserved to him, how much more in ecclesiastical arrangements ought no confusion to be let in; lest discord should find place there, whence the blessings of peace should proceed. And this will in this way be secured, if nothing is yielded to power but all to equity.

Now it has been reported to us that our most beloved brother Ursicinus, bishop of the city of Taurini , after the captivity and plunder which he endured, has suffered serious prejudice in his parishes , which are said to be situated within the boundaries of the Franks, even to the extent of another person being constituted bishop there in contravention of ecclesiastical ordinances, no crime of his demanding it. And, lest this prejudicial proceeding should perchance seem to be a light matter, there has been also some hardship added in the taking from him of the property of his Church which he might have held. Now, if these things are really so, seeing that it is a very cruel thing and opposed to the sacred canons, that the ambition of any should remove from his own altar an innocent priest who does not deserve to be superseded on account of crime, let all regard his cause as their own, and strive against the imposition on others of what they would be unwilling to endure themselves. For if the entrance for an evil thing is not closed before it has been long open, it grows wider by use; and what is evidently forbidden by reason will be allowed by custom. But, beyond all others, let the solicitude of your Fraternity, in consideration of our commendation and your own sense of what you owe to God, devote itself earnestly to his defence, and not allow him to be any longer removed against reason from his parishes.

But, as well in your own person as by making supplication to the most excellent kings , whom we believe to cause you no sadness in any respect, do you bring it about that this thing which has been done amiss may be corrected, and that what has been taken away by force may under the patronage of truth be restored; for, seeing that it is written, A brother helping a brother shall be exalted (Prov xviii. 19), your Charity may know that it will receive by so much the more from Almighty God as His precepts shall have been gladly and constantly executed in helping a brother.

# Epistle CXVI.

TO Theoderic And Theodebert, Kings OF The Franks. Gregory to Theoderic, &c. It is the chief good in kings to cultivate justice, and to preserve to every man his rights, and not to suffer subjects to have done to hem what there is power to do, but what is equitable. Our trust that you both love and altogether aim at this invites us to indicate to your Excellency things that call for amendment, that so we may be able by our letters both to succour the oppressed and to acquire reward for you.

Now they say that our brother and fellow-bishop Ursicinus, bishop of the city of Taurini (Turin), suffers very serious prejudice in his parishes that are within the limits of your kingdom, in such sort that, contrary to ecclesiastical observance, contrary to priestly gravity, and contrary to the definitions of the sacred canons, no crime of his requiring it, another has not feared to be ordained bishop there. And, it being thought not enough unless unlawfulness were added to unlawfulness, even the property of his church, as is said, has been taken away. If the truth is so, it being exceedingly intolerable that one should be oppressed by force whom guilt has not harmed, we beg of you, addressing you in the first place with a greeting of paternal charity, that what out of reverence for the Church and regard to equity your Excellency might of your own accord bestow, you would study to grant all the more kindly on our intercession, and would cause justice to be observed towards him in all respects according to the trust we have in the goodness of your equity; and that, having ascertained the truth, you would order what has been unlawfully done to be corrected, and the property that has been wrongfully taken from him to be equitably restored to him. Nor should the fact of his church being detained for the present by his enemies be at all to his disadvantage:

but this ought to move more and more the disposition of your Christianity to succour him, that, being consoled by the gifts of your bounty, he may not feel the loss arising from the captivity which he has endured. For the good, then, of your soul let this our exhortation find place with you, that to your own reward you may lift up again his dejection with the outstretched hand of justice, to the end that from your observance of equity towards priests you may ever flourish through their prayers before the eyes of God.

# Epistle CXVII.

TO Brunichild, Queen OF The Franks. Gregory to Brunichild, &c. Whereas for the government of a kingdom valour stands in need of justice, and power of equity, nor for this purpose can one suffice without the other, with what great love your care for these things is resplendent is shewn plainly enough by the fact of your governing crowds of nations so laudably. Who then, considering this, can distrust the goodness of your Excellency, or be doubtful of obtaining his request, when he thinks it right to ask for what he knows you would willingly bestow upon your subjects? The bearer, then, of these presents, Hilarius , a servant of your Excellency, supposing that our intervention with your power will aid him, has requested to be supported by letters of commendation from us; holding it as certain that he will more abundantly obtain such favours as you grant to others if our intercession should speak for him. Accordingly, paying you our address of greeting with the affection of paternal charity, we beg that, as he states that he is labouring under adversities from the iniquity of certain persons, the protection of your Excellence may defend him; and, lest he should possibly be oppressed against reason, that by your command you would order him to be kept safe; that so, while no one's opposition shall have place unjustly and of mere will, both we may return thanks for having obtained what rather for your own reward we request, and that the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, whom you will venerate in us with Christian devotion by granting what we ask, may recompense your Excellency.

# Epistle CXX.

TO Claudius IN Spain . Gregory to Claudius, &c.

The renown of good deeds being fragrant after the manner of ointment, the odour of your glory has extended from the Western parts as far as here. Besprinkled by the sweetness of which breath of air, I declare that I greatly loved one whom I knew not, and within the bosom of my heart seized thee with the hand of love; nor did I love without already knowing him to be one whose good qualities I had learnt. For of him who is known to me by great intenseness of feeling, but remains unknown by bodily vision, I undoubtedly can say truly that I know his person, though I know not his home. Now herein is a great assertion of your good repute, that your Glory is said to cleave sedulously to the excellent king of the Goths; since, while good men always displease bad ones, it is certain that you are good, who have pleased one that is good. For this reason, addressing you with the greeting that is due to you, I hope that you are being exercised in these things which you have begun, so that that true sentence of Solomon may be fulfilled in you-The path of the just is as a shining light, and groweth unto the pearl day (Prov iv. 18). For, now that the light of truth shines upon us, and the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom discloses itself to our minds, it is indeed already day, but not yet perfect day.

But it will then be perfect day, when there shall be no longer anything of the night of sin in our souls. But do you grow unto the perfect day, that, until such time as the heavenly country shall appear, there may be spreading increase of good works here; to the end that in the retribution hereafter the fruit of reward may be by so much the greater as earnestness in labour has been increasing now. Wherefore we commend to your Glory our most beloved son Cyriacus, the Father of our monastery, that, after he has accomplished what has been enjoined him, there be no hindrance to delay his return. May Almighty God guard you by the protection of His heavenly arm, and grant unto you to be glorious both now among men and after long courses of years among the angels.

# Epistle CXXI.

TO Leander, Bishop OF Hispalis (Seville). Gregory to Leander, Bishop of Spain.

I have the epistle of thy Holiness, written with the pen of charity alone. For what the tongue transferred to the paper had got its tincture from the heart. Good and wise men were present when it was read, and at once their bowels were stirred with emotion. Everyone began to seize thee in his heart with the hand of love, for that in that epistle the sweetness of thy disposition was not to be heard, but seen. All severally were inflamed, and all admired, and the very fire of the hearers shewed what had been the ardour of the speaker. For, unless torches burn themselves, they will not kindle others. We saw, then, with how great charity thy mind was aflame, seeing that it so kindled others also. Your life indeed, which I always remember with great reverence, they did not know; but the loftiness of your heart was manifest to them from the lowliness of your language. As to my life, this your epistle speaks of it as worthy of imitation by all: but may that which is not as it is said to be become so because it is said to be so, lest one should lie who is not wont to lie. In reply to this, however, I speak shortly the words of a certain good woman, Call me not Noemi, that is, fair; but call me Mara, for I am full of bitterness (Ruth i. 20). For indeed, good man, I am not to-day the man you knew.

For I confess that in advancing outwardly I have fallen much inwardly, and I fear that I am of the number of those of whom it is written, Thou didst cast them down while they were lifted up (Ps. lxxii. 18 ). For he is cast clown when he is lifted up who advances in honours, and falls in manners. For I, following the ways of my Head, had determined to be the scorn of men and the outcast of the people, and to run in the lot of him of whom again it is said by the Psalmist, The ascents in his heart he hath disposed in the valley of tears (Ps. lxxxiii. 7 ); that is, that I should ascend inwardly all the more truly as I lay outwardly the more humbly in the valley of tears. But now burdensome honour much depresses me, innumerable cares din me, and, when my mind collects itself for God, they cleave it with their assaults as if with a kind of swords. My heart has no rest. It lies prostrate in the lowest place, depressed by the weight of its cogitation. Either very rarely or not at all does the wing of contemplation raise it aloft. My sluggish soul is torpid, and, with temporal cares barking round it, already almost reduced to stupor, is forced now to deal with earthly

things, and now even to dispense things that are carnal; nay sometimes, by force of disgust, is compelled to dispose of some things with accompanying guilt. Why should I say more?

Overcome by its own weight, it sweats blood. For, unless sin were reckoned under the name of blood, the Psalmist would not say, Deliver me from blood guiltiness (Ps. l. 16 ). But, when we add sin to sins, we fulfil this also which is said by another prophet, Blood hath touched blood (Hos. iv. 2. For blood is said to touch blood when sin is joined to sin, so as to multiply the load of iniquity. But in the midst of all this I implore thee by Almighty God to hold me who am fallen into the billows of perturbation with the hand of thy prayer. For I sailed as it were with a prosperous breeze when I led a tranquil life in a monastery: but a storm, rising suddenly with gusty surges, caught me in its commotion, and I lost the prosperity of my voyage; for in loss of rest I suffered shipwreck. Lo, now I am tossed in the waves, and I seek for the plank of thy intercession, that, not being counted worthy to reach port rich with my ship entire, I may at least after losses be brought to shore by the aid of a plank.

Your Holiness writes of being afflicted with the pains of gout, by continual suffering from which I too am grievously worn down. But comfort will be readily at hand, if amid the scourges under which we suffer we recall to mind whatever faults we have committed; and then we shall see that they are not scourges, but gifts, if by pain of the flesh we purge the sins which we did for delight of the flesh. Furthermore we have sent you, with the blessing of the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, a pallium, to be used only in celebration of Mass. In sending it to you I ought to admonish you much as to how you ought to live: but I suppress speech, since in your manner of life you anticipate my words. May Almighty God keep you under His protection, and bring you to the rewards of the heavenly country with multiplied fruits of souls. As to me, with what amount of business and with what weakness I am weighed down this short letter hears witness, in which I say little to one whom I greatly love.

# Epistle CXXII.

TO Rechared, King OF The Visigoths . Gregory to Rechared, &c.

I cannot express in words, most excellent son, how much I am delighted with thy work and thy life. For on hearing of the power of a new miracle in our days, to wit that the whole nation of the Goths has through thy Excellency been brought over from the error of Arian heresy to the firmness of a right faith, one is disposed to exclaim with the prophet, This is the change wrought by the right hand of the Most High (Ps. lxxvi. 11 ). For whose breast, even though stony, would not, on hearing of so great a work, soften in praises of Almighty God and love of thy Excellency? As for me, I declare that it delights me often to tell these things that have been done through you to my sons who resort to me and often together with them to admire. These things also for the most part stir me up against myself, in that I languish sluggish and unprofitable in listless ease, while kings are labouring in the gathering together of souls for the gains of the heavenly country. What then shall I say to the coming Judge in that tremendous assize, if I shall then come thither empty, where thy Excellency shall bring after thee flocks of faithful ones, whom thou hast now drawn to the grace of a true faith by assiduous and continual preaching? But this, good man, by the gift of God, affords me great comfort, that the holy work which I have not in myself I love in thee.

And, when I rejoice with great exultation for thy doings, the results of thy labour become mine through charity. With regard, therefore, to the conversion of the Goths, both for your work and for our exultation, we may well exclaim with the angels, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill(Luk. ii. 14). For we, as I think, owe the more thanks to Almighty God for that, although we have done nothing with you, we are nevertheless par-takers in your work by rejoicing with you. Further, how gladly the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, has accepted the gifts of your Excellency your very life witnesses evidently to all. For it is written, The vows of the righteous are his delight (Prov. xv. 8). For indeed in the judgment of Almighty God it is not what is given, but by whom it is given, that is regarded.

For hence it is that it is written, The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his gifts, but unto Cain and to his gifts he had not respect (Gen. iv. 4, 5). To wit, being about to say that the Lord had respect to the gifts, he was careful to premise that He had respect unto Abel.

Thus it is plainly shewn that the offerer was not acceptable by reason of the gifts, but the gifts were so by reason of the offerer. You shew, therefore, how acceptable your offering is, seeing that, being about to give gold, you have first given gifts of souls by the conversion of the nation subject to you. With regard to your telling us that the abbots who were sent to us to bring your offering to the blessed Apostle Peter bad been wearied by the violence of the sea and returned to Spain without accomplishing their voyage , your gifts were not kept back, for they reached us afterwards; but the constancy of those who had been sent has been tried, as to whether they knew how with holy desire to overcome dangers in their way, and, though fatigued in body, by no means to be wearied in mind. For adversity which comes in the way of good purposes is a trial of virtue, not a judgment of reprobation. For who can be ignorant how prosperous an event it was that the blessed Apostle Paul came to Italy to preach, and yet in coming suffered shipwreck? But the ship of the heart stood unharmed among the billows of the sea.

Furthermore, I must tell you that I have been led to praise God the more for your work by what I have learnt from the report of my most beloved son Probinus the presbyter; namely that, your Excellency having issued a certain ordinance against the perfidy of the Jews, those to whom it related attempted to bend the rectitude of your mind by offering a sum of money; which your Excellency scorned, and, seeking to satisfy the judgment of Almighty God, preferred innocence to gold. With regard to this what was done by King David recurs to my mind, who, when the longed for water from the cistern of Bethlehem, which was wedged in by the enemy, had been brought him by obedient soldiers, said, God forbid that I should drink the blood of righteous men (1 Chron. xi. 19). And, because he poured it out and would not drink it, it is written, He offered it a libation to the Lord. If, then, water was scorned by the armed king, and turned into a sacrifice to God, we may estimate what manner of sacrifice to Almighty God has been offered by the king who for His love has scorned to receive, not water, but gold. Wherefore, most excellent son, I Will confidently say that thou hast offered as a libation to the Lord the gold which thou wouldest not have in opposition to Him. These are great things, and redound to the praise of Almighty God.

But in the midst of all these things we must guard with vigilant attention against the snares of the ancient foe, who, the greater gifts he sees among men, with the more subtle snares seeks to take them away. For robbers too do not look out for empty travellers to seize them on their road, but such as carry vessels of gold and silver. For indeed the present life is a road. And every one must needs be the more on his guard against ambushed spirits in proportion as the gifts are greater which he carries. It is the duty, then, of your Excellency, with regard to this so great gift which you have received in the conversion of the nation subject to you, to keep with all your might, first humility of heart, and secondly cleanness of body. For where it is written, Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted (Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14), it is assuredly evident that he truly loves what is lofty who does not cut off his soul from the root of humility. For often the malignant spirit, in order to destroy the good that previously he had not power to oppose, comes into the mind of the worker after accomplishment of his work, and agitates

it with silent thoughts of self-praise, so that the deluded mind admires itself for the great things that it has done.

And, being exalted in its own sight through hidden tumour, it is deprived of the grace of Him Who bestowed the gift. For hence it is that it is said through the voice of the prophet to the soul that waxes proud, Having trust in thy beauty thou playedst the harlot because of thy renown (Ezek. xvi. 15). For indeed a soul's having trust in its beauty is its presuming within itself on its righteous doings. And it plays the harlot because of its renown, when in what it has done aright it desires not the praise of its Maker to be spread abroad, but seeks the glory of its own reputation. Hence again it is written through the prophet, In that thou art more beautiful, go down (Ezek. xxxii. 19). For the soul goes down because of being more beautiful when, owing to the comeliness of virtue whereby it ought to have been exalted before God, it falls from His grace through elation. What then is to be done in this case but that, when the malignant spirit employs the good things that we have done to exalt the mind, we should ever recall to memory our evil deeds, to the end that we may acknowledge that what we have done sinfully is our own, but that it is of the gift of Almighty God alone when we avoid sins.

Cleanness also of body is to be guarded in our strivings after well-doing, since, according to the voice of the apostolic preacher, The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are (1 Cor. iii. 17). And again he says, Far this is the will of God, even your sanctification (1 Thess. iv. 3). As to which sanctification, what he means by it he shews by straightway adding, That ye should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the lusts of concupiscence.

The very government also of your kingdom in relation to your subjects ought to be tempered with moderation, test power steal upon your mind. For a kingdom is ruled well when the glory of reigning does not dominate the disposition. Care also is to be taken that wrath creep not in, lest whatever is lawful to be done be done too hastily. For wrath, even when it prosecutes the faults of delinquents, ought not to go before the mind as a mistress, but attend as a handmaid behind the back of reason, that it may come to the front when bidden. For, if once it begins to have possession of the mind, it accounts as just what it does cruelly. For hence it is written, The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God (Jam. i. 20). Hence again it is said, Let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak, and slow to wrath (Ib. 19). However I doubt not that trader the guidance of God you observe all these things. Still, now that an opportunity of admonition has arisen, I join myself furtively to your good deeds, so that what you do though not admonished you may not do alone, having an admonisher to boot. Now may Almighty God protect you in all your doings by the stretching out of His heavenly arm, and grout you prosperity in the present life, and alter a course of many years eternal joys.

We have sent you a small key from the most sacred body of the blessed apostle Peter to convey his blessing, containing iron from his chains, that what had bound his neck for martyrdom may loose yours from all sins. We have given also to the bearer of these presents, to be

offered to you, a cross in which there is some of the wood of the Lord's cross, and hairs of the blessed John the Baptist, from which you may ever have the succour of our Saviour through the intercession of His forerunner. Moreover we have sent to our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Leander a pallium from the See of the blessed Apostle Peter, which we owe both to ancient custom, and to your character, and to his goodness and gravity .

A long time ago, when a certain Neapolitan youth came hither, your to me most sweet Excellency had thought fit to charge me to write to the most pious Emperor to the end that he might search in the record office for the treaties that had formerly been concluded with the prince Justinian of pious memory as to the claims of your kingdom, so as to gather from them what he should observe with regard to you. But there were two things seriously in the way of my doing this. One was that the record-office in the time of the aforesaid prince Justinian of pious memory had been so burnt by a fire which had crept in suddenly that hardly any paper of his times remained. The other was that, as no one need be told, thou oughtest to look in thy own archives for the documents that are against thee, and produce these instead of my doing so. Wherefore I exhort your Excellency to arrange matters suitably to your character, and carefully to carry out whatever makes for peace, that the times of your reign may be memorable with great L praise through many courses of years. Furthermore, we have sent you another key from the most sacred body of the blessed apostle Peter, which, being laid up with due honour, may multiply with blessing whatever it may find you enjoying.

# Epistle CXXIII.

TO Venantius And Italica . Gregory to the lord Venantius, Patrician, and Italica his wife.

I have taken care, with due affection, to enquire of certain persons who have come from Sicily about your Excellency's health. But they have given me a sad report of the frequency of your ailments. Now, when I say this, neither do I find anything to tell you about myself, except that, for my sins, lo it is now eleven months since it has been a very rare case with me if I have been able now and then to rise from my bed. For I am afflicted by so great sufferings from gout, and so great from troubles, that my life is to me most grievous pain. For every day I faint under my sufferings, and sigh in expectation of the relief of death. Indeed among the clergy and people of this city there has been such an invasion of feverous sicknesses that hardly any freeman, hardly any slave, remains fit for any office or ministry. Moreover, from the neighbouring cities we have news daily of havocs and of mortality. Then, how Africa is being wasted by mortality and sickness I believe that you know more accurately than we do, insomuch as you are nearer to it. But of the East those who come from thence report still more grievous desolations. In the midst of all these things, therefore, since you perceive that there is a general smiting as the end of the world draws near, you ought not to be too much afflicted for your own troubles.

But, as becomes wise nobles, bring ye back your whole heart to the care of your souls, and fear the strict judgment all the more as it is so much nearer at hand. Devote yourselves to piety, of which it is written that It hath promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come (1 Tim. iv. 8). But Almighty God is powerful both to preserve the life of your Excellency for a long time here, and to bring you after many courses of years to eternal joys. I beg my most sweet daughters, the lady Barbara and the lady Antonina, to be greeted in my name; whom I pray that heavenly grace may protect, and grant them to be prospered in all things.

# Epistle CXXV.

TO Maximus, Bishop OF Salona . Gregory to Maximus, &c. Having received the letters of our brother and fellow-bishop Marinianus, and Castorius, our chartularius, having also returned, we learn that your Fraternity have made most full satisfaction with regard to the matters about which there had been uncertainty; and we return great thanks to Almighty God that from our inmost heart all rancour of sinister suspicion has been eradicated. On this account I have been desirous of dismissing with the utmost speed our common son, your deacon Stephen. But the frequent pains of my sicknesses have compelled me to retain him with me for a few days. As soon, however, as I have begun to be even slightly better, I have provided for sending him forthwith back to you with joy. Accordingly we send to you, according to custom, the pallium for the sacred solemnities of mass; the meaning of which we desire you in all respects to vindicate. For the dignity of this vestment is humility and justice. Let, then, your Fraternity make haste with all your heart to shew yourself humble in prosperity, and in adversity, if ever it should ensue; upright in justice; friendly to the good, and opposed to the froward; never discountenancing any one who speaks for the truth; instant in works of mercy according to thy means, and yet beyond thy means desiring to be instant; sympathizing with the weak; rejoicing with men of good will; regarding the woes of others as thine own; exulting for the joys of others as if for thine own; in correcting vices severe, in cherishing virtues, soothing the minds of hearers; in anger, retaining judgment without anger, but in calmness not relinquishing the censorship of your severity. This, dearest brother, is the meaning of the pallium which you will receive, which if you act up to, you will have inwardly what you are seen to have received outwardly.

Furthermore I commend in all respects to your Fraternity our brother and fellow-bishop Sabinianus ; and if there be any matters of dispute between you, let them meanwhile be laid aside. Let charity remain fixed between you, that so, in case of contention ever arising about external things, they may be examined without charity deserting the heart. We commend also our common son Honoratus: concerning whom if it is the case, as we have learnt through Castorius our chartularius; that through him three previous archdeacons have been compelled to observe the ecclesiastical custom by retiring at the expiration of five years, we desire indeed that he may experience the charity of thy Holiness. For a judgment ought not to be solicited in a case which he himself has judged. If, however, it is not so, then, all swelling of heart being repressed, and all grudge set aside, he ought to be received,

and by no means removed from the place which he now occupies. Messianus also, the cleric who had taken refuge with us, we have confidently committed to the charge of our common son Stephen the deacon, being assured that in the case of one whom we ourselves send to your Fraternity, you will not show any grudge, but lend the countenance of your authority. May Almighty God keep you in His protection, and grant us so to act that after the billows of this temporal state we may be able to attain with joy to things eternal.

# Epistle CXXVII.

From S. Columbanus TO Pope Gregory . To the holy lord, and father in Christ, the Roman [pope], most fair ornament of the Church, a certain most august flower, as it were, of the whole of withering Europe, distinguished speculator, as enjoying a divine contemplation of purity (?) . I, Bargoma , poor dove in Christ, send greeting. Grace to thee and peace from God the Father [and] our [Lord] Jesus Christ. I am pleased to think, O holy pope, that it will seem to thee nothing extravagant to he interrogated about Easter, according to that canticle, Ask thy father, and he will skew time; thine elders and they will tell thee (Deut. xxxii. 7). For, though on me, who am indeed a trifler (micrologo) may be branded that excellent expression of a certain wise man, who is reported to have said, on seeing a certain woman, contupictam , I do not admire the art, but I admire the brow, in that I who am vile write to thee that art illustrious; yet, relying on my confidence in shy evangelical humility, I presume to write to thee, and impose on thee the matter of my grief. For writing is not in vain, when necessity compels one to write, though it be to one's betters.

What, then, dose thou say concerning Easter on the 21st or 22nd day of the moon, which (with thy peace be it said) is proved by many calculators not to be Easter, but in truth a time of darkness? For it is not unknown, as I believe, to thy Efficiency, how Anatolius (a man of wonderful learning, as says Saint Hieronymus, extracts from whose writings Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, inserted in his Ecclesiastical History, and Saint Hieronymus praised this same work about Easter in his catalogue) disputes with strong disapprobation about this age of the moon. For against the Gallican Rimarii , who erred, as he says, about Easter, he introduced an awful sentence, saying, Certainly, if the rising of the moon be delayed tilt the end of two watches, which indicates midnight, light does not overcome darkness, but darkness light; which thing is certainly not allowable in the Easter Festival, namely, that any part of the darkness should dominate over the light, since the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection is light, and there is no communion of light with darkness And, if the moon has not shone forth tell the third watch, there is no doubt that the moon has risen on its 21st or 22nd day, in which it is not possible for a true Paschal offering to be made.

For those who lay down that it is possible for a true Easter to be celebrated at this age of the match, not only are unable to affirm this by authority of divine Scripture, but also incur the guilt of sacrilege and contumacy and peril of their souls, while affirming that the true

Light, which dominates over all darkness, can be offered while there is any domination of darkness Also in the book of holy dogma we read, Easter, that is, the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection, cannot be celebrated before the beginning of the vernal equinox is past, to wit, that it may not come before the vernal equinox : which rule assuredly Victorius has gone beyond in his cycle, and hereby has already introduced error into Gaul, or to speak less boldly, has confirmed one of old standing. For indeed how can either of these things stand with reason; either that the Lord's Resurrection should be celebrated before His Passion (the thought of which is absurd), or that the seven days sanctioned by the Lord's command in the Law, during which only it is enjoined that the Lord's Passover could lawfully be eaten (which are to be numbered from the 14th day of the moon to the 20th), should against law and right be exceeded? For a moon in its 21st or 22nd day is out of the dominion of light, as having risen at that time after midnight; and, when darkness overcomes light, it is said to be impious to keep the solemnity of light.

Why then dost thou, who art so wise, the brilliant lights indeed of whose sacred genius are diffused, as in ancient times, through the world,-why dost thou keep a dark Easter? I wonder, I confess, that this error of Gaul, ac si Schynteneum , has not long ago been swept away by thee; unless I should perchance suppose, what I can hardly believe, that, as it is evident that thou hast not corrected it, it has thy approval

In another way, however, may thy Expertness be more honourably excused, if, fearing to subject thyself to the mark of Hermagoric novelty, thou art content with the authority of thy predecessors, and especially of pope Leo.

Do not, I pray thee, in such a question trust to humility only or to gravity, which are often deceived, Better by far is a living dog in this problem than a dead lion (Eccles. ix. 4). For a living saint may correct what had not been corrected by another who came before him. For know thou that by our masters and the Irish ancients, who were philosophers and most wise computists in constructing calculations, Victorius was not received, but held rather worthy of ridicule or of excuse than as carrying authority. Wherefore to me, as a timid stranger rather than as a sciolist, afford the support of thy judgment, and disdain not to send us speedily the suffrage of thy Placability for assuaging this tempest which surrounds us; since, after so many authors whom I have read, I am not satisfied with that one sentence of those bishops who say only, We ought not to keep the Passover with the Jews. For this is what the bishop Victor formerly said; but none of the Easterns accepted his figment . But this the benumbing (numb? backbone of Dagon; this the dotage of error drinks in . Of what worth, I ask, is this sentence, so frivolous and so rude and resting, as it does, on no testimonies of sacred Scripture; We ought not to keep the Passover with the Jews? What has it to do with the question?

Are the reprobate Jews to be supposed to keep the Passover now, seeing that they are without a temple, outside Jerusalem, and Christ, who was formerly prefigured, having been crucified by them? Or, can it be rightly supposed that the 14th day of the moon for the Passover was of their own appointment, and is it not rather to be acknowledged to be of

God's, who alone knew clearly with what mysterious meaning the 14th day of the moon was chosen for the passage [out of Egypt]. Perhaps to wise men and the like of thee this may be in some degree clearer than to others. As to those who make this objection, although without authority, let them upbraid God for that He did not then beforehand guard against the contumacy of the Jews by enjoining on them in the Law nine days of unleavened bread, if He would not have its keep the Passover with them, so that the beginning of our solemnity should not exceed the end of theirs. For, if Easter is to be celebrated on the 21st or 22nd day, from the 14th to the 22nd nine days will be reckoned, that is, seven ordered by God, and two added by men. But, if it is allowed for men to add anything of their own accord to divine decree, I ask whether this may not seem opposed to that sentence of Deuteronomy, Lo (he saith), the word which I give unto thee, thou shall not add unto it nor take from it (Deut. iv. 2).

But in writing all this more forwardly than humbly, I know that I have involved myself in an Euripus of presumption attended with great difficulty, being perchance unskilled to steer out of it. Nor does it befit our place or rank that anything should be suggested in the way of discussion to thy great authority, and that my Western letters should ridiculously solicit thee, who sittest legitimately on the seat of the apostle and key-bearer Peter, on the subject of Easter. But thou oughtest to consider not so much worthless me in this matter as many masters, both departed and now living, who confirm what I have pointed out, and suppose thyself to be holding a colloquy with them: for know that I open my thick-lipped month dutifully though it may be incoherently and extravagantly. It is for thee, therefore, either to excuse or to condemn Victorius, knowing that, if thou approvest him, it will be a question of faith between thee and the aforesaid Hieronymus, seeing that he approved Anatolius, who is opposed to Victorius; so that whoso follows the one cannot receive the other. Let, then, thy Vigilance take thought that, in approving the faith of one of the two authors aforesaid who are mutually opposed to each other, there be no dissonance, when thou pronouncest thy opinion, between thee and Hieronymus, lest we should be on all sides in a strait, as to whether we should agree with thee or with him. Spare the weak in this matter, lest thou exhibit the scandal of diversity. For I frankly acknowledge to thee that any one who goes against the authority of Saint Hieronymus will be one to be repudiated as a heretic among the churches of the West: for they accommodate their faith in all respects unhesitatingly to him with regard to the Divine Scriptures. But let this suffice with respect to Easter.

But I ask what thy judgment is about those bishops whom thou hast written of as simoniacal, and whom the writer Giltas calls pests. Should communion be had with them? For there are known to be many such in this province, whereby the matter is made more serious. Or as to others, who having been polluted in their diaconate, are afterwards elected to the rank of bishops? For there are some whom we know to have conscientious scruples on these grounds; and in conferring with our littleness about them, they wished to know for certain whether they may minister without peril after such transgressions; that is, either after having bought their rank for money, or after adultery in their diaconate. I mean, however,

concealed adultery with their dependents , which with our teachers is accounted as no less criminal.

As to a third head of enquiry, say in reply, I pray thee, if it is not troublesome, what should be done in the case of those monks who for a closer sight of God, or inflamed by a longing for a more perfect life, going against their vows, leave the places of their first con version, and, against the will of their abbots, the fervour of monks compelling them, either go free or fly to deserts. The author Vennianus enquired about these of Giltas, who replied to him most elegantly: yet still to one who is anxious to learn there is ever an increase of greater fear. These things, and much more which epistolary brevity does not admit of, might well have been enquired about more humbly and more clearly in a personal interview, but that weakness of body and the care of my fellow-pilgrims keeps me bound at home, though desirous of going to thee, so as to draw from that spiritual vein of a living well and from the living water of knowledge flowing from heaven and springing up unto eternal life. And, if my body were to Follow my mind, Rome would once more be in danger of being itself despised; seeing that-even as we read in the narration of the learned Hieronymus how certain persons once came to Rome from the utmost boundaries of the Heuline coast ; and then (wonderful to be told) sought something else outside of Rome-so I too, saving reverence for the ashes of the saints should seek out longingly, not Rome but thee: for, though I confess myself not to be wise, but athirst, I should do this same thing if I had time and opportunity.

I have read thy book containing the Pastoral Rule, short in style, lengthy in teaching, full of mysteries; and acknowledge it to be a work sweeter than honey to one that is in need. Wherefore bestow, I pray thee, on me who am athirst for what is thine, the works on Ezekiel, which, as I have heard, thou hast elaborated with wonderful genius. I have read the six books of Hieronymus on that prophet; but he has not expounded the middle part. But, if thou wilt do me the favour, send for me to the city some of thy remaining writings; to wit, the concluding expositions of one book, and (? namely) the Song of Songs from that place where it is said, I will go to the mountain of myrrh and rite hill of frankincense, to the end, treated with short comments, either of others, or thine own: and I beg that thou wouldest expound the whole obscurity of Zachariah, and make manifest its hidden meaning, that Western blindness may give thee thanks for this. I make unreasonable demands, and ask to have great things told me: who can fail to see this? But it is true also that thou hast great things, and knowest well that from a little less, and from much more should be put out to use. Let charity induce thee to write in reply;

let not the roughness of my letter hinder thee from expounding, seeing that it is my mode of expression that has been in fault, and I have it in my heart to pay thee due honour. It was for me to provoke, to interrogate, to request: it is for thee not to refuse what thou hast received freely, to put thy talent out to use, to give to him that asks the bread of doctrine, as Christ enjoins. Peace be to thee and thine; pardon my forwardness, blessed pope, in that I have written so boldly; and I pray thee in thy holy prayers to our common Lord to pray for me, a most vile sinner. I think it quite superfluous to commend to thee my people, whom the

Saviour judges fit to be received, as walking in His name; and if, as I have heard from thy holy Candidus , thou shouldest be disposed to say in reply that things confirmed by ancient usage cannot be changed, error is manifestly ancient; but truth which reproves it is ever more ancient still.

# Epistle X.

TO Romanus, Guardian (Defensorem). Gregory to Romanus, our guardian in Sicily. It has been reported to us that our most reverend brother the bishop Basilius is occupied in legal suits as though he were one of the last of the people, and unprofitably attends the courts. Now, since this thing both renders the man himself vile and does away with the reverence due to priests, let thy Experience, immediately on receiving this order, so compel him by strict execution of it to return to his duty that, through thy insistency, a delay five days be not under any excuse allowed him; lest, if thou shouldest in any way permit him to make such delay, thou with him shouldest come to be gravely culpable before us. Given in the month of December, Indiction 3.

# Epistle XV.

TO Clementina, Patrician . Gregory to Clementina, &c. It has reached us by the report of a certain Abbot that your Glory has been told by certain evil-speakers that we have a pique against you. If this is so, whosoever have made up this story have been double towards you under a shew of sincerity, so as to shew themselves off as faithful, and wickedly cause you to doubt us. But I, glorious daughter, knowing thy good qualities of old, and especially the chastity which has been thy companion from youth, have ever regarded thee with great respect and affection. But, lest even now your Glory should suspect that my heart is changed, I declare that there is not in me a scruple of ill-feeling or anger towards you; but be assured that I evince paternal affection for you. One thing, however, that has been told me I ought. not to pass over in silence, lest there should begin to be a diminution of charity, if what needs to be said for amendment were suppressed.

For indeed it has been reported to me that, when any one has offended you, you retain soreness unremittingly. Now, if this is true, since the more I love you the more grieved I am, I beg that you would nobly rid yourself of this fault, and not suffer the seed of the enemy to grow to the detriment of your crop of well-doing. Let the words of the Lord's Prayer be brought back to your memory, and let not blame prevail with you over pardon. Let the goodness of your Glory get the better of transgressions, and by salubriously pardoning make the offender devoted to you more than persistent asperity can make him undevoted. Let there be left to him what may make him ashamed, and not kept up what may grieve him. For usually discreet remission has more effect for correction than strictness in executing vengeance; so much so that sometimes the one makes a man more faithful and subdued, while the other makes him obstinate and spiteful. And indeed we do not say this to you in order that you should abate your zeal for righteousness, but lest you should be in the least things such as you ought to be in the greatest. For, if ever the quality of a transgression requires severity, it should be so dealt with that both vengeance may correct the fault and grace not be denied afterwards to those that have been corrected. Seeing, then, that we warn you under the dictates of paternal affection for your soul's good, receive our words with the charity wherewith they are spoken, and take them to yourself for the advantage of your Glory, so that your good qualities may become clearer before men and very pure before Almighty God. But count on us, dearest daughter, confidently in all things, as indeed you may; and, since we always desire to hear of your prosperity, refresh us often by your letters.

# Epistle XVIII.

TO Clementina, Patrician . Gregory to Clementina, &c. Know, glorious daughter, that the presbyter Amandus has been elected to the episcopate by the people of Surrentum. And, we having written for him to be sent hither, you ought not to be saddened for his absence, seeing that one who is with you in heart should not even be believed to be departing from you. And, since he who once pleased you is acceptable to those who want a bishop, bless Almighty God for this, and with Christian devotion rejoice the more; and gladly do your best to further his coming to us for the advantage of others speedily, since it is the part of sincere charity to exalt when one who is loved is called that he may grow.

# Epistle XIX.

TO Anthemius, Subdeacon. Gregory to Anthemius, Subdeacon of Campania. After he who had been elected to the episcopate of the city of Surrentum had appeared to us to be unfit, they elected Amandus, presbyter of the oratory of Saint Severinus, which is in the Lucullan camp. Wherefore we enjoin on thy Experience, laying aside excuses, to take care to send the said presbyter to us with all speed, to the end that, if there is nothing to hinder him from coming, the desires of the petitioners may with the help of Christ be fulfilled. As to his life and deeds, seeing that they can be better known where he has long lived, let it be thy care, together with our brother and fellow-bishop, Fortunatus , to make diligent enquiry. And if there is nothing in the way of his promotion to the sacred order, he should be sent to us without any delay. But, lest our glorious daughter Clementina should take this amiss, let thy Experience go to her, and do this thing with her consent. If, however, she should be disposed to resist, let thy Experience still send him hither without delay, since we ought so to pacify the minds of our children as still not to obstruct benefit to souls.

# Epistle XXIII.

TO Adrian, Notary OF Sicily . Gregory to Adrian, &c. A thing to us altogether detestable infamous has come to our ears, and we wonder why, if it is true, thou hast not taken notice of it. For Martianus, a monk of the monastery of Saint Vitus, situate on Mount Aetna, has come to us, and presented a petition, complaining among other things that the monks of this monastery live so perversely and wickedly as to dare to have women living with them, which is a thing atrocious to be spoken of. And, seeing that we have written on this matter to our brother and fellow-bishop Leo , in order that, having enquired into the truth, he may, if he should find it to be so, be at pains to correct it with the strictest severity, it is necessary for thy Experience also to shew thyself in all respects solicitous for investigation of the truth, and punishment of so great a wickedness; so that nothing may be found to be done remissly or negligently. Further, for the interests in other respects of the same monastery, lend thy assistance so far as equity may require, to the end that if, as is said, there has been any invasion of it, it may be redressed according to justice, and that for the future nothing prejudicial may in any way arise there contrary to the fear of God and the order of law.

# Epistle XXIV.

TO Fortunatus, Bishop OF Neapolis(Naples). Gregory to Fortunatus, &c. When your Fraternity pays too little attention to the monasteries that are under you, you both lay yourself open to reproof, and make us sorry for your laxity. Now it has come to our ears that one Mauricius, who lately became a monk in the monastery of Barbacianus, has fled from the same monastery, taking other monks with him. In this case the hastiness of the aforesaid Barbacianus inculpates him exceedingly in our sight, in that he rashly tonsured a secular person without even previous probation. Did we not write to you that you should prove him first, and then, if he were fit, should make him abbot? Even now, then, look well after him whom you chose. For you are delinquent in his delinquency, if he has begun so to demean himself as to shew himself unfit to have the government of brethren.

Further, let your Fraternity more strictly interdict all monasteries from venturing by any means to tonsure those whom they may have received for monastic profession before they have completed two years in monastic life. But in this space of time let their life and manners be carefully proved, lest any one of them should either not be content with what he had desired or not keep firm to what he had chosen. For, it being a serious matter that untried men should be associated under obedience to any master, how much more serious is it that any who have not been proved should be attached to the service of God? Further, if a soldier should wish to become a monk, let no one for any cause whatever presume to receive him without our consent, or before it has been reported to us. If this rule is not diligently observed, know that all the guilt of those that are under thee redounds on thyself, seeing that thou provest thyself by the very facts of the case to be too little anxious about them.

# Epistle XXXI.

TO Libertinus, Ex-Praetor. Gregory to Libertinus, &c. What straits you are in with regard to the things of this world is not unknown to us. But, since to those who are placed in the utmost tribulation the only comfort is the mercy of the Creator, rest your hope on Him, and turn to Him with your whole heart, Who both justly allows whom He will to be afflicted and will mercifully deliver one who trusts in Him. To Him, then, give thanks, and patiently endure what has been brought upon you. For it is the part of a right mind not only to bless God in prosperity, but also in adversities to join in praising Him. In these things therefore that you are suffering let no murmur against God creep into your heart, since for what purpose our Creator thus works is unknown. For perchance, magnificent son, thou didst offend Him in something when in a state of prosperity, from which He would purge thee by kindly bitterness. And so neither let temporal affliction break thee down nor losses of thy goods distract thee, since if, returning thanks in adversity, thou make God propitious to thee by thy patience, both the things that were lost are multiplied, and in addition to this, eternal joys held out to thee. I beg thee, however, not to take it amiss that we have written through Romanus the guardian to order twenty suits of clothing to be supplied from us to your servants, seeing that things, however small, which are offered from the goods of the blessed Apostle Peter are always to be taken for a great blessing, since he will have power both to bestow on you greater things, and to hold out to you eternal benefits with Almighty God. The month of June, Indiction 3.

# Epistle XXXV.

TO Eulogius, Patriarch OF Alexandria Gregory to Eulogius, &c. In the past year I received the letters of your most sweet Holiness; but on account of the extreme severity of my sickness have been unable to reply to them until now. For lo, it is now almost full two years that I have been confined to my bed, afflicted with such pains of gout that I have hardly been able to rise on feast-days for as much as three hours space to solemnize mass. And I am soon compelled by severe pain to lie down, that I may be able to bear my torment with intervening groans. This pain of mine is sometimes moderate, and sometimes excessive: but neither so moderate as to depart, nor so excessive as to kill me. Hence it comes to pass that, being daily in death, I am daily debarred from death. Nor it is surprising that, grievous sinner as I am, I am long kept confined in the prison of such corruption. Whence I am compelled to exclaim, Bring my soul out of prison, that I may confess thy name (Ps. cxli. 8). But, since I am not yet worthy to obtain this by my prayers, I beg that the prayer of your Holiness may afford me the aid of its intercession, and deliver me from the weight of sin and corruption into that liberty, which you know well, of the glory of the children of God.

Your to me most sweet and ever to be honoured Blessedness has informed me in your letter that our common son Anatolius, deacon of the city of Constantinople, had written to you to say that certain monks from the parts about Jerusalem had come to me to make some enquiry concerning the error of the Angoitae , and you say that he begged your Holiness to write to me to express your opinion with respect to this enquiry. But neither have monks come to me from the parts about Jerusalem to make any enquiry, nor do I think that the said our common son can have told you in Iris letters what was not the case; but I suspect that the interpreter has mistaken the meaning of his letters. For the same deacon, now more than two years ago, wrote to me that monks had come from the aforesaid parts to the city of Constantinople making such enquiries, and he desired to ask me what I thought. To him, long before I received your letters, I made the very same reply against that same heresy as I found afterwards in the epistle of your Holiness: and I returned great thanks to Almighty God that concerning all questions the Fathers of the Romans and of the Greeks, whose followers we are, have spoken with one spirit. For in many parts I found this your epistle to be as though I had been reading the writings of the Latin Fathers against the aforesaid heresy.

And consider how much I must love and praise the excellence of my most holy brother, in whose mouth I recognised the venerable Fathers, whom I love so much. Praise therefore be to Him, to Him be glory in the highest, of whose gift the voice of Mark still cries aloud in the See of Peter ; from the effusion of whose spirit, when the priest enters into the Holy of Holies for searching into mysteries, spiritual bells resound in holy Church, as in the tabernacle, from the words of preaching. Right, then, and highly to be praised is your preaching. But we implore the Almighty Lord to keep you long even in this life, that from the organ of God, which you are, the voice of truth may in this world sound more widely. And for me, I pray you, intercede, that the way of this pilgrimage, which has become too rough for me may with speed be finished, to the end that I, who cannot by my own merits, may by yours be able to attain to the promises of the eternal country, and to rejoice with the citizens of heaven.

# Epistle XXXVI.

TO Maximus, Bishop OF Salona . Gregory to Maximus, &c.

When our common son the presbyter Veteranus came to the Roman city, he found me so weak from the pains of gout as to be quite unable to answer thy Fraternity's letters myself. And indeed with regard to the nation of the Sclaves , from which you are in great danger, I am exceedingly afflicted and disturbed. I am afflicted as suffering already in your suffering: I am disturbed, because they have already begun to enter Italy by way of Istria. Further, of Julian the scribo , what shall I say, seeing that I see everywhere how our sins find us out, so as to cause us to be disturbed by the nations from without and by judges from within? But be not at all saddened by such things, since those who shall live after us will see worse times; so much so, that they will regard us as having toad happy days in comparison with their own. But, so far as thy Fraternity has power, thou oughtest to oppose thyself in behalf of the poor, in behalf of the oppressed. And, even if thou shouldest be unable to do any good, the very devotion of thy heart, which Almighty God has given, is enough for Him. For it is written, Rescue them that are drawn unto death, and forbear not to deliver them that are ready to be slain (Prov. xxiv. 11). But if thou shouldest say, My powers are insufficient, He who sees into the heart understands.

In all that thou doest, then, desire to have Him Who sees into the heart well-pleased with thee. But whatever there is whereby He may be pleased omit not thou to do. For human terrors and favours are like smoke, which is snatched by a light breeze and vanishes away. Know this most assuredly, that no one can please God and bad men. Let, therefore, thy Fraternity esteem thyself to have pleased Almighty God in such degree as thou knowest thyself to have displeased froward men. Yet let thy defence of the poor itself be moderate and grave, lest, if anything be done too rigidly, men should think you actuated by the pride of youth. But our defence of the poor must needs be found of such sort that both the humble may feel protection and oppressors may not easily find what out of a malevolent disposition they may blame. Attend, then, to what is said to Ezekiel, Son of man, unbelievers and destroyers are with thee, and than dost dwell among scorpions (Ezek. ii. 6). And the blessed Job says, I have been a brother of dragons, and a companion of owls (Job xxx. 29). And Paul says to his disciples, In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world (Philip. ii. 15). We ought, then, to walk all the more cautiously

as we know that we are living among the enemies of God. Further, with regard to the Photinianists, let thy Fraternity pay the utmost attention;

and, as thou hast begun, study how to recall them to the bosom of holy Church. But, if any should wish to come to me, and to receive an explanation, let them first make oath that they will not permit their followers to persist in their error even after an explanation has been received. And then let thy Holiness promise them that they will suffer no wrong from me, but that I will give them an explanation. If they should acknowledge the truth, let them accept it; if they should not acknowledge it, I will dismiss them unharmed. But, if any of them should wish to come to us against you, let thy Fraternity by no means detain them; for, when they come, they shall either accept an explanation, or assuredly they will not see that land any more.

# Epistle XXXVII.

TO Innocent, Praefect OF Africa. Gregory to Innocent, &c. The lucid eloquence of your Eminence, seasoned with the honey of the heart, has so infused its savour into our inmost soul, and ravished us with love of it, that both what you write sounds sweet, and what you do has a pleasant savour; nor this without good cause, since one who is accomplished in good studies is great in the eye of judgment, and not of partiality. Further, as we understand that you have taken upon you the belts of the prefecture, sadness is mingled with our joy. For on the one hand we are rejoiced for the promotion of our most sweet son, but are saddened on the other, because we feel in fact from our own sorrow how heavy a burden it is in times of confusion to be advanced to high positions. Wherefore all pains ought to be taken that troublesome circumstances may become an occasion of reward. For, as you know, corn springs from land that is full of thistles, and the rose is produced from thorns. While, then, you have a time given you meet for sowing, delay not to sow the seed of good works, that in the day of harvest you may carry home the greater armfuls of joy, and from good service in a transitory dignity may come to eternal glory. Knowing, then, of the pains you have taken in the preparation of swift-sailing vessels , we relieve your anxiety by wished for news, informing you that, by the mercy of God, we have come to terms about peace with the king of the Lombards until the month of March in the coming fourth Indiction. Whether it will hold or not we know not, since the said king is reported to have died since, though the fact so far is held to be uncertain .

We have done what you wrote to ask us to do about Anamundarus, and would that the result might answer to our wish; for, as far as we are concerned, we do not deny the succour of our intercession to the afflicted. As to your wishing the book on the exposition of holy Job to be sent to you, we altogether rejoice at your earnest desire; since we see that your Eminence earnestly desires what may both prevent you from going entirely outside yourself, and bring your heart back to itself after being distracted by secular cares. But, if you desire to be satiated with delicious food, read the works of the blessed Augustine, your countryman, and seek not our chaff in comparison with his fine wheat. Furthermore, we have learnt from the testimony of Hilarius our Chartularius what patronage and what kindness your Glory has bestowed in the interests of the poor of the blessed Peter, Prince of the apostles, who loves you. On this account, returning you abundant thanks, we implore the mercy of Almighty God, that He would defend you with the protection of His grace, and permit neither bad

men to prevail against you without, nor malignant spirits within; but that He would of His mercy so order your doings in His fear that, as He has made you glorious among men, He may also make you so after the course of a long life in the number of His saints.

# Epistle XXXIX.

TO Eulogius, Patriarch OF Alexandria. Gregory to Eulogius, &c. As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country (Prov. xxv. 25). But what can be good news to me, so far as concerns the behoof of holy Church, but to hear of the health and safety of your to me most sweet Holiness, who, from your perception of the light of truth, both illuminate the same Church with the word of preaching, and mould it to a better way by the example of your manners? As often, too, as I recall in my heart your oneness of mind with me, and feel that I remain fixed in your heart, I give thanks to Almighty God that charity cannot be divided by distance of place. For, though in body we are far disjoined, yet in soul we are indivisible. Our common son Anatolius the deacon has notified to me in his letters that in the royal city nothing ecclesiastical has at any time been disturbed from earthly causes. But I believe that he had before announced to me how your Blessedness had spoken in the cause of the Church And I rejoice to think that, I where you chanced to be present, I do not consider that there was any want of me. For I know that you, as a minister of the truth, a follower of Peter, and a preacher of Holy Church, would speak what ought to have been heard through the mouth of a teacher from the Apostle Peter's See .

Moreover, before these days, when Abramius of Alexandria came to me. I had written in reply to your Holiness both what I thought of your writings which you issued against the Agnoite heretics , and why I had been so late in replying. But the said Abramius, compelled by difficulties of navigation, is reported to have delayed long in the city of Naples; and so I write again in the same sense in which I had formerly written, since in your teaching against the heretics that are called Agnoitae there was much for us to admire; but to displease us there was nothing. And in the same sense I had already written at length to our son Anatolius the deacon. Moreover, your doctrine so agreed in all respects with the Latin Fathers that I find, not to my surprise, that in diverse languages the Spirit has not been diverse.

For, as to what you have said about the fig-tree, Augustine speaks aptly in the same sense; for, when the evangelist subjoined, For the time of figs was not yet (Mark xi. 13), it is plainly shown that the figs which the Lord had sough: were fruit in the synagogue, which had the leaves of the Law, but not the fruit of works. For the Creator of all things could not be ignorant that the fig-tree had no fruit; which was a thing that all might know, since it was

not the time of figs. But concerning what is written, That the day and hour neither the Son nor the angels know (Mark xiii. 32), your Holiness has quite tightly perceived that this is most certainly to be referred, not to the said Son with respect to His being the Head, but with respect to His body, which we are With regard to which matter, the same blessed Augustine in many places adopts this sense (Quaest. lib. lxxxiii. q. 6o; lib. I de Trinit., c. 12; in psalm VI., init.; in ps. xxxiv. serm. 2). He mentions also another thing that may be understood of the same Son, namely that Almighty God sometimes speaks in a human manner, even as He says to Abraham, Now I know that thou fearest God (Genes. xxii. 12) It was not that God then came to know that He was feared, but that He then made Abraham know that he feared God.

For, as we speak of a glad day, not meaning that the day itself is glad, but that it makes us glad, so also the Almighty Son says that He does not know the day which He causes not to be known; not that He Himself does not know it, but that He does not allow it to be known. Whence also the Father alone is said to know it, because the Son Who is consubstantial with Him has His knowledge of what the angels are ignorant of from His divine nature, whereby He is above the angels. Whence also it may be more nicely understood thus; that the Only-begotten, being incarnate and made for us a perfect man, knew indeed in the nature of His humanity the day and hour of the judgment, but still it was not from the nature of His humanity that He knew it. What then He knew in it He knew not from it, because God, made man, knew the day and hour of the judgment through the power of His Deity: as also at the marriage, when the Virgin Mother said that wine was wanting, He replied, Woman, what have to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come (Joh. ii. 4). For it was not that the Lord of the angels was subject to the hour, having, among all things which He had created, made hours and times;

but, because the Virgin Mother, when wine was wanting, wished a miracle to be done by Him, it was at once answered her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? As if to say plainly, That I can do a miracle comes to me of my Father, not of my Mother. For He who of the nature of His Father did miracles had it of His mother that He could die. Whence also, when He was on the cross, in dying He acknowledged His mother, whom He commended to the disciple, saying, Behold thy mother (Joh. xix. 27). He says, then, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet came.-That is, "In the miracle, which I have not of thy nature, I do not acknowledge thee. When the hour of death shall come, I shall acknowledge thee as my mother, since I have it of thee that I can die. And thus the knowledge, which He had not of the nature of humanity whereby He was with the angels a creature, this He denied that He had with the angels, who are creatures. The day, then, and the hour of the judgment He knows as God and man, but for this reason, that God is man. It is moreover a thing quite manifest, that whoso is not a Nestorian cannot in any wise be an Agnoite.

For with what meaning can one that confesses that the very Wisdom of God was incarnate say that there is anything that the Wisdom of God is ignorant of? It is written, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things

were made by him (Joh. i. 1). If all things, then without doubt the day and hour of the judgment. Who then can be so senseless as to presume to say that the Word of the Father made what He is ignorant of? It is written also, Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands (Job xxii. 3). If all things, certainly both the day and the hour of the judgment. Who, then, is so foolish as to say that the Son received into His hands what He knows not?

But, with respect to the passage in which He says to the women about Lazarus, Where have ye laid him (Joh. xi. 34), I felt exactly as you felt. that, if they say that the Lord did not know where Lazarus had been buried, and for that reason enquired, they will undoubtedly be compelled to acknowledge that the Lord did not know in what places Adam and Eve had hidden themselves after their sin, when He said in Paradise, Adam, where art thou (Gen. iii. 9)? or when lie chides Cain saying, Where is Abel thy brother (Gen. iv. 9)? But, if He did not know, why did lie forthwith add, Thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground? However, on this passage Severianus Gabalensis speaks differently, saying that the Lord spoke thus to the women as it were in the way of rebuke, in that He enquired where they had laid the dead Lazarus; as if with plain reference to the sin of Eve He had said, I placed the man in Paradise, whom you have placed in the sepulchre.

But to these things our said common son Anatolius the deacon has replied by putting another question:-What if it should be objected to me that, even as He who is immortal vouchsafed to die that He might deliver us from death, and He who is eternal before all time willed to become subject to time, so the Wisdom of God vouchsafed to take upon Himself our ignorance that He might deliver us from ignorance? But I have not yet given him any reply to this, having been confined until now by grievous sickness. Now, however, through your players I have already begun to recover; and, if I should so recover as to be able to dictate, with the help of the Lord I will reply to him. To you it is not for me to say anything on this subject, lest I should seem to teach you what you know, seeing that even medicines lose their power of healing, if applied to sound and strong members.

Furthermore, we apprize you that in this place we suffer from serious difficulty for want of good interpreters. For there are none who can express the sense, while all ever try to translate the words exactly: and so they confuse the whole sense of what has been said. Whence it comes to pass that we are by no means able without severe labour to understand what has been translated. I have received the blessing of Saint Mark the Evangelist and of your Blessedness. And I have been desirous of sending you some timber; but the ship which came was too small to carry it. And yet even that which the Alexandrians saw when they came is of small size. For I had prepared some that is much larger for you, which has not yet been conveyed to the Roman city: for I waited for it to be conveyed when the Alexandrian ship should arrive; and it has remained in the place where it was felled.

May Almighty God long guard your life for the edification of Holy Church, and inspire you to pray earnestly for me; that, being pressed down by my own sins, I may be lifted up before Almighty God by your prayers.

# Epistle XLII.

TO Eusebius. Archbishop OF Thessalonica. Gregory to Eusebius, &c. If, most dear brother, we consider attentively how great is the excellence of peace, we shall recognize with what earnestness it should be cultivated by us. For indeed our Lord and Redeemer vouchsafed to leave and give it as a great boon to His disciples, that He might thereby make those who were united to Him in firmness of faith His associates in loving participation with Himself. For it is written, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God (Matth. v. 9). Whosoever, then, desires to be the father's heir, let him, by keeping peace, not refuse to be his child. For he who gives place to discord surely makes himself to be without lot in so great a gift. Seeing then that by the mercy of God the purity of thy faith has been declared to us, as was meet, with catholic rectitude, we are taken up with great surprise that thou shouldest suffer those whom thou knowest to believe well and to think aright to be needlessly scandalised by the fault of certain persons, so that the reputation of thy Fraternity is clouded by the guilt of others. For how can one avoid suspicion of error who extends sufferance to them that are in error? Or what estimate of himself can he expect, if he provides not for purging by open satisfaction what fervour of faith requires to be purged?

For indeed it is said that Luke thy presbyter and Peter refuse to receive the Chalcedonian synod, and that on this account the hearts of thy orthodox children are perturbed with no slight offence . And, since their zeal is not only to be praised but also to be altogether cherished, we exhort that the care of thy Fraternity hesitate not to investigate the matter with all activity and solicitude. And, if those persons should be found innocent of that pravity, remove offence from the minds of thy children by giving them satisfaction, and among all heresies anathematise especially Severus and Nestorius, so that purification may engender charity among those with whom a sinister suspicion concerning those heretics has, out of love of the faith, produced dissension; and that one feeling of concord may salubriously knit together those whom a pure and single confession of catholic truth unites. Nor let the doubters be thought unworthy of satisfaction, since we are instructed by the Divine voice, Despise not one of these who are the least Matth. xxviii. 18). Whoso, then, desires not that he who instructs us should be despised, let him not reject the words of the instructor; since he also of whom our Redeemer testified that he was a vessel of election unto Himself admonishes us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace Ephes. iv.). Hence whosoever refuses not to be held by this bond of salvation, let him study the things that

make for peace, and afford no place for the foe; so that, having been enabled to advance by the fierce dissension of brethren, he may be more stoutly trampled on, when unity is established.

If however, as we do not expect, they should be found to be wounded by the dart of this error, the cure of ecclesiastical exhortation must be applied to them, so that they may either remain among the Lord's sheep if healed, or be cut off from the unity of the ecclesiastical body; to the end that from a slight loss there may be a great gain, and that the removal of a part may make the whole body free. For it is the care also of a provident shepherd not to delay casting out from consort with his sound sheep a sickly one that admits not of cure, lest it should contaminate others with the taint of its sickness, knowing that he cannot preserve the soundness of the rest but by the ejection of this one. Accordingly 1 once more warn you in brotherly charity to investigate this matter with the utmost vigilance, and to observe what we have written with the utmost care, lest by consort with others you should make the right faith which you hold doubtful. For he who does not correct things that should be cut off commits them. Wherefore you must take thought with great solicitude and with great provision in all ways, that the persons of those men be not an offence to others, or common opinion injurious to you; that so a shepherd's gains may accrue to your Fraternity from the sheep committed to you all the more as both sincere love and approved care shall have made you solicitous for their custody.

# Epistle LXII.

TO The Neapolitans. Gregory to the clergy and noble citizens of Naples.

It is not a new thing, nor is it reprehensible, that in the election of a bishop the votes of the people should be divided between two parties: but it is a serious matter when in cases of this kind the election goes not by judgment, but by favour only. For before your letter reached us we had learnt from the report of certain persons that the deacon John, who has been elected by the other party, has a little daughter. Hence, if they had had a mind to attend to reason, neither would others have elected him nor would he have consented. For what presumption must his be who dares to approach the episcopate while convicted by the evidence of the little girl, of not having had long control over his own body! Moreover, Peter the deacon, who you say has been elected by you, is, according to what is said, quite without astuteness. And you know that at the present time the person to be constituted in the highest place of government, should be one who knows how to be careful, not only for the salvation of souls, but also with regard to the external advantage and safeguard of his subjects. But know ye further that it has come to our ears concerning him, that he has given money on usury; which thing you ought to enquire into thoroughly, and, if it is so, elect another, and without delay hold yourselves aloof from a person of this kind.

For we will on no account lay hands on lovers of usury. If, however, after accurate enquiry made, this should prove to be false (since his person is unknown to us, and we know not whether what has been reported to us of his simplicity be true), he must needs come to us with your decree in his favour, that, having made careful enquiry into his life and manners, we may at the same time become acquainted with his intelligence; and thus, in case of his satisfying this enquiry, we may in him, with the Lord's help, fulfil your desires. Further, let it be your care to look out also for another person who may be suitable, so that, if this one should by any chance appear unfit for appointment to this order, there may be some one else to whom you may transfer your choice. For it will be a serious disgrace to your clergy, in case of this man by any chance not being approved, if they should say that they have no one else fit to be elected.

# Epistle LXIII.

TO Dominicus, Bishop OF Carthage. Gregory to Dominicus, &c.

We have already learnt what great pestilence has invaded the African parts; and, inasmuch as neither is Italy free from such affliction, doubled are the groans of our sorrows. But amid these evils and other innumerable calamities our heart, dearest brother, would fail from desperate distress, had not the Lord's voice fortified our weakness beforehand. For long ago to the faithful the trumpet of the Gospel lesson sounded, warning them that at the approach of the end of the world wars and many other things, which, as you know, are now feared, would come to pass (Matth. xxiv.; Luke xxi.). We ought not, then, to be too much afflicted in suffering things that we knew of beforehand, as though they had been unknown. Frequently also, in our consideration of another's death, the kind of death may be an alleviation. For what manglings, what cruelties have we seen, where death was the only remedy, and life was a torment! Did not David, when a choice of deaths was offered him, refuse famine or the sword, and choose that his people should fall under the hand of God? Gather ye from this how great favour is granted to such as perish under Divine smiting, since they die by the call that was offered to the holy prophet for a boon. Wherefore let us return thanks to our Creator in all adversities, and, trusting in His mercy, bear all things patiently, since we suffer much less than we deserve.

Since, however, we are so scourged temporally that we may not be left without the consolation of life eternal, it is needful (since we are not ignorant, through the announcements of these signs, that the Judge Who is to come is at hand) that we should so much the more, by zeal for good works and the wailing of penitence, make secure our accounts which we shall have to submit to His scrutiny; so that such great smitings may be to us, by the favour of His grace, not the beginning of damnation, but a purgation for our good.

Since, however, the nature of our infirmity is such that we cannot but grieve for those who pass away, let the teaching of your Fraternity be a consolation to the afflicted. Instil into them that the good things which are promised will remain with them; so that, strengthened by a most sure hope, they may learn not to grieve for the loss of temporal things in comparison with the gift to come. Let your tongue, as indeed we believe it does, restrain them more and more from the perpetration of evil deeds; let it announce the rewards of the good, the punishments of the bad, so that those who have little love for good things may at

least be greatly afraid of bad things, and keep themselves from the things which must be punished. For to commit things worthy of scourges when placed in the midst of scourges is to be peculiarly proud against the smiter, and provokes the incensed one to fiercer anger. And it is a prime kind of madness for any one to be unwilling to desist justly from his own evil, and to wish God to cease unjustly from His vengeance. But, since in all this there is need of Divine help, let us, beloved brother, with united prayers implore the clemency of Almighty God, that He would both grant unto us thus to acquit ourselves worthily, and mercifully stir the hearts of the people to perform such things; to the end that, while we order our actions wholesomely in His fear, we may be counted worthy both to be delivered from impending evils, and, by the leading of His grace, without which we can do nothing, to come to supernal joys.

The month of August, Indiction 3.

# Epistle I.

TO John, Abbot. Gregory to John, Abbot of Mount Sina . The Epistle of thy Humility testifies to the holiness of thy life; whence we give great thanks to Almighty God, for that we know that there are still some to pray for our sins. For we, under the colour of ecclesiastical government, are tossed in the billows of this world, which frequently overwhelm us. But by the protecting hand of heavenly grace we are raised up again from the deep. Do you, then, who lead a tranquil life in the so great serenity of your rest, and stand as it were safe on the shore, extend the hand of your prayer to us who are on our voyage, or rather who are suffering shipwreck, and with all the supplications in your power help us as we strive to reach the land of the living, so that not only for your own life, but also for our rescue, you may have reward for ever. May the Holy Trinity protect thy Love with the right hand of Its protection, and grant unto thee in Its sight, by praying, by admonishing, by shewing example of good work, to feed the flock committed to thee, that so thou mayest be able to reach the pastures of eternal life with the flock itself which thou feedest. For it is written, My sheep shall come and shall find pastures (John x. 27). And these pastures in truth we find, when, freed from the winter of this life, we are satisfied with the greenness of eternal life, as of a new Spring.

We have learnt from the report of our son Simplicius that there is a want of beds and bedding in the Gerontocomium , which has been constructed by one Isaurus there. Wherefore we have sent 15 cloaks, 30 rachanae , and 15 beds. We have also given money for the purchase of mattresses and for their transport, which we beg thy Love not to disdain, but to supply them to the place for which they have been sent. Given on the day of the Kalends of September, Indiction 4.

# Epistle XII.

TO Conon, Abbot OF Lirinus (Lerins). Gregory to Conon, Abbot of the Monastery of Lirinus . The carefulness of persons in authority is the safeguard of subjects, since one who watches over what is entrusted to him avoids the snares of the enemy. But how skilful thou art in ruling the brethren, and how earnestly watchful in keeping guard over them, we have learnt from the report of our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Mennas . And as our hearing of the unwary remissness of thy predecessor often saddened us, so the carefulness of thy foresight gladdens us, since there is no doubt that the safeguard of thy earnestness is of profit for reward to thee, and for example to do good to others. But, since the more our adversary knows himself to be guarded against on all sides, the more he seeks to break in by hidden ways, and strives with cunning art to overthrow his opponent, let the watchfulness of thy Love ever kindle itself to more ardent care; and so, with God's help, fortify all beforehand, that the ravening wolf, running about hither and thither, may have no place for entering among the Lord's sheep, Be it then thine earnest endeavour, the grace of our Redeemer aiding thee, to prohibit and in all ways guard those who are committed to thee from gluttony, from pride from avarice, from idle speaking, and from all uncleanness; that by so much the greater reward may accrue to thee from the government committed to thee as thy subjects, through thy vigilance, shall be conquerors against the iniquities of the adversary.

Wherefore let the good feel thee sweet, the bad a corrector. And even in correction know thou that this order should be observed, that thou shouldest love persons and visit faults; lest, if thou shouldest perchance be disposed to act otherwise, correction should pass into cruelty, and thou shouldest destroy those whom thou desirest to amend. For thou oughtest so to cut away a sore as not to run the risk of ulcerating what is sound; lest, if thou press in the steel more than the case requires, thou injure him whom thou art in haste to benefit. For let thy very sweetness be wary, not remiss; and let thy correction be loving, not severe. But let the one be so seasoned by the other that both the good may; have, in loving, something to beware of, and the bad, in fearing, something to love. Attend carefully to these things, most beloved son; earnestly observe them; that, when through such management thou shalt have given back safe to God those whom thou hast received from Him, thou mayest be counted worthy in the day of eternal retribution to hear Him say, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: because thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter into the joy of thy Lord Luke xix. 17). Further, we desire that our son Columbus the

presbyter, who is commended to thy Charity by his own merits, may advance in thy love from our commendation also.

# Epistle XIII.

TO Serenus, Bishop OF Massilia (Marseilles) . Gregory to Serenus, &c.

The beginning of thy letter so showed thee to have in thee the good will that befits a priest as to cause us increased joy in thy Fraternity. But its conclusion was so at variance with its commencement that such an epistle might be attributed, not to one, but to different, minds. Nay, from thy very doubts about the epistle which we sent to thee it appears how inconsiderate thou art. For, hadst thou paid diligent attention to the admonition which in brotherly love we gave thee, not only wouldest thou not have doubted, but have perceived what in priestly seriousness it was thy duty to do. For Cyriacus formerly abbot, who was the bearer of our letter, was not a man of such training and erudition as to dare, as thou supposest, to make up another, nor for thee to entertain this suspicion of falseness against his character. But, while putting aside consideration of our wholesome admonitions, thou hast come to be culpable, not only in thy deeds, but in thy questionings also. For indeed it had been reported to us that, inflamed with inconsiderate zeal, thou hadst broken images of saints, as though under the plea that they ought not to be adored . And indeed in that thou forbadest them to be adored, we altogether praise thee; but we blame thee for having broken them. Say, brother, what priest has ever been heard of as doing what thou hast done?

If nothing else, should not even this thought have restrained thee, so as not to despise other brethren, supposing thyself only to be holy and wise? For to adore a picture is one thing, but to learn through the story of a picture what is to be adored is another. For what writing presents to readers, this a picture presents to the unlearned who behold, since in it even the ignorant see what they ought to follow; in it the illiterate read. Hence, and chiefly to the nations , a picture is instead of reading. And this ought to have been attended to especially by thee who livest among the nations, lest, while inflamed inconsiderately by a right zeal, thou shouldest breed offence to savage minds. And, seeing that antiquity has not without reason admitted the histories of saints to be painted in venerable places, if thou hadst seasoned zeal with discretion, thou mightest undoubtedly have obtained what thou wert aiming at, and not scattered the collected flock, but rather gathered together a scattered one; that so the deserved renown of a shepherd might have distinguished thee, instead of the blame of being a scatterer lying upon thee. But from having acted inconsiderately on

the impulse of thy feelings thou art said to have so offended thy children that the greatest part of them have suspended themselves from thy communion. When, then, wilt thou bring wandering sheep to the Lord's fold, not being able to retain those thou hast?

Henceforth we exhort thee that thou study even now to be careful, and restrain thyself from this presumption, and make haste, with fatherly sweetness, with all endeavour, with all earnestness, to recall to thyself the minds of those whom thou findest to be disjoined from thee.

For the dispersed children of the Church must be called together, and it must he shewn then by testimonies of sacred Scripture that it is not lawful for anything made with hands to be adored, since it is written, Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and him only shalt serve (Luke iv. 8). And then, with regard to the pictorial representations which bad been made for the edification of an unlearned people in order that, though ignorant of letters, they might by turning their eyes to the story itself learn what had been done, it must be added that, because thou hadst seen these come to be adored, thou hadst been so moved as to order them to be broken. And it must be said to them, If for this instruction for which images were anciently made you wish to have them in the church, I permit them by all means both to be made and to be had. And explain to them that it was not the sight itself of the story which the picture was hanging to attest that displeased thee, but the adoration which had been improperly paid to the pictures. And with such words appease thou their minds; recall them to agreement with thee And if any one should wish to make images, by no means prohibit him, but by all means forbid the adoration of images. But let thy Fraternity carefully admonish them that from the sight of the event portrayed they should catch the ardour of compunction, and bow themselves down in adoration of the One Almighty Holy Trinity.

Now we say all this in our love of Holy Church, and of thy Fraternity. Be not then shaken, in consequence of my rebuke, in the zeal of uprightness, but rather be helped in the earnestness of thy pious administration.

Furthermore, it has come to our ears that thy Love gladly receives had men into its society; so much so as to have as a familiar friend a certain presbyter who, after having fallen, is said to live still in the pollution of his iniquity . This indeed we do not entirely believe, since he that receives such a one does not correct wickedness, but rather appears to give licence to others to perpetrate the like things. But, lest haply by any subornation or dissimulation he should prevail on thee to receive him and keep him still in favour, it becomes thee not only to drive him further from thee, but also in all ways to cut away his excesses with priestly zeal. But as to others who are reported to be bad, study to restrain them from their badness by fatherly exhortation, and to recall them to the way of rectitude. But, if (which God forbid) you seem not to profit them at all by salutary admonition, these also thou wilt take care to cast aft far from thee, lest, from their being received, their evil doings should seem not at all to displease thee, and lest not only they themselves should remain unamended, but others also should be corrupted in consequence of thy reception of them. And consider how

execrable it is before men, and how perilous before the eyes of God, if vices should seem to be nurtured through him whose duty it is to punish crimes. Attend therefore to these things diligently, most beloved brother; and study so to act as both wholesomely to correct the bad and to avoid breeding offence in the minds of thy children by associating with evil men.

# Epistle XXV.

TO Januarius, Bishop OF Caralis (Cagliari ). Gregory to Januarius, &c. Know ye that your Fraternity's solicitude has pleased us, in that you have evinced, as was right, pastoral vigilance for the guardianship of souls. For indeed it has been reported to us that you have forbidden a monastery to be founded in the house of the late Epiphanius, a reader of your Church, in accordance with his will, for this reason; lest, seeing that this house was adjacent to a monastery of hand-maidens of God , deception of souls should thence ensue. And we praised you greatly for guarding, as became you, by suitable foresight against the snares of the ancient foe. But, since we have been informed that the religious lady Pompeiana is desirous of taking away, the handmaidens of God from this same monastery, and restoring them to their own monasteries whence they had been taken, and establishing there a congregation of monks, it is necessary that if this be accomplished, the disposition of the deceased should in all respects be adhered to. But, if this should not be done, that the will of the testator may not seem to be entirely frustrated, we will that-inasmuch as the monastery of the late abbot Urban, situated outside the city of Caralis, is said to be left so destitute that not even one monk remains there-we will, I say, that John, whom the said Epiphanius appointed to be abbot in the monastery which, as has been said, he had determined should be founded in his house, be ordained abbot (i.e. of the late Urban's monastery), provided only that there be no impediment against him.

And let the relics which were to have been deposited in the house of the aforesaid Epiphanius be deposited there, and let whatever the same Epiphanius had contributed for the intended monastery in his own house be in all ways applied to the other; that so, even though for safeguard, as above written, his will is not carried out with regard to the place, the benefit intended may nevertheless be preserved inviolate. And indeed let your Fraternity, together with the guardian (defensore) Vitalis, arrange all this, and endeavour to order it so advantageously that you may have your reward, as for your praiseworthy prohibition, so also for your good settlement of the case. Lastly, though it may be superfluous to commend this monastery to your Fraternity, yet we abundantly exhort you that, as becomes you, with due regard to justice, you hold it as commended to you .

# Epistle XXVIII.

TO Augustine, Bishop OF The Angli . Gregory to Augustine, &c.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will (Luke ii. 14); because a grain of wheat, falling into the earth, has died, that it might not reign in heaven alone; even He by whose death we live, by whose weakness we are made strong, by whose suffering we are rescued from suffering, through whose love we seek in Britain for brethren whom we knew not, by whose gift we find those whom without knowing them we sought. But who can describe what great joy sprung up here in the hearts of all the faithful, for that the nation of the Angli through the operation of the grace of Almighty God and the labour of thy Fraternity has cast away the darkness of error, and been suffused with the light of holy faith; that with most sound mind it now tramples on the idols which it formerly crouched before in insane fear; that it falls down with pure heart before Almighty God; that it is restrained by the rules of holy preaching from the lapses of wrong doing; that it bows down in heart to divine precepts, that in understanding it may be exalted; that it humbles itself even to the earth in prayer, lest in mind and soul it should lie upon the earth. Whose is tiffs work but His who says, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work (John v. 17)?

who, to shew that He converts the world, not by men's wisdom, but by His own power, chose unlettered men as His preachers whom He sent into the world? And He does the same even now, having deigned to work mighty works in the nation of the Angli through weak men. But in this heavenly gift, dearest brother, there is ground, along with great joy, for most serious fear. For I know that Almighty God has displayed great miracles through thy Love in the nation which He has willed to be chosen. Wherefore thou must needs rejoice with fear for this same heavenly gift, and tremble in rejoicing:-rejoice, that is, because the souls of the Angli are drawn by outward miracles to inward grace; but tremble, lest among the signs that are done the infirm mind lift itself up to presumption about itself, and from being exalted in honour outwardly, fall inwardly through vain glory. For we ought to remember how, when the disciples returned with joy from preaching, and said to their heavenly Master, Lord, in thy name even the devils are subject unto us (Luke x. 17), they straightway heard, In this rejoice not; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven (Ib. v. 20). For they had set their minds on private and temporal gladness, when they rejoiced in the

miracles. But they are recalled from private to common, from temporal to eternal gladness, when it is said to them, In this rejoice ye, because your names are written in heaven.

For not all the elect work miracles; and yet the names of all of them are kept enrolled in heaven. For to the disciples of the Truth there should not be joy, save for that good which they have in common with all, and in which they have no end to their gladness.

It remains, therefore, dearest brother, that in the midst of the things which through the operation of God thou doest outwardly, thou shouldest ever nicely judge thyself within, and nicely understand both what thou art thyself and how great is the grace in the midst of that same nation for the conversion of which thou hast received even the gift of doing signs. And if at any time thou shouldest remember having offended-against our Creator, whether in tongue or in deed, ever recall these things to thy memory, that memory of guilt may keep down the rising glory of the heart. And whatsoever thou mayest receive, or hast received, in the way of doing signs, regard these powers as not granted to thyself, but to those for whose salvation they have been conferred upon thee. Further, there occurs to my mind, while I think on these things, what took place with one servant of God, even one eminently chosen. Certainly Moses, when he led God's people out of Egypt, as thy Fraternity knows, wrought wonderful miracles. Fasting forty days and nights in Mount Sina, he received the tables of the law; among lightnings and thunders, while all the people trembled, he was attached to the service of Almighty God, being alone with Him even in familiar colloquy (Exod. xxx., xxxi.); he opened a way through the Red Sea; he had a pillar of a cloud to lead him on his journey; to the people when an hungered he gave manna from heaven;

flesh to those who longed for it he supplied in the wilderness by a miracle, even unto overmuch satiety (Exod. xiii., xiv., xvi.). But, when in a time of drought they had come to the rock, he was distrustful, and doubted being able to draw water from the same, which still at the Lord's command he opened without fail in copious streams. But how many and great miracles after these he did during eight and thirty years in the desert who can count or search out (Exod. xvii.; Num. xx.)? As often as a doubtful matter had troubled his mind, he resorted to the tabernacle, and enquired of the Lord in secret, and was forthwith taught concerning it, God speaking to him (Exod. xxxiii. seq.). When the Lord was wrath with the people, he appeased Him by the intervention of his prayer; those who rose in pride and dissented in discord he engulphed in the jaws of the gaping earth; he bore down his enemies with victories, and shewed signs to his own people. But, when the land of promise had at length been reached, he was called into the mountain, and heard of the fault which he had committed eight and thirty years before, as I have said, in that he had doubted about drawing water from the rock. And for this reason he was told that he might not enter the land of promise (Num. xxvii.).

Herein it is for us to consider how formidable is the judgment of Almighty God, who did so many signs through that servant of His whose fault He still bare in remembrance for so long a time.

Wherefore, dearest brother, if we find that even he whom we know to have been especially chosen by Almighty God died for a fault after so many signs, with what fear ought we to tremble, who do not yet know whether we are chosen? But what should I say of the miracles of the reprobate, when thy Fraternity well knows what the Truth says in the Gospel; Many shall come in that day saying to me, Lord in thy name we have prophesied, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works. But I will say unto them, I know not who ye are: depart from me all ye workers of iniquity (Matth. vii. 22; Luke xiii. 27)? The mind, then, should be much kept down in the midst of signs and miracles, lest haply one seek therein one's own glory, and exult in private joy for one's own exaltation. For through signs gains of souls should be sought, and His glory by whose power these very signs are done. But there is one sign that the Lord has given us for which we may exceedingly rejoice, and acknowledge the glory of election in ourselves, seeing that He says, In this shall it be known that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John xiii. 35). Which sign the prophet demanded, when he said, Make with me, Lord, a sign for good, that they which hate me may see it, and be confounded (Ps. lxxxv. 17).

These things I say, because I desire to abase the mind of my hearer in humility. But let thy very humility have its confidence. For I, a sinner, maintain a most certain hope that through the grace of our Almighty Creator and Redeemer, our God and Lord Jesus Christ, thy sins are already remitted, and thou art chosen for this purpose, that those of others may be remitted through thee. Nor will you have sorrow for any guilt in the future, while you strive to cause joy in heaven for the conversion of many. Truly the same our Maker and Redeemer, speaking of the repentance of men, says, Verily I say unto you there will be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance (Luke xv. 7). And if for one penitent there is great joy in heaven, of what kind may we believe the joy to be for so large a people, converted from its error, which, coming to faith, has condemned by penitence the evil things it did. In this joy, then, of heaven and the angels let us repeat the very words of the angels with which we began: let us say therefore, let us all say, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.

# Epistle XXIX.

TO Bertha, Queen OF The Angli . Gregory to Bertha, &c.

They who desire, after earthly dominion, to obtain the glory of a heavenly kingdom ought to labour earnestly to bring in gain to their Creator, that they may be able to rise by the steps of their operation to the things they long for; as we are glad to know you do. For indeed our most beloved son Laurentius the presbyter, and Peter the monk, have brought us word on their return to us how your Glory has exhibited itself towards our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Augustine, and how great succour and what charity you have bestowed upon him. And we bless Almighty God, who has been mercifully pleased to reserve the conversion of the nation of the Angli for your reward. For, as through Helena of illustrious memory, the mother of the most pious Emperor Constantine, He kindled the hearts of the Romans into Christian faith, so we trust that He works in the nation of the Angli through the zeal of your Glory. And indeed you ought before now, as being truly a Christian, to have inclined the heart of our glorious son, your husband, by the good influence of your prudence, to follow, for the weal of his kingdom and of his own soul, the faith which you profess, to the end that for him, and for the conversion of the whole nation through him, fit retribution might accrue to you in the joys of heaven.

For seeing, as we have said, that your Glory is both fortified by a right faith and instructed in letters, this should have been to you neither slow of accomplishment nor difficult. And since, by the will of God, now is a suitable time, so proceed, with the co-operation of divine grace, as to be able to make reparation with increase for what has been neglected. Wherefore strengthen by continual hortation the mind of your glorious husband in love of the Christian faith; let your solicitude infuse into him increase of love for God, and so kindle his heart even for the fullest conversion of the nation subject to him that both he may offer, out of the zeal of your devotion, a great sacrifice to the Almighty Lord, and that the things related of you may both grow and be in all ways proved to be true: for your good deeds are known not only among the Romans, who have prayed earnestly for your life, but also through divers places, and have come even to the ears of the most serene prince at Constantinople. Hence, as great joy has been caused us by the consolations of your Christianity, so also may there be joy in heaven for your perfected work.

So acquit yourselves devotedly and with all your might in aid of our above-named most reverend brother and fellow-bishop, and of the servants of God whom we have sent to you, in the conversion of your nation that you may both reign happily here with our glorious son your husband, and after long courses of years may also attain the joys of the future life, which know no end. Now we pray Almighty God that He would both kindle the heart of your Glory with the fire of His grace to perform what we have spoken of, and grant you the fruit of an eternal reward for work well-pleasing to Him.

# Epistle XXX.

To Venantius, Ex-Monk, Patrician OF Syracuse . Gregory to Venantius, &c.

In addressing to you the greeting which is due I was intending to speak of what I suffer But I think I need not relate to you what you know. For I am tormented by pains of gout, which, afflicting not dissimilarly both me and you, while they increase upon us exceedingly, have caused our life to decrease. In the midst of them what else should we do but recall our faults to mind, and give thanks to Almighty God? For we who have sinned in many things from the pampering of the flesh are purged by the affliction of the flesh. We are to know also that present pain, if it converts the mind of the afflicted one, is the end of preceding guilt; but, if it does not convert to the fear of the Lord, is the beginning of pain to follow. We must therefore take care, and in entire conversion of heart watch to the utmost of our power with tears, lest we pass from torment to torments. We are also to consider by how great a dispensation of loving kindness our Maker deals with us, in that He continually smites us, who are worthy of death, and still slays us not. For He threatens what He will do, and yet does it not, that pains sent in advance may alarm us, and, when we are converted to the fear of the strict Judge, may shield us from His animadversion when life is over.

For who may tell, who may count, how many, sunk in their lechery, running headlong also in blasphemies and pride, continuing in robberies and iniquities even to the day of their death, have so lived in this world as never to suffer even a headache, but by a sudden stroke have been delivered to the fires of hell? We, then, have a token that we are not forsaken, in that we are continually scourged, according to the testimony of Scripture, which says, Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth (Heb. xii. 6). Wherefore under the very stripes of God let us recall to mind both His gifts and the losses of our guilt. Let us consider what good things He has showered upon our ill-doing, and what ill things we have committed under His goodness. Let us fulfil what the Lord says through the prophet, Put me in remembrance, that we may plead together (Isai. xliii. 26). Let us plead now in our though with God, that we be not hereafter strictly judged by God. For what says Paul? If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord (1 Cor. xi. 31). Whosoever, then, would make haste to escape the strictness of the sentence of the judgment to come, let him, through the bitterness of penitence, cut off for himself all the

sweetness of the present life. Moreover, whatever gifts of this kind there are, whose gifts are they but our Maker's?

But that should not be accounted a gift of God fully to us which separates us through delight in itself from the love of God; lest we should prefer the things given to the Giver, and while receiving good things, though ourselves evil, we should be disjoined from His fear by that whereby we ought to have grown in His fear. Now may the Creator of all things, that is Almighty God, pour into your heart by the inspiration of His Spirit what we speak to you of by letter, and cleanse you from all defilements of sin, and grant you the joy of His comfort here, and hereafter eternal rewards with Himself. I beg that my most sweet daughters, the lady Barbara and the lady Antonina, be greeted in my name.

# Epistle XXXII.

TO Marinianus, Bishop OF Ravenna. Gregory to Marinianus, &c. When the bearer of these presents, Candidus the abbot, came hither to ask for relics (which have also been granted), as much as I rejoiced in thy Fraternity's nursing aid, thy Fraternity's care for me being therein apparent, so much was I distressed that I could not enjoy his presence as I wished to do, seeing that he found me sick, and, when he departed, left me still in a state of weakness. For it is now a long time since I have been able to rise from bed. For at one time the pain of gout torments me, at another a fire, I know not of what kind, spreads itself with pain through my whole body; and it is generally the case that at one and the same time burning pain racks me, and body and mind fail me. Further, what other great distresses of sickness beside what I have mentioned I am affected by, I am unable to recount. This however I may briefly say, that tile infection of a noxious humour so drinks me up that it is pain to me to live, and I anxiously look for death, which alone I can hope for to relieve my groans. Accordingly, most holy brother, implore for me the compassion of divine loving-kindness, that it would mercifully mitigate towards me the scourges of its smiting, and grant me patience to endure, lest (which God forbid) my heart break out into impatience from excessive weariness, and the guilt which might have been well cured through stripes be increased by murmuring. Given in the month of February, Indiction 4.

# Epistle XXXIII.

TO Marinianus, Bishop OF Ravenna. Gregory to Marinianus, &c.

On the arrival here of a certain man of Ravenna, I was smitten by most grievous sorrow for that he told me of thy Fraternity being sick from vomiting of blood. On this account we have caused enquiry to be made carefully and severally of those here whom we know to be well-read physicians, and have sent in writing to your Holiness their several opinions and prescriptions. All, however, prescribe before all else quiet and silence, which I greatly doubt whether thy Fraternity can have in thine own Church. And accordingly it seems good to me that, when the Church there has been provided for-whether with such as may accomplish the solemnities of mass, or with such as may take charge of the episcopate, and may be able to shew hospitality and hold receptions, or such as may superintend the guardianship of monasteries-thy Fraternity should come to me before the summer season, that I may, as far as I can, take special charge of thy sickness, and keep thee from being disturbed, since the physicians say that the summer season is exceedingly dangerous for this kind of sickness. And I greatly fear lest, if thou shouldest have any cares together with the unfavourableness of the season, there might be further risk to thee from this disorder. I too myself am very weak, and it is in all respects advantageous that thou shouldest, with the favour of God, return to thy Church in health;

or certainly, if thou art to be called, that thou shouldest be called in the hands of thy friends; and that I, who see myself to be very near death, if Almighty God should be pleased to call me before thee, should pass away in thy hands. But if the circumstances of the present time stand in the way of thy coming, Ago may be treated with, some small present being given him, that he may himself send one of his people with time as far as Rome. If, then, thou feelest thyself held heavily by this sickness, and arrangest to come, thou must come with few attendants, since, while thou stayest with me in the episcopal residence (episcopium), thou wilt have daily attendance from this Church.

Furthermore, I neither exhort nor admonish thee, but straitly charge thee, that thou by no means presume to fast, since the physicians · say that the practice is very prejudicial to this disorder; except that, if by chance a great solemnity demands it, I concede it five times in the year. Thou must also refrain from vigils; and let the prayers which in the city of Ravenna are wont to be said over the wax-taper, and the expositions of the Gospel which

are given by priests about the time of the Paschal solemnity, be delivered by another. And by no means impose on thyself, beloved, any labour beyond thy powers. I have said this that, if thou shouldest feel thyself better, and shouldest put off thy coming, thou mayest know what to observe by my command.

# Epistle XXXV.

TO Barbara And Antonina . Gregory to Barbara, &c. Having received your Glory's letters, which spoke with tears for words, we, most beloved daughters, are affected by no less sorrow than yourselves for your father's sickness. For we cannot account that sadness as extraneous which is made our own by the law of charity. But, since in no state of despair ought there to be distrust in the mercy of our Redeemer, raise your spirits for the comforting of your father, place your hope in the hand of Almighty God, and by His protection we trust that He will guard you from all adversity, and cheer your tribulation, and grant you to be favourably disposed of according to your father's desires. But should He pay the debt of our human lot, even then let not any despair crush you, nor the words of any persons cause you alarm. For after God, Who is the governor and protector of orphans, we will be so solicitous in behalf of your most sweet Glory, and will so make haste, with the Lord's help, to provide as we can for your advantage, that no rough handling of unjust men may perturb you , and that we may repay in all ways the debt we have contracted from the goodness of your parents. And so may heavenly grace nurture you with its favour and defend you by its protection from all evils, that your safety may become our joy.

# Epistle XXXVI.

TO John, Bishop OF Syracuse . Gregory to John, &c.

I have received your Fraternity's letters telling me of the sickness of my most sweet son the lord Venantius, and relating how all things are going on about him. But when I heard at one and the same time that he was desperately and grievously sick, and that unfair men were laying claim to the property of the orphans,. the sorrow in my heart could scarce contain itself. But in this there was comfort, in that tears relieved my groans. Your Holiness therefore ought not to neglect, what should be your first care, to take thought for his soul, by exhorting him, beseeching him, putting before him God's terrible judgment, and promising His ineffable mercy, so as to induce him to return even at his last moments to his former state of life , lest the guilt of so great a fault should stand against him in the eternal judgment. And then it is your duty to take thought how his daughters, the ladies Barbara and Antonina, may be disposed of, so that no opportunity be afforded to bad men. For after he had conjured me to take anxious care for them, adding that I should see to the disposal of them, he went on in his letter to mention a thing which, when I consider the matter, I have no doubt might stand in the way. For he says that I should repeatedly petition the most pious lord Emperor, that he should himself cause provision to be made for the disposal of them.

You observe how different this is from his former wish. And I fear lest an apt opportunity might hence be given to men in Sicily who are seeking all opportunity for interfering in his affairs. For, when this is known, what will those men do who have already, as report goes, been attempting to put a seal on his effects ? Would not reason seem to be on their side, and to afford them as it were a just ground for this proceeding? If they should say, the girls have been commended to the lord Emperor; we cannot neglect the matter; it is at our peril if we do; we make the property safe till such time as the lord Emperor may order them to be taken to Constantinople;-tell me, I pray thee, what I could do in such a case, wherein the father's commendation seems to support a man that has authority. For he conjures me to see to their being so disposed of that they may either be in the Roman city or not be taken away from Sicily; and be so acts as to leave no way of either bringing them hither or retaining them there. But, do you, as far as you can, oppose these bad men. Defend their substance for the sake of Almighty God as if it were your own: and, if it is still possible,

see to all opportunity for wrong being removed with regard to the will of the aforesaid lord Venantius.

But, if it is thought fit that they should be commended to the palace, he ought not to impose such a burden on me as to wish to charge my soul with the care of the disposal of them; as to which be it enough that God Almighty knows how I am taking thought. Hence I have taken care to write at once to my most beloved son the deacon Anatolius, bidding him endeavour to speak with the glorious patrician lady Rusticiana , and telling him in what manner he should enquire anti inform me about the persons whose names have been transmitted to me; that so be may inform us of all things speedily, and what is to be done, may under the ordering of God be arranged.

Furthermore, in the letters that have been sent to us we find that your Fraternity has been grieved at our not having wished you to come hither, as though it had been on account of some displeasure; whereas we acted with a sole view to utility, knowing that on account of persons in your locality your presence there was exceedingly necessary. But, Jest you should hence suppose that we have any feeling or displeasure towards you (which God forbid), if you have the will to come to us, present yourself at a suitable time at the threshold of the apostles. For, so far as we are concerned, we so love your Charity that we desire to see you often.

# Epistle XXXVII.

TO Romanus, Guardian (Defensorem). Gregory to Romanus, Guardian of Sicily . It has come to our knowledge that, if any one has a suit against any clerics, thou causest these clerics to be brought before thee for judgment, setting at nought their bishops. If this be so, seeing that it is evidently very unsuitable, we order thee by this our authority that thou presume not to do it any more. But, if any one should have a suit against any cleric, let him go to his bishop, that either he may take cognizance himself, or at any rate that judges may be deputed by him; or, if it should be a case for arbitration, let the executive authority deputed by him compel the parties to choose a judge. But, if any cleric or lay person should have a suit against a bishop, then thou oughtest to interpose, so that either thou thyself mayest take cognizance of the matter between them or that on thy admonition they may choose for themselves judges. For, if each single bishop has not his own jurisdiction reserved to him, what else is done but that ecclesiastical order is confounded through us by whom it ought to be guarded?

Further, it has been reported to us that, certain clerics having been sent into penance for fault requiring it by our most reverend brother bishop John, thou hast on thy own authority, without his knowledge removed them from it. Now, if this is true, know that thou bast done a thing altogether unseemly, and calling for no light reproof. Wherefore restore these clerics without delay to their bishop. And beware of committing this fault in future: for, shouldest thou be inattentive, know that thou wilt incur our anger in no slight degree.

# Epistle XXXVIII.

TO Vitus, Guardian (Defensorem ). Gregory to Virus, &c. If thou art held bound by no condition or liability to bodily service, and hast not been a cleric of any other city, and if there is no canonical objection to thee, it is our will and pleasure, with a view to the advantage of the Church, that thou receive the office of Guardian of the Church, in order that thou mayest execute incorruptly and diligently whatever may be enjoined thee by us for the benefit of the poor; using this privilege which after deliberation we have conferred on thee, so as to do thy diligence faithfully in accomplishing all that may be enjoined thee by us, as having to render an account of thy doings before the judgment of our God. This epistle we have dictated for writing to Paterius, secundicerio notarioa of our Church , and have subscribed it.

# Epistle XL.

TO Marinianus, Bishop OF Ravenna. Gregory to Marinianus, &c. Great infirmity constrains us, dearest brother. from which if we were free, we should seem justly blamable. But since, while we are in this fragile body, we cannot subsist but by subservience to its weaknesses, we ought not to blush for what necessity imposes on us. And so, since physicians all say that to those who suffer from eruption of blood fasts are injurious, we exhort thy Fraternity by this present address that, recalling to mind what thou hast been accustomed to endure from sickness, thou by no means impose on thyself the labour of fasting . If, however, by the mercy of God, thou knowest thyself to be so far improved in health as to have sufficient strength, we permit thee to fast once or twice in the week. But of this it befits thee before all things to take care, that thou in no wise subject thyself to any feeling of irritation, lest the sickness, which is believed to be now lighter and as it were suspended, should be experienced afterwards more heavily through exasperation.

# Epistle XLIV.

TO Rusticiana, Patrician . Gregory to Rusticiana, &c. I have received the letters of your Excellency, which altogether relieved me, while I was in a state of most grievous sickness, with regard to your health, your devotion, and your sweetness. One thing however I took amiss namely that in the same epistles to me what might have been said once was said repeatedly "Your handmaiden," and "your handmaiden." For, I having been made the servant of all through the burdens of episcopacy, with what reason does she call herself my handmaid whose own I was before I undertook the episcopate? And so I beseech you by Almighty God, that I may never find this word in what you write to me. Further, the gifts which out of a most pure and sincere heart you sent to the blessed Peter, Prince of the apostles, have been received and hung up there in the presence of all the clergy. But my son, the magnificent lord Symmachus, finding me ill from pains of gout and almost despaired of, deferred giving me your letters, and gave them long after the veils had been received: and I found afterwards in your Excellence's letters that they were to have been borne to the Church of the blessed Peter with a litany. And so this was not done, because, as I have already said, we received the veils before the letters. Nevertheless the aforesaid Symmachus did with your whole household what you wished us to do with the clergy. But, even if the voices of men were wanting, your offering itself has its own voice before Almighty God. In His loving-kindness I trust that the intercession of him whose body you have covered on earth may protect you in heaven from all sins, and in his provision rule your house, and in his watchfulness guard it.

With regard to the affliction of gout which you signify to us has come upon you, I am both distressed and rejoiced exceedingly: rejoiced, because the noxious humour, attacking the lower parts of your body, has entirely left the higher ones; but distressed, because I fear you suffer excessive pain in so very slender a body. For where there is a deficiency of flesh, what strength can there be to resist pain? For as to myself, you know what I used to be: but now bitterness of soul and continual exasperation, and besides this the affliction of gout so affects me that my body is dried up even as if in burial. Hence it comes to pass that I can rarely now rise from bed. If, then, the pain of gout has reduced the mass of my body to such dryness, what must I think of your body, which was too dry before the pains came on?

As to the alms which you have bestowed on the monastery of the blessed Apostle Andrew, there is no need for me to say anything, since it is written, Hide thine alms in the bosom of a poor man, and it shall pray for thee (Ecclus. xxix. 15). If then the good deed itself has its voice in the secret ears of God, whether we cry aloud or keep silence, this very thing which you have well done cries aloud. Moreover I declare that there are so great miracles, there is so great care and custody of the monks in this same monastery of the said apostle that it is as if he himself were specially the abbot of the monastery. For, to speak of a few things out of many which I have learnt from the narration of the abbot and the prior of the monastery, two brethren were one day sent out thence to buy something for the use of the monastery, one a junior who seemed to be distinguished for prudence, the other a senior, sent to be the guardian of the junior. Both went forth, and from the money they received as the price of what they were to purchase, he who had been sent as the guardian of the junior purloined something without the knowledge of the other. Having both of them presently returned to the monastery, and come to the threshold of the oratory, he who had committed the theft fell down seized by a demon, and began to be vexed.

And, when the demon had let him go, he was asked by the monks who came round him whether per- chance he had purloined anything from what he had received: he denied, and was a second time vexed. Eight times he denied, and eight times was vexed. But after his eighth denial he confessed how much money he had purloined. And repenting he acknowledged, prostrate on the earth, that he had sinned, and when he had undergone penance, the demon came to him no more.

At another time also, on the anniversary of the same apostle, while the brethren were resting during the mid-day hours, suddenly a certain brother, having become blind with his eyes open, began to tremble, to utter loud cries, testifying by these cries that he could not bear what he was suffering. The brethren ran together to him, saw him blind with his eyes open, trembling, and crying out, abstracted from the scene around him, and having no sense of anything that could be done externally. They lifted him in their hands, and east him before the altar of Saint Andrew the Apostle, prostrating themselves also in prayer for him. And he at once, coming to himself again, declared what he had suffered; namely that a certain old man appeared to him, and set a black dog at him to tear him, saying, Why wouldest thou flee from this monastery? And, when I could by no means have escaped (said he) from the bites of the dog, certain monks came, and besought that old man for me, who straightway bade the dog depart, and then I came to myself. And he often afterwards confessed, saying, On the day on which I suffered these things I bad had a design of flying from this same monastery.

Another monk also secretly desired to depart from the same monastery. And, having considered the matter in his mind, he would have entered the oratory; but he was immediately delivered to a demon and most sorely vexed. But he used to be left by the demon and if he remained outside the oratory, he would suffer no harm; but, if he attempted to enter it, he was at once delivered to the evil spirit and vexed. And, when this took place frequently, he

confessed his fault, namely that he was thinking of going away from the monastery. Then the brethren, assembled in his behalf, bound themselves to continue in prayer for him for three days, and he was so cured that the evil spirit never came to him afterwards. He used to say also that he had seen the same blessed apostle while he was being vexed, and had been reproached by him for wishing to depart from the monastery.

Two other brethren also fled from the same monastery, and gave some intimations previously to the brethren in conversation that they were going down by the Appian way, to make for Jerusalem; but, when they had gone out, they turned aside from the road. And, that there might be no possibility of their being found by any that might follow them, finding some retired crypts near the Flaminian gate, they hid themselves therein. But when they had been looked for in the evening, and not found in the monastery, certain brethren followed them on horseback, going out by the gate of Metronus, to follow them along the Latin or Appian way. But suddenly they conceived the design of looking further for them on the Salarian way: and so, in proceeding outside the city, they turned their course into the Salarian way. But, failing to find them, they decided to return through the Flaminian gate. And, as they were returning, presently when their horses came in front of the crypts in which the men were hidden, they stood still, and, though beaten and urged, refused to move. The monks considered that such a thing could not be without some mystery. They observed the crypts, and saw file entrance to them to be blocked by a piled heap of stones, but, as their horses would not go in any direction, they dismounted. They displaced the stones which were placed at the mouth of the crypts, entered, and found the men in a state of consternation within these dark subterranean hiding-places. They were taken back to the monastery, and were so improved by this miracle that it was of great advantage to them to have fled for a short time from the monastery.

I have told you these things that it may be known to your Excellency whose oratory it is on which you have bestowed your alms. Now may Almighty God keep you under His heavenly protection both in soul and in body and all your house, and grant you to live long for our consolation. I beg that my most beloved son the Lord Strategius with his glorious parents your children may be greeted in my name.

# Epistle XLV.

TO Theoctista, Patrician . Gregory to Theoctista, &c. We ought to give great thanks to Almighty God, that our most pious and most benignant Emperors have near them kinsfolk of their race, whose life and conversation is such as to give us all great joy. Hence too we should continually pray for these our lords, that their life, with that of all who belong to them, may by the protection of heavenly grace be preserved through long and tranquil times.

I have to inform you, however, that I have learnt from the report of certain persons how that, owing to the levity of the people, a tumult of detraction has arisen against you. And I hear that your Excellency has consequently been distressed with no slight vexation. If this is so, I wonder much why the words of men on earth should agitate you, who have fixed your heart on heaven. For the blessed Job, when his friends who had come to console him had broken out into rebuke, said, For behold my witness is in heaven, and he that knows me is on high (Job xvi. 20)r one who has the witness of his life in heaven ought not to be afraid of the judgments of men on earth. Paul also, a leader of good men, says, Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience (2 Cor. i.12). And he says again, Let every man prove his own work, and so shall he have glory in himself, and not in another (Gal. vi. 4). For, if we are rejoiced by praises and broken down by detractions, we have set our glory not in ourselves, but in the mouth of others. And indeed the foolish virgins took no oil in their vessels, but the wise ones took oil in their vessels with their lamps (Matth. xxv.). Now our lamps are good works; of which it is written, Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matth.

v. 16). And we then take oil in our vessels with our lamps, when we seek not the splendour of glory for our good deeds from the adulation of our neighbours, but preserve it in the testimony of our conscience. And in regard to all that is said of us outwardly we ought to recur to the secrets of our soul. Although all should revile us, yet he is free whom conscience accuses not, while, even though all should praise, one cannot be free, if conscience accuses him. Whence the Truth says concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? (Matth. xi. 7). And this in truth is said in the way of negation, not of assertion, since it is added, But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing' are in kings' houses (Ibid. 8). For

although, according to the truth of the Gospel, John was clothed in rough raiment, yet the signification is that they wear sort clothing who are delighted by adulations and praises And it is denied that John was a reed shaken with the wind, inasmuch as no breath from any human mouth bent the fortitude of his mind. For we, if we are lifted up by praises, or cast down by revilings, are a reed shaken with the wind. But far be this, far be it from the heart of your Excellency.

I know that you read studiously the teacher of the Gentiles, who says, I, if yet pleased men, should not be the servant of Christ (Gal. i. 10).

If, however, any even slight sadness has arisen in your mind from this cause, I believe that Almighty God has kindly allowed this to be the case. For not even to His elect in this life has He promised the joys of delight, but the bitternesses of tribulation; so that, after the manner of medicine, they may be restored through a bitter cup to the sweetness of eternal salvation. For what says He? The world shall rejoice and ye shall lament (Joh. xvi. 20). With what hope? With what promise? A little afterwards it is added, I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you (Ibid. 22). Hence again He says to His disciples, In your patience shall ye poseess your souls (Luke xxi. 19).

Consider, I pray you, where patience would be, if there were nothing to be endured. I suspect that there is no Abel without having a Cain for his brother. For if the good were without the bad, they could not be perfectly good, since they would not be purged: and the very society of the bad is the purgation of the good. There were three sons of Noe in the ark, one of whom was a derider of his father, who, though in himself he was blessed, still received a sentence of condemnation in his son. Abraham had two sons before he took Cethura to wife; and yet his carnal son persecuted the son of promise (Genes. ix.). This the great teacher expounds, saying, As he who is after life flesh persecuted him that is after the Spirit, even so it is now (Gal. iv. 29). Isaac had two sons; but one, who was spiritual, fled before the threats of his carnal brother. Jacob had twelve sons, but one, who lived uprightly, was sold by ten into Egypt. In the case of the prophet David, because there was in him what should have been purged, it was brought to pass that he suffered under a son's persecution. The blessed Job says of the society of the reprobate, I have been a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls (Job xxx. 29). To Ezekiel the Lord says, Son of man, unbelievers and destroyers are with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions (Ezek. ii. 6).

Among the twelve apostles there was one reprobate, that there might be one by whose persecution the eleven might be tried. The Prince of the apostles speaks thus to his disciples, He delivered just Lot, oppressed by the injury and conversation of the wicked. For in seeing and hearing he was just, dwelling among those who from day to day vexed the soul of the just one with their unrighteous deeds (2 Pet. ii. 7, 8). Paul also the apostle writes to his disciples, saying, In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as luminaries in the world, holding fast the word of life (Philip: it. 15).

Seeing then that we know from the witness of Scripture that in this life the good cannot be without the bad, your Excellency ought by no means to be disturbed by the voices of fools, especially as there is then sure confidence in Almighty God, when for well-doing any adversity is given us in this world in order that a full reward may be reserved for us in the eternal retribution. Whence also in the holy Gospel the Truth says, Blessed shall ye be when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake (Matth. v. 11). And for our consolation He deigned to adduce as an example His own reproaches, saying, If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household (Ibid. x. 25).

But there are many who perhaps praise the life of the good more than they ought; and, lest any elation should creep in from praise, Almighty God allows bad men to break out into slander and objurgation, in order that, if any sin springs up in the heart from the mouth of them that praise, it may be choked by the mouth of them that revile. Hence it is, then, that the teacher of the Gentiles testifies that he continues in his preaching through evil report and good report (2 Cor. vi. 8); saying also, As deceivers and yet true. If then there were such as laid an evil report on Paul, and called him a deceiver, what Christian now should account it a hard thing in behalf of Christ to hear injurious words? Moreover we know of how great virtue was the precursor of our Redeemer, who in Holy Writ is called not only more than a prophet, but even an angel: and yet, as the history of his death testifies, after his death his body was burnt by his persecutors . But why say we these things of holy men? Let us speak of the Holy of holies Himself, that is of God Who was made man for us, Who before His death heard the injurious charge that He had a devil, and after His death was called a deceiver by His persecutors, when one said, We know that that deceiver said, After three days I will rise again (Matth. xxvii. 63). How much, then, must we sinners needs bear from the tongues and hands of wicked men, we who are to be judged at the coming of the eternal Judge, if He Who will even come as Judge endured so much both before and after His death?

These things, most sweet and excellent daughter, I have briefly said, lest, as often as thou hearest of foolish men speaking in derogation of thee, thou shouldest be touched by even the least sadness of heart. But, seeing that this very murmuring of foolish men cannot be allayed by quiet reason, I hold it to be sin if the doing of what can be done is neglected. For, when we appease insane minds, and bring them back to a healthy state, we ought by no means to cause them offence. For there are some offences that are to be altogether despised; but there are some which, when they can be avoided without guilt, are not to be despised, lest there be guilt in keeping them alive. We learn this from the preaching of the sacred Gospel; since, when the Truth said, Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man (Matth. xv. 11), and the disciples replied saying, Knowest than that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying? (Ibid. 12), straightway He replied, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. Let them alone; they be blind, and leaders of the blind (Ibid. 13). And yet, when tribute was demanded, He first gave a reason why tribute should not be paid, and

forthwith subjoined, Notwithstanding, test we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up;

and when thou hast opened his mouth, than shall find a stater. That take, and give unto them for me and for thee (Matth. xvii. 26). Why is it that of some who were offended it is said, Let them alone; they are blind, and leaders of the blind; and that to others, lest they should be offended, tribute is paid by the Lord, even though not due? Why is it that He allowed one offence to remain, but forbade another to be caused to others? Why, but that He might teach us on the one hand to despise offences which implicate us in sin, but on the other to mitigate in all ways those which we can appease without sin?

Wherefore your Excellency, God protecting you, may, with great quietness, turn aside the offences of bad men. For the chief of them you should of your own accord call to you privately and give them reasons, and anathematize certain wrong points which they suppose to be held by you. And if too, as it is said may be the case, they suspect such anathema to be insincere, you should confirm it even by an oath, averring that you do net hold, and never have held, those points. Nor let it seem beneath you to satisfy them in such a way; nor let there be in your mind any feeling of disdain against them on account of your imperial race. For we are all brethren created by the power of one Emperor, and redeemed by His blood. And so we ought not in anything to despise our brethren, however poor and abject.

For certainly Peter had received power in the heavenly kingdom, so that whatever he should bind or loose on earth should be bound or loosed in heaven; he walked on the sea, he healed the sick with his shadow, be slew sinners with his word, he raised the dead by his prayer. And because by the admonition of the Spirit he had gone in to Cornelius the Gentile, a question was raised against him by the believers as to why he had gone in among Gentiles and eaten with them, and why he had received them in baptism. And yet this first of the apostles, filled with such gifts of grace, supported by such power of miracles, replied to the complaint of the believers, not by power but by reason, and explained the case to them in order; how he saw a certain vessel, as it had been a sheet, in which were four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, let down from heaven, and heard a voice saying, Arise, Peter; kill and eat (Acts xi. 5 seq.); how three men came to him calling him to Cornelius; how the Holy Spirit bade him go with them; how the same Holy Spirit who had been wont to come on those baptized in Judea after baptism, came on the Gentiles before baptism.

For if, when he was blamed by the believers, he had paid regard to the authority which he bad received in Holy Church, he might have replied that the sheep should not dare to find fault with the shepherd to whom they had been committed. But, had he said anything of his own power in answer to the complaint of the believers, he would not have been truly a teacher of gentleness. He pacified them, therefore, by giving a reason humbly, and even produced witnesses to defend him from blame, saying, Moreover these six brethren accompanied me (Acts xi. 12). If, then, the pastor of the Church, the Prince of the Apostles, who singularly did signs and miracles, disdained not, in defending himself from blame, humbly to give a

reason, how much more ought we sinners, when we are blamed for anything, to pacify those who blame us by giving a reason humbly!

For to me, as you know, when I was resident at the footsteps of my lords in the royal city, many used to come of those who were accused with respect to the aforesaid points. But I declare, my conscience bearing me witness, that I never found in them any error, any pravity, or anything of what was said against them. Whence also I took care, despising report, to receive them familiarly, and rather to defend them from their accusers For it used to be said against them that under pretext of religion they dissolved marriages; and that they said that baptism did not entirely take away sins; and that, if any one did penance for three years for his iniquities, he might afterwards live perversely; and that, if they said under compulsion that they an athematized anything for which they were blamed, they were by no means holden by the bond of anathema. Now if there are any who undoubtedly hold and maintain such views, there is no doubt that they are not Christians. And such both I, and all catholic bishops, and the universal Church, anathematize, because they think what is contrary to the truth, and speak what is contrary. For, if they say that marriages should be dissolved for the sake of religion , be it known that, though human law has conceded this, yet divine law has forbidden it. For the Truth in person says, What God hath joined together let not man put asunder (Matth. xix. 6).

He says also, It is not lawful for a man to put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication (Ibid. 9). Who then may contradict this heavenly legislator? We know how it is written, Two shall be one flesh (Matth. xix. 5; 1 Cor. vi. 16; Gen. ii. 24). If, then, a man and wife are one flesh, and a man puts away his wife for the sake of religion, or a woman her husband while he remains in this world, even though perchance he turns aside to unlawful deeds, what is this conversion , in which one and the same flesh on the one part passes to continence and on the other part remains in pollution? If, however, it should suit both to lead a continent life, who may dare to accuse them, since it is certain that Almighty God, who has granted what is less, has not forbidden what is greater? And indeed we know of many holy persons who have both previously led continent lives with their consorts, and have afterwards passed over to the rules Of holy Church. For in two ways holy men are accustomed to abstain even from lawful things. Sometimes that they may increase their merits before Almighty God; but sometimes that they may wipe away the sins of their former life.

For when the three children who were brought under obedience to the Babylonian King, asked for pulse for food, being unwilling to make use of the king's meat, it was not because it would have been sin in them to eat what God had created. They were unwilling, then, to take what it was lawful for them to take, that their virtue might increase through continence. But David, who had taken to himself another man's wife, and had been sorely scourged for his fault, desired long afterwards to drink water from the cistern of Bethlehem; which when his bravest soldiers had brought to him, he refused to drink it, and poured it out as a libation to the Lord. For it was lawful for him to drink it, had he been so minded; but, because he remembered having done what was unlawful, he laudably abstained even from what was

lawful. And he, who to his guilt previously feared not that the blood of dying soldiers should be shed, afterwards considered that, were he to drink the water, he would have shed the blood of living soldiers, saying, Shall I drink the blood of these men who have put their lives in jeopardy (1 Chron. xi. 19)? Accordingly, when good husbands and wives desire either to increase merit or to do away with the faults of previous life, it is lawful for them to bind themselves to continence and to aspire to a better life.

But, if the wife does not follow after the continence which the husband aspires to, or the husband refuses that which the wife aspires to, it is not lawful for wedlock to be cut asunder, seeing that it is written, The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and the husband hath not power of his own body„ but the wife (1 Cor. vii. 4).

But, if there are any who say that sins are only superficially put away in baptism, what can be more against the faith than such preaching, whereby they would fain undo the very sacrament of faith, wherein principally the soul is bound to the mystery of heavenly cleanness, that, being completely absolved from all sins, it may cleave to Him alone of Whom the Prophet says, But it is good for me to cleave to God (Ps. lxxii. 28 )? For certainly the passage of the Red Sea was a figure of holy baptism, in which the enemies behind died, but others were found in front in the wilderness. And so to all who are bathed in holy baptism all their past sins are remitted, since their sins die behind them even as did the Egyptian enemies. But in the wilderness we find other enemies, since, while we live in this life, before reaching the country of promise, many temptations harass us, and hasten to bar our way as we are wending to the land of the living. Whosoever says, then, that sins are not entirely put away in baptism, let him say that the Egyptians did not really die in the Red Sea. But, if he acknowledges that the Egyptians really died, he must needs acknowledge that sins die entirely in baptism, since surely the truth avails more in our absolution than the shadow of the truth. In the Gospel the Lord says, He that is washed needeth not to wash, but is clean every whit (Joh. xiii. 10).

If, therefore, sins are not entirely put away in baptism, how is he that is washed clean every whit? For he cannot be said to be clean every whit, if he has any sin remaining. But no one can resist the voice of the Truth, He that is washed is clean every whit. Nothing, then, of the contagion of sin remains to him whom He Himself who redeemed him declares to be clean every whit.

But, if there are any who say that penance is to be done for sin during any three years, and that after the three years one may live in pleasures, these know neither the preaching of the true faith nor the precepts of sacred Scripture. Against these the excellent preacher says, He that soweth in his flesh shall of the flesh also reap corruption (Galat. vi. 8). Against these he says again, They that are in the flesh cannot please God (Ram. viii. 8); where he subjoins to his disciples, But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.

Now they are in the flesh who live in carnal pleasures. Against them it is said, Neither shall corruption possess incorruption (1 Cor. xv. 50). But, if they say that a short season

of penitence may suffice against sin, so that one may be allowed to return again to sin, rightly does the sentence of the first pastor hit them, when he says, It is happened unto them according to the true proverb; The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the saw that was washed to her wallowing in the mire (2 Pet. ii. 22).For great is the efficacy of penitence against sin; but only if one persevere in this penitence. For it is written, He that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved (Matth. x. 22: xxiv. 13). Hence again it is written, He that is baptized from a dead body, and toucheth it again, what availeth his washing? (Ecclus. xxxiv. 30 ). Now a dead body is every perverse work, which draws a man to death, because he lives not in the life of righteousness. He, then, is baptized from a dead body, and again touches it, who deplores the bad works which he remembers having done, but after his tears entangles himself in the same again. Washing, therefore, from such dead body avails not any soul that does again what it has bemoaned, and rises not through the lamentations of penitence to the rectitude of righteousness. For to do penance truly is not only to bemoan what has been committed, but also to decline from what has been bemoaned.

But, if there are any who say that, if any one shall have anathematised anything under compulsion of necessity, he is not held by the bond of the anathema, these are themselves witnesses that they are no Christians. For they think by vain attempts to loose the binding of holy Church, and hereby neither do they account as real the absolution of holy Church which she offers to the faithful, if they think that her binding is of no avail. Against such as these dispute should be no longer held, since they ought to be altogether scorned and anathematised; and whence they think to elude the truth, thence let them in reality be bound in their sins.

If, then, there are any who under the Christian name dare either to preach, or to hold silently in their own minds, the points of error which we have spoken of above, these undoubtedly we both have anathematised and do anathematise. Yet, as I have said before, in those who used to come to me in the royal city I observed no error at all as to any one of the aforesaid points, nor do I think there was any. For, if there had been, I should have observed it. However, since there are many of the faithful who are inflamed with unwise zeal, and often, while they attack certain persons as though they were heretics, themselves make heresies, consideration should be had for their infirmity, and, as I have said before, they should be appeased with reason and gentleness. For indeed they are like unto those of whom it is written, I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge (Rom. x. 2). Wherefore your Excellency, who live incessantly in reading, in tears, and in alms, should, as I have requested, appease their unwisdom by gentle exhortations and replies, that not only in yourself, but also in them, you may find the glory of eternal retribution. All this my exceeding love has induced me to say to you, since I think that your joy is my gain, and your sadness my loss. May Almighty God guard you with heavenly grace, and, keeping safe the Piety of our lord and the Tranquillity of our most pious lady, prolong your life for the education of the little lords.

# Epistle XLVI.

TO Isacius, Bishop OF Jerusalem . Gregory to Isacius, &c.

In keeping with the truth of history, what means the fact that at the time of the flood the human race outside the ark dies, but within the ark is preserved unto life, but what we see plainly now, namely that all the unfaithful perish under the wave of their sin, while the unity of holy Church, like the compactness of the ark, keeps her faithful ones in faith and in charity? And this ark in truth is compacted of incorruptible timber, since it is built of strong souls, and such as persevere in good. And, when any single person is converted from a secular life, timber is, as it were, still cut down from the mountains. But when, according to the order of holy Church, one is assigned to have custody of others, it is as though the ark were built of timber sawn and put together for preserving the life of men. And in truth that ark, when the flood was over, rested on a mountain, because when the corruption of this life is over, when the billows of evil works have passed away, holy Church will rest in the heavenly country, as on a high mountain. To the building, therefore, of this ark we rejoice to find, after reading your Fraternity's epistle, that in the compactness of a right faith you lend your aid; and we render great thanks to Almighty God, who, though the pastors of His flock are changed, keeps the faith which He once delivered to the holy Fathers, even after them unchangeable.

Now the excellent preacher says, Other foundation can no titan lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus (I Cor. iii. II). Whosoever, then, with love of God and his neighbour, holds firmly the faith which is in Christ, he has laid the same Jesus Christ, Son of God and man, as a foundation for himself from the Father. It is to be hoped, then, that, where Christ is the foundation, the building also of good works may follow. The Truth itself also in person says, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep (Joh. x. I). And a little afterwards He adds, I am the door. He, then, enters into the sheepfold by the door who enters by Christ. And he enters by Christ who thinks and preaches what is true concerning the same Creator and Redeemer of the human race, keeps what he preaches, and undertakes the topmost place of government with a view to a burdensome office, not in desire of the glory of transitory dignity. He watches also wisely over the charge of the

sheepfold which he has taken in hand, lest either perverse men speaking forwardly tear the sheep of God, or malignant spirits waste them by persuading them to vicious delights.

But in all these things may He instruct us Who for our sake was made man. May He Who vouchsafed to become what He made Himself infuse the spirit of His love both into my infirmity and thy charity, and open the eye of our heart in all carefulness and watchful circumspection. But that men of a right faith are advanced to sacred orders, thanks should be given without cease to the same Almighty God, and prayer should ever be made for the life of our most pious and Christian lord the Emperor, and for his most tranquil spouse, and his most gentle offspring, in whose times the mouths of heretics are silent, since, though their hearts seethe in the madness of perverse opinion, yet in the time of the orthodox Emperor they presume not to speak out the wrong opinions which they hold; so that we plainly see fulfilled what is written, Gathering the waters of the sea together as in a bottle (Ps. xxxii. 7) ). For the water of the sea is gathered together as in a bottle, because whatever wrong opinions the bitter science of heretics entertains at the present day it keeps within the breast, and presumes not to express them openly. But thy Fraternity, spiritually taught, has set forth in all respects the right faith, and has thoroughly declared the things that should be sought after. Your faith, therefore, is ours. We hold what you say, and say what you hold.

But, inasmuch as it has come to our ears that in the Churches of the East no one attains to sacred orders but by giving of bribes, if your Fraternity finds that this is the case, you should offer as your first oblation to Almighty God the restraining of the error of simoniacal heresy in the Churches subject to you. For, not to speak of other things, what sort of men can they be when in sacred orders who are advanced to them not by merit but by bribes? Now we know with what animadversion the Prince of the apostles attacked this heresy, having pronounced the first sentence of condemnation against Simon, when he said, Thy money be with thee unto perdition, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money (Acts viii. 20). Our Lord God Himself also, the Creator and Redeemer of the human race, having made a scourge of small cords, overthrew and cast out of the temple the seats of them that sold doves (Matth. xxi.). For to sell doves in the temple, what else is it but to give for a price in holy Church that imposition of hands whereby the Holy Spirit is given? But the seats of them that sold doves were overthrown, because the priesthood of such is not accounted as priesthood.

Moreover, I have been informed that in the Church which is called Neas, strifes often arise with your Church in the city of Jerusalem. Wherefore your Holiness ought carefully to consider all things, and to correct some things gently, but bear others that cannot be corrected with equanimity. For we see plainly what is said by holy Church through the voice of the Psalmist, Sinners have built upon my back (Ps. cxxviii. 3) . For on the back burdens are borne. Sinners, then, build upon our back, when we bear with sufferance those whom we cannot correct. For the steersman of a ship, when he considers that the wind is against him, surmounts some billows by steering right over them, but some which he foresees can-

not be surmounted he prudently avoids by turning his course aside. So, therefore, let your Holiness mitigate some evils by repressing them, and others by bearing them, so as in all respects to conserve the peace of them that dwell together in the holy Church of Jerusalem. For it is written, Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God (Hebr. xii. 14). For in quarrels the very light of the soul, the light of good intent, is blocked. Whence the Psalmist says, Mine eye is troubled because of anger (Ps. vi. 8) And what remains in us of well-doing, if we lose peace from the heart, without which we cannot see the Lord? Do you therefore so act as to gather the gain of your reward even from those who through strife might have caused it to perish. May Almighty God guard your Love with heavenly grace, and grant you to carry with you from those who are committed to you manifold fruit and measure running over to eternal joys.

# Epistle XLVII.

To Anatolius, Deacon At Constantinople. Gregory to Anatolius, &c.

Thy Love has written to me that our most pious lord orders a successor to be appointed to my most reverend brother John, bishop of Prima Justiniana, on account of the ailment of the head from which he suffers, lest perchance that city, while without the jurisdiction of a bishop, should be ruined by its enemies, which God forbid. And yet the canons nowhere enjoin that a bishop should be superseded on account of sickness. And it is altogether unjust that, if bodily ailments come on, the sick person should be deprived of his dignity . Accordingly this thing can by no means be done through us, lest sin should come upon my soul from his deposition. But it is to be suggested that, if he who bears rule is sick, an administrator may be found, to undertake all his charge, and maintain and fill his place, without his being deposed, in the government of the Church and custody of the city; so that neither may Almighty God be offended nor the city be found to be neglected. If, however, the same most reverend John should haply on account of his ailments request to be relieved from the dignity of the episcopate, it should be conceded on his presenting a petition in writing. But otherwise we are altogether unable, with due regard to the fear of Almighty God, to do this thing. But, if he should be unwilling thus to make petition, what pleases the most pious Emperor, whatever he commands to be done, is in his power. As he determines, so let him provide. Only let him not cause us to be mixed up in the deposition of one so situated. Still, what he does, if it is canonical, we will follow. But, if it is not canonical, we will bear it, so far as we can without sin of our own.

# Epistle L.

To Adrian, Notary. Gregory to Adrian, Notary of Panormus. Agathosa, the bearer of these presents, complains that her husband has, against her will, been converted. in the monastery of the abbot Urbicus. And, since this undoubtedly touches the credit and reputation of the said abbot, we enjoin thy Experience to investigate the matter by diligent enquiry, so as to see whether it may not be the case that the man's conversion was with her consent, or that she herself had promised to change her state. And should it be found to be so, see to his remaining in the monastery, and compel her to change her state, as she had promised. If however neither of these things is the case, and you do not find that the aforesaid woman has committed any crime of fornication on account of which it is lawful for a man to leave his wife, then, lest his conversion should possibly be an occasion of perdition to the wife left behind in the world, we desire thee, without any excuse allowed, to restore her husband to her, even though he should be already tonsured. For, although mundane law declares that marriage may be dissolved for the sake of conversion against the will of either party, yet divine law does not permit this to be done. For, save for the cause of fornication, a man is on no account allowed to put away his wife, seeing that after the husband and wife have been made one body by the copulation of wedlock, it cannot be in part converted, and in part remain in the world .

# Epistle LIV.

To Desiderius, Bishop of Gaul . Gregory to Desiderius, &c. Many good things having been reported to us with regard to your pursuits, such joy arose in our heart that we could not bear to refuse what your Fraternity had requested to have granted to you. But it afterwards came to our ears, what we cannot mention without shame, that thy Fraternity is in the habit of expounding grammar to certain persons. This thing we took so much amiss, and so strongly disapproved it, that we changed what had been said before into groaning and sadness, since the praises of Christ cannot find room in one mouth with the praises of Jupiter. And consider thyself what a grave and heinous offence it is for bishops to sing what is not becoming even for a religious layman. And, though our most beloved son Candidus the presbyter, having been, when he came to us, strictly examined on this matter, denied it, and endeavoured to excuse you, yet still the thought has not departed from our mind, that in proportion as it is execrable for such a thing to be related of a priest, it ought to be ascertained by strict and veracious evidence whether or not it be so. Whence, if hereafter what has been reported to us should prove evidently to be false, and it should be clear that you do not apply yourself to trifles and secular literature, we shall give thanks to our God, who has not permitted your heart to be stained with the blasphemous praises of the abominable; and we will treat without misgiving or hesitation concerning the granting of what you request.

We commend to you in all respects the monks whom together with our most beloved son Laurentius the presbyter and Mellitus the abbot we have sent to our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Augustine, that, through the succour of your Fraternity, no delay may stop their onward progress.

# Epistle LV.

To Virgilius, Bishop Of Arelate (Arles) . Gregory to Virgilius, &c.

Since by the testimony of Holy Writ avarice is called the service of idols, with what earnestness it ought to be banished from the temple of God is acknowledged; and yet (we say it with groaning) by some priests this is not regarded. For fierce cupidity holds the heart captive, and persuades one that what it commands is lawful, and so proceeds as to slay with the same sword both the giver and the receiver. What safe place, then, can hereafter be of avail against avarice, if the Church of God is opened to it by bad priests? How can he keep the sheepfolds inviolate who invites the wolf to enter? Alas for shame! He pollutes Iris hands by an unlawful bribe, and thinks to lift up others by his benediction, while himself prostrate under his own iniquity, and captive notwithstanding to his own ambition. Since then this evil of rapacity has never entered the citadel of your mind, and you say that you have your hands unpolluted in the matter of ordinations, give thanks to Almighty God, anti acknowledge yourselves to be His debtors in that under His protection you have remained unharmed by the contagion of this disease. But this good in you will profit you less than it might have done if you have not carefully forbidden this thing in others also. As in thyself this evil had displeased thee, thou oughtest to have been zealous against it in thy brother also.

For, seeing that the divine precepts admonish us to love our neighbours as ourselves, it is no small fault to disregard them, and not to fear for others what for ourselves we shrink from. Even now, therefore, most beloved brother, give thy mind to repairing what thou hast lost in others through thy negligence in correction, and restrain whomsoever thou canst from this wickedness, and insist on a synod being assembled for rooting out this same heresy, to the end that, with reward to thy Love, what shall have been condemned, God granting it, by the ordinance of all may be better guarded against by all.

Furthermore, it has come to our ears that our brother and fellow-bishop, Serenus of Massilia (Marseilles), receives bad men into his intimate society, so as to have, in fine, as his familiar friend a certain presbyter. who, after lapse, is said to wallow still in his iniquities. This you ought to enquire into closely. And, if it should prove to be so, let it be your care so to correct this matter in our stead that both he who has received such a one may learn not to encourage him by familiarity, but rather to constrain him by punishment, and he who

has been received may learn to wash away his sins with tears, and not to pile up iniquity by unclean living. Let your Fraternity hold as commended to you in all respects the monks whom we have sent to our brother and fellow-bishop Augustine, and take pains so to succour them for proceeding on their way, and so to concur with them, that through your assistance they may be able, under the protection of God, to arrive speedily at their destination.

# Epistle LVI.

TO Aetherius, Bishop OF Lugdunum (Lyons.) Gregory to Aetherius, Bishop of Gaul. The language of your epistles, full of venerable gravity, has so engaged our heart's affection that it would please us to be ever mingling mutual discourse, to the end that, if we cannot enjoy your bodily presence, absence may make no difference with us while this intercourse goes on between us. For how great love of ecclesiastical order shines forth you, and how great is your regard for discipline, and how great your earnestness in the observance of wholesome ordinances you shew in that you receive our exhortation submissively and altogether willingly, and declare that you will inviolably observe it. Since then you bear a heart prompt for the amendment of others, and condemn with a free voice, as becomes you, an evil of old standing, and seeing that our other brethren and fellow-bishops also are similarly disposed, it is your duty to rise unanimously against the Lord's enemies, and cast avarice out of the house of God by a synodical definition. In the giving of ecclesiastical orders let not fierce hunger for gold find any satisfaction; let not flatteries filch any advantage; let not favour confer anything: let a man's life have the reward of honour, his modesty promote his advancement; that, while this kind of observance obtains, both he that seeks to rise by bribes may be judged unworthy, and he to whom his conduct bears good testimony may be worthily honoured. Let this be your care, most beloved brother, let this anxiety ever keep guard over your thoughts, so that you may prove by action that the zeal which you shew in your letters is the witness of your heart. Wherefore continually and instantly press for the assembling of a synod; and so earnestly acquit yourself as to act up to the dignity of your title in the administration of your office.

With regard to what you request to have granted to your Church on the ground of ancient custom, we have caused search to be made in our archives, and nothing has been found. Wherefore send to us the letters which you say you have, that from them we may gather what ought to be granted you. As to the acts or writings of the blessed Irenaeus, we have now long been searching for them, but have not succeeded so far in finding any of them. Furthermore, let your Fraternity take care to hold as in all respects commended to you the monks whom we despatched to our brother and fellow-bishop Augustine, and for the sake of God display your charity towards them; and so earnestly concur with them in priestly zeal, and so hasten to help them with your succour for proceeding on their journey, that, while there shall be no cause of delay in your parts to detain them, both they may go on their way

more speedily, and you may find. a reward for what you have done in their behalf. Given this 10th day of July, Indiction 4 .

# Epistle LVII.

TO Aregius, Bishop OF Vapincum . Gregory to Aregius, Bishop of Gaul. There being in brotherly love one heart and one soul, as the mind rejoices in the prosperity of another, so is it afflicted in his adversity, since in both it is bound to be partaker by the law of charity. And so the greater sorrow had come upon us for your sadness, lest perchance the affliction of a prolonged grief might batter your heart with continual pain, and burden your life with groans. But, having received the letters of your Charity, we have been consoled with the joy we hoped for, and we give thanks to Almighty God, for that we now know that your equanimity is unimpaired, and that your mind has been restored to comfort. Nor indeed was it otherwise to be expected of you than that you would undoubtedly overcome with priestly patience whatever adversity there might be.

Further, we well recollect how the zeal of your Fraternity flamed up of old in uprooting simoniacal heresy. Wherefore we exhort that you give your earnest attention to this, and that, among other things that we wrote of, it be condemned by the strict definition of a council; that so, the bent of our desire being fulfilled by the help of your solicitude, you may both offer to Almighty. God a most acceptable oblation in the correction of vices, and also shew, for the edification of others, how the care of the pastoral office shines forth in you. Moreover our experience of your life, which we have known to be much superior to that of many, moves us to presume on great assistance from you in this matter. And so complete ye your kindness as under God you have begun, that the good which with a right aim has been begun in you may, by the help of God the Creator of all, be brought to completion.

Furthermore, let your Fraternity bestow your accustomed charity on the monks whom we have sent to our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Augustine; and so endeavour to succour them for proceeding on their way, as well personally as through others as you can, that, while through your provision they have no difficulties or delays m your parts, both we may feel that our confidence m you was not in vain, and Almighty God may give you the recompense of His grace for the conversion of the souls on whose behalf they have been sent.

# Epistle LVIII.

To Divers Bishops of Gaul. Gregory to Mennas of Telona (Toulon), Serenus of Massilia (Marseilles), Lupus of Cabillonum (Châlons-sur-Saône), Aigulfus of Metae (Metz), Simplicius of Parisii (Paris), Melantius of Rotonius (Rouen), and Licinius , bishops of the Franks. A paribus. Though the care of the office you have undertaken reminds your Fraternity how you ought to assist with all your endeavours religious men, and especially those who labour in behalf of souls, yet it is not beside the purpose that an address by letter from us should stimulate your assiduity, since, as a fire becomes larger from a blast of air, so the purposes of a good disposition are advanced by commendation. Inasmuch, then, as through the co-operating, grace of our Redeemer so great a multitude of the nation of the Angli is being converted to the grace of Christian faith that our most reverend common brother and fellow-bishop Augustine asserts that those who are with him cannot suffice for carrying out this work in divers places, we have made provision by sending to him a few monks with our most beloved common sons Laurentius the presbyter and Mellitus the abbot. And so let your Fraternity shew them the charity that becomes you, and so make haste to aid them wherever there may be need, that through your assistance they may have no cause for delay in your parts, and that both they themselves may rejoice with you in being relieved by your consolation, and you, by affording them your succour, may be found partakers in the cause in furtherance of which they have been sent.

# Epistle LIX.

To Theoderic, King of the Franks . Gregory to Theoderic, &c. The letter of your Excellency, which is the index of your heart, has so shewn, in its flow of lucid language, what great prudence is conspicuous in you, along with royal power, that there can be no doubt of the truth of whatever fame has reported in your praise. And inasmuch as you signify, by what you say in praise of it, that our exhortation has so pleased your royal mind that you wish whatever you know to pertain to the worship of our God, to the veneration of Churches, or to the honour of priests, to be both carefully established and in all ways guarded, we appeal to you with a renewed exhortation, with a view to your greater reward, that you would order a synod to be assembled, and, as we have before written, cause corporal vices in priests and the pravity of simoniacal heresy to be condemned by the definition of all the bishops, and to be cut off within the limits of your kingdom, and allow not any longer money to have more effect than the precepts of the Lord. For, since all avarice is the service of idols, whosoever does not watchfully guard against it, and especially in the bestowal of ecclesiastical honours, is subjected to the perdition of infidelity, even though he may seem to hold the faith which he disregards. As, then, against external enemies, so also against adversaries of souls among yourselves, take ye earnest heed, that on account of this your faithful opposition to God's enemies you may both reign prosperously here under His protection, and also come hereafter by the leading of His grace to eternal joys.

Furthermore, what benefits your Excellence bestowed on our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Augustine on his progress to the nation of the Angli we have been told by certain monks who have returned to us from him. Wherefore, returning abundant thanks, we beg that you will deign to afford your support in full measure to these monks also who have been sent to him, and to aid them on their onward journey, so that the more amply you shew your kindness to them, the greater return you may expect from Almighty God, whom they serve.

# Epistle LX.

TO Theodebert, King OF The Franks . Gregory to Theodebert, &c. One who receives with willing mind and embraces in the bosom of his heart words of fatherly admonition declares himself without doubt to be one who would be an amender of faults. On which account the absolute promise of your Excellence assures us sufficiently. For we hold in place of a pledge the words of one who is good for payment. Therefore let your Excellency vouchsafe, adhering to the commands of our God, to give zealous attention to the assembling of a synod, that every corporal vice in priests, and simoniacal heresy, which was the first to arise in Churches from iniquitous ambition, may under threat of the censure of your power be removed by the definition of a council, and be cut off by the roots; lest, if gold is loved in your parts more than God, He who now remains tranquil while His precepts are despised be felt hereafter to be wrathful in vengeance. And indeed, because we say all this for your own behoof, we therefore cease not to press you again and again, that we may be able, even by importunity, to do good to our most excellent and most sweet sons. For it will be in all respects of advantage to your kingdom, if what is done in those parts against God be corrected by the emendation of your Excellency.

Furthermore, what good service your Excellency did to our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Augustine on his progress to the nation of the Angli we have learnt from the report of certain monks who returned to us from him. Rendering you the greatest thanks for this, we beg you to bestow your benefits abundantly on the monks, the bearers of these presents, whom we have sent to our said brother, to the end that, while under your patronage, they find no difficulties in your parts, but accomplish easily with the help of Christ the journey they have undertaken, you may reap your richer fruit of reward before the eyes of our God.

# Epistle LXI.

TO Clotaire, King OF The Franks . Gregory to Clotaire. &c. Among so many cares and anxieties which you sustain for the government of the peoples under your sway, it is to your exceeding praise and great reward that you are helpers of those who labour in the cause of God. And, since you have shewn yourselves by the good things you have already done to be such that we may presume still better things of you, we are moved most gladly to request of you what will be to your own reward. Now certain monks, who had proceeded with our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Augustine to the nation of the Angli, have returned and told us with what great charity your Excellence refreshed this our brother when he was present with you, and with what supports you aided him on his departure. But, since the works of those who do not recede from the good they have begun are acceptable to our God, we beg of you, greeting you with fatherly affection, to hold as peculiarly commended to you the monks, bearers of these presents, whom we have sent to our aforesaid brother together with our most beloved sons, the presbyter Laurentius and the abbot Mellitus. And whatever kindness you before shewed to him bestow ye on them also to the richer increase of your praise, to the end that, when through your provision they shall have accomplished without delay the journey they have begun, Almighty God may be the recompenser of your good deeds, and both your guardian in prosperity and your helper in adversity.

Furthermore, it has come to our ears that in your parts sacred orders are conferred with payment of money. And we are exceedingly distressed if the gifts of God are not attained by merit, but pounced upon by bribes. And, because this simoniacal heresy, which was the first to arise in the Church, was condemned by the authority of the apostles, we beg of you for your own reward to cause a synod to be assembled; to the end that, having been put down and eradicated by the definition of all the priests, it may in future find no power in your parts to endanger souls, nor be allowed henceforth to arise under any pretext whatever, that so our Almighty God may exalt you against your adversaries in proportion as He sees that you have zeal in fulfilling His commands, and as you take thought for the salvation of souls which had been in danger of perishing by the sword of this atrocity.

# Epistle LXII.

To Brunichild, Queen OF The Franks . Gregory to Brunichild, &c. We render thanks to Almighty God, Who, among all the other gifts of His loving-kindness that He has bestowed upon your Excellency, has so filled you with a love of the Christian religion that whatever you know to pertain to the gain of souls, whatever to the propagation of the faith, you cease not to carry into effect with devout mind and pious zeal. As to the great favour and assistance wherewith your Excellence aided our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Augustine on his progress to the nation of the Angli, fame had already not been silent; and after wards certain monks. returning to us from him, gave us a particular account thereof.

And indeed, let others to whom your benefactions are less known wonder at these evidences of your Christianity; for to us who know them by experience they are not a subject of wonder, but of rejoicing, because through what you bestow upon others you delight yourself. Now of what sort and how great are the miracles which our Redeemer has wrought in the conversion of the above-written nation is already known to your Excellency. On which account you ought to have great joy, since the succours afforded by you claim to themselves the larger share herein, it having been through your aid, after God, that the word of preaching became widely known in those parts. For one who aids the good work of another makes it his own. But, that the fruit of your reward may be richer more and more, we beg of you kindly to afford the support of your patronage to the monks, the bearers of these presents, whom we have sent with our most beloved sons, the presbyter Laurentius and the abbot Mellitus, to our aforesaid most reverend brother and fellow-bishop, because of his telling us that those who are with him are not sufficient; and to vouchsafe to stand by them in all things, to the end that, when by the good auspices of your Excellency they shall have had the better success, and shall have found no delays or difficulties in your parts, you may call down the mercy of our God towards you and your most sweet nephews in proportion as you have demeaned yourselves compassionately for the love of Him in causes of this kind.

(In Collect. Pauli Diac.) Given the tenth day of the Kalends of July, Indiction 4.]

# Epistle LXIII.

TO Brunichild, Queen OF The Franks. Gregory to Brunichild, &c.

What good gifts have been conferred on you from above, and with what piety heavenly grace has filled you, this, among all the other proofs of your merits, intimates evidently to all that you both govern the savage hearts of barbarians with the skill of prudent counsel, and (what is still more to your praise), adorn your royal power with wisdom. And since, as you are above many nations in both these respects, so also you excel them in the purity of your faith, we have great confidence in your amending what is unlawful. For the contents of the letters you have already sent us are witness how your Excellency has embraced our exhortation, and with what devotion you long to fulfil the same. But, since He Who is the giver of good dispositions is wont to be their helper also, we trust that He may direct your causes in His loving-kindness all the more favourably as He sees you to be assiduous in His cause. Do you God's work, and God will do yours. Wherefore order a synod to be assembled, and, among other things, as we have before written, studiously prohibit by the definition of a council the sin of simoniacal heresy in your kingdom. Offer a sacrifice to God by conquering the enemy that is within, that by His help you may conquer the enemies that are without; and that, according to the zeal you evince against His foes, such you may feel Him to be in aiding you.

Believe me, moreover, that, as we have learnt from the experience of many, whatever is gathered together with sin is spent with loss. If, then, you wish to lose nothing unjustly, endeavour to the utmost to have nothing got by injustice. For in earthly matters loss has always its origin in sin. You, therefore, if you wish to stand above adverse nations, if you would speedily, with God's leave, be victorious over them, receive with trembling the commandments of the same Almighty God, that He Himself may fight for you against your adversaries, Who has promised in Holy Writ, saying, The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace (Exod xiv. 14).

[In Collect. Pauli Diac.: Data die decima Kalend., Indict. 4. In Remigiano : Data die x Kalendas Julii, Indict. 4.]

# Epistle LXIV.

TO Augustine, Bishop OF The Angli . Here begins the epistle of the blessed Gregory pope of the city of Rome, in exposition of various matters, which he sent into transmarine Saxony to Augustine, whom he had himself sent in his own stead to preach. Preface.-Through my most beloved son Laurentius, the presbyter, and Peter the monk, I received thy Fraternity's letter, in which thou hast been at pains to question me on many points. But, inasmuch as my aforesaid sons found me afflicted with the pains of gout, and on their urging me to dismiss them speedily were allowed to go, leaving me under the same painful affliction; I have not been able to reply, as I ought to have done, at greater length on every single point. Augustine's first question. I ask, most blessed father, concerning bishops, how they should live with their clergy: And concerning the offerings of the faithful which are received at the altars, both into what portions they should be divided, and how the bishop ought to deal with them in the Church.

Answer of Saint Gregory, pope of the city of Rome. Holy Scripture, which no doubt thou knowest well, bears witness, and especially the epistles of the blessed Paul to Timothy, in which he studied to instruct him how he ought to behave himself in the house of God. Now it is the custom of the Apostolic See to deliver an injunction to bishops when ordained, that of all emoluments that come in four divisions should be made: to wit, one for the bishop and his household on account of hospitality and entertainment; another for the clergy; a third for the poor; and a fourth for the reparation of Churches. But, inasmuch as thy Fraternity, having been trained in the rules of a monastery, ought not to live apart from thy clergy in the Church of the Angli, which by the guidance of God has lately been brought to the faith, it will be right to institute that manner of life which in the beginning of the infant Church was that of our Fathers, among whom none said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common (Acts iv.).

Augustine's second question . I wish to be taught whether clerics who cannot contain may marry; and, if they marry, whether they should return to the world. Answer of the blessed pope Gregory. If, however, there are any clerics, not in sacred orders,. who cannot contain themselves, they ought to take to themselves wives, and receive their stipends separately, since we know that it is written of those same Fathers whom we have before mentioned, that distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Wherefore thought should

be taken and provision made for their stipends, and they should be kept under ecclesiastical rule, that they may lead good lives, and give attention to the singing of psalms, and by the help of God preserve their heart and tongue. and body from all that is unlawful. But as to those who live in community, what is there. more for us to say with regard to assigning portions, or shewing hospitality, or executing mercy, seeing that what remains over and above their needs is to be expended for pious and religious uses, as the Lord and Master of us all says, Of what is over give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you (Luke xi. 4x)?

Augustine's third question. Since there is but one faith, why are the uses of Churches so different, one use of Mass being observed in the Roman Church, and another in the Churches of Gaul? Answer of the blessed pope Gregory. Thy Fraternity knows the use of the Roman Church, in which thou hast been nurtured. But I approve of thy selecting carefully anything thou hast found that may be more pleasing to Almighty God, whether in the Roman Church or that of Gaul, or in any Church whatever, and introducing in the Church of the Angli, which is as yet new in the faith, by a special institution, what thou hast been able to collect from many Churches. For we ought not to love things for places, but places for things. Wherefore choose from each several Church such things as are pious, religious, and right, and, collecting them as it were into a bundle, plant them in the minds of the Angli for their use.

Augustine's fourth question. Pray tell me what any one ought to suffer who may have abstracted anything from a church by theft? Answer of the blessed pope Gregory. In this case thy Fraternity can consider, with regard to the person of the thief, how he may be best corrected. For there are some who commit theft though they have resources, and there are others who transgress in this matter out of want. Hence it is needful that some should be corrected by fines, but some by stripes, and some more severely, but some more lightly. And, when any one is somewhat severely dealt with, he should be dealt with in charity, and not in anger; since to the man himself who is corrected the punishment is assigned lest he should be given up to the fires of hell. For we ought so to maintain discipline towards believers as good fathers are wont to do towards their sons, whom they both smite with blows for their faults, and yet seek to have as their heirs the very persons on whom they inflict pain, and keep what they possess for the very same whom they seem to assail in anger. This charity, then, should be retained in the mind, so that nothing at all be done beyond the rule of reason.

Thou askest also how they ought to restore what they have abstracted by theft from churches. But far be it from us that the Church should receive back with increase what it seems to lose of its earthly things, and seek gain out of losses. [al., for de damnis, de vanis. So Bede.] Augustine's fifth question. I beg to know whether two brothers may marry two sisters, who are far removed from them in descent. Answer of the blessed pope Gregory. This by all means may be done. For nothing at all is found in Holy Writ which seems to be opposed to it. Augustine's sixth question. As far as what generation believers ought to be joined in

marriage with their kin, and whether it is lawful to be joined in marriage with stepmothers and brothers' wives? Answer of the blessed pope Gregory.

A certain earthly law in the Roman republic allows the son and daughter, whether of a brother and sister, or of two brothers, or of two sisters, to marry together. But we have learnt by experience that progeny cannot ensue from such marriages. And the sacred. law forbids to uncover the nakedness of kindred. Whence it follows that only the third or fourth generations of believers may be lawfully joined together . For the second which we have spoken of, ought by all means to abstain from each other. But to have intercourse with a stepmother is a grave offence, seeing that is also written in the law, thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father (Lev. xviii. 7). Not indeed that a son can uncover his father's nakedness; but, since it is written in the law, They too shall be one flesh (Gen. ii. 24), he who has presumed to uncover the nakedness of his stepmother, who has been one flesh with his father, has in truth uncovered his father's nakedness. It is also forbidden to have intercourse with a brother's wife, who, through her former conjunction, has become the flesh of the brother. For which thing also John the Baptist was beheaded, and crowned with holy martyrdom. He was not bidden to deny Christ; and yet for confessing Christ he was slain; because the same our Lord Jesus Christ had said, I am the truth (John xiv. 6); and because John was slain for the truth, he shed his blood for Christ.

Augustine's seventh question . I request to have it declared whether to such as are thus foully joined together separation should be enjoined, and the oblation of sacred communion denied them? Answer of the blessed pope Gregory. But, since there are many in the nation of the Angli who while they were yet in unbelief are said to have been associated in such unholy marriages, they should be admonished, when they come to the faith, to abstain from each other, and be made to understand that this is a grievous sin. Let them fear God's tremendous judgment, lest for carnal delight they incur the pains of eternal torment. Yet they should not on this account be deprived of the communion of the Lord's body and blood, lest we should seem to punish them for what they had bound themselves in through ignorance before the layer of baptism. For at this time holy Church corrects some things with fervour, tolerates some things with gentleness, connives at and bears some things with consideration, so as often to repress what she opposes by bearing and conniving. But all who come to the faith are to be warned not to dare to perpetrate any such thing: and if any should perpetrate it, they must be deprived of the communion of the Lord's body and blood, since, as in those who have done it in ignorance the fault should be to a certain extent tolerated, so it should be severely visited in those who are not afraid to sin in spite of knowledge.

Augustine's eighth question. I ask whether, if length of way intervenes, and bishops are not able to assemble easily, a bishop should be ordained without the presence of other bishops. Answer of the blessed pope Gregory. Indeed in the Church of the Angli, wherein thou art so far the only bishop, thou canst not ordain a bishop otherwise than without bishops. For, when bishops shall come from Gaul they will attend thee as witnesses for the ordination of a bishop . But we desire thy Fraternity so to ordain bishops in England that the bishops

themselves be not separated from one another by long distances, to the end that there be no necessary cause wily they should not come together in the case of the ordination of any bishop. For the presence of some other pastors also is exceedingly advantageous; and hence they ought to he able to come together as easily as possible. When therefore, God granting it, bishops shall have been ordained in places not far from each other, an ordination of bishops should in no case take place without three or four bishops being assembled. For in spiritual things themselves, that they may be ordered wisely and maturely, we may draw an example even from carnal things. For assuredly, when marriages are celebrated in the world, some married persons are called together, that those who have gone before in the way of marriage may be associated also in the ensuing joy. Why then, in this spiritual ordination too, wherein man is joined to God through a sacred mystery, should not such come together as may both rejoice in the advancement of him who is ordained bishop and pour forth prayers to the Almighty Lord for His protection?

Augustine's ninth question. I ask also how we should deal with the bishops of Gaul and of the Britons. Answer of the blessed pope Gregory.

Over the bishops of Gaul we give thee no authority, since from the ancient times of my predecessors the bishop of Arelate (Arles) has received the pallium, and we ought by no means to deprive him of the authority that, he has acquired. If therefore it should happen that thy Fraternity should pass into the provinces of Gaul, thou shouldest act with the same bishop of Arelate in such a way that vices in bishops, if any, may be corrected. And, if he should by chance be lukewarm in the vigour of discipline, he must be stirred up by the zeal of thy Fraternity. To him we have also written letters , bidding him aid thee with his whole soul, whenever thy Holiness may be present in Gaul, that you may together repress in the manners of bishops all that is contrary to the command of our Creator. But thou thyself wilt not have power to judge the bishops of Gaul by authority of thine own; but by persuading, alluring, and also exhibiting thine own good works for their imitation, and so moulding the dispositions of the vicious to concern for holiness; seeing that it is written in the law, One passing through the standing corn of another must not put in a sickle, but rub the ears with his hand and eat (Dent. xxxii. 25). Thou canst not, then, put in the sickle of judgment into the crop that is seen to be committed to another;

but by kindly good offices thou canst strip the corn of the Lord from the chaff of its defects, and by admonishing and persuading, convert it, as it were by chewing, into the body of the Church. But whatever is to be done authoritatively, let it be done with the aforesaid bishop of Arelate, lest there should be any disregard of what the ancient institution of the Fathers has provided. But of all British bishops we commit the charge to thy Fraternity, that the unlearned may. be taught, the weak strengthened by persuasion, the perverse corrected by authority.

Augustine's request. I request that the relics of Saint Sixtus the martyr may be sent to us . The grant of Gregory. We have done what thou hast requested, to the end that the people who formerly said that they venerated in a certain place the body of Saint Sixtus the martyr,

which seems to thy Fraternity to be neither the true body nor truly holy, may receive certain benefits from the most holy and approved martyr, and not reverence what is uncertain. Yet it seems to me that, if the body which is believed by the people to be that of some martyr is distinguished among them by no miracles, and if further there are none of the more aged who declare that they had heard the order of his passion from progenitors, the relics which thou hast asked for should be so deposited apart that the place in which the aforesaid body lies, be entirely blocked up, and that the people be not allowed to desert what is certain, and venerate what is uncertain.

Augustine's tenth question. Whether a pregnant woman should be baptized, or, when she has brought forth, after what length of time she should be allowed to enter the church. Or, to guard also against her issue being surprised. by death, after how many days it may receive the sacrament of holy baptism. Or after what length of time her husband may have carnal intercourse with her. Or, if she is in her sickness after the manner of women, whether she may enter the church, or receive the sacrament of sacred communion. Or whether a man after intercourse with his wife, before he has been washed with water, may enter the church, or even go to the ministry (ministerium: in Bede, mysterium) of sacred communion. All these things it is fight we should have made known to us for the rude nation of the Angli. Answer of the blessed pope Gregory.

I doubt not that thy Fraternity has been asked these questions, anti I think that I have supplied thee with answers to them. But I believe that thou wishest what thou art able of thyself to say and think to be confirmed by my reply. For why should not a pregnant woman be baptized, fecundity of the flesh being no fault before the eyes of Almighty God? For, when our first parents had transgressed in Paradise, they lost by the just judgment of God the immortality which they had received. Therefore, because Almighty God would not utterly extinguish the human race for their fault, He took away immortality from man for his sin, and yet, in the kindness of His pity, reserved to him fruitfulness in offspring. With what reason then can what has been preserved to the human race by the gift of Almighty God be debarred from the grace of holy baptism? For indeed it is very foolish to suppose that a gift of grace can possibly be inconsistent with that mystery wherein all human sin is entirely extinguished.

But as to how many days after her delivery a woman may enter the church, thou hast learnt that by the direction of the Old Testament she ought to keep away xxxiii. days for a male child, but lxvi. for a female. It should be known, however, that this is understood mystically. For, if in the same hour in which she has been delivered she enters the church, she subjects herself to no burden of sin. For it is the pleasure of the flesh, not the pain, that is in fault. But it is in the carnal intercourse that the pleasure lies; for in bringing forth of offspring there is pain and groaning. Whence even to the first mother of all it is said, In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children (Gen. iii. 16). If, therefore, we forbid a woman after her delivery to enter the church, we reckon her very penalty to her for a fault. Moreover, it is by no means forbidden that either a woman after delivery or that which she has brought forth should

be baptized without delay, if in peril of death; she even in the same hour in which she is delivered, or it in the same hour in which it is born. For, as in the case of those who live and have discretion the grace of the holy mystery should be seen to with great discernment, so to those who are in imminent danger of death it should be offered without any delay, lest, while time is being sought for administering the mystery of redemption, death should shortly intervene, and no way be found of redeeming the time that has been lost.

Further, her husband ought not to cohabit with her till that which is brought forth be weaned. But an evil custom has arisen in the ways of married persons, that women scorn to nurse the children whom they bring forth, and deliver them to other women to be nursed. Which custom appears to have been devised for the sole cause of incontinency, in that, being unwilling to contain themselves, they think scorn to suckle their offspring. Those women therefore who, after an evil custom, deliver their children to others to be nursed ought not to have intercourse with their husbands unless the time of their purification has passed, seeing that, even without the reason of childbirth, they are forbidden to have intercourse with their husbands while held of their accustomed sicknesses ; so much so that the sacred law smites with death any man who shall go into a woman having her sickness (Lev. xx. 18). Yet still a woman, while suffering from her accustomed sickness, ought not to be prohibited from entering the church, since the superfluity of nature cannot be-imputed to her for guilt, and it is not just that she should be deprived of entrance into the church on account of what she suffers unwillingly. For we know that the woman who suffered from an issue of blood, coming humbly behind the Lord, touched the hem of his garment, and immediately her infirmity departed from her (Luke viii.). If then one who had an issue of blood could laudably touch the Lord's garment, why should it be unlawful for one who suffers flora a menstruum of blood to enter in the Lord's Church?

But that woman, thou wilt say, was compelled by infirmity; but these are held of their accustomed sicknesses. Yet consider, dearest brother, how all that we suffer in this mortal flesh is of infirmity of nature, ordained after guilt by the fitting judgment of God. For to hunger and to thirst, to be hot, to be cold, to be weary, is of infirmity of nature. And to seek food against hunger, and drink against thirst, and cool air against heat, and clothing against cold, and rest against weariness, what is it but to search out certain healing appliances against sicknesses? For in females also the menstruous flow of their blood is a sickness. If therefore she presumed well who in her state of feebleness touched the Lord's garment, why should not what is granted to one person in infirmity be granted to all women who through defect of their nature are in infirmity?

Further, she ought not to be prohibited during these same days from receiving the mystery of holy communion. If, however, out of great reverence, she does not presume to receive, she is to be commended; but, if she should receive, she is not to be judged. For it is the part of good dispositions in some way to acknowledge their sins. even where there is no sin, since often without sin a thing is done which comes of sin. Whence also, when we hunger, we eat without sin, though it has come of the sin of the first man that we do hunger. For the

menstruous habit in women is no sin, seeing that it occurs naturally; yet still that nature itself has been so vitiated as to be seen to be polluted even without the intention of the will is a defect that comes of sin, whereby human nature may perceive what through judgment it has come to be, so that man who voluntarily committed sin may bear the guilt of sin involuntarily. And so females, when they consider themselves as being in their habit of sickness, if. they presume not to approach the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord, are to be commended for their right consideration. But when, out of the habit of a religious life, they are seized with a love of the same mystery, they are not to be restrained, as we have said.

For, as in the old Testament outward acts were attended to, so in the New Testament it is not so much what is done outwardly as what is thought inwardly that is regarded with close attention, that it may be punished with searching judgment. For while the law forbids the eating of many things. as being unclean, the Lord nevertheless says in the Gospel, Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but the things which come forth from the heart, these are they which defile a man (Matth. xv. II). And soon after He added in exploitation, Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts (Ib. 19). Hence it is abundantly indicated that what is shewn by Almighty God to be polluted in act is that which is engendered of the root of polluted thought. Whence also Paul the Apostle says, All things are pure to the pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure (Tit. i. 15). And immediately, to declare the cause of this defilement, he subjoins, For their mind and conscience is defiled. If, then, food is not impure to one whose mind is not impure, why should what with a pure mind a woman suffers from nature be reckoned to her for impurity?

Further, a man after sleeping with his own wife ought not to enter the church unless washed with water, nor, even when washed, enter immediately. Now the law enjoined on the ancient people that a man after intercourse with a woman should both be washed with water and not enter the church before sunset. Which may be understood spiritually as meaning that a man has intercourse with a woman when his mind is joined with delight in thought to illicit concupiscence, and that, unless the fire of concupiscence in his mind should cool, he ought. not to think himself worthy of the congregation of his brethren, seeing himself to be burdened with by lewdness of wrong desire. For, although in this matter different nations of men have different notions, and some are seen to observe one practice and some another, yet the usage of the Romans from ancient times has always been for a man after intercourse with his own wife both to seek the purification of the bath and to refrain reverently for a while from entering the church.

Nor do we, in saying these things, account wedlock as sin. But, since even the lawful intercourse of the wedded cannot take place without pleasure of the flesh, entrance into a sacred place should be abstained from, because the pleasure itself can by no means be without sin. For he had not been born of adultery or fornication. but of lawful wedlock, who said, Behold I was conceived in iniquities, and in sin my mother brought me forth (Ps. l. 7). For, knowing himself to have been conceived in iniquities, he groaned for having been born in

sin, because the tree bears in its, branch the vicious humour which it has drawn from its root. Yet in these words he does not call the intercourse of the wedded iniquity in itself, but in truth only the pleasure of the intercourse. For there are many things which are allowed and legitimate, and yet we are to some extent defiled in the doing of them; as often we attack faults with anger, and disturb the tranquillity of our own mind. And, though what is done is right, yet it is not to be approved that the mind is therein disturbed. For instance. he had been angry against the vices of transgressors who said, Mine eye is disturbed because of anger (Ps. vi. 8).

For, since the mind cannot, unless it be tranquil, lift itself up to the light of contemplation, he grieved that his eye was disturbed in anger, because, though assailing evil doings from above, he still could not help being confused and disturbed from contemplation of the highest things. And therefore his anger against vice is laudable, and yet it troubles him, because he felt that he had incurred some guilt in being disturbed. Lawful copulation of the flesh ought therefore to be for the purpose of offspring, not of pleasure; and intercourse of the flesh should be for the sake of producing children, and not a satisfaction of frailties. If, then, any one makes use of his wife not as seized by the desire of pleasure, but only for the sake of producing children, he certainly, with regard to entering the church or taking the mystery of the body and blood of the Lord, is to be left to his own judgment, since by us he ought not to be prohibited from receiving it who knows no burning though in the midst of fire. But, when not the love of producing offspring but pleasure dominates in the act of intercourse, married persons have something to mourn over in their intercourse. For holy preaching concedes them this, and yet in the very concession shakes the mind with fear.

For, when the Apostle Paul said, Who cannot contain let him have his own wife, he straightway took care to add, But I speak this by way of indulgence, not by way of command (I Cor. vii. 7). For what is just and right is not indulged: what he spoke of as indulged he shewed to be a fault.

Furthermore it is to be attentively considered that the Lord in mount Sinai, when about to speak to the people, first charged the same people to abstain from women. And if there, where the Lord spoke to men through a subject creature, purity of body was required with such careful provision that they who were to hear the words of God might not have intercourse with women, how much more ought those who receive the Body of the Almighty Lord to keep purity of the flesh in themselves, lest they be weighed down by the greatness of the inestimable mystery! Hence also it is said through the priest to David concerning his servants, that if they were pure from women they might eat the shew bread; which they might not receive at all unless David first declared them to be pure from women. Still a man who after intercourse with his wife has been washed with water may receive even the mystery of sacred communion, since according to the opinion above expressed it was allowable for him to enter the church.

Augustine's eleventh question. I ask also whether after an illusion, such is accustomed, to occur in dreams, any one may receive the body of the Lord, or, if he be a priest, celebrate the

sacred mysteries? Answer of the blessed Pope Gregory. Such a one the Testament of the old law, as we have already said in the last section, declares indeed to be polluted, and does not allow to enter the church until the evening, or without being washed with water. But one who understands this not only with special reference to that people at that time, but also spiritually, will regard it under the same intellectual conception that we have spoken of before; namely, that he has, as it were, an illusion in a dream who, being tempted by uncleanness, is defiled in thought by true images. But he is to be washed with water in the sense of washing away the sins of thought with tears. And, unless the fire of temptation has passed away, he should feel himself to be guilty, as it were, until the evening.

But in tiffs same illusion discrimination is very necessary, since it ought to be nicely considered from what cause it occurs to the mind of the sleeper. For sometimes it happens from surfeit, sometimes from superfluity or infirmity of nature, sometimes from cogitation. And indeed when it has come to pass from superfluity or infirmity of nature, it is by no means to be viewed with alarm, since the mind is to be commiserated as having endured it unwittingly rather than as having done it. But when the appetite of gluttony in taking food is carried beyond measure, and consequently the receptacles of the humours are loaded, the mind has therefore some guilt, yet not to the extent of prohibition from receiving the sacred mystery, or celebrating the solemnities of mass, when perchance a festival day demands it, or necessity itself requires the mystery to be exhibited by reason of there being no other priest in the place. For, if others competent to execute the mystery are present, an illusion caused by surfeit ought not to debar from receiving the sacred mystery, though immolation of the sacred mystery ought, as I think, to be humbly abstained from; provided only that foul imagination has not shaken the soul of the sleeper. For there are some to whom the illusion for the most part so arises that their mind, though in the body which sleeps, is not defiled by foul imaginations.

With regard to this, there is one case in which it is shewn that the soul itself is guilty, not being free even from its own judgment; that is where, while it remembers having seen nothing when the body was asleep, it still remembers having fallen into lewdness when the body was awake. But, if the illusion arises in the soul of the sleeper from foul cogitation while he was awake, the mind's guilt is patent to itself. For a man sees from what root that defilement proceeded, if he has endured unwittingly what he wittingly cogitated. But it is to be considered whether the cogitation ensued from suggestion, or delight, or sinful consent. For there are three ways in which all sin is accomplished; to wit, by suggestion, by delight, and by consent. Suggestion is through the devil, delight through the flesh, consent through the spirit; since, in the case of the first sin, the serpent suggested it, Eve, as the flesh, delighted in it, but Adam, as the spirit, consented to it. And great discernment Is needed, that the mind may sit as judge of itself to distinguish between suggestion and delight, between delight and consent. For, when the evil spirit suggests sin in the soul, if no delight in sin should follow, no sin is in any wise committed. But, when the flesh has begun to take delight, then sin has its commencement. But, if it sinks to deliberate consent, then sin is known to be completed.

In suggestion therefore is the seed of sin, in delight its nutriment, in consent its completion. And it often happens that what the evil spirit sows in the thought the flesh draws into delight, and yet the mind does not consent to this delight. And, while the flesh cannot be delighted without the soul, still the mind, though struggling against the pleasures of the flesh, is in some way bound against its will in carnal delight, so as by force of reason to protest against it and not consent to it, and yet to be bound by the delight, but still to groan exceedingly for being bound. Whence even that chief soldier of the heavenly army groaned, saying, I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members (Rom. vii. 23). Yet, if he was a captive, he did not fight. But he did fight too, and therefore he was not a captive. And therefore he fought by the law of the mind, which the law which is in the members fought against. If he thus fought, he was not a captive. Behold then man is, so to speak, both a captive and free: free with regard to the righteousness which he loves; a captive with regard to the delight which he endures unwillingly.

# Epistle LXV.

TO Augustine, Bishop OF The Angli . Gregory to Augustine, &c.

Though it is certain that for those who labour for Almighty God ineffable rewards of an eternal kingdom are reserved, yet we must needs bestow honours upon them, that by reason of remuneration they may apply themselves the more manifoldly in devotion to spiritual work. And, since the new Church of the Angli has been brought to the grace of Almighty God through the bountifulness of the same Lord and thy labours, we grant to thee the use of the pallium therein for the solemnization of mass only, so that thou mayest ordain; bishops in twelve several places, to be subject to thy jurisdiction, with the view of a bishop of the city of London being always consecrated in future by his own synod, and receiving the dignity of the pallium from this holy and Apostolical See which by the grace of God I serve. Further, to the city of York we desire thee to send a bishop whom thou mayest judge fit to be ordained; so that, if this same city with the neighbouring places should receive the word of God, he also may ordain twelve bishops, so as to enjoy the dignity of a metropolitan: for to him also, if our life is continued, we propose, with the favour of God, to send a pallium but yet we desire to subject him to the control of thy Fraternity.

But after thy death let him be over the bishops whom he shall have ordained, so as to be in no wise subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. Further, between the bishops of London and York in the future let there be this distinction of dignity, that he be accounted first who has been first ordained. But let them arrange by council in common, and with concordant action, whatever things may have to be done in zeal for Christ; let them be of one mind in what is right, and accomplish what they are minded to do without disagreement with each other.

But let thy Fraternity have subject to thyself under our God not only those bishops whom thou shalt ordain, and those whom the bishop of York may ordain, but also all the priests of Britain, to the end that they may learn the form of right belief and good living from the tongue and life of thy Holiness, and, executing their office well in their faith and manners, may attain to heavenly kingdoms when it may please the Lord. God keep thee safe, most reverend brother. Given on the tenth day of the Kalends of July, in the 19th year of the empire of our lord Mauricius Tiberius, the 18th year after the consulship of the same lord, Indiction and.

# Epistle LXVI.

TO Edilbert, King OF The Angli. Gregory to Edilbert, &c.

On this account Almighty God advances good men to the government of peoples, that through them He may bestow the gifts of His loving-kindness on all over whom they are preferred. This we have found to be the case in the nation of the Angli, which your Glory has been put over to the intent that through the good things granted to you, heavenly benefits might be conferred on the nation subject to you And so, glorious son, keep guard with anxious mind over the grace which tuba hast received from above. Make haste to extend the Christian faith among the peoples under thy sway, redouble the zeal of thy rectitude in their conversion, put down the worship of idols, overturn the edifices of their temples , build up the manners of thy subjects in great purity of life by exhorting, by terrifying, by enticing, by correcting, by. shewing examples of well-doing; that so you may find Him your recompenser in heaven Whose name and knowledge you shall have spread abroad on earth. For He Himself will make the name of your glory even more glorious to posterity, if you seek and maintain I His honour among the nations. For so Constantine, the once most pious Emperor, recalling the Roman republic from perverse worshippings of idols, subjected it with himself to our Almighty Lord God Jesus Christ, and turned himself with his subject peoples with all his heart to Him.

Hence it came to pass that that man surpassed in praise the name of ancient princes, and excelled his predecessors as much in renown as in well-doing. And now, therefore, let your Glory make haste to infuse into the kings and peoples subject to you the knowledge of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that you may both surpass the ancient kings of your race in renown and in deserts, and the more you shall have wiped away the sins of others among your subjects, the more secure you may become with regard to your own sins before the terrible scrutiny of Almighty God.

Moreover, you have with you our most reverend brother, Augustine the bishop, learned in monastic rule, replete with knowledge of holy Scripture, endowed by the grace of God with good works. Listen gladly to his admonitions, follow them devoutly, keep them studiously in remembrance: for, if you listen to him in what he speaks in behalf of Almighty God, the same Almighty God will the sooner listen to him when he prays for you. For, if (which God forbid) you disregard his words, when will it be possible for Almighty God to hear him for

you, whom you neglect to hear for God? With all your heart, therefore, bind ye yourselves in fervour of faith to him, and aid his endeavours by the power which he gives you from above, that He Whose faith you cause to be received and kept in your kingdom may Himself make you partakers' of His own Kingdom.

Furthermore, we would have your Glory know that, as we learn from the words of the Almighty Lord in holy Scripture, the end of the present world is already close at hand, and the reign of the saints is coming, which can have no end. And, now that this end of the world is approaching, many things are at hand which previously have not been; to wit, changes of the air, terrors from heaven, and seasons contrary to the accustomed order of times, wars, famine, pestilences, earthquakes t in divers places. Yet these things will not come in our days, but after our days they will all ensue. You therefore, if you observe any of these things occurring in your land, by no means let your mind be troubled, since these signs of the end of the world are sent beforehand for this purpose, that we should be solicitous about our souls, suspectful of the hour of death, and in our good deeds be found prepared for the coming Judge. These things, glorious son, we have now briefly spoken of, that, when the Christian faith shall have been extended in your kingdom, our speech to you may also extend itself to greater length, and that we may be pleased to speak so much the more fully as joy multiplies itself in our heart for the perfected conversion of your nation.

I have sent you some small presents, which to you will not be small, when received by you as of the benediction of the blessed Apostle Peter. And so may Almighty God guard and perfect in you the grace which He has begun, and extend your life here through courses of many years, and after a long life receive you in the congregation of the heavenly country. May heavenly grace keep your Excellency safe, sir son (domine fili). Given this 10th day of the Kalends of July, the 19th year of the empire of our most pious lord Mauricius Tiberius Augustus, the 18th year after the consulship of the same our lord, Indiction 4.

# Epistle LXVII.

TO Quiricus, Bishop, &C. Gregory to Quiricus, Bishop, and the other catholic bishops in Hiberia . Since to charity nothing is afar off, let those who are divided in place be joined by letter. The bearer of these presents, coming to the Church of the blessed Peter, Prince of the apostles, asserted that he had received letters for us from your Fraternity, and had lost them, with other things also, in the city of Jerusalem. In them, as he says, you were desirous of enquiring with regard to priests and people who have been bewildered in the error of Nestorian heresy, when they return to the Catholic Church which is the mother of all the elect, whether they should be baptized, or joined to the bowels of the same mother Church by confession only of the one true faith.

And indeed we have learnt from the ancient institution of the Fathers that whosoever among heretics are baptized in the name of the Trinity, when they return to holy Church, may be recalled to the bosom of mother Church either by unction of chrism, or by imposition of hands, or by profession of the faith only. Hence the West reconciles Arians to the holy Catholic Church by imposition of hands, but the East by the unction of holy chrism. But Monophysites and others are received by a true confession only, because holy baptism, which they have received among heretics, then acquires in them the power of cleansing, when either the former receive the Holy Spirit by imposition of hands, or the latter are united to the bowels of the holy and universal Church by reason of their confession of the true faith. Those heretics, however, who are not baptized in the name of the Trinity, such as the Bonosiaci and the Cataphrygae, because the former do not believe in Christ the Lord, and the latter with a perverse understanding believe a certain bad man, Montanus, to be the Holy Spirit, like unto whom are many others;-these, when they come to holy Church, are baptized, because what they received while in their error, not being in the name of the Holy Trinity, was not baptism. Nor can this be called an iteration of baptism, which, as has been said, had not been given in the name of the Trinity.

But the Nestorians, since they are baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity-though darkened by the error of their heresy in that, after the manner of Jewish unbelief, they believe not the Incarnation of the Only-begotten-when they come to the Holy Catholic Church, are to be taught, by firm holding and profession of the true faith, to believe in one and the same Son of God and man, our Lord God Jesus Christ, the same existing in Divinity before the

ages, and the same made man in the end of the ages, because The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (Joh. i. 14).

But we say that the Word was made flesh not by losing what He was, but by taking what He was not. For in the mystery of His Incarnation the Only-begotten of the Father increased what was ours, but diminished not what was His. Therefore the Word and the flesh is one Person, as He says Himself, No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven (Joh. iii. 14). He Who is the Son of God in heaven was the Son of man who spoke on earth. Hence John says, We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding ( 1 Job. v. 20). And as to what understanding He has given us, he straightway added, That we may know the true God. Whom in this place does he mean as the true God but the Father Almighty? But, as to what he conceives also of the Almighty Son, he added, And that we may be in his true Son Jesus Christ. Lo, he says that the Father is the true God, and that Jesus Christ is His true Son. And what he conceives this true Son to be he shews more plainly; This is the true God, and eternal life. If, then, according to the error of Nestorius the Word were one and the man Jesus Christ were another, he who is true man would not be the true God and eternal life.

But the Only-begotten Son, the Word before the Ages, was made man. He is, then, the true God and eternal life. Certainly, when the holy Virgin was about to conceive Him, and heard the angel speaking to her, she said, Behold the hand-maid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word (Luke i. 38). And, when she had conceived Him, and went to Elizabeth her kinswoman, at once she heard, Whence am I worthy that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Lo, the same Virgin is called both the handmaid and the mother of the Lord. For she is the handmaid of the Lord, because the Word before the Ages, the Only-begotten, is equal to the Father; but the mother, because in her womb from the Holy Spirit and of her flesh He was made man. Nor is she the handmaid of one and the mother of another, because, when the Only-begotten of God, existing before the ages, of her womb was made man, by an inscrutable miracle she became both the handmaid of man by reason of the divinity and the mother of the Word by reason of the flesh. It was not that the flesh was first conceived in the womb of the Virgin, and the divinity afterwards came into the flesh; but that as soon as the Word came into the womb, immediately the Word, retaining the excellence of His own nature, was made flesh.

And the Only-begotten Son of God, through the womb of the Virgin, was born a perfect man, that is, in verity of flesh and of rational soul. Whence also He is called Anointed above his fellows, as the Psalmist says, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Ps. xliv. 8) . For He is anointed with oil, that is to say with the gift of the Holy Spirit. But He was anointed above His fellows, because all we men first exist as sinners, and afterwards are sanctified through the unction of the Holy Spirit. But He Who, existing as God before the ages, was conceived as man through the Holy Spirit in the Virgin's womb at the end of the ages, was there anointed by the same Spirit, even where He was conceived. Nor was He first conceived and afterwards anointed; but to be conceived by

the Holy Spirit of the flesh of the Virgin was itself to be anointed by the Holy Spirit. This truth, then, concerning His nativity let all who are brought back from the perverse error of Nestorius confess before the holy congregation of your Fraternity, anathematising the same Nestorius with all his followers, and all other heresies. The venerable synods also which the universal Church receives let them promise to receive and venerate;

and let your Holiness without any hesitation receive them in your assembly, allowing them to retain their own orders, in order that, while you both carefully sift the secrets of their hearts, and teach them through true knowledge the right things they ought to hold, and in gentleness make no difficulty or contradiction with them with respect to their own orders, you may snatch them from the mouth of the ancient foe; and that the retribution of eternal glory with Almighty God may increase to you the more as you gather together many who may glory with you in the Lord without end. Now may the Holy Trinity keep you in its protection while you pray for us, and grant you in its love still more manifold gifts.

[In Colbert. and Collect. Paul, "Given on the tenth day of the Kalends of Jul. Indict. 4."]

# Epistle LXVIII.

(TO Virgilius, Bishop OF Arelate Arles.) Gregory to Virgilius, &c. What affection should be bestowed on brethren who come to us of their own accord is apparent from the fact that they are usually invited to visit us for the sake of charity. And so, if our common brother the bishop Augustine should chance to come to you, let your Love, as is fit, so affectionately and sweetly receive him as both to refresh him with the boon of your consolation and teach others also how fraternal charity should be cultivated. And, since it often happens that those who are placed at a distance learn first from others of things that require amendment, if he should perchance intimate to your Fraternity any faults in priests or others, do you, in concert with him, enquire into them with all subtle investigation. And do you both shew yourselves so strict and solicitous against things that offend God and provoke Him to wrath that, for the amendment of others, both vengeance may smite the guilty and false report not afflict the innocent. God keep thee safe, most reverend brother. Given the 10th day of the Kalends of July, the 19th year of the empire of our most pious lord Mauricius Tiberius Augustus, the 18th year after the same our lord's consulship, Indiction 4.

# Epistle LXIX.

TO Brunichild, Queen OF The Franks. Gregory to Brunichild, &c.

Since it is written, Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin maketh peoples miserable (Prov. xiv. 34), a kingdom is then believed to he stable when a fault that is known of is quickly amended. Now it has come to our ears by the report of many, what we cannot mention without exceeding affliction of heart, that certain priests in those parts live so immodestly and wickedly that it is a shame for us to hear of it and lamentable to tell it. Lest, then, now that the rumour of this iniquity has extended as far as here, the wrong doing of others should smite either our soul or your kingdom with the dart of its sin, we ought to arise with ardour to avenge these things, lest the wickedness of a few should be the perdition of many. For bad priests are the cause of the ruin of a people. For who may offer himself as an intercessor for a people's sins, if the priest who ought to have prayed for it commits more grievous offences? But, since those whose place it is to prosecute these things are stirred neither by care to enquire into them nor by zeal to punish them, let letters from you be addressed to us, and let us send over, if you order it, a person with the assent of your authority, who together with other priests may search into these things thoroughly, and amend them according to the will of God.

For indeed what we speak of is not a thing to be winked at, since one who can amend a fault and neglects to do so without doubt makes himself partaker in it. See therefore to your own soul, see to your grandsons, whom you wish to reign happily, see to the provinces; and, before our Creator stretches out His hand to smite, take most earnest thought for the correction of this wickedness, lest He afterwards smite by so much the more sharply as He now waits longer and more mercifully. Know moreover that you will offer a great sacrifice of expiation to our God, if you cut off speedily from your territories the infection of so great a sin.

# Epistle LXXVI.

TO Mellitus, Abbot. Gregory to Mellitus, Abbot in France .

Since the departure of our congregation, which, is with thee, we have been in a state of great suspense from having heard nothing of the success of your journey. But when Almighty God shall have brought you to our most reverend brother the bishop Augustine, tell him that I have long been considering with myself about the case of the Angli; to wit, that the temples of idols in that nation should not be destroyed, but that the idols themselves that are in them should be. Let blessed water be prepared, and sprinkled in these temples, and altars constructed, and relics deposited, since, if these same temples are well built, it is needful that they should be transferred from the worship of idols to the service of the true God; that, when the people themselves see that these temples are not destroyed, they may put away error from their heart, and, knowing and adoring the true God, may have recourse with the more familiarity to the places they have been accustomed to. And, since they are wont to kill many oxen in sacrifice to demons, they should have also some solemnity of this kind in a changed form, so that on the day of dedication, or on the anniversaries of the holy martyrs whose relics are deposited there, they may make for themselves tents of the branches of trees around these temples that have been changed into churches, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasts.

Nor let them any longer sacrifice animals to the devil, but slay animals to the praise of God for their own eating, and return thanks to the Giver of all for their fulness, so that, while some joys are reserved to them outwardly, they may be able the more easily to incline their minds to inward joys. For it is undoubtedly impossible to cut away everything at once from hard hearts, since one who strives to ascend to the highest place must needs rise by steps or paces, and not by leaps. Thus to the people of Israel in Egypt the Lord did indeed make Himself known; but still He reserved to them in His own worship the use of the sacrifices which they were accustomed to offer to the devil, enjoining them to immolate animals in sacrifice to Himself; to the end that, their hearts being changed, they should omit some things in the sacrifice and retain others, so that, though the animals were the same as what they had been accustomed to offer, nevertheless, as they immolated them to God and not to idols, they should be no longer the same sacrifices. This then it is necessary for thy

Love to say to our aforesaid brother, that he, being now in that country, may consider well how he should arrange all things. God keep thee safe, most beloved son.

Given this 15th day of the Kalends of July, the 19th year of the empire of our most pious lord Mauricius Tiberius Augustus, the 18th year after the consulship of the same our lord, Indiction 4.

# Epistle LXXVII.

To Boniface, Guardian (Defensorem), in Corsica. Gregory to Boniface, &c. Thy experience is not free from blame, in that, knowing Aleria and Adjacium, cities of Corsica, to have been long without bishops, thou hast delayed admonishing their clergy and people to choose for themselves priests. But, since they ought to be no longer without rulers of their own, hasten thou, on receiving this authority, to exhort the clergy and people of these cities severally, that they disagree not among themselves, but that each city with one consent choose for itself a priest to be consecrated. And, when they have made their decree, let such person as shall have been elected come to us. But, if they should be unwilling to come to an unanimous decision, being divided in their choice between two persons, let both in like manner come to us, the decree having been made in the usual way, that, after enquiry made into their lives and characters, the one who may appear to be most fit may be ordained. Seeing, moreover, that many poor persons there are said to be oppressed and to suffer prejudice, let thy Experience give heed to this, and not allow them to be unjustly aggrieved; but so endeavour thyself that neither they who take action be unreasonably hindered nor those against whom action is taken be in danger of sustaining damage unjustly.

Furthermore, it has reached our ears that some of the clergy, thou being on the spot, are held in custody by laymen. If this is so, know that the blame will be imputed to thee, since, if thou wert a man, it would not have been the case. And accordingly thou must needs pay attention in future so that thou permit not the like to be done; but that, if any one should have a cause of complaint against a clerk, he resort to his bishop. And, if perchance the latter should be suspected, a commissioner must be deputed by him-or, if this too should be objected to by the plaintiff, by thy Experience,-who may compel the parties to choose arbitrators by mutual consent. And whatever may be decided by them, let it be in all ways so carried out, with due observance of law, by thy own or the bishop's care, that there may be no occasion for them to weary themselves with disputes.

# Epistle LXXVIII.

To Barbara and Antonina . Gregory to Barbara, &c. On receiving your epistles, I was in all manner of ways delighted to hear of your well being, and I entreat Almighty God that He would guard you by His protection from malignant spirits in thought, and from perverse men, and from all contrariety; and that He would, with the grace of His fear, settle you in unions worthy of you, and cause us all to rejoice in your settlement . But do you, most sweet daughters, rest your hope on His help, and, being always under the shadow of His defence, both by praying and by well doing, escape the plots of bad men. For, whatever human comforts or adversities there may be, there are none, unless either His grace protects or His displeasure troubles you. Rest therefore your hope on no one among men, but bind your whole soul to trust in Almighty God. While we sleep, then, He will protect you, of whom it is written, Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep (Ps. cxx. 4) .

As to your saying that you are in haste to approach the threshhold of the blessed Peter, Prince of the apostles, I wish exceedingly, and wait with fervent desire, to see you in his church united to husbands well worthy of you; that so both you may obtain some little comfort from me, and I no little joy from your presence. I have also commended your causes to thy most reverend brother the bishop John , and to Romanus the guardian (defensori), that under God they may accomplish what they have begun. Your present of two racanae , which you sent me word were your work, I accepted gladly. But yet know ye that I did not believe the word you sent me. For you are seeking praise from the work of others, seeing that you have perhaps never yet put hand to spindle. Nor yet does this circumstance distress me, since I wish you to love the reading of Holy Scripture, that, so long as Almighty God shall unite you to husbands, you may know how you should live and how you should manage your houses.

# Introduction

In the Sixth Indiction, and the Thirteenth Year From His Ordination.

# Epistle I.

To the Roman Citizens. Gregory, servant of the servants of God, to his most beloved sons the Roman citizens. It has come to my ears that certain men of perverse spirit have sown among you some things that are wrong and opposed to the holy faith, so as to forbid any work being done on the Sabbath day. What else can I call these but preachers of Antichrist, who, when he comes, will cause the Sabbath day as well as the Lord's day to be kept free from all work. For, because he pretends to die and rise again, he wishes the Lord's day to be had in reverence; and, because he compels the people to judaize that he may bring back the outward rite of the law, and subject the per-tidy of the Jews to himself, he wishes the Sabbath to be observed. For this which is said by the prophet, Ye shall bring in no burden through your gates on the Sabbath day (Jerem. xvii. 24), could be held to as long as it was lawful for the law to be observed according to the letter. But after that the grace of Almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ has appeared, the commandments of the law which were spoken figuratively cannot be kept according to the letter. For, if any one says that this about the Sabbath is to be kept, he must needs say that carnal sacrifices are to be offered: he must say too that the commandment about the circumcision of the body is still to be retained. But let him hear the Apostle Paul saying in opposition to him, If ye be circumcised, Christ profiteth you nothing (Galat. v. 2).

We therefore accept spiritually, and hold spiritually, this which is written about the Sabbath. For the Sabbath means rest. But we have the true Sabbath in our Redeemer Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. And whoso acknowledges the light of faith in Him, if he draws the sins of concupiscence through his eyes into his soul, he introduces burdens through the gates on the Sabbath day. We introduce, then, no burden through the gates on the Sabbath day if we draw no weights of sin through the bodily senses to the soul. For we read that the same our Lord and Redeemer did many works on the Sabbath day, so that he reproved the Jews, saying, Which of you doth not loose his ox or his ass on the Sabbath day, and lead him away to watering (Luke xiii. 15)? If, then, the very Truth in person commanded that the Sabbath should not be kept according to the letter, whoso keeps the rest of the Sabbath according to the letter of the law, whom else does he contradict but the Truth himself?

Another thing also has been brought to my knowledge; namely that it has been preached to you by perverse men that no one ought to wash on the Lord's day. And indeed if any

one craves to wash for luxury and pleasure, neither on any other day do we allow this to be done. But if it is for bodily need, neither on the Lord's day do we forbid it. For it is written, No man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it (Ephes. v. 29). And again it is written, Make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof (Rom. xiii. 14). He, then, who forbids provision for the flesh in the lusts thereof certainly allows it in the needs thereof. For, if it is sin to wash the body on the Lord's day, neither ought the face to be washed on that day. But if this is allowed for a part of the body, why is it denied for the whole body when need requires? On the Lord's day, however, there should be a cessation of earthly labour, and attention given in every way to prayers, so that if anything is done negligently during the six days, it may be expiated by supplications on the day of the Lord's resurrection.

These things, most dear sons, being endowed with sure constancy and right faith, observe; despise the words of foolish men, and give not easy belief to all that you hear of having been said by them; but weigh it in the scale of reason, so that, while in firm stability you resist the wind of error you may be able to attain to the solid joys of the heavenly kingdom. [In two mss., one Colbert, and Vatic. F., "mense Septembri, indict. 6."]

# Epistle V.

To Etherius, Bishop of Lugdunum (Lyons). Gregory to Etherius, Bishop.

Although what we say is very distressing to us, and fraternal compassion rather moves us to weep than allows us to lay down anything concerning the things we have heard of, yet solicitude for the government undertaken by us pricks our heart with an urgent spur to see with great care to the good of churches, and to arrange what should be done before their interests might possibly suffer irretrievably. It has come, then, to our ears from the report of certain persons that an affection of the head has so befallen a certain bishop that it is a matter of groaning and weeping to hear of what he is wont to do under alienation of mind. Lest, therefore, while the shepherd is sick, the flock should be exposed to be torn by the teeth of the lyer-in-wait (which God forbid), or the interests of the Church itself should suffer irretrievably, it is necessary for us to treat the case with cautious provision, And so, since during the life of a bishop, whom unadvoidable infirmity and not crime withdraws from his office, no reason allows another to be ordained in his place except on his resignation , let him, if he is accustomed to have intervals of sanity, himself make petition, declaring that he is no longer equal to this ministry owing to subversion of his intellectual faculties by infirmity, and let him request that another be ordained in his place.

Which being done, let another who may be worthy be solemnly consecrated bishop in his place, by the election of all; yet so that, as long as life shall retain the said bishop in this world, his due expenses be supplied to him by the same Church. If, however, he at no time recovers the faculties of a sound mind, a trustworthy person of approved life must be chosen, who may be fit for the government of the Church, take thought for the benefit of souls, restrain the unquiet under the bond of discipline, take care of ecclesiastical property, and exhibit himself in all respects ripe and efficient. And also, should he survive the bishop who is now sick, he should be consecrated in his place.

But as to ordinations of presbyters or deacons, or of any other order, if cause requires any to be made in that Church, know that this is to be reserved to thy Fraternity, to the end that, it being in thy diocese, thou mayest enquire concerning the life, manners, and conduct of him who is chosen to such office. And if thou shouldest be satisfied, and there is nothing in him liable to the censure of canonical strictness, let him attain to his destined order not otherwise than through ordination by thee. Let thy Fraternity then, so proceed, and

so order these things with vigilant provision, that the Church of God may no longer suffer from any neglect, and that thou mayest warn thy fellow-priests, not only by word but also by example, to have a care laudably for venerable places.

# Epistle VI.

To Brunichild, Queen of the Franks . Gregory to Brunichild, &c. Among other excellencies in you this holds the chief place beyond the rest, that in the midst of the waves of this world, which are wont with turbulent vexation to confound the minds of rulers, you so bring back your heart to the love of divine worship and to providing for the quiet of venerable places as if no other care troubled you. Whence, since conduct of this kind on the part of potentates is wont to be a great defence to subjects, we declare the nation of the Franks happy beyond other nations, having been accounted worthy to have a queen thus endowed with all good qualities. On learning from the information contained in your letters that you have built the Church of Saint Martin in the suburbs of Augustodunum (Autun), and a monastery for hand-maidens of God, and also a hospital in the same city, we rejoiced greatly, and returned thanks to Almighty God, who stimulates the sincerity of your heart to the doing of these things. In this case, that we may be held to some degree sharers in your good deeds, we have granted privileges according to your wish, to those places for the quiet and protection of those who live in them; nor have we borne to defer even in the least degree our embracing of your Excellency's desires.

Furthermore, addressing you in the first place with the greeting of paternal charity, we inform you that to our illustrious sons, but your servants and legates, Burgoaldus and Varmaricarius, we have granted a private interview in accordance with what you wrote to us; and they have disclosed to us in detail all that they said they had been charged with. It will be our care in time to come to inform your Excellency of whatever is done with regard to these things. For, as for us, whatever is possible, whatever is profitable, and tends to the settlement of peace between you and the republic, we desire, under God, with the utmost devotion, that it should be accomplished. As to Mennas, our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop, after we had enquired into what had been said about him, and found him in no way culpable, and he having made satisfaction under oath before the most sacred body of the blessed apostle Peter, and so proved himself to be unaffected by what had been objected against his reputation, we have allowed him to return to his post purged and acquitted, since, as it was right, if he were in any respect guilty, that we should punish his fault canonically, so it was not right when he had the support of innocence, that we should detain him longer, or any way distress him.

Moreover, with respect to a certain bishop who, as the aforesaid magnificent men have told us, is prevented by infirmity of the head from administering his office, we have written to our brother and fellow-bishop Etherius , that if he should have intervals of freedom from this infirmity, he should make petition, declaring that he is not competent to fill his own place, and requesting that another be ordained to his Church. For during the life of a bishop, whom not his own fault but sickness, withdraws from the administration of his office, the sacred canons by no means allow another to be ordained in his place. But, if he at no time recovers the exercise of a sound mind, a person should be sought adorned with good life and conversation, who may be able both to take charge of souls, and look with salutary control after the causes and interests of the same church; and he should be such as may succeed to the bishop's place in case of his surviving him. But, if there are any to be promoted to a sacred order, or to any clerical ministry, we have ordained that the matter is to be reserved and announced to our aforesaid most reverend brother Etherius, provided it belong to his diocese , so that, enquiry having then been made, if the persons are subject to no fault which the sacred canons denounce, he himself may ordain them. Let, then, the care of your Excellency conjoin itself with our ordering, to the end that the interests of the Church, which you have exceedingly at heart, may not suffer damage, and that increase of reward may accrue to the good deeds of your Excellency.

Having been asked likewise concerning a certain bigamist whether he might be admitted to a sacred order, we have, according to canonical rule, altogether forbidden it. For God forbid that in your times, in which you do so many pious and religious things, you should allow anything to be done contrary to ecclesiastical ordinance. Moreover the aforesaid magnificent men, our sons, having delivered us a schedule, have requested among other things, what they said had been enjoined on them by your order, that such a person may be sent from us into Gaul as may, on the assembling of a synod, correct under the guidance of Almighty God whatever has been perpetrated against the most sacred canons. Herein we recognize the care of your Glory, how you take thought for the life of the soul and the stability of your kingdom, seeing that, fearing our Redeemer, and observing His precepts in all ways, you act in this case also so that the government of your kingdom may long subsist, and that after long courses of years you also may pass from an earthly to a heavenly kingdom. At a fitting time, if what we have said should be pleasing to God, we will take care to fulfil the venerable desires of your Excellency.

We, then, for the defence of the places about which your Excellency has written to us have been careful to order all things as you wish. But, lost haply our decrees should be suppressed at any time by the governors of those places on the ground that they are found to be interdicted from doing certain things, this same ordinance must be inserted among the public acts, that so it may be kept in your royal archives as well as in ours. May Almighty God ever keep your Excellency in His tear, and so fulfil your desires and those of our sons the most excellent kings your grandsons, through the intercession of the blessed Peter, Prince of the apostles, to whom you commend them, as to grant you to have stable joy in their continual welfare, as you desire. Given in the month of November, Indiction 6.

# Epistle VII.

To Theoderic, King of the Franks . Gregory to Theoderic, &c. We have received with joy your written address to us indicating your health and safety, and we thereby perceive that you so transcend your age in prudence as to make it evident that it is for the happiness of the nation of the Franks that the government of royal dominion has been committed by the favour of heavenly grace to your Excellency. And this in you among other things is enough to call for praise and admiration, that in such things as you know that our daughter your most excellent grandmother desires for the love of Almighty God, in these you make haste most earnestly to lend your aid, so that thereby you may reign both happily here, and in a future life with the angels . Seeing, then, that this comes, by the gift of God, from great discreetness of judgment, we have so speedily and gladly fulfilled what your Excellency desires as to show by the celerity of our execution how much your good deeds have pleased us.

Furthermore, greeting you with paternal sweetness, we inform you that all the matters which you enjoined on the illustrious men your servants Burgoaldus and Varmaricarius, our sons, to be transacted with us have been disclosed to us in a private interview. And we praised you greatly, that you both attend wisely, as becomes you, to the present, and also make haste so to provide for security in the future by means of a lasting peace between you and the Republic that, being made one, you may extend the stability of your kingdom salutarily to all time. With regard to this we will announce to you in time to come what it may please God to order. For, as to us, whatever is proved to be advantageous and conducive to peace, we desire and strive that it should be brought to pass. The one thing is that, as our will is with regard to what is expedient, so should be the will of God, without whom we can do nothing. May the Holy Trinity make you to advance always in His fear, and so dispose your heart in moderation well-pleasing to Him as both to grant to your subjects now joy from you, and to you from Himself joy without end hereafter.

# Epistle VIII.

To Senator, Abbot. Gregory to Senator, presbyter and abbot of a hospital (or guest-house, xenodochii). When the hearts of Catholic Kings, &c. [See the epistle following Ep. ix.), with which this agrees throughout, as does also Epistle X. to Lupo, except for the different designations of the persons addressed and places referred to, and the addition in epistles VIII. and IX., after the words "or absolve her (him) as innocent," of the following paragraph.] By a similar definition, according to the desire of the founders, we decree that none of those who may in future have been ordained as abbot or presbyter to the same guest-house and monastery shall dare by any secret scheming whatever to take the office of the Episcopate, unless he has been first deprived of the office of abbot, and another has been substituted in his place; lest, by consuming the property of the guest-house or monastery in unfair expenditure, he should cause most serious pressure of want to the poor and strangers, or to others who live from its resources. Moreover, we forbid that the bishop have licence, without the consent of the abbot and presbyter, to remove from the same place any monk for promotion to an ecclesiastical order, or for any cause whatever, lest usurpation in this regard should be carried to such an extent that places which have to be built up by the acquisition of men be destroyed by their removal.

# Epistle IX.

To Thalassia, Abbess. Gregory to Thalassia, &c. When the hearts of catholic kings are so inflamed with ardent desire, by divine grace preventing them, as of their own accord to demand the things that pontifical admonitions should provoke them to, such things are to be granted with cheerful and joyful mind all the more as the very things which they desire ought to have been demanded of them, had they been unwilling to do them. Accordingly, in accordance with the letters of our most Excellent royal children, Brunichild and her grandson Theoderic, to the monastery of Saint Mary, where there is constituted a congregation of handmaidens of God, founded in the city of Augustodunum by the bishop Siagrius of reverend memory, over which you preside, we indulge, grant and confirm by the decree of our present authority privileges as follows;-Ordaining that no king, no bishop, no one endowed with any dignity whatsoever, or any one else whatsoever, shall have power, under show of any cause or occasion whatsoever, to diminish or take away, or apply to his own uses, or grant as if to other pious uses for excuse of his own avarice, anything of what has been given to the same monastery by the above-written king's own children, or of what shall in future be bestowed on it by any others whatever of their own possessions. But all things that have been there offered, or may come to be offered, we will to be possessed by thee, as well as by those who shall succeed thee in thy office and place, from the present time inviolate and without disturbance, provided thou apply them in all ways to the uses of those for whose sustentation and government they have been granted.

We also appoint that on the death of an abbess of the aforesaid monastery no other shall be ordained by means of any kind of craftiness of secret scheming, but such a one as the king of the same province, with the consent of the nuns, shall have chosen in the fear of God, and provided for the ordination of. Under this head we also add, in order that we may exclude all place for avarice, that no one of the kings, no one of the priests, or any one else in person or by proxy, shall dare to accept anything in gold, or in any kind of consideration whatever, for the ordination of such abbess, or for any causes whatever pertaining to this monastery, and that the same abbess presume not to give anything on account of her ordination, lest by such occasion what is offered or has been offered to places of piety should be consumed. And, inasmuch as many occasions for the deception of religious women are sought out, as is said, in your parts by bad men, we ordain that an abbess of this same monastery shall in no wise be deprived or deposed unless in case of criminality requiring it. Hence it is necessary

that if any complaint of this kind should arise against her, not only the bishop of the city of Augustodunum should examine the case, but that he should call to his assistance six other of his fellow-bishops, and so fully investigate the matter, to the end that, all judging with one accord, a strict canonical decision may either smite her if guilty, or absolve her if innocent.

All these things, therefore, which the paper of this our precept and decree contains we decree to be observed in perpetuity for thee as well as for all who may succeed thee in the same rank and place, and for all whom they may concern. Moreover, if any one, whether king, priest, judge, or secular person, being aware of this our written constitution, should attempt to contravene it, let him be deprived of the dignity of his power and honour, and know that he stands guilty before divine judgment for the iniquity that he has perpetrated. And, unless he either restore what he has wrongfully taken away, or lament what he has done unlawfully with fit penitence, let him be debarred from the most sacred body and blood of our God and Lord, the Redeemer Jesus Christ, and be subject to strict vengeance in the eternal judgment. But the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be to all who observe what is just to this same place, to the end that they may both receive here the fruit of their well-doing, and find the rewards of eternal peace at the hands of the strict Judge.

# Epistle X.

To Lupo, Abbot. Gregory to Lupo, Presbyter and Abbot. When the hearts of catholic kings, &c.

# Epistle XII.

To Paschasius, Bishop of Neapolis (Naples) Gregory to Paschasius, &c. Those who with pure intent desire to bring to the true faith aliens from the Christian religion should study kindness, and not asperity; lest such as reason rendered with smoothness might have appealed to should be driven for off by opposition. For whosoever act otherwise, and under cover of such intention would suspend people from their accustomed observance of their own rites, are proved to be intent on their own cause rather than on God's. To wit, the Jews dwelling in Naples have complained to us, asserting that certain persons are endeavouring unreasonably to drive them from certain solemnities of their holidays, so that it may not be lawful for them to observe the solemnities of their festivals, as up to this time since long ago it has been lawful for them and their forefathers to keep and observe them. Now, if this is true, these people appear to be taking trouble to no purpose. For what is the use, when even such long unaccustomed prohibition is of no avail for their faith and conversion? Or why should we lay down rules for the Jews as to how they should observe their ceremonies, if we cannot thereby win them? We should therefore so act that, being rather appealed to by reason and kindness they may wish to follow us, and not to fly from us; and that proving to them from their own Scriptures what we tell them, we may be able, with God's help, to convert them to the bosom of Mother Church.

Wherefore let thy Fraternity, so far as may be possible, with the help of God, kindle them to conversion, and not allow them any more to be disquieted with respect to their solemnities; but let them have free licence to observe and celebrate all their festivals and holidays, even as hitherto both they and their forefathers for a long time back have kept and held them.

# Epistle XVIII.

To Certain Bishops of Sicily. Gregory to Leo, Secundinus, John, Donus, Lucidus, Trajan, bishops of Sicily. Even as we are admonished through the speech of the apostles to impart one to another spiritual aids,-so, in matters that by God's ordering we may have to settle in virtue of the government imposed on us for administration of the affairs of the poor, it is fit that priestly succour be not wanting. Accordingly in sending the bearer of these presents, Adrian our Chartularius , to govern the patrimony of our Church, to wit in the Syracusan district we have thought it necessary to commend him to your Fraternity, that, wherein custom may demand it, you may afford him your succour, to the end that, while he is supported by you with bodily aid for doing his work, and with the spiritual aid of your prayers for carrying out with facility whatever he may undertake, he may be able, God also working with him, to accomplish prosperously what has been by us enjoined on him. But, as for yourselves, you should so acquit yourselves in good works before the face of Almighty God that there be not found in your doings anything that may be smitten by the judgment of God, or for which you may be accused by any man whatever lying in wait against you. For we have charged our aforesaid Chartularius that, if he should come to know of any inordinate doings on the part of our most reverend brethren the bishops, he should first himself take them to task by private and modest admonition; and, that, if such things are not amended, he should inform us of them speedily.

Furthermore, it has been reported to us that in the times of our predecessor of holy memory it was arranged by the deacon Servusdei, who then had charge of the ecclesiastical patrimony, that the priests of your several dioceses, when you go forth to seal infants , should not be immoderately burdened. For a certain sum had been fixed, and this, as I hear, with your consent, to be given by the same priests for the services of the clerks (clericorum). And this, which was then approved of, is said to be by no means kept to now. Wherefore I admonish your Fraternity to endeavour not to be burdensome to your subjects, and, if they have any grievances, to abate them, seeing also that you ought not to have departed from what had once been determined. For you will be seeing to your own interest both in the future and the present life, if you keep those who have been committed to you free from grievance.

# Epistle XXII.

To Rusticiana, Patrician Lady. Gregory to Rusticiana, &c. As often as any one comes to us from the royal city, we take care to enquire of your bodily health; but, my sins being the cause, I always hear what I am sorry to hear, since, frail and weak as you already are, it is reported that the pains of gout still grow upon you. But I pray the Almighty Lord that whatever befalls your body may be ordered to the health of your soul, and that temporal scourges may prepare for you eternal rest, and that through the pains which have an end He may grant you joys without end. As for me, I live in such a state of groaning and in the midst of such occupations that it irks me to have arrived at these days which now I spend, and my only consolation is the expectation of death. Wherefore I beg you to pray for me, to the end that I may be soon released from this prison of the flesh, so as to be no longer tormented by such great pains.

Furthermore, I have to inform you that a certain person has come here, Beator by name, who gives himself out as comes privatarum , and is doing many things against all, but principally against your Excellency's people, or those of your most noble granddaughters, as though he were making enquiry into matters of public import. And we indeed will not permit him to act wrongfully, but neither can we stand in the way of public interests. Do you therefore treat as you can with the most pious princes, that they may countermand any wrongful proceeding on his part. For neither is the public interest served by any kind of turmoil, nor does he appear to reclaim anything of great amount. I beg that my most sweet son the lord Strategius be greeted in my behalf, whom may Almighty God nourish for Himself and for you, and ever comfort you by His own grace and by the young lord's life. Further, what should I write to you concerning your return hither, knowing as you do how much I desire it? But, when I look to the obligations of the business that detains you, I am in despair; and so I implore the Creator of all that, wherever you are, and wherever you may be, He would protect you by the extension of His right hand, and preserve you from all evil.

# Epistle XXVI.

To Anthemius, Subdeacon. Gregory to Anthemius, Subdeacon of Campania.

It has reached our ears that our brother and fellow-bishop Paschasius is so idle and negligent in all ways that he is in no respect recognised as bishop; and that so neither his own Church, nor the monasteries, nor any, whether the sons of the Church , or the oppressed poor, are conscious of any earnestness of love on his part towards them; nor does he afford any help in what is just to those who. supplicate him, and (what is a still more serious thing to say) he cannot bear on any account to receive the counsels of the wise and of such as admire what is right, so that he might at any rate learn from another what he cannot attend to of himself; but, passing over the things that pertain to a pastor's charge, he occupies himself with his whole attention unprofitably in the building of ships. Whence, as is reported, it has come to pass that he has already lost four hundred solidi, or more. This also is added to his faults, that he is said to go down daily to the sea with one or two clerics in so mean a guise as to be the talk among his own people, and to scent to strangers so vile and despicable that he is judged to have nothing in him of the character or venerableness of a bishop. If this be so, know that it is not without fault of thine, who hast delayed to rebuke and restrain him, as is fit.

Seeing, then, that all this not only discredits him, but also evidently brings reproach on the office of the priesthood, we desire thee to summon him for this thing before other priests , or some of his noble sons , and exhort him that, shaking off the vice of sluggishness, he be not idle, but vigilant in the care of his Church and of the monasteries, exhibit fatherly charity to his sons, stand up for the defence of the poor with discretion in cases that are commended by justice, and receive gladly the counsels of the wise, to the end that both that city may be comforted by his solicitude, and he himself succeed in covering the faults of his idleness. If however, as we do not believe will be the case, after this our exhortation he should venture to be negligent after his accustomed manner, he must by all means be sent to us, that in our presence he may learn what it becomes a priest to do, and how to do it, after the fear of God. Given in the month of March, Indiction 6.

# Epistle XXVII.

To Anthemius, Subdeacon. Gregory to Anthemius, Subdeacon of Campania. As often as we hear things of our brethren and fellow-bishops that shew them to be to blame and cause us sadness, necessity compels us in no slight degree to take thought for their amendment. Seeing, then, that it has been reported to us that the bishops of Campania are so negligent that, unmindful of the dignity and character of their office, neither towards their Churches nor towards their sons do they shew the care of paternal vigilance, nor concern themselves about monasteries, nor bestow their protection on the oppressed and the poor, we therefore enjoin thee and hereby give thee authority to call them together, and strictly admonish them in virtue of our mandate, that they be not any longer idle, but so evince their priestly zeal and solicitude, and be so vigilant in what it becomes them justly and according unto God to do, that no murmur concerning them may exasperate us any more. If, however, thou shouldest find any one of them to be negligent after this being done, send him to us without allowing any excuse, that by regular exercise of discipline they may be made to feel how serious a matter it is to refuse to be corrected in things that are reprehensible and exceedingly to be condemned.

# Epistle XXXI.

To Phocas, Emperor . Gregory to Phocas Augustus.

Glory to God in the highest who, according as it is written, changes times, and transfers kingdoms, seeing that He has made apparent to all what He vouchsafed to speak by His prophet, That the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will (Dan. iv. 17). For in the incomprehensible dispensation of Almighty God there are alternate controlments of mortal life; and sometimes, when the sins of many are to be smitten, one is raised up through whose hardness the necks of subjects may be bowed down under the yoke of tribulation, as in our affliction we have long had proof. But sometimes, when the merciful God has decreed to refresh the mourning hearts of many with His consolation, He advances one to the summit of government, and through the bowels of His mercy infuses the grace of exultation in Him into the minds of all. In which abundance of exultation we believe that we shall speedily be confirmed, who rejoice that the Benignity of your Piety has arrived at imperial supremacy. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad (Ps. xcv. 11); and let the whole people of the republic, hitherto afflicted exceedingly, grow cheerful for your benignant deeds. Let the proud minds of enemies be subdued under the yoke of your domination. Let the crushed and depressed spirits of subjects be revived by your mercy: let the power of heavenly grace make you terrible to your enemies, your piety kind to your subjects.

Let the whole republic have rest in your most happy times, the pillage of peace under colour of processes at law being exposed. Let plottings about wills cease, and benevolences exacted by force. Let secure possession of their Own return to all, that they may rejoice in having without fear what they have acquired without fraud. Let every single person's liberty be now at length restored to him under the yoke of empire. For there is this difference between the kings of the nations and the emperors of the republic, that the kings of the nations are lords of slaves, but the emperors of the republic lords of freemen. But we shall better speak of these things by praying than by putting you in mind of them. May Almighty God in every thought and deed keep the heart of your Piety in the hand of His grace; and whatever things should be done justly, whatever things with clemency, may the Holy Spirit who dwells in your breast direct, that your Clemency may both be exalted in a temporal kingdom, and after

courses of many years attain to heavenly kingdoms. Given in the month of June, Indiction 6.

# Epistle XXXIV.

To Pantaleo, Notary. Gregory to Pantaleo, &c.

Thy Experience remembers what and what kind of oath thou tookest over the most sacred body of the blessed apostle Peter. Whence also we committed to thee without fear the charge of enquiry in the patrimony of the Syracusan district. It is, then, incumbenton thee to have thine own good faith and the fear of the same blessed apostle Peter ever before thine eyes, and so to act that neither with men in this present life nor with Almighty God in the last judgment thou mayest be open to blame. Now from the report of Salerius our chartularius we have learnt that thou hast found the modius in which the husbandmen (coloni) of the Church have been compelled to give their corn to be one of twenty-five sextarii . This we altogether execrated, and were sorry thou hadst been late in making it a subject of enquiry. We rejoice, therefore, at thy telling us that thou hast broken the said modius and made a just one. But, inasmuch as the aforesaid chartularius has taken care to mention also what has already been collected under thy Experience by the fraudulent dealings of the farmers (conductores) from two territories, therefore, even as with a view to the future, we rejoice that thou hast acted zealously in breaking the unjust modius, so also we think of sins in the past; lest, if what the farmers have fraudulently taken away from the peasants (rusticis) accrues to us, we should be implicated in their sins.

And accordingly we desire thy Experience, with all faithfulness, with all integrity-having regard to the fear of Almighty God, and recalling to mind the strictness of the blessed apostle Peter-to make a list throughout each several estate (massam) of poor and indigent husbandmen, and with the money found to have been got by fraud to procure cows, sheep, and swine, and distribute them among the several poor husbandmen. And this we desire thee to do with the advice of the most reverend lord bishop John , and Adrian our chartularius and rector . If, moreover, it should be necessary for the sake of consultation, our son also the lord Julian should be called in, so that no one else may know, but all be kept quite secret. Do you therefore consult among yourselves whether this same assistance should be given to the said poor husbandmen in money or in kind. But, whatever be the common fund, first, as I have said, make a list, and afterwards take pains to distribute to each according to the degree of his poverty. For I, as the teacher of the Gentiles testifies, have all and abound; nor do I seek money, but reward (Phil. iv.). So act therefore that in the day of judgment

thou mayest shew me fruit of thy, labour from the service that has been committed to thy Experience. If thou do this purely, faithfully, and strenuously, thou wilt both receive it back here in thy children, and hereafter wilt have plenary retribution in the scrutiny of the Eternal Judge.

# Epistle XXXVIII.

To Phocas, Emperor. Gregory to Phocas Augustus.

It pleases us to consider, with rejoicings and great thanksgivings, what praises we owe to Almighty God, that the yoke of sadness has been removed, and we are come to times of liberty under the imperial Piety of your Benignity. For that your Serenity has not found a deacon of the Apostolic See resident at the court according to ancient custom, is not owing to my negligence, but to most grave necessity. For, while all the ministers of this our Church shrunk and fled with fear from times of such oppression and hardship, it was not possible to impose on any of them the duty of going to the royal city to remain at the court. But now that they have learnt that your Clemency, by the ordering of God's grace, has attained to the summit of Empire, those who had before greatly feared to go there hasten even of themselves to your feet, moved thereto by joy. But, seeing that some of them are so weak from old age as to be hardly able to bear the toil, and some are deeply engaged in ecclesiastical cares, and the bearer of these presents, who was the first of all our guardians (defensores), has been long well known to me for his diligence, and proved in life, faith, and character, I have judged him fit to be sent to the feet of your Piety .

I have accordingly, by God's permission, made him a deacon, and have been at pains to send him to you with all speed, that he may be able, when a convenient time is found, to inform your Clemency of all that is being done in these parts. To him I beg your Serenity to deign to incline your pious ears, that you may find it in your power to have pity on us all the more speedily as you learn the more truly from his account what our affliction is. For in what manner by the daily swords, and by how many invasions, of the Lombards, lo now for the length of five and thirty years, we have been oppressed, by no words of description can we fully express. But we trust in the Almighty Lord, that He will complete for us the good things of His consolation which He has begun, and that, having raised up pious lords in the republic, He will also extinguish cruel enemies. And so may the Holy Trinity guard your life for many years, so that we may the longer rejoice in the good of your Piety, which we have received after long waiting.

# Epistle XXXIX.

To Leontia, Empress. Gregory to Leontia Augusta. What tongue may suffice to speak, what mind to think, what great thanks we owe to Almighty God for the serenity of your empire, in that such hard burdens of long duration have been removed from our necks, and the gentle yoke of imperial supremacy has returned, which subjects are glad to bear? Glory, then, be given to the Creator of all by the hymning choirs of angels, thanksgiving be paid by men on earth, for that the whole republic, which has endured many wounds of sorrow, has now at length found the balm of your consolation. Hence we must needs implore the more earnestly the mercy of Almighty God, that He would keep the heart of your Piety ever in His right hand, and dispose your thoughts by the aid of heavenly grace, to the end that your Tranquillity may be able to rule those who serve you the more righteously as you know more truly how to serve the Sovereign of all. May He make you His champions in love of the catholic faith, having, of His benign dealing, made you our emperors. May He infuse into your minds zeal together with gentleness, that you may always be able with pious fervour not to leave unavenged whatever is done amiss with regard to God, and in case of any delinquency against yourselves to bear and spare. May He give us in your Piety the clemency of Pulcheria Augusta, who for her zeal for the catholic faith was called in the holy synod the new Helena (Act. 1 synodi Chalcedonensis). May the Almighty mercy of God grant to you fuller length of days to live with our most pious lord, that the longer your life is extended, the more strongly may the consolation of your subjects be confirmed.

I ought perhaps to have requested that your Tranquillity should hold as especially commended to you the Church of the blessed apostle Peter, which up to this time has laboured under grievous plots against it. But, knowing that you love Almighty God, I ought not to ask what you will exhibit of your own accord out of the benignity of your piety. For the more you fear the Creator of all, the more, fully may you love the Church of him to whom it was said, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to whom it is said, To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shall bind an earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be leased in heaven (Matth. xv. 18). Whence it is not doubtful to us with what strong love you will bind yourself to him through whom you earnestly desire to be loosed from all sins. May he, then, be the guardian of your empire, may he be your protector on earth, may he be an intercessor for you in heaven: that through

your relieving your subjects from hard burdens, and causing them to rejoice in your empire, you may, after many years, rejoice in the heavenly kingdom.

# Epistle XL.

To Cyriacus, Patriarch of Constantinople. Gregory to Cyriacus, &c. Observing diligently, most dear brother, how great is the virtue of peace from the Lord's voice, which says, My peace I give unto you (Joh. xiv. 27), it becomes us so to abide in the love thereof as in no wise to give place to discord. But, since we cannot otherwise live in its root except by retaining in mind and in deed the humility which the very author of peace has taught, we entreat you with befitting charity, that, treading down with the foot of your heart the profane elation which is always hostile to souls, you make haste to remove from the midst of the Church the offence of a perverse and proud title, lest you should possibly be found divided from the society of our peace. But let there be in us one spirit, one mind, one charity, one bond in Christ, who has willed us to be his members. For let your Holiness consider how hard it is, how indecent, how cruel, how alien from the aim of a priest, not to have that peace which you preach to others, and so abstain from offending your brethren out of pride. But study this rather, how you may prostrate with the sword of humility the author of vain and profitless elation, to the end that in such a victory the grace of the Holy Spirit may claim you as a habitation for Himself, so that what is written may be plainly fulfilled in you; the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are (2 Cor. vi. 17.)

We commend to you in all things the bearer of these presents, our most beloved common son, the deacon Boniface, that in whatsoever may be needful he may find, as is becoming, the succour of your Holiness.

# Epistle XLI.

To Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria. Gregory to Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria. A conversation having arisen one day between me and my familiar friends about the customs of churches, one who had studied the art of medicine in the great city of Alexandria told us that he had a fellow-student attending the same lectures, a boy of extreme depravity, who, he said, had been suddenly ordained a deacon. And he added that he had procured ordination by bribes and gifts; for he acknowledged that this custom had prevailed in the holy Alexandrine Church. On hearing this I was amazed, and exceedingly surprised that the tongue of the most holy and blessed man the lord Eulogius, which recalls so many heretics to the catholic faith, has not extirpated simoniacal heresy from the holy Alexandrine Church. Anti who will there be whose exhortation or correction will be able to amend this, if his great and admirable teaching shall have left it without amendment?

Wherefore, for the absolution of your soul, for the increase of your reward, that your works may be in all respects perfect before the eyes of the tremendous Judge, you ought to make baste utterly to pull up and eradicate simoniacal heresy, which was the first to arise in the Church, from your most holy See, which is our's . For on this account it comes to pass that the holiness of ecclesiastical orders falls away from very many, because persons are promoted to these orders, not for their life and deeds, but for bribes. But if meritorious character, and not bribes, be sought after, unworthy persons will not come to ordination. And by so much the more will reward begin to accrue to you as any good men who have been promoted to sacred orders shall have devoted themselves to the care of winning souls.

# Epistle XLII.

To Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria. Gregory to Eulogius, &c. We return great thanks to Almighty God, that in the mouth of the heart a sweet savour of charity is experienced, when that which is written is fulfilled, As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news front a far country (Prov. xxv. 25). For I had previously been greatly disturbed by a letter from Boniface the Chartularius, my responsalis, who dwells in the royal city, saying that your to me most sweet and pleasant Holiness had suffered from failure of bodily sight. From this letter I was smitten by heavy sorrow. But suddenly, by the prospering grace of our Creator and Redeemer, I received the epistle of your Blessedness, and, learning that the bodily trouble of which I had heard was cured, I rejoiced exceedingly, since gladness of heart succeeded which was as great as the bitterness of the sadness which had come before. For we know that, with the help of Almighty God, your life is the health of many. For sailors sail secure through the waves when an instructed and skilful steersman sits at the helm.

Moreover in my joy for your health I have this additional cause for exultation, that I have learnt how through your mouth the enemies of the Church are decreased in number, and the flocks of the Lord multiplied. For through the ploughshare of your tongue heavenly corn increases daily, and is multiplied in the garners on high; so that in you we rejoice that what is written is fulfilled, Where there is much increase, there is manifest the strength of the oxen (Prov. xiv. 4). Whence we gather plainly that the more you bring back fugitives to the service of Almighty God, the more merit you have with Him. And by how much the more merit you receive, the more fully can you obtain what you ask for. I beseech you therefore to pray the more earnestly for me a sinner, since both pain of body, and bitterness of heart, and immense ravages of mortality among the swords of so many barbarians, afflict me exceedingly. In the midst of all these things it is not temporal but eternal consolation that I require, which of myself I am not able to win by prayer, but which I trust that I shall obtain by the intercessions of your Blessedness. Last year I received no letters from your Holiness, and I was much distressed. It is true that your blessing, which you sent without a letter, was both given and received. But, since your tongue delights me more than your gifts, I was less gratified than I might have been by what was given. But I directed our common son, the deacon Epiphanius, to write to Alexander and Isidore, deacons of your most holy Church, to acknowledge the receipt of what had been sent.

I wrote to you, further, that I had got ready large pieces of timber for making masts and rudders, but that the small ship which had come could not carry them; and you have since written nothing in reply. Wherefore, it you need them, write to our common son Boniface, whom we are now sending as our representative (responsalem) to the royal city, that he may send me word that they may prepared, and that they may be found ready when your Blessedness shall send for them. Furthermore, we have sent you a small cross, in which is inserted a blessing from the chains of your lovers the apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul; and let this be continually applied to your eyes, seeing that many miracles have been wont to be wrought through this same blessing. May Almighty God inspire the heart of your Blessedness to be careful to pray for me continually, and may He protect yon and all yours with His right hand, and after ninny courses of years bring you to the heavenly kingdom.

We have received, corresponding with your description of them, the blessings of Saint Mark, sent to us by your most blessed Fraternity, and we return thanks for your kindness, since from these outward things we learn what you are towards us inwardly.

# Epistle II.

To Vitalis, Guardian (Defensorem) of Sardinia. Gregory to Vitalis, &c. From the information given us by thy Experience we find that the hospitals [or guest-houses, xenodochia] rounded in Sardinia are suffering from grievous neglect. Hence our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Januarius would have had to be most strongly reprehended, did not his old age and simplicity, and the sickness which thou hast told us of coming on besides, keep us in check. Seeing, then, that he is so situated that he cannot be fit to order anything, do thou warn the steward of that Church, and Epiphanius the archpresbyter, under our strict authority, that they themselves at their own peril endeavour themselves carefully and profitably to set those same hospitals (xenodochia) in order. For, if there should be any neglect there hereafter, let them know that they will not be able in any manner, or to any extent, to excuse themselves before us.

Further, since the proprietors of Sardinia have petitioner us that, seeing that they are afflicted by diverse burdens, thou mightest go to Constantinople for their redress, we grant thee leave to go. And we have also written to our most beloved son Boniface, desiring him to do his best to lend thee his aid in obtaining redress for that province. Moreover, with regard to the Churches which thou hast informed us are without priests , we have written to our aforesaid most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Januarius, that he should supply them; yet so that all be not chosen for the episcopate from his own Church. For it becomes him so to supply other Churches as not to cause want in his own of persons who may be of advantage to it. As to what thou hast told us of persons having been preferred to the government of certain monasteries who, while they were in a lower monastic order, had fallen into sin, they ought not indeed to have undertaken the office of abbot except after entire reformation of life and after due preceding penance. But since, as thou sayest, they have undertaken the office of abbots, heed must be given to their life, manners, and attention to duty. And, if their conduct should not be found inconsistent with their office, let them persevere in the order in which they are. Otherwise let them be removed, and others ordained who may profit the souls committed to them.

Furthermore, in the case of the monastery of Saint Hermas, which was founded by our brother in the house of the religious lady Pomponiana, inasmuch as it should be treated with tenderness rather than with strictness, let thy Experience endeavour to deal sweetly

with the said lady, to the end that neither may she, to her own sin, disregard the will of the founder, nor thou fail to provide salubriously for the advantage of the monastery. Further, as to the girls of whom the aforesaid Pomponiana had formerly changed the religious dress, and converted them in the monastery , thou must by no means suffer them to be withdrawn from her, or disquieted; but let them continue, God protecting them, in the state of life in which they are. With regard to the recovery of the property of Churches, or of monasteries, or any other devoted to pious uses, about which thou hast written, those who are interested must be admonished that it is for them to seek in all ways to recover it with thy support and aid. But, if they should haply prove negligent, or in any case if such as ought to recover it should not be found, then do thou search it all out and so get it back, when discovered, as not to appear to take legal action against any one with a high hand. As to what thou bast told us with respect to the hospitals (xenodochia) of Hortulanus and Thomas, we so far have no knowledge. Wherefore let thy Experience look diligently into the order of the Emperor so far given, and arrange all according to its tenour, and make known to us whatever thou hast done.

Concerning what thou hast written about our brother and fellow-bishop Januarius at the time when he celebrates the sacrifice often suffering such distress that he can hardly after long intervals return to the place in the canon where he has left off, and as to many doubting whether they should receive the Communion from his consecration, they are to be admonished to be in no alarm at all, but communicate with full faith and security, since a person's sickness neither alters nor defiles the benediction of the sacred mystery. Nevertheless our said brother should by all means be exhorted privately, that, as often as he feels any trouble coming on, he should not proceed to celebration, lest he thus expose himself to contempt, and cause offence to the minds of the weak.

Furthermore, the religious lady Pomponiana has complained to us that the inheritance of her late son-in-law Epiphanius-of which the said Epiphanius had appointed his wife Matrona, daughter of the aforesaid Pomponiana, to be usufructuary for the benefit of the monastery which he had directed to be founded in his house, and for its benefit also in all ways after the extinction of the usufruct-together with other things which are proved to belong to the same Matrona by right of possession, have been unjustly taken away by thy Experience and by our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Januarius, and that nothing therefore has so far been paid to her daughter, or been of profit to the monastery. Now if the truth is so, and thou art aware of having done anything unbecomingly, without any delay restore what has been taken away; or at any rate, if thou thinkest it to be otherwise lest the opposite party should seem to be aggrieved prejudicially, by no means defer submitting the case to arbitrators chosen with her concurrence, that it may be declared by a definite decision whether her complaint be true and just.

# Epistle IV.

To Fantinus, Guardian (Defensorem) of Panormus. Gregory to Fantinus, &c Such things about our brother and fellow-bishop Exhilaratus, as thou thyself also knowest, have come to our ears as ought by all means to be visited with severe punishment. But, since it has been smoothed over by our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Leo , who has also declared that he was judge in that case, we have thought it fit that he [i.e. Exhilaratus] should be sent back to his Church, considering that what we have inflicted on him by keeping him here so long may be enough for him. Therefore we enjoin thy Experience to pay attention to his manners and deeds, and to admonish him frequently, to the end that he may shew himself solicitous in extending kind charity to his clerks (clericis), and, should need require, in correcting faults. But we desire thee also to admonish his clergy that they exhibit humility towards him, and the obedience which the Lord commands, nor in any respect presume to behave proudly with regard to him. And if any one of them, that is, either bishop or clerk, should disregard thy admonition, do thou, under this authority from us, either correct the sin of disobedience by canonical coercion, as thou seest fit, or make haste to send a report to us, that we may be able to arrange how the rein of discipline may keep from going off their road those whom the goad of evil inclination provokes to transgression.

# Epistle VII.

To Alcyson, Bishop of Corcyra. Gregory to Alcyson, &c.

Not undeservedly does the ambition of an elated heart require to be quelled, when, disregarding the force of the sacred canons, the excess of rash presumption in coveting unlawfully what belongs to others is shewn to be not only harmful in causing expense, but also opposed to the peace of the Church. Having, then, perused thy Fraternity's epistles, we have learnt what has been done formerly or of late by the bishop of the City of Euria with regard to the camp of Cassiopus , which is situated in thy diocese, and we are distressed that those who should have been debtors to thy Church for charity bestowed upon them, should rather become its enemies, no shame restraining them; and at last that, in a way contrary to ecclesiastical arrangement, contrary to priestly moderation, contrary to the ordinances of the sacred canons, they should attempt to withdraw the aforesaid camp from thy jurisdiction and subject it to their own power, so as to become as it were masters where they had before been received as strangers.

Concerning which matter, seeing that Andrew, our brother of venerable memory, Metropolitan of Nicopolis, with the support also of an imperial order whereby the cognizance of this case had been enjoined on him, is known to have determined in a sentence promulged by him, as has been made manifest to us, that the aforesaid camp of Cassiopus should remain under the jurisdiction of thy Church as it always has been, we, approving of the form of that sentence, confirm it, as justice approves, by the authority of the Apostolic See, and decree that it remain firm in all respects. For no reason of equity, no canonical order, sanctions that one person should in any way occupy the parish of another. Wherefore, though the guilt of this contentiousness seems to require no slight strictness of treatment, in that they have returned evil for good, nevertheless care should be taken that kindness be not overcome by excess, nor that what is due to strange brethren, when they are suffering constraint too, be denied them, lest charity should be judged to have no operation in the minds of bishops, if those to whom great compassion is due should be left without the remedy of consolation.

It is right, then, that the priests and clergy of the city of Euria be not repelled from habitation of the aforesaid camp of Cassiopus, but that they should have leave also to deposit with due reverence the holy and venerable body of the blessed Donatus, which they have brought with them, in one of the churches of the aforesaid place such as they may choose.

Yet so that protection be procured for thy Love, in whose diocese this camp is situate, by the issue of a security whereby the bishop of Euria shall promise not to claim for himself any power therein, or any privilege, or any jurisdiction, or any authority in future, as though he were cardinal bishop; but that, peace being restored by the favour of God, they shall return by all means to their own places, taking away with them, if they will, the venerable body of Saint Donatus. So, this promise being kept in mind, neither may they dare on any pretext whatever to claim further to themselves any right of rule there, but acknowledge themselves guests there at all times, nor may the Church of thy Fraternity in any degree incur prejudice to its rights and privileges.

# Epistle VIII.

To Boniface, Deacon. Gregory to Boniface, Deacon at Constantinople .

As often as the discord of those who ought to have been preachers of peace makes us sad, we should study with great solicitude that cause of contention may be removed, and that those who differ among themselves may return to concord. Now what has been done with respect to the camp of Cassiopus, which is situate in the island of Corcyra, and how the bishop of Euria is endeavouring to withdraw it from the jurisdiction of the bishop of Corcyra, and iniquitously to subject it to his own jurisdiction, it would be very tedious to tell . But, that your Love may understand all things fully, we have sent to you the letters of our brother Alcyson, the bishop of Corcyra, and have caused his man to go to you to inform you of everything more particularly by word of mouth. This, however, we briefly mention, that an order having been surreptitiously obtained from the late Emperor Mauricius, which order, having been given in opposition to the laws and sacred canons, had no effect, and the dispute between the parties remaining undecided, he gave another order to our late brother Andrew, then Metropolitan of Nicopolis, to the effect that, as both parties were subject to his jurisdiction, he should take cognizance of the case and terminate it canonically.

The said Metropolitan, having taken cognizance of the case and pronounced sentence, of which we send you a copy, decided the aforesaid camp of Cassiopus to be under the power and jurisdiction of the bishop of Corcyra, in whose diocese it always was; and we, approving his sentence, have thought fit to confirm it by the authority of the Apostolic See. And, lest what we decreed should be so strict as to seem to have no admixture of benignity, we took care so to order the matter for the time being (as the text of our sentence which we send to thee shews) that neither should the bishop or clergy of the city of Euria incur the necessity of residence, nor the privileges of the Church of Corcyra be in any way disturbed. But inasmuch as at the very beginning of proceedings an order was surreptitiously got from the most serene lord the Emperor, and (contrary to the judgment of the Metropolitan of Nicopolis, which rested on ecclesiastical propriety and canonical reason) the aforesaid camp of Cassiopus is said to have been handed over to the bishop of Euria (a thing we cannot hear without grief or tell without groans), with still greater wrong to the bishop of Corcyra and his clergy, in such sort as (sad to say) to take away entirely the jurisdiction of the Church of Corcyra, and give as it were to the bishop of Euria the whole principal jurisdiction there;

this being so, we have thought right to deliver our sentence to no one, lest we should seem to do anything contrary to the order of our most clement lord the Emperor, or (which God forbid) in contempt of him. Wherefore let thy Love diligently represent the whole matter to his Piety, and steadily insist that the thing is altogether unlawful, altogether bad, altogether unjust, and greatly opposed to the sacred canons. And so may he not allow a sin of this sort to be introduced in his times to the prejudice of the Church. But represent to him what is contained in the judgment of the aforesaid late metropolitan on the business, and in what manner his decision had been confirmed by us, and endeavour so to act that our sentence, with an order from him, may be sent to those parts, to the end that we may be seen to have paid due deference to his Serenity, and to have corrected reasonably what had been presumptuously done amiss. In this affair pains must by all means be taken that, if it can be effected, he may contribute also his own order, enjoining the observance of what has been decided by us. For if this is done, all place for subornation hereafter will be shut out.

Make haste, then, so to exercise thy vigilance, with the help of Almighty God, for abating these wrongs, that neither may the will of those who attempt perverse things obtain any advantage now against the ancient settlement of ecclesiastical usage, nor a nefarious proceeding gain ground for example afterwards.

Furthermore, that thou mayest know what wrongs and what oppressions the above-written Alcyson, our brother and fellow-bishop, asserts that he endures from the agents (actionariis) of the Church of Thessalonica, we have forwarded to thy Love the letter which he has sent to us. And do thou accordingly cause the responsalis of the aforesaid Church to come to thee, anti take cognizance of the case in his presence, and write to our brother and fellow-bishop Eusebius, on such heads as reason may suggest to thee, that he may prohibit his men from acting unjustly, and warn them not to oppress interiors, but rather help them in whatever may be just. This also we desire; that thy Love should write to him who may have been ordained as Metropolitan in the city of Nicopolis, to the end that he may take cognizance of the case with regard to the injuries which our aforesaid brother Alcyson complains of having been inflicted on his Church, and decide what is just, seeing that the matter itself is stated not to have been decided by his predecessors, but reserved.

# Epistle XII.

To Theodelinda, Queen of the Lombards. Gregory to Queen Theodelinda. The letters which you sent us a little time ago from the Genoese parts have made us partakers of your joy on account of our learning that by the favour of Almighty God a son has been given you, and, as is greatly to your Excellency's credit, has been received into the fellowship of the catholic faith . Nor indeed was anything else to be supposed of your Christianity but that you would fortify him whom you have received by the gift of God with the aid of Catholic rectitude, so that our Redeemer might both acknowledge thee as His familiar servant, and also bring up prosperously in His fear a new king for the nation of the Lombards. Wherefore we pray Almighty God both to keep you in the way of His commandments, and to cause our most excellent son, Adulouvald , to advance in His love, to the end that, as he is in this world great among men, so also he may be glorious for his good deeds before the eyes of our God.

Now as to what your Excellency has requested in your letter, that we should reply in full to what our most beloved son, the abbot Secundus has written , who could think of putting off his petition or your wishes, knowing how profitable they would be to many, did not sickness stand in the way? But so great an infirmity from gout has held us I fast as to render us hardly able to rise, not only for dictating, but even for speaking, as also your ambassadors, the bearers of these presents, are aware, who, when they arrived, found us weak, and when they departed, left us in the utmost peril and danger of our life. But, if by the ordering of Almighty God I should recover, I will reply in full to all that he has written. I have, however, sent by the bearers of these presents the Synod that was held in the time of Justinian of pious memory, that my aforesaid most-beloved son may acknowledge on reading it that all that he had heard against the Apostolic See or the Catholic Church was false. For far be it from us to accept the views of any heretic whatever, or to deviate in any respect from the tome of our predecessor Leo, of holy memory; but we receive whatever has been defined by the four holy synods, and condemn whatever has been rejected by them.

Further, to our son the King Adolouvald we have taken thought to send some phylacteries; that is, a cross with wood of the holy cross of the Lord, and a lection of the holy Gospel enclosed in a Persian case. Also to my daughter, his sister, I send three rings, two of them with hyacinths, and one with an albula , which I request may be given them through you, that our charity towards them may be seasoned by your Excellency. Furthermore, while

paying you our duty of greeting with fat erly charity, we beg you to return thanks in our behalf to our most excellent son the King your consort for the peace that has been made, and to move his mind to peace, as you have been accustomed to do, in all ways for the future; that so, among your many good deeds, you may be able in the sight of God to find reward in an innocent people, which might have perished in offence.

# Epistle XIII.

To Alcyson, Bishop of Corcyra . Gregory to Alcyson, &c.

To brethren who bethink themselves and return to wholesome counsels kindness is not to be denied, lest a fault seem to weigh more in the minds of bishops than charity. We have therefore received, in the presence of thy Love's responsales, Peter, reader of the Church of Euria, who came to us with letters from our brother and fellow-bishop John, and, when the letters which he had brought had been read, we took care to ask him if he had anything to say against the allegation of those thy responsales. And on his stating that he had been charged with nothing, and had no answer to make, beyond what the epistle of his bishop contained, we decreed without tardiness, under God, what was agreeable to the canons. After a long time, however, the above-written Peter produced a document which he asserted had been given him by his bishop; and so the case underwent delay.

But inasmuch as in this document the above-mentioned bishop was found to say that he had hoped to have leave to deposit the holy and venerable body of the blessed Donatus in the church of the blessed John which is within the camp called that of Cassiopus, saying that he is prepared, on account of its being proved to be in thy diocese, to give thy Love a security that no prejudice to thee should thence arise, we thought it fight that his petition should not be left without effect, now that in a time of necessity he desires provision to be made for him in such a way as to secure his acknowledgment in all respects of the jurisdiction of thy Church. Moved therefore by this reason, we exhort thy Fraternity by this present letter, that, without any delay or excuse thou afford opportunity for depositing the venerable body of the above-written Saint in the aforenamed Church of the blessed John; on condition only that he previously protect thee by a security in writing that he will never on any plea whatever claim to himself any jurisdiction or privilege in the aforesaid Church or camp, as though he were the bishop of the place, but guard there inviolably all the right and power of thy Church, the place being in thy diocese.

At the same time it becomes thee also, as the same our brother has requested, to reply to him that whenever, peace being restored by the mercy of God, he may be at liberty to return to his own place, it shall be lawful for him to take away with him, without any objection made, the aforesaid venerable body. Herein, lest what is done should seem to be personal, and occasion should possibly be found for stirring up the contention anew, your successors

also should be in all respects included in this promise to keep things as they are, to the end that through this preventional security neither may he in future presume to claim anything there in thy diocese against equity and the decrees of the sacred canons, nor the rights of thy Church ever in any manner sustain any prejudice from such concession.

# Epistle XVI.

From Felix Bishop of Messana ToSt. Gregory. To the most blessed and honourable lord, the holy father Pope Gregory, Felix lover of your Weal and Holiness. The claims under God of your most blessed Weal and Holiness are manifest. For, though the whole earth was filled with observance of the true faith by the preaching and doctrine of the apostles, yet the orthodox Church of Christ, having been founded by apostolical institution and most firmly established by the faithful fathers, is further built up through the teaching of divine discourses, while instructed by your hortatory admonition. To it did all the most blessed apostles, endowed with an equal participation of dignity and authority , convert hosts of peoples; and by salutary precepts and admonitions, piously and holily, brought such as were foreknown in the grace of divine predestination from darkness to light, from error to the true faith from death to life. Following the merits of these holy apostles, and perfectly acting up to their example, your honoured Paternity adorns with them the Church of God by probity of managers and holiness of deeds; and, strong in sacred faith and Christian manners, enjoins what should be done to please God, and unceasingly follows and fulfils pontifical duties, thus observing the precepts of divine law; since (as says the Apostle) Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified (Rom. ii. 13).

As we were meditating on these things, news was brought us by certain who came from Rome that you had written to our comrade Augustine (afterwards ordained Bishop for the nation of the Angli, and thither sent by your venerable Holiness), and to the Angli (whom we have long known to have been converted to the faith through you), that persons related in the fourth degree of descent, if married, should not be separated . Now this was not formerly the custom either in those or in these parts, when I was brought up and taught together with you from infancy; nor have I read of it in any decrees of your predecessors, or in the institutes of other Fathers generally or specially, or learnt that it had been allowed hitherto by any of the wise. But I have fouled from your holy predecessors, and from the rest of the holy Fathers, assembled as well in the Nicene synod as in other holy councils, that this [i.e. this prohibition of marriage] should be observed down to the seventh degree of descent; and I know that this is carefully seen to by men who live aright and fear the Lord. While these things were being discussed among us, other things also supervened, concerning which it seems necessary for us to consult your authority. For there came to

us both Benedict, bishop of the Syracusan Church, and also others of our brethren, being bishops, weeping, and saying that they were greatly disturbed and afflicted in mind on account of the immoderate proceedings of secular and lay persons, in consequence of which some unjust things were also being said against them.

There are also some churches in our province about the consecration of which doubt is felt; and, because both of their antiquity and of the carelessness of their custodians, it is unknown whether they have been dedicated by bishops or not. As to all these things we beg to be instructed by your Holiness, and by the authority of your holy see; and we ask to be informed by your letters whether what, as we have before said, we have heard that you had written to our aforesaid comrade Augustine and to the nation of the Angli was written specially to them or generally to all; and we desire to be fully informed both on this matter and on the others above written.

For we do not signify to you what we have read, and what we know to be observed by the faithful, by way of finding fault (which be far from us); but we seek to know what we may reasonably and faithfully observe in this matter. And, since no slight murmuring is going on among us on this question, we seek an answer from you, as from the head, as to what we should reply to our brethren and fellow bishops; lest we should remain doubtful in the matter, and lest this murmuring should remain among us both in your times and in times to come, and your reputation, which has always been good and excellent, should be lacerated or disparaged through detractions, or your name (which God forbid) should be evil spoken of in succeeding times. For we, observing under God what is right with humble heart, being bound to you in one bond of charity, and defending your religion in all things as faithful pupils, seek knowledge of what is right from you. For we know that, as the apostles in the first place who were prelates of the holy See, and their successors afterwards, have always done, so you also take care of the universal Church, and especially of bishops, who on account of their contemplation and speculation are called the eyes of the Lord; and that you think continually about our religion and law, as it is written, Blessed is he who shall meditate in the law of the Lard day and night (Ps. i. 2).

Which meditation of yours is not only seen by reading, through the outward expression of letters, but, by the grace of Christ abounding in you, is known to be immoveably engrafted in your conscience; while the most holy law of Christ the Lord in no wise departs from your heart; as says the Prophet in the Psalms, The mouth of the righteous will meditate wisdom, and his tongue will be talking of judgments: the law of God is in his heart (Ps. xxxvi. 30); written not with ink, but in secret by the Spirit of the living God; not therefore on tables of stone, but on the tables of the heart. Let all gloom of darkness, we pray you, be dispelled by your most wise replies and assistance, that the morning star may shine upon us through you, most holy Father, and a dogmatic definition causing joy to all everywhere, because the glorious Fathers of holy Church are known to have preached proper and most pious dogmas unto secure inheritance of eternal life.

Subscription. May the Lord keep you safe and well-pleasing to God for ever, holy father of fathers, while you pray for us.

# Epistle XVII.

TO Felix, Bishop O Messana. To our most reverend brother, the Bishop Felix. Gregory, servant of the servants of God Our Head, which is Christ, to this end has willed us to be His members, that through His large charity and faithfulness He might make us one body in Himself, to whom it befits us so to cling that, since without Him we can do nothing, through Him we may be enabled to be what we are called. From the citadel of the Head let nothing divide us, lest, if we refuse to be His members, we be deserted of Him, and wither as branches cast off from the vine. That we may be counted worthy, then, to be the habitation of our Redeemer, let us abide with the whole desire of our heart in His love. For he says, He that loveth me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will make our abode with him (Joh. xiv. 23). Now thy Love, most dear brother, has demanded of us that we should reply to shy enquiries with the authority of the Apostolic See. And, though we make haste to do this, not at length but succinctly (because of certain pressing cares that have come upon us, through the hindrance of our sins), yet we commit what follows to Shy attention for wider enquiry, and investigation of other institutes of holy fathers. For a mind worn and weighed down with burdens and pressing cares cannot effect so much good, or speak of these things so freely, as can one that is joyful and free from depression. We have not therefore given the preference to such cares as wishing to deny to shy Holiness this and such other information. as we might find to be needful, but in order that what is here found deficient may be more fully enquired into.

For, following the examples of thy predecessors, thou hast thought it fight to consult the Apostolic See, in which thou hast been brought up and educated, on three points; that is on marriages of consanguinity, on vexation of bishops by subordinates, and on doubt with respect to the consecration of churches. Know then that what I wrote to Augustine, bishop of the nation of the Angli (who was, as thou rememberest, thy pupil), about marriages of consanguinity was written specially to him and to the nation of the Angli which had recently come to the faith, lest from alarm at anything too austere they should recede from their good beginning; but it was not written generally to others. Of this the whole Roman city is my witness. Nor did I thus order in those writings with the intention that, after they had been settled in the faith with a firm root, they should not be separated, if found to be below the proper degree of consanguinity, or should be united, if below the proper line of affinity, that is as far as the seventh generation. But for those who are still neophytes it is very often

right in the first place to teach them, and by word and example to instruct them, to avoid unlawful things, and then afterwards, reasonably and faithfully, to shut out things that they may have done in matters of this kind. For according to the Apostle who says, I have fed you with milk, not with meat (1 Cor.

iii. 2), we have allowed these indulgences for them only, and not (as has been said above) for future times, lest the good which had been planted so far with a weak root should be rooted up, but that what had been begun should rather be made firm, and guarded till it reach perfection. Certainly, if in these things we have done anything otherwise than as we ought to have done, know that it has been done, not of wantonness, but in commiseration. Wherefore, too, I invoke God as my witness, who knows the thoughts of all men, and to whom all things are naked and open. For,if I were to destroy what those who came before me established, I should be justly convicted of being not a builder but an over-thrower, as testifies the voice of the Truth, who says, Every kingdom divided against itself shall not stand (Luke xi. 17); and every science and law divided against itself shall be destroyed. And so it is needful for us all with one accord to hold to the appointments of our holy Fathers, doing nothing in contention, but, unanimous in every aim of good devotion, to obey, the Lord helping us, the divine and apostolical constitutions.

O how good is charity, which through love exhibits absent things in an image to one's self as though they were present, unites things divided, sets in order things confused, associates things unequal, consummates things imperfect! How rightly the excellent preacher calls it the bond of perfectness, since the other virtues indeed produce perfectness, but yet charity so binds them that they cannot now be unloosed from the mind of hint that loves. This being duly considered, in what has been already spoken of I indulged charitably; nor did I give a command, but advice; nor did I deliver a rule to be held to by any who should come after, but shewed of two dangers which might be more easily avoided. If, then, in secular affairs every one should have his own right and his proper rank preserved to him, how much more in ecclesiastical arrangements ought no confusion to be induced, lest discord should find place there whence the blessings of peace ought to proceed. And this will be thus secured, if nothing is yielded to power, but all to equity. On this account our heart rejoices greatly with your greatness, because we find you so earnest in your doings as to have a care for us, and at pains to enquire about such things by questioning us, to the end that such things may acquire for you not only glory with men, but also rewards of recompense with the Almighty Lord.

But with regard to vexation of bishops, about which you wish to consult us, we know that the life of prelates ought to be perturbed by no excesses, since it is very unfit that those who are called thrones of God should be disturbed by any motion from kings or subjects. For, if David who was the most righteous of kings presumed not to lay his hand on Saul who was evidently already rejected God, how much more should heed be taken that none lay the hand of detraction or vituperation or indiscreetness or dishonour on the Lord's Anointed, or on the preachers of holy Church, since vexation or detraction of them touches Christ,

in whose stead they fill the office of legates in the Church! Hence all the faithful should be exceedingly cautious not either secretly or publicly, by detractions or vituperations rend their bishop, that is, the Lord's Anointed, considering that example of Mary [i.e. Miriam], who for speaking against Moses the servant of God because of the Ethiopian woman was punished with the uncleanness of leprosy (Num. xiii.); and that of the Psalmist, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm (Ps. civ. 15) . And in the divine law we read, Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people (Ex. xxii. 28).

Hence great care should be taken by subordinates, whether clerical or lay, that they dare not to blame rashly the lives of their bishops or superiors, if perchance they see them do anything blameable, lest from their position of reproving evil they be sunk into greater depths through the impulse of elation. They are to be admonished also that, when they consider the faults of their superiors, they grow not too bold against them. But let them so consider with themselves the things that are bad that, constrained by divine fear, they refuse not to carry the yoke of reverence, seeing that the things done by bishops and superiors are not to be smitten with the sword of the mouth, even when they may seem to be such as may be properly blamed; since we are aware that it has been laid down by our predecessors and by many other holy bishops that sheep should not readily blame their shepherds, or presume to criminate or accuse them, because, when we sin against our superiors, we go against His ordinance Who gave them to us. Hence Moses, when he had learnt that the people complained against himself and Aaron, said, For what are we? against us is your murmuring but against God (Ex. xvi. 8). Wherefore subordinates of either order are to be admonished that, when they observe the deeds of their masters, they return to their own heart, and presume not in upbraidings of them, since The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord (Matth.

x. 24).

Concerning doubt as to the dedications of churches, about which among other things you have wished to consult us, you ought duly to hold to this which we have received as handed down to us from those who have gone before us; namely, that, as often as doubt is entertained as to the baptism or confirmation of any persons, as well as the consecration of churches, and there is no certain account to be given, either from writings or witnesses, as to whether persons have been baptized or confirmed, or whether churches have been consecrated, that such persons should be baptized and confirmed, and that such churches should be canonically dedicated, lest such doubt should become ruin to the faithful; inasmuch as what does not appear by certain proofs to have been duly done is not in such case done a second time. This, divine grace supporting us, we desire so to hold; and we enjoin it on you, as you have requested, to hold and teach; and we wish not wantonly to break through, but faithfully to observe, what has been determined by holy Fathers before us. Wherefore we implore the mercy of our Redeemer to assist you with His grace, and give unto you to carry into effect what He has granted you to will, since in this matter the good gifts of retribution by so much the more accrue to us as the zeal of labour is increased.

But we decree that every one of those who have been faithfully taught, and already stand ineradicably planted with a firm root, shall observe his descent even to the seventh generation. And as long as they know themselves to be related to each other by affinity, let them not presume to approach the association of this union; nor is it lawful, or shall be lawfully for any Christian to marry a woman of his own kindred whom he has lived with as a wife, or whom he has stained by any unlawful pollution; since such intercourse is incestuous and abominable to God and to all good men. But we read that it has long been determined by holy Fathers that incestuous persons are not to be reckoned under any title of wedlock. And so we desire not to be blamed by you or any other of the faithful in this matter, seeing that in our indulgence herein to the nation of the Angli we have acted, not as laying down a rule, but as taking thought lest they should leave imperfect the good which they had began, &c.

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**Source.** English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.