A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2)

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Psalm 1

ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST is the Tree of Life. This Psalm treats generally of all the Saints, but more especially of Joseph, who buried the Body of the LORD. That the eye is to be used modestly. VENERABLE BEDE. In the first part the prophet expounds the virtue of the holy Incarnation. The second shows that the wickedness of the ungodly shall receive its due recompense in the day of Judgment. ARABIC PSALTER. The beauty of holiness and the hope of another world. Gregorian. Ferial. Sunday: 1st Nocturn. [Easter Day: Matins. Invention and Exaltation of the Cross: 1st Nocturn. Corpus Christi: 1st Nocturn. Common of One and of Many Martyrs: 1st Nocturn. Common of Confessors: 1st Nocturn. Feasts of SS. Agnes and Agatha: 1st Nocturn. Feasts of the Crown of Thorns and of the Spear and Nails: 1st Nocturn. All Saints: 1st Nocturn.] Monastic. Ferial. Monday: Prime. [Whitsun Day: 1st Nocturn. Invention and Exaltation of the Cross: 1st Nocturn. Common of One and of Many Martyrs: 1st Nocturn. Common of Confessors: 1st Nocturn. Feasts of SS. Agnes and Agatha: 1st Nocturn. All Saints: 1st Nocturn.]

Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: Matins. Gregorian. Ferial. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice unto Him with reverence. [Common of a Confessor: Blessed is the man whose meditation is in the law of the LORD; his delight shall remain day and night, and all things whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Common of One Martyr: In the law of the LORD was his delight day and night. Common of many Martyrs: By the rivers of waters he planted the vine of the just, and in the law of the LORD was their delight. Easter Day: I am that I am, * and My counsel is not with the wicked, and in the law of the LORD is My delight. Alleluia. Corpus Christi: The LORD gave the fruit of salvation to the taste at the season of His death. All Saints: The LORD knoweth the way of the righteous * who meditate in His law day and night.]

Monastic. [Whitsun Day: Suddenly there was a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. Alleluia. Alleluia.] Parisian. Blessed is the man * that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, but his meditation is in the law of the LORD day and night. Mozarabic. In the law of the LORD was his delight, day and night: in His law shall he meditate. THIS Psalm is the preface of the Psalter, the Psalm

of Psalms, the title of the whole book; and as the key of a palace, by opening the outer gate, gives access to innumerable chambers, so this gives admission to the mystery of all Psalms. And it has no title, because JESUS CHRIST, our Head, of Whom it altogether treats, ”is before all things, and by Him all things subsist.” 1 Blessed is the man, that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners: and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful.

Blessed. As the prize is proclaimed before the conflict, so this book, the companion of the Church to the end of time in her great conflict, opens with the proclamation of her great reward,—blessedness. Both David and the Son of David begin their teaching with a blessing; only whereas here we have but one, the commencement of the Sermon on the Mount gives us eight. S. James i. 12.

Blessed is the man. Namely, He Who is both GOD and Man, JESUS CHRIST. The counsel of the ungodly was oftentimes offered to Him. Satan said, ”Command that these stones be made bread:” His friends said, ”If Thou do these things, show Thyself to the world:” the Chief Priests said, ”Let CHRIST, the King of Israel, descend now from the Cross, that we may see and believe.” The way of sinners was open before Him; but He warned against it when He said, ”Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction.” Before the seat of the scornful He stood indeed, when He testified of Himself that for this end came He into the world, that He should bear witness of the truth. But when He sat, it was in the seat of teaching, as when He instructed the multitude in the Sermon on the Mount; or in the seat of love, as when He was known to the two disciples in breaking of bread; and finally He shall sit in the seat of Judgment, when He shall come in the glory of the FATHER and of the holy Angels. Thou, therefore, O Christian, if thou seekest the name of blessed, repel these temptations as thy Master did; for it is written, ”BLESSED is the man that endureth temptation.” And when thou hast so repelled them, remember to return the blessing to Him from Whom it came, according to that saying, ”BLESSED be the Name of His Majesty for ever.”

Notice the gradual way in which a man grows hardened in sin. First, he walks, or rather departs in the counsel of the ungodly; departs from GOD, and goes to himself; leaves the Fountain of all wisdom, for the advice of him that is the source of all iniquity. Secondly, he stands in the way of sinners, as opposed to the Way of Life, which is CHRIST. Where note: he saith not, who hath not been in the way of sinners, for in that way all were born; but, who hath not stood in it, after being once removed from it by holy Baptism. Lastly, which is more than walking or standing, there is the sitting in the seat of the scornful; the throwing in our lot and portion with them here, because we choose it, whose lot and portion will be ours hereafter, whether we choose it or not. And, again; there are three other steps of guilt: the ungodly, namely, those that forget GOD; the sinners, those who commit open and grievous sins; the scornful, those who boast themselves in their wickedness, and

ridicule that which is good. Where observe, that the three miracles of raising the dead which our LORD performed set forth to us His power over all these three degrees of sin. Jairus' daughter was just dead; there is the state of the ungodly. The son of the widow of Nain was already carried out of the city; where we have the sinners, who are removed from the company of the faithful. Lazarus had been dead four days, and was buried; and he is a type of the scorners, who are dead and buried in trespasses and sins. And further, notice, that of these three, Lazarus is the only one that is mentioned by name; just as it has oftentimes pleased GOD to make the greatest of sinners into the great lights of His Church.

[Blessed is the man. The word man does not here denote sex, but maturity of reason, wherefore the Church does not hesitate to use the Psalm of certain Virgin Martyrs. And as the Psalmist tells us of the man Adam, who was wretched because he walked in the counsel of the ungodly, and thereby drew all men into condemnation, so he points to the coming Man, Whose obedience shall be rewarded with blessedness above human thought. The way of sinners. This world is that way, observes S. Augustine, the broad way which leadeth to destruction. The seat of the scornful. The LXX. and Vulgate read the seat of pestilence. Sitting, that is, as a teacher of evil, corrupting by precept and example, in contrast with CHRIST, Whose words are healing to the soul. Pride is that seat, remarks another, and he only sits not there who desires not the kingdom of this world. Or, better, it is heretical doctrine, whose "word will eat as doth a canker," especially the false philosophy of Gentile paganism.]

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD: and in his law will he exercise himself day and night. A. Ric. Hamp. S. Albertus Magnus. A. 2 Tim. ii. 17. S. Pet. Chrysol. Serm. xliv. Ay. C. Isa. i, 16. Isa. lviii. 2. Job i. 9. Ay. S. Matt. xxvi. 54. S. Matt. xxvii. 45. S. John xix. 28. B. A. 1 Tim. i. 9. S. Alb. Mag. Cant. v. 2.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord. Here we have three steps in holiness, which in some degree answer to the three stages of sin. And in the respective position of the two verses we learn that the beginning of GOD's fear is to depart from sin,—its progress, to do good; as it is written, "Cease to do evil, learn to do well." To delight in the law of the LORD; this is much: and yet this, after a sort, is done by the wicked: "They take delight in drawing near to GOD." To meditate on His law by day,—that is, in the day of prosperity, is more; and yet of this Satan may say, "Doth Job fear GOD for nought?" But most of all is it to do so in the night of adversity. So it was with the Man of Whose blessedness the Psalm treats. He so meditated on the law of His FATHER in the same night in which He was betrayed, that whereas He might presently have called for more than twelve legions of angels, He would not, saying, "How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Again, He so meditated on it in that night when "there was darkness over all the earth from the sixth hour till the ninth hour," that it is written of Him, "After this, JESUS, knowing

that all things were now accomplished, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst." And in these three steps to, or degrees of, holiness, we are reminded of that Blessed Trinity, to Whose Presence they lead.

[His delight is in the law. Yet the Apostle saith that "the law is not made for a righteous man." But it is one thing to be in the law, another to be under the law. He who is in the law, deals according to the law, he who is under the law is dealt with by the law. The one is free, the other a bondsman. Day and night. This is, in its fulness, true of CHRIST only, Who kept GOD's law sleeping as well as waking, and of Whom it is therefore said, "I sleep, but my heart waketh."] 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the water-side: that will bring forth his fruit in due season. S. Thomas de Villanova, i. 7, 57.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the water-side. And here, leaving for a moment the LORD, David turns to the servant. He, the true follower of CHRIST, shall be like the tree planted by the water-side, which is CHRIST Himself,—the "green tree," on which His enemies did such things, and which they hewed down, but which now flourishes in the midst of the Paradise of GOD. Thus it is said that the true servant of his LORD shall be transformed into the image of his LORD. Planted by the water-side. For as rivers flow through valleys and low countries, so the root of all holy actions is nourished by humility. And here also the tears of repentance are set forth to us, that water-side by which the greatest of GOD's Saints have most loved to be planted. Planted: and that by the Hand of GOD: as it is written, "Every tree which My heavenly FATHER hath not planted shall be plucked up." In due season: for it is not enough that our works be good, unless they be also done at the right time. As one says, "GOD loveth adverbs; it mattereth less to Him that a thing be good, than that it be well." And this also was fulfilled in the Man of Whom we speak, Who Himself testified, "My time is not yet come, but your time is alway ready."

[He, CHRIST JESUS Himself, shall be like a tree, in His Humanity, planted by the water-side, because hypostatically united to the Godhead of the SON, which flows from the FATHER, that will bring forth His fruit, the HOLY GHOST, Who has mission from Him, in due season, after His own Resurrection and Ascension. The Monastic Breviary, prefixing, on the Exaltation of the Cross, the words of Venantius Fortunatus as the Antiphon to this Psalm: Sweetest wood, and sweetest iron, Sweetest weight is hung on thee, The Hymn, Vexilla Regis. teaches us that the Cross itself is the Tree which brought forth its fruit in GOD'S own season, as the same poet sings in another hymn: When at length the sacred fulness Of the appointed time was come, This world's Maker left His FATHER, Sent the heavenly mansion from. The Hymn, Pange lingua. And the verse will then tell us of conformity to the Passion as the true mark of a Saint.

Others again, while referring the Tree to CHRIST, find in the water-side a reference to the Church, intended for all nations, according to that saying, ”The waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues,” and the fruit then denotes the local Churches founded in many lands by the Apostles. They who take the Tree to represent a Saint, explain the water as the gifts of the HOLY GHOST, free, cooling, satisfying.] A. 4 His leaf also shall not wither: and look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.

His leaf also shall not wither. As the fruit signifies works, so the leaves set forth words. The leaves of the tree, the words of Him that spake as never man spake, ”are for the healing of the nations.” His leaf, not leaves; for all the words of CHRIST are comprehended in this one, namely,—Love. Shall not wither. Wherefore, O servant of GOD, knowing that for every idle word men speak they shall give account, take heed, lest thou offend with thy tongue, and remember that thy Master said, ”Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.” Whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper. It shall indeed. ”He went forth conquering and to conquer.” ”The help that is done upon earth, He doeth it Himself.” Shall prosper. There are three kinds of prosperity: that of fools, which destroys them; that of the godly, which may be a snare to them; and that of the blessed, the only true prosperity, when, as the Prophet writes, ”Jacob shall return, and be at rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid.” And thus David lays down six conditions necessary for the righteous man, and which were fulfilled by Him, Who died at the sixth hour of the sixth day. He must depart from sin (hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly,) must love the commandments of God (his delight is in the law of the Lord;) be conversant in them (in His law doth he meditate,) fulfil them (he bringeth forth his fruit,) teach them (his leaf also shall not wither,) persevere unto the end (whatsoever he doeth it shall prosper.)

5 As for the ungodly, it is not so with them: but they are like the chaff, which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth. S. Greg. M. Ezek. i. 4. Now follows the wretched estate of CHRIST’s enemies. It is not so with them. They reviled; the Man Whose blessedness is set forth, reviled not again; they gave Him vinegar and gall; He feeds the sons of men with His own Body and Blood. They set on Him a crown of thorns; He prepares for them a crown of glory. ”I fed thee with manna in the wilderness, and thou gavest Me to drink of vinegar and gall,” say the Reproaches on Good Friday. They are like the chaff which the wind scattereth away. ”As soon, then, as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground.” The wind. Like that great and strong wind of old time, which rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD, so this shall at the Last Day utterly destroy those whose hearts were as hard as rocks. This is that whirlwind which Ezekiel saw coming ”out of the north, with a great cloud and a fire enfolding itself.” Scattereth away from the face of the earth. As it is written in another Psalm, ”Let them be as the dust before the wind, and the angel of the

LORD scattering them." And it is also written in the Book of Revelation how the ungodly shall desire the mountains to fall on them and the hills to cover them from the wrath of the Lamb.

[Chaff. The Vulgate reads dust, which the wicked are like, because unwatered by the grace of the HOLY SPIRIT, not united by any bond of charity, "carried about with every wind of doctrine," and by every temptation of the devil, they are scattered away from the face of the earth, that is, from the Church, the solid ground of the truth, which bears fruit for GOD.] 6 Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgment : neither the sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgment. The Godly did stand in the judgment of that unrighteous governor; and by so standing for a while there, was exalted to sit down at the right hand of glory for ever. Shall not be able to stand in the judgment. In one sense they certainly shall stand in it, as it is written, "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of GOD." But either they shall not stand in it, as being already judged, as it is written, "He that believeth not is condemned already;" or they shall not so stand in it as to abide it, so as to be justified in it, so as to be delivered from it. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Neither the sinners in the congregation of the righteous. In this world they do stand in that congregation. The wheat and the tares grow together till the harvest. The net that is cast into the sea gathers bad fish as well as good. The man without the wedding-garment comes into the palace of the king as well as he that is arrayed in it. But then it shall not be so. The sheep on the right hand, the goats on the left; the good fish gathered into vessels, the bad fish cast away; the wheat housed in the barn, the chaff burnt up with fire unquenchable; the other guests sitting down at the marriage supper of the Lamb, he without the wedding garment cast into outer darkness. The congregation of the righteous. Gathered together, that is, by the merits and by the strength of Him Who is only righteous, and therefore truly His congregation.

7 But the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous : and the way of the ungodly shall perish. But the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous. GOD is said to know things in two ways : in the way, as the schoolmen speak, of cognition, and in the way of complacence. By the one He knows all things, bad as well as good : as it is written, "Thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men;" and again, "He knew what was in man." By the other, He knows so as to approve : and in this sense it is said to the foolish virgins, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Knoweth the way of the righteous : and that will end in their knowing Him as He is. The way of the ungodly shall perish : not the ungodly, lest it should seem that no place were left for repentance.

Glory be to the FATHER, Who knoweth the Way of the righteous; glory be to the SON, Who is the Way of the righteous, the Man Who is blessed, and prosperous in

whatsoever He doeth; glory be to the HOLY GHOST, Who is the Wind that scattereth the ungodly. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.]

Collects.

Mozarabic Collect for the 5th Sunday in Advent. Mozarabic Collect for S. Martin. Make us, O LORD, like a most fruitful tree, planted in Thy garden; and vouchsafe that we, being watered by the showers of Thy grace, may bring forth to Thee plenteousness of fruit in due season. Through (1.) O LORD GOD, with Whom is the fulness of salvation and the perfection of blessedness; Grant that we may pass our time both by day and by night in the meditation of Thy law, so that, like a fruitful tree planted by the rivers of Thy grace, we may bring forth fruit here, and may be crowned with glory hereafter. (11.) Grant, O LORD, that we, meditating on Thy law with our whole hearts, may bring forth that fruit which Thy saints and Confessors bore in their several generations: so that we, following their example here, may be partakers of their glory hereafter. (11.)

[O GOD, the author of all good things, replenish us, we beseech Thee, with Thy grace, that our will may ever be directed in Thy law, that, by Thine inspiration, we may so meditate in it day and night, as to attain the fruit of everlasting joy. (1.)]

Psalm 2

ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST shall receive all the nations as His heritage from the FATHER. Of the gathering together of the wicked in the Passion of the LORD. The voice of CHRIST in His Passion and concerning His Nativity: and against him who blasphemes the Providence of GOD, and in accusation of the wicked. This Psalm is to be read with the Gospel of Luke. The voice of the FATHER and of the Apostles and of CHRIST. At the head should be written: CHRIST saith concerning His Passion and His Power:— VEN. BEDE. David is by interpretation, Mighty in hand, or Desirable, which can be said of none more fitly, than of the omnipotent CHRIST, Who is verily most Mighty, and exceedingly to be desired by His people. The Prophet here speaks of His Passion, and the LORD Himself is about to speak. In the Hebrew, this Psalm hath no title, but is joined to that which precedes, and makes with it one Psalm: which begins in blessedness and ends also in blessedness. It is divided into four portions. In the first, the Prophet addresses the Jews on the Passion of CHRIST: ”Why do the heathen,” &c. Next, concerning the madness of His judges, ”Let us break,” &c. In the third, the SAVIOUR speaks of His Almighty kingdom and ineffable generation: as far as human nothingness can comprehend: The Lord said unto Me. Fourthly, the Prophet speaks and warns the people that, acknowledging the Majesty of the LORD, they should embrace the Christian faith: Be wise now, &c.

EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. A prophecy of CHRIST, and of the calling of the nations. ARABIC PSALTER. A prophecy of David concerning CHRIST the LORD, and the calling of the nations.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Ferial. Sunday: I. Nocturn. [Good Friday: I. Nocturn. Easter Day: I. Nocturn. Invention and Exaltation of the Cross: I. Nocturn. Feast of Spear and Nails: I. Nocturn. Feasts of SS. Agnes and Agatha: I. Nocturn. Common of One and Many Martyrs: I. Nocturn. Common of Confessors: I. Nocturn.] Monastic. Monday: Prime. [As Gregorian, except on Easter Day.] Parisian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. Lyons. Sunday: I. Nocturn. Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: Matins.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Ferial: Serve the LORD * with fear, and rejoice unto Him with reverence. [Good Friday: The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together, against the LORD, and against His Anointed. Easter Day: I desired of My FATHER, Alleluia. He gave Me the Gentiles, Alleluia, for an inheritance, Alleluia. Common of Many Martyrs: The LORD proved the elect as gold in the furnace, and received them as burnt offerings for evermore. Common of Confessors: Blessed is this saint, who trusted in the LORD, preached the law of the LORD, was set upon His holy hill.] Parisian. Serve the LORD * and rejoice before Him: take hold of instruction. Mozarabic. Be wise, now, therefore, O ye kings; be learned, ye that are judges of the earth: serve the LORD with fear. According to some, this and the first Psalm form but one; which thus begins alike and ends in blessedness; begins with the blessedness of the Head,—blessed is the Man,—ends with the blessedness of the members,—blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. S. Paul, indeed, in his sermon at Antioch in Pisidia, says: "as it is also written in the Second Psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." But the better MSS. have, "in the first Psalm;" and, according to a capital rule of criticism, were the MS. authorities only equal, this, as being the stranger and more difficult reading, ought to be preferred. The probability, therefore, seems that, in Apostolic times, these two were really reckoned as one. It has been well said, that it is almost presumptuous to comment on this Psalm after an Apostle.

F 1 Why do the heathen so furiously rage together : and why do the people imagine a vain thing ? Why do the heathen so furiously rage together ? In the literal sense, the Philistines, who before David was established in his kingdom, came up again and again to attack him : but spiritually, Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the Roman soldiers, who indeed furiously raged against our LORD, both in the judgment seat and on Mount Calvary. And the people, that is, the Jews, imagined a vain thing, when they took counsel how they "might entangle Him," Who spake as never man spake, "in His talk ;" how they might kill the Prince of Life ; how they might secure the Mighty GOD by a few soldiers and a little wax. Notice, that there is no distinct mention here made of the Jews : Why do the heathen,—why do the people ? For verily they deserved to lose all distinct and express recognition as a peculiar nation, when they had thus sunk below the wickedness of the heathen in crucifying the LORD of Glory. Imagine a vain thing : as GOD's enemies always, when taking counsel against GOD's people. "Ye thought evil against me, but GOD meant it unto good to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive."

[A vain thing, turning still to the beggarly elements of the vanished Law, its ceremonies and sacrifices, after the types had been fulfilled, and the kingdom of CHRIST set up.] 2 The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together : against the LORD, and against his Anointed. Ps. cxlix. 23. S. Athan. i. 959, C. The kings of the earth, Pontius Pilate and Herod, stand up, and the Rulers,

the chief Priests and the Pharisees, take counsel together. So in another Psalm : ”Princes also did sit and speak against me.” Again, Kings of the earth may well signify the Prince of the powers of the air : who, of a surety, now lords it over the children of men. Against His Anointed. Where notice, that David was anointed King three times. 1. Secretly, in his father’s house, by Samuel. 2. In Hebron, by the men of Judah over that tribe only. 3. In the same city, over all Israel. In like manner, CHRIST may be said to have been anointed three times. In the first place, secretly and in His FATHER’s house ; namely, by that secret foreknowledge of GOD, before all worlds, that He should be the Redeemer of man. Next, when He was sent into the world, and declared to be the SON of GOD with power ; but still over the house of Judah only, that is, over His true servants : because, as the Apostle says, ”we see not yet all things put under Him.” But thirdly, He shall have all things subdued unto Him at the end of the world, as Israel, no less than Judah, finally submitted to David, according to that saying; ”He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet.”

3 Let us break their bonds asunder : and cast away their cords from us. Let us break their bonds asunder. This we may understand in more ways than one. It may be spoken by the enemies of CHRIST exhorting each other to cast off His light yoke and His easy burden. Again, it may be spoken by CHRIST Himself, Who burst the bands of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of them. Again, in another sense, there may be a reference to the ceremonial yoke of the Jews, which the Apostles cast away, saying, Now, therefore, why tempt ye GOD, to put a yoke upon our necks, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? And we may also use the words as an exhortation: Let us break the bands of sin, the heavy yoke wherewith the wicked, though thinking themselves free, are in reality bound. By bonds we are restrained from doing what we would; by cords we are made to do that which we would not.

[Their bonds. Who are they? Some will have it that the words, uttered by the Jews, denote the FATHER and the SON, since the Jews in dishonouring CHRIST, dishonoured His FATHER also. Others see in the plural word a reference to CHRIST and the Apostles. If we take the verse as the utterance of the Saints, it may well refer not only to their acceptance of the law of liberty, but to their overthrow of Pagan idolatry. A Greek Father, most singularly of all, puts the words in the mouth of the Angels who were spectators of the Passion, expressing their eagerness to deliver their King from His enemies.] 4 He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn : the LORD shall have them in derision. He that dwelleth in heaven. Where notice, that it is said of our LORD, while engaged in His work on earth, He that dwelleth—not that dwelt—in heaven. And so S. Thomas teaches us in his Eucharistic hymn :

”The Word of GOD, proceeding forth, Yet leaving not the FATHER’s side, And going to His work on earth, Had reached at length life’s eventide.” Shall laugh them to scorn, by turning all their devices to their own confusion. ”Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.” They thought to put CHRIST to death, and by His death He destroyed death. They thought to root out His Name from under heaven, and Acts xv. 10. Theodoret. i. 494. S. Ambros. in Ps. cxviii. The Hymn, Verbum supernum prodiens, Nec. it had dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the world’s end. They thought to bind Him in the grave, and they did but make the truth of His Resurrection more manifest. The Lord shall have them in derision. Thou therefore, O Christian, take courage when thou art had in derision of men; remembering that the triumph of the wicked is but short, and that the shame and contempt of which David writes are everlasting.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath: and vex them in his sore displeasure. This verse sets forth the present and future state of the wicked. He shall speak unto them by His Prophets, His Apostles, His Saints; He shall threaten them in His wrath, yet so as to leave them time and space for repentance. But if all this fails,—if the fig-tree, though dug about and tended, bears no fruit, then He shall vex them in His sore displeasure, when the smoke of their torments shall go up for ever and ever. And the Jews in the last siege of Jerusalem were thus vexed, when wrath came upon them to the uttermost. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath: then, when the due time was come, and not before. For at first, ”as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.”

6 Yet have I set my King: upon my holy hill of Sion. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill. Thus He was owned by the wise men: thus by the thief, ”Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom:” thus in the title of His Cross, ”The King of the Jews.” Of Sion. I shall have occasion, in the Third Dissertation, to enter at great length into the mystical distinction of Sion and Jerusalem; and to that section the reader is referred. [Yet have I set my King, &c. The LXX., Vulgate, and Æthiopic, read here, putting the words into the mouth of CHRIST, Yet I have been set as King by Him, &c. Even here, while proud men refused My yoke, I was King in Adullam, over every one that was in distress, but now, made Head of the Church, I am set upon the throne of Sion, over the Jewish people first, and then over Gentiles too. Set. As David made Solomon king, but not taking the honour to Himself before being called of GOD.]

7 I will preach the law, whereof the LORD hath said unto me: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. I will preach the law. But why one law? Because the end and sum of all the commandments is one, namely, love— the leaf, as we saw, that shall not wither: the new commandment given unto us, that we love one another. This day: that is, from all eternity; for in eternity there is neither past nor future. Again, on the authority of S. Paul, it alludes more especially to the Resurrection.

Nor is it wrong to refer the words to the Baptism of the LORD, seeing that then there came ”a Voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son.” [This day. The words apply not only to the eternal generation of the Consubstantial WORD, but to that especial day when the tidings were brought by the Archangel to the Maiden at Nazareth. Again, it may be fitly taken of the Nativity itself. And, once more, this day denotes the time of grace, in which the ”Dayspring from on high” was sent to drive away the night of the world.]

8 Desire of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance: and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. Desire of Me. And how did He desire it, but by His death? By that sacrifice, of so infinite value that nothing is too great for it to obtain, He intercedes for us in three ways. By word,—as when He said, ”FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” By deed,—as when He shows for us the wounds in His Hands and His Feet; and by influence, as when He causes His people to intercede one for the other. And this prophecy was in part fulfilled when He said, ”Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word.” I shall give thee. In that CHRIST is GOD, with the FATHER He gives all things; in that He is Man, from the FATHER He receives all things. The heathen for Thine inheritance. No mention is here made of the Jews, because, as the Apostle speaks, they counted themselves unworthy of the grace of GOD. And note how completely the Psalms and the Gospel accord. After ”This day have I begotten Thee,” follows, ”I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance.” And after the Resurrection, the LORD commanded, ”Go ye, and teach all nations.”

9 Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron: and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. With a rod of iron. This may refer to the punishment of the wicked in this life, when GOD is often pleased to bruise them, if perchance their hearts may be softened. But in the next, they shall be dashed in pieces like a potter’s vessel, which cannot be mended, because there is no place for repentance in the grave. Or, again, if we refer the verse to the Jews, the rod of iron is the Roman empire, the fourth kingdom, which, as Daniel speaks, shall be strong as iron. This was the sceptre Vleyra. A. S. Luke i. 78. S. Albertus Magnus. P. Acts xiii. 46. Rupert. in Jonam. Theodoret. i. 407. of iron with which they were punished, who put into the hand of GOD a reed for a sceptre.

[Like a potter’s vessel. By taking all earthly desires and affections away from the soul, leaving it pure and clear, as the lamps which shone out when Gideon broke the pitchers.] 10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings : be learned, ye that are judges of the earth. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings : because He that is the King of kings reveals Himself as the Eternal Wisdom. Be learned, ye that are judges of the earth, by the example of him who may be called Satan’s Judge, and who killed the Prince of Life. [They are kings, who rule over whatever is servile and base, and animal in

their own natures; they are judges of the earth, who look down on earthly things, and rate them at their true worth, taught by the example of CHRIST, and thus like Him true pastors and rulers of the Church. And observe, that as three qualities go to make up a good king, valour against foes, wisdom in choosing the better part, and steadfast intention in fulfilling an appointed end, so these qualities are typified by the gifts which the three wise kings brought to CHRIST at His Epiphany.]

11 Serve the LORD in fear : and rejoice unto him with reverence. In fear. The difference between the fear of GOD and the fear of the world is to be noted. The one shrinks from sin, the other from punishment; the one influences our thoughts, the other only our actions. And thus the schoolmen have distinguished four kinds of fear: the fear of man, by which we are led rather to do wrong than to suffer evil; servile fear, through which we are induced to avoid sin only from the dread of hell—and this fear, taken by itself, was, till later and laxer times, always held to be sinful; thirdly, initial fear, in which we avoid sin partly from the fear of hell, but partly also from the love of GOD, which is the fear of ordinary Christians; and filial fear, when we are afraid to disobey GOD only and altogether from the love we bear Him, which is the fear of Saints. Rejoice, because of the reward laid up for GOD's servants; and yet with reverence, because we may come short of it.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish from the right way : if his wrath be kindled, (yea, The correction which Ayguan's words have undergone, on this point, from their later editors, is worth notice. Compare the editions of 1524 and but a little,) blessed are all they that put their trust in him. Kiss: expressing thereby, as to a monarch, both love and awe. Ye perish from the right way. Here, again, the Psalms and the New Testament give the same warning, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you?" So David and S. Paul teach, that, after for awhile running our race with patience, we may nevertheless finally be lost. And we may do this, if His wrath be kindled, yea, but a little: therefore we are warned against little beginnings of sin. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him: because, "in a little wrath I hid My face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD, thy Redeemer."

[Kiss the Son. So the Syriac alone of ancient versions, nearest to which is Aquila, who reads, καταφιλήσατε ἐκλεκτῶς. The Targum, LXX., Vulgate, and Æthiopic, with but slight variations, turn the words take hold of instruction (LXX. δράξασθε παιδείας, Vulg. apprehendite disciplinam,) and S. Jerome, following Symmachus, reads, Worship purely. Modern critics are divided, but the Prayer Book rendering is maintained by such scholars as De Wette, Gesenius, and Delitzsch. Take hold, as of a protection and shield in battle. Take hold, as of a thing which flies from you, and must be seized in the instant, though that thing be the discipline of a chastising GOD, which the Christian is to take patiently, as from a loving FATHER's hand.] Glory be to the FATHER, Who hath begotten the SON to-day, that is, eternally, and

hath set Him as King, and heard His desire as that of a Priest; Glory be to the SON, Who desireth the FATHER for us, and possesseth the nations for an inheritance unto the utmost parts of the earth; Glory to the HOLY GHOST, Who is the Blessedness wherewith blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.]

Collects.

Break in sunder, O LORD, we beseech Thee, the chains of MSS. Thomas. our sins; that, taking upon us Thy light yoke and easy burden, we may serve Thee, with fear and reverence, all the days of our life. Through (1.) O CHRIST, the WORD of the FATHER, against Whom the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together; give unto Thy Church to obtain the victory which she desires over all her enemies, that the sword of her perse- A. Mozarabic, Collect in Holy Week. cutors may be sheathed, and the faith of them that believe in Thee may be established. (11.) O GOD, the FATHER of the Only-begotten SON, Who dwellest in heaven, and Who turnest to derision those that rise up against Thy CHRIST, give us this special grace, that we may never yield to adversities, to the end that the unbelief of them that know Thee not may be confounded, and the faith of them that cling to Thee may be crowned. (11.)

[Hear us out of Thy holy hill, O LORD our GOD, as we call unto Thee with our voice in prayer, arise to help us, that by Thine aid we may attain salvation and everlasting blessedness. Through (1.)]

Psalm 3

TITLE. A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST for us slept in the sleep of Death and rose again. The voice of CHRIST in His Passion to the FATHER concerning the Jews. Of the guile of heretics. VEN. BEDE. By David understand CHRIST: by Absalom Judas Iscariot; from whose face CHRIST fled either literally when He departed to Mount Olivet, or spiritually when He hid from him the light of His knowledge and love. It was meet, on account of the correspondence between type and antitype, that both persecutors should die in the same way, namely by hanging. Note that this Psalm was composed after the 50th, and many others which refer to the plots of Saul; but is placed before them for a mystical reason: namely, that this, which speaks of the resurrection on the third day, should come third in order, and that which tells of remission and the fruits of repentance, should be the 50th. It pertains altogether to the Person of CHRIST. First, He speaks to the FATHER, rebuking the persecutors who spake blasphemously against Him: Lord, how are they increased, &c. Next, His faithful people are instructed by His example not to fear death, since they also, like their Head, are consoled by the hope of a most certain resurrection.

SYRIAC PSALTER. Written by David concerning good things to come.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. [Easter Day: I. Nocturn. Invention and Exaltation of the Cross: I. Nocturn. SS. Agnes and Agatha: I. Nocturn. Common of One and of Many Martyrs: I. Nocturn. Common of Confessors: I. Nocturn.] Fiftieth, on account of the known type of restoration and year of jubilee being the well-forgiveness. Parisian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. Lyons. Sunday: I. Nocturn. Ambrosian. Monday of First Week: Matins.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Serve the LORD, &c. [Easter Day: I laid me down and slept, and rose up again, for the LORD sustained me. Alleluia. Alleluia. Common of One Martyr: I did cry unto the LORD with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. Many

Martyrs: If they have suffered torments before men, the life of the elect is immortal for evermore. Common of Confessors: Thou art my glory, Thou art my defence, O LORD: Thou art He that liftest up my head: Thou hast heard me from Thy holy mountain.] Parisian. They say * to my soul, there is no help for him in his GOD. But Thou, O LORD, art my defender. This Psalm in its literal sense applies to the flight of David from Absalom, but mystically to the Son of David; and it is one of the six which relate to His Passion and Resurrection. In commenting on this Psalm I have followed almost exactly S. Bruno of Aste. The others are the 22nd, 43rd, 64th, 83rd, and 108th.

1 LORD, how are they increased that trouble me: many are they which rise against me. Literally this refers to the multitude of those that troubled David. In his youth Saul, then the Philistines, now Absalom, Ahithophel, and Shimei. But principally it relates to CHRIST. How are they increased. Herod, when he slew the Holy Innocents, the Chief Priests and Scribes, the tempters that feigned themselves just men: Judas, Herod, Pontius Pilate, the band of soldiers; the thief that railed on Him; the standers-by at the Cross; yes, and the Apostles that forsook Him, and S. Peter that denied Him. Or we may understand the word of things as well as of persons. Our LORD was troubled in His Head, by the crown of thorns; in His hands, by the nails; in His side, by the spear; in His whole body, by the scourge; in His face, by the blows of the soldiers; in His sight, when He was blindfolded; in His hearing, when He was blasphemed; in His taste, when they gave Him vinegar to drink. And by this multiplication of suffering was brought to pass a multiplication of CHRIST's elect, even as it is written, "Lift up Thine eyes round about and see, all they gather themselves together, they come to Thee;" and a multiplication of the abodes of the blessed, for it is said, "In My FATHER's house are many mansions." Many that rise up. As the many false witnesses that rose up against JESUS to put Him to death.

A. [How. So as to include even one of My chosen disciples, without whose aid they could not have succeeded.] 2 Many one there be that say of my soul : There is no help for him in his God. Elias of Crete, 37, A. Ay. So said the Chief Priests : "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him;" "let Him save Himself, if He be CHRIST the chosen of God." And with reference to ourselves, the craft of the devil is often displayed in representing a sin to which we are tempted as trifling; after we have committed it, as so great that there is no help for us in our God. Note the various helps which there are for the Christian: the help of redemption, against the deceit of sin; of illumination, against ignorance; of peace which passeth all understanding, against discord: of the hope of glory, against present trouble.

[No help for Him in His God. They said it, not merely when He hung on the Cross, but when they rejected His miracles, saying, "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub."] 3 But thou, O LORD, art my defender : thou art my worship, and the lifter

up of my head. Here we have the patience of CHRIST under the revilings of His enemies. And we, like Him, may thus look to our FATHER in tribulation, as our defender, for all things work together for good to them that love Him: as our glory, for ”we glory in tribulations also;” as the lifter up of our head, for He that lifted up our great Head from the grave will raise us likewise, like the butler of Pharaoh, by His Resurrection on the third day, the true birthday of the true Pharaoh. [Observe that the FATHER was the lifter up of the SON in two ways. First, by exalting Him on the Cross, that He might draw all men unto Him; and then, by giving Him a Name which is above every name, so that the stone rejected of the builders was exalted to be the head of the corner. GOD lifts up the head of His Saints, when He raises their thoughts above all earthly desires to heavenly things.]

4 I did call upon the LORD with my voice : and he heard me out of his holy hill. Thus is the efficacy of our LORD’s intercession set forth: I did call; as when He said, ”I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not;” and again, ”Neither pray I for these alone;” and again, ”FATHER, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, may be with Me where I am.” Holy hill; even heaven, the hill to which we lift our eyes, and whence our help cometh. [I did call, saying, ”FATHER, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son,” and ”glorify Thy Name,” and He heard Me, answering, ”I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” And every Saint who calls on God is heard out of His holy hill, that is, through CHRIST, Who, born of no human father, is the ”stone cut out without hands, which became a great mountain.”]

5 I laid me down and slept, and rose up again: for the LORD sustained me. Still our blessed LORD is speaking: He laid Him down in the new sepulchre. He slept His sleep of three days; He rose up again, the third day from the dead. It was sleep in three senses; as being voluntary, for He said, ”I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again;” as being short, for ”His soul was not left in Hell;” as being harmless, for the ”Holy One saw no corruption.” [I laid me down, is said of man, when he takes pleasure in the thought of sin, and slept, indulging in sinful act, and forgetting God’s commands, and rose up again, in repentance, not of my own might, but of God’s grace, for He, the Lord, sustained me.] 6 I will not be afraid for ten thousands of the people: that have set themselves against me round about.

If her dear LORD showed His love for the Church by lying down and sleeping, and His might by rising again, surely she needs not to be afraid of ten thousands of enemies. And herein she further imitates that SAVIOUR, Who, when they cried, ”Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him,” ”for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross.” That have set themselves against me round about. Before, by alluring into sin; behind, by exciting memories of evil things; on our right, by prosperity; on our left, by misfortunes. [Ten thousands of the people. This Psalm is fitly used by the Church in commemoration of the Martyrs, in whom this verse

was fulfilled again and again to the letter, even by maidens and children, as they stood in the amphitheatre, alone, unpitied, the mark for the cruel stare of myriads of spectators, crying, Christianos ad leones.

Thus in the arena he stood by himself, one minute, not longer: Here on this side a child; on the other ten myriad pagans. Then did the Christians in peace send up one deep supplication, God would again show His praise in the mouth of babes and of sucklings: Trembling nor fear none now; but Philemon came forward a little Nearer the mouth of the den, where the creaking winch told was the lion. J. M. Neale, Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. Back flew the gate: black-maned, the beast, with the roar of his fury, Sprang in one bound on the child,—and the child was in Abraham's bosom.] 7 Up, LORD, and help me, O my GOD: for thou smitest all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. The Church continues to cry to GOD for help, drawing from past deliverances present comfort. Note, both here and all through the Psalms, the repetition of that holy argument, "Because Thou hast been my helper, therefore under the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice."

A. [The teeth of the ungodly, are the evil speeches of envious and slanderous men, of whom the Apostle saith: "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." Or, again, the words may denote those who cut men away from the fellowship of the just, and incorporate them into the body of the evil, as the teeth do with food. Opposed to these are the teeth of the righteous preachers of the Church, who bring men into the body of CHRIST, teeth which should not decay through luxury, but be white with innocence, joined in charity, even in justice, firm in constancy, bony in vigour, biting into sin with doctrine and truth. Of such is written, "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing."] 8 Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: and thy blessing is upon thy people.

Here our LORD teaches us what we are to believe; and what, if we believe, will be our reward. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; there is the doctrine: Thy blessing is upon Thy people; there is the prayer. Glory be to the FATHER, Who, lifting up my Head, which is CHRIST, is glorified in Him; glory be to the SON, Who laid Him down, and slept, and rose up again; glory be to the HOLY GHOST, Who is the Salvation and Blessing of which is said, Salvation is of the LORD, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.]

Collects.

Pour forth, O LORD, Thy blessing upon Thy people, that being fortified by Thy Resurrection, we may not be afraid for ten thousands of the adversaries that set themselves against us round about. Who. (5.) Albeit, O LORD, that there are many who say, that there is no help for us in our GOD; yet Thou art our defender, and

the lifter up of our head: vouchsafe, therefore, to give us the increase of hope, and to surround us with Thy perpetual mercy. (11.) O LORD, those are increased that trouble us; let Thy mercy be increased above them: for then we shall fear no evil, when we are defended by Thy grace. (11.) Hear us, O LORD, from Thy holy hill, when we cry unto Thee from the deep of our sin; be Thou our rock and our defence, that no kind of tempest may overthrow us, and no violence of adversaries may destroy us. (11.)

Hear, O LORD, the confession of our sin, and vouchsafe to accept it, that as our resurrection had its beginning in Thee, so from Thee our life may have its reward: that our frailty may be so strengthened by Thy ready succour, as that our foes may be scattered by Thy just judgment: that Thy people, created by Thee, redeemed by Thee, regenerated by Thee, may here set forth Thy praise and may do all such good works as Thou hast prepared for them to walk in. (11.) LORD JESU CHRIST, Who didst for us undergo the sleep of death, to the end that we might never sleep in death, grant that we, who have been born again by Thy dying, may rise from the bed of sins by Thy quickening, and may no longer be overwhelmed by the penalty of sin, who have been redeemed by the price of Thy most precious Blood. (11.)

Mozarabic, Collect in Advent.

Psalm 4

TITLE. English Version: To the Chief Musician on Neginoth; a Psalm of David. Vulgate: To the end, in the Songs, a Psalm of David. Or according to modern critics: To the Supreme, for the stringed instruments: a Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST after His Passion was glorified by GOD the FATHER. The prophet blameth the Jews. Of admonishing our neighbour. VEN. BEDE. CHRIST is the End of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth, the glorious perfection of all good; or as others will have it, it is said of us, "Upon whom the ends of the world are come." Through the whole Psalm holy Mother Church speaks. In the first part, she makes supplication that her prayers may be heard, and blames unbelievers, who, adoring false Gods, neglected the worship of the true LORD. In the second, she admonishes the Gentile world to forsake their false superstition, and to offer the Sacrifice of Righteousness; and in order that she may convert them by holding forth a promise, she commemorates the blessings which the LORD hath bestowed on Christians. ARNORIUS. That the GOD of justice heard His SON on the Cross, against Whom the Jews in their rage sin even to this very day.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Daily: Compline. [Corpus Christi: I. Nocturn. Common of Confessors: II. Nocturn. Invention and Exaltation of the Cross: II. Nocturn. Feasts of Nails and Spear, Crown of Thorns, and Shroud: II. Nocturn. All Saints: I. Nocturn. Common of one Martyr: I. Nocturn.] Monastic. Daily: Compline. [Corpus Christi: I. Nocturn, All Saints: I. Nocturn. Common of one Martyr: I. Nocturn. Common of Confessors: I. Nocturn.] Eastern Church. Lauds, and Great Compline.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Have mercy * upon me, and hearken unto my prayer. Gregorian and Monastic. [Corpus Christi: The faithful, increased by the fruit of corn and wine, take their rest in the peace of CHRIST. All Saints: The LORD hath dealt wondrously with His Saints, and heard them when they called upon Him. Common of one Martyr: O ye sons of men, know this also, that the LORD hath dealt wondrously

with His Saint. Common of a Confessor: The LORD heard His Saint when he called upon Him, the LORD heard him, and made him to dwell in peace.] Parisian. His faithfulness shall be thy shield,* thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night. Mozarabic. When I called upon Thee, Thou heardest me: O GOD of Righteousness, Thou hast set me free. We must use this Psalm as David did. It would seem to have been written when he had been concealed from the pursuit of Saul in a rock in the wilderness of Maon. And we, if we would say it aright, must take refuge from our spiritual enemies in the true Rock, which is CHRIST: according to that saying, "The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks." This is a Compline Psalm all through the Western Church.

1 Hear me when I call, O GOD of my righteousness: Thou hast set me at liberty when I was in trouble; have mercy upon me, and hearken unto my prayer. God of my righteousness. For "this is His Name whereby He shall be called;" else it will be said to us, as it was to the Jews, "When ye make many prayers, I will not hear." Have mercy upon me, by removing evil, and hearken unto my prayer, by bestowing good. Have mercy, and therefore we must have mercy. In trouble. God therefore allows His people to fall into distress, that the trial of faith may be theirs, and the glory of their deliverance His; even as it is written, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." [Set me at liberty. More exactly, with LXX. and Vulg., &c. Thou hast enlarged me. It is the Church which speaks, dwelling on the goodness of God in giving her the greatest increase of converts exactly in the time of trouble, when Martyrs and Confessors had to strive for their crowns.]

2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye blaspheme mine honour: and have such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing? Still the Church cries to God in the time of her trouble. Sons of men, as distinguished from sons of God. Mine honour, that is, Him Who condescends to all shame for us, that we might obtain all glory through Him. In vanity: in the things of this world, which are "vanity of vanities," or in the devices of your own hearts: for "the LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain." [Blaspheme mine honour. Literally, as A. V., turn my glory into shame. And so, very nearly, the Syriac. But the LXX., Vulgate, and Ethiopic, read, How long will ye be heavy of heart? That is, they note, how long will ye be weighed down with mere temporal cares, instead of rising to divine contemplation? Following the Hebrew, we may remember how the idolatrous Jews, "turned their glory into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay;" how too, later, they mocked and reviled the FATHER's Splendour, and lastly, how evil Christians "blaspheme that worthy Name by the which ye are called."]

3 Know this also, that the LORD hath chosen to himself the man that is godly: when I call upon the LORD, he will hear me. The man that is godly: even that Man Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. And it is because He is chosen to be our Intercessor, that, therefore, when we call upon the LORD, He will hear us.

Know this. And how? By prophecies and types in the Old Testament: in the New, by the miracles of "Him that went about doing good," and the victories of the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." [Chosen to Himself. The LXX. and Vulgate have, He hath made His saint wonderful. His Saint, or Holy One, is CHRIST the SON, Whose Name shall be called Wonderful, Whom the FATHER made wonderful in His Conception, Na- Isaiah i. 15. tivity, Transfiguration, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension. And therefore, because He, My Advocate, is throned on high, His FATHER will hear me when I call upon Him.]

4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still. It is, therefore, only by standing in awe, that we can be free from sin. Commune with your own heart on the sins of the past day, following the disease with a remedy; and in your chamber, for— A. A. "I seek for JESUS in repose, When round my heart its chambers close," and be still: for "the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest." [Stand in awe. The Hebrew is, Tremble (denoting agitation from whatever cause.) But the ancient versions, with one voice, turn it, Be ye angry. And so the Apostle read the words, for he cites them exactly: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Angry, with your past sins, determining not to repeat them; angry with the first motions of sin, and resisting them steadily. Angry with the zeal which is jealous for GOD's honour, but not for your own wrongs. The verse runs on in the LXX. and Vulgate: Sin not; for that which ye say in your hearts, be smitten with compunction, (κατανόητε, compungimini) upon your beds. That is to say, that impunity from earthly tribunals and public shame does not acquit us in the sight of GOD, and we must therefore try and judge ourselves in secret at the bar of conscience even when men count us innocent. Or it may be directed against lip-worship, and mean, What ye say outwardly, say again in the hidden recesses of your hearts, and that with piercing eagerness of prayer. And lastly, whereas the literal sense applies to secret cabals and treason against David, so the mystical sense warns against false teachers in the Church, who, rebels at heart against David's Son, have not the courage to express their unbelief openly, but are not the less guilty on that account.]

5 Offer the sacrifice of righteousness: and put your trust in the LORD. Offer the sacrifice of righteousness. And in the first sense by restoring to GOD that of which we have defrauded Him: for we have robbed Him of many things. As it is written: "Will a man rob GOD? yet ye have robbed Me." We have robbed Him of the glory that is His due; of the love we should bear Him, of the obedience we should pay Him, of the fear we should render to Him. And we must offer all these as just sacrifices before we can put our trust in the Lord. Note, sacrifice, not sacrifices, because they all spring from one root, which is, love, a sacrifice needing no altar, fire, nor victim but the heart alone. But in the higher sense, offer the sacrifice of righteousness, by

setting forth the LORD'S Death till His coming again; the sacrifice of Him Who is our Righteousness, the sacrifice by which holiness is increased: and put your trust in the Lord, Whose death you thus set forth, according to His own commandment.

6 There be many that say: Who will show us any good? This may be taken in two senses. There be many that say, despising GOD's promises of eternal blessedness, Who will show us any earthly good? Again, there be many in heathen lands who long for some knowledge of future and eternal good, and yet, because none go forth to evangelise them, are compelled again and again to ask, Who will show us any good, who will show us any good? And the question is answered in another Psalm, "No good thing shall He withhold from them that walk uprightly." 7 LORD, lift thou up: the light of thy countenance upon us. In opposition to such vain inquiries after good, in this and the two following verses, we have the three sources whence the servants of GOD obtain it. In this verse, light, in the 8th, gladness, in the 9th, peace. The light of Thy countenance, which is the true light; the Light of light; the pillar of fire to guide us through the wilderness of this world, which cannot mislead, and cannot fail: a light to show us the recesses of our own hearts, their sinfulness and vileness; the enemies that beset us, their malice and watchfulness; the defenders that fight for us, their love and power: the light of grace, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day, the light of glory.

[Lift Thou up. As a banner in the day of battle. But the LXX. and Vulgate read, The light of Thy countenance hath been signed upon us, O Lord. Signed, as the image of a king upon a coin, as his signet upon wax, because we have been stamped anew with the Image of GOD, formerly marred and worn by sin, and that through His mercy Who is the Light of GOD's countenance. The word signed causes many of the commentators to look to the Cross, the especial badge of CHRIST's victory, and type of His Passion, the seal which the servants of GOD receive in their foreheads at baptism. Seal or banner, we have it alike in the hymn: S. Athan. i. 807 D. Ave, signum novæ legis, Et vexillum summi Regis, In te culpas sui gregis Bonus Pastor abstulit: The Sequence, Ave, crucis dulce lignum. 8 Thou hast put gladness in my heart : since the time that their corn and wine and oil increased.

Since the time that our LORD left us His blessed Sacraments; the corn, namely, the Body which He took for us men, and which was born at Bethlehem, which is by interpretation the "house of bread;" the wine, His precious Blood, which indeed "maketh glad the heart of man," and the oil, the graces of the HOLY GHOST; gladness is truly put into the heart of His servants, which shall lead on to that time, when they shall "obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." The Vulgate translation is entirely different: "From the fruit of their corn, wine, and oil, they have been multiplied." And they explain it, of course, of the multiplication of the Church's graces in the multiplication of her Sacraments; all which

Sacraments had their rise, as it were, in the Passion of our LORD, to which the next verse so beautifully leads us.

[Corn and wine, and oil. The wicked have their fruits as well as the Saints, the corn of earthly riches, the wine of intoxicating pleasures, the oil of flattery and ease, with which, as the LXX. has it, they have been filled. With these they are busily engaged, but the Church, turning from such thoughts, looks to her rest in CHRIST alone. The true meaning of the passage is that given in the A. V. Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn and wine were increased. That is, joyful and gladdening as is the Holy Eucharist upon earth, there is yet something better, a still more perfect union, awaiting us, when the Sacramental veils shall be withdrawn, and we shall see face to face. S. Thomas Aquin. The Rhythm, Adoro te devote. JESU, Whom thus veiled I must see below, When shall that be granted, which I long for so, That at last beholding Thy uncovered Face, Thou wouldst satisfy me with Thy fullest grace?]

9 I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest : for it is thou, LORD, only that makest me dwell in safety. S. Hilar. in Psalm 121, 113. And they who have all their life long been fed with the Body and Blood of their LORD, and been one with Him, as He is with them, may well say, when its evening is drawing on, I will lay me down in peace in the grave where He Who is our Peace also lay, and, after the trials and temptations of this life, take my rest. It is a beautiful motto for the resting-place of a line of kings, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." To dwell in safety. In safety, amidst temptation while on earth; in safety, as respects the body from final dissolution in the grave; in perfect safety,—in heaven. [In peace. The LXX. and Vulgate here add the phrase ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, in idipsum, that is, as they say, the same, unchangable, eternal. So the Cluniac:

The peace of all the faithful, The calm of all the blest, But far lovelier than this is the Æthiopic, which reads, In peace, in HIM, I will lay me down: Peace of the dying, Life of the dead: Path of the lowly, Prize at the end, Breath of the holy, SAVIOUR and Friend.] Note: These first four Psalms contain in brief the whole Gospel. The first, the Life of CHRIST: "Blessed is the Man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly:" the second, His Passion: "The rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed;" the fourth, His Precious Death and Burial: "I will lay me down in peace and take my rest;" the third, His Resurrection: "I laid me down and slept, and rose up again." Glory be to the FATHER, Who is the LORD; glory to the SON, Who is His Countenance; glory to the HOLY GHOST, Who is the Light of that Countenance.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.]

Collects.
Hear us, we beseech Thee, O LORD, and have mercy upon us in our tribulations;

and, as Thou alone art glorious over the people, give spiritual joy to us, who look for the hope of Thine eternal rewards. Through (1.) Almighty GOD, although our iniquities have offended Thee, grant that our prayers and our confession may obtain Thy mercy; that through Thy loving-kindness, no tribulation of this world may cause us to despair, no harmful persuasion may allure us to evil; but that the Light of Thy countenance may shine upon us; and that from Thy Light in this world, we may advance to the light of Thine everlasting vision. (11.) Hear us when we call, O LORD JESU CHRIST, Who art our righteousness; that as Thou didst for the wicked undergo all miseries, so Thou wouldest on the penitent bestow all mercies. (11.) [Grant us, we beseech Thee, Almighty GOD, the gladness of Thy SPIRIT in our hearts, that we, offering the sacrifice of righteousness, and alway putting our trust in Thee, may, when the end of our life is at hand, lay us down in the peace of CHRIST, and take our rest for ever in His kingdom. Through the same. (2.)]

Psalm 5

TITLE. English Version: To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David. LXX.: To the end: for the heiress, a Psalm of David. Vulgate: In finem, pro eâ quæ hæreditatem consequitur; Psalmus David. Or, as modern critics: To the Supreme; on the wind instruments; a Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST is the inhabiter of Saints, the hearer of the Church. The voice of the Church. CHRIST speaketh to the FATHER concerning the Jews, and to the Church which hath received the heritage of Paradise, not of the old Testament, as the title of the Psalm proves. VEN. BEDE. To the end: for her that obtaineth the inheritance. That is for the Church, who, by the Resurrection of CHRIST, has received the gift of spiritual good; and who herself is sometimes called the heritage of the LORD, since by His precious Blood she hath been redeemed. Whence it is written in the 2nd Psalm: "Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the Gentiles for thine heritage." All this Psalm is spoken in the person of the Church. In the first section she desireth that her prayer may be heard, and showeth how heretics and schismatics are shut out from the gifts of the LORD. In the second, she maketh request that, through the understanding of Holy Scripture, she may be led in a right path to that happy country, from whence she knoweth that they who are treacherous will be for ever shut out. In the last she setteth forth the rewards of the blessed, that in one and the same discourse she may convert the wicked by the prediction of their punishment, and excite the good by the promise of their reward.

SYRIAC. PSALTER. A prayer of David in the person of the Church when in the morning he went up to the temple of the LORD.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Monday: Lauds. [Feasts of Invention and Exaltation of the Cross: II. Nocturn. Feasts of Crown of Thorns, and of Nails and Spear: II. Nocturn. Feasts of SS. Agnes and Agatha: II. Nocturn. Common of One Martyr: II. Nocturn. Common of Confessors: II. Nocturn. Office of the Dead: Lauds.] Monastic. Ferial; Monday: Lauds. [Common of One Martyr and of Confessors: I. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: Matins.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Ponder • my words, O LORD. Office for the Dead. Make Thy way plain, • O LORD, my GOD, before Thy face. [Common of One Martyr: Thou hast crowned him with the shield of Thy good will, O LORD. Common of Confessors: Let all them that put their trust in Thee, O LORD, rejoice, for Thou hast blessed the righteous, and crowned him with the shield of Thy good will.] Parisian. All they that hope in Thee • shall ever be giving of thanks, and Thou shalt dwell in them. Lyons. Consider • my crying, O LORD. Mozarabic. My voice shalt Thou hear betimes, O LORD. Early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up. 1 Ponder my words, O LORD: consider my meditation. Here we distinguish two kinds of prayer: words and meditations. Words may refer both to that form of prayer which our blessed LORD has left us, and to those prayers which, by His teaching, His Church has provided for her children. Meditations, to the thoughts and desires of our heart, whether put into, or ascending without, words. We call upon GOD to ponder the first, to weigh their full meaning, oftentimes more than we are aware of, and to give us according to that: to consider the second, bestowing on us what He sees to be good among the things which we ask, and regarding our meaning rather than our expressions.

2 O hearken thou unto the voice of my calling, my king and my GOD: for unto thee will I make my prayer. Note; there are three things which make prayer acceptable to GOD; faithfulness, humility, and assiduity; and we have them all here. Faithfulness: my King, showing that we are subjects to none other. Humility: I will look up. Assiduity: Early in the morning. My King and my God. By King, we understand the SON, by God, the FATHER. And the reason of this order of the words may be, that by A. CHRIST we draw near to the FATHER, as He saith, ”No man cometh unto the FATHER but by Me.” [All Three Persons of the Holy Trinity are marked in the opening of this Psalm, in the three titles, LORD, King, and GOD, but the verb is singular, denoting the indivisible Unity.] 3 My voice shalt thou hear betimes, O LORD: early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

S. Cyprian. de Or. Dom. 217. A. C. In the morning. This may be expounded in several senses: first, of diligence in seeking GOD, not only in the morning, but early in the morning. Again, of purity; the morning being the clearest and purest time of the day. Again, the night may be taken of the darkness of original sin: then the illumination of Baptism is signified by the morning. And literally, David appointed the Levites to stand every morning, to thank and praise the LORD. Look up, because looking down to the earth we can obtain no real help.

[Early in the morning, that is, as soon as CHRIST, Who is the bright and morning Star, arises on my darkened heart, I will begin to pray. Early in the Resurrection morning, which has no night, I will stand by Thee (Vulg.) at Thy right hand, and will behold (Vulg.) Thy righteous judgments. Early, because Divine grace is like

the manna, which had to be gathered before the sun arose to melt it. Early in the morning, says Rabbi Rasi, because we are guilty sinners, and that is the time of judgment and execution, according to that saying of the Prophet, ”Execute judgment in the morning.” Observe further, that the seven stages of true prayer are all set before us in these verses, and in the seventh. First, right intention, My voice shalt Thou hear: secondly, eagerness, betimes; thirdly, constancy, Early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee; fourthly, a pure conscience, and will look up. The three other stages are,—union with GOD, I will come into Thy house; confidence, in the multitude of Thy mercies; and reverence, I will worship. Look up, in this life, for help, and yet more to ponder on the Divine mysteries of the New Law. Look up, in the life to come, on the ineffable glory and the Beatific Vision. Some Greek texts, and the Arabic version, read here, Thou shalt see me: and the Syriac and Æthiopic are nearly the same, I shall appear unto Thee. It is David, observes a Saint, calling on GOD in trouble, and saying, Thou hast seen me a shepherd, Thou wilt see me a king. Thou hast seen me harping, Thou wilt see me prophesying.]

4 For thou art the GOD that hast no pleasure in wickedness: neither shall any evil dwell with thee. The God. Not like the gods many and lords many of the heathen, which were so often served by, and took pleasure in, wickedness. He saith not, Come unto Thee, but dwell with Thee; for it was in order that, being made clean, they might dwell with Him for ever that the publicans and sinners came into the presence of the LORD. 5 Such as be foolish shall not stand in thy sight: for thou hatest all them that work vanity. In this and the next verse are set forth three kinds of sinners who are not to stand in the presence of GOD; the foolish, that is, sinners in thought (for ”The fool hath said in his heart, There is no GOD:”) them that work wickedness, that is, sinners in deed: and them that speak leasing, that is, sinners in words. Shall not stand in Thy sight. They shall not in this world, even in His holy temple, because they will not; and they will not stand in His sight before His Judgment seat, because they shall not. That work vanity. Not that have worked it, or where could any hope to appear?

6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor both the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. Will abhor. That is, though He now abhors them, He will in the last day manifest His abhorrence by condemning them to everlasting destruction. Note: the sins of the heart are visited as if they were sins of action. Blood-thirsty, not bloody: deceitful, not an open liar. 7 But as for me, I will come into thine house, even upon the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple. And yet, nevertheless, we who have so often and so grievously offended both in thought, word, and deed, will come into the House of GOD; and can only do so upon the multitude of His mercy. Or if prevented from actually going up thither, like Daniel, who when he made his prayer looked towards Jerusalem, we will worship toward His holy temple. Again, the words may be taken

of that heavenly house into which we one day hope to enter, and of the Lamb Who is the Temple thereof.

[Into Thine house. As a stone let into the very substance of the building, never more to go out, towards, not in, Thy holy temple, doing reverence to the human Body of CHRIST JESUS, the true sanctuary of GOD, in which dwelt all His fulness, the temple destroyed by the Jews, and raised up again in three days.] A. 8 Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies : make thy way plain before my face. And because in attaining to this celestial dwelling, we are surrounded by many enemies, we therefore call upon God to lead us in His righteousness, even CHRIST Who is the Way. Because of mine enemies. In a twofold sense; that they may be preserved from hurting us, or that we may be enabled to do them good. Before my face. That there may be no turning back from it; no "ye did run well." Or again, that the true Way, our blessed LORD, may be more and more plainly manifested to us; and that we may more and more trustfully look to Him.

[Make Thy way plain. There is an especial pathos in selecting this verse as the Antiphon for that Office of the Dead which takes its name Dirge from the Vulgate Dirige, here found. It is the cry of the parting soul, about to begin its mystic journey to another world, by a road beset with ghostly enemies, and calling on God for help against them and for light and guidance by the way. Through death's valley, dim and dark, JESUS guide thee in the gloom, Show thee where His footprints mark Tracks of glory through the tomb. Grant him, LORD, eternal rest, With the spirits of the blest. It is Thy way before my face in the Hebrew and in the English versions. The LXX. and Vulgate, and Æthiopic read it conversely, my way before Thy face. God's Way is before our face when we are following CHRIST, Who is that Way; our way is before God's Face, when, having gone in that Way from strength to strength, we appear at the last unto the God of gods in Sion.]

9 For there is no faithfulness in his mouth : their inward parts are very wickedness. For there is no faithfulness. And therefore, since there are so many that would lead us into error, we the more require that God's way may be made plain to us. In his mouth, and "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." 10 Their throat is an open sepulchre : they flatter with their tongue. An open sepulchre. Dangerous and noisome, and as silent in the praises of God, as the tomb. The two clauses set forth the open and secret endeavours of her enemies to destroy or injure the Church, and they thus also doubly attacked our LORD. Openly, as when they said, "He hath a devil;" as when "they took up stones to stone Him;" as when they "led Him to the brow of the hill." Secretly, as when tempting Him, they said, "We know that Thou art true;" and as when Judas betrayed Him with a kiss.

[An open sepulchre. And so more dangerous even than hypocrites, who are like sepulchres closed and whited outwardly. Open, because they are gaping to swallow up the labours of others, as the grave gapes for bodies. Open, because their soul

is not only dead in sins, but emits its noisome savour in evil words of heresy, which bring others down into the same tomb of unrighteousness. They would do less harm were they silent.] 11 Destroy thou them, O GOD; let them perish through their own imaginations: cast them out in the multitude of their ungodliness; for they have rebelled against thee. Let them perish. This is the first instance of that praying for evil on others which has so much perplexed some with the Psalms, and which, as clearly as anything else, shows that they are to be taken in a sense above that of the letter. (This subject is referred to in the Third Dissertation.) But if we always apply such expressions to our spiritual enemies, the difficulty will disappear. Through their own imaginations. Like Gehazi, who thought to obtain the gold, and was visited with the leprosy, of Naaman.

[Destroy them. The LXX. and Vulgate read, Judge them: modern critics, far better, Make them repent. Let them perish through their own imaginations. The LXX. and Vulgate are somewhat nearer to the Hebrew, reading, as they do, Let them fall away from their thoughts, that is, let them abandon, or be baffled in, their evil plans, or, let their own consciences accuse and condemn them. Cast them out. So long as the sinner hides his guilt, he is within the grave. But when the voice of the LORD calls on any Lazarus to come forth, then, by moving him to confession, He casts him out of darkness into light in this life, that he may not be cast out of light into outer darkness in the world to come. Rebelled. The LXX. and Vulgate read, embittered Thee. By their own sin, making that Bread of Life which is sweet to the taste of the righteous, a bitter poison to them.

Hic est panis, sumptus digne, A gehennæ servans igne, Qui, si sumptus sit indigne, Mortem dat perpetuam.] S. Albertus Magnus. S. Matt. xxiii. 27. Rabbi Rasi. A. Haymo. A. A. The Sequence, Recolamus sacramcænum. 12 And let all them that put their trust in thee rejoice: they shall ever be giving of thanks, because G thou defendest them; they that love thy name shall be joyful in thee. [Thou defendest them. LXX., Syriac, and Vulgate, Thou shalt dwell in them. The Æthiopic, yet better, Thou shalt dwell over them. As a sheltering tent, notes Cardinal Bellarmine, but we may better take the LORD's own simile, as a bird gathering her young under her wings.] 13 For thou, LORD, wilt give thy blessing unto the righteous: and with thy favourable kindness wilt thou defend him as with a shield. In these verses we have the help of GOD promised to His Church. Where note three things. 1. It is eternal: they shall EVER be giving of thanks. 2. Divine: THOU defendest them. 3. Free: Thou wilt GIVE Thy blessing. And what then matters it who scorns or injures us? If GOD be for us, who can be against us? The Vulgate translation somewhat differs from ours. For Thou shalt give Thy blessing to the righteous: O Lord, Thou hast crowned us as with the shield of Thy good-will. "In the life of this world," says S. Jerome, "a shield is one thing, and a crown another: GOD Himself is both Crown and Shield. As a shield, He defends; as a crown, He rewards." Well, then, may the Church pray in one of her sweetest hymns:

The Hymn, A Patre Unigenitus. Glory be to the FATHER, unto Whom is said, Ponder my words, O LORD; glory be to the SON, unto Whom is said, Consider my meditation; glory be to the HOLY GHOST, unto Whom is said, Hearken Thou unto the voice of my calling. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.]

Collects.

O merciful LORD, Who understandest the groaning of the contrite heart before it is expressed, make us, we pray Thee, the Temple of the PARACLETE, to the end that we may merit to be crowned with the shield of celestial mercy. Through. (1.) Our King and our GOD, repel from our hearts the night of error and ignorance, so that renewing us into a new man, Thou mayest in the morning hear our voice. Grant that we may very early by good works present ourselves to Thee, and vouchsafe that we may contemplate Thee in the Sacrament of Thy Resurrection. (11.) O GOD, Who hatest all that work iniquity, fill us with the strength of Thy love; that they may at some time turn to Thee and bitterly lament their sin, who now speak falsely against Thee. (11.) O LORD, the expectation of our salvation, receive the prayers of them that call upon Thee: Thou that art the discoverer of hidden things, give ear to the hidden cry of the heart; that those things which we tremble to have committed and blush to confess, Thou, our King, mayest forgive of Thy clemency, and blot out of Thy goodness; so that our supplication may arise to Thee in the morning, and the good gifts of Thy mercy may descend on us right early. (11.)

[O our King and GOD, lead us in Thy righteousness because of our enemies, and direct my way in Thy sight, that Thou mayest ever rejoice and dwell in us, who are crowned with the shield of Thy goodwill. Through. (1.)]

Psalm 6

TITLE. English Version: To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David. Vulgate: To the end, in the Songs, A Psalm of David for the Eighth. Modern writers: To the Supreme, for the stringed instruments, in concert with the chorus.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST is the Conqueror of our enemies. The voice of CHRIST to the FATHER. That the creature may praise the Creator, and it has to do with penitence. Read it with the resurrection of Lazarus. VEN. BEDE. For the eighth signifies the coming of the LORD, The old creation having been accomplished in seven days, the number 8 is taken by mediæval writers sometimes of the new creation of Baptism, sometimes of that new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. So Venerable Bede in one of his hymns: ”Octava præstat ceteris Ætatibus sublimior, Cum mortui de pristino Terræ resurgent aggere.” In the Sheminith of the Psalms (and compare also that verse in 1 Chron. xv. 21, ”With harps upon the Sheminith to excel,”) whatever may be the literal meaning, no wonder that they should

have loved to find a prophecy of that eighth age of perpetual bliss. S. Hilary dwells at length on the subject in his preface to the Psalms (12—14;) and S. Athanasius on this very Psalm says: ”In the sixth age, the world shall come to an end; in the seventh, the LORD shall judge the universe; in the eighth, the one shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the other into life eternal.” On this same passage and in this sense, Gerhohus writes at great length and with much beauty. [The Cabbalists, looking, as usual, for mysteries in numbers, have noted that the Name of the LORD occurs exactly eight times in this Psalm, five when the work of the world being finished, He shall come to judge the earth, whence this Psalm begins with the greatest trembling. He that composed this Psalm prays in a fourfold manner. In the beginning he excites the good-will of the Judge, speaking of His power of judgment, of His wont to spare, and of his own infirmity. In the second division he relates his own miseries. In the third he separates himself from evil

men, which separation he knows to be likely to win the favour of the good Judge. Lastly, he repudiates all the wicked, with whom he refuses to have any portion.

EUSEBIUS OF CÆSARÆA. A pattern of confession.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. [Office for the Dead: I. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: Matins.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Serve the LORD, &c. [Office for the Dead: Turn Thee, * O LORD, and deliver my soul, for in death no man remembereth Thee.] Parisian. My just help is from the LORD, * Who preserveth those that are true of heart. Mozarabic. Rebuke me not in Thine anger. This is the first of the seven Penitential Psalms: the seven weapons wherewith to oppose the seven deadly sins: the seven prayers inspired by the sevenfold SPIRIT to the repenting sinner: the seven guardians for the seven days of the week: the seven companions for the seven Canonical Hours of the day. 1 O LORD, rebuke me not in thine indignation: neither chasten me in thy displeasure. Theodoret. i. 418. Rebuke me not in this life; neither chasten me in the next. Where note: he saith not absolutely, Rebuke me not, but adds, in Thine indignation: ”For if we be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards and not sons.” And so David himself testifies in another place: ”Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O LORD.” As if he said, Rebuke me as a Father, chasten me as a Master.

[Rebuke me not. This is the first step of the seven in the ladder of repentance, denoted by the seven Penitential Psalms, times in the first five verses, exactly as in the first half of the Decalogue, and three times in the last three, as in the Levitical benediction.] and marks fear of punishment. Next is sorrow for sin, ”I will confess my sins unto the LORD.” Thirdly; the hope of pardon, ”Thou shalt answer for me, O LORD my GOD.” Fourthly; the love of a cleansed soul, ”Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.” Fifthly; longing for the heavenly Jerusalem, ”When the LORD shall build up Sion, and when His glory shall appear.” Sixthly; distrust of self, ”My soul fleeth unto the LORD.” Seventhly; prayer against final doom, ”Enter not into judgment with Thy servant.”]

2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD, for I am weak: O LORD, heal me, for my bones are vexed.
Have mercy. GOD has mercy in many ways. By waiting, as it is written: ”And therefore will the LORD wait, that He may be gracious unto you.” By long-suffering, as He saith: ”It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.” By calling: ”I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” By helping: ”He, remembering His mercy, hath holpen His servant Israel.” By upholding: ”When I said, My foot hath slipped, Thy mercy, O LORD,

held me up." I am weak: there is nothing like a confession of weakness to move the Heavenly Physician to compassion. Weak, from the sin of Adam; so that "of myself I cannot do the things that I would." Weak, from actual transgression: for no soul can fall into sin without losing some of the strength that it received at Baptism. Weak: for if even the intellect were not enfeebled, how could it be so easily overcome by passions? Yes: weakness is indeed the first and best argument for GOD's mercy. Whence S. Gregory, writing on this very Psalm: "Adest miseria: adsit et misericordia." "What," asks S. Ambrose, "is David weak, and dost thou profess to be strong? Did Solomon fall, and dost thou stand firm?" Note: bodily weakness is sometimes spiritual strength; yet even against that also we may cry to Him Who "healeth all our infirmities." But here, spiritual weakness is also included, and we cry for grace that "when we are weak, then we may be strong." My bones are vexed: therefore we pray, heal me, remembering the promise, "He keepeth all His bones, not one of them is broken." Well, therefore, asks S. Peter Chrysologus: "What is weaker than man, whom sense beguiles, ignorance deceives, judgment surrounds, pomp injures, time deserts, age changes, infancy softens, youth precipitates, old age destroys?"

[Heal me. The Psalmist calls on the Great Physician for help, but does not presume to tell Him how He is to heal. Use Thy sharpest remedies, fire and steel, on me in this life, so that Thou spare me in that which is to come. My bones. It is not merely the weaker part of my nature which fails me, S. Luke i. but the very strongest, my understanding, will, and firmness, my spiritual might, all that is, or may be, virtue, is enfeebled by my sin.] 3 My soul also is sore troubled : but, LORD, how long wilt thou punish me? A. & G. Troubled. Not with passion, nor anger, nor with temporal fears only: nor with the afflictions of this world only, but with sorrow for sin. For of the former it is written, that "man disquieteth himself in vain." How long? If GOD delays to be gracious, it is not without love to incite us to more fervent prayer, to make us more vigilant against sin; for that which is easily cured, we take little care to prevent: to try our faith, and to make us feel, if the penitent suffers much, how far more grievous is the lot of the impenitent. Note: GOD hears, though He answers not. The verb is in the present, to show the readiness with which GOD gives: "Unto him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Here it is in the future, to teach us that the visible effects of GOD's gifts do not always at once appear.

4 Turn thee, O LORD, and deliver my soul : O save me for thy mercy's sake. Turn Thee. For the LORD turned and looked upon Peter, before he went out and wept bitterly. He that has turned from us for our sins, must turn to us that we may repent. For it is written: "Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn unto you." "How long," cries S. Peter Chrysologus, "wilt Thou endure, how long wilt Thou not assist, where is Thy CHRIST so often promised? Let Him come, let Him come, before the world shall have perished altogether, and nothing be found in it that He can preserve." Turn Thee, O Lord, From what? From GOD into man, from the LORD into the servant,

from the Judge into the Father. 5 For in death no man remembereth thee : and who will give thee thanks in the pit?

In death. It may be understood either of temporal or eternal death. For how can we remember Him to Whom we are dead in trespasses and sins? They are solemn words of Salvian's, in which he describes—commenting on the Vulgate, "And who shall confess to Thee in the grave?"—the utter uselessness of a too late repentance; the limit beyond which the keys of Absolution have no power. 6 I am weary of my groaning; every night wash I my bed : and water my couch with my tears. Every night. For repentance is not a thing to be done once and then left alone; but to be practised day by day as long as we live, more especially in the dark night of affliction. Couch, may be understood mystically of those sins which have plunged the soul in security, and have withdrawn from it the light of God's presence. Of which couch the Bride speaks in the Canticles, saying: "By night on my bed I sought Him Whom my soul loveth; I sought Him, but I found Him not." Wash, lamenting past sins: water, so as to bring forth good fruits for the future.

[My bed. The bed on which the soul lies sick, is the flesh, weakened and wounded by Adam's fall. That bed the great Physician touched, by taking flesh Himself and suffering therein, and when He touched it, the sick man was healed. Wherefore is said to the repentant sinner, "Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house," that soul and body may be together in the heavenly mansions. My tears. This is the second of the seven liquors which God gives us to wash the soul. First come the waters of Baptism: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." Secondly; tears, as here. Thirdly; the milk of pure doctrine: "His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk." Fourthly; the precious Blood of CHRIST, Who "loved us and washed us from our sins with His own Blood." Fifthly; the wine of compunction: "He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of the grape." Sixthly; the butter of rich devotion: "I washed my steps in butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil." Seventhly; the oil of spiritual gladness: "Bring me oil, that I may wash me."]

7 My beauty is gone for very trouble: and worn away because of all mine enemies. My beauty. That is the beauty wherewith we were arrayed in Holy Baptism, when, as Ezekiel speaks, We were girded about with fine linen and covered with silk, when there was neither spot, nor wrinkle nor any such thing in us. Worn away: lost, little by little, through the assaults of our ghostly enemies. The Vulgate gives it rather differently: "I have grown old among all mine enemies." Where Lorinus observes that Holy Scripture mentions eight kinds of age. 1. That of natural condition: "They all shall wax old as doth a garment." 2. Of human corruption: "Put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." 3. Of ignorance: "Ancient error hath departed." 4. Of character and disposition: "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles." 5. Of sin: "O thou that art waxen old in wickedness." 6. Of

friendship: ”Forsake not an old friend.” 7. Of the law: ”That we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” 8. Of eternity: ”I beheld till the thrones were cast down and the Ancient of Days did sit.”

Rev. i. 5. [My beauty. The A.V. correctly, with all the old versions, mine eye. This is the eye whereof the LORD saith in the Gospel, ”If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.” This eye is the Catholic understanding of the Church, which is troubled because of wrath (Vulg.) against heretics, oppressors, and evil spirits. It is also the reasoning power of each man, confused by the attacks of his ghostly foes. Worn away. The A. V., rightly, wareth old. Because it has not ”put off the old man;” because ”Israel, thou art in thine enemies’ land, thou art waxen old in a strange country.” And so, even a heathen poet has truly said: 8 Away from me, all ye that work vanity: for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

After declaring his repentance, he proceeds to speak of its effects. Away from me. ”For what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” In the Canticles: ”I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?” That work. Not that have worked, lest he should seem to exclude penitents like himself. Note: all the Psalms which treat of penitence, one only excepted, the 88th, end with the expression of joyful hope. [They that work vanity always are the evil spirits, who are most readily driven away by penitential weeping, for as has been well said, Satan can better endure his own fire than our tears, and he is more racked by the weeping of a contrite heart than by the flame of the burning of hell. That flame can absorb all rivers, but cannot dry up the waters of tears. Nay, rather, observes a Saint, writing on this very Psalm, tears can extinguish the fire which is not quenched.]

9 The LORD hath heard my petition: the LORD will receive my prayer. In Ps. iv. In Ps. xxxvii. My petition. Like Jeremiah’s, That I should not be caused to go into the pit to die there. My prayer: for grace for the future. It is not enough to a truly joyful heart to express its gladness once; whence S. Paul also says, ”Rejoice in the LORD alway, and again I say, rejoice:” hence its repetition here. S. Hilary prettily enough represents penitential tears as going on an embassy to the throne of grace: S. Ambrose works out the idea at greater length, and says that such an embassy can never fail of its aim. ”The most honourable embassy,” writes another Saint, ”which can be sent to GOD, is the shower of tears which fell from a penitent eye.” ”The prayers of tears are more useful,” says S. Maximus of Turin, ”than those of words. Words of prayer often deceive: tears of prayer deceive not. A word is often unable to express its own meaning: a tear can always say that it would.” S. Anselm of Laon says neatly enough, ”Oratio Deum lenit, lacryma cogit; hæc pungit, illa ungit.”

10 All mine enemies shall be confounded, and sore vexed: they shall be turned back, and put to shame suddenly. This is not so much a prayer against, as an

intercession for, his enemies. Confounded at their past folly; sore vexed by true repentance; put to salutary shame in this world, that they may escape everlasting contempt in the next. Suddenly. For though the day of the LORD tarry long, yet that which is not expected at the time, comes suddenly after all. And note: it is fit that after crying for mercy himself, he should ask it for others: according to that saying, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." [Confounded. This is the very same word , which is rendered put to shame, in the last clause of the verse, and much of the force is lost by diversity of translation. Let them be ashamed, after my example, for their past sins, sore vexed by the fear of judgment to come, turned backward from their sins, and to GOD, and ashamed, not of their sins alone, but of all in which they once boasted, and that suddenly, that they may not delay repentance till it is too late. And note that shame is twice mentioned, the shame before conversion which leads to repentance, the shame from the memory of past sins, which guards against relapse.]

Glory be to the FATHER, the LORD Who hath heard the voice of my weeping; glory be to the SON, the LORD Who hath heard my petition; glory be to the HOLY GHOST, the LORD Who will receive my prayer. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.]

Collects.
O CHRIST, SON of the Living GOD, Whose beauty in Thy Passion departed for very heaviness and was worn away because of all Thine enemies, heal the wounds of our hearts, that Thy grace being confirmed in us, we may so put our trust in Thy Passion as to find our glory in Thy Resurrection. (11.) We know, O LORD JESU CHRIST, that whilst Thou wast on earth, Thou didst every night water Thy couch with tears for us men: grant us so to repent for our iniquities, that we may hereafter attain to that place where all tears are wiped from all eyes. (11.) A. Regard, we beseech Thee, O LORD, the supplications of Thy people; and, as Thou inflictest on us the severity of just correction, give us also the assistance of merciful consolation. (11.) [Almighty GOD, we humbly intreat for Thy most loving mercy, that Thou mayest not rebuke in Thine indignation, nor chasten in Thy displeasure us who have offended Thee by our many transgressions, but turn Thee and deliver our souls from everlasting damnation, and save us for Thy mercy's sake. Through. (1.)]

Psalm 7

TITLE. English Version: Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite. Vulgate: Psalm of David, which he sang to the LORD for the words of Cush the Benjamite. Shiggaion might perhaps be translated ”descant,” or ”rhapsody;” but in the other part of the title the critics find considerable difficulty. Some will have Cush to signify Saul, and imagine him to have been called Cush or an Ethiopian from the blackness of his character. Among the Fathers, S. Jerome and Ven. Bede are of this opinion: among the moderns, Jansenius. Others will have the name to be that of Cushi or Hushai, by whose wiliness the good counsel of Ahithophel was overruled: and this is held by the greater part of the Fathers. Arias will have Cush to be the same as Kish, the father or uncle of Saul; an opinion which has found no followers. Others would translate, ”Concerning the words of the traitorous Benjamite,” and would refer them to Shimei, when he said to the flying and exiled king, ”Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial:” and if this interpretation may be thought admissible, it certainly adds great point and beauty to the literal meaning of the Psalm.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST is the searcher out of all consciences. The Prophet speaketh to CHRIST of His enemies the Jews and of the devil. Yet it appeareth to pertain to CHRIST and to the synagogue. For CHRIST is exalted even to the heavens, but the synagogue had fallen into the pit which it digged for Him. VEN. BEDE. The Prophet, therefore, turning his own circumstances into the future mysteries of the LORD the SAVIOUR, in the first division prays to GOD in His person that he may be delivered from all his persecutors. In the second he prays to be assisted by the manifested glory of His Resurrection: Arise, O Lord. In the third he introduces Him speaking, on account of His humility, and Ven. Bede first enters into the reasons why Hushai cannot be meant. demanding to be judged according to His justice and truth: terrifying the evil by the prospect of vengeance, promising to the good gratuitous rewards: Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness. In the fourth part, the Prophet speaketh again, and admonisheth the Jews that through fear of the coming Judgment, they depart from the evil they have proposed: God is a righteous Judge, &c. This Psalm also may be understood in the Person of the

GOD-Man, if only the things which are there spoken humbly are referred to our humility which He bare.

EUSEDIUS OF CÆSAREA. A confession of David, and prophecy of the calling of nations. SYRIAC PSALTER. The conversion of the Gentiles to the faith, and to the confession of the Trinity.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. [Office for the Dead: I. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: Matins.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. GOD is a righteous Judge, strong and patient: shall GOD be provoked every day? [Office for the Dead: Lest he devour my soul like a lion, and tear it in pieces while there is none to help.] Mozarabic. My help cometh of GOD, Who preserveth them that are true of heart. 1 O LORD my GOD, in thee have I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me; The first three verses refer to the life of our LORD on earth, when there were indeed many that desired to persecute Him, and like lions to tear Him in pieces. Lord my God. LORD of all by right, GOD by creation, my GOD by Thy Incarnation. In Thee. ”For I will not trust in my bow: it is not my sword that shall help me.” And from the literal sense: though the craft of Hushai has given me time to raise an army, yet in Thee, not in it, have I put my trust. For Thou hast said, ”Cursed be the man that trusteth in man.” Wherefore I confide not in my counsel, nor in its prudence, but in Thee.

2 Lest he devour my soul, like a lion, and tear it in pieces: while there is none to help. Lest he. He first mentions all them that persecute him, and then proceeds, lest he. But how none to help, when David had an army, and chiefs, and knowledge of war? Because the whole world can be no help to him whom God assists not. Mystically, it is the cry of the Church before the Incarnation: while there is none to help me: while the fulness of time is not yet come. For only by that great mystery are we delivered from the spiritual lion who sought to destroy our souls: and that by the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Who hath prevailed. [This verse is the Antiphon in the Office for the Dead, wherein the Church prays for help against the assaults of him who ”walketh about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour,” thinking vainly that there is none to help, for

The lamb is in the fold, In perfect safety penned; The lion once had hold, And thought to make an end: But One came by with wounded side, And for the sheep the Shepherd died.] 3 O LORD my GOD, if I have done any such thing: or if there be any wickedness in my hands; Our blessed LORD Himself speaks; setting forth in this verse His innocency, in the next His patience. Any such thing: as all the false accusations the Jews laid to His charge. If there be any wickedness, for He ”did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.” [Any such thing. They differ as

to the especial thing here implied. The Targum seems to take it, If I have made this Psalm with evil intent. The Greek Fathers, If I have dealt with my parents as Absalom has done with me. Many of the Latins hold that pride is meant, and S. Thomas, in particular, points out that the words denote a denial of any act which has brought on the misfortune as its punishment. In my hands. What then is in His hands? The print of the nails which we put there, the writing of our sins, our names graven there by Himself, the writing of His pardoning love.]

4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that dealt friendly with me: yea, I have delivered him that without any cause is mine enemy; Four manners of rewardings are mentioned in Scripture; evil for good: evil for evil: good for good: good for evil. Here we have the last. Delivered: by all the good that He did, by all the evil that He suffered: from bodily disease, by healing the sick; from bodily hunger, by feeding the multitude; from spiritual famine, by His own Body and Blood; from spiritual sickness, for Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses; from the prince of the power of this world, and from everlasting death. That without any cause is mine enemy. ”Because the carnal mind is enmity against GOD: for it is not subject to the law of GOD, neither indeed can be.” [Have delivered him, &c. The LXX. and Vulgate read this clause very differently. May I (deservedly Vulg.) fall away empty from mine enemies, i.e. may I be ingloriously worsted in my encounter with my earthly or spiritual foes, losing life on the one hand, grace on the other. The Syriac, Targum, and S. Jerome, again, agree in explaining the words, If I have despoiled, or oppressed, even mine enemies. And it is literally taken of David allowing Saul to go free out of the cave; mystically of CHRIST’s prayer on the Cross, ”FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”]

5 Then let mine enemy persecute my soul, and take me: yea, let him tread my life down upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. He shows here all the bitterness of His Passion: in that though He had delivered us, who without any cause were His enemies,—us, who were rebels against Him,—us, that He might reconcile us to GOD, the enemy, nevertheless, did persecute His soul and take it. Mine honour: for being a King, He had a Crown of thorns; being a Conqueror, no seemlier a triumphal chariot than the Cross; scornful revilings, instead of applauses; a reed for a sceptre. And all this to the intent that our enemy, the devil, might not persecute our souls in this world, and take them in the next; nor lay our honour, our hopes, and strength, and confidence in the dust. 6 Stand up, O LORD, in thy wrath, and lift up thyself, because of the indignation of mine enemies: arise up for me in the judgment that thou hast commanded.

From the Passion he forthwith turns to the Resurrection. In Thy wrath. And so it is written in Isaiah: ”My fury it upheld Me.” Because of the indignation of mine enemies. And so again it is written: ”According to their deeds, accordingly He shall repay; fury to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies.” Arise up for me.

Where notice how he lays hold of and applies to himself the merits of the LORD's Resurrection: saying with Thomas, "My LORD and my GOD;" with S. Paul, "I know whom I have believed;" with the Bride, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." In the judgment that Thou hast commanded. Because He thus 2 Tim. i. 12. Eusebius. S. Chrysost. S. Basil. Theodoret. Z. S. Thom. Aquin. Burgen. L. A. Beda. Ric. Hamp. D. C. P. arose for our sakes from the heart of the earth in His Resurrection, He will arise to deliver us in our own: because He was unjustly condemned in the judgment which the Jews demanded, He will rise up to acquit us in the judgment which He has commanded.

[Stand up. The suffering Church calls on her LORD at four times to arise. Under the Law she implores Him to show Himself Incarnate; when she feels the need of a sacrifice for sin, she asks Him to be exalted in His Passion, and to reign from the Tree; then to return, arising from the grave, to comfort His Bride; and last, that He may stand up in the preaching of His Saints, so that His Name may be adored in the bounds of mine enemies, in Judæa which rejected Him, and in all those Gentile lands which once knew not GOD. The Syriac reads, Be Thou lifted up upon the necks of mine enemies, that they may bow under Thine easy yoke. The judgment. LXX. and Vulgate read, the precept. Many Greek Fathers, expounding literally, take it of GOD's vengeance on Absalom's breach of filial duty. Others refer it to David's claiming the fulfilment of GOD's promise of a sure kingdom to him. Mystically, there are several views. First comes the Eastern, that it is a prayer to CHRIST to bestow the promised gifts of the SPIRIT, for the forgiveness of sins and fulfilment of the New Law. The Latin Fathers are divided. Some take it of the precept of humility, others of the new commandment of brotherly love; others again of the overthrow of the Jewish nation and polity, and the conversion of the Gentiles.]

7 And so shall the congregation of the people come about thee: for their sakes therefore lift up thyself again. And so: not as once when the congregation came about the LORD in the judgment hall of Pilate to accuse Him, or in the pavement to crown Him with thorns, or on the hill of Calvary to mock Him. But shall so come about Him as to be His congregation, His Church, purchased by the Blood, cleansed by the water that flowed from His side: shall so come about Him as to look to Him and live: "it is good for me to draw near to GOD:" shall so hereafter come about Him as to hear that most joyful voice, "Come, ye blessed children of My FATHER." And this Church could not extend itself and prosper until the coming of the HOLY GHOST; neither could the HOLY GHOST descend till CHRIST had gone up, as it is written, "The HOLY GHOST was not yet given, because that JESUS was not yet glorified:" and again, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." For their sakes therefore, on account of that Church, lift up Thyself again: as Thou didst once lift up Thyself from the darkness of the tomb to the light of this world, so now lift up Thyself again from earth to Thy heavenly kingdom. Or it may

be taken in another sense: the congregation of the people shall rise against Thee to oppose Thee; for their sakes, therefore, and to plead the cause of Thy Church, ascend into heaven.

[Come about Thee. S. Albert briefly sums up the various motives which made the Jewish multitudes throng around CHRIST, thus: Lift up Thyself again. The ancient versions, closer to the Hebrew, and more distinctly foretelling the Ascension, read Return upon high, and that not merely for Thy congregation, but over it, (Heb.) supreme in power, as well as prevalent by intercession.] 8 The LORD shall judge the people; give sentence with me, O LORD: according to thy righteousness, and according to the innocency that is in me. As in the Creed, after the clause, "He ascended into heaven," follows, "from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead," so here, after "Lift up Thyself again," comes, The Lord shall judge the people. The Lord. What LORD save JESUS CHRIST? "For the FATHER judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment into the hand of the Son." The innocency. David speaks not as boasting of it, but as returning thanks for it; the Son of David speaks of it as pleading its merits, and so assuring our pardon.

[Give sentence with me. The A. V., more exactly, Judge me. It is not spoken only of the Head, Who in His perfect holiness can alone abide the sentence of GOD, but it is the cry of the righteous man not yet made perfect, asking for the chastisement which is to purify him as fine gold, according to his righteousness and innocence, that is, active and passive holiness, precisely because there is precious metal needing to be cleansed from dross, and that it may be so completely purged that the wickedness of the ungodly may come to an end in the soul.] 9 O let the wickedness of the ungodly come to an end: but guide thou the just. And yet this very wickedness is allowed by GOD to the end that He may thereby prove the virtue and increase the merit of His martyr servants, even as the fury of the heathen was the glory of the martyrs. Come to an end: virtually indeed, in the Crucifixion; but not actually till all the righteous shall have been gathered into that place, whereinto nothing can in any wise enter that defileth.

S. Augustin. in Joan. 5. Pseudo-Hieron Brev. in loc. 10 For the righteous God : trieth the very hearts and reins. That is, the business and pleasures of this life : whether it be the business of one who would gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ; whether it be the pleasure of one that would rather enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season than suffer affliction with the people of God. R. [Hearts and reins. The good and evil desires of men, the higher thoughts and lower appetites, or else the first movements of the will, and the final accomplishment of action, whence pleasure comes.] 11 My help cometh from God : who preserveth them that are true of heart.

Ay. Where note : every one needs some help. They who seek it from God, need it not from the world, nor from the devil ; they who seek it from the world or the devil,

need it not the less, it is true, but assuredly will not have it, from God. My help cometh from God. My help in temptation from Him Who was thrice tempted in the wilderness : my help in weariness from Him who being taken even as He was, fell asleep in the storm : my help in poverty from Him Who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor : my help in distress, from Him Who being in agony, prayed more earnestly : my help in death, from Him Who Himself bowed His head and gave up the ghost. Who preserveth them that are true of heart. And this is the first time that a blessing is pronounced on the true of heart in the Psalms : on them who receive such innumerable benedictions throughout the whole Psalter, and because they turn neither to the right hand nor to the left in following their LORD here, receive from Him the gift of final perseverance, to the end they may never be separated from Him hereafter.

12 God is a righteous judge, strong, and patient : and God is provoked every day. Ay. And hereby are we stirred up both to hope and to fear. Patient, or who could hope to escape ? and yet righteous, to execute justice on the impenitent : and strong, for " mighty men shall be mightily tormented." Wisd. vi. 6. [God is provoked. The Vulgate puts it as a question, Is God provoked ? with a word (numquid) which looks for a negative answer. The Syriac, LXX., and Æthiopic insert the negative itself. And they point out that God did not show His anger upon the Jews each day that they insulted His Son, nay, that He spared them for a full generation after the Passion, and that as for us, He desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live.] D. C. Ezek. xviii. 23.

13 If a man will not turn, he will whet his sword : he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. [He will whet His sword. That is the Sword which He sent to us first sheathed in the scabbard of human flesh, that "Sword of the SPIRIT, the WORD of GOD," which the FATHER will whet, and polish (LXX.), and brandish (Vulg.) in terror and glory on the day of doom. And so the Prophet : "A sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished ; it is sharpened to make a sore slaughter ; it is furbished that it may glitter : shall we then make mirth ? it is the rod of My SON, it despiseth every tree." He hath bent His bow, the bow of Holy Writ, wherein the stern and rigid precepts of the Old Testament are bent by the cord of love of the New.]

14 He hath prepared for him the instruments of death : he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors. Here we find two different kinds of arrows. The first, instruments of death, when at last His vengeance sleeps no longer, but His threatenings are put into force, and "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." But He also ordaineth another kind of arrows against the persecutors, arrows, namely, of love. Such an one was ordained against Saul, the persecutor, when he became Paul the Apostle. [The instruments of death may also be taken of holy preachers, who threaten death to the unrepentant, as it is written, "We are unto GOD a sweet

savour in CHRIST, in them that are saved, and in them that perish ; to the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life." The arrows are the piercing words and counsels drawn from thence, which He makes burning, (Heb.) with the fire of charity, faith, and devotion. The LXX. and Vulgate, reading arrows for them which burn, point to the same meaning. In a bad sense, the instruments of death or vessels (Vulg.) of death, are heretics, who draw poison from the waters of salvation, and "wrest the Scriptures unto their own destruction." Others interpret this whole passage of GOD's secret vengeance on sinners who burn in their lusts, for whom He prepares, not only swift and sudden arrows, but vessels of everlasting death. And a tamer exposition sees in the sword and bow, the vessels and arrows, Vespasian and Titus with their fearful visitation of the Jews.]

15 Behold, he travaileth with mischief : he hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth ungodliness. "That which is conceived and that which is born, are always of the same kind. If a man was born, a man was conceived : if a lion was born, a lion was conceived ; if a monster S. James i. 15. was born,—and all sin is a monster,—a monster was conceived. Then, when David asserts, he brought forth ungodliness, why does he not speak consistently, he hath conceived ungodliness? Because this is the method of reasoning by which a man who has any faith persuades himself to sin. He first conceives sorrow, he then brings forth ungodliness; he first determines on future repentance, and then, as upon a letter of licence and immunity from punishment, he sins boldly and without fear. The Christian, who is a sinner, knows well that sin destroys the soul, and condemns it to hell: but flattered and conquered by his own lusts, as if he were excusing himself to his soul, and so making all safe, he speaks thus within himself: My soul, I know well that I am destroying and condemning thee, but if I destroy and condemn thee with sin now, I will raise thee up and deliver thee with repentance hereafter."

[He conceiveth sorrow, by longing after temporal goods, which can bring no true godliness, but only care and trouble, and thus gives birth to ungodliness, to the deceit, injustice, and fraud, exhibited in the struggle for riches and power. And the Jews conceived sorrow when they, stung with CHRIST's reproaches, plotted against His life. They brought forth ungodliness, crying, "Crucify Him."] 16 He hath graven and digged up a pit: and is fallen himself into the destruction that he made for other. [Graven and digged up. The words mark two things, the toil of the tempter in his evil work, and the depth to which bad counsel, if not promptly rejected, sinks into the heart. But note, that as a pit can only be dug where there is earth, so it is only base and earthly desires which give the enemy ground to work upon for our destruction. It holds of heretics, who dig deeply into Holy Writ, not for edification, but for evil ends, and it may be taken also of Judas and of the Chief Priests, all of whom perished by their plots against the innocent.]

17 For his travail shall come upon his own head: and his wickedness shall fall on his own pate. Venantius Fortunatus. The Hymn Pange lingua. For the work of our salvation Needs would have his order so, And the multiform deceiver's Art by art would overthrow; And from thence would bring the medicine, Whence the insult of the foe. These sentences are from the noble Sermon of Antonio Vieyra, on the text "Sin no more." Vel. iv. p. 1. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, by which man fell, changed into the tree of life by which Satan perished; the fruit of disobedience, becoming the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of paradise: the garden whence the first Adam was driven forth replaced by the garden where the second Adam arose from the dead. "O sin of Adam, certainly necessary, which was destroyed by the death of CHRIST! O happy fall, which merited such and so great a Redeemer!"

Office of Easter Eve. 18 I will give thanks unto the LORD, according to his righteousness: and I will praise the Name of the LORD most High. He has spoken of the Passion and Resurrection of the LORD, now he speaks of the final beatification of His servants. For it is only in our Country that we can praise the LORD according to His righteousness, seeing that, while we are in the world, the half of His goodness is not declared to us. It is they, as Deborah speaks, "that have been delivered from the noise of archers," which we in this world cannot be, "who shall declare the righteous acts of the LORD, even His righteous acts to the inhabitants of His villages in Israel:" to those who dwell dispersed and scattered in the earth, far from each other, and far from the city of their King, but who shall then be gathered together in one great congregation before the throne of GOD, and of the Lamb.

Glory be to the FATHER, the LORD my GOD, in Whom I have put my trust; glory be to the SON, the LORD Who shall judge the people; glory be to the HOLY GHOST, the righteous GOD, Who preserveth them that are true of heart. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.]

Collects.
GOD, That searchest the heart and triest the reins, deliver us from them that persecute us: and grant us, through the expectation of Thy judgment, such firm trust of heart that we may never recompense to our enemies evil for evil. Through. (1.) O LORD GOD, deliver Thy Church, which trusteth in Thee, from her persecutors: that as, by the might of Thy Passion, Thou didst set her free from the slavery of the devil, so by the virtue of Thy intercession Thou mayest redeem her from eternal punishment. (11.) O GOD, great, powerful, and merciful, deliver us from the roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour, that through the victory of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the hosts of all our enemies may be put to flight. (11.) O LORD our GOD, in Whom we put our trust, deliver Thy faithful from all their vis-

ible enemies that persecute them, that obtaining safety under Thy protection, we may evermore fearlessly praise Thy blessed Name. Through. (1.)

Psalm 8

TITLE. English Version: To the Chief Musician upon Gittith; a Psalm of David. Vulgate: To the end; for the winepresses; a Psalm of David. Modern interpreters: To the Supreme; at wine-press-tide. Targum: To be sung to the harp which David brought from Gath; a Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST, the Son of Man, was made in His Passion a little lower than the angels. The voice of the ancient Church speaketh of CHRIST and of faith. Also of the Ascension of the SAVIOUR, and of the infants that glorified Him and that said, ”Hosanna in the Highest.” The voice of the Church giveth praise to CHRIST for the faith of all creatures. Read it with the Gospel of S. Mark. VEN. BEDE. For the winepresses: that is, for the members of the Church; because, as in the winepress, when the grapes are bruised, and the hardest pips crushed, the sweetest wine pours forth, so, when obstinacy and pride are crushed in the Church, the sweet tears of penitence are beautifully expressed. The Church, then, of former times, true winepress indeed of the body, and salutary fruit of the soul, at the commencement of the Psalm sings the praises of her LORD CHRIST, setting forth His Majesty and the greatness of His operations: ”O Lord, our Governor,” &c. Then she speaketh more plainly of the nature of man, which, from the low and depraved condition whereto Adam’s fall had reduced it, He raised to the height of glory; and the One Person of CHRIST in its two distinct and inconfused natures is unhesitatingly acknowledged: ”What is man,” &c.

SYRIAC PSALTER. A prophecy that the infants and children would sing praise in Hosannas to the LORD.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Ferial. Sunday: I. Nocturn. [Ascension Day: I. Nocturn. Trinity Sunday: I. Nocturn. Transfiguration: I. Nocturn. Feast of the Holy Name: I. Nocturn. Invention of the Cross: II. Nocturn. Feasts of the Crown of Thorns and of the Nails and Spear: II. Nocturn. Feasts of the Blessed Virgin: I. Nocturn. Michaelmas Day: I. Nocturn. All Saints: I. Nocturn. Common of One Martyr and of Confessors:

II. Nocturn. Common of Virgins: I. Nocturn.] Monastic. Ferial. Tuesday: Prime. (Festivals: as Gregorian.) Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: Matins.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. GOD is a righteous Judge, &c. [Ascension: Thy glory is set up above the heavens, O GOD, Alleluia. Trinity Sunday: Be present, One GOD Almighty, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. Transfiguration: Made a little lower than the Angels, He was crowned with glory and worship, and set over the works of the hands of GOD. Holy Name: First verse. All Saints: How excellent is Thy Name, O LORD, for Thou hast crowned Thy Saints with glory and worship, and hast set them over the works of Thy hands. For one Martyr: Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour in all the earth. Common of Virgins: O how fair is the chaste generation with glory.] Mozarabic. How excellent is Thy Name, O LORD, in all the earth. 1 O LORD our Governor, how excellent is thy Name in all the world: thou that hast set thy glory above the heavens!

The former Psalm concludes with a promise, "I will praise the Name of the LORD Most High." Here we have its fulfilment. O Lord, our Governor. GOD's Name is twice repeated: for He is twice our LORD, in that He made us and in that He redeemed us. The LORD of the heathen, as having created them; but ours doubly, in that He is known to us. In that He is our LORD, we are His servants: in that we are His servants, in all that He possesses we have a special interest. In all the earth: and not in Judea alone, seeing that, in the fulness of the time, the Gentiles also were to be added to the Church. And that Name, when first set up as a title over the Cross, was written in three languages, as a sign that hereafter it should be preached and should be worshipped by every tongue and nation.

[Thy Name. It is that Name JESUS, the joy of the faithful, and the true revelation of the FATHER, which is meant. In hoc lucet splendor PATRIS, In hoc patet decor Matris, In hoc fulget honor fratris, Miss. Sarisb. The Sequence, Jesus dulcis Nazarenus. [Above the heavens. They take it, for the most part, literally of the Ascension. Others, and especially the Angelic S. Athanasius. A. S. Hieron. C. S. Thomas Aquin. S. Petr. Damiani, The Hymn, Gaudium mundi. Doctor, see here implied the infinite distance between CHRIST and the very highest of His Saints; not only the Apostles or the Angels, but even her who bore Him, whom Christian singers delight in styling the "new heaven." Aula coelestis speciosa Regis, Fulta septenis sophiæ columnis, Quem nequit totus cohibere mundus Claudis in alvo. Above the Scriptures also, and all Sacraments, because their only value is as ways to Him.] 2 Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies: that thou mightest still the enemy, and the avenger.

Literally the Holy Innocents, who thus glorified CHRIST by their deaths, and they who cried Hosanna by their acclamations, as He Himself has taught us. Spiritu-

ally, the weaker members of the Church, of whom the Apostle writes, ”I have fed you with milk, and not with strong meat.” And again, those who had the innocence and simplicity of babes, as the holy Apostles. Because of Thine enemies: for their conversion; or, if they will not turn, for their destruction. As it is written, ”The arrows of the little ones are made their wounds.” That Thou mightest still the enemy: for GOD hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the wise. Note; He chooses this sign rather than any other, for the more confusion of the Jews. For CHRIST’s other miracles had been performed under the Old Covenant; not so this. [Babes and sucklings. The words are mystically taken of the Apostles, as the first-born of the Church, as taught by their LORD to speak, as fed by Him like new-born babes with the sincere milk of the Word, and as called by Him His ”children.” Avenger. S. Bruno the Carthusian, following here the Italic version, defender, interprets the word of the Jews, professing zeal for the defence of the Law as their motive for persecuting their LORD, saying, ”This Man is not of GOD, because He keepeth not the Sabbath Day;” and again, ”We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the SON of GOD.” Avenger. Not only tyrants and unbelieving nations, whom GOD has at various times raised up to chastise a backsliding Church, but the evil spirit himself, who is only an instrument in his Creator’s hand, and who will finally be stilled in the great doom.]

3 For I will consider thy heavens, even the works of thy fingers: the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained. The heavens. The whole course and disposition of events under God’s Providence: the works of His fingers, Who has declared that all things shall work together for good to them that love Him. His fingers, not His hands, because this is but a small thing for God’s omnipotence. The moon, that is, the Church, dark in itself,—constantly as it were, in danger to shine no more,—as constantly renewed, and deriving all her light from the true Sun. The stars. The Saints of God, as it is written, ”They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.” Note; he mentions not the sun, because the Sun of Righteousness was begotten, not made. And again, in another sense, the Son of David might have taken these words on His own lips, when He continued all night on the mountain in prayer to God, and was then so mindful of the sons of men, as, at the fourth watch of the night, to appear to them walking upon the sea.

[For I will consider. The A. V. more exactly, when I consider, then, seeing God’s majesty, I marvel at His condescension, and am, besides, kindled with eager longing after the Heavenly country. El amor y la pena Despiertan en mi pecho una ansia ardiente, Despiden larga vena Los ojos hechos fuente, La lengua dice al fin con voz doliente: Morada de grandeza, Templo de claridad y hermosura, Mi alma que á tu alteza Nació, ¿qué desventura La tiene en esta carcel baja oscura? The moon and the stars. The use of this Psalm in the Common of Virgins points to yet another meaning of this clause. The moon, observes the confessor of Edward I., denotes Mary, the Mother of God, and that for various reasons. As the moon draws

all her brightness from the sun, and yet is the most luminous object next to him, so Mary, made ”full of grace” by Him whose countenance is ”as the sun shineth in his strength,” is brightest of all the Saints. And yet, as the moon is nearest to the earth, so Our Lady is the lowliest of all in her humility. As the moon rules the tides, so Mary, (according to S. Jerome, ”Star of the Sea,”) by her prayer helps those who are tossed on the bitter surges of the world. And as Easter, the festival of the Resurrection, follows the course of the moon, so the spiritual arising of man by the Incarnation followed the consent of Mary’s will to the

S. Greg. Hom. in Ezek. ii. 1. Rev. i. 16. Ps. xlv. 15. message of the Angel. The choirs of Virgins which be her fellows, and bear her company, then are fitly compared to the stars, less than the moon alone in glory and beauty. The Sequence, O vernantes CHRISTI rasæ. O puellæ, O agnellæ, CHRISTI caræ columbellæ, Sine dolo, sine felle, Cœli stellæ, DEI cellæ, Jubilate purpuratæ, Coronatæ, congregatæ Cum Agno innocentiæ. Ipsa est dilecta mea, Vos præcedens in choreâ, Cujus nomen et persona Suâ lucet in coronâ, Quam inseripsit DEUS PATER, Hæc est illa JESU mater Maria Virgo virginum.] 4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him: and the son of man, that thou visitest him? When, therefore, the prophet considers all these things, tending to man’s salvation, the providence whereby all events work together for his good,—the Church to be his mother, the Saints to be his examples and his friends,—his thoughts are naturally carried back to the one source of all, which is the Incarnation. What is man? The Psalmist answers in another place, ”Every man is but vanity;” and again, ”All men are liars.” Man, taken absolutely as a sinner: the son of man, those that are endeavouring to keep the law of GOD. Visitest. As it is written: ”Blessed be the LORD GOD of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people.” And again, ”Thou visitest the earth, and blessest it.”

[The Rouen Breviary, employing by a peculiar use the eighth Psalm for the matins of Christmas Day, fitly selects this verse as the Antiphon, in the spirit of that hymn of Adam of S. Victor. A. Ps. xxxix. 12. Ps. cxvi. 10. S. Petr. Damiani, Serm. 58. S. Luke i. 68. Ps. lxv. 9. The Sequence, Jubilemus Salvatori. Ut ascendat homo reus Condescendit Homo-Deus Hominis miseriæ. Quis non laudet et lætetur? Quis non gaudens admiretur Opus novæ gratiæ? And there is yet another thought which they bring before us, that these glorious starry heavens are the destined home of feeble and sinful men: Quid datur et quibus æther? egentibus et cruce dignis, Sidera vermibus, optima sontibus, astra malignis.] 5 Thou madest him lower than the angels : to crown him with glory and worship. Forasmuch as CHRIST went not up into joy, but first He suffered pain, so here we see Him in His low estate first, and then in His glory ; for the humility of His Passion was the merit of His exaltation. Lower than the angels. In that He condescended to become mortal and passible. A little lower. And what marvel, then, if, speaking in respect of His

humanity, He saith, ”My FATHER is greater than I?” With glory, as respects Himself; with worship, in reference to others.

[Lower. The A. V., and the old versions all have a little lower. A little, for it was but for a short time, a little, because He was mortal and passible of His own free-will, and not, like us, of necessity. Glory, in the victory of the Resurrection; honour, in the throne of the Ascension. And note that CHRIST is said to have many crowns, of which the chief are mercy, wherewith He was crowned in His Incarnation and Nativity; sorrow, when the thorny diadem of the Passion was given Him; glory, in His Resurrection and Ascension; dominion, which He will receive when the court of the redeemed gathers round Him.] 6 Thou makest him to have dominion of the works of thy hands : and thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet ; Over the works of Thy hands ; and therefore over those angels than whom for a season He was made a little lower, Thou hast put all things in subjection. Let the Apostle interpret : ”In that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him.” ”But when he saith, All things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted Which did put all things under Him.” Note ; in these three verses we have the four living creatures of the Revelation ; for these may denote the four parts of CHRIST’s work of mercy, as well as the four Evangelists. What is man ? There we have the face of a man. Thou madest Him lower than the angels : there the ox, the animal fitted for sacrifice. To crown Him with glory and honour : there the victorious lion. Thou hast put all things in subjection : there the eagle that soars above everything else.

[Under His feet. As the Head of CHRIST is His Divinity, so His feet are His Manhood, and it is as Man that the empire is given Him which was always His very own as God.] 7 All sheep and oxen : yea, and the beasts of the field ; All sheep. By sheep we understand those whose business in CHRIST’s Church is not to teach, but to learn. ”My Rupert. in Apocalypse. tom. ii. 487, 488. H sheep,” saith He, ”hear My voice.” By oxen, those who labour in His Word and doctrine; according to that saying of S. Paul, ”Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.” For by these great profit is obtained in His Church; as it is written, ”Much increase is by the strength of the ox.” Yea: the word shows that a change of subject is made; namely, from the good to the wicked. The beasts of the field: those who own no master, but follow their own hearts’ lusts, like ”brute beasts,” as S. Peter teaches, ”made to be taken and destroyed.” For the wicked as well as the good are made subject to CHRIST.

[Not only are the sheep, the lowly and docile, who hear the voice of the Shepherd, put under Him, but even the oxen, the powerful rulers of the earth, and the beasts of the field, the wandering and barbarous tribes which knew no law before.] 8 The fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea: and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas. The fowls of the air are the Saints, who rise above the world, but

only by means of the sign of the Cross. The fishes, ordinary Christians, regenerate of water and of the HOLY GHOST; and whatsoever, bad as well as good, unholy no less than holy, walketh through the paths of the seas, is exposed to the waves and storms of this troublesome world. A. [The fowls of the air, S. Augustine will have to be the proud and ambitious, the fishes, those who are restless and acquisitive. Others see in the winged fowls, the angels; in the fishes, the evil spirits of the abyss; or again, in a good sense, the dwellers in the isles afar, and mariners in them who walk through the paths of the seas. The literal interpretation of these verses, as referring to the dominion of man over the lower creation, bestowed on Adam and confirmed to Noah, has led to the use of this Psalm in the Office in time of cattle-plague.]

9 O LORD our Governor: how excellent is thy Name in all the world! Excellent, therefore, as well for that He is very GOD, as set forth in the first verses, as because He is very Man, as taught in the succeeding verses, of the Psalm. And its beginning and ending are the same, as being in His praise Who is the first and last, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Glory be to the FATHER, Who hath put all things under the feet of the Son of Man; glory be to the SON, Who, though SON of GOD, vouchsafed to become Son of Man, and to be made lower than the Angels, and now is crowned with glory and honour as Priest and King; glory be to the HOLY Ghost, the Finger of God, by Whom the heavens were made. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.]

Collects.

We beseech Thy Name, O LORD, which is great, wonderful, and holy, that as Thou didst create the beasts of the field for the service of man, so Thou wouldst cause man to delight in the service of Thee. Through (1.) O LORD, our Governor, Whose Name is excellent through all the world, grant that we may despise the excellency of the same world, and Thy praise may be perfected in our mouths, and Thy faith made manifest by our good works. (11.) [LORD JESU, Whose wonderful Name the angel foretold, Thy Mother bestowed, Simeon acknowledged, Anna praised; save Thy people in all the world, Thou Whose Name is majestic in heaven, that Thou Who only art glorious in power, mayest also be gentle in Thy merciful pardon to the lost. (11.)] [O LORD JESU CHRIST, by Thine excellent Name, spread through all the world by the Apostles, perfect the praise of Thy victory in us who are the work of Thy fingers, that our enemy may be stilled, and we crowned with the perpetual triumph of glory and worship. (5.)]

Psalm 9

This and the following Psalm are, in the LXX. and the Vulgate, reckoned as one; though the numbering of the verses breaks off and begins again. The Antiphons, therefore, Arguments, and the like, must be taken to apply to one, as well as to the other. TITLE. English Version: To the Chief Musician upon Muthlabben. Vulgate: To the end; for the hidden things of the Son; a Psalm of David. Targum: To sing upon the death of a man who had gone out from between the camps. A Psalm of David. No title has given modern Commentators more trouble than this. Some, as Bishop Horsley, follow the Vulgate, and adopt the mysterious interpretation of Venerable Bede. Others will have the Muthlabben to be a musical instrument. Others, as Dr. Good, dissatisfied with all these, propose, by a different division of the word, to elicit the meaning, On the death-blow: that is, One of the decisive vic-

Kimchi understands this of Goliath, who is called "the man of the middle places," in 1 Sam. xvii. 4, as standing between the Philistine and Hebrew armies.—L. tories obtained by David over the Great Confederation that attacked him immediately after his accession to the throne.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST, by His holy Advent, will crush Antichrist. The prophet speaketh the praises of CHRIST, and prayeth to CHRIST concerning the Jews. The Church rendereth thanks to CHRIST, and speaketh of the Jews and of the prince of the devils, and of the perdition of idols, whose name is put out for ever and ever, and of the Advent of CHRIST, Who came that the man of the earth might no more be exalted: for dead men were worshipped as Gods.

VEN. BEDE. For the hidden things of the Son. The name of the Son, signifies the Person of the LORD the SAVIOUR. He saith hidden things, in the plural, because he denoteth not one Advent only, but both. It ought to be known that in the Hebrew, the expression is, For the death of the Son: but the LXX. interpreters preferred, in referring to the Passion and Resurrection of CHRIST, to use the expression, the hidden things of the Son, lest they should set forth to the Gentiles that which before they were unacquainted with . . . All this Psalm is spoken in the person of the Prophet. He begins by expressing his joy in the LORD, for that He hath put the

Devil to confusion; whose worship was destroyed by His Advent; I will give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, &c. Next, he exhorts the faithful to sing Psalms to GOD, Who avengeth the blood of the poor, and lifteth them up from the gates of death: O praise the Lord, Which dwelleth, &c. Next, He telleth of the end, which will come upon sinners together with Antichrist: the wicked shall be turned into hell. Then, vehemently grieved at such overwhelming misery, he turneth himself to the LORD, as if GOD had withdrawn from the defence of the poor, and given the wicked licence to work out their own will: Why standest Thou so far off, O Lord? And fifthly, He prays that the time of that tremendous judgment may draw nigh, and that all these evils may be ended, and the wickedness of no man longer prevail. Arise, O Lord, &c.

EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. The death and Resurrection of CHRIST; His Reception of the kingdom, and destruction of all His enemies. SYRIAC PSALTER. Of CHRIST receiving the Crown and the Throne, and putting His enemies to flight. Also concerning the attacks of the enemy on Adam and all his posterity, and how CHRIST put an end to his arrogance. ARABIC PSALTER. Of the hidden things of the SON, as respects the glory of CHRIST and of His Resurrection and Kingdom, and the destruction of all the disobedient.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. Lyons. Monday: I. Nocturn. Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: II. Nocturn. Gregorian. GOD is a Righteous Judge, &c. Monastic. First portion: as Gregorian. Second portion: Up, LORD, and let not man have the upper hand. Parisian. And they that fear Thy Name shall put their trust in Thee, for Thou, LORD, hast never failed them that seek Thee. Lyons. I will be glad and rejoice in Thee, O LORD. Mozarabic. I will be glad and rejoice in Thee; yea, my songs will I make in Thy Name, O Thou Most Highest. 1 I will give thanks unto thee, O LORD, with my whole heart: I will speak of all thy marvellous works. 2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: yea, my songs will I make of thy Name, O thou most Highest.

This is the first of the many Psalms which may be applied to both the Head of the Church, and to the Church herself. It is the voice of CHRIST, say a great crowd of commentators. It is the voice of the Church, say an equal number. But in truth it is both one and the other: for how shall that which is said by the Head, not also be capable of being said by the members? With my whole heart. For as with His whole heart He entered on His Passion, according to that saying, ”How am I straitened till it be accomplished,”—so also with His whole heart, when the good fight had been fought, the course finished, and the faith kept, He said, ”FATHER, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me!” Or, if you will take it as the words of the Church, it is a Psalm for every season of the Christian year. All Thy marvellous works: the Incarnation, no less than the Passion; the Ascension, equally with the Resurrection.

My songs will I make of Thy Name. For which of the hymns of the Church is not directly or indirectly made of the Name which is above every Name? And it is well said, O Thou Most Highest, when it was that Name which was once set up as the title of His accusation, and is, therefore, now exalted, to the end that, on hearing it, every knee should bow.

3 While mine enemies are driven back: they shall fall and perish at thy presence. And notice how it follows: My songs will I make of Thy Name, while mine enemies are driven back. Even so, when the multitude that went forth with swords and staves had demanded JESUS of Nazareth, and the LORD answered them, I am He, "As soon as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward and fell to the ground." And if it is the Church that speaks, how many righteous souls have departed out of this life, with that most sweet Name on their lips! How many martyrs have pronounced It the last of all earthly words! In how many sudden accidents has there been time for that one blessed word, and for no more! And in all these cases, their enemies were driven back for ever, according to that saying, "The Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever." They shall fall and perish at Thy Presence. Even as the band and officers in the Garden of Gethsemane, and the guards that watched the tomb. At Thy Presence, here in this world, under the form of Bread and Wine; hereafter, when they shall hear those words, "Depart, ye cursed, from the Throne of GOD."

[Mine enemies. The LXX. and Vulgate read in the singular, mine enemy. And they take it then especially of Satan, compelled to get him behind the servant of GOD, as he was forced to do before in the Temptation. The reading in the second clause is plural, referring, say they, to the ministers and snares which the evil one employs for his bad ends.] 4 For thou hast maintained my right and my cause: thou art set in the throne that judgest right. It is still the Eternal SON that speaks. Thou hast maintained My right to reassume that life which I voluntarily laid down, and My cause, the cause of them that are Mine; the cause of once fallen, but now ransomed, mankind. Thou art set in the throne that judgest right. Annas and Caiaphas in their tribunal, Herod in his palace, Pilate in the praetorium, pronounced their unrighteous judgment on Good Friday, and the morning of Easter Day reversed it for ever. And much more may the Church thus speak to her only SAVIOUR. Thou hast maintained My right, the right which was Mine by Thine own promise, and My cause against the adversary of Thy people. Thou art set in the throne, the triumphal throne of the Cross, that judgest right, even then dividing between the good and the bad, and setting the penitent thief on Thy right hand: in the throne at the right hand of the FATHER, still to maintain the right won by Thy Passion: and Thou shalt sit on Thy throne of judgment at the end of the world, to separate for ever between the unrighteous and the just.

5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and destroyed the ungodly: thou hast put out their name for ever and ever. And notice the difference. By that Cross and Passion, the heathen were rebuked, that so they might be brought to the knowledge of salvation: even as the Centurion, when he had seen the earthquake and the darkness, glorified GOD, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous man." But the ungodly, namely the Prince and source of all ungodliness, was destroyed: the strong man was bound, and his goods spoiled: the death of the Prince of Life made the destruction of the Prince of death. Thou hast put out their name. And notice the contrast. As soon as the Name of JESUS of Nazareth was exalted on the Cross, it was proclaimed throughout the world, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved, but only the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

[Put out their name. As regards the Gentiles, by taking away that title of reproach, and calling them Christians instead; as regards the Jews, by destroying their kingdom, temple, sacrifices and ceremonial law.] 6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: even as the cities which thou hast destroyed; their memorial is perished with them. The Church, calling Satan by his true name, speaks of his destructions, because from the beginning they were twofold; death of the body and death of the soul. Both now come to an end: for the Blood that was shed on the Cross was the quickening of the soul; and the rising again on Easter morning, the pledge of the general Resurrection. Both come to a perpetual end: for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Even as the cities which Thou hast destroyed. Literally, the five cities of the plain, "which, giving themselves over unto fornication, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Mystically, these cities are the same as those which our LORD calls houses of the strong man, namely, human souls: their memorial perishing with them, in the multitudes of those whom before the coming of our LORD, Satan destroyed at his will. "Hast thou never read," asks Satan of S. Antony, "'O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end, and thou hast destroyed their cities?' See, I have now no territory; I now possess no city; I have no longer any arms: the Name of CHRIST echoes through every nation, through all provinces: the very solitudes are filled with the choirs of the monks." So truly could the father of lies apply this verse to his overthrown kingdom.

[O thou enemy. This does not reproduce either the Hebrew or the old versions. The real sense is, The enemies are gone, in ruins for ever, the cities Thou hast destroyed, the memory of them has perished. The LXX. and Vulgate read: The swords of the enemy have failed for ever, and Thou hast destroyed their cities, their memory hath perished with a sound. They tell us that the swords are the torments employed by earthly foes against the bodies of the Saints, and the temptations of ghostly ones against their souls. With a sound, as the devils cried out when expelled from the possessed. With S. Athan. in Vita. the noise of arms and trumpets, as befell the

Jews before Titus, remarks another. Best of all, that the walls of those citadels which were raised up against holiness, fell, like those of Jericho, at the sound of the Gospel proclaimed by the Apostles. And so the Paris Breviary:

Sant. Vict. The Hymn, Supreme quales arbiter. CHRISTUM sonant : versæ ruunt Arces superbæ dæmonum : Circum tubis clangentibus Sic versa quondam mœnia.] 7 But the LORD shall endure for ever : he hath also prepared his seat for judgment. Having set forth the work of our LORD on the Cross, he proceeds to set forth His abiding work in heaven. He endured the suffering of the Cross but for a few hours; His intercession at the Right Hand of the FATHER, shall last until He prepares His seat for judgment, at the end of all things. For thus the Psalmist proceeds: 8 For he shall judge the world in righteousness : and minister true judgment unto the people. Where notice, that the LORD obtained the power of judgment by the patience of His humility : so that He Who was judged upon the Cross should judge on the Throne. He shall judge the world : namely, the sinners : in righteousness : and minister true judgment, namely, that judgment mixed with mercy, in which He delights, to the people, His own peculiar people : according to that saying, ” We are His people, and the sheep of His Pasture.” And observe, that the judgment of the wicked is here put before that of the righteous, even as it is in that parable, ” Gather ye together first the tares : but gather the wheat into my barn.”

9 The LORD also will be a defence for the oppressed, even a refuge in due time of trouble. In due time, but not before. ” My time is not yet come, but your time is alway ready.” For, ” LORD, wilt Thou at this time?” is as natural a question to us, as ever it was to the Apostles. The due time, when, but not till, the feet of the Priests are dipped in the edge of the water : the due time, when, but not till, the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees is heard : the due time, when, but not till, Gideon shall break his own pitcher, and the light it contains shall flash confusion on the hosts of the Midianites. It is for Saul to offer his sacrifice before the due time shall have arrived, and Samuel shall come; and his sentence is, ” Thou hast done foolishly : now thy kingdom shall not continue.”

10 And they that know thy Name, will put their trust in thee : for thou, LORD, hast never failed them that seek thee. That Name Which is above every Name, which is exalted to give salvation to Israel and remission of sins. That seek Thee. But how, says S. Chrysostom, can He be sought Who is everywhere present? Present though He be, worldly thoughts will so blind us that we find Him not. Even as the men of Sodom sought for the door of Lot, and through their miraculous blindness could not discover it, so shall the worldly man grope for the true Door, but in vain. Hast never failed. ”O most sweet promise!” says one who had been in afflictions and perils times without number, ”worthy to be all our salvation and all our desire! Never, not even when the snares of death compass me about, and the pains of hell got hold upon us. Never, though there be ’the choking of fire on every side, from

the midst of the flame which we kindled not:' never but once, and that once to the intent that one single failure might for ever make such failure impossible; when the Only-begotten Son cried from the Cross, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' that His faithful people might seek Him from their own crosses, with the assured certainty that He will be their 'Hope and Strength, a very present Help in trouble.'"

11 O praise the LORD which dwelleth in Sion : show the people of his doings. It well follows when the Prophet has been speaking of help required, that he should forthwith mention Sion, whence that help comes. And so it is written in another place, "Strengthen Thee out of Sion." Help, of what marvellous power, the deeds of the Martyrs and Confessors may speak; help, no less wonderful in its variety than admirable in its might; adapting itself to each several need as the manna to every different taste: like a true Tree of Life, bearing its twelve fruits, one for every month of man's sorrows. And with such help, what ought to be the praise! The Prophet not only exhorts us to praise the Lord, Which dwelleth in Sion, but himself has assisted every generation of faithful souls to fulfil his own exhortation, Show the people of His doings. For notice, as Gerlach Petersen says, how love desires to speak of that which it loves; the leper that was cleansed, to spread abroad the LORD's doing throughout all that country; the man out of whom the devils were cast, to make known that beloved Name to his kinsfolk and acquaintance. "Come hither and hearken, ye that fear God, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul." This it is that has sent out many and many a missionary to die for the Name of CHRIST. "If

Pseudo. Hieron. in loc. CHRIST Himself," the great missionary, Gaspar Barzeo, used to say, "had not established a mission in a heart then worse than any Mahometan land, I should never have been preaching the Gospel in Persia." 12 For when he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them : and forgetteth not the complaint of the poor. Remembereth them : but whom ? The martyrs who poured forth that blood : the righteous souls that continually cry under the altar, "How long, O LORD, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge ?" He remembereth them, making the blood of the martyrs the seed of the Church. If Stephen is crushed to death with stones, Paul shall supply his place in the armies of the Living God. And naturally, from the martyrs, the Prophet ascends to the Martyr of martyrs. He forgetteth not the complaint of the poor. That complaint or petition, "FATHER, forgive them," uttered on the Good Friday, which in the week of Pentecost brought in eight thousand souls to the Church. Woeful inquisition for blood, which fulfilled the Jewish prayer, "His blood be on us and on our children :" Blessed inquisition, which, when the Destroying Angel is passing by, shall find that Blood consecrating and protecting the habitations of our hearts ! They are beholding that blood in which we place all our confidence, they are acknowledging

the scarlet line which is the pledge of our deliverance : ”Remember us, O LORD, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people.”

13 Have mercy upon me, O LORD, consider the trouble which I suffer of them that hate me : thou that liftest me up from the gates of death. Thus spoke the Eternal Son of God in the days of His humiliation. For what trouble was there which He did not suffer from them that hated Him ? The trouble of treacherous lips and a false tongue ; of their assaults when they took up stones to stone Him, and led Him to the brow of the precipice ; lastly, the trouble, the like to which the world never saw, of the Pavement and Calvary. But not less may the words be put into the mouth of our glorified LORD. Though in Himself He can suffer no more, yet as regards His members it is, ”Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me ?” In that beloved Bride Whom He purchased by the effusion of His own Blood, still He suffers trouble from them that hate Him and that hate her : in every faithful soul He is troubled by the temptation of Satan and the attacks of an evil world. Yet as, in His own person, He was once for all lifted up from the gates of death, so in that dear Church ”which is His Body,” so in that soul which so fondly clings to Him, He is again and again lifted up, in every fresh deliverance, assistance, triumph which is given to her. Or, if you like to take the verse as the prayer not of the Head, but of the members, then the gates of death may well be, as S. Augustine says, ”All depraved desires, for that through them is the road to death.”

14 That I may show all thy praises within the ports of the daughter of Sion: I will rejoice in thy salvation. We had the deliverance in the last verse; we have the reason of that deliverance in the present: That I may show all Thy praises within the ports of the daughter of Sion. From the gates of death to the gates of Sion, O glorious change! From the broad portal that leadeth to destruction, to the strait and narrow entrance whereby we go into life. For like those of her prototype, Jerusalem, the gates of the earthly Sion shall not be shut at all; ever ready to receive him that would enter in, ever joyful to welcome the poor wanderer. I will rejoice in Thy salvation; as Simeon, when he took the Desire of all nations in his arms, and prayed to depart in peace. Will rejoice with that joy which may begin indeed on earth, but which, like that good old man’s, can only have its full completion in the temple of the heavenly Jerusalem.

[The ports of the daughter of Sion. They are three: faith, hope, and charity. In the ports, that outer vestibule of the Church Militant, wherein we must abide for a time, before we pass into the secret chambers of the King’s palace.] 15 The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the same net which they hid privily, is their foot taken. 16 The LORD is known to execute judgment: the ungodly is trapped in the work of his own hands. So from the very beginning, the works of Satan and of all his servants have, by the deep counsel of GOD, been turned against himself: from that very first victory when by death Death was destroyed. Hear how joyously

Cosmas, the sweet poet of the Eastern Church, exults over that antithetical justice by which the ungodly was trapped in the work of his own hands. ”O thrice blessed wood,” says he, ”on which CHRIST, the LORD and King was stretched; by which he was overthrown that had deceived by the tree; on which he was taken as it were with a hook, by the GOD Who assumed our flesh! In Paradise, of old time, the Enemy by the fruit of the tree stripped us of immortality; by the Tree, was man

A. S. Greg. in Job. xli. 2.

invested again, through the Giver of Life, with the garb of incorruption. Hither, O ye people, approach and behold this great wonder! The tree that in Paradise brought forth death; the tree that on Calvary blossomed into immortality! Here was that sinless LORD nailed, from Whom every nation, as from a glorious wine-press, rejoices itself with the wine of everlasting Life. And as with the Chief, so also with His followers. ”In the thing wherein they dealt proudly, He was above them,” said Moses. ”Wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished,” says the Wise Man: and again, ”Whereas men had lived dissolutely and unrighteously, Thou hast tormented them with their own abominations. So the Egyptians that had cast the Israelite children into the river, found the waters of that river changed into blood: so Haman, that had raised the gallows fifty cubits high, was hanged on those very gallows; so Holofernes, that sought the ruin of Judith, by the hand of Judith was cut off in the midst of his sin; so the Egyptian, the goodly man (and no ill type of him, the Lord of that land which is signified by Egypt, once the goodliest of Archangels,) that thought to have slain Benaiah with his spear, was by that very spear himself destroyed:

so they that had laid the false accusation against Daniel, were themselves cast into the den of lions, ”and the lions had the mastery over them, and brake all their bones in pieces, or ever they came at the bottom of the den: so, in later times, Galerius and Maximian, inventors of unheard-of and fearful tortures, perished by diseases unknown to physicians, and horrible beyond the power of words to describe: so Ægeas, that sentenced S. Andrew to the Cross; so Quintian, that inflicted on S. Agatha such extremity of torture, were themselves, almost in the very act of unrighteous judgment, summoned to appear before the righteous bar of GOD. He that should desire an extended commentary on these two verses, let him read the work of Lactantius concerning the ”Deaths of the Persecutors. Then indeed, he may well exclaim, The Lord is known to execute judgment.

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell: and all the people that forget GOD. Oh words, first and easiest among those taught to a child, last and most dreadful that shall be pronounced before the good and bad are finally and for ever separated! Actual sin, the wicked: negative guilt, all the people that forget. ”Here,” says a mediæval commentator, ”I would rather tremble than comment. From that wrath to come, Good LORD, deliver me.” These passages are taken from the Ode of Cos-

mas of Maiuma for the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. 18 For the poor shall not alway be forgotten: the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever.

Not always. It seemed as though He was forgotten by the FATHER, when He uttered that great and exceeding bitter cry on the Cross; by His disciples, when they all forsook Him and fled; by all the Jews when He was laid in the sepulchre, when He was counted as one of them that go down to the pit, reckoned among the men that have been long dead. ”We fools counted His life madness, and His end to be without honour: but because of that brief forgetfulness, therefore it is that He now bears the Name that is above every name, and the remembrance that is dearer than all other remembrance. O LORD JESU, so poor in Bethlehem, where there was no room for Thee in the inn, so poor on the Cross that they parted Thy garments and cast lots for Thy vesture, if Thou art forgotten by the world still, if Thou art put out of sight by those who will not give Thee one moment, though Thou didst give them all that Thou hadst,— grant that we, at least, may remember Thee, may hold Thy remembrance as sweeter than the life itself, may remember Thee as the chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely, may so remember Thee here, that hereafter Thou mayest remember us in Thy kingdom! Where notice, as Hugh of S. Victor says, it is not the poverty of the meek, or the labour of the meek, or the afflictions of the meek; but the patient abiding.

This is the grace which is dearest of all in GOD’s sight. This is the grace which is emphatically said to crown and to be crowned. And as He said Himself, so we also, altering but one word, may say of the LORD: There is none meek, save one, that is GOD. This is the true Moses, who was indeed meek above all the men that were on the face of the earth. And His patient abiding,—the long months during which He did not abhor the Virgin’s womb—the patient years before He entered on His public ministry,— before He began to be about thirty years old,—the patient abiding of all misery, all insult, the most cruel death, did not perish for ever, though it might seem to perish on the night of that first Good Friday. We have seen how the sapless wood of the Cross has blossomed, how the glory of Lebanon has been added to it: we can appreciate the force of that wherefore in S. Paul’s argument,— ”Wherefore GOD also hath highly exalted Him.”

19 Up, LORD, and let not man have the upper hand: let the heathen be judged in thy sight. See, with reference to this especial humiliation of our LORD, the second of the Labours of JESUS by Frey Thomas de Jesus. [Let not the outer man, the old Adam, have the upper hand over the inner, spiritual man, nor let mere earthly thoughts lead us down from higher things.] 20 Put them in fear, O LORD : that the heathen may know themselves to be but men. A. S. Luke xix. 14. A.

Here again, the Vulgate differs widely from our translation: Thou shalt appoint a legislator over them, O Lord. And if we follow that interpretation, it is an easy step from the ”patient abiding of the meek” in His Passion, to the glory of the Legislator

in His exaltation. Or, if you will, you may take the legislator in S. Augustine's sense, as referring to Antichrist; that since man has so far forsaken GOD and so resolutely persisted in his "We will not have this man to reign over us," such continued rejection of the King of Peace shall be followed by the tyranny of Antichrist. But if we are to follow our own version, still it applies naturally to our LORD. At the conclusion of the last verse, we left Him in the grave, when His patient abiding seemed to have perished: rightly and meetly it proceeds, Up, Lord; up, and burst the bars of death; up, and become the first fruits of them that sleep; up, and let not man have the upper hand: let not the guard, and the seal, and the great stone prevail against Thine own Word. And then again, Put them in fear, O Lord: as indeed it follows, four times in the Acts of the Apostles: "Fear came upon every soul;" "Great fear came on all them that heard these things;" "Great fear came upon all the Church;" "Fear fell on them all, and the Name of the LORD JESUS was magnified." That the heathen may know themselves to be but men. As the Prophet said of old: "Now the Egyptians are men and not gods, and their horses flesh and not spirit:" that all the devices, all the efforts, of the heathen, the laws of their emperors, the eloquence of their philosophers, the violence of their rabble, may be but the feeble endeavours of mortal men, against the omnipotence of a wise and ascended GOD.

Psalm 10

1 Why standest thou so far off, O LORD : and hidest thy face in the needful time of trouble? But He does not really stand far off,—He, 'the friend that sticketh closer than a brother,"—He, the very present help in time of trouble. We, indeed, complain of His absence, if He leave us but for a single moment: He endured to be forsaken of the FATHER during the whole of His long agony. Let Saul, if he will, say, "The Philistines make war against me, and GOD is departed from me;" but not GOD's servants, from whom He never can depart, though He may seem to hide His Face for a moment. If, being sent for, He abides two days still in the same place where He was, it is, to the end that, "if we will believe, we may see the glory of GOD." We may, if we will, follow Augustine and take the latter clause of the verse as the answer to the former. Why standest Thou so far off? Because it is the needful time of trouble,—because "it is expedient for you that I go away," because thus departing for a season it may be to remain with us for ever. But in the fullest and most bitter sense, our dear LORD might take the whole question on His own lips, as indeed He did in His paraphrase on the Cross, Why standest Thou so far off, O Lord? "My GOD, My GOD, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

A. and following him Ruffinus, S. Alcuin, S. Remigius, Hugo de S. Victore. 2 The ungodly for his own lust doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the crafty wiliness that they have imagined. Or as the Vulgate has it: While the proud is arrogant, the poor is inflamed: that is, while Satan and evil men are permitted to persecute, the love of GOD's true servant does but wax warm. When, says Tertullian, we are consumed by the flames of persecution, then trial is made of the tenour of our faith. These are the fiery darts of the devil, by means of which our faith burns clearer and brighter. So S. Gregory; "Gold," says he, "grows to perfect purity in the furnace, whilst it loses its dross. As gold, then, by passing through the fire, so the souls of the righteous by suffering the furnace of tribulation; holiness is increased, vices are purged away. Whence David: While the proud is arrogant, the poor is inflamed." And to this same purpose we may understand the text in Isaiah, "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work." Let them be taken—as Satan himself was caught in his own guile; just as we have already so often had occasion to notice,

and shall in the course of the Psalter again and again: and as, from that time to this, many a poor servant of CHRIST has but obtained the greater glory because his enemies exhibited the greater malice.

De fugâ in Pers. cap. 3. In Job. lib. xvi. cap. 15. 3 For the ungodly hath made boast of his own heart's desire: and speaketh good of the covetous, whom GOD abhorreth.

And now they look past the lesser temptations of individual Christians, the feebler manifestations of his malice who goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and see, as in a glass, the frightful persecution of Antichrist, which will precede the end of all things. Hath made boast of his own heart's desire: so that "he as God sitteth in the temple of GOD, showing himself that he is God. For just as comforting as are the types and prophecies of the Old Testament which point out the Captain of our salvation, just so awful are the symbols, whether in history or in prophecy, of that Antichrist who must be revealed before the end of all things: types, such as those of Pharaoh, Antiochus Epiphanes, and that fourth empire of iron which Daniel beheld, or such fearful verses as that,—(and GOD have mercy on those who shall understand its full meaning!)—"He doth ravish the poor when he getteth him into his net. They take occasion then to point out five characteristics of the empire of Antichrist. 1. It will be an empire of guile, "the crafty wiliness" of David, the "deceivableness of unrighteousness," of S. Paul. 2. Of direct opposition to GOD, "He careth not for GOD," "He opened his mouth in blasphemy against GOD, to blaspheme His Name and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven." 3. That it will defy every principle of right and of holiness. "Thy judgments are far above out of his sight, and therefore defieth he all his enemies:

"Who is like unto the beast, who is able to make war with him?" 4. That it will have a certain appearance of goodness, "He falleth down and humbleth himself: "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men," and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles. 5. That it will be an empire of flattery: He speaketh good of the covetous, whom God abhorreth: "He hath two horns like a lamb . . . . and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast. Thus they elicit from this more particularly, but from other Psalms also, the great features of Antichrist; features which we must constantly keep in mind if we would understand the Psalms of temptation, such as this, and such as those coming between the fiftieth and the sixtieth. Having thus the general idea, let us go on to the details.

4 The ungodly is so proud, that he careth not for GOD: neither is GOD in all his thoughts. Here again the Vulgate differs widely from our translation: The wicked hath provoked the Lord to anger: according to the multitude of his indignation, he shall not seek. That is, his sins shall be left unpunished in this world, that they may be doubly visited in the world to come. So the man of GOD that came from

Judah was slain by a lion, whereas the old prophet, the cause of his destruction, was buried in the sepulchre of his forefathers. So also that terrible threatening in Hosea, ”Therefore, behold, I will not punish your wives and your daughters when they commit fornication.” And notice why it is that he careth not for God. Satan at first, Antichrist at last, the sin was the same, the ungodly is so proud: ”for thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of GOD; yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.”

5 His ways are alway grievous : thy judgments are far above out of his sight, and therefore defieth he all his enemies. Few Psalms are more difficult to explain from the Fathers and from mediæval writers than that on which we are now engaged, on account of the discrepancy between the Vulgate and our own translation. His ways are alway grievous : as we have it, it may either mean the ways of GOD to the sinner, or the ways of the sinner to GOD. Grievous, indeed, to the sinner, is that strait gate and narrow way; heavy to him, is that light yoke and easy burden. But in the Vulgate we have it, His ways are always polluted : then the reason, Thy judgments are far above out of his sight. The pleasures of sin here, enjoyed, because the wages of sin there, forgotten; the light affliction which is but for a moment, found grievous and intolerable, because the exceeding and eternal weight of glory is kept out of sight. And therefore defieth he all his enemies : or, as the Vulgate has it, He shall have the dominion over all his enemies. Not a true victory, nor yet true foes; but that miserable triumph where to conquer is to perish. ”My SPIRIT shall not alway strive with man:” the HOLY SPIRIT may at last be conquered; every evil man shall do that in the battle-field of his own heart which Antichrist shall do in the great and final conflict between good and evil. He shall have the dominion over all his enemies, when ”as GOD, he shall sit in the temple of GOD, showing himself that he is God;” ”When they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over the two witnesses,” ”and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because those two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.”

R 6 For he hath said in his heart, Tush, I shall never be cast down : there shall no harm happen unto me. And notice how, in the song of triumph over the mystic Babylon, this same self-confidence is prominently brought forward. ”How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her : for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.” In like manner Isaiah, to the literal Babylon: ”Thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever, so that thou didst not lay these things to thine heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.” And what is this in Antichrist, but the words of the parable in the mouth of an every-day sinner, ”Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry?”

7 His mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and fraud: under his tongue is ungodliness and vanity. 8 He sitteth lurking in the thievish corners of the streets: and privily

in his lurking dens doth he murder the innocent; his eyes are set against the poor. 9 For he lieth waiting secretly, even as a lion lurketh he in his den: that he may ravish the poor. 10 He doth ravish the poor: when he getteth him into his net. 11 He falleth down and humbleth himself: that the congregation of the poor may fall into the hands of his captains. 12 He hath said in his heart, Tush, God hath forgotten: he hideth away his face, and he will never see it.

A sad, dreary prophecy of a most perilous and fearful time. No wonder that the saints have somewhat hurried over these warnings of that great tribulation which shall be upon all the earth. But rather look back, if you will, and see how this prophecy of David will apply to that hour in which the Son of David was betrayed. Think how then the Pharisees and elders were found stirring up the very dregs of the people in the thievish corners of the streets; how in their lurking dens, the Innocent,—He that "did no guile, neither was deceit found in His mouth,"—was indeed murdered when the thirty pieces of silver were paid for His delivery: how not then only, but all through the course of His public life, their eyes were indeed set against the Poor; and then, at last, how that prophecy was completed, He doth ravish the Poor when he getteth Him into his net,—when they stripped our true Joseph of His coat, the coat woven without seam that was upon Him; stripped Him of His liberty, of His honour, and lastly of His Life itself. When he getteth Him into his net. The net of false witnesses, which yet even so did not agree; the net of the various temptations which Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians, feigning themselves to be just men, had spread in His path. And then, how true the conclusion! He falleth down and humbleth himself:

they, burning with the desire of a temporal kingdom—with the dream of a Jewish Empire, which should extend itself over the face of all the earth,—they, the Chief Priests, answered and said, "We have no king but Cæsar. Or again, when the Prince of Life had risen from the dead, and they condescended to devise with the soldiers an impossible lie, gave large money to them for repeating it, and promised them indemnity with the governor, should the tale reach his ears. And all wherefore? That the congregation of the poor may fall into the hands of his captains: that not only "that Deceiver," but the eleven also that still owned Him their King, might be crushed in the very outset of their mission, and might thenceforth forbear to speak to any man in the Name of their LORD.

13 Arise, O LORD GOD, and lift up thine hand: forget not the poor. I know no part of the Psalter where mediæval commentators seem to shrink from exposition, so much as here. That fearful persecution of Antichrist, when, if it were possible, the very elect should fall away,—that terrible trial of faith when, as S. Anselm says, the persecutor shall glitter with miracles, and the Martyr shall perform none,—of all this they seem loth to speak, except distantly and generally. Lift up Thine hand. Taken in this sense, of that last lifting up of GOD's Right Hand which shall

accompany the Depart, ye cursed. But we may also take it of His lifting it up and stretching it forth on the Cross: that Right Hand which even then became glorious in power, which even then was dashing in pieces the enemy. Forget not the poor. Forget not even in the midst of that great affliction Him, Who though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor; forget not His poverty, when He went about not having where to lay His Head, when He was a guest with publicans and sinners; lastly, when He was so poor, after they parted His raiment among them, and cast lots for His vesture, as to be beholden to the love of His disciples for the clothes of the grave.

14 Wherefore should the wicked blaspheme GOD: while he doth say in his heart, Tush, thou GOD carest not for it? Blaspheme God; as Pharaoh, the earliest type of Antichrist, when he said, "Who is the LORD, that I should let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go." And thus to decry GOD's providence is, according to S. Bernard, one of the greatest of sins; an iniquitas ad odium, as he calls it. Thou, God, carest not for it. As if it were possible that He should not care for those whom He bought at no less a price than the effusion of His own blood,—those whom He has graven on the palms of His Hands,—those for Serm. on Ecce nos reliquimus omnia. whom His side was opened with a spear, that they might have the readier entrance to His heart,—those whom He guards "as the apple of an eye." Well, therefore, may the Psalmist continue—

15 Surely thou hast seen it : for thou beholdest ungodliness and wrong. Thou hast seen it. Thou writest it in Thy book of remembrance,—Thou shalt proclaim it before men and angels at the end of the world,—the ungodliness that was met by the patient endurance of the Martyrs,—the wrong that was borne by the long-suffering of the Confessors, or baffled by the purity of the Virgins! S. Augustine understands this passage in a very singular sense,—a sense in which he has not been followed. He takes the verse to be spoken by Antichrist, and in this sense : "Surely Thou hast seen it ; I know that Thou art acquainted with my evil doings, and my persecutions of Thy saints ; but (not FOR) Thou beholdest the labour, (for so he would rather translate ungodliness) and wrong, or rather, trouble,—and therefore because of this labour and trouble which it would cause Thee to put an end to my transgressions, therefore Thou wilt not interfere with me." In fact, he would interpret it in the sense of the poet of atheism, speaking of the Gods and their nature—

Nam privata dolore omni, privata perielis, Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri, Nec bene pro meritis capitur nec tangitur irâ. But this, notwithstanding the great authority of S. Augustine, seems an unnatural and forced interpretation. And it is far better so to apply the words, that every faithful soul faithfully suffering this or that for her LORD, bearing this or that cross, enduring this or that temptation, assailed by this or that hard word or unkind deed, should be able to say, Surely Thou

hast seen it. Thou Who didst suffer such contradiction of sinners against Thyself; Thou That wast called a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber; Thou Whose mighty works were ascribed to Beelzebub, the Prince of the devils; surely Thou hast seen it, for Thou Who once didst suffer in Thyself, now beholdest exerted against us, ungodliness and wrong. 16 That thou mayest take the matter into thine hand : the poor committeth himself unto thee; for thou art the helper of the friendless.

Lorinus says that he has not been followed by a single commentator. This is not literally true; for Gerhohus, whose ex- position was not published till after the Jesuit commentator's time, not only follows, but amplifies it. How are we to take our own version? Are we to join, "Surely Thou hast seen it," with, "That Thou mayest take the matter into Thine hand," as if this were the end of GOD's seeing that He might act? Or are we to join, That Thou mayest take the matter, with the next clause, The poor committeth himself unto Thee, as if the sense were "The poor trusts, because that very trust will make Thee act on his behalf?" Both senses are full of truth and comfort: though the Vulgate favours the former. Thou art the Helper of the friendless. Or fatherless, or orphan, as the Vulgate and Septuagint have it. The Commentators find a singular meaning in the promises. Originally, every one who is afterwards brought to CHRIST belongs to the devil as his father; and when he forsakes Satan, is in this sense fatherless. Or, as they take it who prefer the translation "orphan," the Psalmist would speak of those who have lost the world as their father, and concupiscence as their mother.

17 Break thou the power of the ungodly and malicious: take away his ungodliness, and thou shalt find none. Break Thou the power of the ungodly. Not the ungodly himself; his power is taken away that he himself may be saved. Or if we still refer the whole to Antichrist, then the prayer is like the prophecy in Job, "From the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken." And notice this by way of comfort: Take away his ungodliness and it shall not be found, for so the Vulgate reads: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out your transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not think upon your sins:" and how? The Apostle shall tell us: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, nailing it to His Cross." S. Augustine takes it in a more terrible sense: He shall not be found, because he shall so utterly perish: as Pharaoh and his host were not found: "The Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever:" as Jezebel was not found when "they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands." Or finally, still continue the sense of Antichrist: Thou shalt take away his ungodliness, and it shall not be found; because then, when he is destroyed, all iniquity will have come to an end; Satan will be crushed for ever; the kingdom of righteousness will begin: so that the Psalmist may well continue—

18 The LORD is King for ever and ever: and the heathen are perished out of the land. Which is only what the Apostle says, in different words, ”When all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the 1 Cor. xv. 28. A. A. SON also Himself be subject unto Him Which did put all things under Him, that GOD may be all in all.” Out of the land. What land, save the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, into which nothing can in any wise enter that defileth? as the seven accursed nations were rooted out of the old land of Canaan; as every evil passion and worldly desire is rooted out of each faithful soul, when it enters into its heavenly rest. And then the Psalm sums up the whole of its prayers and petitions, saying— 19 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the poor: thou preparest their heart, and thine ear hearkeneth thereto;

20 To help the fatherless and poor unto their right: that the man of the earth be no more exalted against them.

The desire of the poor. As we have seen before, all those many supplications which the Poor King of Heaven and Earth offered up for us during the days of His humility: His desire that we should be preserved while in the flesh from harm, ”I pray not that Thou wouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou wouldest keep them from the evil: His desire that day by day we should grow in holiness: ”sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth: His desire, finally, that we should go and dwell in that land out of which the heathen shall perish: ”FATHER, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory. Thou hast heard the desire of the poor: for so it is written: ”He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. Thou preparest their heart, namely, from the beginning, before the world was, to undertake the work of man’s redemption, and before His entrance on its final struggle, to cry out, ”I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished. Then the Poor shall indeed be helped to His right,—to the possession of the countless souls who are the lawful purchase of His blood; to the Name which is above every Name;

to the Throne on the Right Hand of the FATHER, and the confession of all the company of heaven that the Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our LORD and of His CHRIST, and He shall reign for ever and ever. That the man of the earth may be no more exalted against them. No more proud monarchs, as Pharaoh and Antiochus; no more fierce chiefs, as Sisera and Rabshakeh; no more false prophets, as Balaam; no more treacherous priests, as Annas and Caiaphas; no more insidious workers of righteousness, as the Scribes and the Pharisees. This is the desire of the Poor, both for Himself and for us; and we have but to pray in accordance with it, in the words of S. Peter Damiani:

CHRIST, Thy soldiers’ palm of honour! To Thy city, bright and free, Lead me, when my warfare’s girdle I shall cast away from me; A partaker in Thy glory, With Thy

blessed ones to be. And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who lifteth up His Hand and forgetteth not the Poor; and to the SON, the Poor King Who shall one day be helped to His Right: and to the HOLY GHOST, the desire of the Poor, Who is always heard; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

Open, O merciful LORD, Thy ears to our prayers. Thou Ludolph. Who never failest them that trust in Thee: so that we, being lifted up from the gates of perpetual death, may be able safely to escape the snares of the Tempter. Through. (1.) Of Thy merciful goodness, O LORD, attend to the desire of Mozarabic. the Poor, and bestow on us the abundance of Thy celestial gifts: remove from us the love of the passing things of this world, and since Thou defendest the humble and the orphan, give us the joy of Thy fatherly mercy: bestowing for the humiliation of this world, the joys of the kingdom of heaven. Amen. Through Thy mercy, &c. (11.) Have mercy on us, O LORD, and behold how we are in-Mozarabic. sulted by our enemies: and do Thou Who couldest not be held by the bars of the grave, raise us up by Thy power from the gates of death. (11.)

We pray Thee, O LORD, to preserve us unhurt from the S. Jerome. works of Antichrist; to the end that we, deserting him and acknowledging CHRIST the LORD as our Father, may follow Thee by our faith, may retain Thee by our love, may glorify Thee by our good works. Through. (2.) [O GOD, the Defence of Thy poor, Who forgettest not D. C. them that seek Thee in their need, neglect us not when we cry to Thee in trouble, but lift us up from the gates of death, that now and evermore we may rejoice in Thy praises. (1.)]

Psalm 11

ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST judges every one according to justice and equity. The voice of CHRIST to the FATHER. The voice of CHRIST and His members: and of a fixed faith against heretics and hypocrites. Read in Genesis the destruction of Sodom. EUSEBIUS. A triumphal hymn for him who fights on GOD's side. SYRIAC PSALTER. Of David, when the people was sorrowful because he was led away captive with his sons. But to us it now denotes triumph over an adversary. ARABIC PSALTER. Of the victory of him who fights.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday. Matins: I. Nocturn. [Ascension Day: I. Nocturn. Exaltation of the Cross, Feasts of Crown of Thorns, and Five Wounds: II. Nocturn. Michaelmas Day: I. Nocturn. Common of one Martyr: II. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: II. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Thou shalt keep us, O LORD, Thou shalt preserve us. [Ascension Day: The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD's seat is in heaven. Alleluia. Common of One Martyr: The righteous LORD loveth righteousness, His countenance will behold the thing that is just.] Parisian. Preserve me, * O LORD, for in Thee have I put my trust. Mozarabic. The righteous LORD loveth righteousness; His countenance beholds the thing that is just. 1 In the LORD put I my trust : how say ye then to my soul, that she should flee as a bird unto the hill? Notice first how remarkably the whole Psalm corresponds with the deliverance of Lot from Sodom. This verse with the Angel's exhortation, "Escape to the mountains, lest thou be consumed," and Lot's reply, "I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil take me and I die;" and again, The Lord's seat is in heaven, and upon the ungodly He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest, with "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire out of heaven:" and again, His countenance will behold the thing that is just, with "Delivered just Lot . . . . for that righteous man vexed his righteous soul with their ungodly deeds."

But it is rather the voice of our LORD before His Passion. How say ye then to my soul. "Be it far from Thee, LORD, this shall not happen unto Thee." Unto the hill.

For though for a while, before His time was fully come, He walked in the hill country near the wilderness, yet as soon as the day of His Passion had arrived, the only hill which He sought, was the hill of Calvary. Or if we take it of ourselves, we indeed, like birds which can only fly by making the sign of the Cross with their wings, must flee to Him Who is the true mountain of His people, and "hide ourselves there for a little moment till the indignation be overpast," before we can take to ourselves the wings of a dove and flee unto "God's hill, in the which it pleaseth Him to dwell."

[Unto the hill. The hill is CHRIST, and the words may be taken of the enticing words of heretics, urging men to flee out of the unity of the Church into the sects, alleging that CHRIST is with them. Another sees here the call made by the Jews to Christians, to flee away to the old Law, given on Mount Sinai, God's hill, and thus return to carnal ceremonies, abandoning the Gospel of grace. Yet again, there are those who flee from the plain of lowly reverence for Holy Writ to the hill of free-thought and human intellect.] 2 For lo, the ungodly bend their bow, and make ready their arrows within the quiver : that they may privily shoot at them which are true of heart. The plottings of the Chief Priests and Pharisees that they might take JESUS by subtlety and kill Him. They bent their bow, when they hired Judas Iscariot for the betrayal of his Master; they made ready their arrows within the quiver, when they "sought false witnesses against JESUS to put Him to death." Them which are true of heart. Not alone the LORD Himself, the only true and righteous, but His Apostles, and the long line of those who should faithfully cleave to Him from that time to this. And as with the Master, so with the servants: witness the calumnies and the revilings that from the time of Joseph's accusation by his mistress till the present day, have been the lot of God's people.

[The ungodly heretics bend the bow of Holy Scripture by wrestling it from its true meaning, and make ready the arrows of apt texts and subtle arguments in the quiver of their heart and tongue. Privily, or, more exactly, with the old versions and margin of A. V.: in darkness, that is, choosing the hard and dark sayings of the Bible as their ground. And, as a Saint acutely observes, they defeat their own end by shooting in darkness, because they can neither aim with certainty nor avoid wounding themselves and their friends.] 3 For the foundations will be cast down : and what hath the righteous done? "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." The foundations of all faith and hope will —so said the unbelief of the disciples—be cast down, if the Prince of Life shall die, if the LORD of Glory shall suffer as a malefactor, if the Resurrection shall be committed to the grave. And what hath the righteous done? "We, indeed, justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this Man hath done nothing amiss."

[The first clause runs differently in LXX., Vulgate, Syriac, and Æthiopic. They have destroyed what Thou hast accomplished. The whole meaning and bent of Scripture, which they utterly pervert, say nearly all the commentators. They have destroyed

Him Who is especially Thy handiwork, in crucifying Thy Son, observes one of them. And, once more, we may take it of the fall of once flourishing Churches, Persia, Egypt, Libya, and Japan, before the attacks of the infidel.] 4 The LORD is in his holy temple : the LORD's seat is in heaven. Either the Eternal FATHER, Who, however He may seem for a time to forsake the Only-begotten Son, shall in due season highly exalt Him, and give Him the Name which is above every name, raising Him up to the right hand of that very seat in heaven : or the LORD Himself, the LORD that suffered on the Cross in His Manhood, was at that very moment, according to His Godhead, on His throne in heaven :

The Word of GOD proceeding forth, Yet leaving not the FATHER's side, as S. Thomas says. Or we may take it of the virtue derived from this Passion to all those who, having been redeemed by it, are also endeavouring to be conformed to it. The Lord is in His holy temple, when the HOLY GHOST takes up His abode in a pure heart : even as He will be hereafter in that temple which shall be built up in heaven of His faithful people, when He removes them from their work on earth. [Again, the Lord is in His holy temple of the Church Militant here on earth, present where two or three are gathered together in His Name, present in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, while His seat is in heaven, where He is throned at the right hand of the FATHER.] 5 His eyes consider the poor : and his eyelids try the children of men.

For thus the eyes of the FATHER considered Him, Who although He was rich, yet became poor : considered Him as the sacrifice and propitiation of the whole world : considered Him, as by that very act of humility winning for Himself, according to His humanity, the everlasting diadem. His eyelids try the children of men. They take it to mean that those hidden and mysterious counsels, the secret things which belong to the LORD our GOD, of which His servants sometimes catch as it were a glimpse, and then all is dark again, are His appointed trial for our faith, His touchstone whether we attain to the blessedness of those that have not seen and yet have believed. [His eyes consider the poor, because He watches unweariedly over them in His love, and allows no want of theirs to escape Him. His eyelids are sufficient to judge sinners, because His briefest glance sees even the most hidden sins. Again, they take the eyelids, opening and closing like a book, to denote Holy Writ, the standard whereby man is to be tried. Others see here the sudden flashes of inspiration whereby men's intellects or consciences are often roused to the true knowledge of divine things.]

6 The LORD alloweth the righteous : but the ungodly, and him that delighteth in wickedness doth his soul abhor. Vulgate : The Lord questioneth the just and the wicked : but he that loveth iniquity hateth his own soul. In our translation we must take the allowance of the righteous in the same sense as that saying of S. Peter, the righteous shall scarcely be saved. But in the other version, from the Cross of suffering we come to the Throne of judgment, prefigured indeed by the separation

of the penitent and impenitent thieves on Calvary. ”Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth GOD, and him that serveth Him not:” and shall discern also that however much the ungodly may have seemed to say to his own soul, ”Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry,” in the last day he will be found to have been its most cruel enemy.

7 Upon the ungodly he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest : this shall be their portion to drink. After the judgment follows the condemnation : prefigured as we have seen, by the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. Snares : because the allurements of Satan in this life, will be their worst punishments in the next, the fire of anger; the brimstone of impurity; the tempest of pride: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. This shall be their portion : compare it with the Psalmist’s own saying, ”The LORD Himself is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup.” [The fiery storm; the frozen blast; The darkness thickly spread; The shrieks of anguish rolling past; The stench, as of the dead; The pressure close, the stifling breath; The sense of everlasting death; The hellish crew; the spectres dim; The fear, the thirst unquenchable; All these with bitter torments fill Their chalice to the brim.]

Dionys. Carth. The Rhythm, Homo Dei creatura. I 2 8 For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness : his countenance will behold the thing that is just. [Righteousness. The word in the Hebrew is plural, , and is so turned by LXX. and Vulgate, righteousnesses. And they point out that whereas GOD’s righteousness is one, and perfect, and infinite, man’s righteousnesses are various in degree and kind, yet all recognized and allowed by GOD, Who beholdeth the thing which is just. And that, because all our righteousnesses are but rays from the glory of that Uncreated Light, the Just One, the Holy Thing Who is the beloved SON of GOD, ever looking on Him.] And therefore; Glory be to the FATHER, the LORD Who is in His holy temple; and to the SON, the Righteous LORD, Who loveth righteousness: and to the HOLY GHOST, the Countenance by Whom all the just and the saints are illuminated;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

Let Thy merciful eyes, O LORD, vouchsafe to look upon our low estate: and protect us with the armour of faith, that we being preserved from the arrows of the wicked, may be able to keep truth and righteousness. Through (1.) O GOD, Whose eyes regard Him that for our sakes was poor, be the succourer of the heart that putteth her trust in Thee: and like as we do desire to be healed by the wounds of His Passion, grant that we may be delivered in all the dangers of our own. Through the same (2.) [Thou Who art GOD everlasting, be gracious unto us who put our trust in Thee; grant us, by Thy gift, to be unlike the birds, cause us by Thy might

to quench the arrows of the evil one, and to live in the righteousness of Thy grace, whereby vouchsafe unto us to please Thee for evermore. (1.)]

Psalm 12

TITLE. To the chief musician upon Sheminith: a Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST rose for our miseries and necessities. Spoken by CHRIST concerning the Passion of His Saints. EUSEBIUS. The insurrection of the ungodly, and the expectation of CHRIST. VEN. BEDE: To the end: for the eighth. The eighth pertains to eternal rest; for there is no eighth day in the week of this world, but when the seventh is over, the first comes round again. The prophet, therefore, asks that the iniquity of this world may be destroyed, and that the reality of good things to come may be made manifest. Rightly, therefore, is this Psalm appropriated to the eighth day, since it speaks of leaving the evil customs of this, and of aspiring to the innocence of the next, world. In the first part, the Prophet makes supplication that he may be delivered from the perversity of this world, since the crafty and the proud denied the power of the LORD by their wicked speeches. In the second, he foretells that the promise of the FATHER is to be accomplished by the Omnipotent SON, briefly praising the words of GOD, as he had before rebuked the words of the wicked.

EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. An accusation of the wicked, and a prophecy concerning the Advent of CHRIST. ARABIC PSALTER. Concerning the end of the world, which will happen in the Eighth Age, and a prophecy of the Advent of CHRIST. S. JEROME. This Psalm is sung concerning the Passion of CHRIST.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. Ambrosian. Monday in the First Week: II. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Thou shalt keep * us, O LORD, Thou shalt preserve us. Parisian. Help me, LORD, * for the faithful are minished from among the children of men. Mozarabic. For the comfortless troubles of the needy, and because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the LORD. I Help me, LORD, for there is not one godly man left: for the faithful are minished from among the children of men. There is not one godly man left. Rather, The righteous hath failed. He, the only Righteous, hath

failed,—not in making good His promises, not in loving His own to the end, not in humbling Himself for us unto death, even the death of the Cross; but hath failed in the weakness of death; those blessed Hands, nailed to the Cross, and no more able to cast out devils, to heal the sick, to raise the dead: those dear Feet, in like manner fastened to the same tree, now no more able to go forth on their missions of love. The faithful are minished. They are indeed. Of the twelve that had so vehemently said, "Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee," but one only, and he at a distance, remains faithful: one betrays, and one denies with an oath. And well may the Church, therefore, pray, Help, Lord. "We trusted, that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." The Prince of Life dying the death of a malefactor: the King of Ages suffering the punishment of a slave: the One Star of a dark night, as S. Chrysostom beautifully says, blotted out by the wintry clouds. Help, Lord: for human help is here indeed vain. "If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? Out of the barn floor, or out of the wine-press?"

[The faithful. The LXX. and Vulgate render the Hebrew literally, truths. The Uncreated Truth is One, but created truth is threefold, that of life, of doctrine, and of righteousness, and may be minished by error, which makes light darkness, and sweet to be bitter. It is true also of heretics, explaining away one Christian tenet after another, and thus minishing the truths of the Creed.] 2 They talk of vanity every one with his neighbour: they do but flatter with their lips, and dissemble in their double heart. So they talked on that first Easter Eve. "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, After three days will I rise again." "Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can." Miserable flattery indeed, whereby they brought themselves to think that the Omnipotent GOD could be "made sure" by a little wax; that the four soldiers could avail against the mission, if need were, of more than twelve legions of Angels! And dissemble in their double heart. And well they fulfilled this prophecy, when they gave large money to the soldiers, and sent them forth with the tale that that precious Body had been stolen while they slept. And the wise man may well say, "Woe be to the sinner that goeth two ways:" the Apostle may well teach us, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." For it follows,

3 The LORD shall root out all deceitful lips: and the tongue that speaketh proud things. All deceitful lips. And oh, how many they were! that spake concerning the Passion, "I am innocent of the blood of this Just Person;" and the Catholic Creed replies, from one end of the world to the other,—replies by the baptismal font, in the village school, in the assembly of the faithful, by the bed of the dying, "Suffered under Pontius Pilate:" "Himself He cannot save:" "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and hell." Yes: Pilate, Herod, Pharisees, Elders, Seribes, people, deceitful lips have they all; and of all of them long since has it been said, "So let all Thine enemies perish, O LORD." "Let the Jews say," exclaims the exulting office of the Oriental Easter, "let

the Jews say how the soldiers lost the King Whom they were appointed to guard. Either let them exhibit the Body that was interred, or worship the Monarch that has arisen." And the tongue that speaketh proud things. For what prouder saying than that spoken in the hall of most unrighteous judgment, "Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" What more arrogant decree than that, the dogmatic decree of the whole Jewish Sanhedrim, "Give GOD the praise, we know that this man is a sinner!" Truly they have been rooted out. Disperdet: that is, as Cardinal Hugo, with a mediæval play upon words, observes, Bis perdet: with the double destruction of body and soul.

4 Which have said, With our tongue will we prevail: we are they that ought to speak; who is lord over us? So it was: twelve poor and unlearned men on the one side, all the eloquence of Greece and Rome arrayed on the other. From the time of Tertullus to that of Julian the Apostate, every species of oratory, learning, wit, lavished against the Church of GOD: and the result like the well-known story of that dispute between the Christian peasant and the heathen philosopher, when the latter, having challenged the assembled Fathers of a synod to silence him, was put to shame by the simple faith of the former, "In the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, I command thee to be dumb." Who is lord over us? "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?" "What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him?" "Who is that GOD that shall deliver you?"

5 Now for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy: and because of the deep sighing of the poor, 6 I will up, saith the LORD: and will help every one from him that swelleth against him, and will set him at rest. Comfortless! Yes, they were indeed comfortless, those poor trembling ones, when they were waiting for the departure of that long, weary Sabbath; when their one poor longing was to anoint for its burial the Body that they had fondly hoped to see exalted upon the throne of Israel. Comfortless indeed, when Peter was despairing of pardon; when James had bound himself by a great oath that he would neither eat nor drink till he had seen the LORD; when, go which way they might, everywhere was there the exultation of the Pharisees over their fallen enemy, everywhere taunts and jeers at "that Deceiver!" Deep sighing: for they dared not openly to lament; the doors were shut where the disciples were assem-

Stichos of the Monday of Renewal Week. bled, for fear of the Jews. And poor they were, if ever any one could be called poor. They had lost Him That was altogether lovely: they had lost that one Pearl of countless value; and what had they left but the faint remembrance of His Words, and the shaken and shattered faith, that was yet not wholly destroyed? And therefore, I will up, saith the Lord. "Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Easter has come at last: "destruction," as the Eastern Church joyfully exclaims, "has been exiled, immortality has blossomed forth: the long galling chain has been broken in sunder: let the

heavens rejoice: let the earth and the things under the earth be glad: for CHRIST hath arisen, and death is spoiled." From him that swelletth against him. For as the serpent had no sooner triumphed over the woman than the promise of salvation was given to the human race; so Satan no sooner seemed to have completed his victory, on the Cross, than his power was crushed for ever, and they over whom he had tyrannized set at rest, by the sure and certain support of a Risen LORD in this world, and the hope of a perfect and unending rest in the next. Notice that the reading of the Vulgate gives quite a different sense: I will place him in My salvation, I will act faithfully (or as the Septuagint has it, παρρησιάσομαι) in him. And set in GOD's salvation we are, when, as doves, we take refuge in the "Great Rock:" faithfully He has dealt with us in accomplishing all the promises, all the types, all the sayings "that He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began."

S. Luke i. 70. 7 The words of the LORD are pure words: even as the silver, which from the earth is tried, and purified seven times in the fire. Pure. They fail not to remind us that they are pure in three ways: as cleansing us from impurity, properly so called, from pride, from avarice. And no sooner had the LORD risen from the tomb, than His words were spoken and written by His servants for the support of the Church to the end of time: no sooner had this true Naphtali, this stricken and persecuted Hind, been "let loose" from the chains of death, than He gave goodly words to His Apostles and Evangelists. And notice how in this very first sermon, His words were emphatically pure words, when He proclaimed the blessedness of the pure in heart, and restored marriage to its first and original purity. Well says S. Ambrose, "Let us beware not to mingle anything earthly, anything secular, anything corporeal, anything light and mutable, in these celestial sentences. For the words of the LORD are chaste

S. Ambros. in Ps. cxix. 1 Sticheron of the Stichos, Friday in S. Thomas' Week. words: that in these, the immaculate and modest sincerity of celestial mysteries may shine forth by a spiritual interpretation. Let us not mingle earthly with Divine things, and injure that inviolable Sacrament of the prophetic vision, or the everlasting oracles by the false estimation of our nature. Therefore he adds, Even as silver, &c., to the end that we, like good money-changers, may examine the coin of prophetic writings, separating the LORD's money, and purging it from every earthly pollution." Seven times. As infusing in us the sevenfold graces of the SPIRIT; set forth both in the words of Isaiah, and in those of the Sermon on the Mount.

[From the earth. Because all the prophecies and types of the Old Testament are now purged from the earthly and carnal surroundings of the ceremonial Law, and set in their true light and beauty. Modern critics agree in turning the words thus, in the earth; that is, in a crucible or furnace of clay; not very dissimilarly from

S. Chrysostom, who explains it of running the molten ore into clay moulds. And then we are reminded, taking the words still of Holy Writ, of that passage, ”Thus saith the LORD of Hosts, the GOD of Israel, Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days.” The oracles of GOD, prophecy fulfilled and unfulfilled, evidence of our ransom, that we may be our Master’s ”purchased possession,” confided first to the Jews and then to the Church Militant, were indeed in a vessel of earth. And as regards each of us, the Apostle warns us that ”we have this treasure in earthen vessels,” so that we must undergo stern probation that ”the Word of GOD may have free course” within our hearts, which it cannot till the fire of Divine love frees it from all dross. Seven times in the fire. So, in the Beatitudes, after seven blessings have been pronounced on the poor, the mournful, the meek, the righteous, the merciful, the pure, and the peacemakers, the eighth, summing up all these into one, pronounces a blessing on those who are persecuted, and have thus reached the final stage of purification from things of the earth, because the eighth Beatitude, as the octave of eternal life, does but repeat the first note in a higher interval.]

8 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD: thou shalt preserve him from this generation for ever. Keep them: that is, not as the passage is generally taken, Keep or guard Thy people, but Thou shalt keep, or make good, Thy words: and by so doing, shalt preserve him—him, the needy, him, the poor—from this generation. Thou shalt keep Thy word,—”Cast Thy burden upon the LORD, and He shall nourish thee;” Thy word,—”I will inform thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go;” Thy word,—”Fear A. I 3 not, little flock; it is My FATHER’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom;” and so, preserving him from this generation, shall hereafter give him a portion with that happier generation, the general assembly of the First-born which are written in heaven. 9 The ungodly walk on every side: when they are exalted, the children of men are put to rebuke.

And we are reminded of the LORD’s own words, ”I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves;” and of the Apostle’s warning, ”That ye may be blameless and harmless in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.” But starting from the literal sense of the Vulgate, The ungodly walk in a circuit, it is a favourite idea of S. Bernard’s to contrast their crooked ways with the straight-going path of the servant of GOD; their turning aside from the right straight road, with the ”I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed” of the follower of CHRIST. Walk on every side. Compare it with S. Peter’s warning,

”Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour;” and say with S. Cyril, in his extreme peril before the Council of Ephesus, ”That wicked one, the sleepless beast, walketh about, plotting against the glory of CHRIST; from whom He only can deliver us, from

whom we know that He will deliver us." When they are exalted. The ten persecutions may witness to the truth of this saying. When the children of men, fearing man rather than GOD; dreading them that killed the body, rather than Him that hath power to destroy the soul; fell away from the faith, and denied the LORD that bought them: while the children of GOD, standing firm against seductions and threats, obtained the glory of martyrs as their reward. Notice that here again the Vulgate widely differs from our translation,—According to Thy loftiness, Thou hast multiplied the sons of men: or as it is better in the LXX.,—Thou hast made much of the children of men. And they remind us how the human race has been indeed made much of, in that it has been exalted in the Person of our LORD, to a height far above all height, and to a participation in the very Throne of GOD.

[The sons of men were minished, observes Arnobius, when the LORD descended to the grave, for His disciples forsook Him and fled, but they were multiplied by His Ascension, because He sent down the HOLY SPIRIT, through Whom three thousand souls were in a moment added to the Church.] And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who is our help when godly men See how he dwells on this passage in his book, De diligendo Deo, and again in his Sermon on the text, "Behold, we have forsaken all things." fail; and to the Son, of Whom it is written, "I will up, saith the LORD;" and to the HOLY GHOST, Whose words are pure words. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

Have mercy, most holy FATHER, on our infirmity, and grant to us to receive and to hold fast Thy words in a pure heart, that we may be able to turn away from the guileful speeches of Thine enemies. Through (1.) Deliver us, O LORD, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue, Thou, Who wast Thyself weighed on the balance of the Cross; and grant that neither the accuser may have any inlet to our accusation, nor Thy people acquiesce in the deceit of his words. Overthrow him that lies in ambush against us by Thine Almighty spear, and rise up for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy, and because of the deep sighing of the poor. (11.) [O LORD, Keeper of the faithful, ever preserve and keep us from the generation of the ungodly, and unite us to the generation of the righteous who keep Thy pure words, that we may alway abide in Thy love, and by the help of Thine aid, rejoice in everlasting salvation. Through (1.)]

Psalm 13

ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST always lightens our eyes that we should not sleep in death. The voice of CHRIST to the FATHER concerning the devil, and his members. The voice of the Church expecting the Advent of CHRIST. It has to do with Mark. VEN. BEDE. The whole Psalm speaketh of the love of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The Prophet beholding nearly all the world given up to idolatry, in the first part makes a request that its incredulity may be removed by the approach of the holy Incarnation; that Paganism even thus at length put to shame, might be able to recognise its own Creator: How long wilt Thou forget me, O Lord? In the second part he vehemently desires that his soul may be enlightened to put up his petitions in such a manner as to be heard, and not to give way to any temptations to the enemy.

EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. The insurrection of our enemies and the expectation of CHRIST. SYRIAC PSALTER. Exultation over the enemy and expectation of the LORD and of His succour. S. JEROME. The thirteenth Psalm contains the voice of the faithful soul that seeketh after GOD. Gregorian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. [Feast of Seven Dolours: I. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Monday of First Week: II. Nocturn.

Antiphons.

Gregorian. Thou shalt keep * us, O LORD, Thou shalt preserve us. Parisian. Lighten * mine eyes, that I sleep not in death. Monastic. I will sing unto the LORD * Who hath given me good things. Mozarabic. My heart shall rejoice in Thy salvation; I will sing of the LORD because He hath dealt so lovingly with me. There have not been wanting holy men who have seen in this Psalm a prophecy of the four monarchies by which the Jewish nation has at different times been led captive: the Babylonian; the Assyrian; the Græco-Syrian; and the Roman: from which captivities they were delivered respectively by Cyrus, by Darius, by the Maccabees; while from the last their deliverance is still future. To this also they refer that verse in Amos (ii. 4,) "Thus saith the LORD, For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." That is, that though the iniquities which were punished by the first three captivities, were forgiven, the fourth, namely, the death of our LORD, which led to the last, has not

yet been pardoned. Of this last they take the first verse, How long wilt Thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? Of the Babylonian captivity, How long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me? Of the Assyrian, How long shall I take counsel in my soul, and be so vexed in my heart? Of the Græco-Syrian, How long shall mine enemies triumph over me? But leaving this, let us rather see in the question,

1 How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD, for ever: how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

the complaint of the heathen world before the Advent of CHRIST; when it was, as S. Paul says, ”filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity:” when, as Isaiah tells us, to ”Look unto the earth” was to ”behold trouble, and darkness, and dimness of anguish.” How long wilt Thou forget me, when the promise was once given that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head,—that out of Sion should come a Deliverer,—that the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea? How long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me? Where notice that by the Face of GOD here as so often, reference is made to the Incarnation. As the face is that by which we principally know a man, so by our LORD’s taking our nature, and by that alone, we attain to the knowledge of GOD. ”Ye saw no manner of similitude,” says Moses. ”We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the FATHER,” writes S. John. But it is also the voice of every faithful soul, walking in darkness and having no light, yet endeavouring after the Prophet’s injunction to rest on the Name of the LORD, and stay herself upon her GOD. For such an absence does indeed seem for ever. Thy face. That Face, which for us was buffeted, for us blindfolded, for us spit upon; the model of that patience which the very question here asked renders necessary. And yet the asking it is in itself a proof of GOD’s favour. ”It is no small advantage,” says S. Chrysostom, ”to have any feeling that GOD is forgetting us. Many suffer this desertion and neither know it nor lament it. Holy David not only knew it, but reckoned the time of its endurance.”

Deut. iv. 15. S. John i. 14. 2 How long shall I seek counsel in my soul, and be so vexed in my heart: how long shall mine enemies triumph over me? Seek counsel: that is, when, as S. Paul says, the world was ”feeling after” the LORD, so blindly and so hopelessly; everywhere, in real truth, erecting altars to the Unknown GOD: alive to the misery of sin, but knowing of no deliverer; trembling under its guilt, but unable to conceive of any SAVIOUR. And be so vexed in my heart;—by the various schemes of philosophers, each contradicting the other, and all contradicting the truth, with their different teachings as to the chief good, the existence or non-existence of the gods, and of a future state, and the like. How long shall mine enemies triumph over me? O question, never to be answered by the wisdom of this world, but only by the doctrine of the Cross! When Adam, says the legend,

had fallen sick of the sickness of which he died, he sent Seth to the place where he was wont to pray, and desired healing from GOD. An Angel gave three seeds into the hand of the son; and ”Place them,” he said, ”in your father’s mouth; when they bear fruit, he shall recover of his disease.” From these seeds grew the tree whereof the Cross was made: and thus the prophecy was fulfilled: thus, too, the answer is given here to the poor world’s How long?

[Seek counsel, by earnest meditation in the Law, trying S. Hieron. through its circumcision, prayers, sacrifices, and other rites, to be delivered from the bondage of sin. How long shall mine enemies triumph? It is the cry of the righteous souls detained in Hades, observes one commentator, wearying for the Deliverer Who was to bring them into Paradise. It is the cry of the Jewish Church, remarks another, seeing the worship of devils and idols prevailing throughout the world, in despite of her testimony to the Unity of God.] 3 Consider, and hear me, O LORD my GOD: lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death. The voice of the world still: but yet more strikingly the voice of the faithful soul in the season of her distress and desertion. Consider: for the promise is, ”His eyes consider the poor.” Thus they considered Peter that he slept not in the death of his denial: thus have they considered every faithful penitent from that time to this, giving him the desire of crying for mercy, without which there can be no answer of peace. It is well said, therefore, Consider first, and then, hear. O Lord, my God. Where once more notice the appropriation to himself of Him That is the GOD of all. Lighten mine eyes: by the Incarnation; as it is written, ”To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Thy people Israel;” and again, ”Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.”

[Lighten mine eyes. Where note that the eyes of the inner man are his understanding and his affections, which both need to be enlightened by the wisdom and love of CHRIST. He who makes any compact with the prince of this world, does it only on the terms offered by Nahash ”the serpent,” that his right eye, the organ of charity, may be thrust out. But he who tastes and sees how gracious the LORD is, fares like Jonathan, whose eyes were enlightened by his tasting the honey on the rod, typifying the sweetness of the Cross.] 4 Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him: for if I be cast down, they that trouble me will rejoice at it. The old argument from the time of Moses downwards, for GOD’s mercy—”Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, For mischief did He bring them out?”—”Then the Egyptians shall hear it, and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land.” ”Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their GOD?” ”Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high and the LORD hath not done all this.” And so Judith; ”Lest the Gentiles should say, Where is their GOD?”

[Cast down. The A. V. rightly, as the ancient versions, when I am moved. It is not in completed success that they rejoice, but in their assurance of future victory if I quit my post of vantage, if I leave my strong castle for the undefended plain, if I venture out of the sure haven into the perilous sea. There is no apter comment on these two verses than the Greek Vesper Hymn: Or sleep in death shall I; And he, my wakeful tempter, Triumphantly shall cry: "He could not make their darkness light, Nor guard them through the hour of night!"] The Hymn, 5 But my trust is in thy mercy: and my heart is joyful in thy salvation. Where notice that he asks the two things which all need; and he asks them in the order in which they are required: to be spared and to be helped. Notwithstanding all past falls, notwithstanding his present dereliction by GOD, my trust is in Thy mercy: and the mercy that spares shall enlarge itself into the grace that crowns: "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it." My heart is joyful in Thy salvation. The mercy that spared on Good Friday: the salvation that triumphed on Easter Day.

Phil. i. 6. 6 I will sing of the LORD, because he hath dealt so lovingly with me: yea, I will praise the Name of the LORD most Highest. Hath dealt. Are we to take it as the language of a strong faith which looks on the triumph, though yet future, with the same certainty as if it were already vouchsafed? or of the thankfulness which in the very trial and affliction can see the LORD's dealing so lovingly? I will praise the Name of the Lord. As if,—which is so often the case,—the Prophet foresaw that in that very Name would lie all strength, all victory: that the title set up over the Cross would be the banner of every follower of the Crucified: that Statu degis in tranquillo; The Se- And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who will not forget His servants for ever; and to the SON, the Angel of the Great Counsel (ver. 2:) and to the HOLY GHOST, Who lighteneth our eyes that we sleep not in death;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen. Turn not away, O Almighty GOD, Thy face from us, lest our adversaries should be exalted against us: but so kindle our souls into the joy of Thy salvation that we may escape the sleep of the second death. Through (1.) Consider and hear us, O LORD our GOD; assist our timid efforts; give the end of the act, Thou Who didst give the beginning of the will; grant that we may be able to accomplish the thing, which Thou hast already granted that we should desire to commence. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) Lighten our eyes, O LORD, that our faith may fix her sight upon Thee, and our soul may take counsel in the sweetness of Thy Love, and Thy fear implant true penitence in our heart. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.)

[Almighty, Everlasting GOD, lighten our eyes with the light of Thy SPIRIT, that we sleep not in evil deeds, but with the help of Thy grace, may ever watch in Thy commandments, and, when CHRIST cometh, may pass to the reward of our high calling. Through the same (2.)]

Psalm 14

ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST turns away the captivity of His people. The words of CHRIST to the rich man that asked Him what he should do to be saved. Of the Jewish people and also of the Gentiles who say concerning the SAVIOUR, He is not GOD. VEN. BEDE. The Church of CHRIST condemns the madness of the Jews. That face of the LORD which was sought in the last Psalm, is now spoken of as made manifest. And therefore in the first place, the Church blames the Jews who, though they saw CHRIST, would not believe. Next, the Prophet shows that they are confounded with vain dread who will not receive into their hearts the salutary fear of the LORD. And lastly, their conversion at the end of the world is predicted. SYRIAC PSALTER. The expectation of CHRIST. EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA. An accusation of the wicked, and a prophecy of the Advent of CHRIST.

The allusion, which is sufficiently far-fetched, is this. The fool, Nabal, as Abigail says —"Nabal is his name, and folly is in him." Hence that which is said by David to the fool, is applied by Origen in the person of Nabal, to the rich: and thus he is reminded of our LORD'S answer to him that yet lacked one thing. Gregorian. Sunday: I. Nocturn. Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: III. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Thou shalt keep * us, O LORD, Thou shalt preserve us. Monastic. As preceding Psalm. Ambrosian. From heaven, O GOD,* look down upon the children of men. Mozarabic. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God: Art Thou our GOD? 1 The fool hath said in his heart: There is no GOD.

The title of the Psalm ascribes it to David: but many of the commentators see in its commencement a marvellous application to the blasphemies of Rabshakeh. The question: "Who are they among all the gods of the countries that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" The answer: The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God, compared to Hezekiah's "Hear the words of Sennacherib which hath sent him to reproach the Living GOD;" and Isaiah's "Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed?" But take it rather of the Jews, who, though they were instructed by the prophecies; though they might have understood the types; though they saw done among them such

works as none other did, yet refused to acknowledge in the Son of Mary the GOD of all things. The devils confessed: ”I know Thee Who Thou art, the Holy One of GOD:” the Jews, when He said, ”I and My FATHER are One,” took up stones again to stone Him. ”The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib, but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider.” Notice, that from the very beginning, the Jewish people were resolved to reject their Messiah. For when Herod had diligently inquired of the wise men where CHRIST should be born, they quoted, indeed, the first part of the prophecy, that which named Bethlehem as the place of His birth, but omitted the latter, ”whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Or we may take the verse, as S. Chrysostom does, of Satan. He, says that Father, was the first fool: he was the first that preached a multitude of Gods,—”In the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods,”—and by consequence, denied the One GOD. But mindful of the curse which then fell on him, it is no longer, The fool hath said, but The fool hath said

S. Luke iv. 34. S. John x. 30. Isa. i. 3. in his heart: he no longer saith this by himself, immediately, but by those whom he inspires. He said in Pharaoh; ”I know not the LORD:” he said by Sennacherib, ”The LORD shall not deliver Jerusalem out of my hand;” he said by Nebuchadnezzar, ”Who is that GOD Which shall deliver you out of my hands?” 2 They are corrupt, and become abominable in their doings: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

”Men,” says S. Bernard, ”because they are corrupt in their minds, become abominable in their doings: corrupt before GOD, abominable before men. There are three sorts of men of which none doeth good. There are those who neither understand nor seek GOD, and they are the dead: there are others who understand Him but seek Him not, and they are the wicked. There are others that seek Him but understand Him not, and they are the fools.” ”O GOD!” cries a writer of the Middle Ages, ”how many are there at this day who, under the name of Christianity, worship idols, and are abominable both to Thee and to men! For every man worships that which he most loves. The proud man bows down before the idol of worldly power; the covetous man before the idol of money; the adulterer before the idol of beauty, and so of the rest.” And of such saith the Apostle, ”They profess that they know GOD, but in works deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.” There is none that doeth good, no, not one. The last clause is not in the Hebrew. Notice how S. Paul avails himself of this testimony of the Psalmist, amongst those which he heaps together in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where he is proving concerning ”both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.”

Tit. i. 16. 3 The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men: to see if there were any that would understand, and seek after GOD. [The Lord JESUS CHRIST looked down from the heaven of His assumed Humanity, wherein the

Godhead dwelt, upon the children of men, by coming Himself on earth to seek for the lost sheep of the house of Israel.] 4 But they are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become abominable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. He looked down "upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth;" and then His saying was, "the end of all flesh is come before Me, and behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Again He looked down "to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded," and these were His words: "Let Gen. xi. 5, 7. us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." Once more, when the fulness of the time was come, He looked down, and then "God S. John iii. so loved the world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have 16. everlasting life."

5 Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues have they deceived: the poison of asps is under their lips. 6 Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood. 7 Destruction and unhappiness is in their way; and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes. On these three verses I shall say nothing, as they are neither to be found in the Hebrew nor in the LXX, and therefore are also absent from the Bible Version. They are clearly requoted from the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where the Apostle is giving a kind of abstract of the characteristics of the wicked from various Psalms. Their throat is an open sepulchre, is from Ps. v. 10; the poison of asps, &c., is from Ps. exl. 3; Their mouth is full of cursing, &c., from Ps. x. 7. Again, Their feet are swift to shed blood, &c., is from Isa. lix. 7; or perhaps from Prov. i. 16; and the last clause, There is no fear of God before their eyes, is from Ps. xxxvi. 1. S. Jerome and Venerable Bede give this account of the insertion. Cassiodorus seems doubtful whether they are not original. John Azor, and some other late writers, agree with him.

8 Have they no knowledge, that they are all such workers of mischief: eating up my people as it were bread, and call not upon the LORD. Have they no knowledge? It is the same thing that is written in Isaiah; "therefore is My people gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge." "If," says S. Basil, "they would not gain knowledge by being taught, they shall gain it by being afflicted." And notice how S. Paul, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, shows that they might have had knowledge if they would: that "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, so that they are without excuse." Eating up my [The passage is given in many editions of the LXX. and in translations which follow the Greek, as the Vulgate, Æthiopic,

Coptic, Arabic, and also is found in one Hebrew MS., but it is rejected by the best authorities as an insertion.] Rom. i. 20.

Job xv. 16. people as if they would eat bread. And in like manner, Eliphaz speaks of man, ”which drinketh iniquity like water. And so the Apostle warns, ”If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. Where S. Chrysostom very well observes the gradual augmentation of the sin and punishment, Bite, devour, be consumed. And yet that very saying of the Jews which so fully expressed their malignity against the Prophet, ”Who shall give us of his flesh, that we may be satisfied? is so beautifully turned by the Church to her own purposes when she speaks of the Flesh that is Meat indeed, and the Blood that is drink indeed. And call not upon God. That is, as S. Chrysostom well teaches, They may indeed call upon Him with their mouths; they may give Him honour with their lips, but thus persecuting His people, that shall be fulfilled in them which is written by Isaiah, ”Your brethren that hated you and cast you out for My Name’s sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified; but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. S. Chrysost. [Eating up my people.

The Greek Fathers take it literally of the miseries inflicted by Sennacherib’s army, and it is then transferred to the sufferings of the Church during her persecutions at the hands of the Jews first and then of the Romans, neither of whom knew the Way of Peace, the Redeemer of the world, wherefore is added, and call not upon the Lord. For, as the Apostle asks, ”how shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? And therefore judgment came upon them, according to that saying, ”Pour out Thy fury upon the heathen that know Thee not, and upon the families that call not upon Thy Name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate. And another warns us that evil priests, who make a gain of their flock, and are not zealous for the glory of GOD and the salvation of souls, are here threatened. Isa. lxvi. 5. [Eating up my people. The Greek Fathers take it literally of the miseries inflicted by Sennacherib’s army, and it is then transferred to the sufferings of the Church during her persecutions at the hands of the Jews first and then of the Romans, neither of whom knew the Way of Peace, the Redeemer of the world, wherefore is added, and call not upon the Lord. For, as the Apostle asks, ”how shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed?

And therefore judgment came upon them, according to that saying, ”Pour out Thy fury upon the heathen that know Thee not, and upon the families that call not upon Thy Name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate. And another warns us that evil priests, who make a gain of their flock, and are not zealous for the glory of GOD and the salvation of souls, are here threatened. Z. 9 There were they brought in great fear, even where no fear was: for GOD is in the generation of the righteous. D. C. Prov. xxviii. 1. ”The wicked flee when no man pursueth, but the righteous is bold as a lion,” that is, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, That hath conquered. So it was with the Jews, when in the Council of the Pharisees Caiaphas said, ”The Romans

shall come and take away both our place and nation; and by the means of the very wickedness they committed to prevent it, their destruction by the Romans was brought to pass. I need not quote, as Corderius does, a vast number of sentences from Aristotle and other heathen philosophers to the same effect. We may sum up the whole in the saying of the wise man, ”Fear is nothing else than a betraying of the succours which reason offereth; or better still is that of S. Basil of Seleucia, ”Fear is only an argument of unbelief. S. Alb. Mag. Rom. x. 14. Jer. x. 25. Ric.

Hamp. Wisd. xvii. 12. Orat. 22.

[Where no fear was. That is, fearing the persons of men, and fearing the loss of mere temporal blessings, but not fearing GOD, nor the loss of eternal joys.] 10 As for you, ye have made a mock at the counsel of the poor: because he putteth his trust in the LORD.

Ye have made a mock at the counsel of the poor. So they did when they said, ”Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days?” So they did when they exhorted Him, ”If Thou do these things, show Thyself to the world:” when they cried out, ”Let CHRIST, the King of Israel, come down now from the Cross, that we may see and believe.” And because he putteth his trust in the Lord. It is precisely the same thing as in that other verse, ”All they that see Me, laugh Me to scorn; they shoot out their lips and shake their heads, saying, He trusted in GOD.” So, long before, Rabshakeh had made a mock at the counsel of the poor, the Jews shut up within Jerusalem, and besieged by the enormous hosts of Assyria: ”Let not Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us: this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the King of Assyria.” And in contrast with this, we have that sad warning, ”Lo, this is the man that took not GOD for his strength.” And here, then, is our comfort: the counsel of the Poor may be made a mock of, but cannot be overthrown: ”The counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.” That counsel which is to guide and guard us in the days of our pilgrimage here: that counsel which proceeds from the Wonderful Counsellor; as it is written, ”My FATHER Which gave them Me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My FATHER’S hand.”

11 Who shall give salvation unto Israel out of Sion? When the LORD turneth the captivity of his people: then shall Jacob rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. Notice that by Israel we are to understand those other sheep which the LORD has that are not of this fold, but which He must also bring, that they may hear His voice. For it is Israel, not Judah; Sion, not Jerusalem. Who shall give? Firstly, and as the cause of all the rest, those tongues of fire which, to quote S. James’ Liturgy, ”descended in that upper room of the holy and glorious Sion,” and from thence scattered the illumination of the Gospel over the dark places of the earth: that rushing, mighty wind, which first ”filled all the house, where they were sitting,” but afterwards breathed like a summer gale over the face of the whole earth, making

the wilderness and solitary place glad for it, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. But in a subordinate sense, who shall give may be answered by the names of the Apostles and other valiant heroes of CHRIST, by whose labours the earth was filled with the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. When the Lord turneth the captivity of His people. Then, as it is in the parallel passage, were we like unto them that dream. A glorious dream indeed, in which, fancy what we may, the half of the beauty, the half of the splendour, will not be reached by our imagination. The captivity—of our souls to the law of concupiscence, of our bodies to the law of death; the captivity of our senses to fear; the captivity, the conclusion of which is so beautifully expressed by one of our greatest poets:

”No sorrow now hangs clouding on their brow; No bloodless malady impales their face; No age drops on their hairs his silver snow; No nakedness their bodies doth embase; No poverty themselves and theirs disgrace; No fear of death the joy of life devours; No unchaste sleep their precious time deflowers; No loss, no grief, no change, wait on their winged hours.” And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who looked down from heaven upon the children of men; and to the SON, Who is in the generation of the righteous: and to the HOLY GHOST, from Whom and by Whom that generation receives its righteousness; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

Vouchsafe, O LORD, to look down from Thy holy heaven upon the children of men, and give us to know the way of peace; that we, being set free from the hard captivity of vice, may enjoy the habitations of the heavenly Jerusalem. (1.) Mozarabic, for the Jews. O JESU, ineffable WORD of the Almighty FATHER, Whom the hearts of men therefore believe not to be very GOD, because in their own souls they are altogether become abominable; we pray and beseech Thee that they also may know Thee like as we know Thee; that they may so be joined to Thy faithful people by the profession of a true faith, as entirely to rejoice that they have their portion and inheritance among the redeemed. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) The LORD grant to each of us that, being made a Jacob by supplanting all vice, and turned into a true Israel, he may merit to embrace the LORD with his whole heart: to Whom, with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, is honour and glory to ages of ages. Amen.

Mozarabic, for the Arians. [O LORD, make us ever believe and call upon Thy Name, that we may not think with the heart of the fools, who cry with unbelieving voice, There is no GOD. Turn the corruption of their mind unto the truth of the faithful, that their wickedness may not overcome those faithful, but that the faithful may win them by the doctrine of love, that they may eschew their abominable heresy, and together with the faithful may in a pure heart believe and confess the essence of the Trinity, so as to be numbered with the generation of the righteous, and with Thy Saints enjoy the glory of blessedness. Through Thy mercy (11.) [O GOD

the FATHER, turn everlasting captivity away from Thy people, and, we pray Thee, grant us peace in Him Who maketh both one, peace wherein our mortal Jacob may rejoice in the flesh, until, becoming Israel, we shall attain to behold Thee, O GOD. (1.)]

Psalm 15

TITLE. A Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST is the mountain on which the souls of the righteous may rest. The voice of CHRIST speaking to the FATHER concerning His faithful people. Of the example and dominion of the same. Of His Apostles and Saints. The Prophet inquireth: GOD replieth. Of righteousness. VEN. BEDE. The LORD replieth to the question of the Prophet after the pattern of the decalogue, that the way to the courts of His blessedness, lies by ten virtues. The whole Psalm consists of a question and reply: but the question is contained in one verse, the reply in six. EUSEBIUS OF CÆSARÆA. Restitution to our first state, and a representation of Him Who is perfect according to GOD. ANONYMOUS. The words of the people in the Babylonish captivity, desiring to return to their own country, and enumerating the merits by which a man may go up thither. SYRIAC PSALTER. Perfect conversion to GOD.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: II. Nocturn. [Easter Eve: Matins. Feasts of Five Wounds, Crown of Thorns, and Shroud: II. Nocturn. Michaelmas Day: I. Nocturn. All Saints: II. Nocturn. Common of One Martyr: III. Nocturn. Common of Many Martyrs: II. Nocturn. Common of Confessors: III. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: III. Nocturn. Gregorian. [Easter Eve: He shall dwell in Thy tabernacle,* He shall rest upon Thy holy hill. All Saints: LORD, they who have done the thing which is right, shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, and rest upon Thy holy hill. Common of a Martyr: He shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, he shall rest upon Thy holy hill. Many Martyrs: I will give to My Saints the promised place in the Kingdom of My FATHER, saith the LORD.] Parisian. Who shall rest upon Thy holy hill, O LORD? He that worketh righteousness and hath done no harm to his neighbour. Mozarabic. LORD, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle? or who shall rest upon Thy holy hill?

The question has been asked why this is only called A Psalm of David: not, as so often, A Psalm of David to the end. S. Chrysostom answers that this Psalm has reference, not to the end, but to the very beginning, of the Christian life. Ruffinus

sees a mystery in the very number of the Psalm: the Paschal Lamb was slain on the fourteenth day of the month at even: the number fifteen, as the day of the full moon, implies the fulness of light which followed the completion of the sacrifice, that fulness of light which will be the portion of the citizen of Sion, described in this Psalm. The Psalmist in the last Psalm had declared: ”They are all gone out of the way, there is none that doeth good;” and so, as if in despair, he turns to GOD that he may put the disciples’ question, ”Who then can be saved?” Standing then as a Priest before the Holy of Holies, and waiting for the words of the Living Oracle CHRIST, the whole world lying in wickedness behind him, the House of GOD in all its blessedness before him, he thus begins:

1 LORD, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle: or who shall rest upon thy holy hill? We must understand the tabernacle of the Church militant; the holy hill of the Church triumphant. And in this sense it is well said, the tabernacle or tent, because tents are the habitation of them that are engaged in war, not of those who are at rest. By the mountains, as the Gloss beautifully says, eternal beatitude is represented, where is the vision of peace, Remigius also joins on this Psalm to the last, but he makes it depend on the last verse, ”Then shall Jacob rejoice, and Israel shall be right glad;” as if, remembering with the Apostle that ”they are not all Israel which are of Israel,” he proceeded to ask, Which of all these who seem to enter into GOD’S tabernacle shall really dwell there and belong to it? Jansenius and Lorinus, but few other commentators of note, will have both the tabernacle and the holy hill to mean the same thing, namely, the kingdom of heaven.

and the perfection of love, where none contends in the vehemence of the conflict,—but every one rests in eternity of peace: the mountain in which it pleased the LORD to dwell, yea, the LORD will abide in it for ever. He asks not, Who shall rest in Thy tabernacle? because he well knows that rest here is impossible: ”without are fightings, within are fears:” ”if Joshua had given them rest, then would He not afterwards have spoken of another day.” Who shall dwell or abide: for he well knew how difficult it is to abide in grace. Adam had two sons, and one was a murderer: only eight persons were preserved in the ark, and one was a blasphemer: Abraham had two sons, and one was rejected: Isaac had two sons, and one was reprobate: Jacob had twelve, and ten banded together to sell their brother for a slave. We may find a reference here to the ark, which for centuries dwelt in the tabernacle, being carried hither and thither, but never found any rest till removed to the holy hill of Sion. S. Basil takes the tabernacle of our flesh, laying the emphasis on the word Thy: who shall dwell in this body of infirmity and sin, so as to make it Thy tabernacle?

[This whole Psalm sets before us the perfect Manhood of CHRIST, and describes the holiness and obedience whereby He merited, even as the Son of Man, the throne of Heaven. And as He rested in more than one place during His pilgrimage on earth,

so the tabernacle is variously explained. And first, it is taken of His Virgin Mother: Sic quisvit in Mariâ, Dum ipsius in hac viâ Virgo fit hospitium. Or, with the Vulgate reading of Ecclus. xxiv. 8: ”He that made me rested in my tabernacle.” Then the grave which held Him for a time is so called, in accordance with that saying, ”His rest (Vulg. grave) shall be glorious.” Wherefore this Psalm is recited on Easter Eve. And, thirdly, His abode in Paradise before His Resurrection is referred to, as He was the first of mankind to enter there. Finally, He, coming to His people in the Blessed Sacrament, dwells in that true tabernacle of GOD, a cleansed heart.

O dulcis JEST, veni In cordis lectulum, In quo nil sit obscœni; Fac tibi ferculum Virtutibus ornatum, Et caritate stratum, Me tibi præparatum Fac tabernaculum.] 2 Even he, that leadeth an uncorrupt life: and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart. K The Sequence, Jubilemus in hac die. The Hymn, Quo me Deus umore. As ten commandments were given from Mount Sinai, which they who would enter into eternal life must keep: so here we have ten marks or characteristics of those that shall enter into the same life. The first is, He that leadeth an uncorrupt life; or as it is in the Vulgate, He that walketh without blemish. Walketh, that is, in the same state in which he has been placed by holy Baptism; leading ”the rest of his life according to this beginning.” But this keeping himself unspotted from the world, this passive service of GOD, is not enough, unless he bring forth the fruits of actual righteousness: and therefore it follows in the second place, and doeth the thing which is right. They observe that of the four cardinal virtues, Justice, Prudence, Temperance, and Fortitude, David only mentions Justice, because this of necessity must include all the others. And then there follows thirdly, speaketh the truth from his heart. Where notice that truth is here mentioned as the first-fruit of working righteousness, just as it is put first in the catalogue of Christian graces by S. Paul: ”finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest,” &c.

3 He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour: and hath not slandered his neighbour. They notice well that there are three kinds of truth; truth in heart, truth in word, truth in deed. Truth in heart, of which the Apostle says, ”Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.” Truth in word, of which the Prophet writes, ”These are the things which ye shall do; speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour.” Truth in deed; of which Hezekiah pleads, ”Remember now how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart.” And we have them all here. Truth in heart: speaketh the truth from his heart. Truth in word: he that hath used no deceit in his tongue. Truth in deed: nor done evil to his neighbour. And these are the third, fourth and fifth marks of the citizen of Sion. S. Augustine, the Doctor of Truth, who so strenuously teaches that a falsehood can never be justified by any necessity, even of life or death, dwells at great length from this Psalm in his treatise De Mendacio, on the subject of truth.

And notice the examples of truth spoken with the lips but not from the heart; because either spoken unwillingly or guilefully. Caiaphas spoke the truth concerning CHRIST: ”It is expedient that one man should die for the people;” but, ”this spake he not of himself;” and therefore not from his heart. The priests of the Philistines spake truth concerning the ark; Balaam concerning the people of GOD; the devils concerning CHRIST; but again not from the heart. The sixth note: and hath not slandered his neighbour. S. Augustine’s practical commentary on this clause is well known; how over the table at which he entertained his friends, he caused these two verses to be written: He that is wont to slander absent men, May never at this table sit again: And in his Confessions, he takes occasion to celebrate the abhorrence which S. Monica always felt and expressed for everything like slander. The seventh characteristic follows:

4 He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes: and maketh much of them that fear the LORD.

Here the Vulgate is entirely different from our own translation: The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight: or as it is in our Bible translation, In whose eyes a vile person is contemned. If we take that translation, the Psalmist only tells us what the Apostle also commands: ”Be strong in the LORD, and in the power of His might: thus being able to contemn him that is indeed the vile person, him that is indeed the malicious, namely, Satan. Hence came the courage of the martyrs; hence they could despise the bribes and seductions of the devil on the one side, for the ”far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” offered them on the other. And not only the devil, but his instruments: witness the words of brave Mattathias: ”Thus consider ye throughout all ages, that none that put their trust in Him shall be overcome. Fear not thou the words of a sinful man, for his glory shall be dung and worms. To-day he shall be lifted up, and to-morrow he shall not be found, because he is returned into his dust, and his thought is come to nothing. Yes: and thus indeed Satan was contemned by Him Whose abode is from everlasting to everlasting on the heavenly hill, when the evil one showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them in a moment of time:

and received for his answer, ”Get thee behind Me, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and Him only shalt thou serve. And maketh much of them that fear the Lord. Beautifully in the same spirit is it said by our own Bishop Montague, ”These blessed ones with GOD, that have fought the good fight, kept the faith, finished their course, as they are now regnant in glory with their Redeemer, so are they honourable amongst the righteous upon earth for ever. They have left a name behind them so that their praise shall be remembered for evermore. The LORD hath gotten great glory by them, and therefore with renown He will reward them. No Christian will deny or envy them their due: and

A New Gag. for myself, I say with Nazianzen, It doth me good at heart to see them honoured: I admire, reverence, adore them in their kind: their triumphs and trophies over death and hell, my tongue and pen shall most willingly set forth to light with all the poor skill and faculty I have." 5 He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not: though it were to his own hindrance. This is the eighth characteristic of the citizen of Sion. Where notice that there was once a disposition on the part of some of the greatest doctors of the Church, as S. Augustine and S. Basil, to consider all swearing of whatever kind, forbidden by the law of Christianity. S. Basil says on this very place: "What is this? Here an oath is mentioned among those virtues which belong to a perfect man; while in the Gospel it is entirely forbidden. What then are we to say? This: that the LORD has everywhere the same end, not only to prevent the completed efforts of sin, but to cut up iniquity from its very first beginnings. For, as the old law says, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but the LORD's commandment is, Thou shalt not desire: so here, the Prophet is satisfied if an oath be taken with truth; but the LORD cuts up all possibility of perjury by forbidding an oath." S. Augustine says: "A false oath is destruction; a true oath is perilous: no oath is secure." And so S. Ambrose: "It is GOD's will that thou shouldst not swear, lest thou shouldst commit perjury." But the teaching of the Church is rather that of S. Thomas: An oath is like medicine; not to be taken every day and on common occasions, nor without the advice of a wise physician; but with that advice necessary.

[And observe, that as the word Sacrament denotes the military oath, so this verse holds of the Christian soldier who keeps the pledge sworn to his Captain in Baptism, and confirmed in the Eucharist, disappointing Him not, Who is so eager for our salvation, but abiding faithful even when constancy seems to be to his own hindrance, loss of friends, spoiling of goods, peril of life itself. And it is well said, his neighbour, because the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother," the LORD our GOD, is nigh unto us in all things that we call upon Him for.] [There is a noteworthy parallel to this picture of a righteous man in a place where it would hardly be looked for, the poems of Catullus: Nec sanctam violasse fidem, nec fœdere in ullo Divum ad fallendos numine abusum homines, Multa peracta manent in longa ætate, Catulle, Ex hoc ingrato gaudia amore tibi.]

6 He that hath not given his money upon usury: nor taken reward against the innocent.

The first clause of this verse contains no doubt the most intensely difficult subject in Christian morals. Whether the law against usury was one intended for the Jews alone, in the strictness of the letter, and the Early Church was mistaken in applying it to the new dispensation: or whether the later Church has mistaken in allowing it under certain, and those very lax, rules, rules rather dictated by the civil authority than self-evident, is a question which it would be the height of presumption to

attempt to solve. Only this must be remembered: that there has been great error on the one side or on the other; either in the present practice of allowing, without a scruple, funds, debentures, and the like; or in the early prohibition to a priest to buy a field in which the seed had just been sown, with the intention of selling the crop, because in so doing he sold time, God's free gift to every one. But let this law mean what it may; let it be taken in the literal sense, or like the fourth commandment be utterly spiritualised, there can be no doubt as to the next clause, nor taketh reward against the innocent. And then we are carried back at once to His trial, Who was indeed, Who was only, innocent; to His own words quoted against Him, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it again;" to the confession of Judas, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." And this last characteristic of the perfect man, seems to fix the interpretation of the whole on Him Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; on Him Who shall indeed dwell in God's tabernacle and rest upon His holy hill, when all enemies shall be subdued to Him and He shall reign for ever and ever. And in this sense, most fully, most completely, does the last verse apply;

S. Hieronym. in Ezech. 18. 7 Whoso doeth these things: shall never fall. And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Whose is the holy hill; and to the SON, Who shall abide in it for ever: and to the HOLY GHOST, by Whom only we are to reach it. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

Grant to us, merciful GOD, to enter Thy Church without spot, and turn us away from deceiving our neighbours; that while we observe all things according to Thy precepts, we may not be afflicted by Thy punishments for ever. (1.) O CHRIST, the SON of GOD, have mercy on our humility, Thou, Who by the deceit of the traitor disciple, wast given over to suffering and death: and as Thou wast in Thine innocence sold for money, grant that we may never deceive our neighbour by perjury, nor injure ourselves by evil habits; but rather following the example of Thy patience, may prevail both against our external and internal enemies. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) [Visit us, O LORD, we pray Thee, as we wander in the body away from Thee, and vouchsafe to strengthen us in Thy holy service, that alway busied in doing that which is right, we may be uncorrupt dwellers in Thine everlasting tabernacle.]

Psalm 16

TITLE. Michtam of David. Vulgate: The inscription of the title: To David himself. Probably, A golden Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST, when He had suffered for us, was not left in hell. The voice of the Church. The voice of CHRIST to the FATHER, and of His members to their head. Through this whole Psalm the Person of the SAVIOUR is introduced. At its commencement, He speaks according to His humanity to the FATHER, beseeching that He may be preserved, because He hath ever set His hope on Him: He adds how His Saints are chosen, not by the desires of the flesh, but by the virtues of the SPIRIT: He affirms that everything that He endured was for the glory of His heritage. In the second part, He returns thanks to the same FATHER, Who, standing on His right hand, overcame the iniquity of this world by the power of His omnipotence: whence He affirms that His soul was set free from hell, and after the glory of His Resurrection, had its dwelling among the pleasures of GOD'S right hand.

VEN. BEDE. When all the headings of the Psalms may be called Inscriptions of Titles, I know not with what peculiar mystical signification this Psalm has this especial title. But since a title was written over our LORD when Crucified, "This is the King of the Jews," not without reason in the Psalm in which that same King is about to speak of His Passion and Resurrection, is commemoration made of that inscription: for that which is added, to David himself, is not to be applied to any other person than to the LORD, the SAVIOUR to Whom it is sung. EUSEBIUS OF CÆSARÆA. The election of the Church and the Resurrection of CHRIST. ÆTHIOPIC PSALTER. The covenant of David which he proposed as peculiar to himself.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: II. Nocturn. [Easter Eve: Matins. Corpus Christi: I. Nocturn. Feasts of the Precious Blood and Shroud: Matins. Common of Many Martyrs: II. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: II. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. My goods * are nothing unto Thee: in Thee have I hoped; save me, O GOD. [Easter Eve: My flesh also shall rest in hope. Corpus Christi: With the Communion of the Cup, whereby GOD Himself is received, not with the blood of bulls, the LORD hath gathered us together. Common of Many Martyrs: In the Saints which are in the earth, He hath magnified all my wills among them.] Parisian. Preserve me, O GOD: for in Thee have I put my trust. Mozarabic. I said unto the LORD, Thou art my GOD. 1 Preserve me, O GOD: for in thee have I put my trust.

Have I put My trust. And "they that trust in the LORD," it is the promise of the prophet, "shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. But we may put the text, so far as He is man, into our LORD's mouth: for He was preserved by the FATHER, as well as preserved Himself. Or when He says, Preserve Me, we may so interpret it, as if He were praying for those that are His, and with Whom He is one. Gerhohus beautifully paraphrases the prayer: "Preserve in them, Me, the Way, that they may not err; Me, the Truth, that they may neither deceive, nor be deceived; Me, the Life, that although they be dead, they may live,—that although they be sick through any sin, this sickness may not be unto death; but that every one that liveth and believeth in Thee may not die everlastingly. Thus, O FATHER, preserve Me, Who am the Resurrection and the Life, so that if even any one of Mine should die through sin, he may yet live again through penitence: to the end that none of My own may perish, preserve me, O God. But further notice that this and the following verses teach us six mysteries concerning CHRIST. The virtue of His prayer, Preserve Me, O God:

the efficacy of His teaching, "All My delight is upon the Saints,"—or, as it is in the Vulgate, "In the Saints He hath wonderfully declared My will: the gathering together of His Church, "Their drink-offerings of blood," &c.: the safeguard of His Passion, "Thou maintainest My lot: the glory of His Resurrection, "Thou shalt not leave My soul in hell: the blessedness of His Ascension, "At Thy Right Hand there is pleasure for evermore. On this verse the schoolmen raise a question whether our LORD can be said, in so far as He was man, to have possessed hope as a theological virtue. And S. Thomas decides that He cannot: a decision somewhat modified by Cardinal Hugo and others, who say that, although He possessed not hope in respect of the beatific object, which was always His own, yet so far as hope imparts an expectation of a certain, separate, future thing, as for example, the incorruptibility of His own Body in the grave, He may be said to have possessed it.

2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD: Thou art my GOD, my goods are nothing unto thee. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, "Thou hast no need of my goods." Others would more literally translate it, "My Good, there is nothing beside Thee." They dispute whether this verse may be put into the mouth of our LORD, Thou art My God. No

doubt it may be, as He Himself taught us on the Cross. Hence also the whole question arises, How, and how far, human works may be said to have merit: taken in connection with that speech of Elihu, ”Thinkest thou this to be right that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than GOD’S? If thou sinnest, what doest thou against Him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto Him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou Him, or what receiveth He of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.” It is sufficient to notice the fact, without entering into this, the most boundless controversy that has ever been agitated, and in which the Church has always allowed so great a latitude on either side. This only is to be observed: if we can from our very hearts take the first clause of the verse on our lips, then indeed we possess a blessing which nothing can destroy, and for which nothing could compensate.

[Modern critics translate the last clause, as practically do the Syriac and Symmachus, I have no good except Thee. And on this there is no better comment than that brief saying of the Doctor of Grace, ”Thou hast made us for Thee, and our heart is restless, until it rests in Thee.” And they explain the ordinary rendering as spoken in the person of CHRIST, and meaning that the WORD took flesh not for Himself, but for us, and therefore that the Divine Glory, essentially incapable of increase, as already infinite, was not augmented by the Manhood of the SAVIOUR.]
3 All my delight is upon the saints, that are in the earth: and upon such as excel in virtue. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, ”In the Saints which are in His earth He hath magnified all My wills among them.” For He Who, just before His Passion, said, ”Nevertheless, not My Will, but Thine be done,” has, in so far as He was Man, had His reward and His joy in this: that His will, and not their own, is the pole-star which directs the course of His people

S. August. Conf. i. 1. across the stormy ocean of this world. Or, if we take the verse according to our own translation: the greatest of heathen philosophers could say that there was no sight more pleasing to the gods, than that of a good man suffering affliction wrongfully. And so we may not doubt that, among the innumerable cloud of witnesses, He, the Martyr of martyrs, is continually to be found. Or, if we put the words into our own mouths, then we find an especial emphasis in the clause, that are in the earth: as if it were natural to find more comfort from their struggles who are compassed about with the same infirmity, and exposed to the same attacks as ourselves, than from the peace of the blessed ones who have already entered into their rest. But not only in this verse, but in the next also, is there a striking difference between the Vulgate and our own version.

4 But they that run after another god: shall have great trouble.

Or, as it is in the Vulgate, ”Their infirmities are multiplied: after that they made haste. It is wonderful how the different versions vary in this place, till one could

hardly think that it was the same passage of Scripture that was translated. Thus, for example, one would read: ”Multiplied be their sorrows who run headlong elsewhere. Another: ”As for those profane earthly idols, and all the great who in them delight, multiplied be their sorrows. But, to take the words of the Vulgate, there are two senses, both most true, both most beautiful, in which they may be understood. The first, of the wicked: Their infirmities, that is, the afflictions which God sends, to bring them back to Himself, are multiplied in His love: because one is not enough, He sends another: as the Prophet says, ”Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little. And yet, when thus afflicted, they made haste; they became impatient; they fretted at the chastisement of the LORD. Or, quite in the opposite sense, Their infirmities were multiplied: that is, the true servants of God, the more they try to walk worthy of their vocation, the more they endeavour to tread in the footsteps of their LORD, the more Satan assaults them with his temptations, the more their infirmities are multiplied. But in them is that prophecy fulfilled, ”Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall also arise. After that they made haste:

they advanced in their spiritual course; they fulfilled the homely proverb, ”He that stumbles without falling, goes on faster than before. After that they made haste. As Saul the persecutor, who became Paul the Apostle, laboured more abundantly than they all; as the penitent thief who, after grace had touched his heart, so confessed CHRIST, as none other before nor since; as S. Mary Magdalene, who, after having fallen so deeply into that sin, which, more than any other, cuts us off from the grace of GOD, nevertheless merited first to behold Him after He had risen from the dead.

D. C. [Again, their infirmities were multiplied when they learnt, for the first time, the true number and nature of their sins from holy preachers, and then, after that, they made haste to be converted and baptized. Haste, like Peter and Andrew, James and John, leaving their nets, and Matthew’s quitting his office.] 5 Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer: neither make mention of their names within my lips.

Or, as it is in the Vulgate, ”I will not enter into their conventicles of blood. And think first of those sacrifices of blood which have been offered from the time of righteous Abel to Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar: and then, beyond and above all, of that sacrifice of blood which, so far as they that offered it were concerned, has never yet been expiated, ”His blood be on us and on our children. Neither make mention of their names. A reference to the Mosaic law, which not only forbade the worship of the idols of the seven nations, but the very mention of their names. And so is the prophecy in Zechariah: ”It shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of Hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered. It is not, perhaps, necessary, with S. Paulinus, to put these words into our LORD’s mouth,

and to understand the lips of the two Testaments, by both of which, and especially by their coherence and contact, He reveals His Will; and to which, also, he would refer that verse in the Canticles, ”Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth. For it is remarkable how the names of the wicked are, as it were, passed over and kept silence about in Holy Scripture. The old prophet of Bethel,—we know his deeds; of his name we are not informed.

So in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus; the name of the beggar that was carried by Angels into Abraham’s bosom is known to the whole world; that of him who in hell lift up his eyes, being in torment, is involved in obscurity. So again of him who said, ”Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years,” and to whom GOD said, ”Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. In like manner the young man is not named who went away sorrowful from our LORD, because he had great possessions.

[Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, because My offering is My own Blood, the Cup of the New Testament; neither make mention of their names, because the titles Jew [There is a very ancient tradition that he was S. Barnabas.] and Gentile have been done away by the new name of Christian, which I have given to My Saints. Nay, I will not call them by the names their old sins have deserved, thieves, harlots, murderers, and the like, but brethren.] 6 The LORD himself is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup : thou shalt maintain my lot.

One can hardly explain the portion of mine inheritance better than by the words of S. Augustine on another Psalm : ”What better than GOD can be given to me? GOD loveth me, GOD loveth thee. Behold, He hath set it before thee : ask what thou wilt. If the Emperor were to say to thee, Ask what thou wilt : what office of tribune or of count wilt thou receive? then what wouldest thou demand both to be received by thyself and to be given to others? Well, when GOD saith, Ask what thou wilt ; what wilt thou demand? stir up thy mind, exercise thy avarice, stretch forward as far as thou canst, dilate thy cupidity : it is no ordinary person, but the Omnipotent GOD Who saith to thee, Ask what thou wilt have. . . . Thou wilt find nothing dearer, thou wilt find nothing better, than Him Who said, Ask what thou wilt. Seek for JESUS, Who made all things : and in Him, and from Him thou wilt have all things which He made. . . . And He desires to give thee nothing so much as Himself. If thou canst find anything better, ask it. But if thou askest anything else, thou wilt do Him dishonour, thou wilt do injury to thyself, by preferring His works to Himself. . . . The Lord is the portion of my inheritance. Let Him possess thee, that thou mayest possess Him : He possesses thee that He may benefit thee ;

He is possessed by thee, that He may benefit thee. Thus S. Augustine speaks on the 40th Psalm, but his words are at least equally applicable to this. Thou shalt maintain my lot. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, ”Thou art He that shall restore me mine

inheritance. And one cannot but notice the similar difference between our translation and that of the Vulgate in the parable of the Prodigal Son : where our translation has, ”Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him,” it is in the Vulgate, ”Bring forth the first robe,” that is, the robe of baptismal innocence, to be restored in a certain degree by penitence. And thus in this verse, Thou shalt restore my heritage manifestly refers to our being made heirs of GOD, and joint heirs with CHRIST, in our Baptism. Neither must we fail to see how the two great Sacraments are set forth to us in this verse. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance,—namely, that HOLY GHOST, Whose temples at the baptismal font we became : and of my cup,—namely, that dear LORD, Whose Blood in the Eucharistic chalice we drink. Thus we have the Sacrament of Life, and the Sacrament of Food, immediately followed by

A. A. that of medicine. Literally, these references to the cup, The Lord is the portion of my cup, ”I will receive the cup of salvation,” ”Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?” are allusions to the Jewish custom of ratifying and confirming a covenant, such as the transfer of land, by drinking from a common cup. But how unspeakably poor and mean is that literal sense in the Psalms, compared with the mystical signification which shall be in force till the end of the world! Or we may put the words into our LORD’s mouth, Thou shalt restore Mine inheritance. It is the same prayer as that, ”And now, O FATHER, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” Thou shalt restore. After My thirty and three years of suffering, after My crown of thorns, after My reed of mockery, after My Cross, Thou shalt restore My everlasting years of glory, Thou shalt set a crown of pure gold upon My Head, Thou shalt give Me the sceptre of everlasting dominion, and the throne that is at Thy Right Hand for evermore.

The Hymn, Optatus votis omnium. O grande cunctis gaudium, Quod partus nostræ Virginis Post sputa, flagra, post crucem, Sedi Paternæ jungitur. 7 The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground : yea, I have a goodly heritage. A.

Had we not such authority for the application, I should almost have shrunk from applying this verse to the Son of God, as exulting over, and glorying in, His union of human nature to the Eternal Word. This is the fair ground in which He cast His lot at Bethlehem : this is the goodly heritage, goodly only to the exceeding greatness of His love, which He came into this world to vindicate to Himself. And S. Peter Chrysologus carries out the allegory still further, and shows how the lines, as the Vulgate and our own Bible translation give the word, were meted out by the HOLY GHOST, when He came down on the Blessed Virgin, preparing in her a habitation for the Son of God. And there is no doubt a reference to the division of the inheritance of the tribes by Him, as it is described in the book of Joshua. The expression in the Vulgate, ”The ropes are fallen unto Me,” is piously interpreted in more than one sense by the Fathers. Euthymius will have them to be those material

ropes by which the Son of God was bound in the garden : the fair ground referring literally to the beauty of its flowers, but spiritually to the inheritance which that binding, as the first-fruits of, and entrance on, His Passion, procured for Him. S.

Augustine takes them of the bands of love by which CHRIST was drawn to His work on earth, and with reference to which the Bride prays, "Draw Me, we will run after Thee. I have a goodly heritage. Or we may take it of the Son of God thus consoling Himself amidst the toils and afflictions of His earthly pilgrimage: "I suffer these things, because without them mankind cannot be restored to their country: I endure the contempt, the insults, the rejection of those that ought to be My own here, to the end they may be in very deed My own there. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. I HAVE a goodly heritage, Mine before the foundation of the world; and Mine, but belonging also to those that are Mine, when I shall have returned to My country, and resumed My throne to all eternity. And yet in one sense more: may not we, who have been led into the green pastures of Scriptural interpretation by the primitive and mediæval Saints, whom, at however great a distance, we are following,—may not we say, The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground: the fair, wide ground, which, taking us away from the narrow construction of the literal sense, enables us to lift up our eyes to the everlasting hills;

yea, I have a goodly heritage, in the application to things seen and eternal, of words in their literal sense, spoken of things seen and temporal.

8 I will thank the LORD for giving me warning: my reins also chasten me in the night-season. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, Who hath given me understanding. But to take it in the sense of our own version: see how continually from the very beginning that HOLY SPIRIT has warned against sin and danger. The hundred and twenty years given to the sinners of the old world; the vision of Abimelech; the repeated messages to Pharaoh; the continual warnings given to Saul: the threatening pronounced by the prophet sent against Bethel: all these show how mercifully GOD would fence in both His servants and His enemies from sin. Who hath given me understanding. They see a reference here to the first Adam: to him also the lines fell in pleasant places; he also had a goodly heritage: but because "being in honour he had no understanding," he lost all, and became like the beasts that perish. But if we take this sentence as spoken by our LORD, the greater number of the Fathers have taught us that the knowledge of CHRIST, in so far as He was man, was not communicated to Him by degrees, and in the course of years, but at once and from the very in-

1 It would take too long to follow Hugh of S. Victor in his allegory of the universe divided between our LORD and Satan: or Nicephorus Blemmidas, of the ropes, in the sense of the snares which were spread for CHRIST. Michael Ayguan under-

stands the passage, of the division of the world among the twelve Apostles, as once of Canaan between the twelve tribes. stant of the Incarnation. It is true that the opposite opinion has been held by S. Athanasius, S. Cyril of Alexandria, S. Ambrose, S. Fulgentius, S. Epiphanius, and to a certain extent by S. Augustine; but, notwithstanding, the other is the more general belief, except in so far as that which is termed experimental understanding, the wisdom and knowledge arising from experience, is concerned. My reins also chasten me in the night-season, or as it is in the Vulgate, till the night. Either version will give the same sense. He did indeed suffer all the miseries and labours, all the hardness and weariness in the night-season of this life: or till the night, the deep, dark night of His Passion. And notice that this is one of the blessings for which He returns thanks: He, the Captain of our salvation, for the pains and labours which purchased for Him, in so far as He was Man, the Throne above every throne, and the Name above every name: as we, the soldiers of that Captain, ought to do for the pain which renders us like Him here, and which is intended to transform us into His image there. As the German poet well says:

”Could I face the coming night, If Thou wert not near? Nay, without Thy love and might, I must sink with fear: Round me falls the evening gloom, Sights and sounds all cease, But within this narrow room Night will bring no peace. ”Then if I must wake and weep All the long night through, Thou the watch with me wilt keep, Friend and Guardian true; In the darkness Thou wilt speak Lovingly with me, Though my heart may vainly seek Words to breathe to Thee.” [My reins. Taking it of our LORD, these words denote the Jewish nation, from whose reins His Mother sprang, which did indeed chasten Him by revilings and tortures until that night-season of the three hours’ darkness, when they could do no more. And if we apply the passage to Christians, it tells of the temptations of the flesh, the law in the members warring against the law of the mind, and that, even in Saints, till the night of bodily death, but in sinners till the night of voluntary spiritual darkness.]

9 I have set GOD always before me : for he is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall.

And again the verse may be said by our LORD with a depth of meaning in which it can be taken by none other. For, from the very instant of His conception hypostatically united to the FATHER, how could it be that the LORD was not always before Him? And if we could but do that by grace which He did by nature,—if in all the goings out and comings in of this life, it might be said of that dear LORD and of us, ”So they two went on together,”—if, whether we be sent to Bethel, or Jericho, or Jordan, our own resolution is, ”As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee,”—oh, with what a reality may we take the beginning of the next verse on our lips, ”Wherefore my heart was glad! But now, how is this? If He is to be on our right hand, then we are making for ourselves the same awful petition, which

the wife of Zebedee put up for one of her sons, and should ourselves be found on His left hand. Are we to say, with some of the commentators, that we are not to press the text too closely? or, with others, that first of all, at the beginning of the manifestation of His love towards us, we were indeed on His left hand, and He, stretching forth the right hand of His Majesty, succoured us from this peril, and gave us a good hope of being placed among the sheep at the last day?

Or, once more, are we to imagine ourselves as looking up to, standing face to face with Him, as He sits on His Throne,—He thus on our right hand, so that we shall not be moved; we not the less on His right hand, the place and the heritage of perpetual joy? Take it which way you will, the end of the verse will be fulfilled: therefore I shall not fall. One indeed, but One only, could say, absolutely and fully, I shall not fall: even as He said, "The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me. But we—"The righteous man falleth seven times a day, and we, exceeding sinners, seventy times seven. But we may so fall as to be able to say with the Prophet, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; for when I fall, I shall also arise. We may so fall as, after we have suffered for a while, to be more than conquerors through Him That loved us.

10 Wherefore my heart was glad, and my glory rejoiced: my flesh also shall rest in hope. We can take these words in our own mouths, and see how beautifully they set forth to us the love of our LORD. Because we have set GOD always before us, therefore He that is indeed our heart, the heart of all our affection, trust, joy, our Heart was glad, and our Glory,—for Who but He, That bare all shame for us, is our Glory?—rejoices. For if there be joy in the presence of the Angels over one sinner that repenteth, how much more in the sight of the LORD of the Angels, Whose love is to theirs, as the ocean to the drop of a bucket? My flesh shall rest in hope. In hope indeed: for from that one sepulchre in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, life and light and hope have gone forth into all the graves of the earth;

S. Petr. Damiani, Serm. in Act. ii. 24. have changed burial grounds into cemeteries, graves into beds, death into sleep: "LORD, if he sleep he shall do well." My flesh shall rest. And they take it as more especially appertaining to our LORD, because He, the Martyr of Martyrs, after the struggle was over, reposed in peace: as it is written; "All the kings of the nations, even all of them lie in glory, every one in his own house." Whereas the martyrs His followers so often had no grave in which to repose: their dead bodies were "cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost." Or they were burnt to ashes in the furnace, or entombed in the maws of wild beasts, or torn to pieces on the rack. But our LORD's Body, during those solemn hours, rested in peace, rested as a king under a guard of honour, in a garden, in the spring of the year. So well was it foretold by the Prophet: "His rest shall be glorious."

11 For why? thou shalt not leave my soul in hell: neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

Let us first hear the Apostolic interpretation of David's prophecy: "Wherefore he saith also in another Psalm, Thou shalt not suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of GOD, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption. But He Whom GOD raised again, saw no corruption. Such was S. Paul's interpretation: now let us hear S. Peter's. "For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the LORD always before My face, for He is on My right hand that I should not be moved: therefore did My heart rejoice and My tongue was glad. Moreover My flesh also shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to Me the ways of life. Thou shalt make Me full of joy with Thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that GOD had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, He would raise up CHRIST to sit on his throne: he seeing this before spake of the Resurrection of CHRIST, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. Thus it is that the two great Apostles explained this verse:

and we can only tread in their steps. It is well said by Pseudo-Dionysius, in the famous book of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, with reference to this verse: "When they approach to death who have led a holy life, looking to the true promises of GOD, the verity of which they have seen made manifest in the Resurrection of CHRIST, with a firm and a lively hope and a Divine joy, they advance to the goal of death as to the end of their conflicts; because they know for certain that all they care for, because of their future resurrection, will be safe in that perfect and eternal life and blessedness. How many of God's saints these words have consoled in death, who can tell us? Who can say what part of the earth is not hallowed by the body of a saint? It is a noble thought of the earliest of Christian poets, where he represents the different cities presenting their various saints, as so many offerings to the second Adam:

Wherefore this dwelling, full of mighty Angels, Fears not the wide world's universal ruin, While in her hands she bears a rich oblation Unto her SAVIOUR. Thus, when the LORD shall shake His flaming right arm, Coming, His throne a purple cloud, to judgment, Weighing each nation in His ready balance Strictly and justly, Each of those cities, rising from her ruins, Shall to her monarch emulously hasten, Bearing those gifts, so precious and so loving, Home in their casket. 12 Thou shalt show me the path of life; in thy presence is the fulness of joy: and at thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore.

And, in the first place Who is the Path of Life but the LORD Himself? ”I am,” saith He, ”the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” And so the Apostle speaks of Him as ”the Author and Finisher of our faith.” The Fathers well remind us that what He said to S. Thomas, He says to all of us: that of us, as well as of that generation, the saying is true, ”No man cometh to the FATHER but by Me.” S. Ambrose and S. Gregory apply these words to our LORD and dilate upon them with great emphasis; but we may also take them in another sense, and putting them in our own mouths, address them to the Captain of our Salvation: Thou shalt show me the Path of Life: for the Path of Life is that path by which our LORD ascended from the Mount of Olives to the Right Hand of the FATHER. As He left us an example by rising from the grave, how we ourselves should burst the bands of death, so, by His Ascension into heaven, He taught us how of us that saying should be fulfilled, ”Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the LORD in the air, and so shall we ever be with the LORD.”

[In Thy presence. The LXX. and Vulgate read, Thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy countenance, and thus bring out more vividly the thought of the Beatific Vision: Sunt hi viventes, Me vitâ fruentes, The Hymn, In domo Patris. Pulchre lucentes, Me lumen videntes, Sunt et divini Dii quoque igniti Mihi uniti.] And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who restores our lot to us; and to the SON, Who is the portion of our inheritance: and to the HOLY GHOST, Who is on our right hand that we should not fall; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

Preserve, O LORD, them that put their trust in Thee, and conform our will to Thine; that we, enlightened by the joy of Thy Resurrection, may merit to be made happy at Thy Right Hand with all Thy saints. Who livest (5.) Preserve us, O LORD, in the fear which Thou lovest, and separate us from the contagion of sin; that since our goods are nothing unto Thee, we may receive Thine everlasting gifts. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) Make known to us, O LORD, the paths of life, and fill us with the pleasures that are at Thy Right Hand; and by the governance of Thine arm, cause us to submit our necks to Thy light yoke. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) [O most merciful GOD, preserve under Thy protection us who put our trust in Thee, show us the path of life, that we walking steadfastly therein unto the end with Thee as our Leader, may be filled with eternal joy, and be satisfied with the pleasure of Thy countenance. Through (1.)]

Psalm 17

TITLE. A Prayer of David. VEN. BEDE. Since many of the Psalms consist of prayers, the question may be asked why such an inscription more especially belongs to this. But though the others contain divers prayers mixed with other matters, this is a supplication through its whole course. Now David, as is known, signifies the LORD CHRIST, in Whose Person this Psalm is uttered for the instruction of the human race.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST, cast out of the city, was surrounded by the Jews. CHRIST speaketh concerning the Jews to the FATHER, complaining that they received Him as a lion greedy of the prey, and satiated with sins left the crime of their incredulity to their babes, when they said, "His Blood be upon us, and upon our children." VEN. BEDE. A threefold prayer is in this Psalm uttered by CHRIST according to His humanity. The first is where He makes His supplication to be heard according to His righteousness: Hear the right, O Lord. The second, that His innocence may be delivered from the snares of the Jews: I have called upon Thee, O God, for Thou shalt hear me. In the third, He supplicates a speedy resurrection, to the end that the perverse people of the Jews may no longer insult over Him; and that His faithful people may not doubt concerning His Majesty, He declares that He shall remain in eternal blessedness: Up, Lord, disappoint him, and cast him down.

EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. A prayer of the perfect man, or of CHRIST Himself, for them that are to be saved by Him. S. JEROME. This Psalm is sung in the Person of CHRIST against the Jews, and in the person of the Church against heretics.

Various Uses.
Ambrosian. Monday of the First Week: III. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Because of men's works * that are done against the words of Thy lips, I have kept hard paths. Parisian. O hold Thou up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. Mozarabic. Hear the right, O LORD, consider my complaint:

hearken with Thine ears to my prayer. 1 Hear the right, O LORD, consider my complaint: and hearken unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.

It is a very beautiful idea of Pseudo-Dionysius regarding the efficacy of prayer, that the case is as if we, standing on board a vessel, and holding in our hands a rope fastened to the shore, were to pull lustily at it. While endeavouring as it were to bring the shore to ourselves, we should indeed be bringing ourselves to it. And thus in prayer: while we seek in appearance, to bend GOD's will to us, we are indeed bringing our will to His. Here CHRIST prays not for Himself alone, but for the instruction of all: and the right which is to be heard is that righteousness which He offers for us, that full and complete sacrifice which He presents for our sins. And if we take the words into our mouths, S. Gregory Nyssen tells us that he will use it in vain whose debtor is in prison: the sound of his chains, says he, will be louder than the sound of your words. Or again applying the verse to the Son of God, "While," says Gerhohus, "I hang in agony on the Cross, whose cross beams represent as it were a balance, I cry for justice in the sight of the FATHER and of the whole company of heaven, to wit, whether My misery be not sufficiently great to abolish the guilt of all that believe in Me. I, the Son of God, suffer for slaves; I, the Just, for the unjust." Has not such a sacrifice a sweet-smelling savour by which the evil odour of sin may be destroyed? Has not such a sacrifice a voice that must be heard, not only on the part of mercy, but also of justice? That goeth not out of feigned lips. As they pray, who say, LORD, LORD, and do not the things which He commands.

2 Let my sentence come forth from thy presence: and let thine eyes look upon the thing that is equal. My sentence, it is as if He said, in this world was, "Let Him be crucified;" "Not this Man, but Barabbas:" but let My true sentence come forth from Thy Presence, Thou Who hast said, "I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession." Not the sentence of My accusation set up over My Cross, but the sentence pronounced before the world was, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." Let Thine eyes look upon the thing that is equal. It is equal or right, that, since the innocent suffered, the guilty should go free, that the innocent Lamb should atone for the wandering sheep; that since the Prince of Life submitted to the law of death, they that were all their life-time subject to his bondage should attain to everlasting life.

[From Thy presence. That is, let men know of a surety that My condemnation to the Cross was not the work of the Jews and Pilate, to whom I said, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above;" but that it was done of My free-will, and according to Thy decree and foreknowledge, for the salvation of My enemies.] 3 Thou hast proved and visited mine heart in the night-season; thou hast tried me, and shalt find no wickedness in me: for I am utterly purposed that my mouth shall not offend.

Proved, visited, tried: S. Thomas thus explains their difference. God proves when He puts a man to the test whether he will keep His laws or not. He visits, when by the indwelling of His HOLY SPIRIT, He would give him power to keep them. He tries, whether His servant will persevere to the end, or whether, having run well, he will cease to run at all. And that word try has the force of trial by fire which indeed is expressed both in the LXX. and in the Vulgate. And that story is well known of him who, inquiring of the refiner of silver how he knew when the dross was sufficiently separated, received for answer, "When I can see my own image perfectly reflected in it." In the night season. And what is that but saying "In the multitude of the sorrows that I have in my heart," for night is mystically the season of affliction, "Thy comforts have refreshed my soul?" Thou shalt find no wickedness in me. And then manifestly, He That speaks is the Son of God. But take it in the other sense: put those words into the mouth of one of the members, which only the Head can really and truly say, and then notice how the next clause follows: for I am utterly purposed that my mouth shall not offend. What is this but S. James's "If any man offend not in word, the same is also a perfect man?" And well might S. Pambo say when he had come to one of the elder saints of the wilderness for instruction in the ascetic life, and had heard from him that verse, "I said, I will take heed to my ways that I offend not with my tongue," That is enough for a whole life's practice; let me go home and attempt it.

4 Because of men's works, that are done against the words of thy lips: I have kept me from the ways of the destroyer.

The Vulgate is quite different: That my mouth may not speak the words of men: because of the words of Thy lips, I have kept hard paths. And taking it in that sense He would not speak the words of men Who denounced the doings and the traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees; Who exposed them for making clean the outside of the cup and the platter, while their inward parts were full of iniquity. I have kept hard paths. Hard indeed: hard, literally, in His manifold journeys among the mountains of Judæa and the plains of Galilee and the sea-coasts of Tyre and Sidon; hard, mystically, in that life which was but one sorrow from beginning to end; begun in the manger because there was no room for Him in the inn: ended between the two thieves on the Cross. And because of Thy words. Because—"Ought not CHRIST to have suffered these things?"—Because of the prophecies that He should be despised and rejected of men; because of the types, that He should be the Lamb sacrificed with fire, and together with hyssop and bitter herbs. It is to be noticed that some of the older translations give the passage thus: I have kept the ways of the transgressor: which they interpret to mean that He was numbered with them, reckoned among them, called a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber while He lived, and joined with the wicked in His death. I have kept hard paths. This is the Antiphon which the Church takes as the ordinary interpretation of the Psalm. And well it may be: for what is the whole of the Christian course but a succession of hard

paths,—the strait gate and the narrow way which the martyrs and the confessors trod, and which they trod for the same reason, namely, love. Lorinus beautifully applies those words of the heathen poet:

Nam ubi amor condimentum inerit, cuivis placiturum credo. Neque salsum neque suave esse potest quicquam, ubi amor non admiscetur. Fel quod amarum est, id mel faciet: hominem ex tristi lepidum et lenem. 5 O hold thou up my goings in thy paths: that my footsteps slip not. Hold Thou up, or, as the Vulgate has it, Make perfect. That is, says Gerhohus, in the paths of eternity: because of Thy commandments, I have kept hard paths in this world; let their hardness and sorrow be turned into the joy and glory of the next. Hold Thou up my goings. And where were they so truly held up as on the Cross? There indeed stablished; there indeed made perfect. Or, again, others will have this expression of making perfect to refer to the example that He left us, that we should tread in His steps; and in this way a very beautiful meaning may be drawn forth. Hold Thou up My goings, that I may leave a pattern to them that shall come after Me to life everlasting, that My footsteps—that is, that their footsteps which are Mine, because taken in My strength, and based upon My example—slip not, notwithstanding all the infirmities of the flesh, and the assaults of the world and of Satan.

6 I have called upon thee, O GOD, for thou shalt hear me: incline thine ear to me, and hearken unto my words. The Prophet, as Cajetan very well observes, sets us a memorable example in two respects. The one, his trust in GOD, Thou shalt hear me: the other, his acknowledgment that he has no merit of his own, Incline Thine ear to me, because my words have in themselves no power or force to reach it. Or, to apply these words to our LORD: I have called upon Thee, when I said, ”The hour is come: glorify Thy SON, that Thy SON also may glorify Thee;” when I prayed, ”FATHER, glorify Thy Name;” when I said, ”FATHER, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me where I am.” But now, as the hour of My Passion approaches, as the redemption or damnation of the human race depends upon My drinking or not drinking the cup, now in a different and deeper sense than before, incline Thine ear unto Me, and hearken unto My words, those seven words which I shall utter on the Cross; for others, ”FATHER, forgive them; for they know not what they do:” for Myself, ”FATHER, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit.”

7 Show thy marvellous loving-kindness, thou that art the Saviour of them which put their trust in thee: First let us separate the last clause from its present awkward junction, and refer it, as it ought to be referred, to the next verse. And then we take the words on our own lips, and having spoken of the LORD’s Passion, pray for that marvellous loving-kindness by which He said to the thief, ”Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise:” by which He made good the very title of His Cross—JESUS, in that He showed Himself to be the SAVIOUR, the King: in that He accepted the prayer, ”Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” Thou That art the Saviour of

them that put their trust in Thee. Where notice the condition upon which only He becomes our SAVIOUR,—namely, that we trust in Him. But yet observe how faint a degree of hope He sometimes rewards. The disciples had already got into the past tense, "We trusted that it had been He Which should have redeemed Israel," when He joined them in the way, and when He taught them of Himself.

From such as resist thy right hand, 8 Keep me as the apple of an eye: hide me under the shadow of thy wings, 9 From the ungodly that trouble me. And they expound it of our LORD looking, in the fulness of His Omniscience, backwards and forwards, to the many times in which He, in His own people, was kept as the apple of an eye: the time when Pharaoh took counsel to oppress the chosen race with heavy burdens: when Satan moved them to murmur in the wilderness: when Saul pursued David for so many long years: when Antiochus stood up against the great and the holy people: when Herod sought to destroy the infants at Bethlehem: when, in the ten great persecutions, "the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together," and at length in the fulness of their joy struck the medal which declared the execrable superstition to have been crushed: and finally, in the time of Antichrist, when, if it were possible, the very elect should perish; but because they are elect they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of His hand. Or, to take it in another sense, we ourselves ask to be kept as the pupil of GOD'S S. Basil. in loc.

Eye,—that is, as the very and eternal Son of God; for the pupil of the eye, as Hugh of S. Victor reminds us, has been from all antiquity the type of a son. Anastasius IV. found so great consolation in this expression, that Custodi me ut pupillum oculi was his motto. But, as mediaeval writers love to tell us, the pupil of the eye, the true type of all God's servants, is more especially so of those that have entered on the religious life. The eye lies, as it were, enshrined in its own little temple: so they, shut out and shut off from the cares and the allurements of this world. "The SAVIOUR," says Salvian, "desirous to have followers of the purest and holiest of all, commanded that by such the most trifling sins should be avoided: that the life of a Christian should be undefiled, as is the pupil of our eye: to the end that, as the one cannot abide the smallest particle of dust, so our life should reject and abhor every spot of defilement." Under the shadow of Thy wings. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." There they see the two wings of which the Psalmist speaks: that which protects from temporal, and that which shields from eternal, dangers. Others take it of the two Testaments: the promises and consolations of each. S. Basil sees in the type of wings the swiftness of God's protection: others, from that expression, the shadow, would remind us that we are none the less safe in this world for a little temporary darkness.

[Thy right Hand. The Right Hand of the FATHER is the Son, and the words therefore are spoken in His person against the Jews, and in that of the Church against

the Pagan enemies of His Name. The apple of an eye. This type is used of CHRIST, because as the eye, itself very small, gives light to the whole body, so CHRIST, Who appeared most lowly and obscure, is the ”Light of the world” and of His mystical body, the Church.] 9 Mine enemies compass me round about to take away my soul. 10 They are inclosed in their own fat: and their mouth speaketh proud things.

Compass me about. They refer very appositely to that verse, ”Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt?” And notice that the fat was that part of the sacrifice which belonged to God only, and hence one of the sins of Hophni and Phinehas; that, when any man said, ”Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth,” the answer was, ”Nay, but thou shalt give it me now.” And thus our LORD’s enemies, instead of rendering to God the things which were God’s, inclosed themselves in, kept back for their own, those very things. ”They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.” ”How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh from GOD only?” Others refer it to their sensuality, and being given over to the lusts of the flesh: others, again, as Theodoret and Ludolph, to their having shut themselves up from all compassion, and so they connect it with the next verse. Or, lastly, the expression may but mean such a delicate and luxurious life, as that of the rich man who fared sumptuously every day, and of whom, and of whom only, it is written, that ”in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments.”

[Their mouth speaketh proud things, such as, ”We will not have this man to reign over us,” and ”We have no King but Cæsar;” and yet again, ”He is guilty of death,” ”Crucify Him.” It is said, their mouth, because the wicked often condemn in their heart the very thing which they utter.] 11 They lie waiting in our way on every side: turning their eyes down to the ground; 12 Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey: and as it were a lion’s whelp, lurking in secret places. [They lie waiting, &c. The LXX. and Vulgate read here, Casting me out, they compassed me. They cast Him out more than once, as when at Nazareth they ”rose up, and thrust Him out of the city,” intending to throw Him down a precipice. They cast Him out of the city of Jerusalem, crucifying Him ”without the gate,” and compassing Him upon the Cross. The Syriac and Symmachus read, They praised Me, and now they have compassed Me. And this they did twice, when they tempted Him, saying, ”Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of GOD in truth;” and again, when they mocked Him, saying, ”Hail, King of the Jews.”]

Turning their eyes down to the ground: for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. Or, as others take it, ”Watching My steps, if perchance they might find any occasion of stumbling in Me:” as when they sent out those that feigned themselves just men, to entangle Him in His talk. S. Thomas well reminds us how often Holy Scripture bids us to lift up our eyes,—”I will lift up mine eyes unto the

hills:" "Lift up your eyes to the heavens:" "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things:" and again, "Lift up your eyes, and behold the fields:" because we are of our own nature so apt to forget our country and our home, and to fix them on the place of our exile. The lion—that roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour; the lion's whelp, his followers and ministers, of whom it is well said that he lurketh in secret places, because it is written, "Every one that doeth good, cometh unto the light."

13 Up, LORD, disappoint him, and cast him down: deliver my soul from the ungodly, which is a sword of thine; Here, again, the Vulgate entirely differs: Deliver my soul from the ungodly; Thy sword from the enemies of Thy Hand: where they interpret the sword of the LORD Himself. How many a time, says S. Bonaventura, has the petition, Up, Lord, been uttered by the true of heart! How many a time has it seemed for the present unheard, that it might be answered the more gloriously hereafter! Disappoint him, or rather, be beforehand with him: and S. Jerome has an epistle on the way in which GOD thus snatches His children from the power of the enemy at the very moment when human hope seems over. So, most wonderfully of all, they were disappointed who remembered that that Deceiver had said, while He was yet alive, "After three days, I will rise again:" and themselves endeavouring to be beforehand with Him, by the watch and the seal, only rendered more glorious and more manifest the fulfilment of His own words, "I Myself will awake right early." And if we are to take the last clause in the sense of our own version, the ungodly, which is a sword of Thine, then it can have no better commentary than GOD's own words to Sennacherib, "Now have I brought it to pass that thou shouldst be to lay waste defenced cities into ruinous heaps: therefore their inhabitants were of small power."

[CHRIST is called the Sword of GOD, "sharper than any two-edged sword," for He is two-edged in His twofold nature of GOD and Man. His soul is the sword wherewith the FATHER, drawing it out of the sheath of His Body, conquered hell.]
14 From the men of thy hand, O LORD, from the men, I say, and from the evil world: which have their portion in this life, whose bellies thou fillest with thy hid treasure. [From the men, I say, and from the evil world, &c. The best texts of the LXX. with the Vulgate read, quite differently, Divide them, O Lord, in their life from the few, off the earth. Do not wait till the Judgment Day to part the sheep from the goats, but even now make the distinction between Goshen and Egypt. Save the little Christian flock when the guilty nation perishes in its own city, and is driven off its own land. Divide evil Christians in this life by excommunication from the Church Militant, that they may repent in time. S. Albert explains the words further of evil Bishops, who are set apart by rank and wealth from the lowly and obscure, who heap up riches, and are guilty of nepotism.]

15 They have children at their desire : and leave the rest of their substance for their babes.

It is not without reason that they see a terrible meaning in these words. The rest of their substance, that is, of the possessions of the Jews, the chief enemies of CHRIST, who indeed had their portion in this life, though once filled with the hidden treasure of His knowledge. The rest of the substance which they left to their descendants was none other than that curse, "His Blood be on us and on our children. It is not worth while to go through the twelve meanings, partly literal, partly mystical, which the diligence of the commentators has discovered for the very obscure Vulgate: "O LORD, from the few of the land, divide them in their life: with Thy hid treasure is their belly filled. That is, that the great mass of the Jews, left to their deserved perdition, should be separated from the few of the land who had heard the Apostles' message, and had repented. But if we follow our own version, the men of Thy hand must be only an amplification of that which went before, "The ungodly, which is a sword of Thine: the men who, while they seek to carry out their own devices, and to injure Thee and Thine, are indeed but passive instruments in Thine hand. With reference to GOD's thus ordering the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, Vieyra says well: (he is speaking of the disciples who went to Emmaus: "It was the LORD's intention to send back those disciples with joy to Jerusalem.

Why then, if He purposed to send them to Jerusalem, did He go with them to Emmaus: Et ipse ibat cum illis? The road to Emmaus and the road to Jerusalem are precisely opposite: and does CHRIST go with the disciples to Emmaus when He wishes to take them to Jerusalem? Yes: for these are the marvels of Divine Providence, to conduct us to its own end by our own ways. To accomplish the designs of GOD by the straight ways of GOD, this might be anybody's providence; but to accomplish the designs of GOD by the erring ways of men, this is GOD's Providence. To go to Jerusalem by the road to Jerusalem is the ordinary road; to go to Jerusalem by the way of Emmaus, that is GOD's road."

[They have children at their desire. The Italic version reads here, very singularly, They are filled with swine's flesh, given up, as they are, to every uncleanness, and error forbidden by the Law, and leaving all their evil ways as a legacy to their posterity.] 16 But as for me, I will behold thy presence in righteousness : and when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it. [This curious version arises from a variant in Origen's Hexapla, now the common reading of the LXX., though doubtless the error of a transcriber, below instead of viōv.] A.

With one consent all the mediæval commentators take the righteousness in this place to mean our LORD. I shall behold Thy Presence; but not for any merits of my own: I shall behold Thy Presence, because, as S. Paul says, I have put on CHRIST. Or, if the words be spoken by our blessed LORD Himself, then it is, I, Whom they

call the Seducer; I, of Whom they said, "Nay, but He deceiveth the people; I shall behold Thy Presence in righteousness: righteousness in fulfilling My promises, that where I am, there My faithful people shall be also; in putting down the mighty from their seat, and exalting the humble and meek; and in giving possession to the meek-spirited of the heavenly land. O righteous FATHER, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee; and therefore, all My sufferings over, all My promises fulfilled, all My glory accomplished, I shall behold Thy Presence in righteousness. And when I awake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it. "But when," says S. Bonaventura, "O LORD JESU, when shall that when be? And S. Augustine dwells upon that word satisfied, knowing, as he says, "that, without GOD, all is emptiness. "This is that glorious satisfying which leaves nothing empty or hollow, nothing which the soul can desire or pursue. Blessed satisfaction without satiety, pleasure without weariness, the use of everlasting delight without softness, continual felicity without any labour. While we live, our eyes and ears are unsatisfied with seeing and hearing;

the more they receive, the more they desire. We may have pleasure, but we are never filled: our merriment rises, at it were, to the summit; the depth below is all bitter. Well, therefore, said David, Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee. So writes Drexelius; and I cannot better follow up his words, and end the Psalm, than by the beautiful verses of Bernard of Cluny:

And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Whose Presence we shall behold in righteousness; and to the SON, Who awoke up after His likeness; and to the HOLY GHOST, Who is Himself that satisfaction, communicated in this world partly, that in heaven He may be bestowed fully and everlastingly. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.
Turn, O LORD, the eyes of our heart to behold the verity of Thy judgments, that while we are here proved by Thy spiritual fire, we may hereafter be satisfied with the fruit of righteousness by Thy Presence for ever. Through. CHRIST, the SON of GOD, Whose insatiable enemies, enclosed in their own fat, surrounded Thy soul, deliver our souls from the wicked; and let Thy Passion so extinguish our passions, that we may never turn our eyes down to the ground. Amen. Through Thy mercy. Keep us, O LORD, as the apple of Thine eye, lest the whirlwind of carnal concupiscence should injure the eyes of our innocence: guard us under the shadow of Thy wings, that we may not be seduced by the allurements of those pleasures that lie in wait for us; that we, who, up to this day, stand firm by the help of Thy grace, may merit, when Thy glory shall appear, to be satisfied with it. Amen. Through Thy mercy.

[Show Thy marvellous loving-kindness, O GOD, hide us under the shadow of Thy wings, keep us as the apple of an eye, that our goings may be perfected in Thy paths, and we may appear with Thee in righteousness and be satisfied when Thy glory shall appear.]

Psalm 18

TITLE. To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said. Targum: For singing concerning the marvels which abundantly happened to David, the servant of the LORD, who sang in prophecy before the LORD the words of this song for all the days wherein the LORD delivered him out of the hands of all his enemies, and from the sword of Saul.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST is the Founder of the Church. David, in the Person of CHRIST, speaketh to the FATHER concerning His Passion, and concerning hell, and concerning His fixed faith in GOD. For at the Baptism of CHRIST, when He entered into the Jordan, the Voice of the FATHER thundered from heaven, and the springs of waters were seen, and thence they that rose up against Him, and would have overthrown Him, were cast out as the mire in the streets. Read with John. Concerning hope in GOD.

VEN. BEDE. Title: "To the end. To David, the child of the LORD, who spake to the LORD the words of this song in the day when the LORD delivered him from the hands of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul, and he said:" The Child of the LORD signifies CHRIST the SAVIOUR; and He is so named, because Unto us a Child is born. The history relates how David was freed from the snares of all his enemies; by which type the resurrection of the LORD, and the deliverance of His members from the power of the devil, are set forth. This Psalm cannot apply to a single person only. For in the first place the Prophet speaketh, and returns thanks that the Divine Goodness vouchsafed to free him from so many dangers. Secondly, the Church speaketh, which before the Advent of the LORD had endured so many calamities; until, having mercy on her, He gave the medicine of the Holy Incarnation, and by the blessing of Baptism, collected a Christian people from the whole world: The sorrows of death compassed me, &c. After that, the Voice of CHRIST the SAVIOUR gently descends, like the dew of mercy, and its virtue and power is described by most beautiful types. Fourthly, the Catholic Church again

speaks, and praises with great exultation the gifts which GOD hath bestowed on her: The Lord liveth, &c.—Thus far Bede.

It would seem that David published, so to speak, two editions of this Psalm; that which we have in the Psalter, and which may therefore be considered more authentic; the other, that in the 22nd chapter of the second of Samuel, where also we have the date, which serves as a title to the Psalm. The differences, however, are very inconsiderable; and indeed, in the last seven verses of each, where the discrepancies are greatest, they are scarcely more than verbal. EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. A thanksgiving of David, and a prophecy of the Advent and Ascension of CHRIST. SYRIAC PSALTER. A thanksgiving of David, and concerning the Ascension of CHRIST.

Various Uses.
Monastic. V. 1 to 24, Friday: Prime. 25 to end, Saturday: Prime. Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: I. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. I will love Thee, * O LORD, my strength. Parisian. 1st Section: I will love Thee, O LORD, my strength. 2nd Section: I was also incorrupt before Him, and eschewed mine own wickedness. 3rd Section: Thy right hand shall hold me up, * and Thy loving correction shall make me great. Mozarabic. My strength, I will love Thee, O LORD, my stony rock. 1 I will love thee, O LORD, my strength; the LORD is my stony rock, and my defence: my SAVIOUR, my GOD, and my might, in whom I will trust, my buckler, the horn also of my salvation, and my refuge.

In the mouth of two witnesses let every word be established. David and S. Paul knew but of one cure for weakness. I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength. "I can do all things through CHRIST, Which strengtheneth me. O marvellous weakness of the Man of Sorrows, thus becoming the strength of His followers: weakness that marked His whole earthly life, His companion in the cradle, in His many journeys, on the Cross, and there by that one sentence, "It is finished," turned into everlasting life. So let us be content to be weak with Thee here, O LORD JESU, that hereafter, in that one moment of death, when our warfare is accomplished, our infirmity may also be abolished for ever! Well and beautifully writes Hugh of S. Victor: "First, He is our SAVIOUR, because He saves us from the power of the devil; then our Defence, because, since we distrust our own strength, He undertakes the charge of us; then our Stony Rock, to support us when we stand; then our Strength, to crown us when we fight. Our SAVIOUR in Baptism, our Defence in repentance, our Stony Rock by patience, our Strength by victory. The order of this first verse is the order of escaping evil. The next verse shows us by what order he attains good. My God, because He illuminates by faith. My Might, because He assists in good works. In Whom I will trust, because He inflames my heart with His love.

My Buckler, (Protector,) because He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear. The Horn of my salvation, because He causes me to despise the assaults of the devil. Lastly, my Refuge, because, when the course of this world is passed, He will be my eternal Refuge in heaven. No wonder that on these names holy men have dwelt at great length, and with singular delight. Notice that of all the characters in which GOD is here represented, that of hope is the only one in which the prophet speaks actively of his own duty resulting from it; and this, they say, because, since no man is lost till he despairs, hope is in one sense the greatest and most important of Christian graces: "We are saved by hope. Observe that our hope in GOD is threefold: for His pardon, whence the remission of sins; for His grace, whence the possibility of good works; for His glory, whence the everlasting crown. Observe that a part of this verse is quoted by S. Paul, Heb. ii. 13: "I will put my trust in Him."

The Vulgate ends the first verse at "SAVIOUR:" the Italic at "defence." The contrast of this accurate and scholastic arrangement of Hugh of S. Victor, compared with the loose, trivial method of Theodore of Heraclea, in explaining the same passage (Corderius, i. 306,) is an admirable example of the superior precision, as mystical commentators, of Western over Eastern writers. But quoted in such a manner as to make the Apostle's intention rather obscure. "For which cause," he is arguing, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto My brethren." His second quotation is the present passage, "I will put my trust in Him," where there is no direct allusion to the word or to the relationship of brethren. But the Apostle was probably think2 I will call upon the LORD, which is worthy to be praised : so shall I be safe from mine enemies.

I will call upon the Lord. David gives us the promise of being heard: S. Paul, manifestly alluding to it, confirms it, "Whosoever shall call on the Name of the LORD shall be saved." Which is worthy to be praised. Notice here that favourite argument of all GOD's servants: because past succour, therefore future help. Worthy to be praised for deliverance in former times; therefore, I will call upon Him still. So shall I be safe from mine enemies. And oh, how happy is he that has discovered the virtue of this so! so, and no otherwise: that has not to run hither and thither, to run to other succour first, and then, as a last resort, turn to GOD; that does not in the first place send to Baalzebub, god of Ekron, and then request the help of Elijah! But now S. Paul gives us the clue to the higher meaning of these verses, expressly putting them into our LORD's mouth. And thus, if I hear David say, "I will call upon the LORD, so shall I be safe," I hear the Son of David say, "FATHER, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me, and I knew that Thou heardest Me always." I hear David say, I will call upon the Lord, Which is worthy to be praised: I see the Son of David rise up a long while before day, go out, and depart into a solitary place to pray. I hear David say, The Lord is my might; I hear the Son of David say,

”Thou hast given Me power over all flesh.” Yes; they are His words with which the Psalm begins, and they are His actions and sufferings to which it will now lead us.

3 The sorrows of death compassed me: and the overflowings of ungodliness made me afraid. He leads us by the Via Dolorosa to the sorrows of Calvary; to those overflowings of ungodliness from the blaspheming multitude that were yet so completely the fulfilment of ancient prophecy. But we must take that expression in a deeper sense, if we would see how it is that this made Him afraid. The ungodliness of the whole world,—every single crime, from the moment in which Eve stretched forth her hand to the forbidden fruit, to the last sin that shall be accomplished before the Sign of the Son of Man shall appear in heaven,—these wickednesses indeed went over His head, and were like a sore burden, too heavy for Him to bear. ”By Thy unknown sufferings,” prays the Greek Ectene, ”JESU, deliver ing of the innumerable passages in which GOD’s servants are said to put their trust in Him, and would thence argue that our LORD’s using precisely the same expression proves Him to be in all respects like His brethren, sin

only excepted. [S. Paul is not quoting from this passage in Heb. ii. 13, but from Isa. xii. 2, which he cites exactly from the LXX., using the word πεποιθὼς, whereas the term here is ἐλπιῶ.] us.” ”By the weight of ungodliness that pressed sore upon Thee and overwhelmed Thee, set us free from our many iniquities,” prays the Syriac Office. The overflowings, or, as the Vulgate has it, the torrents. ”Well called torrents,” says Cardinal Hugo: ”first, because of the impetuosity of a torrent. Next, because, put an obstacle in its way, and it rushes all the more vehemently, just as we long most for that which is prohibited. ’The law entered, that the offence might abound.’ Thirdly, because it is turbid; thus sin also causes the mind to become troubled. ’My soul also is sore troubled.’ Fourthly, because it is tumultuous. ’The wicked are like a troubled sea, that cannot rest.’ Next, because it hollows and wears away the earth, as sin the body. ’The waters wear the stones; Thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth, and Thou destroyest the hope of man.’ Sixthly, because it is sudden and accidental. Next, because it sweeps away everything that is unstable, as sin those who are not rooted in charity. ’That ye, being rooted and grounded in love.’ ’The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon.’ The next, that it throws itself into the sea, as the sinner throws himself into hell. Ninthly, it has its origin in melted snow: thus sin is of the devil, who was once whiter than snow in heaven, and then dissolved by the lust of pride.”

4 The pains of hell came about me: the snares of death overtook me.
Here it is well to remember the general rule laid down by those who have treated the mystical sense of the Psalter. ”Such is the unity of the Church, that is to say of its Head and its members, that, as if they were one body and person, they used one language, although the words they employ may sometimes be referred to different

objects. For some things are properly said by the Head only, some by the Head and members. Again, among the latter, it is sometimes the past, sometimes the present, sometimes those who are to come that speak; and yet, through the diversity of the circumstances, Scripture uses one form of expression, and speaks in one person." Thus indeed the Head might speak, when the pains of hell came about Him in the garden of Gethsemane; when the snares of death overtook Him, the band that came with lanterns, and torches, and weapons, and bound Him, and led Him to Annas. And what the Head said then, over and over again the Church has had reason to cry out. Again and again, in the savage persecutions of heathen powers, when such forms of torture were devised as none but Satan himself could have suggested, the pains of hell came about her: again and again, in the subterfuges, and prevarications, and artifices of heretics,—sufficient, if it had been possible, to deceive the very elect,—the snares of death overtook her.

5 In my trouble I will call upon the LORD : and complain unto my GOD. Thus again did the Head : thus at all times must the members do. In that His trouble, He indeed called upon the LORD, "FATHER, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me :" not twice only, as the Psalmist here, but three times. Thus also, treading in His footsteps, His members have followed Him, in His prayer as well as in His affliction. Peter is kept in prison ; but "prayer is made without ceasing of the Church unto GOD for him." Paul and Silas are thrown into the dungeon : at midnight they pray and sing praises unto GOD, and the prisoners hear them. Stephen, in the midst of the shower of stones, cried with a loud voice, "LORD, lay not this sin to their charge." 6 So shall he hear my voice out of his holy temple : and my complaint shall come before him, it shall enter even into his ears.

So of our Head : "He was heard in that He feared." And notice, as holy men have always remarked, the emphasis with which this clause applies to Him : that voice was heard from His holy temple in a different sense, as issuing from it, not as received in it ; as issuing from that temple of His Body to be destroyed by the Jews, and raised again in three days. And to a certain degree thus also every faithful soul may take the words to herself. The voice of distress which she sends up to GOD pleads to be accepted by Him, for this very reason, that it issues from that which was made His holy temple at Baptism ; because the distress or temptation assaults that which is His ; because it would defile that which is holy ; because it would sacrilegiously profane a temple of the Living GOD. And observe that so. Shall we say that the first clause, "I will call upon the LORD," is not the way to be heard ; but that the change, "I will complain unto my GOD," is answered immediately by the SO shall He hear? My complaint shall come before Him. And a fearful thing it is for those against whom the complaint comes. "Behold, the hire of the labourers that have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth ; and the cries of them that have reaped have entered into the ears of the LORD of Sabaoth."

7 The earth trembled and quaked : the very foundations also of the hills shook, and were removed, because he was wroth. 8 There went a smoke out in his presence : and a consuming fire out of his mouth, so that coals were kindled at it.

It is almost curious to see how they who looked for CHRIST, and for Him only, in the Psalms, were too intent on that search to notice,—or, as compared with it, thought it vain to point out,—the sublimest passage in the whole Psalter: a strain of poetry to be matched, if anywhere, only where the LORD answers Job out of the whirlwind. And when that last complaint, ”FATHER, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit,” had entered into the ears of GOD, then ”the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;” then ”the centurion and they that were with him saw the earthquake;” then the very foundations also of the hills,—of that hill of David on which the temple was built,—so shook and were so removed, that ”the veil was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom,” and an access opened to the Holy of Holies. And yet, though He was wroth, He remembered love; for next we have the smoke in His presence: the ”much incense” of the fervent prayer; we have the consuming fire of love, that love which ”is strong as death,” that ”jealousy,” which is ”cruel as the grave,” kindling the coals, the dark, foul, earthy substance of an unloving heart. These were the coals of the Apostles, which afterwards burnt so clearly through the whole world; those ”coals of fire which had a most vehement flame.” And not only then, but daily and hourly does that same grace, does that same love kindle the cold heart; making an Augustine, till then the slave of sin, in one moment the saint and Doctor of Grace. That consuming fire shall burn till the end of the world, melting all hardness, quickening all deadness, kindling all coldness: ”We love Him, because He first loved us.”

[And then, tropologically, the whole passage may be read of the penitent soul. At first earth, and carnal, it trembled at the threats of judgment, shaking itself thus loose from its attachment to sin. The very foundations of the hills; all the proud, self-sufficient thoughts of this world were disturbed, and removed from pride and sin to humility and holiness, at the thought of GOD’s anger. The dark smoke of penitential supplication then went up before Him, and at last the fire of love kindled the dark black hearts of sinners, turning the coals into flame.] 9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and it was dark under his feet. From the Passion we turn to the Incarnation, which none ever doubted to be here set forth. He bowed the heavens: He humbled the Divine nature; He emptied Himself of the glory which He had before the world was, and came down at the word of the Angel,—came down from the eternal palace of the heaven into the little cottage at Nazareth,—came down from the illimitable majesty of Him Who containeth all things, into the womb of Mary. And it was dark under His

A. Feet. ”The LORD said that He would dwell in the thick darkness.” Here is that mystery into which the angels desire to look; that mystery which was hid from

ages and from generations; that mystery by which, as S. Leo says, ”the propriety of each nature and substance being preserved, and both uniting so as to form one person, humility was assumed by majesty, infirmity by power, mortality by eternity; and to pay the debt of our condition, inviolable was united to passible nature: that one and the same Mediator of GOD and man, the Man CHRIST JESUS, might be able to die from the one, might not be able to die from the other.” This was the thick darkness in which the LORD came down. Miss. Nidros. In Comm. B.V.M. [Cœlum DEUS inclinavit, Et descendit et intravit Vas electum stirpe David Quod ante promiserat. And despite this humility, nay, rather because of it, He put the evil one, who is darkness, under His feet. They take it also that He bows down the intellects of His great preachers, making them condescend to men of low estate by simplicity of teaching, that the ignorant, though dark as respects mental culture, may yet be obedient to His law, and under His feet.]

10 He rode upon the cherubims, and did fly: he came flying upon the wings of the wind. And first we remember those angels who in the night-watches announced His Birth at Bethlehem; but there is a deeper sense than this. By the cherubim, whose name is derived from their perfect knowledge, no doubt the Apostles are meant. For they were indeed filled with the knowledge of that mystery of the Incarnation which had been concealed from other ages and generations; and on their preaching the LORD was borne out as it were to all the world, flying upon the wings of the wind, from the marvellous swiftness with which the doctrine, once confined to a small corner of Judea, filled, as the Chief Priests and Pharisees themselves confessed, the whole world. [As in the ninth verse we have the humiliation of CHRIST, so in these comes His exaltation; the descent of the Godhead is followed by the Ascension of the Manhood.

Adam Vict. Sequ. in Ascens. Postquam hostem et inferna Spoliavit, ad superna CHRISTUS redit gaudia, Angelorum ascendenti, Sicut olim descendenti, Parantur obsequia.] 11 He made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him with dark water, and thick clouds to cover him.

Here again, we have the mystery of the Incarnation; the thick darkness in which the LORD said that He would dwell. His pavilion: that is, the Body He took of Mary, flesh of her flesh, and bone of her bone, with the dark waters of prophecy and the thick clouds, the preaching of the Apostles. Of old time the Jews had a type of this pavilion, when, as it is written, ”a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle: and Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. That by the clouds Apostles and other teachers are meant we have proof in Isaiah, where, when the unfruitful vineyard is threatened with destruction, the last and severest sentence pronounced upon it is this: ”I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. And consider, the clouds

are formed of water, and by the heat of the sun; and thus the Apostles themselves, basing all their doctrine on the water of Baptism, were drawn by the heat of the Sun of Righteousness to their work: dark and colourless in themselves, but gloriously reflecting His rays; and like earthly clouds, never reflecting them so beautifully as when in the sunset of their lives tinged with the crimson of martyrdom. Further, the clouds can only move as the wind impels them,—that wind which bloweth where it listeth;

so the Apostles went but whither they were compelled by that HOLY GHOST Who wrought in them. Do they seek to preach the Word in Asia? They are forbidden of the HOLY GHOST. Do they assay to go into Bithynia? The SPIRIT suffers them not. And presently the reason is made clear by a vision, and they "assuredly gather that the LORD hath called them to preach the Gospel" in Macedonia. So that S. Gregory may well say, "By clouds it is certain that the holy Apostles and preachers of the Divine Word are designated, who, sent forth into all parts of the world, can both raise with doctrine and lighten with miracles. He made darkness His secret place. "But let us," as S. Bruno well says, "who desire to find GOD, enter boldly into this darkness, like Moses, when he drew near to the thick darkness where GOD was; and also like Moses we shall have our reward in the LORD's promise, 'I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the LORD before thee.'" Dark waters. What are they but these very Psalms which we are considering dark,—not from their obscurity, but from their excess of brightness. "Were not," says one, "the waters dark, when Isaiah prophesied of the

It is curious to see Milton's "Dark with excess of light" anticipated in Corderius: "Has autem tenebras, non ex defectu sed abundantia lucis Divinæ, immensa sua claritate creatam omnem intelligentiam caligare facientis, provenire docet optime S. Dionysius toto libro de Mystica Theologia;" and it is not impossible that our poet, as an Ay. Isa. xi. 1. Jer. xl. 19, Vulg. Ezek. xliv. 2. Nativity, 'There shall go forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse;' when Jeremiah foretold the Cross, 'Come and let us put wood into his bread;' when Ezekiel spoke beforehand of the perpetual virginity of S. Mary, 'This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it, because the LORD, the GOD of Israel, hath entered in by it; therefore shall it be shut?' Or, once more, the dark waters and thick clouds may be the Sacraments, in which, while in this world militant, we see as through a glass darkly, waiting for that blessed time when we all "with open face beholding the glory of the LORD, shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory." L. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

12 At the brightness of his presence his clouds removed : hailstones, and coals of fire. By But at length types, and symbols, and prophecies were lost in the truth : the darkness of their enigmas disappeared in the full blaze of light. At the brightness of His presence, Who is the dayspring from on high, Who is the Sun of Righteousness, His clouds removed. And what was the result? Hailstones and coals of fire. The

reference in the first place is to that plague, when ”the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground;” but in the understanding the mystical form of the expressions, holy men seem equally divided into two opposite explanations. The hail, so clear, so hard, so overwhelming, is, every one is agreed, the threatening of the Gospel : the savour of death unto death; the ”it had been better for them not to have known the way of truth.” But the coals of fire, what are they? Are we to take them, as before, for the love of GOD, which, when the promises were made clear, and types were lost in the antitype, stood manifested to the world? Or, of the ”consuming fire,” which the LORD is to His enemies, ”the day that shall burn as an oven, when all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble?” Let us understand it, rather, if S. Bruno, and Euthymius, and their followers will allow us, of GOD’s love : so the sense will be;— Prophecies and shadows have come to an end, and, coming to an end, reveal to us on the one side the ”Depart from Me, ye cursed;” on the other, the ”Come, ye blessed of My FATHER, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” S. Gregor. M. A. Mal. iv. 1.

13 The LORD also thundered out of heaven, and universal scholar, might have had this very passage in his mind. Tom. i. 339. 2. [Corderius is merely annotating the fifth epistle of the Pseudo- Dionysius, to Dorotheus, wherein is said ”The Divine darkness is that light inaccessible, in which GOD is said to dwell.”] the Highest gave his thunder : hailstones, and coals of fire. So it had been from the beginning. GOD had at sundry times and in divers manners spoken unto the Fathers by the Prophets: The Lord thundered out of heaven. But now, beside these ancient words, The Highest gave His thunder: He That had made Himself lowest for our sakes, and by virtue of that humiliation was highly exalted, and obtained the Name that is above every name; He, the Highest, now also spake,—spake of that which He had seen and heard with the FATHER,—spake of that which He would still do for those for whom He had once suffered,—spake of the many mansions which He had prepared for them,—spake of His will, that where He was, there they should be also. The Highest gave His thunder. And still the threatenings of vengeance, and still the fervency of love: hailstones and coals of fire.

14 He sent out his arrows, and scattered them : he cast forth lightnings, and destroyed them. What are the arrows but those words of truth by which the Apostles sought to pierce the hard hearts of the heathen, and so to wound them here, that they might find everlasting healing hereafter? Those arrows, like that of him at Ramoth Gilead, often sent at a venture, were yet directed by the Master of the Apostles in their aim. Whence notice that it says not, They sent out their arrows, but He sent out His arrows. Such arrows, such lightnings, were those of the two surnamed by our LORD, Boanerges. And destroyed them. So destroyed them, so caused them to die to sin, as to make them able to say with the Apostle, ”I live, yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me.” ”And when,” cries S. Bruno, with a holy boldness, ”when shall we too thus be destroyed? When shall we, crucifying the old man, and

utterly abolishing the whole body of sin, be found worthy of the new and better life that is from CHRIST, and in CHRIST?" The Eastern Church, on the contrary, would generally seem to have taken the words in the opposite sense, and to have applied them to the enemies of our LORD. "It is written, destroyed them," says Euthymius, "because the HOLY GHOST would not so much as name, by the mouth of His Prophet, the evil spirits to whom He refers." But surely, the more loving exposition of the Western Fathers is better than this.

A. 15 The springs of waters were seen, and the foundations of the round world were discovered, at thy chiding, O LORD : at the blasting of the breath of thy displeasure. By the waters we understand Holy Scripture; and the springs of this fountain,—the deepest, truest, most real meaning was seen of a truth, when the Incarnation unlocked the enigmas of the Old Testament. The foundations of the round world, that which is the base and substructure of the whole A. Church, was indeed revealed, when the hidden mysteries of sacrifices, and types, and parables were laid open at that moment when "the WORD was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Or you may take the foundations of the Church to mean the Apostles and Prophets. Of these foundations Micah speaks, "Hear ye, O mountains, the LORD's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth;" and of their beauty Isaiah testifies, when he thus consoles the Church:

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and will lay thy foundations with sapphires." The foundations of the round world were discovered at Thy chiding, O Lord: and so indeed they were, when He said, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken;" and then "opened their understanding, that they should understand the Scriptures." Therefore it was that, in mediaeval times, the altars were stripped on Good Friday, to show that, by the Passion of CHRIST, the mysteries of the Law and the Prophets were revealed. Or, if we wish, we may understand the springs of water of the Baptismal fountain, revealed by virtue of the LORD's Incarnation, and owing all its efficiency to that. At the blasting of the breath of Thy displeasure. For what was the message which heralded in and which accompanied the LORD's preaching? "Repent ye:" "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance."

16 He shall send down from on high to fetch me: and shall take me out of many waters.

It is the Church that speaks: He shall send—but whom? None less than the SON. As it is written, "GOD so loved the world, that He sent His Only-begotten SON" to take me for His bride; as He spake by the mouth of His holy Prophets, "I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness." Out of many waters. Oh, what marvellous richness of meaning is there in these Psalms! so that, whichever way you turn, new vistas of interpretation open upon

you, each vying with the other in beauty. Shall we take these waters as the waves of affliction? concerning which it is written, ”Save me, O GOD, for the waters are come in, even to my soul.” And again, ”I will pour My wrath upon them like water;” or again, ”We went through fire and water.” Truly, out of such afflictions has the Church over and over again been taken; over and over again shall she be taken, till put into possession of her future inheritance, the blessed Country where there shall be no more sea. Or shall we rather see in these waters, a type of the many peoples out of which our Church is formed: which, indeed, is the Chaldee paraphrase, where we read, Shall take me out of many peoples? And if so, we have the effects of that preaching of the Apostles whereof we were now speaking, who by their labour and their blood, gathered the Church out of every language, and people, and nation. Or yet once more, Are we to find in these waters the type of Baptism, out of, and by means of which the Church is taken? as it is written, ”That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church.”

17 He shall deliver me from my strongest enemy, and from them which hate me: for they are too mighty for me. My strongest enemy. Little doubt of whom the Church speaks. Them which hate me: The Jews, in the first beginnings; the Emperors and magistrates of this world in their ten persecutions; the various sects of heresy springing up like so many heads of a hydra from the Father of all Lies; and last, but not least, that fearful enemy of worldliness which, if others have slain their thousands, has of a surety destroyed its ten thousands. Or hear in this verse the words of our LORD instead of those of the Church. He was delivered from His strongest enemy in the three temptations of the wilderness, and from them which hated Him; Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, Lawyers, Annas, Caiaphas, Pontius Pilate; delivered over and over again till His time was come, and then finally and for ever delivered by those most blessed of all words, ”It is finished.”

18 They prevented me in the day of my trouble: but the LORD was my upholder. That is, taking the word in its largest sense, they prevailed against Me. But when? Only in the times of My earthly humiliation; only when I was made a little lower than the angels; only in that day of My trouble when the prophecy was fulfilled, ”Thou shalt bruise His heel.” For the time of glory is to come, when there could be no more preventing, no more prevailing, on the part of the enemy. And notice, as a good man observes, that expression, My trouble: trouble that, as it were, belongs to me as a possession, as a privilege: My trouble, out of and by means of which, sprang My glory. Or it may be the voice of the Church; and then by my trouble she means the days of those persecutions when she could say with Job: ”The days of affliction prevented me; I went Lam. I. 9. mourning without the sun.” Or with Jeremiah: ”O LORD, behold my affliction; for the enemy hath magnified himself.” Rupert. They prevented me, but the Lord was my upholder. And what trouble is not well borne—what difficulty is not happily encountered—if that may be its result?

D. C. [They, my spiritual enemies, prevented me by attacking me, an unconscious infant, with the weapon of original sin, in the day of my trouble of being born into this weary world, but the LORD saved me from their chains, for] 19 He brought me forth also into a place of liberty: he brought me forth, even because he had a favour unto me. Ps. xxiv. 1. If it be our LORD that speaks, then He tells how from the narrowness of the grave He came forth to the possession of the wide earth: "The earth is the LORD's, and all that therein is:" nay, more, how He returned again into heaven, having won for Himself, according to His Manhood, the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. But if it be the Church that speaks, she tells how from the cramped limits of Judæa, she was called forth "to have dominion from one sea to another, and from the flood unto the world's end." Or in another sense, how from the narrow laws concerning the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, she was led to see the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of that love which they so faintly, and feebly, and imperfectly prefigured. Or yet once more: how she was instructed in the fullest and widest range of divine mysteries; mysteries utterly hidden from Jewish eyes, and then first revealed when "the WORD was made flesh, and dwelt among us." He had a favour unto me: not I to Him. All came from Him first: and so it was the Apostle's prayer and labour not that GOD should be reconciled to us, but that we should be reconciled to GOD.

A. D. C. [He brought me, by Baptism, into the glorious liberty of the children of GOD, rightly called, as by LXX. and Vulgate, a wide place, because faith, hope, and charity, then infused into the soul, enlarge its capacity and affections.] 20 The LORD shall reward me after my righteous dealing: according to the cleanness of my hands shall he recompense me. Hugo Card. From this passage, Cardinal Hugo points out seven steps to blessedness. The first, GOD's merciful election: because He had a favour unto me. The second, faith in the redemption of CHRIST; He brought me forth. (It is, in the Vulgate, "He saved me," and the reference is to our LORD's words, "Thy faith hath saved thee.") The third, Love: into a place of liberty. The fourth, our free-will, which co-operates with God's love; according to my righteous dealing. The fifth, good works, according to the cleanness of my hands. The sixth, perseverance: because I have kept. The seventh, eternal retribution: The Lord shall reward me. According to my righteous dealing. For one star differeth from another star in glory: or again, according to S. Mark's one only peculiar parable, "The earth bringing forth fruit, the blade, then the ear, after that, the full corn in the ear." Or let them be the words of our LORD: and what was the reward of His Righteous dealing, but the multitude of souls for whose disobedience He atoned by His perfect obedience, whose life He purchased by His death? According to the cleanness of my hands. For He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. That cleanness which, touching the leper, imparted cleansing to him: which, nailed to the Cross, poured forth those precious streams which have been the purification of the whole world.

A. S. Mark iv. 28. A. 21 Because I have kept the ways of the LORD: and have not forsaken my God, as the wicked doth. 22 For I have an eye unto all his laws: and will not cast out his commandments from me. Forsaken, alas! too often: the just man falleth seven times a day. By reason of the frailty of our nature, we cannot always stand upright. But not as the wicked doth. If the just man falleth so often, he riseth again. ”Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy, when I fall, I shall also arise.” And notice the pronoun, My God: the reason which prevents him from thus forsaking; the strength which enables him thus to arise. The ways. For, says one, there are two ways: love of God, and love of our neighbour. So much for the past. Then comes the present. I have an eye; and to what? to all His laws. For ”whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” And then the future, and will not cast out His commandments from me. But who may say this truly and perfectly, save He Who was the law-giver, as well as the law-keeper; the framer, as well as the observer of the commandments?

23 I was also uncorrupt before him: and eschewed mine own wickedness. Uncorrupt, or, as it is in the Vulgate, immaculate. S. Augustine, in his work on the perfection of righteousness, explains how it is that good men may be called perfect, even in this life: as where Moses says in the book of Deuteronomy, ”Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.” ”Not, says he, that they contract no stains, but that they are eager and anxious to contract none; and that they do contract none of that mortal character that eats into and leaves marks on A. Eph. i. 4. the soul.” ”Herein do I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence, both toward GOD and toward men.” Here notice, David says not simply uncorrupt, but uncorrupt before Him. Easy enough to be uncorrupt before men; but the thing is to be, as S. Paul again says, holy and without blame before Him in love. And eschewed mine own wickedness. They take it literally of the murder and adultery, the one deep stain of David’s life. But spiritually, we may understand it, as Jansenius does, of that concupiscence which, though not sin in itself, is metaphorically called so, as so easily leading into wickedness: the fuel which it only needs temptation to kindle into an active flame: the ”sin that dwelleth in me,” of S. Paul. Eschewed, because it is the one end and aim of a Christian life to keep this under, and bring it into subjection.

24 Therefore shall the LORD reward me after my righteous dealing: and according to the cleanness of my hands in his eye-sight. Notice again: according to the cleanness of my hands in His sight; not according to that of the world: ”not as pleasing men, but GOD, Which trieth the hearts,” says the Apostle. But put the verse into the mouth of our LORD, and what was the reward of His righteous dealing? What, but the redemption of the whole human race potentially; and actually, the final beatification of those righteous and happy souls, whom, having loved, He will love to the end? And we need not be afraid to apply even those words, eschewed mine own wickedness, to the same blessed LORD. His own, as assumed and carried by

Him "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." And this eschewing them, this being made responsible for, and brought into contact with that which was His so infinite abomination; this was one of those unknown sufferings of which what finite mind can venture to imagine the depth or the extent? Hence, by mediæval allegorists He is sometimes imagined as the ermine, that dies of grief if its spotless fur be but in the least soiled.

25 With the holy thou shalt be holy: and with a perfect man thou shalt be perfect. 26 With the clean thou shalt be clean: and with the froward thou shalt learn frowardness. They generally take these verses as the words of the Psalmist to GOD; setting forth that according to the measure of a man's good works, will be the measure of GOD's grace given him; the talent bestowed on him that had already ten talents. So, in one of his poems, S. Gregory Nazianzen: "As the soul's measure through her earthly race, So is the measure of celestial grace." To him that in the midst of darkness, and notwithstanding the rough, steep ascent, like Moses still struggles onwards and upwards to draw nearer to God; to him, also, as to Moses, God's holiness shall be most fully revealed: and so of the other clauses. Or, as others take it, David is speaking to the true servant of God. With the holy thou shalt be holy: as God the FATHER is the Source and Foundation of all holiness, so in his own poor way, man, that is made after the similitude of God, will also try after holiness. With a perfect man thou shalt be perfect: as the Son of God, Man as well as God, took our nature upon Him, that all mankind should follow His example. With the clean thou shalt be clean: that is, shalt strive hard to preserve that purity which the HOLY GHOST, the Giver of all purity, implanted in Baptism. With the froward thou shalt learn frowardness: that is, thy whole life should be one long struggle against, one continuous resistance to, him who is indeed froward, that great enemy both of God and man, whose never-ending temptations ought to teach us never-ending watchfulness: thou shalt learn frowardness.

27 Thou shalt save the people that are in adversity: and shalt bring down the high looks of the proud. It is the rule of CHRIST Himself. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." And this verse might be taken as a compendium of all Church History; open any page at random, and you will find a commentary on it. And of our LORD Himself,—how did He save the people that were in adversity when on that first Easter night He manifested Himself, entering in through the closed doors to the Apostles; how again, when as the three Maries were much distressed and perplexed, who shall roll away the stone? they found that the angel had already rolled it away: "for"—and notice the beauty of the reason—"it was exceeding great." As much as to say, that because the difficulty was so formidable, therefore God must, as it were, remove it by a supernatural ministry. It is a "for" which, like many another little word in the Bible, may cheer and comfort us when we are in distress. And see how the high looks of the proud have been no less miraculously brought down: how, when the people

shouted, ”It is the voice of a God, and not of a man,”—”immediately, the angel of the LORD smote him, because he gave not God the glory:” how, no sooner had Nebuchadnezzar uttered his ”Is not this great Babylon which I have builded?” than the voice fell from heaven, ”O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, thy kingdom is departed from thee.” And how he of whom every enemy of God’s people is but the type, he who said, ”I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will be like the Most High,” he it was of whom the LORD said, ”I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”

28 Thou also shalt light my candle: the LORD my GOD shall make my darkness to be light.

My candle. It is beautifully said: for, like a candle, no true servant of GOD can shine without at the same time consuming. ”He was a burning and a shining light: but the burning first and then the shining. Or take it of the faith of the Church: a light kindled upon her,—a light that it over and over again seems as if some blast of temptation would extinguish,—a light, if small in itself, the faith as a grain of mustard-seed, yet sending out its beams far and near in the darkness of this world. Thou also shalt—when none else can: and notice, too, how here, as so often, the Psalmist begins with speaking of GOD, and ends with speaking to Him. So the Bride in the Canticles, ”Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for Thy love is better than wine. Shall make my darkness to be light. So also the promise: ”Who is there among you that . . . walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the Name of the LORD, and stay himself upon his GOD. His GOD, as here the LORD my GOD: for no colder, no more distant appropriation of GOD’s love will serve the turn in such times of distress. My darkness to be light. Shall we take it of the darkness of that night and of that garden when they came to seek Him with lanterns, and torches, and weapons?

Or of that darkness which was over all the earth from the sixth hour until the ninth hour? Or rather of that darkness—a darkness which might be felt—which came in even to our LORD’s soul, and attained its most fearful blackness when He uttered that cry, ”My GOD, My GOD, why hast Thou forsaken Me? However we take it, if never such darkness to precede, never such brightness to follow. ”At the brightness of that light,” says the Eastern Church, ”let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; because the LORD hath showed strength with His arm, hath trampled down death by death, hath become the First-begotten from the dead; hath dispersed the darkness of hell, and hath poured glorious brilliancy on the world. And notice how beautifully the description in the text rises. In this world, after all, our faith, our knowledge of GOD, are but as a candle; it remains for the next world to do away with these shadows for ever, to bring the light of happy morning after the dark and sad night, The Lord my God shall make my darkness to be light.

[The Targum expounds this verse of exiled Israel, whose candle was indeed quenched in captivity, but to be kindled again by Him Who is the Light of Israel, making His people Apolytikion of the Sunday of the Paralytic. see the consolations for the righteous in the world to come. Many of the Western commentators see here the Apostles, Martyrs, and early preachers of the Gospel, who are the light of the world, bright with the knowledge, and warm with the love of GOD, and dispersing the darkness of heathenism. Others again will have it that man's heart or intellect is the lantern or candle, to be enlightened by grace; and yet once more, a holy writer bids us look from the darkness of this world to the glory to be revealed in the Heavenly Country. S. Bruno Carth. S. Albertus Magnus. P. Lu. S. Cyril. A. Ric. Hamp. In te nunquam nubilata Aëris temperies, Sole solis illustrata Semper est meridies, In te non nox fessis grata, Nec labor nec inquies.]

The Hymn, Jerusalem luminosa. 29 For in thee I shall discomfit an host of men: and with the help of my GOD I shall leap over the wall. It is the LORD, in the full view of His Passion, Who speaks. For He beholds the host of men that are drawn up to oppose Him: the Jews, Pilate, Herod, the soldiers; and over each and all He prophesies His final victory. I shall leap over the wall. That wall of which Isaiah speaks, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your GOD, and your sins have hid His face from you." And again: "Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, and swelling out in a high wall." And so for us. Every wall which would intercept our course to GOD, every obstacle which Satan sets up that he may sore let and hinder us,—if we cannot sweep it away entirely, at least we must overcome it for ourselves and leap over it. And finally that last and most fearful wall, which before immortality was brought to light seemed the hindrance to any further advance, the wall of death, that also, following the example of our Leader we shall pass in safety. Of Him it is written, "The fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall He bring down;" and by the help of our God, we also, as the children of Israel over the fallen walls of Jericho, shall go up to the city which we are seeking.

[One writer, with a quaint literalness, explains the wall to be the material barrier of the grave and of the closed doors of the upper chamber, through which CHRIST passed in His risen Body without disturbing them. It is strange that none of the commentators make any reference here to CHRIST as destroying the distinction between Jew and Gentile, "Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."] See this beautifully dilated lius in his little treatise called on and worked out by Drexe-Heliotropium. Lib. 2. cap. 6. 30 The way of GOD is an undefiled way : the word of the LORD also is tried in the fire; he is the Defender of all them that put their trust in him.

And now notice the remarkable allusion to the Blessed Trinity. The way of God, that law which He gave on Mount Sinai when the FATHER manifested Himself as

a GOD afar off. The word of the Lord, the Incarnate Word, was indeed tried in the fire when, through so many sufferings and agonies, He was Himself according to His Manhood made perfect, and according to His Godhead opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. And again: He—the Blessed SPIRIT, He without Whom man would in vain strive against his enemies,—He of Whom it is written, ”Except the LORD keep the city,” that is, the city of the heart, ”the watchman,” that is, conscience, ”waketh but in vain,”—He is the Defender of all them that put their trust in Him. Well for us that, since that way is so undefiled, and we ourselves so polluted, we have not an High Priest Which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been Himself tried in the fire! Well for us that, since that way is so beset with enemies, banded together to resist our progress, we have a Defender Who is no accepter of persons, but the safeguard of all them that put their trust in Him!

31 For who is God but the Lord: or who hath any strength, except our God? 32 It is God that girdeth me with strength of war: and maketh my way perfect. Here again we have the Blessed Trinity most clearly set forth. Who is God, but the Lord? The question of Michael the Archangel, when fighting with the dragon and his angels, whence his very name, Mi-cha-el. Learn, says the Spanish illation, on the Festival of that Archangel, what is the power of preserving humility. While it ascribes everything that it can perform to GOD, it is also honoured with the very Name of GOD. For Michael by interpretation is, Who is as GOD? Or who hath any strength except our God? ”for though He were crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of GOD.” So from the weakness of the Cross, came our strength; from the anguish of the Cross, came our comfort; from the death of the Cross, came our life. And then again: It is God that girdeth me with strength of war: girdeth me at Baptism, giveth me power and strength to have victory and to triumph against the devil, the world, and

So the Mozarabic hymn: O cælorum alme princeps, Michael fortissime, Summi regis CHRISTI summus the flesh: girdeth me at Confirmation, which is the very Sacrament of strength: girdeth me by preparing for me by His own sanctification of the material element ”the Corn of the mighty.” And thus assisted by each Person of the ever Blessed Trinity, well may the Psalmist cry, and maketh my way perfect. Perfect it ought to be even here: perfect it is commanded to be; ”Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy GOD:” perfect it will be hereafter: ”The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” And they also see here a reference to the battle with Goliath: a type of the great battle which decided the fate of the world. It is God, not Saul, that girdeth me with strength of war. ”Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head.” . . . ”And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them.” And thus our David was girded with strength of war, which to human

eyes seemed weakness; armed with the staff of His Cross, and with the five smooth stones of His unconquerable wounds from the brook of affliction.

33 He maketh my feet like harts' feet: and setteth me up on high. It may be taken in two senses. Our LORD's Feet were swift as the hart's, when He came from heaven to work out our salvation. Or if we understand the hart to mean the ibex or some similar mountain goat, then the words will tell us how there was no difficulty too great to be overcome, no place too inaccessible to be scaled, when the Captain of our Salvation assaulted the fortress of the strong man armed. The Bride understands the word in the first sense, when she calls to herself Him Whom she loves: "Haste, my Beloved, and be Thou like to a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of spices." Habakkuk seems to take it in the second, when he says: "The LORD GOD is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk in mine high places." It must be confessed that the prayer of the Prophet shows even more faith than that of David. Setteth me up on high, says the Psalm,—"Will make me to walk upon MY high places," says the Canticle. We younger brethren of that dear Elder Brother,—we co-heirs with Him Who is the blessed and only heir,—we may use that word my by right of adoption, which He can take into His mouth by right of inheritance.

A. 34 He teacheth mine hands to fight: and mine arms shall break even a bow of steel. He teacheth: and not as man teacheth. Thus He taught Gideon to fight with the innumerable host of Midian by sending to their homes two-and-twenty thousand, and re- M A. Ps. xl. 2.

taining but ten thousand of his soldiers; and then again by reducing that remnant to the little band of three hundred who lapped when brought down to the water. Thus He taught Samson by abstaining from strong drink, and by suffering no razor to pass over his head. Thus He taught the three kings in the wilderness to war against their enemies, not by any strength of their armies, but by making ditches in the desert. Thus He taught David himself by waiting for the sound of the going in the tops of the mulberry trees. And so He taught the arms of the True David to fight when stretched on the Cross: nailed, to human sight, to the tree of suffering, but in reality, winning for themselves the crown of glory: helpless in the eyes of Scribes and Pharisees; in those of Archangels, laying hold of the two pillars, sin and death, whereon the house of Satan rested, and heaving them up from their foundation. And mine arm shall break even a bow of steel. Take it in the first sense; and the bow is that of which it is written, "The ungodly bend their bow and make ready their arrows within the quiver: for, as it is written in another place, "Their sword shall go through their own heart, and their bow shall be broken. That is, every effort, every aim, every device of the enemy shall be "knapped in sunder" by those victorious arms.

Take it in the other sense, and the bow is that bow of prayer which sends the arrows of ejaculation to the throne of God: that bow which is answered by the heavenly bow of peace: that bow which, like the king of old, our LORD drew three times with all His might in the garden of Gethsemane. This is the bow concerning which the True David, with respect to His own people, would follow the example of the David of old, in his command to his army: ”Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow: without the employment of which any conflict with the spiritual Philistines must certainly be another defeat on Mount Gilboa.

35 Thou hast given me the defence of thy salvation: thy right hand also shall hold me up, and thy loving correction shall make me great. S. Bruno of Würzburg. The defence of Thy salvation. That which is indeed our true defence against the wear and tear of disease, and weakness, and labour, the dissolution of death itself is the glory of the Resurrection. Or rather, they take Thy salvation to [The word break here and in the A. V. is better turned bend. Break comes from taking as the Niphal from fractus est, instead of from the Aramaic root , descendit, (compare) implying the lowering of the upper limb of the bow. The LXX. and Vulgate, reading , translate Thou hast set (posuisti) mine arms as a brazen bow.]

be Him Who is indeed all our salvation and all our desire; Him Whose Name is JESUS, which is by interpretation a Saviour. And even Rabbi Joden, and other Jewish expositors, take it of the Messiah. Thou hast given me: not I myself: ”for the battle is the LORD’s, and He will give you into our hands. Thy right hand: and there again we have that LORD Who, as the express image of the FATHER, is also the Right Hand of His Majesty. Hold me up, by having taken my nature; hold me up, by having atoned for my sins on the Cross; hold me up, by interceding for me at the throne of the FATHER. Thy loving correction shall make me great: for ”whom the LORD loveth He chasteneth. ”Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me. It is, in the Vulgate, ”Thy discipline has corrected me to the end. ”There is,” says Hugh of S. Victor, ”a good and a bad end. The bad end is the depth of sin: the good end the consummation of virtue. But the discipline of the LORD correcteth to the end, because even they who have fallen into the abyss of iniquity are raised by it to the height of virtue. O good, O sweet discipline of GOD! O that we may know it! O that we may receive it! O that we may abide it! But how can this be? It consists in three things: in precepts, in temptations, in chastisements. In precepts GOD makes trial of your obedience;

in temptations, of your constancy; in chastisements, of your patience. Obediently receive the precepts, constantly resist the temptations, patiently endure the chastisements. But these three things,—obedience, constancy, and patience, —can never be separated from each other, because each is necessary in all. The translation of Eusebius gives a different sense still: ”And my obedience, that shall increase me,” truly enough said of Him of Whom it is written, that because ”He became

obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, therefore GOD also hath highly exalted Him."

36 Thou shalt make room enough under me for to go: that my footsteps shall not slide. Room enough: not like Balaam, against whom the Angel of the LORD went forth, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. Room enough: not like the host of Holofernes, against whom the High Priest wrote that the passages of the hill country were to be kept; because "it was easy to stop them that would come up, for the passage was strait, for two men at the most." Room enough: not like to the tribe of Dan, of whom it is written, "The Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain, for they would not suffer them to come down into the valley." But according to the promise: "When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened:" or again, "Thou hast set my feet in a large room." And how is this

L. Judg. i. 34. G. room to be made, except by charity, which expands all things,—by the breadth of that love of CHRIST which passeth knowledge? That my footsteps shall not slide. That is, that the example which our LORD left may not be thrown away upon us; that the pattern which He gave we may copy, setting our feet in the prints of His. For His footsteps are indeed, in a far higher sense than that of the poet, "Footprints which perhaps some other, Sailing o'er life's solemn main, Some forlorn and shipwrecked brother Seeing, may take heart again." Cd. "He," says Eusebius, "who follows JESUS, must needs tread in His steps; and, for the very reason that he travels on in the road travelled by our LORD, he finds the road firm, and that verse fulfilled, That my footsteps shall not slide." Well says Gerhohus, speaking in the person of our LORD, "As I walked in heaven upon the lion and adder, and trod the young lion and the dragon under foot, when I beheld Satan as lightning fall thence, so also on earth My footsteps did not slide through the infirmity of the flesh; seeing that I crushed the head of the self-same tempter in the desert; seeing that I crush him still in My members, in whom, though they are weak, I am strong; and in My Sacraments, the effect of which is not weakened, though they be celebrated by unholy and infirm ministers."

37 I will follow upon mine enemies, and overtake them: neither will I turn again till I have destroyed them. Ay. Upon Mine enemies. Thus saith the LORD of His persecutors: thus must we also say, not only of our besetting sins, but of that concupiscence which remains in the regenerate, and which, though not sin in itself, is the mother and source of all sin: remembering our vow to crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin. And of what this war must be, take an example in the commands given to the Jews: their seven nations are our seven deadly sins. "Thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them: thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them; for thou art an holy people, saith the LORD thy GOD." "Happy, happy soul," cries a good Bishop, "if only thou

wilt put this precept in practice! if only thou wilt take possession of the mountains of Canaan, and drive out the accursed tribes, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong!" Nor turn again. For the true Joshua, like him of old, "drew not his hand back wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai." And so of us also. Neither will I turn again. For "is not," as Job said, "my life a warfare upon earth?"

38 I will smite them, that they shall not be able to stand : but fall under my feet. Fall. Still it is the LORD that speaks : He of Whom it is written, "They that dwell in the wilderness"—namely, the wilderness of this world—"shall kneel before Him ; His enemies shall lick the dust :" fall, therefore, in adoration ; or, if not, fall in absolute and perpetual ruin. Under My feet. That is, under those that are sent forth by Me, to do My work, and to preach My Word ; My apostles, My ambassadors till the end of time. And of them that will not fall in obedience it is written, "He shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of thy feet :" just as Joshua, after the great victory by Gibeon, and the capture of the five kings, "said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings." "Thine enemies," is the promise to Israel, "shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

39 Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle : thou shalt throw down mine enemies under me. But why again give thanks to GOD for His help against enemies, when already (ver. 35) David has done so ? "Because," answers Hugh of S. Victor, "we have to gird on our armour at the end as well as at the beginning of our Christian warfare. When we have overthrown our enemies, then we are attacked by the most dangerous of all,—the pride of our very victory." So the rhyme says, very well : Cum bene pugnaris, cum cuncta subacta putaris, Quæ magis infestat vincenda superbia restat. "Verily," says Arnobius of Chartres, "the desire of human praise and glory is the ulcer of virtue, the moth of sanctity, on which, as the last of all evils, our enemy depends for victory." Or, if you desire another reason for the twofold ascription of praise, others have made the first the thanksgiving, so to speak, of our LORD for His own victory ; the second for the triumphs, in and through Him, of His people.

40 Thou hast made mine enemies also to turn their backs upon me : and I shall destroy them that hate me. They have little to say on this verse, beyond—what is so easy to say and so difficult to act out—the happiness of such a victory : but pass on to 41 They shall cry, but there shall be none to help them : yea, even unto the LORD shall they cry, but he shall not hear them. Hab. xli. 17. Sad examples enough there are of the truth of this prophecy. Of Esau it is written that he "found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Of Antiochus, though he vowed in his last illness "that also he would become a Jew himself, and go through all the world that was inhabited and declare the power of GOD, yet,"

continues the historian, ”for all this his pains would not cease, for the just judgment of GOD was come upon him.” But most appropriately to this passage, it is written of Saul: ”When he inquired of the LORD, the LORD would answer him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.” And therefore the Prophet warns us: ”Give glory to the LORD your GOD before He cause darkness, and before your feet stumble on the dark mountains;” as Saul’s feet indeed stumbled on the dark mountains of Gilboa. Even unto the LORD shall they cry: but not, as it has been well remarked, by a Mediator: and so, crying to Him in their own name, and by their own merits, they cry in vain.

42 I will beat them as small as the dust before the wind : I will cast them out as the clay in the streets. A. The dust before the wind : and nothing can more fitly express the miserable condition of the scattered Jews,—driven in the times of their persecution from one country to another, fugitives and exiles everywhere, branded by peculiar laws, and forbidden to find a resting-place and a home. Dust indeed, as not having received the dew of GOD’s grace. The clay in the streets. The broad way of this world, says Gerhohus, is full of this clay, and therefore of those luxurious and impure souls who wallow in it. But this clay shall perish, because ”the world passeth away, and the lust thereof.” Nor shall there remain aught of that in which these worldly swine now delight themselves, in that new heaven and new earth wherein nothing can in any wise enter that defileth. Yet nevertheless of this clay, as Didymus reminds us, the

Gerhohus, like an earnest reformer as he was, in an age of the Church which abounded with horrible corruptions, and when, as it has been said, the LORD seemed again asleep in the bark of Peter, twists this text by main force to bear witness against the simony of the age; when, as he says, princes and other potentates chose Barabbas and rejected JESUS for the Epis- copate; and then, when they had elected the former, and were in need of some spiritual assistance, cried, and there was none to help them. One can hardly call this a commentary; but yet one honours the zeal of the writer, who, in whatever part of the Scripture he was expounding, saw the abuses of the Church in his own time, and so treated it. Master of the house will sometimes make to Himself vessels more precious in His eyes than of gold or silver: vessels of honour, sanctified, ”meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”

[In the streets, because as the dust of a city is far more trodden under foot than that of the fields, so the punishment of the rebellious Jews has been not once only, but again and again at the hands of different oppressors through the ages of their exile.] 43 Thou shalt deliver me from the strivings of the people: and thou shalt make me the head of the heathen. Strivings indeed; as that of Korah: ”Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy.” As that of the High Priest: ”Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.” As that of the Jews,

when ”they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.” Or again: ”As concerning this sect, we know that it is everywhere spoken against.” So it was that holy Simeon prophesied of the ”sign which should be spoken against:” this is the lesson that we are taught by the Apostle, ”Consider Him That endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself.” Or take the word of the strivings of the Jews amongst themselves: ”There was much murmuring of the Jews among themselves; for some said, He is a good man; others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people.” Thou shalt make Me the head of the heathen. And even the Jewish Rabbis saw in this a prophecy of the Messiah; while Christian expositors with one voice,—Tertullian, S. Cyprian, S. Augustine, Procopius, Justin Martyr, S. Prosper, and S. Chrysostom,—all with one consent apply it to Him, and to Him only.

”Reprobatus et abjectus, Lapis iste; nunc electus In tropæum stat erectus, Et in caput anguli.” 44 A people whom I have not known: shall serve me. First we have the obedience of the Gentiles, before we hear of the disobedience of the Jews. All mediæval writers expound with reference to this verse, the sad story of Tamar: a story where, more than anywhere else, we have to bear in mind the grand rule of S. Augustine, ”Let us abhor the sin, but let us not quench the prophecy.” Here, too, we have fulfilled the prediction, ”Behold, Thou shalt call a nation whom Thou knowest not, and nations that knew not Thee A. L. Adam. Victorin. The Sequence, Ecce dies celebris. shall run unto Thee.” And again: ”I am sought of them that asked not for Me; I am found of them that sought Me not.” 45 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: but the strange children shall dissemble with me.

[As soon as they hear, or more exactly, with the old versions, and the margin of A. V., At the hearing of the ear, contrasting thus the ready obedience of the Gentiles, who had only the preaching of missionaries to trust to, with the contradictions or strivings of the Jews, who saw and heard CHRIST Himself, and had the Scriptures besides.] 46 The strange children shall fail: and be afraid out of their prisons. A.

The strange children. That is, the Jews: children indeed, as descended from faithful Abraham; but strange by rejecting Him Whose day Abraham desired to see. It is thus that almost all the Fathers interpret the passage, some few only taking it of the Gentiles: it is Osorius who most warmly supports this meaning. Shall dissemble with me. So they did when they said, ”Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of GOD in truth; neither carest Thou for any man, for Thou regardest not the person of men. And they not only dissembled themselves, but were the cause of deceit in others: as when ”they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. S. Augustine, in expounding that passage, ”Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out,” says with reference

to this text: ”Children, not my own, but strange children, as it is written, ’Ye are of your father, the devil.’” The next clause is given differently in the Vulgate: ”The strange children are inveterate, and halted from their paths. Halted, they all say, from S. Augustine downwards, as receiving the Old, but rejecting the New Testament; as was typified of old by Jacob’s halting upon his thigh. But even of these that thus halt it is written, as S.

Jerome reminds us, ”I will save her that halteth, and gather her that is driven out. And in the mean time, the exhortation to the Jews is, as it was of old, ”How long halt ye between two opinions? But our own translation is not without its force. They shall be afraid in those prisons of sin whence they would not allow the Redeemer to say to them, ”Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; prisons which nevertheless one day He shall destroy, when Jew as well as Gentile shall join in that

A. verse, ”He hath broken the gates of brass, and smitten the bars of iron in sunder.” 47 The LORD liveth, and blessed be my strong helper : and praised be the GOD of my salvation. Notice the admirable sequence of these two verses. First, we have the Jews dissembling, and buying the perjury of the Roman soldiers : then, being indeed afraid when they found that Deceiver to have risen, and ”when they heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow :” and lastly, as in the beginning of this verse, the reason, The Lord liveth. Liveth, after His three days’ slumber in the sepulchre ; liveth, to burst the gaol and to scatter the guards ; liveth, and was dead, and is alive for evermore. And it is well said, The Lord liveth : the slave died, but the LORD, the LORD of Life, the LORD of Glory, liveth again. And notice the reference to the Blessed Trinity : The Lord liveth :— and blessed be my Strong Helper :—and praised be the God of my salvation. Praised, or, as it is in the Vulgate, exalted.

”Exalted,” says Gerhohus, very prettily, ”be the GOD of my salvation, exalted be the Sun of Righteousness to the very height of His zodiac, that He may evoke throughout the whole world summer days,—days long and bright, in which we may say, The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear. Whence, when He came into this world to endure the wintry miseries of mortality, it was in winter that to us a Child was born, unto us a Son was given. But rising as the First-born from the dead, He dedicated the season of spring to His Resurrection and Ascension, and so enter into that eternal summer where He has done with the miseries of winter for ever.” 48 Even the GOD that seeth that I be avenged : and subdueth the people unto me. 49 It is he that delivereth me from my cruel enemies, and setteth me up above mine adversaries : thou shalt rid me from the wicked man.

Avenger ! But how? If it is CHRIST that speaks, then He says, ”FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do. If it be His Bride, then she says, ”The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. O, most sweet revenge, that fulfils the

saying of Job, ”He putteth forth His Hand upon the rock : the Hand pierced for our sakes, on the hard rock of the heart ; that accomplishes the saying of the Psalmist, ”Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke : the cold, dark mountains of human pride and self-will, which will one day be set on fire with the love of GOD : when the prediction of Isaiah shall come to pass, ”The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet. Or, if we take it literally, this vengeance is a prophecy of that most terrible siege of Jerusalem, when the prayer was fulfilled, ”His blood be on us, and on our children. And now notice—as so often—the Trinity of evil: My cruel enemies—Mine adversaries—the wicked man. ”These,” says Gerhohus, ”are the three bands which the Chaldæans made out; and he interprets them of the Jews, the Pagans, and the heretics. And he well observes that this verse forms the Introit for the Wednesday in Passion-week. ”It may well do so,” says he;

”for the true Palm Sunday will never be celebrated by the Church till these attacks of her enemies shall have passed away for ever. He sees a further type of the same thing in the Gospel for that Sunday: the Jews, when they said unto our LORD, ”How long dost Thou make us to doubt? played the part of His adversaries: when they said, ”For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy,” of the wicked man; when they took up stones to stone Him, of His cruel enemies.

50 For this cause will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the Gentiles: and sing praises unto thy name. And now comes the summing up of the whole. I will give thanks: I, in My Apostles; I, in My ambassadors till the end of time; I, in My Church, which shall have the heathen for her inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for her possession; I will give thanks among the Gentiles. Or, to apply this in a sense in which David could never have intended it, to the sweet Psalmist of Israel himself, then see how, from one end of the earth to the other, in every kindred and nation, and people and tongue, he still gives thanks unto the LORD; how, commented on by a thousand saints, with words interpreted into a thousand holy meanings, he still sings praises to that Name which is exalted above every name,—that Name, than which there is none other given under heaven whereby we must be saved.

51 Great prosperity giveth he unto his King: and showeth loving-kindness unto David his Anointed, and unto his seed for evermore. Unto his King: unto the King once crowned with thorns,—the King to Whom they once bowed the knee in mockery,—the King, Whose title as monarch was once the very title of His accusation: but now it is David His Anointed: anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. ”The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you; and as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him. And now, little children, abide in Him.” I cannot end the commentary on so long a Psalm better. And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who showeth loving-kindness unto David His Anointed, and to His

seed; and to the SON, CHRIST the King, the true David, Who goeth forth to sow His seed: and to the HOLY GHOST, Who is that loving-kindness itself;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.
O most merciful GOD, Foundation of our hope, and Refuge in our affliction, preserve us from our enemies, and from the snares of death, that we, being delivered from the multitude of our afflictions, may most devoutly give thanks to Thy holy Name, with the purity of innocence. Through (1.) O CHRIST our GOD, Who wast set at nought by the contradictions of a wicked people, and therefore raised to be the Head of the Gentiles, suffer us not, whose Head Thou didst vouchsafe to become by Thy Passion and Resurrection, to be cut off from Thee; that Thou being our Guide, we may triumph over the powers that are opposed to us, Whom, for our sakes, we know to have been exalted on the tree of the Cross. Amen. Through (11.) O our LORD and Liberator, give us the desire of loving Thee, that we may praise and call upon Thee, and that Thou mayest send forth Thine arrows, and disperse our enemies, and deliver us from those that hate us; and so they may be converted, and we may rejoice and be saved by Thy protection. Amen. Through (11.)

Hear, O LORD, from Thy holy Temple, the voice of Thy Church; and as Thou in Thy Passion didst pour forth streams of blood, so look upon and console us surrounded by the pangs of death, that the torrents of iniquity may in no wise hurt us, when Thy grace shall cause us to endure them unmoved. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) [Take from us the darkness of our sins, and lighten our hearts with the lantern of Thy Consubstantial WORD, gird us, we pray Thee, with His strength, and show us the undefiled way in Him. (2.)]

Psalm 19

ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST entered the Virginal shrine, and proceeded from it, in order that He might make known the secrets of men. Concerning the preaching of the Apostles, and the Advent of CHRIST. Concerning the Advent of CHRIST and His Ascension, by which we may unlock the 119th Psalm, where the Old and New Testament are joined. Read it with S. Matthew. VEN. BEDE. (Title: To the end; a Psalm of David.) This inscription is well known, referring what is said in the Psalm to CHRIST the LORD, of Whose First Advent the Prophet is about to speak: and this is the first Psalm on that subject. The others are four in number; that is, the 80th, the 85th, the 97th, and the 98th. Through the whole Psalm they are the words of the Prophet. In the first place, he praises the preachers of the LORD; he then uses the loveliest comparisons concerning His Incarnation. Secondly, he lauds the precepts of the Old and New Testament. Thirdly, he prays that he may be purged from his secret faults, and may be made a worthy Psalmist.

SYRIAC PSALTER. The liberation of the people from Egypt, and to us a theological instruction.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: III. Nocturn. [Christmas Day: I. Nocturn. Circumcision: I. Nocturn. Ascension Day: I. Nocturn. Trinity Sunday: I. Nocturn. Feast of the Holy Name: I. Nocturn. Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary: I. Nocturn. Michaelmas Day: II. Nocturn. Common of Apostles: I. Nocturn. Common of Virgins: I. Nocturn.] Parisian. Tuesday: I. Nocturn. Ambrosian. Tuesday of First Week: I. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. There is neither speech nor language but their voices are heard. [Christmas Day: The LORD coming forth as a Bridegroom from His chamber. Circumcision: In the sun He hath set His tabernacle, and Himself is as a bridegroom coming forth from his chamber. Ascension: His going forth is from the highest heaven, and His return is unto its highest place, Alleluia. Trinity Sunday: We acknowledge Thee, One in Substance, Trinity in Persons. Holy Name: At the Name of JESUS every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth,

and things under the earth. Comm. of Apostles: Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world.] Lyons. O LORD, * my strength, and my Redeemer. Mozarabic. The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul. This Psalm has been so universally applied to the Apostles, that it will be well, before we proceed to its consideration, to

[There is a peculiar Sarum Use of this Psalm, followed by York and Aberdeen, at the first Nocturn of All Saints' Day, with the Antiphon, "Let us praise the LORD, Whom the Angels praise * Whom Cherubim and Seraphim proclaim Holy, Holy, Holy."] give one of the most beautiful applications thus made of it, the Sequence of Gotteschalkus. It was written for the Division of the Apostles; a favourite feast in Germany on the 15th of July. The Heavens declare the glory of the Son of God, the Incarnate Word, made Heavens from earth. For this glory befitteth that LORD alone, Whose Name is the Angel of the Great Counsel. This Counsel, the assistance of fallen man, is ancient, and profound, and true, made known to the Saints alone. When this Angel, made Man of a woman, made an immortal out of a mortal; out of men, angels; out of earth, heaven.

This is the LORD GOD of Hosts, Whose angels sent into the earth are the Apostles. To whom He exhibited Himself alive after His Resurrection by many arguments, announcing peace as the victor of death. Peace be unto you, saith He; I am He; fear ye not; preach the word of CHRIST to every creature, before kings and princes. As the FATHER hath sent Me, even so send I you into the world; be ye therefore prudent as serpents, be ye harmless as doves. Hence Peter, Prince of Apostles, visited Rome; Paul, Greece, preaching grace everywhere; hence these twelve chiefs in the four quarters of the world, preached as Evangelists the Threefold and the One. Andrew, either James, Philip, Bartholomew, Simon, Thaddeus, John, Thomas, and Matthew, twelve Judges, not divided from unity, but for unity, collected unto one those that were divided through the earth: Their sound is gone out into all lands.

And their words into the ends of the world. How beautiful are the feet of them that proclaim good things,—that preach peace; That speak thus to them that are redeemed by the Blood of CHRIST: Sion, thy GOD shall reign. Who made the worlds by the WORD; Which WORD was for us, in the end of the world, made Flesh. This WORD Which we preach, CHRIST crucified, Who liveth and reigneth, GOD in heaven. These are the Heavens in which, O CHRIST, Thou inhabitest; in whose words Thou thunderest; in whose deeds Thou lightenest; in whose grace Thou sendest Thy dew: To these Thou hast said: Drop down, O ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just One; let the earth be opened and bud. Raise up a Righteous Branch, Thou Who causest our earth to bring forth, sowing it with the seed of Apostolic words: through whose words grant, O LORD, that we, holding the WORD of the FATHER, may bring forth fruit to Thee, O LORD, in patience.

These are the Heavens which Thou, Angel of the great Counsel, inhabitest, Whom Thou callest not servants, but friends; to whom Thou tellest all things that Thou hast heard from the FATHER. By whose Division mayest Thou preserve Thy flock, collected and undivided, and in the bond of peace; that in Thee we may be one, as with the FATHER Thou art One. Have mercy on us, Thou that dwellest in the heavens. 1 The heavens declare the glory of GOD: and the firmament showeth his handy-work.

"By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the Breath of His Mouth." What heavens are these, says S. Gregory, except the holy Apostles? And this is the key-note by which all the Fathers interpret this Psalm. That as the visible heavens set forth the glory of the Creator, so these spiritual heavens should declare the praise of the Redeemer. Therefore in every Festival of the Apostles, this Psalm has borne its part; and every clause and paragraph has been interpreted, with a holy ingenuity, in this sense. The Firmament, from S. Augustine downwards, they take to be that firmness in speaking the Apostolic message even before kings, and not being ashamed, that fearing not them which kill the body, and after that have no more which they could do, which the Apostles, weak enough till then,—they who had all forsaken their Master and fled,—received on the descent of the HOLY GHOST at the Day of Pentecost. By it they showed His handy-work; the work by which in His great humility He wrought out our salvation,—His Incarnation, His earthly life, His Passion. Truly as, according to that beautiful idea in the decoration of Egyptian pyramids, the cornices are embellished with the blue wings of the sky, keeping watch over and guarding all inferior objects,—so the Apostles separated once to meet no more on earth, kept watch over all its regions, from the labours of S. Thomas in China, to those of S. Matthew in Ethiopia, and S. Paul in Spain.

A. 2 One day telleth another: and one night certifieth another. A. L. Isa. lix. 1. Day unto day. That is, Saint to Saint, Prophet to Prophet, Apostle to Apostle: CHRIST Himself, the King of Apostles, the Inspirer of the Prophets, the Saint of Saints, to each and to all. And night unto night. The trials and afflictions of the Martyrs and Confessors; the struggles and self-denial of every righteous soul, till the night of our own affliction and distress. But the loving-kindness that delivered them can deliver us still: "the LORD's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy that it cannot hear." That night speaks to us in no unintelligible voice, "Look at the generations of old and see: did ever any trust in the LORD and was confounded?" Or again, take it, if you will, of the work of the six days and the rest of the seventh, so sedulously parallelised with the seven gifts of the SPIRIT. Or, (as S. Augustine truly says, "Some words in Scripture have, from their obscurity, this advantage, that they give rise to many interpretations: had this been plain, you would have heard some one thing, but as it is, observe, you will hear many.") it cannot be more beautifully taken than of the seasons of the Church's year: Festival speaking to

Festival, Fast to Fast; the faithful soul by Advent prepared for Christmas; by Lent for Easter; by the Great Forty Days of Joy, for the Descent of the HOLY GHOST: and by all these days of transitory holiness, made ready for that Eternal day, the festival which shall never be concluded.

The Church on earth, with answering love, Echoes her mother's joys above: These yearly feast days she may keep, And yet for endless festals weep. Adam. Victorin. The Sequence, Superna mutris gaudia. That succession of doctrine and comfort, day speaking to day; what a beautiful type it finds in the midnight of a Scandinavian summer! The north-western and north-eastern sky, aglow respectively with evening and morning twilight, and the space between them filled with the lines of purple or crimson, the links which unite the departing to the coming day! [The A. V. is here nearer to the Syriac, LXX., and Vulgate, all which read Day breatheth out a Word unto day, and night declareth knowledge unto night. The days, the Saints filled with the wisdom and glory of GOD, declare the Divinity of the Incarnate WORD to men; the nights, less illuminated, can yet speak of the Manhood of the Great Teacher, and lead their hearers on to love Him.]

3 There is neither speech nor language: but their voices are heard among them. And we may take the verse in two senses: either, no speech nor language among the nations of the earth to which these voices did not go forth; which must be the sense if we refer the clause to the Apostles: or, no real speech in the preaching of the stars, and yet their language is intelligible to all nations. The great Portuguese theologian, Vieyra, referring to this verse, says, "The most ancient preacher in the world is the sky. If the sky be a preacher, it must have sermons, and it must have words. So it has, says David. And what are these sermons and words of the sky? The words are the stars: the sermons, their composition, order, harmony, and cause. . . . . The stars are very distinct and very clear; so must

Vieyra. Tom. i. p. 40. the style of preaching be. And have no fear that on this account it should appear low: what loftier than the sermons of the heavens? The style may be clear enough, and yet lofty enough too: so clear, that the illiterate may understand it; so deep, that the philosopher may learn from it. In the stars, the countryman finds instruction for his labour, the seaman for his navigation, the mathematician for his observation. So that the husbandman and sailor, who cannot read, can yet understand the stars; and the philosopher who has read every book that ever was written, cannot fathom their meaning." 4 Their sound is gone out into all lands: and their words into the ends of the world. A. The quotation of this text by S. Paul, "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, Their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world," is, as is well noticed by Jansenius, a sufficient warrant for the explanation which would understand the Apostles by the heavens. And how did their sound then go forth? Let Cardinal Hugo answer. "The preacher," says he, "is raised from the earth by contemplation; has

the breadth of charity; the splendour of wisdom; the serenity of a tranquil mind; the swift motion of obedience: he rains by instruction; thunders when he rebukes; lightens by miracles; is the seat of God by grace and humility."

5 In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun: which cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course. 6 It goeth forth from the uttermost part of the heaven, and runneth about unto the end of it again: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. In these verses, the Church has from the beginning seen a marvellous type of the Incarnation. So S. Ambrose, in one of his most noble hymns: Forth from His Chamber goeth He, The Royal Hall of Chastity; In nature two, in Person One, His glad course, giant-like, to run. From GOD the FATHER He proceeds; To GOD the FATHER back He speeds: The reader will observe that in this, and the other quotations from Jansenius, I am not referring to the more celebrated Bishop of Ypres, from whom the so-called Jansenists derive

their name, but to the Bishop of Ghent, whose Harmony of the Gospels and Exposition of the Psalms rank him high among the theologians of the sixteenth century. Proceeds—as far as very hell, Speeds back—to light ineffable.

They first see the beauty of the literal sense, read according to the Vulgate: In the Sun He hath set His tabernacle: that is, that of all natural objects, the Sun is the best and clearest representative of the Creator. So the wise man in Ecclesiasticus: "The sun when it appeareth declareth at his rising a marvellous instrument, the works of the Most High: and in which so many nations of the world have seen the God whom they considered worthy of adoration. But for us, knowing that it shall pass away, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, it is but God's tabernacle: the true Sun is that which "shall no more go down, when the LORD shall be our everlasting Light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended. Then in the mystical sense, the sun and the tabernacle are the LORD's abiding in the womb of Mary: and they fail not to quote from Ecclesiasticus that text, "As the sun when it ariseth in the high Heaven, so is the beauty of a good wife in ordering her house. "The tabernacle," says Cosmas, "is the flesh of the LORD, which was united for ever to His Divinity. Or retaining our own translation, with a slight change of metaphor, In them hath He set His tabernacle for the sun; in the preaching of the Apostles He hath taught that the Eternal WORD, the GOD Who is a consuming fire, the Sun of Righteousness, has tabernacled in human flesh.

And as they who go out to war dwell not in houses, but in tabernacles or tents, so our LORD, going forth to His war with Satan, dwelt in the tabernacle of His flesh while He entered into the conflict with, and when He overcame, His enemy. Which cometh forth as a Bridegroom out of his chamber. And here none ever failed to see the LORD's entrance into the world from the womb of Mary. The Bridegroom, hereafter to be betrothed to the Church on the Cross, came forth, as it were, in the morning of that day of which the sufferings of Calvary were the evening. "That

Eternal Light," says S. John Damascene, "which, proceeding from the Co-Eternal Light, had His existence before all worlds, came forth corporeally from the Virgin Mary, as it were a Bridegroom from His chamber. And rejoiceth as a giant. They go back far for the full solution of this mystery. It was from the union of the sons of GOD with the daughters of men that those ancient giants sprang: who may thus properly be called of "twofold substance. Like them, it was the twofold nature of our LORD which enabled Him to accomplish the work of our redemption: and thus this word "giant" in itself sets forth to us the whole scheme of salvation. "I see," says S. Proclus, "His miracles, and I proclaim His Deity: I behold His sufferings, and I deny not His humanity.

Emmanuel opened the gates of nature as man, but burst not the bars of Virginity as GOD. So came He forth from the womb of Mary as by a word He entered: so was He born

A. S. Joan. Damasc. Hom. i. in Nativ. B. V. M. In his sermon in the Great Church at Constantinople, March 25th, 429. as He was conceived: without human passion He entered: without human corruption He came forth." S. Ambrose explains more fully the type of the giant. "Him holy David the Prophet describes as a giant, because He, being One, is yet double, and of twofold nature: partaker both of the Divinity and of a body: Who, like a Bridegroom proceeding out of his chamber, rejoiced as a giant to run his course. The Bridegroom of the soul as the WORD: the Giant of the earth, because performing all the offices of our nature. Being eternal GOD, He undertook the Sacrament of the Incarnation." So in another hymn: Genus superni numinis, Processit aulā Virginis, Sponsus, redemptor, conditor, Suæ gigas Ecclesiæ. Cant. i. 4.

"I came forth from the FATHER, and am come into the world: again I leave the world and go unto the FATHER." Would you know, asks S. Gregory, the steps by which He thus came? From heaven into the womb; from the womb to the cradle: from the cradle to the Cross; from the Cross to the sepulchre; from the sepulchre He returned to heaven. Behold, that He might cause us to follow Him, He took these steps, that we might be able to say from our very hearts, "Draw me, we will run after Thee." And see the depth of the mystery in the sign that was given to Hezekiah. The shadow went backward ten degrees, by which degrees it had gone on; thus the LORD humbled Himself below the nine orders of angels, being "made a little lower than the angels," to the tenth degree, namely, man, before His glorified humanity took its place on the Right Hand of the FATHER. And see how beautifully those two are joined: He runneth about unto the end of it again, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. Because He Whom we love has now ascended into heaven, therefore it is that our hearts burn within us, while we think of the glory which is His, and which is to be ours. Nothing hid from the heat thereof. For that Ascension—for that land—pertain no less to ourselves than to the angels.

The Hymn, Optatus notis omnium. O common joy, O common boast, To us and that celestial host! To them, that He regains the sky: To us, that He to us is nigh. 7 The law of the LORD is an undefiled law, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple. He is gone there in His own dear form, but He has left His law behind Him, the guide and rule of His Church to the end. This is the mantle which fell from our ascending Elijah, and which, if we hold it steadfastly, will divide for us any Jordan of temptation. "A certain simple-minded and honest man," says S. Peter Damiani, "one that feared GOD, had been hearing Matins, and was returning from church. His disciples asked him, What did you hear at church, father? He answered, 'I heard four things, and observed six.' A very subtle reply, and one which showed his faith. He had heard four verses of the nineteenth Psalm. The law of the Lord is an undefiled law, &c., and the three following verses, in which six things are noted: which are law, testimony, righteousness, commandments, fear, judgments."

8 The statutes of the LORD are right, and rejoice the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, and giveth light unto the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, and endureth forever: the judgments of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether.

And notice, that the first character of CHRIST's law is, that it is undefiled: purity being set foremost, as the foundation of all the service of GOD, just as impurity occupies the first place in almost every Scriptural list of sin; because, as the greatest Saints have always taught, more will be condemned at the end of the world for more or less direct breaches of the seventh commandment, than of all the other commandments put together. Next observe, the sixfold division of these excellencies. As our Blessed LORD taught us in the wilderness, Holy Scripture is to be our magazine of defensive armour against temptation. But six is always the type of temptation. On the sixth hour of the sixth day, the first temptation came into the world: the sixth petition of the LORD's Prayer is, "Lead us not into temptation:" the sixth blessing pronounced to the seven Churches is, "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation:" and the whole culminates in the 666, the mark of the Beast, the most fearful of the many tempters that shall ever rise up against the Church. After purity, as so continually in Scriptural lists of virtues, comes truth: the testimony of the Lord is sure. And forthwith that which the LORD Himself made the chief character of His mission,—that to the poor the Gospel was preached,—that is also recorded here: wisdom unto the simple. Notice further the connection between purity of heart and illumination: the commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth light unto the eyes: exactly as in the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see GOD." Yet it must be confessed to be rather marvellous that holy writers on this Psalm seem unable to trace the especial connection between these six

A. characteristics of the Word of GOD, and content themselves with dwelling on it, without any attempt to behold in them a ladder set upon the earth, but reaching to heaven. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. The much fine gold of our version is, in the Vulgate, much precious stone, and then they see in these three things the chief allurements of the world ; riches in the gold ; power in the precious stones ; pleasure in the honey. ”The flowers that produce this honey,” says Chrysostom, ”were fed by no earthly dew : the gentle distillations of the HOLY GHOST gave them not only their beauty, but their sweetness.” And here notice how David constantly, but David and Solomon almost alone, use honey in a good sense, or as a type of holy things. ”Ye shall burn no leaven nor any honey,” is the command in the Law. ”It is not good to eat much honey,” say the men of Hezekiah. ”It shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey,” is the command to S. John. Is it to pursue the type too minutely to see in the special reference to the honey-comb a connection between the six-sided cell, and the sixfold characteristics, just mentioned, of the Word of GOD ?

11 Moreover, by them is thy servant taught : and in keeping of them there is great reward. And we naturally remember how the LORD’s Servant, when tempted in the wilderness, was taught by this same word, and by a threefold quotation obtained a threefold victory. Compare this saying of the Psalmist with that prophecy of Isaiah : ”Behold, My servant shall deal prudently ; He shall be exalted and extolled, and shall be very high.” ”Deal prudently.” He did, indeed, when with the very passage that replied most aptly He repulsed the assaults of the tempter : ”exalted” He was, above the desires of the flesh, in refusing to make the stones bread : ”extolled,” when raised to the pinnacle of the temple, and yet refusing the vain-glory of casting Himself down : ”very high,” when carried to the summit of an exceeding high mountain, He refused the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Thy servant. And holy men have not feared thus to interpret the ”Well done, good and faithful servant,” of the parable. ”Thou hast truly served,” says Guarric of Igniac, ”Thou hast served in all faith and truth, Thou hast served in all patience and long-suffering. Not after a lukewarm sort, Who didst rejoice as a giant to run the course of obedience ; not in a feigned manner, Who, after so many and so great labours, didst spend Thy life once and above all ; not unknowingly, Who, when Thou wast

G. Isa. iii. 13. Read Rupert. de Gloria F. H. Lib. iii. in S. Matt. iv. L. scourged, though innocent, didst not even open Thy mouth. For it is written, and it is just, That servant who knew his LORD’s will and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. And this Servant, I pray you, what did He not that was wanting? What ought He to have done that He did not?” In keeping of them. Not for keeping of them, though that also; but he speaks here of the promise of the life that now is, rather than of that which is to come. But we may, perhaps, rather take all these sayings regarding the Word of GOD as applicable to the true and eternal WORD. It

is to content ourselves with too low a view, if we restrict them to anything short of Him. See with respect to this what is said in the Third Dissertation.

12 Who can tell how oft he offendeth : O cleanse thou me from my secret faults. Who indeed? And the question carries us at once to the greatest of all sins, and the prayer concerning it: "FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do." "Do thou still," says one, "O gentle and patient Lamb of GOD, so plead for us when we fall into any sin of ignorance; when we forget Thee, do not forget us; when we are in error, send out Thy light and Thy truth; when we are in doubt, let us hear a voice behind us: This is the way, walk ye in it." My secret faults. And here they dwell on the tribunal of penitence, when we ourselves are the accusers and ourselves the culprits; when we proclaim the most hidden thoughts of our hearts, in order that hereafter the Eternal Judge may not say: "Thou didst it secretly, but I will proclaim it before all Israel, and before this Sun." Cleanse Thou me, however bitter the medicine; cleanse Thou me, however full of shame the confession. Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for Thou art my praise.

13 Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over me: so shall I be undefiled, and innocent from the great offence. Here, again, the Vulgate widely differs from our translation. Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults, and preserve Thy servant from the power of aliens. If they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. But if—to follow our version—we cannot understand the countless faults into which we daily fall, against this, at least, we can be on our guard: against presumptuous sins: and more especially against that habit of presumptuous sin, which has so fearful a tendency to terminate in the great offence. The great offence: the sin against the HOLY GHOST; the sin unto death: not any one particular offence, however mortal or enormous; not even wilful and deliberate apostasy, which some have imagined it, but, to use the terrible words of Vieyra, "that most miserable estate of final impenitence, consummated in the next life, but commenced in this. Oh, how many condemned souls," he continues, "are still living—are still walking among us: not because, absolutely speaking, they cannot, but because they will not be converted. They are bound to the sins of which they have already filled up the measure. Woe to them, says GOD, when I shall depart from them. To this woe, infinite woes will respond through all eternity: but woes of grief without repentance; woes of torment without alleviation; woes of despair without remedy." And this is the great offence.

[They distinguish here, for the most part, between the secret faults, which arise within man from original sin, and the promptings of his lower nature, and the sins of others, the suggestions of evil spirits or bad companions, external to the soul, understanding delictis after the word alienis here in the Vulgate. But in truth, hominibus is the lacking idea, and modern critics, following Aben-Ezra, agree in

translating from the proud.] 14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart: be always acceptable in thy sight, 15 O LORD: my strength and my redeemer. He begins with the fruit, the words of my mouth, and descends to the root, the meditation of my heart. For it is written, "Either make the tree good and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt." And it is singular that, as this connection between the words and the thoughts follows in the Psalm the mention of the "great offence," so that of the tree and its fruit immediately succeeds in the Gospel to that saying concerning blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST. And thus the Psalm may well end: it began by setting forth how "the heavens declare the glory of GOD;" it concludes by telling how we should make manifest the same glory. It began by the perpetual succession of nights and days, with their uninterrupted Benedicite; it ends with the supplication that our prayer may be always acceptable: acceptable to Him Who is our Strength, now that He has made us His own; as He was our Redeemer, when we were far off from Him; our Strength, to enable us to reach the land that flowed with milk and honey, as our Redeemer from the country of Egypt and the house of bondage.

[O, with what a thankful and devout mind ought every Christian to chant this Psalm, wherein the foundations of the Christian Faith are recorded, the preaching of the Apostles, the Incarnation of the WORD, the praise of the Gospel Law, the acknowledgment of our own frailty, and the cry for divine mercy, are wondrously contained!] And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, from Whom was the going forth of the Sun; and to the SON, Which cometh forth as a Bridegroom out of His chamber: and to the HOLY GHOST, the spiritual heat, from which not anything is hid; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

Most gracious GOD, Who didst proceed from the Virginal shrine to liberate us, and didst thus at length ascend to the Right Hand of the FATHER; we beseech Thy boundless mercy, that we, being converted to Thy law, illuminated by Thy precepts, instructed by Thy testimonies, may be cleansed from our secret faults, and delivered from our enemies. Who livest (5.) Cleanse us, O LORD, from our secret faults, by purifying our conscience, which is stained with its own defilements; set free Thy servants also from the dominion of their enemies, and forgive us those things which we have learnt by the example of the wicked, or have done through the persuasion of evil counsellors; that we, who confess Thee to be our own LORD, may never again experience the domination of sin. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) O Thou Helper in tribulation and necessity; O Thou, my Redeemer, for that Thou hast redeemed me with Thy precious Blood; Thou art the Helper of the human race, when Thou causest us to draw near to Thee; Thou art our Redeemer, for that, by Thy Passion and Resurrection, Thou hast redeemed us from destruction. Grant that we, perpetually walking in Thy law, may be guarded by Thee, for to Thee, with

the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, is the honour and glory for ever, and to ages and ages. Amen.

[O LORD, our Strength and our Redeemer, let Thy right statutes rejoice our hearts, cleanse our secret faults with the grace of Thy Word, whereby we being purified from the great offence, the meditation of our heart and the words of our mouth may be acceptable in Thy sight. Through (1.)]

Psalm 20

ARG. THOMAS. That by the gift of CHRIST we rise and rejoice. The Prophet exhorts him that worketh, and tells how we are set free by the Passion. The Church applies it to CHRIST going to the Cross. VEN. BEDE. The Prophet, filled with the knowledge of the future, prays that those prosperous events may happen to the Holy Church, which he knows will be bestowed upon her by the Advent of the LORD. At the opening he prays that the Church, wearied with the storms of this world, may receive CHRIST the LORD. Next, that the LORD may, of His love, confirm all her designs and her true faith, and promises that the people shall be magnified, not by worldly power, but by the Divine Arm. SYRIAC PSALTER. Of David, when he prayed that he might come safe out of the war with the Ammonites. To us now it is a useful prayer.

Various Uses.
Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: I. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. The LORD hear thee * in the day of trouble. [Corpus Christi: The LORD remember our offering, and let our burnt-sacrifice be fat.] Mozarabic. The Name of the GOD of Jacob protect thee: send thee help from the Sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Sion. 1 The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble: the Name of the GOD of Jacob defend thee; Ps. i xviii. 18. The Church speaks to her LORD, going forth to His final war, in the day of His trouble,—the day when the moon was confounded and the sun ashamed,—the day of the Cross. Where note: CHRIST, in the time of His Passion, offered a threefold prayer: for Himself, for His disciples, and for His enemies; and He was heard in all. For Himself: ”FATHER, the hour is come: glorify Thy SON, that Thy SON also may glorify Thee:” and He was heard when the heathen began to be given Him for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. For His disciples, when He said, ”That they all may be one:” and He was heard when ”the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul.” For His enemies, when He said, ”FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do:” and He was heard, when ”He received gifts for men, yea, even for His enemies.” The Name of God defend Thee: ”for He said, I

am the SON of GOD." The Name of the God of Jacob: for as Jacob prevailed over his brother by guile, and was rightfully named a supplanter, so the LORD, by the depth of His eternal counsel, confounded Satan,

And the multiform deceiver's Art by art would overthrow. Ven.Fortun. The Hymn, Fange lingua. With such a prayer, with such a yearning, ardent wish, go forth, O "Man of war," to Thy last battle! go forth, O "Man of sorrows," to Thy last agony! Never can conflict be sorer; never can necessity be more overwhelming: The Lord hear Thee in the day of trouble: the Name of the God of Jacob defend Thee! 2 Send thee help from the sanctuary : and strengthen thee out of Sion ; Easy enough to take it in the sense in which they usually understand it: that the LORD's help in that hour of darkness still came from the FATHER, from Whom, not even in the depth of His humiliation, was He severed. But then we must go counter to the whole rule of the Psalms, by understanding Sion of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Therefore, best, with other holy men, to take this help of the foreknowledge which the LORD had that, by His bitter Death and Passion, the foundation of that spiritual temple would be laid; that, not till the second Adam slept in death, could that dear Bride be formed out of His wounded Side. Help, indeed, from the sanctuary: from the foresight of the innumerable souls to be sanctified in that future Church, all then hanging on His victory; all to be elect or reprobate, according as He won or lost. Strength, indeed, out of Sion, when for no less a purpose than this was that fearful battle waged: all His saints, all His redeemed, His martyrs, His confessors, His virgins, hanging on the result of that day.

A. 3 Remember all thy offerings : and accept thy burnt-sacrifice ; All Thy offerings: the humiliation that brought Him from heaven to earth; the patient tabernacling in the womb of the ever-Virgin; the poor Nativity: the hard manger: ox and ass for courtiers; the weary flight into Egypt; the poor cottage in Nazareth; the doing all good, and bearing all evil; the miracles, the sermons, the teachings; the jeerings; the being called a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, the friend of publicans and sinners; the attribution of His wondrous deeds to Beelzebub. And accept Thy burnt sacrifice. As every part of the victim was consumed in a burnt sacrifice, so what limb, what sense of our dear LORD did not agonise in His Passion? The thorny crown on His head; the nails in His hands and feet; the reproaches that filled His ears; the gloating multitude on whom His dying gaze rested; the

N vinegar and the gall; the evil odours of the hill of death and corruption. The ploughers ploughed upon His back, and made long furrows; His most sacred Face was smitten with the palm of the hand, His Head with the reed. What could have been done more for the vineyard that He did not do in it? So, what more could have been borne by the Vine, that this dear Vine did not bear? Remember them now, O FATHER; call to mind, for us sinners, for us miserable sinners, and for our salvation, all these offerings; accept, instead of our eternal punishment, who are guilty, His

burnt sacrifice, Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth! [And taking these words as spoken to the Church, as well as to her Head, they remind us of that Holy Oblation of the Eucharist, wherein the Passion is represented and pleaded, acceptable to GOD, reverenced by Angels, adored by men, because therein are the Soul of the Righteous, the Flesh of the Most Pure, the Godhead of the Most High. This is fat, for it burns with the clear flame of love, warming our chill souls; it is moist, softening our dry hearts, and melting them into tears, and joyful, making our faces to shine.]

4 Grant thee thy heart's desire: and fulfil all thy mind. The desire of that heart, the well of all pity and all love; the desire of that heart which for us was pierced with the spear; the desire, of which He said, "How am I straitened till it be accomplished?" Thy heart's desire. Not the cruel malice of the Jews; not the counsel of the Scribes and Pharisees; but the eternal purpose, purposed before the world began; but the mystery hid from ages and from generations, and only revealed on Calvary. And that not barely;—as if the desire granted, but that all; the wish accomplished, but that the outside. Fulfil ALL Thy mind. O LORD JESU, fulfil Thou all Thy mind in us! Grant that we may stay for nothing, fear nothing, shrink from nothing, be seduced by nothing, be deceived by nothing, till we are both almost and altogether such as Thou art,—especially in the bonds of Thy love!

5 We will rejoice in thy salvation, and triumph in the Name of the LORD our GOD: the LORD perform all thy petitions. Still the Church sits "under His shadow with great delight." And it is well said, "We will rejoice." She watches by that agonised Form; she sees the eyes filming over, and the Face growing grey, and the Head bowed in death, and for the present it is agony such as the world never knew before, nor can know again; but for all that, we will rejoice: we see the joy ineffable of the ransomed souls,—we behold the exceeding great multitude, which no man can number, —we see the Church a glorious kingdom, and we will rejoice. And triumph in the Name of the Lord our God. That Name which was set up over the Cross: that Name which in the hour of deepest humiliation asserted the title of a King; of uttermost dereliction, claimed the prerogatives of a SAVIOUR (for so is JESUS by interpretation;) of being reckoned among the transgressors, made mention of separation from sinners; of reproach and blasphemy, yet boasted of them that should praise Him ("King of the Jews," "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly," &c.) The Lord perform all Thy petitions. That petition, "FATHER, forgive them!" that petition, "That where I am, there they may be also;" that petition, "That they all may be one!"

[Triumph. The A. V. here gives us the true meaning, In the Name of our God we will set up our banners. What that means we may learn from the old Crusading march: Lignum Crucis, Signum Ducis Sequitur exercitus; Quod non cessit, Sed præcessit In vi Sancti SPIRITUS.] The Rhythm, Justa threnos Jeremiæ. 6 Now know I, that the

LORD helpeth his Anointed, and will hear him from his holy heaven: even with the wholesome strength of his right hand. It is said of the Resurrection, but said of the Ascension also. The bursting of the bars of death has changed the title that was on the Cross: now it is not only "the SAVIOUR," but the "Anointed,"—anointed to be a triumphant King, as well as an eternal Priest. Hitherto He has been heard from earth; henceforth He shall be heard from heaven, from His heaven; and because His, therefore ours. Hitherto He has been heard from the mountain, from the sea shore, from the Cross; henceforth He shall be heard from the Right Hand of the FATHER. Now the sufferings and humiliation of that Right Hand have ended in its wholesome strength. "They pierced My hands and My feet" is now lost in the hymn of triumph: "Thy Right Hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: Thy Right Hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy."

[CHRIST is called the Right Hand of the FATHER, because the right hand is given as a pledge of peace, for it is stronger than the left, and he who gives it deprives himself thereby of power to hurt. So when the FATHER gave us the SON, He put away His chastisements from us, nay, for our greater safety, He suffered that Right Hand of His to be nailed to the Cross, so that It could not strike us sinners. When we fear the anger of GOD, let us then seize hold of CHRIST, His Right Hand, and not let Him go. For then, if God should strike us, it will be only with the left hand of temporal punishments and deprivations, for in His left hand are riches and honour, but in His right hand length of days.] 7 Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the Name of the LORD our God.

His Name, Who entering into Jerusalem, entered not with the pomp of chariot and horse, but "on an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass:" His Name, of Whom it is written, "The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." "Pharaoh's chariots are cast into the Red Sea." "We," says Origen, "who would rightly fight under the LORD JESUS, must extirpate all vices in ourselves; and seizing the spiritual sword, must hough (compare 2 Sam. viii. 4) that evil cavalry of wickedness, and burn all the chariots,—that is, abolish all pride and elation of soul,—so that, no longer trusting in chariots and horses, we may invoke the Name of the LORD our GOD." Remember the Name: how it was set up over the Head of the dying SON as the title of accusation: how it is exalted to the Right Hand of the FATHER as the title of all glory.

8 They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright. Brought down, or bound: for what binds and fetters a man more than sin? Take it of the Jews, bound indeed in the fetters of their own unbelief: brought down in that most terrible of all terrible sins: brought down by their dispersion through all the kingdoms of the earth; brought down in being the proverb of reproach, and the offscouring of all men to this day. We, who are "sinners of the Gentiles,"—we, once "without CHRIST, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the

covenant of promise, having no hope," are risen: risen from hopelessness, risen from misery, risen to Him Who, being lifted up on the Cross, was to draw all men to Him; and rising by His most dear and precious Passion, by His continual and prevailing intercession stand upright.

9 Save, LORD, and hear us, O King of heaven: when we call upon thee. The chariots and horses reminded us of the lowly entrance into Jerusalem: here we call to mind the Hosanna of the exulting crowd that attended it. But we call not on the King of the Jews, but on the King of Heaven: we fall down, not before Him That was mounted on the ass, but before "Him that rideth upon the Heavens." As S. Theodulph's Ps. lxviii. 4. Thou wast hastening to Thy Passion When they poured their hymn of praise: Thou art reigning in Thy glory, When our melody we raise. The Hymn, And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who hears us in the day of trouble; and to the SON, Whose Name defends us: and to the HOLY GHOST, in Whose salvation we will rejoice. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.
Fulfil, O LORD, our petitions, and accept us as a burnt-offering well pleasing to Thee: that we, having overthrown the chariots of our enemies, may rejoice in the protection of Thy salvation. Through (5.) Turn, we beseech Thee, O LORD, the sorrows of our hearts, which through fear of Thy judgments we make known unto Thee, into joy and gladness: send us help from the sanctuary, and accept our afflictions as a sacrifice to Thee; that Thou mayest both breathe into our hearts such counsels as shall please Thee, and fill our hands with the work which Thou wilt reward. So grant our petitions, as to do away our sins; and give us entrance into that blessed place, where is life without end. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) [Hear us, O LORD, we beseech Thee, in the day of trouble, and defend us from all evils, that risen, and standing upright, when our enemies are fallen, we may ever rejoice in Thee, our LORD and GOD (1.)]

Psalm 21

TITLE. To the end: a Psalm of David. [To the Supreme: a Psalm of David.]

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST will cast the wicked to be consumed in everlasting fire. The Prophet speaks to the FATHER concerning CHRIST the King; and of the kingdom of CHRIST, and the rejection of the Jews. VEN. BEDE. This Psalm relates first to the Incarnation of the SAVIOUR, then to the deeds of His Godhead, that thou mayest openly confess one and the same CHRIST to be the SON of the Virgin Mother and of GOD the FATHER. In the first place the Prophet speaks to the FATHER of the LORD'S Incarnation; in the next he describes His divers virtues and glories; and how, by His Passion, He hath attained to the height of all honour. Then, turning to the LORD, he asks, after the manner of a petitioner, that those things may take place in the judgment which he knows will come to pass. SYRIAC PSALTER. A petition for those things which may help the just man.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Sunday: III. Nocturn. [Ascension Day: II. Nocturn. Exaltation of the Cross: II. Nocturn. Feast of Crown of Thorns: II. Nocturn. Common of one Martyr: III. Nocturn. Common of Confessors: III. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: I. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. The King shall rejoice in Thy strength, O LORD. [Ascension Day: Be Thou exalted, LORD, in Thine own strength, we will sing and praise. Alleluia. Holy Cross: The King is exalted on high, when the noble trophy of the Cross is adored by all Christians through the ages. Common of One Martyr: Thou hast set, O LORD, upon his head a crown of precious stone. Common of Confessors: He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, O LORD. Glory and great worship hast Thou laid upon him. Thou hast set upon his head a crown of precious stone.] Mozarabic. Be Thou exalted, LORD, in Thine own strength. 1 The King shall rejoice in thy strength, O LORD: exceeding glad shall he be of thy salvation. Sunday of the Ointment-bearers: Stichera of the Resurrection.

Who is King but CHRIST, according to His Manhood? The Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief shall not always travel through the vale of Baca: shall not always be despised and rejected of men: shall not always go on His way weeping, and bearing forth good seed. This ”Man” also ”goeth forth to His work and to His labour until the evening;” but not beyond. Then shall come the time of joy; the exceeding gladness of that bursting the bars of the grave, and by death crushing death. Of Thy salvation. ”For Him hath GOD raised up the third day;” raised by Himself in so far as He was GOD; raised by the FATHER, in so far as He was Man. Shall rejoice: shall be exceeding glad. ”Rejoice,” exclaims the Eastern Church, ”rejoice, O ye peoples, and leap for joy! The Angel hath rolled away the stone of the cave; he hath given us the glad tidings and hath said,—CHRIST hath arisen from the dead, the SAVIOUR of the world, and hath filled all things with sweetness. Rejoice, O ye peoples, and leap for joy!”

[Again, you may take it of the human nature of CHRIST, rejoicing in its hypostatic union with the Eternal WORD, and glad at being the bringer of salvation to His brethren.] 2 Thou hast given him his heart’s desire : and hast not denied him the request of his lips. That desire which led Him down from the songs of the Angels to the blasphemies of Calvary : that heart’s desire which led to the piercing of His heart, the source of all love, by the Centurion’s spear : to which, and not to the earthly anguish of mortal fever, holy men have not dreaded to refer the words, ”I thirst.” JESU, wondrous to the last! What was Thine intention? Thou wast silent of the Cross, but of thirst mad’st mention : Not that this Thou feltest more than Thy bitter tension ; But that thirst Thou wouldst express for lost man’s invention.

The Hymn, Cænam cum discipIulis. Request of His lips. The ”FATHER, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory:” or, if we carry on our thoughts from the Cross to the Throne, then the continual request that those lips, ”full of grace,” and ”blessed for ever,” offer to the FATHER for us : Given to Him, indeed, however much it seemed as if ”all these things were against” Him, as if the Prince of Life were subdued by the King of Death, yet in and by all these sufferings, the desire of the heart, the prayer of the lips, were being won. ”LORD,” exclaims the Eastern Church, ”though Thou wast presented before the tribunal, and judged by Pilate, yet wast Thou not separated from the Throne, sitting there together with the FATHER ; and arising from the dead, Thou didst free the world from the slavery of an alien, gracious and merciful. LORD, though the Jews laid Thee as dead in the sepulchre, yet the soldiers guarded Thee as a sleeping monarch, and sealed Thee as a treasure of Life with a seal.”

Saturday of the Pascha : Stichera of the Resurrection. [His heart’s desire. For Himself, that petition which He twice made, ”FATHER, glorify Thy Name,” ”And now, O FATHER, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self.” For us, that He might not

leave us even by His Ascension, but remain with us sacramentally under the veils of Bread and Wine. ”With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you,” because, as is elsewhere written of Him, the Eternal Wisdom, ”My delights are with the sons of men.”] The Gloss. S. Luke xxii. 15. Prov. viii. 31. 3 For thou shalt prevent him with the blessings of goodness : and shalt set a crown of pure gold upon his head. The Hymn, Adest nova solemnitas.

Thou shalt prevent Him. S. Jerome takes this in the sense of those blessings given by CHRIST, and given to CHRIST before His Incarnation. ”That is,” says he, ”long before, when Melchisedec blessed Abraham; and in all the other benedictions which were in the times of the Patriarchs, and until the Advent of CHRIST, CHRIST was blessed in them before. Thou hast prevented Him with the blessings of sweetness. (Vulg.) The Jews offered Him vinegar and gall; and when He had tasted thereof, He would not drink. He tasted, because He underwent our death; He would not drink, because He remained not in the state of death.” We may also take these words of the servant as well as of the Master, and understand them of prevenient grace. ”For,” says S. Bernard, ”grace prevents, not only them that had no merits, but them that had evil merits; so that, while we are yet children of wrath, and are working the works of death, the thoughts that our LORD thinks towards us are thoughts of peace, and not of bitterness; and to us who do not even pray to Him, but who are impenitent,—to us who do not invoke, but provoke,—to us who do not intercede, but recede, He giveth the good Spirit, the Spirit of Life, the Spirit of adoption.” And hast set a crown of pure gold upon His head. They fail not to remind us how often CHRIST was crowned. First, with a crown of flesh, at His Incarnation; and of this it is that Bernard understands that, ”Go forth, O ye daughters of Sion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him.” By His step-mother, the Synagogue, He was crowned with a crown of thorns; by His own faithful people He is crowned with a crown of righteousness; and finally by His FATHER at the Ascension, He was crowned with a crown of glory.

Signum præfert victoriæ Corona triumphalis: Simul et excellentiæ Dignitatis regalis: Sub umbrâ legis veteris Præsignata per cidaris Typum sacerdotalis. Of pure gold: or, as the Vulgate has it, of precious stones. That is, the multitude of the redeemed, each a gem more or less bright, according to his greater or fewer merits, and, brilliant above and beyond the rest, the twelve precious stones of the Apostolic band,—not only the foundation stones of New Jerusalem, but jewels in the diadem of its King. And they also take it of the crown of righteousness laid up for every one who shall have fought the good fight, finished his course, kept the faith. Innocent III. will have it to consist of seven precious stones: four corporeal gifts of the transfigured body,—agility, subtilty, impassibility, immortality,—and three of the glorified spirit,—love, knowledge, happiness. Others reckon up twelve; explaining in this sense the twelve stones of the breastplate, and those which S. John beheld in the Apocalypse. Thus this crown, taken from the King of the Children

of Ammon (for no doubt the Psalm was composed on that occasion,) and set upon David's head, is the delight and teaching of the Church of God to all ages,—nay, rather, beyond all ages.

4 He asked life of thee, and thou gavest him a long life: even for ever and ever. Literally, He asked life of Thee, for the child whom "the LORD struck, that it was very sick:" and though not heard with respect to that infant, he was heard with regard to himself: "the LORD also hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die." But the literal sense is lost in the beauty of the mystical signification. He asked life of Thee, when He said, "FATHER, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." And this is what S. Paul also tells us when it is written that "He was heard in that He feared." And Thou gavest Him a long life: not only in Himself, according to His Manhood, as it is written, "As the FATHER hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son, to have life in Himself;" but life also in His followers: to whom, when their bodies were killed, the enemy had nothing more that he could do: life, the true life, after this valley of the shadow of death: life, the perfection of life, even the Beatific Vision.

5 His honour is great in thy salvation: glory and great worship shalt thou lay upon him. We must understand it of the glory of the Ascension. For though the Incarnation was glorious, and though the glory of the conqueror was still further manifested in the Resurrection, yet not till that day when He had done with this world for ever, and a cloud received Him out of sight of the Apostles, did they understand fully what was that glory,—the glory as of the Only-begotten of the FATHER. Didymus well observes that the double repetition, His honour is great—glory shalt Thou lay, answers exactly to that voice of the FATHER, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Shalt Thou lay upon Him, as upon an immoveable foundation; causing Him to bear up, as it were, all the glory of His Martyrs and His other servants, from S. Stephen to the end of all things.

6 For thou shalt give him everlasting felicity: and make him glad with the joy of thy countenance.

Or rather, as it is in the Vulgate, Thou shalt give Him to be an everlasting benediction. And they compare very ingeniously the blessing pronounced by God upon the first Adam, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it. For though, while our LORD still dwelt in this world, His time was not yet come, that the multitude of the Gentiles should be converted to Him, and though after His Ascension the number of the names together at Jerusalem was but about a hundred and twenty, yet no sooner had the HOLY GHOST descended at the Day of Pentecost, than the preaching of the Gospel was indeed fruitful, and the number of the faithful did indeed multiply; than the Apostles, by their labour and their blood, did subdue the earth. For He indeed is the true Abraham, of whom it is written, "In Thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. Cardinal Hugo understands it of the blessing

that shall be pronounced, —”Come, ye blessed of My FATHER: and of this he sees a type in the blessing pronounced by Isaac over Jacob, with its twelve particulars: ”particulars,” says he, ”which every true blessing, more especially the great and final one, must contain. I mark them for the reader’s study: ”See, the smell of my son, is as (1) the smell of a field (2) which the LORD hath blessed: therefore GOD give thee (3) of the dew of heaven (4) and the fatness of the earth: (5) and plenty of corn (6) and wine:

(7) let people serve thee (8) and nations bow down to thee: (9) be lord over thy brethren, (10) and let thy mother’s sons bow down to thee: (11) cursed is every one that curseth thee, (12) and blessed is he that blesseth thee. And make Him glad with the joy of Thy countenance. And here, as the key-stone and essence of that everlasting felicity, he speaks of the Beatific Vision. And so one of our poets well writes:

In the midst of this city celestial, Where the eternal temple should have rose, Lightened the idea beatifical: End and beginning of each thing that grows, Whose self no end nor yet beginning knows: That hath no eyes to see, nor ears to hear, Yet sees and hears, and is all eye, all ear: That nowhere is contained, and yet is everywhere. 7 And why? because the King putteth his trust in the LORD: and in the mercy of the Most Highest he shall not miscarry. The first Adam, placed in Paradise by the mercy of GOD, lost it, almost as soon as he obtained it. The second Adam, having won for Himself and for us, with His own Right Hand and with His holy arm, a better Paradise, shall not miscarry. Even as they, who shall once have been counted worthy to enter into that place, shall no more be cast out. The King, even when He held the reed for His sceptre, even when He was invested with the purple robe for His royal garment, even when He hung on the Cross, beneath the title of His accusation, ”the King of the Jews,” nevertheless put His trust in the LORD; nevertheless knew that the affliction which was but for a moment, was working out for Him and for His a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Of the Most Highest. This word is not used here without a deep sense: for the same expression, was first used by Melchisedec, when he was blessing Abraham: and by him twice: ”Blessed be Abraham of the Most High God; and blessed be the Most High God:” and therefore it was fit, that He Who on the Cross was made a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, should use the same phrase regarding His victory over that.

8 All thine enemies shall feel thy hand: thy right hand shall find out them that hate thee. ”By the Hand of God,” says S. Ambrose, ”we understand His power of punishment. This Hand scourged the King of the Egyptians, by reason of his detention of Sarah. This Hand overwhelmed the chariots and people of the Egyptians in the deep of the Red Sea. This Hand phrensied the mind of King Saul, so that he hated the grace of Him That would have preserved him, so that he fell on his

own sword, and could not endure to survive his sons and his kingdom." As before, we have the effect of our LORD's victory as regarded His followers, so here we have its consequences as respects His enemies. But others take the former part of the verse in a happier sense, and say with Gerhohus, "O LORD JESU, let me, who going down from Jerusalem to Jericho have fallen among thieves,—who from Thy son have become Thine enemy, feel Thy hand of mercy and love: Thy hand, that will pour in the wine of comfort, and the oil of pardon." Thy Right Hand shall find out them that hate Thee. And why? Because they would never find Him out first: "I am found of them," says He, "that sought Me not." "I like it well," says Bishop Andrewes, "that it is written, 'Then said JESUS again, Peace be unto you:' for if we had had to wait till it could have been said, 'Then answered JESUS,' we might have waited for ever, and never obtained His peace at all."

S. Ambros. in Psalm. 37. 9 Thou shalt make them like a fiery oven in time of thy wrath: the LORD shall destroy them in his displeasure, and the fire shall consume them. For when, in its fullest and most terrible meaning, His Right Hand shall have found out them that hate Him, then shall be brought to pass that which is written, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." But S. Jerome will take it in another sense, and understands this fiery oven of the earnestness of true penitence: the oven presupposes the fire and the wood, and they look back to the Lamb offered on Mount Calvary for a burnt offering. But generally speaking, mediæval writers understand it of the pains of hell: which they here enumerate and detail with a fulness of description that reminds one of the paintings of those on the left hand, in the Great Doom of mediæval churches. But take it in the words of Dionysius the Carthusian:

The Rhythm Homo Dei creatura. Ignis, frigus procellarum, Sulphur, fetor tenebrarum, Jugis luctus animarum, Pars earum calicis. Sempiterna mors, dracones, Fames, demones, bufones, Amarissimos agones Superaddunt miseris. Tot sunt loca tenebrosa, Tot tormenta monstruosa, Quot hæc terra spatiosa, Atque visibilia. Quamvis parum sint miranda; Nec ad illa comparanda; Ista quippe enarranda, Hæc indicibilia. 10 Their fruit shalt thou root out of the earth: and their seed from among the children of men. Their fruit. All their counsels, all their acts against the righteous: all those times of which the wise man writes, "The ungodly said, reasoning with themselves, but not aright;"—all their temporary victories, shalt Thou root out of the earth: out of this earth, because even here, "the poor shall not alway be forgotten,—the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever," and much more out of that "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." From among the children of men. They take it of the saints, because they have been renewed from that first nature which they had as men, by that second and better principle infused into them by Him who was truly the Son of Man.

11 For they intended mischief against thee: and imagined such a device as they are not able to perform. They intended mischief against Thee: when ”the Kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed:” when they led Him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, and would have cast Him down headlong: when they took up stones again to stone Him: when they took counsel against JESUS to put Him to death: finally, when Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. But we may take it in even a more comforting sense: that not against the Saints in their several generations,—that not against us now, does Satan intend mischief; but against the Saint of Saints, the Author and Finisher of our salvation. ”Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?” The Vulgate translates it, ”They declined their sins upon Thee:” that is, they said, as the heretics of old,—”Why doth He yet find fault, for who hath resisted His will?” Or as Adam in the garden, ”The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” The same wicked reasoning which we have heard far nearer our own days:

Can that offend great Nature’s GOD Which Nature’s self inspires? 12 Therefore shalt thou put them to flight: and the strings of thy bow shalt thou make ready against the face of them. Nothing can be more different than the Vulgate rendering of this verse: ”Therefore Thou shalt turn them back: in their remnants Thou shalt make ready Thy countenance.” It must be confessed that the commentators seem hardly able to make any sense out of that obscure translation. Thou shalt put them to flight, or as others take it, ”shall bow down their backs to receive the yoke.” The strings of Thy bow. Not like the certain man who drew a bow at a venture, and smote the King of Israel between the joints of his harness, but that unerring aim which cannot be turned aside, and cannot miss: If there be any sense in the other reading, it is this: that on the remnant, those who should turn to GOD out of the mass of the Jewish nation and should be saved, on them He should lift up the light of His Countenance; them He should prepare to receive His likeness here, and to be transfigured to His glory hereafter.

[Thou shalt turn them back from Thyself, to gaze instead on those mere earthly things which they prefer, Thou shalt make ready their countenance by suffering them to be so blinded with their thought of the mere temporal kingdom of Israel, that kingdom which was but the leavings of CHRIST, Who refused to be made a King, that they will become the ready instruments of the Passion. His leavings in another sense, as the mystery of salvation kept until the last time. Yet again, the Jews not only suffered once, but their distant posterity, the leavings of GOD’s vengeance, continued to feel His wrath. Origen sees here a promise of final restoration. The sinners are turned back for a time, that they may be corrected, but their countenance shall be prepared for that A. which remains, namely, to return to GOD. The true meaning of the Hebrew is, however, Thou shalt put them to flight,

but, even as they fly, Thine arrows shall not merely wound their backs, but meet them in their faces also.]

13 Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength : so will we sing, and praise thy power. For Thou art the Sun of Righteousness, Who knowest Thy time for rising as well as setting : Who when by Thy death on the Cross Thou madest darkness that it was night,—then all the beasts of the forest,—those evil spirits that sought the destruction of man,—went abroad : the young lions, Satan and his followers, strong as in renewed youth, roaring after their prey, sought their meat from GOD : that is, by tearing away His people from GOD's protection. These are the beasts of which Daniel wrote : "I saw in my vision by night, and behold the four winds of the heavens strove upon the great sea, and four great beasts came up from the sea." But now is the time, O Light, O Sun of our souls, to be exalted in Thine own strength, that these may get them away together, and lay them down in their dens. So will we sing and praise Thy power, the power exerted around us to protect us from our enemies,—the power exerted within us to guard us against ourselves. Gerhohus concludes his comment with some verses, which, though rude enough, are so beautiful that I quote them here :

[And the Carthusian bids us note the fulfilment of this prophecy in the fact that Christian hymnody and psalms begin immediately after the Ascension of CHRIST, and the descent of the Paraclete, never ceasing since throughout the ages.] And therefore : Glory be to the FATHER, Who preventeth the SON with the blessings of goodness ; and to the SON, on Whose Head a crown of pure gold is set ; and to the HOLY GHOST, the joy of the Countenance of GOD. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

Collects.
Prevent us, O LORD, with the blessings of sweetness, and fulfil our desires according to Thy will : that while we sing and praise Thy power, we may obtain a long life, even for ever and ever. Through (1.) Destroy the fruit of Thine enemies, O LORD, from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men, because they will not confess Thee, the one CHRIST, SON of GOD and Son of Man; to the end that Thy Cross, which is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, may direct both those peoples to the rule of faith, and may join them to Thee, to be crowned by Thine Hand for ever. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) O LORD, Who dost vouchsafe to prevent us with the blessings of goodness, prevent us also with the blessings of sweetness; and as Thou givest temporal existence to all mortals, so be Thou pleased to bestow on us eternal life. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.)

[Exalt us, O LORD, by the merits of strength, whereby we may devoutly sing and praise Thy power, grant us to attain everlasting felicity, and to be made glad for evermore with the joy of Thy countenance. Through (1.)]

Psalm 22

Having finished the first twenty Psalms, most of my fellow-commentators take the opportunity of reviewing what they have already done, and of asking wisdom and power to continue their work to the end. None more beautifully than Gerhohus, who, in his dedication here inserted to Everard, Archbishop of Salzburg, and Gotteschalk, Bishop of Frisingen, well expresses the feelings with which every one should approach such a task as that which I have taken in hand; that he may not by his own fault explain ill, or do injustice to, those words which have been daily, and daily will be to the end of time, the especial delight and comfort of the Church militant. TITLE. To the Chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar: a Psalm of David. In the Vulgate: To the end, for the morning undertaking: a Psalm of David. Most mediæval writers: To the end, for the morning hind: a Psalm of David.

Others: To the Supreme, in the midst of gloom. In this variety of translations, it is better simply to give the meaning proposed to each. The morning undertaking is explained of the capture of our LORD in the morning by the Jews; the commencement of that Passion of which the Psalm treats. To this explanation S. Ambrose and Cassiodorus refer. But the majority of the Fathers understood it of the Resurrection, as having taken place very early in the morning; and to the Resurrection the end of the Psalm certainly alludes. Those who translate, for the morning hind, naturally see in this hind the type of our LORD, hunted by His enemies, driven into the snares, and so slain. The mediæval catalogue of the characteristics of the hind naturally led the authors of that time to prefer this meaning. The last translation, if it may be allowed, explains itself. The Chaldee paraphrase, varying from all the others, interprets it, ”Concerning the powerful oblation of the perpetual morning:” which, at all events, affords a very beautiful mystical interpretation: the powerful oblation being the never-failing intercession of Him Who is indeed the everlasting Morning of His people.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST was pierced with nails, and that over His garments they cast lots. The Voice of CHRIST when He was suffering in His Passion. VEN. BEDE. Through this whole Psalm the LORD CHRIST speaketh. But in its opening,

He complaineth that He was forsaken by the FATHER; to the end, namely, that He might undertake His Passion, according to the dispensation of GOD; commending His most powerful humility, brought to pass by the rejection of men, My God, My God, look upon Me. Next, He prophesieth His Passion under divers types, beseeching that He may be delivered from His raging enemies: Many bulls are come about Me. Thirdly, He exhorteth Christians to praise the LORD, Who in His Resurrection looked upon the Catholic Church, lest if they heard of His Passion only, the hearts of men should tremble. EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. A prophecy of the Passion of CHRIST, and of the vocation of the Gentiles.

L. S. JEROME. The context of the whole Psalm sets forth CHRIST. It is worthy of notice, that Theodore of Mopsuestia was condemned in the fifth Œcumenical Council, and in the Provincial Synod of Rome under Vigilius, for asserting that this Psalm was to be understood of David only, and had no direct reference to our LORD: one of the few instances in which the Church has condemned or asserted a particular explanation of a particular text of Scripture. The most ancient explanations of the Jews themselves refer it to CHRIST: and Rabbi Solomon says that the Messiah in the midst of His sufferings would sing this Psalm aloud.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Prime: originally on Sunday, now on Friday. [Good Friday: I. Nocturn.] Parisian. Friday: Nones. [Good Friday: I. Nocturn.] Lyons. Friday: Sext. [Good Friday: I. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: II. Nocturn. Quignon. Friday: Matins: I. Nocturn. Benedictine. Sunday: Matins: I. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Good Friday: They parted My garments among them, and for My vesture did they cast lots. Parisian. Good Friday: They gaped upon Me with their mouths, as it were a ramping and a roaring lion: the council of the wicked layeth siege against Me. Mozarabic. My GOD, My GOD, look upon Me; why hast Thou forsaken Me? I My GOD, my GOD, look upon me; why hast thou forsaken me: and art so far from my health and from the words of my complaint?

There is a tradition that our LORD, hanging on the Cross, began—as we know from the Gospels—this Psalm: and repeating it and those that follow, gave up His most blessed Spirit when He came to the sixth verse of the 31st Psalm. However that may be, by taking these first words on His lips, He stamped the Psalm as belonging to Himself. We may notice that the words, Look upon Me, though in the Vulgate and in the Septuagint, are not in the Hebrew, and are not quoted by our LORD. Why hast Thou forsaken Me? Here we enter on one of the most difficult questions of Theology, how far, and in what sense, our LORD was forsaken by the FATHER; and how far, and in what sense, the Human Nature was forsaken by, or separated from, the WORD. The doctors of the Church have laboured to explain what is perhaps incomprehensible by the human understanding. S. Ambrose—and he is followed

by the Master of the Sentences—explains these words in a sense which, if taken literally, would lead on to the most dangerous errors: ”The Man CHRIST,” says he, ”thus exclaims when about to die by the separation of the Divinity. On the contrary, the whole Church agrees with the explanation of the Coptic Church, towards the end of the Liturgy, ”I believe, I believe, I believe and confess to the last breath of my life, that His Divinity was never separated from His Humanity, not even for one hour, or for the twinkling of an eye.

Others, as Venerable Bede, will have it that our LORD spoke these words to prove Himself true man, and to manifest that, as true man, He had all the natural revulsion of man from death; and that He complains of being forsaken thus far, that the Divinity did not exert itself to prevent the Humanity from dying. Others, again, in a very forced sense, and among these is Theophylact, suppose our LORD to have spoken in the person of the Jews as being Himself one of that nation: forsaken, indeed, by GOD as soon as they were guilty of the murder of the Only-begotten SON. The Master of the Sentences, again, proposes the explanation that our LORD merely spoke in a general way, as being so forsaken by the FATHER as to be delivered up into the hands of His enemies. But S. Jerome, and after him Dionysius the Carthusian, seems to give the truer meaning: that in the time of our LORD’s Passion there was no influx of consolation, either from His FATHER, nor on the part of the WORD, to the Human Nature of CHRIST. For, S. John i. 29.

as he says, CHRIST suffered, the WORD being quiescent; which WORD, however, was not idle, but was present to His suffering Human Nature, so consenting to the Passion, and hypostatically supporting that nature. Scribanius beautifully writes on this verse: ”Who could believe it, unless the LORD Himself said it? Who could believe that the Heavenly FATHER could forsake His SON, and so to speak, forsake Himself in His SON? that this could have been endured by that great love wherewith the FATHER loveth the SON? or that for our sakes the FATHER could have forgotten the SON, His only SON, GOD of GOD? So that He seems to have embraced us with greater love than His SON; us His sworn enemies, than the SON of the same Substance, and the same Divinity with Himself. What can we repay for this love? Nay, rather, the SON willed to be forsaken by the FATHER for our love: both that by this very forsakenness He might merit that the FATHER should never forsake us, and that He might make atonement for all the forsaking by which we, prone to every kind of wickedness, have left the FATHER, and have adhered to His most bitter enemy, the devil; have forsaken GOD our Maker, and enrolled ourselves among the ranks with the foe of our salvation; have forsaken the LORD that would reward us, and joined ourselves to him that would torment us body and soul for ever. And art so far from My health and from the words of My complaint.

Or, as it is in the Vulgate: Far off from My salvation are the words of My sins. Eusebius says very well: ”As John said, ’Behold the Lamb of GOD, Which taketh

away the sins of the world;' and Paul, 'He made Him to be sin for us;' and again, 'CHRIST hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.' Therefore in like manner as, though He was the fountain of righteousness, He took our sins upon Himself; and though He was the ocean of blessing, He endured the malediction pronounced upon us, and bare the Cross, despising the shame; so likewise for us He speaks here. For if He of His own accord endured the punishment destined to us, (for 'the chastisement of our peace was upon Him,' as the Prophet speaks,) much more doth He here speak in our person, and cry out, Far off from My salvation are the words of My sins. Look not, saith He, at the sins of man's nature, but give salvation on account of My sufferings. And Gerhohus speaks with equal beauty: "I, being a Man, owing nothing to death, yet obedient to Thee Who art My GOD, humbled Myself to death, even the death of the Cross. I, twice humbled,—firstly, by being born and living in the flesh; secondly, by dying in the flesh,—say twice, My God, My God, that Thou, in respect of two reasons, mayest look upon Me.

Once, that Thou mayest raise Me up in the morning from simple death, that is, of the flesh alone; secondly, that Thou mayest raise up My members from the death of their souls and bodies; first destroying the death of their souls by the death of My Body, then restoring the life of their bodies by My resurrection: so that, as soon as I shall have died on this Cross, and the water and the Blood flowing from My side shall exist as the material whence My Bride shall be formed, immediately the faithful souls, whether in this world or in Hades, may perceive that the door of life is opened to them. And as a proof of this very thing, the soul of the thief that confesses Me shall to-day be with Me in Paradise; and when I shall rise in the body, the First-begotten of the dead, the door of the resurrection of the dead shall be opened; in proof whereof, many bodies of the Saints shall rise with Me."

One thing more is to be observed. From these words Calvin and other heretics have drawn an argument that there was a moment when our LORD, hanging on the Cross, despaired. Whereas S. Chrysostom very well shows that these words, though words of agony, are also words of hope; and to this, he says, S. Paul might have referred, when he writes that our LORD made prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears to Him That was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared. 2 O my GOD, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not: and in the night-season also I take no rest.

Or, as it is in the Vulgate, And in the night, and not to My folly: that is, Though I seem not to be heard, yet am I not, therefore, unreasonable in making My supplication. Literally, I cry in the day-time, when He uttered those words on the Cross; and in the night-season also He took no rest, in the night of His Agony, in the night of His Betrayal, in the night when He was set before Annas and Caiaphas. But how could the Only-begotten SON cry, and the FATHER not hear? And they answer that

the prayer of CHRIST was twofold. The one kind proceeding from deliberate will and foreknowledge, and that was always heard; as He saith Himself, ”And I knew that Thou hearest Me always: the other proceeding from the affections and sensitive part of His human nature, and that was not always heard, as when He prayed that the chalice might pass from Him. The Master of the Sentences will have it that CHRIST is here speaking in the person of His Church, who is not always heard in the sense of her words, but is always heard in the sense of her meaning. And not to My folly. S. Augustine explains this by another example from Holy Scripture. ”Paul,” says he, ”prayed that the thorn in his flesh might be removed, and was not heard:

but it was said to him, ’My grace is sufficient for thee, that My strength may be perfect in weakness.’ Heard, therefore, he was not, but it was not to his folly, but to his wisdom: that man may understand that GOD is the great Physician, and that tribulation is His medicine to salvation, not His punishment to damnation. Under medical treatment thou art burnt, thou art cut, thou criest out; the physician hears not, so far as thy words are concerned, but he does hear so far as thy health is concerned. One cannot but wonder at the audacity of Tertullian, who, after laying down the general truth that CHRIST is always heard by the FATHER, proceeds to demonstrate it by this text amongst others, reading it thus: ”I cry in the day-time, and Thou hearest. S. Thomas Aquinas understands it to mean that CHRIST was heard for the predestinate, for whom He prayed with that deliberate will which is always granted; but not in the same sense for those who are not predestinate, though willing also, with a true and real will to save them, if they would have accepted of His salvation. Bellarmine has hit on a singular method of explanation: ”I cry in the day-time of life, that I may escape death, and Thou hearest not, because that cup may not pass from Me: I cry in the night-time of death, namely, that I may rise again, and that prayer is not to My folly, because Thou wilt hear it. S.

Gregory sums up the lesson of the text very well. ”Let no one, when he is not instantly heard, believe that he is neglected by the Divine care. For it often happens that our desires are heard on this very account, because they are not granted at once; and that which we wish to be fulfilled instantly, sometimes prospers the better for its very tardiness. Our cry is often granted by means of its being delayed; and when our petition seems on the surface neglected, it is fulfilled in the deep root of our thought; just as the grain is compressed and hardened by frost, and the longer it is in sprouting above the earth, the larger is the crop which it brings forth. The labour of the battle is protracted, that the crown of the victory may be enriched. The LORD, when He hears not His own at once, while He seems to repel them, attracts them. He cuts off the diseased flesh with the knife of tribulation, and by the very means of being deaf to the cries of the sick man, He is bringing about the end of the sickness. Hence it is that the prophet saith, I cry in the day-time, and Thou hearest not, and in the night-season, and it is not to my folly.”

3 And thou continuest holy: O thou worship of Israel. The Prophet teaches that whether GOD seems, or seems not, to hear, He is nevertheless always kind. Whether He hears not Saints when they cry to Him, like Paul, He is increasing their sanctity. Whether He hears the petition of the Devil, as in the case of Job, He is adding to Job's reward. O Thou worship of Israel. For Israel is by interpretation, "He that sees GOD." That is, the worship of those who see His love, as well in His apparent neglect, as in His manifested care. In the Vulgate it is, And Thou dwellest in the holy place. That is, chiefly and principally, in that holy temple which the Jews destroyed, but which after three days was to be raised again. And they draw a comparison between the first and the Second Adam. The first Adam, in the Paradiso of pleasure, in the cool of the day, being called by GOD, was silent: the Second Adam, on the Tree of Agony, in the heat of the conflict, being forsaken by GOD, was not silent, but praised Him. Eusebius also explains the Thou dwellest in the holy place, of the indwelling of the HOLY GHOST in the bodies of His servants. Justin Martyr, taking it as I just now did, of our LORD Himself, understands the appellation Israel of the same LORD, as if He said, "O Thou Whom I, beyond all others, worship, because I, beyond all others, know."

[O Thou worship of Israel. The A. V. is better, Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel, or, with modern critics, that art throned amidst Israel's songs of praise. Rabbi Ezra takes it of the Presence over the Ark of the Covenant. R. Kimchi, far better, as an appeal to Him Who is faithful and true, Whom Israel has so often before praised and blessed for His help in need, to hearken yet again to the same hymns and petitions.] 4 Our fathers hoped in thee: they trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them. 5 They called upon thee, and were holpen: they put their trust in thee, and were not confounded.

It is the consolation which the Church stores up for the dying beds of her children. "Deliver, O LORD, the soul of Thy servant, as Thou didst deliver Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees: as Thou didst deliver Enoch and Elijah from the common death of this world: as Thou didst deliver David out of the hand of Goliath; as Thou didst deliver the Three Children from the burning fiery furnace; as Thou didst deliver Susanna from a false accusation; as Thou didst deliver Thecla from the midst of her enemies." And it may well comfort the death-bed of the servant since—as here—it comforted the death-bed of the Master. Thou didst deliver them, but Thou wilt not deliver Me: nay rather, Thou didst deliver them because Thou wilt not deliver Me. And if others of them were tortured, not accepting deliverance, it was to this end, that they might obtain a better Resurrection: namely, Me Myself, Who am the Resurrection and the Life; and Who now thus suffer, that I may open the way to My own and to their Resurrection. In one sense, it has been most truly observed, this Psalm speaks more clearly of our LORD's human nature than do the Gospels themselves. In the latter, our LORD never speaks of our Fathers, but of the Fathers,

or your Fathers: here, as not being ashamed to call us brethren, and to testify to His true humanity, it is, ”Our Fathers.”

6 But as for me, I am a worm, and no man : a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people. I am a worm. The metaphor has opened the door to all the luxuriance of mediæval symbolism. The Hymn, Exite filiæ Sion. The festal purple of the LORD,—It is no garment stately : A vest, by very slaves abhorred, The worm hath tinged it lately ; ”I am a worm,”—of old said He ; And what its toils have tinged, ye see. De Operibus SS.Trinitatis in Exod. 16. Again, they see a type of our LORD in the worms which were generated by the manna. So S. Ambrose : so, even more boldly, Rupert of Deutz. And so, in another sense,—a sense dwelt on at such length by S. Gregory in his Morals : The humanity of our LORD was the bait which the spiritual Leviathan, Satan, swallowed, not seeing the hook of His Divinity. And so Hildebert of Tours, in one of his epigrams, says :

Fisher the FATHER is : the world the sea, His flesh the bait, the hook His Deity : The line His Resurrection. Satan took The proffered bait, and perished by the hook. And still in another sense they apply that verse of Habakkuk, ”The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the worm out of the timber shall answer it :” the stone out of the wall, being the Church ; the worm in the timber, CHRIST the LORD : so S. Jerome. Some Commentators have abused this passage, as well as the text in Isaiah, ”He hath no form nor comeliness,” to prove that our LORD’s human Body was destitute of all beauty : and accordingly, some mediæval paintings so represent Him. But the almost unanimous voice of the Church declares that the other text, ”Thou art fairer than the children of men,” is to be taken literally : and the earliest representations of our LORD, (showing, at all events, a very strong tradition,) and the letter of Lentulus (let whatever weight be attached to it,) speak to the same point. A very scorn of men. ”See,” exclaims Dionysius the Carthusian, ”see what was His contempt ; see what the LORD of Glory bore, that His confusion, so painful to Himself, should become our glory and celestial beatitude. For was He not the reproach of the people, when the Jews said to Pilate, ’Write not the King of the Jews, but that He said, I am the King of the Jews?’ Behold, O Christian, and consider in a faithful heart what CHRIST the King of Glory endured for thee ! Unceasingly impress this thought on thy soul, as CHRIST Himself exhorts thee in the Canticles, ’Set Me as a seal upon Chant. viii. 6. thine heart.’”

7 All they that see me, laugh me to scorn : they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying, 8 He trusted in God, that he would deliver him : let him deliver him, if he will have him. It is marvellous that, with this Scripture before them, the Jews could use the very same words which the Psalmist had put into their mouths: an infatuation unparalleled, unless it be by those in the present day, who railing, if not against CHRIST, at least against one of the greatest gifts of CHRIST, use the very words of His enemies, rebuked and disproved by Himself, ”Who can forgive sins

but God only?" But from the fact that the Jews did, in their blindness, thus fulfil this prophecy, the Doctors of the Church gather, that no prophecy will be intelligible till the fact to which it refers is become matter of history: that the Church will never be able to say, Now, at this moment, such a prediction is being fulfilled. In fact that, in this sense also, "the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation." All they that see Me, for so it has always been, with the reproach of the Cross: so, from the time of S. Paul till now, the question has been asked: "If I preach Circumcision"—or whatever for the time being may be the fashionable doctrine of the world—"why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the Cross ceased."

He trusted in God. He did indeed. "I knew that Thou hearest Me always:" "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My FATHER, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?" "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" But these new Chaldeans could find no fault against this true Daniel, unless they found it concerning the law of His God. Let Him deliver Him, if He will have Him. And so from that time to this, have persecutors defied the Saints of God, or rather, the God of Saints: not knowing that a time will come when He will deliver them out of the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, will have them in His own country, and His own city, in His own Presence; will have them, as it is written; "My FATHER Which gave them Me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of My FATHER's Hand:" will have them so that the prophecy shall be fulfilled, "Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours."

9 But thou art he that took me out of my mother's womb: thou wast my hope when I hanged yet upon my mother's breasts. A. 10 I have been left unto thee ever since I was born : thou art my God, even from my mother's womb. Ay. A. Epist. 120, cap. 12. L.

There is a noble passage in Eusebius, in which he shows the connection between our LORD's Incarnation and His Passion : that He might well comfort Himself while hanging on the Cross by the remembrance that the very same body then "marred more than any man, and His Form more than the sons of men," was that which had been glorified by the FATHER with such singular honour, when the HOLY GHOST came upon Mary, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her : that this Body, therefore, though now so torn and so mangled, as it had once been the wonder, so it would for ever be the joy, of the Angels ; and having put on immortality, would be the support of His faithful people to the end of time. So also, though at less length, S. Augustine. I have been left unto Thee. S. Cyprian beautifully represents S. Mary as offering our LORD, so to speak, on the Altar of the Manger, (when, as it is written, She brought forth her first-born Son, and laid Him in the manger,) both to the FATHER and to men : to men, to work their will upon,—to reject, scourge,

crown with thorns, and crucify : to the FATHER, to guard, console, and finally to make Him more than Conqueror. And the Doctors of the Church find in these verses an argument both for the hypostatical union of the WORD with the flesh, and also for the perpetual virginity of S. Mary. But Thou. The Vulgate has, Because Thou :

which they explain to be our LORD's taking up, so to speak, the words of the Jews, "He trusted in GOD," as if He said, "It is so, and it is meet and right that it should be so, because," &c. With reference to this passage, the Fathers dispute at great length, and more especially Origen, S. Epiphanius, S. Chrysostom, and S. Ambrose, as to the manner of CHRIST's birth : which, however, cannot be better expressed than in those words of S. Proclus : "Emmanuel opened the gates of nature as man, but burst not the bars of Virginity as GOD. So was He born as He was conceived : without human passion He entered, without human corruption He came forth. Thou art my God : or, as it is in the Vulgate, My Hope : which can only be understood in an inferior and limited sense, and according to our LORD's Manhood.

11 O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand : and there is none to help me. Trouble is hard at hand : that is, the last and secret part of My Passion, My departure out of this world. And there is none to help me. But why ? Because for the exceeding great love He had to us, He refused their help. To Peter it was, "Put up again thy sword into its place." Of the angels ready to come to His assistance, He said, "How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Or, if we put these words into the mouth of the sinner: "I have been left unto Thee ever since I was born," namely, born again in Baptism, "Thou art My God, even from my mother's womb,"—that spiritual womb of the Church, namely, the Font. O go not from me. "While," says Dionysius, "thou sayest or hearest this, O sinner, lament in the bitterness of thine heart that thou hast lost thy robe of innocence, that thou hast returned from the laver of Baptism to thy wallowing in the mire; and pray that at last God would not go far from thee, though thou hast gone so far from Him; that thy FATHER would bring forth for thee, His prodigal son, the first robe, and put it on thee." Trouble is hard at hand. While we are beset with such enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, there cannot be a moment in which we may not so speak. And if, for a while it seems as though there were none to help, we have but to call to mind Him Who thus speaks here, and Who says in another place, "I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore Mine own arm brought salvation unto Me."

12 Many oxen are come about me: fat bulls of Basan close me in on every side. 13 They gape upon me with their mouths: as it were a ramping and roaring lion. Here the Champion of the human race, like one of His own martyrs in after years, is brought out on to the arena of His sufferings. They understand the fat bulls, of Satan and his hosts: the lions, in the next verse, of his ministers, the Jews, and the Roman soldiers, with their exclamations of "Crucify Him! Crucify Him! If thou

let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: we have no king but Cæsar." 14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart also in the midst of my body is even like melting wax. I am poured out like water. For water cleanses, and it is written, "In that day,"—namely, on that first Good Friday, —"there shall be a Fountain opened,"—as it was on the Cross—"to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." I am poured out like water. For water fructifies; and this is that river of which it is written, that it went out of Eden to water the garden, the whole garden of CHRIST'S Church. And in this sense also we may understand that prophecy, "There," namely upon the Cross, "the glorious LORD will be unto me a place

O A. S. John xix. 34. of broad rivers and streams. Where He names them twice, rivers and streams, as if to signify their double virtue of cleansing and fructifying. I am poured out like water. So it was in the garden, when His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. So it was in the Prætorium, when the ploughers ploughed upon His back and made long furrows. So it was on the Cross, when the soldier with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water. Wherefore, as the mediæval hymn says: The Hymn, Cænam cum discipulis. Wherefore, sinner, haste to this Fountain of salvation: Life thou mayest draw therefrom, and illumination: Cure thou mayest find for sin,—strength to meet temptation; Refuge mayest thou gain against Satan's condemnation. Rupert. 2 Sam. xiv. 14. L. Serm. xv. in Cant. Or we may take it in another sense,—that of the wise woman of Tekoa: "I am poured out like water: that is, in the thought of my enemies I am utterly destroyed. "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. "What marvel," asks S. Bernard, "that the name of the Bridegroom should be as ointment poured forth, when He Himself, for the greatness of His love, was poured forth like water.

And in responding to that love, they warn us not to be like David, who, when the three mighties brought him the water of the well of Bethlehem, which was by the gate, poured it out upon the ground, figuring thereby the wickedness of the Jews, who accounted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith they were sprinkled, as an unclean thing: but rather, if we are not privileged to resist "unto blood, striving against sin," at all events to say with Jeremiah, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people: Slain, by their malice, but slain to be our Atonement. And all my bones are out of joint. Besides the literal sense of the tension and dislocation of our LORD's members, when hanging on the Cross, they interpret it of the flight and dispersion of the Apostles, who may truly be called the bones or chief supports of our LORD's Body, the Church. In the literal meaning, these words have given rise to some of those long and patient disquisitions which have inquired into the component parts of the Cross, and the nature of our LORD's suffering there. The Eastern Church, as well as some particular Doctors of the West, has always

held that, besides the Cross and the nails, our LORD was supported by a smaller transverse bar beneath His Feet;

and that in the convulsion of death, this became slightly displaced, so as to present the form which surmounts all Oriental churches. A. Epist. 120, cap. 14. See Ignatius of Veronej. A. My heart also in the midst of My Body. And here, again, passing by our LORD's own sufferings, they find a beautiful mystical interpretation. The Body is Holy Scripture: the heart signifies all things in Moses and the Prophets concerning Himself. And as wax, when melting, burns and gives light, so by the LORD's Passion the obscurities of Holy Scripture were lighted up, and henceforth illuminated the Church. "And if thus," says S. Bernard, "the heart of the Bridegroom was melted with the love of the Bride, what ought to be the earnestness of her affection—what the fervour of her gratitude to Him? If such be the cry of His sufferings, speaking better things than that of Abel, how ought she to cry to Him that she may not be deserted in her own passions,—that she may be so counted worthy to abide with Him on the Cross, that hereafter she may merit to claim the crown. Is even like melting wax. Justin Martyr understands it of the Bloody Sweat by which our LORD was bedewed as with water: Eusebius, of the water and the blood that followed the Centurion's spear: while S. Thomas refers more generally to the saying of the wise woman, "We must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again."

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums: and thou shalt bring me into the dust of death. S. Gregory, after S. Jerome and S. Augustine, understands the verse singularly enough. "As," says he, "clay, when exposed to the fire, is at first soft and yielding, but by the heat of the furnace becomes hard and imperishable; so our LORD's human nature, from His birth,—in that He was very man,—subject to corruption, became, by the virtue of His Passion, incorruptible and impassible." Gerhohus finds a similitude between our LORD in His Passion and Job, when in the misery of his sickness, he took a potsherd to scrape himself withal. "The furnace," says the wise man, "proveth the potter's vessel; so is the trial of man." "In the lantern made of this potsherd," says S. Gregory, "is it that the Church lights her candle, and cleansing her house, seeks diligently for her lost children." My tongue cleaveth to My gums: on account of His thirst on the Cross, says S. Athanasius. That tongue might well be silent, cries Didymus, when all the hearers had forsaken their Master and fled. But let us rather take it of that silence at the Judgment-seat, at which Pilate marvelled greatly; that silence so long ago foretold by the Prophet, when, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so this Immaculate Lamb opened not His mouth. And so the follower of CHRIST must, though for a very different reason, imitate his LORD. "My tongue cleaveth to my mouth," because from the barrenness of my soul and my lack of grace, I have not a single word of consolation or doctrine, by which I may profit others. Wherefore

the LORD saith to Ezekiel, ”I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shall not be to them

S. Bernard. in Cant. 1. Hom. 22, in Evang. a reproval.” O that He would rather cause me to say with Isaiah, ”The LORD GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary!” And Thou shalt bring me into the dust of death. It is surprising how, not content with the plain meaning of our LORD’s words, the same as in that other Psalm, ”I am counted as one of them who go down into the pit,” they introduce so much besides of the circumstances of our LORD’s Passion. ”Not death,” says Cassiodorus, ”but the dust of death,—that is, the outward appearance of it, because His soul was not left in hell, neither did His flesh see corruption.” The dust of death: ”that is,” says S. Thomas, ”the vilest and most disgraceful death.” The dust of death: ”that is,” explains Cajetan, ”the multitude of the Jews, the seed of Abraham, made like the dust of the earth, and clamouring for His death.” The dust of death. ”He knoweth whereof we are made; He remembereth that we are but dust.” And this dust also He will remember on the third day; will remember the many promises of the Old Testament,—”Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell,”—”After three days He will revive us,” and the like: will remember the many types, Abraham lifting up his eyes on the third day, and seeing the place of his deliverance; Jonah, three days and three nights in the whale’s belly. Shalt bring me into the dust of death, but shalt bring me forth again and exalt me to the Right Hand of the FATHER for ever and ever.

16 For many dogs are come about me: and the council of the wicked layeth siege against me. Not very long ago, we found these same enemies likened to bees: ”they came about me like bees:” bees that make honey, indeed, but not for themselves. Now, they are compared to dogs,—dogs who keep watch, indeed, but not for themselves. Just as the Jews kept strict watch over the prophecies, that every tittle of them should be fulfilled; when unconscious of what they were doing, they uttered the very words as they surrounded the Cross, which the SPIRIT of GOD so many centuries before had put into their mouths. For this Hind,—not as yet, according to the title of the Psalm, the morning Hind, but rather the evening Hind, worn out and exhausted by the fatigues of the day, was now surrounded by these dogs. ”The hart desireth the water-brooks,” and so this Hart said, ”I thirst.” Long before, He was weary when He sat by the well, and said, ”Give Me to drink:” now, He was weary, even to death, but still athirst for that well of water which should spring up to everlasting life. ”It is not meet to take the children’s bread and to cast it to the dogs.” And so our LORD,— became, as S. Peter Chrysologus well says, ”A stone to them instead of bread: a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.” The council of the wicked layeth siege against me. Literally so, when in the morning the Chief Priests gathered a council together against JESUS. But another Council had been gathered before that,—those evil spirits who had in their infernal conclave resolved

on His death, not knowing that His death was their own destruction. The wicked: with an emphasis beyond all others; in like manner as we daily pray, Deliver us from the evil.

17 They pierced my hands and my feet, I may tell all my bones: they stand staring and looking upon me. They pierced: the Latin is, they dug. And there seems a peculiar propriety in this word when spoken of the true Vine: ”I am the True Vine, and My FATHER is the Husbandman.” That FATHER Who first surrendered the well-beloved Son to death, or else His enemies would have had no power to hurt Him. Of that Body thus tilled, the LORD might well say, ”I gave a sweet smell like cinnamon, and as the fume of frankincense in the tabernacle: as the vine brought I forth pleasant savour, and my flowers are the fruit of honour and riches.” Of honour, when to the thief dying in misery and shame there budded forth from those branches the promise, ”To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” Of riches, when to every human soul, wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, that glorious declaration was made once for all, ”It is finished.” And why does He only mention His Hands and His Feet, and not His Side? Because, says one, He suffered to leave us an example of patience. And patience is not exercised in a dead, but only in a living body. My Hands and My Feet. And this double wound was long ago, say the Doctors of the Church, prefigured by Moses when he smote the rock twice. Whence the verses:

Bis silicem virgâ Dux percutit atque Propheta: Ictio bina ducis sunt duo ligna crucis. Fons est de petrâ populo datus absque metretâ; Larga salus homini corpore de Domini. Or Moses may stand as a type of the FATHER Himself, by Whose permission it was that the Son thus suffered. ”And the rivers of the flood,” that flowed from that double stroke, ”make glad the city of GOD,” that city which has its double wall of Jews and Gentiles. For before the Hands, and Feet, and Side of CHRIST were opened, He was as it were ”a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.” This was the book sealed with seven seals, which no man nor angel was found worthy to open till thus opened by the spear: this is the Rock, the saJudges i. 15. lutary streams of which still follow the LORD’s people, though divided into seven rivers in the wilderness of this world, the seven graces of the HOLY GHOST. But as it has well been said, not only did those wicked soldiers pierce the LORD’s Hands and Feet; but at this time His own valiant soldiers do the same thing, when they seek to investigate His actions and His goings forth. Whence one of the most valiant of them, by name Peter, says, ”CHRIST also suffered for us, leaving an example that ye should follow His steps.” They pierce them still, when they endeavour to draw forth the graces which flow thence: when like Achsah, the daughter of Caleb, they ask for the nether springs and the upper springs: the nether springs of sorrow for sin; the upper springs of tears of longing for the celestial country. This is to pierce His Heart: when we utter those ejaculations, By Thy Nativity, Good LORD, deliver

us: By Thy Fasting and Temptation, by Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat, Good LORD, deliver us.

This clause has given occasion to the commentators to discuss all those questions connected with our LORD's Crucifixion, which it has been the comfort and delight of those who investigated His Passion to dwell upon. Thus, that He was indeed nailed, and not merely tied to the Cross, as some heretics have taught. For though it be true that the Jewish custom was to fasten the malefactor with ropes, and not with nails, yet our LORD was tried and condemned after the manner of the Romans and not of the Jews. Catholic painters have usually represented the thieves as tied; but this is also contrary to the fact that, in the invention of the Cross, no difference was to be discovered between the three in this respect. Again: by what law it was that our LORD suffered, when the punishment of blasphemy of which He was accused, was stoning, and not crucifixion. But here again, Pilate proceeded on the incidental charge of sedition: "Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar: and for this, by the Roman law, the Cross was the punishment.—Another, and that a more difficult question is: whether our LORD was first nailed to the Cross, while it lay on the ground, and then together with it erected: or whether it were first set up, and our SAVIOUR then fastened to it. The former method has been usually received by the Church: and is more especially defended by S. Jerome and S. Anselm.

The latter receives a certain degree of confirmation from the mystical text, "I will go up to the Palm tree: is expressly maintained by S. Hilary, by S. Gregory Nazianzen, and S. Bonaventura; and it is clearly proved by Lipsius, that this was the more ordinary Roman use. The point can never be certainly settled: though Gretser's authority, who is in favour of the common opinion, ought to carry great weight; and as S. Bonaventura observes, it is easier and more convenient for pious meditation to imagine that it was so. I put the revelation of S. Bridget, which represents the Cross as first erected, out of the question: because Catholic doctors are all agreed that, however beautiful and edifying such revelations are, they are not to be adduced in support of, or against, any historical fact: the so-called revelations of different Saints sometimes contradicting each other. Another question is, whether our LORD's Hands or Feet were first nailed to the Cross: the Roman use was, to begin with the hands. Again, another question which has been much debated, is,—whether three or four nails were employed. The weight of evidence is in favour of three: though more than one learned book has been written in defence of the other opinion. It is a very ancient tradition that the nail which fastened our LORD's Feet was driven in with thirty-six strokes of the hammer.

Though we are not immediately concerned with another question on the words of the text, it may be well to observe, that the title is usually held to have been also nailed on to the Cross, and that the Cross itself was pierced with the holes

intended afterwards to receive the nails, before the Crucifixion of the malefactor. We have already observed that the Wound in our LORD's Side is not here mentioned: nevertheless, let it be remembered, that all but universal tradition represents it as inflicted on the right side. And these are some few of the many considerations which holy men have presented to us from: They pierced My Hands and My Feet.

I may tell all My bones. For, as the First Adam by his fall, lost the robe of innocence, and thenceforth needed other garments, so the Second Adam vouchsafed to be stripped of His earthly vestments, to the end it might hereafter be said to us, "Bring forth the first robe, and put it on him." They counted all My bones, it is in the Vulgate: in which there seems a particular emphasis, as if to signify that not one of all those bones was broken: as set forth so long before by the Paschal Lamb, and foretold in another place by David: "He keepeth all His bones, so that not one of them is broken." Origen relates that it was the custom among the Romans to strike the malefactors under the arm-pits, in order, by the more violent dislocation of the shoulders, to hasten death: a cruel mercy, which was denied to the greatest criminals:—that Pilate, in compliance with the express request of the Jews, forbad such a procedure in our LORD's case; Who, in order to show that He had power to lay down His life, as well as to take it again, was notwithstanding pleased that His most blessed soul should depart from the body long before the usual time. The Chaldaic version reads, They beheld and despised Me: and S. Matthew expressly relates that, "Sitting down, they watched Him there:" watched Him, no doubt, for the purpose of reviling and insulting: but watched Him also, lest, as He had so often miraculously escaped from their power, He might do so once more, even from the

Ps. xxxiv. 20. Tract. 35 in S. Matt.

Cross. I cannot better conclude this verse, than with the beautiful words of Dionysius the Carthusian. "Thus speaks Jeremiah: 'O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest Thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night.' O how notable and beautiful are these words of blessed Jeremiah! For in them it is most clearly manifested that CHRIST is true GOD and Man. For that He speaks of GOD, Who by His Incarnation came into the world as a poor wayfaring man, that which goes before clearly proves. 'O the Hope of Israel, the SAVIOUR thereof in time of tribulation!' As a wayfaring man. For CHRIST testifieth of Himself, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.' And the blessed Apostle, speaking concerning CHRIST, 'For our sakes,' says he, 'He was made poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.' Let us then, brethren, impress firmly on our hearts the image of JESUS Crucified: let us fix all His Passions indelibly in our minds, so that we may each be able to say with the Apostle: 'I am crucified with CHRIST; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me.' There is no more efficacious method of conquering all temptations—there is

no more compendious way of gaining all virtues—than perpetually to contemplate, affectionately to consider, diligently to wait upon, CHRIST hanging on the Cross. For how can anything carnal delight him who ceaseth not to meditate on the most bitter pains of CHRIST That suffered for him? And how can he fail to love GOD, or to be thankful to CHRIST, who remembers that for his sins' sake the FATHER spared not His own SON; that for his sake the SON was obedient to the FATHER, even unto death?"

[And as the sufferings of the Head were continued in the sorrows of His mystical Body, they take occasion to remind us how the Apostles, His feet, beautiful upon the mountains, carrying Him into many lands as they preached the gospel of peace, were pierced: Peter, Andrew, and Philip, like Himself, with the nails of the Cross, Thomas with a spear, and all of them with one pang or another of martyrdom. They numbered all My bones (Vulg.) when they made out lists of Christians in every city of the Empire, that they might drag before the tribunals them who were "members of His flesh and His bones."] 18 They part my garments among them: and cast lots upon my vesture.

And what those soldiers did then, the enemies of our LORD do still. Instead of dividing His garments, they divide the Scriptures: as when the Manicheans receive the New Testament and reject the Old; or the Jews receive the Old, and reject the New. Nay, worse than the quaternion who stood by the Cross, and who at least said of the seamless robe, "Let us not rend it: heretics and schismatics now tear that undivided garment of CHRIST which is the Church. And it has been ingeniously observed, that each of the Evangelists speaks of our LORD's vestment in different terms, and in those precise ones which represent the character of his own Gospel. S. Matthew says, "They put on Him a scarlet robe. Scarlet is the colour of love: that love which led our LORD from heaven to earth by the long ladder of generation which S. Matthew gives in his first chapter. S. Mark writes, "They clothed Him with purple. Purple is the royal colour: and the regal character of CHRIST is that which this Evangelist principally keeps in view; as the lion, his symbol, is king among the beasts. S. Luke says, "They arrayed Him in a white robe: white is the sacerdotal colour; and S. Luke principally sets before us our LORD's priestly character; whence also he is signified by the ox, the creature appointed for sacrifice. S. John once more speaks of purple: as he also tells of our LORD's heavenly kingdom, as the eagle is king among the birds.

It is worth while to observe, that this verse shows the minuteness of meaning which the Psalms possess. Did we not see by the fulfilment that each clause has its own separate signification, we should be apt to imagine that the two were merely a poetical parallelism to signify one and the same thing. The story is well known, that when Arius, afterwards the celebrated heresiarch, had been separated from the Church for some fault, and was refused readmission—it then seemed harshly—

by Peter, the Patriarch of Alexandria, he assigned as his reason for the severity, that he had beheld our LORD, seated in majesty, but with His garment torn; and on inquiring, ”LORD, who hath thus rent Thy robe? he received for answer, ”Arius. The text is quoted by S. Matthew: though in some MSS. that verse is omitted. S. Peter Chrysologus well compares this casting of lots with that, in consequence of which the LORD’s great type, Jonah, was cast into the sea. There is a strange tale regarding the seamless coat, that it afterwards was purchased by Pilate; and that, in process of time, when tried before the Emperor Tiberius for malpractices, he twice appeared in it, and was acquitted: and the third time, appearing without it, was condemned. Parez says very prettily, that this tunic fell to the lot of a Gentile soldier, to show that the faith of CHRIST was henceforth to belong to the Gentile world. S.

Bernard says, that, as Adam lost the four garments of mercy, truth, justice, and peace, so our LORD atoned for that loss by His own loss: but that the seamless vest represented that image of GOD which was not destroyed even by the fall, but still remains implanted in, and impressed on human nature, even unregenerate. The word My,—My garments, My ves-

”Non facile credo,” says Loand the writer would say the rinus, referring to the tradition, same thing. Serm. i. in Annunt. ture,—was once prominently brought forward in that long and weary theological discussion on the poverty of CHRIST, when, from the disputes among the Franciscans, the question was agitated, whether our LORD had anything that He could call His own. His garments having been thus parted, the question has been discussed, even from the time of Justin Martyr, what robes our LORD wore, after His resurrection. The general opinion is, that they were then created. 19 But be not thou far from me, O LORD : thou art my succour, haste thee to help me. The force is on the word me : for we now come to speak of the Resurrection. That resurrection which, in all the followers of CHRIST, was to be deferred for so long and uncertain a time; but in Him was to be brought to pass on the third day. Haste Thee to help Me; and the prayer was indeed accomplished : for the three days and three nights were so shortened, as scarcely to embrace half the time that the words usually signify. Assume, as the tradition of the Church teaches, that our LORD rose about one on the morning of the Sunday, He lay in the grave but thirty-four hours. And notice this : His prayer on the Cross, Haste Thee to help Me, has been His Church’s daily and hourly prayer from then till now. O GOD, make speed to save us : O LORD, make haste to help us.

The Hymn, Cedant justi signa luctus. In humilitate Dei 20 Deliver my soul from the sword : my darling from the power of the dog. 21 Save me from the lion’s mouth : thou hast heard me also from among the horns of the unicorns. L. A. He prays for the Head and the Body : the Head,—Himself,—My Soul : the Church, My darling. And how truly He calls her by that name, unicam meam, My only one, as it is in

the Vulgate, let the whole Book of Canticles speak. ”There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled, is but one.” One : for although, as S. Cyprian well says, she may be multiplied in her branches, she remains one in her stem : though she may be diversified in her rays, she continues one in her light. And notice how here, as so often, that old argument is repeated : from past mercies to future deliverance : Save me from the lion’s mouth, because Thou hast heard me from among the unicorns. And from the less to the greater danger. It is GOD’s way of leading on His people. First, to run with the footmen: then to contend with the chariots. Notice also, that the same animals are made the types both of our LORD and of His great adversary. There is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, as well as the lion that walketh about seeking whom he may devour: there is the unicorn, like whom each Christian is to be exalted, as well as the unicorn from whose horn we are to be delivered. Save me from the lion’s mouth.

”O my GOD!” exclaims the Eastern Church; ”O WORD of GOD! O my only joy! How can I endure to see Thee given up to those lions of the Jews, to the perverse and crooked nation, to the impure stream, out of a most holy source! How can I endure, O Martyr of martyrs, to behold Thee rent to pieces by their bloodthirsty jaws; Thee, Who didst choose them for Thy peculiar people, set at nought and reviled by them beyond all malefactors!” Others will take the unicorn more especially to mean the Jews; because its one horn signifies the one law given by Moses, its glory and its pride. Triodion for the Great Sabbath. S. Bruno of Aste. 22 I will declare thy Name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

I will declare Thy Name: as He did to S. Mary Magdalene in the garden of Joseph, to S. James, and again to S. Peter, we know not where: to S. Luke and S. Cleophas, as they went to Emmaus: to the ten, as they were gathered in the large upper room: and finally, most gloriously of all, to S. Thomas. And notice the force in the brethren. They had denied Him, they had fled from Him, they had disbelieved His resurrection, but they were His brethren still. In the midst of the Church. This is one of the passages that S. Augustine pursues with irresistible force against the Donatists: according to whom, the words of David ought to have been, ”in a corner of the Church:” as if the Bride of the LORD was to be found in a few provinces of Africa alone, instead of having dominion from sea to sea, and from the flood unto the world’s end. Dionysius, according to his custom, applies that which is said of CHRIST to the followers of CHRIST. In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee. I will not, says he, be ashamed of Thy Name before men, lest Thou shouldest be ashamed of me before Thy FATHER Which is in heaven. Some declare GOD’s Name with their lips, but not in their deeds, because they do not that which they teach, and by the very fact of their thus teaching, they are guilty of mortal sin, because, as far as in them lies, they make void the intention of Holy Scripture, and of its Author, the HOLY GHOST. Others teach by their good life and good reputation

only, as monks: and those do well and sufficiently, provided they are not bound to preach

A. with their lips: for if they are, then comes in that saying of Isaiah, ”They are dumb dogs, they cannot bark.” And others teach, both by word and by action: of whom God saith to Daniel, ”They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.” In the midst of the Church. Here we still have the Tree of Life in the midst of the garden,—teaching them now by His Words, as before He taught by His sufferings: the Tree of Life on either side of the river, the river of death; healing the nations on this side the river by His life-giving Wounds; on the further and immortal side of the stream, by His life-giving words. 23 O praise the LORD, ye that fear him: magnify him, all ye of the seed of Jacob, and fear him, all ye seed of Israel. R. Ay. S. Bruno of Aste.

He speaks of the Church as a whole, in the first place; of the Church in its two great component parts, in the second. All ye that fear Him, whether Jews or Gentiles; the seed of Jacob, the Church of the Circumcision; the seed of Israel, the Church of the Gentiles. Or we may take it in a more glorious sense; the seed of Jacob; the Church militant: for Jacob is by interpretation, ”a supplanter;” and her children have to supplant the world, the flesh, and the devil. But Israel is by interpretation, ”He that sees God:” and thus the happy estate of the Beatific Vision is expressed. Or we may take both Jacob and Israel to set forth our LORD Himself: the one in His suffering, the other in His glorified life. Fear Him. And here, again, the older Commentators are full of denunciation of that servile fear which the laxity of later ages has considered sufficient, when joined with absolution, for the sinner’s justification. ”Not,” says Ludolph, ”with servile fear, lest they should be punished: but with the chaste fear of sons;—that they may not be forsaken.”

24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the low estate of the poor: he hath not hid his face from him, but when he called unto him, he heard him. Not even when He was hanging on the Cross, so poor that His last earthly possessions—His garments—had been taken from Him; so poor that He was soon about to be beholden to the charity of Joseph of Arimathea for a place of burial. And notice how, though at the beginning of the Psalm He had complained that the poor was forgotten and despised, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? now, He seems to correct Himself, and to confess that that forgetfulness was only in appearance—only for a little moment. And what the LORD here says, is but what is said over and over again by the HOLY GHOST. ”The prayer of the humble pierceth the clouds; until it come nigh, he will not be comforted.” ”The poor crieth, and the LORD heareth him.” ”The LORD heareth the poor.” The low estate, or, as it is in the Vulgate, the prayer; and the same Hebrew word may signify both, and that very rightly; as if we were never so likely to be heard, as when in a low estate. It is a singular sense, in which S. Albertus explains that verse in Tobit, ”Turn not away thy face from the

poor man, and then the face of the LORD will not be turned from thee,"—that, if we would be heard by the FATHER, we must keep our eyes steadfastly fixed on That Poor Man, Who hung upon the Cross for our sakes.

25 My praise is of thee in the great congregation: my vows will I perform in the sight of them that fear him.

Where observe that, though after His resurrection the number of the names together was only a hundred and twenty, yet even already he speaks of the Great Congregation. My praise, and yet it shall be of Thee: hereby marvellously illustrating His own words, "I and the FATHER are one. My vows. The promise made before the world was, that He would be incarnate for the sake of man: that He would not only take our nature upon Himself, but would die in it; and on the Cross, in the sight of them that feared Him, that little band amidst the multitude of revilers and blasphemers, those vows were accomplished. Here they take occasion to argue whether our LORD took upon Himself the three vows of the religious life. About poverty and chastity, there is no question: the only discussion arises on the point, whether He took the vow of obedience. And S. Thomas teaches that He did not: because the vow of obedience, properly speaking, has for its object a human creature: whereas our LORD neither owed nor could pay obedience to such an one. Others, again, urging that He was subject to His parents, and obedient to the law, affirm that He also took this vow. And notice the plural vows: the full meaning of which we do not reach till the next verse. And to that S. Augustine more especially refers it. "What are his vows? The sacrifice which he offered to GOD. Do you know what sacrifice?

The faithful know what are His vows in the sight of them that fear Him. Wherein He plainly hints at the Blessed Eucharist, though in such a manner as not to explain it to the catechumens. And Ludolph does not forget to remind us that what He did we must do likewise. "Better," says the Wise Man, "is it not to vow, than to vow, and not to pay. But the baptismal vows by which all are bound, must be not only in the sight of them that fear Him, but in the sight of, and notwithstanding, them that fear Him not: as it is written, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, Him also shall the Son of Man confess before the Angels of GOD."

A. A. 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied : they that seek after the LORD shall praise him; your heart shall live for ever.

And here we have the final and most glorious way in which these vows were performed: for none ever commented on this verse without referring it to the Holy Eucharist. Where notice, it is not the rich, but the poor, that shall so eat as to be satisfied. "He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away. Shall be satisfied, partly and imperfectly here, for there is but one full satisfaction; and that not with our LORD under the form of bread and wine. But,—

”When I awake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it. And therefore it well follows: They that seek after the Lord shall praise Him. They that seek after the LORD here, feeling after Him, as it were, in this Sacrament, shall praise Him: not interruptedly—not brokenly, as here,—but with the full power of their heart, and of their love, where it is written that ”His servants shall serve Him. Your heart. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, Their heart. He Who is indeed the Heart of His people, dearer to them than life itself, shall indeed live for ever when He has once burst the bars of death. And then, as it is written, ”Because I live, ye shall live also. And again: if we take the words in their more natural sense, there is no doubt a reference to the connection between the reception of the Blessed Eucharist and the Resurrection.

Hence, the Second Council of Nicæa calls that Sacrament the symbol of the Resurrection: S. Ignatius, the remedy of immortality. And Irenæus argues at length, against those who denied the Resurrection, that the body nourished by our LORD’s Flesh and Blood, cannot finally perish. Hence, holy men have discussed at great length the method in which the Holy Eucharist can be said to be the cause of the Resurrection, when it is certain that they who have never received it will equally rise. One pious opinion is, that for them who have received it worthily, it will occasion an additional aureole, as it were, of beauty and happiness to the glorified body. None has written on this subject better than Claude de Saintes.

27 All the ends of the world shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the LORD : and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.

And why do they remember? Because the LORD turns and looks upon them. They must remember Him before they can remember themselves: it must be His love that draws them to look to Him. Whence it is well said: Not shall turn, but shall be turned unto the Lord. Remember. Because, indeed, they had forgotten Him; how widely they had wandered from Him, S. Paul sets forth to us in that awful chapter where he tells us that even the Gentiles are without excuse. It is the same prophecy that we read in Zechariah: ”They shall remember Me from afar, and shall be turned unto Me! The same exhortation which is given by Jeremiah: ”Remember the LORD afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind. Whence Euthymius very justly argues, that the knowledge of GOD, though hidden from, and clouded over, amongst the Gentiles, yet nevertheless exists, even among them: it is a thing which has to be recovered, not to be recreated. ”The Gentiles,” says S. Augustine, ”had not so forgotten GOD, as not to be able, by an effort of recollection, to remember Him. In forgetting GOD, they forgat, as it were, their own life, and turned themselves towards death: When they shall remember GOD, it will be a return to the remembrance of life, yea, rather, to life itself. The same Father pushes the Donatists hard with this text; that it is all the ends of the earth, not Africa alone, that is to belong to GOD. S. Jerome has a singular mystical interpretation:

”The ends of the earth,” says he, ”are its highest parts, as the circumference of a wheel may be said to be higher than its centre. Of these high ones—these proud hearts—it was once written, ”As for the proud, He beholdeth them afar off; but now, even they, too, shall remember themselves. All the kindreds of the nations: because henceforth there shall be neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, but CHRIST shall be all and in all: because in that eternal marriage supper, the banquet will not be set on for our true Joseph by Himself, and for His brethren by themselves, and for them that did eat with them by themselves, but the whole family of heaven and earth shall sit down together at the celestial table. Shall remember themselves. S. Albertus ingeniously connects this with the prophecy in the preceding verse, of the Blessed Eucharist, by reminding us of our LORD’s injunction, ”This do in remembrance of Me. Shall worship before Him. Where? In the true Galilee, where He has appointed His disciples hereafter to meet Him.

Rom. i. 20. In Isa. cap. 52. JESUS amantibus afferet omnibus alta trophæa: JESUS amabitur, atque videbitur in Galilæa. The ends of the earth. Once more; Hugh of S. Victor would refer this to the Blessed Eucharist, because to those who receive it worthily, all earthly things have an end, and heaven is already begun. 28 For the kingdom is the LORD’s: and he is the governor among the people. Where notice: he saith not, Shall be the LORD’s: though that also: as it is written: ”The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea;” but is,—is at this moment,—is, though Satan may be called the Prince of the Power of the Air: is, though His citizens hate Him and say, We will not have this man to reign over us. And so our LORD Himself says, ”Now is,” not, Now shall be, ”the judgment of this world.” Thou therefore, O Christian, though that banner of the Cross seem for a while overthrown, though that golden sceptre be for a time disregarded, take comfort in this, that, notwithstanding all, the kingdom is the Lord’s; that every suffering He calls thee to endure, is winning it for, and confirming it to, Him: and that, as the kingdom of the earth belongs now to the Head, so shall the kingdom of heaven ere long belong to the members. And He is the Governor among the people. Yes, Although they may say, as once of old, ”We have no king but Cæsar,” it is to David that the LORD sware and will not repent, ”Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.” Observe further, by the Kingdom, we may understand that of the Jews; by the People, the Church of the Gentiles.

29 All such as be fat upon earth : have eaten and worshipped. B. A. R. C. Isa. lxv. 13. So the Greek Commentators generally. Thus it must be when ”the Kingdom is the LORD’s:” that not only His real servants, those who are poor in spirit, and heirs not of this world, but of heaven, but all such as are fat upon earth also, shall eat of that blessed Sacrament, and shall pay external worship. Before, it was said that ”the poor shall eat and be satisfied:” here, it is said that the rich shall eat, but not that ”they shall be satisfied.” In this sense, the meaning would be the same with that saying, ”Behold, My servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold,

My servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty." Others take it to mean, that they who were once poor, shall, by feeding on this Blessed Sacrament, become fat upon earth: that is, have an antepast of heaven, even here. From the former, which is probably the true signification, the Gloss collects that sinners are not to be repelled from the Sacrament, if they choose to present themselves to receive it: though S. Thomas warns us that public sinners do not come under this rule. Notice further the argument to be drawn from this verse for the adoration of the Sacrament: have eaten and worshipped.

30 All they that go down into the dust shall kneel before him : and no man hath quickened his own soul. Here the Vulgate translation is entirely different. In his Presence shall all fall that descend into the earth, and my soul shall live to Him. Here, they say, is the punishment of those who have worshipped with this external worship: when they stand before His Presence at the Last Day, they shall so fall as to descend into the earth: that is, shall receive the portion of those that are at the left hand. Contrasted with this, My soul, says David, speaking in the person of GOD's true servants, liveth (Vulg. shall live) to Him. This meaning, however, is merely elicited by a supposed reading of the LXX.

for . The Prayer Book Version, No man hath quickened his own soul, is without ancient authority of any kind. Of the Bible translation, that None can keep alive his own soul, the same thing may be said. A meaning which may be got out of the Hebrew, And shall revive without strength, agrees sufficiently well with the general idea presented by the Vulgate. These, the "fat upon earth," who have worshipped with their lips and outward gestures, while their hearts were far from Him, shall revive indeed, because the bad, as well as the good, shall awake at the general resurrection: but it shall be without strength, that is, without the strength and beauty, and glory of eternal life. Or you may take it: Shall awake, not by their own strength, but by the Almighty Power of GOD, and at the voice of the Archangel. [The true sense of this difficult passage seems to be, And he who cannot prolong his own life, i.e. who is at the point of death, shall serve Thee, as well as the rich, who are fat, and the poor, brought by misery into the dust, and thus all classes of men are included.]

31 My seed shall serve him: they shall be counted unto the LORD for a generation. 32 They shall come, and the heavens shall declare his righteousness: unto a people that shall be born, whom the LORD hath made. Here again, the Vulgate differs widely: My seed shall serve Him: the generation that is to come shall be announced to the Lord. But notwithstanding this false worship, My seed, the children who sprang from My sufferings on the Cross shall serve Him; and as one after another, forsaking his old superstitions, joins himself to the LORD's people, they shall be announced to the LORD for a generation. It is the same thing that is elsewhere prophesied: "Of Sion it shall be reported that he," that is, that this and that man,

”was born in her.” And the heavens shall declare His righteousness. Firstly and literally, by the glorious appearance and order of the stars; then, at the end of the world, when the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the LORD’s promises of coming again shall be made good, and thus His righteousness declared. Or, to take it in the mystical sense: The heavens, that is, as we saw when considering the 19th Psalm, the Apostles, shall declare His righteousness (and notice that it is exactly the same expression that S. Paul uses, ”to declare. I say, at this time, His righteousness,”) to a people that shall be born, that is, to the Church, not yet in existence: but,— acts xv. 18. and the change of tense is well worthy of observation, which the Lord hath made. Not yet in actual existence, but written in that book of Predestination, of which it is said, ”Known unto GOD are all His works, from the beginning of the world.”

And thus we finish this marvellous Psalm: the clearest prophecy ever delivered: the first open Revelation of the Gospel. And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, to whom all the ends of the world, when they remember themselves, shall turn; and to the SON, Who hath made the people that shall be born; and to the HOLY GHOST, the Governor among the people. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.
GOD, That art the Source of mercy, Who for us didst descend into the womb of the Virgin; wast nailed to the Cross; didst behold Thy garments divided; didst rise Victor from Hell; we beseech Thee that Thou, remembering this Thy conversation amongst us, wouldst free Thy people from the mouth of the lion, as Thou didst once deliver their fathers that hoped in Thee. Who livest. O LORD GOD, Who, when our fathers cried unto Thee, didst set them free, when they trusted in Thee didst save them; we pray and beseech Thee not to be far from us, but to haste to our defence, and to save us from the mouth of the lion. Through (1.) O CHRIST, Who didst exclaim from the Cross to the FATHER, My GOD, My GOD, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Who by Thy Cross didst redeem lost man, and didst give Satan to be bound in eternal chains: we beseech Thy mercy that us, who believe in Thee, Thou wouldst never forsake; us, who confide in Thee, Thou wouldst never repel; but that when we cry in the day time Thou wouldst hear, and in the night-season also Thou wouldst receive our prayer. (11.)

O Shepherd of souls, LORD JESU CHRIST, look graciously to the defence of Thy Church; deliver us of Thy mercy from the mouth of the lion, Thou Whose own soul was delivered from the power of the dog. (11.) Mozarabic, for unbelievers. O CHRIST, Who didst leave the synagogue on account of its incredulity, and didst gather together Thy Church out of an innumerable company of all nations, thus accomplishing the prophecy that all the ends of the world shall remember themselves and be turned to the LORD, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship

before Him: raise up children of belief from the circumcision, that they who come may be received to the kingdom of faith, and that they who have been received, may not, through any sin, be deprived of Thine heritage. (11.) [O GOD the FATHER Almighty, Who didst will to send Thy SON our LORD JESUS CHRIST into the world for His Passion, and to call back man to the kingdom of heaven, who had been tempted by the fruit of the forbidden tree, and cast out of the bliss of Paradise, look upon us who cry unto Thee, deliver us from words of sin, and save us who trust in Thee for evermore. Through the same (2.)]

Psalm 23

TITLE. A Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST prepares for His Church eternal pastures. Before Baptism. The voice of the Church after Baptism. To be read with Esther. VEN. BEDE. Through the whole Psalm the Christian regenerate in Baptism speaks, and renders thanks that he has been brought from the barrenness of sin into a green pasture and the still waters. And notice that, as before, in Psalm xv., he had received the Decalogue of the Law, thus he here rejoices in ten blessings. EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. The doctrine and the first institution of the new people. S. ATHANASIUS. A Psalm of boasting in the LORD.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Ferial: formerly Sunday, now Thursday: Prime. [Corpus Christi: II. Nocturn. Office of the Dead: II. Nocturn.] Monastic. Thursday: Sunday: I. Nocturn. Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: II. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. [Corpus Christi: The table of the LORD is prepared for us against all them that trouble us. Office of the Dead: He shall feed me in a green pasture.] Monastic. The LORD governs me, and nought shall be lacking to me: He set me there in a place of pasture. Ambrosian. My GOD, My GOD, look upon me. K. K. K. Mozarabic. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou GOD art with me. Compare Esther iii. 13, with viii. 17; and both with ”Thou shalt prepare a table before Me against them that trouble Me.” Or it may be taken of Haman’s banquet.

1 The LORD is my shepherd : therefore can I lack nothing.
S. Alb. Mag. In the last Psalm we heard of the Passion of CHRIST: now we hear of the effects of that Passion. It was because He stood in need of everything, that we lack nothing. And take it either way, both are beautiful: The Lord is my Shepherd, so our version; The Lord governs me, so the Vulgate. And think of the Psalm first of all as uttered by David long before his combat with Goliath, ”as he was following

the ewes great with young ones. What he then said in the ignorance and simplicity of his pastoral life, that he found true through his persecutions, through his wars, through all his troubles to the very end. These are nearly the first words of David: and among the last words of David are, ”Yet hath He made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. D. C. But it is in two different ways that those two different families—the ”travellers,” to use the mediaeval expression, and ”they that have comprehended,”—are to use this verse. Our Shepherd—we, the travellers—our Shepherd putteth forth His own sheep into all kinds of dangers, by the lions’ dens, by the mountains of the leopards; and though wherever He putteth them forth, He Himself, according to His own most sweet promise, has been before them, yet they have to wander in wastes and wilds, far away from the comfort and safeguard of any visible fold.

But with them the more beautiful flocks that feed upon the celestial mountains, the LORD is their Shepherd too: He has brought them home from the danger of wild beasts, as it is written, ”No lion shall be there, neither shall any ravenous beast go up thereon: He has brought them out of the very sound of their voices; He has brought them into that fold, not one of the stakes whereof shall ever be removed. And yet both they and we may say, The Lord is my Shepherd. The Shepherd delivers us continually from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear; the Shepherd King feeds them for evermore in pastures, of which the human heart cannot conceive the beauty. Therefore can I lack nothing. Because that Shepherd lacked everything; because He had not where to lay His head; because there was no room for Him in the inn; because He sat thirsty on the well; because He was taken even as He was in the ship; because He was an hungered in the wilderness; therefore shall we lack nothing,—His need supplying our wants, as His righteousness atones for our guilt. ”What can GOD deny us, when He has given us His own SON? asks S. Paul: and what can the SON of GOD deny us, when He gives us Himself? He gives us His Body, He gives us His Soul, He gives us His Divinity, and will He deny us bread? Oh, fear and cowardice, unworthy of faith!

GOD had not as yet given Himself to be our food, and had only revealed this mystery to the same David, who had so often suffered from poverty, and at once He scoffs at it, and says for us that which we knew not how to say for ourselves. And what is that? The Lord is my Shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing. One thing follows the other. The rich shall fall into want, they who put their confidence in inconstant possessions, to-day possessed, to-morrow lost; but the poor who betakes himself to that LORD, Who is LORD of all things, shall have enough and to spare, as saith the same Prophet, ’The rich men do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the LORD shall not want anything that is good.’

2 He shall feed me in a green pasture: and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.

”Come unto Me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. And with what refreshment? The green pasture: the waters of comfort. In its widest and broadest sense, the green pasture is the Church. Green, as constantly refreshed with the dew of the HOLY GHOST: green, as shaded from the burning sun of temptation. And notice how it follows, ”There was much green grass in the place: so the men sat down. There we have the freshness and verdure of—there also we have the rest to be found in—the Church. But the greater number of the Fathers refer this Psalm altogether to the Sacraments. The waters of comfort, therefore, are the waters of Baptism; just as presently we shall find the oil to be Confirmation, and the cup to be the Blessed Eucharist. But Rupert takes these waters of comfort to be the rivers of pleasure which are at GOD’s right hand; of comfort imperishable, unchangeable, eternal. Lysimachus deplored that for a draught of water he had lost a kingdom: whoso drinketh of this water, which proceedeth from the throne of GOD and of the Lamb, shall reign for ever and ever. And these waters of comfort were purchased for us by that bitter cry of our LORD on the Cross, ”I thirst. Therefore, because of that thirst, ye shall draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation. And these wells or fountains, S. Bernard says, are five in number:

four belonging to the earthly paradise, the four wounds of our LORD while yet living in the flesh: the fifth, which pertains to the celestial land, the wound inflicted on His side. And they beautifully interpret, of these fountains, that which is said in Genesis of the four rivers of Eden. The first ”compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold, and the gold of that land is good. Havilah is by interpretation, ”He that suffers pain; and by means of the wound in our LORD’s right hand, the gold produced by the region of pain will be good indeed. The second encompassed the whole land of Ethiopia; that land which originally lay under a curse; as the wound of our LORD’s left hand may be said to have turned the curse arising from the sin of man—the left hand being the type of

Elias Scholiast. in S. Gregor. Nazianzen. Rupert. in S. Matt. v. Serm. i. De Nativitate. sin—into a blessing : and so of the rest. Mediæval writers rejoiced to heap together all the characteristics, real or feigned, of various rivers : of the Cephissus, which makes the fleece of black sheep white : of the Xanthus, which turns them red ; and so on. There are not wanting those who understand the waters of comfort of Holy Scripture : and quote appositely that saying of S. Paul’s, ”Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our consolation.” 3 He shall convert my soul : and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for His Name’s sake.

G. And now notice how admirably the miracle of the passage of Jordan figures the effect of Baptism ; its savour of life unto life, and of death unto death. That part which remained nearest to the fountain head ”rose up on an heap,”—that is, those who remain true to their LORD in Baptism are drawn up towards heaven : that part

which ran into the Dead Sea ”failed and was cut off,” having no more connection with the original source of the stream, but utterly lost in those dark and noisome waters. And notice also how admirably the usual course of GOD’s dealing with a Christian soul is here set forth. In the last verse we have Baptism : we are to understand the usual sad falls after Baptism. And then it follows, He shall convert my soul. Never let us be afraid, because the word has been so sadly misused and misapplied, to dwell boldly on this truth, and to enjoin it with all our might,—that in most instances a second grace is necessary after that of Baptism has been given and has been abused. And then, when this grace of conversion has been given, and has been received and acted upon, then He shall lead us forth in the paths of righteousness. Others see in this verse an admirable declaration of the blessings of the New Covenant. When the waters of comfort had once been opened, then the servants of GOD should be led forth in the paths of righteousness :

for before the institution of that blessed Sacrament, the greatest Saints were only led forth in the paths of the ceremonial law. I cannot do better than quote the admirable words of Lorinus on the subject : ”They,” says he, ”were led forth in the paths of ceremonies, carnal commandments, the works of the law ; which could not justify, and made nothing perfect. ’But in His days,’ says David, ’shall righteousness flourish:’ He, namely, Who is the LORD our Righteousness ; the Righteous Man Who is raised up from the east ; the Righteous Man Whom the ’clouds rain down ;’ Who is made righteousness to us ; Who came to teach us righteousness ; Who Himself fulfilleth all righteousness ; Who goeth in the way of righteousness ; Who, finally, alone justifies and leads to blessedness them who walk according to the laws that He has prescribed to them, and teaches the Divine knowledge of the things which have to be believed as

Heb. vii. 19. Ps. lxxii. 7. Jer. xxiii. 6. Isa. xii. 2. Isa. xiv. 8. 1 Cor. i. 30. Hos. x. 12. S. Matt. iii. well as done. These are the ’ways of wisdom,’ of which Solomon speaks; these are the ’right paths’ to which he invites.” For His Name’s sake. And here once more is the Name that is above every name; the Name, ”great, wonderful, and holy,” which is to be the strength of God’s people here, and the everlasting subject of their praise hereafter. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.

Here we have the reason why this Psalm is one of those employed in the Office for the Dead. And see how beautifully the whole corresponds to it. The grave, the fold, in which the LORD’s sheep are penned safely till the morning of the Resurrection. And the Shepherd Himself had tasted of the same trials which He permits His sheep to know. The green pasture will be, as ancient Liturgies so often make it, the state of blessed souls, that have departed out of this world, but have not yet been admitted to the Beatific Vision. ”They have departed,” says James of Edessa,

in his Liturgy, ”with true hope, and the confidence of the faith which is in Thee, from this world of straits, from this life of misery, to Thee. Remember them and receive them, and cause them to rest in the bosom of Abraham, in tabernacles of light and rest, in shining dwelling-places, in a world of pleasures, in the city Jerusalem, where there is no place for sorrow or for war. ”They have been set free,” says Ignatius Bar-Maadn, of Antioch, ”they have been set free from this temporal life, according to the sentence constituted by their iniquity, and have returned to Thee, O God, as to the first Almighty cause. Spare them by Thy mercy; reckon them in the number of Thine elect; cover them with the bright cloud of Thy saints; cause them to dwell in the blessed habitations of Thy kingdom;

to be invited to Thy banquet in the region of exultation and joy, where there is no place of sorrow or misery. Then the ”convert my soul” must be taken of that final conversion, when sin shall be destroyed for ever, as it is written, ”He that is dead is freed from sin. ”The paths of righteousness,” what are they but those streets of gold, of which it is written, ”The nations of them which are saved shall walk in it? The table will be at the eternal wedding feast; and then how does the ”All the days of my life,” and ”I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever,” rivet the Psalm as it were to this, as its natural meaning! But to return to our verse. Why the valley of the shadow of death? What Eusebius taught long ago, let Laud on the scaffold explain at greater length: ”LORD, I am coming as fast as I can. I know I must pass through the shadow of death before I can come to see Thee. But it is but umbra mortis, a shadow of death, a little darkness upon nature; but

Renaudot, Lit. Or. ii. 376. Renaudot, Lit. Or. ii. 516. In S. Johan. v. 27. A. R. B. Lu. S. Isidore, i. 391. Theodoret. S. Justin. Martyr in Tryph. Z. S. Zeno, Serm. de Jud.

Thou, LORD, by Thy goodness, hast broken the jaws and the power of death. Yes: our LORD passed through the valley of death; we through the valley of the shadow of death. He tasted of death, that we might never taste of it; He died, that we might fall asleep. Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me. Holy men have discussed at length what is the difference between these two. Some will have it that the rod denotes GOD’s punishments for lighter offences; the staff, His chastisements for heavier sins. But it is better to take the one of His punishment when we go wrong, the other of His support when we go right. Thus they will answer to the wine and the oil in the parable of the Good Samaritan; the wine the salutary chastisement, the oil the no less salutary comfort. But there is yet a deeper meaning in it than this: the rod and the staff together make the blessed Cross; just as the two sticks that the widow was gathering have always been considered typical of the same tree of salvation. And it may well be said that, in our valley of the shadow of death, that Cross is to be our comfort on which our LORD passed through His own valley of misery. For notice how the two join together: For Thou art with me—”I determined

to know nothing among you save JESUS CHRIST"—Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me—"and Him crucified. There are other beautiful significations for these words.

Some will have the rod to signify the Incarnation: ("There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse:") and by the staff the Passion: as if, in our passage through death, we require both the one and the other to console us; according to that saying, "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise Thee. And yet once more: still taking the staff for the Cross, we may understand the rod of the Virgin Mother, here joined with the Cross itself, because it is written, "Now there stood by the Cross of JESUS His mother. Once more: Dionysius regards the verse as the thanksgiving of the blessed for the loving kindness which has led them through all the dangers and miseries of this world; and thus beautifully writes: "The rod and the staff with which in the Way Thou didst visit me, have brought me to this celestial consolation. For corrections inflicted for sin, here spoken of under the name of the rod, so purify the soul, as to unite it to the Divine light. And the glorious consolations, bestowed by GOD upon earth, enkindle the soul to desire the perfect sweetness of their country. But it might seem that this verse cannot apply to the blessed, because it implies their remembering in Paradise what they suffered on earth;

whereas it is written in Isaiah, 'The former troubles shall be forgotten, shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.' We answer that the Saints in their country do remember the ills which they suffered in their journey, in so far as such a remembrance is to them a matter of joy. For CHRIST in His most glorious Body has retained the marks of His Five Wounds, not only that in the Day of Judgment He may manifest to the ungrateful that which He suffered for them, but that the Saints in their country may for ever behold that which He endured for their salvation, and by this means may be inflamed with inestimable praise and giving of thanks."

5 Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me : thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.

By far the greater number of commentators take it—and how could it be otherwise?—of the Blessed Eucharist. "This is the table," says S. Cyril, in his Catechetical Lectures, "prepared by GOD, in opposition to the table prepared before him by Satan;" clearly meaning that, before the Advent of CHRIST, the enticements and allurements of Satan to sin were, so to speak, a table of poisonous delicacies, to which there was then no such remedy as the table of the LORD. S. Cyprian and the Bishops assembled with him at one of the Councils of Carthage, exhort all those who were likely to be called to suffer martyrdom to prepare themselves for it by the reception of the Holy Eucharist. "Those whom we excite," says the Synodal letter, "and exhort to the battle, let us not leave weak and unarmed, but let us fortify with the protection of the Body and Blood of CHRIST. And since the Eucharist is celebrated to this end, that it may be a safeguard to

them who receive it, let us arm with the defence of the LORD's banquet those whom we desire to make safe against the adversary." Then the sense of against them that trouble me may be threefold. Either in opposition to their wishes, and in defiance of their endeavours; or that we by receiving it may be strengthened in opposition to them; or that they, beholding the delicacies GOD provides for us, may be the more enraged and thrown into despair. They give multitudes of instances in which the reception of the Blessed Sacrament has at once set free from some particular temptation; like the story related of S. Macarius, who delivered one who was possessed by a devil, and told her that the reason of the demon acquiring that power over her was her having abstained for so long a time from receiving.

Nevertheless, there are not wanting those who understand this table of Holy Scripture: as Bede, S. Jerome, and Peter of Blois. Others, again, take it of the remembrance of the LORD's Passion; but the most singular interpretation is that of S. Remigius, who takes the table to refer to the rod and the staff mentioned just before, as if David said, Whatever other consolation I might have looked for, Thou hast prepared this; the chastisement that for the present seemeth not joyous, but grievous, but afterwards yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, which fruit is here called the table. Gerhohus, after dwelling on the blessedness of in Ezek. cap. P Job i. 17. Rev. i. 6. 1 S. Pet. ii. 9. Serm. in S. Matt. vi.

the Holy Eucharist, well concludes by quoting the prayer ascribed to S. Ambrose: "I pray Thee, O LORD, by that holy and quickening mystery of Thy Body and Blood, by which we are daily fed in Thy Church, of which we are daily given to drink, by which we are cleansed and sanctified, and made partakers of Thy Divinity, give me Thy holy virtues, filled with which I may approach to Thine altar, so that these celestial Sacraments may be to me salvation and life. For Thou hast said, by Thy holy and blessed mouth, 'The bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. I am the Living Bread that came down from heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever.' O most sweet Bread, heal the taste of my heart, that I may perceive the sweetness of Thy love; cleanse it from all languor, that I may be conscious of no sweetness but Thine. O most pure Bread, having all delight in Thyself, which always refreshest us and never failest, let my heart feed upon Thee, and let the very innermost parts of my soul be filled with Thy sweetness." And then he tells us how the Chaldæans still make out three bands against us: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; and how each and all of these are to be repulsed by the Sacrament.

Thou hast anointed my head with oil. And here again the commentators devise all sorts of explanations, as indeed Holy Scripture itself invites them to do. But the best and truest seems to be that which sees in this oil both royal and priestly unction: according to that saying, "Thou hast made us unto our GOD kings and

priests;" and again, "ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." Others again, not unfitly, understand it of Confirmation: which indeed suits well with the mention of Baptism in the second verse, and also that of the Blessed Eucharist in this. Or mystically: it is the boast of every Christian,—"Thou anointest my head with oil." For so S. Bernard understands that command,—Thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head. For what is our Head but our Blessed LORD and SAVIOUR? and what is oil but the graces of the HOLY GHOST, That SPIRIT not given by measure unto Him? And there may also be a reference to the unction of our LORD by the hands of S. Mary Magdalene.

And my cup shall be full. Or, as it is in the Vulgate: And my inebriating chalice, how excellent it is! And here again we see that glorious and excellent chalice, filled, not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with the precious Blood of CHRIST, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. And S. Cyprian even uses this verse as an argument against the Aquarii, who used water in the oblation: "for how can water," says he, "inebriate?" "With this cup," cries Augustine, "were the martyrs inebriated, when, going forth to their passion, they recognised not those that belonged to them,—not their weeping wife, not their children, not their relations: while they gave thanks and said, I will take the Cup of salvation!" A. Ave, sacer CHRISTI Sanguis! Iter nobis rectum pandis Ad celi sedilia! Ave, potus salutaris! Nullus unquam fuit talis Bonitatis copiâ! The Hymn, Ave, caro CHRISTI cara.

6 But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

And here, as the conclusion of this Psalm of graces, comes the last and highest of all graces, that of final perseverance: the end and result of all the Sacraments. I will dwell in the house of the Lord. It may be taken in two senses: the religious as opposed to the secular life here; or the true life, the life that is life indeed, in the true house of the LORD hereafter. But why is it said, shall follow me, rather than, shall go before me? For certainly we need that preventing grace of GOD, for which the Church prays, to remove obstacles, to face dangers, to overthrow difficulties. Because, say the Greek Fathers, the idea is that, though we of our own will and nature would forsake and forget GOD, He sends out after us, follows us, chases us, as it were, till He overtake us, and seizes us for Himself. We need not here enter into the disputes of the schools about prevenient, subsequent, co-operating, concomitant, grace. It suffices us to know what David so often declares, and the celebrated Council of Orange teaches from his words, that we need grace on every side, grace before and behind, grace on the right hand and on the left, if we ever hope to enter the kingdom of GOD at all. Prevenient and subsequent grace are beautifully set forth in the Canticles: when the Bride first says, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His," and then, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.

The former being signified by the first verse, the latter by the second. That I may dwell: there we have the heavenly home-sickness; S. Paul's desire to depart and to be with CHRIST, which is far better; the change of the light of grace, here often clouded and obscure, for the light of glory that can never be darkened, that can never fade away, that grows brighter and more perfect to ages of ages.

Nos ad sanctorum gloriam Per ipsorum suffragia Post præsentem miseriam CHRISTI perducat gratia! Adam. Victorin. The Sequence, Supernae matris gaudia. And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who anoints our head with oil; p 2 and to the Son, the Shepherd of His people: and to the HOLY GHOST, Who provides for us that inebriating chalice which is so excellent. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.
Govern us, O LORD, with the sweet yoke of Thy commandments, that we may obtain a place in Thine eternal habitation, and be satiated with the plenitude of the celestial banquet. (1.) Grant, O LORD, that we may sing a new hymn to Thy praise, to the end that Thou mayest bring us into the pastures of life, and lead us by the still waters of comfort; that we may never hunger nor thirst again, when our feet shall stand within the gates of Jerusalem. (11.) Lead forth, O LORD, Thy people by the waters of comfort which Thou hast formed by the baptismal streams; that they, inspired by the teaching of Thy law, may have their desire set on that place where Thou promisest Thyself to be their eternal reward. (11.) [For Thy Name's sake, O LORD, lead us in the paths of righteousness, let Thy mercy follow us, that we may dwell in Thy house for ever. Through (1.)]

Psalm 24

TITLE. A Psalm of David. The title in the Vulgate is, The first of the Sabbath, a Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST sets the Church, redeemed by His Blood, above the waves of the world. The voice of the Church after Baptism. Concerning the beginning of the Church in which the princes of idols are excluded, and the King of the same Church enters therein, and of the confirmation of the believing people. The gates of which he speaks are sins, or the gates of hell. Also the voice of CHRIST concerning the Gentiles and concerning the Church. VEN. BEDE. The first of the Sabbath signifies the LORD'S Day, which is the first day after the Sabbath; on which day the LORD arose from the dead. And because the whole Psalm is sung after the Resurrection, therefore this title is well fitted to admonish the hearts of the faithful. After the Resurrection of the LORD, the Prophet, becoming more joyful, addresses the human race, then labouring with various superstitions: defining in the first part that the universal orb of the world was the LORD'S, and as no one was excepted from His empire, so none should believe anything opposed to His faith, The earth is the Lord's. In the second place determining with what virtues they are endued who are set in His Church: Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Thirdly, he speaks most kindly to the superstitious that, turning to the service of the true GOD, they would depart from their harmful perversity: Lift up your gates, O ye Princes, &c.

EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA. A prophecy of the vocation of the Gentiles, and the perfection of them who are saved. SYRIAC PSALTER. Concerning the first day in which the LORD began to form creation. ARABIC PSALTER. A prophecy of the vocation of the Gentiles and the Resurrection.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Originally Sunday, now Monday: Prime. [Circumcision: I. Nocturn. Easter Eve: II. Nocturn. Trinity Sunday: I. Nocturn. Feasts of the Five Wounds and the Shroud: Matins. Common of B. V. M.: I. Nocturn. Michaelmas Day: II. Nocturn. Feast of Guardian Angels: II. Nocturn. All Saints: II. Nocturn. Common

of Many Martyrs: II. Nocturn. Common of Confessors: II. Nocturn. Common of Virgins: I. Nocturn. Dedication of a Church: I. Nocturn.] Monastic. Sunday: I. Nocturn. Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: II. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. [Circumcision and Easter Eve: Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. All Saints: This is the generation of them that seek the LORD, that seek the face of the GOD of Jacob. Many Martyrs: The Saints that wait on the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall fly, and not faint. Confessors: He shall receive righteousness from the LORD, and mercy from the GOD of his salvation, for this is the generation of them that seek the LORD. Dedication: Lift up your gates, ye princes, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors.] Parisian. He that hath not lift up his mind to vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour, he shall ascend into the hill of the LORD. Ambrosian. My GOD, my GOD, look upon me. K. K. K. Mozarabic. He hath founded it upon the seas and prepared it upon the floods.

1 The earth is the LORD’s, and all that therein is: the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein. Whether or not this Psalm were composed, as is probable, for the feast of bringing up the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom to Mount Sion, at all events it was appropriated by the Jews to the first day of the week, and for many centuries continued by the Church for Sunday. At the very time when the whole earth was awaking into beauty; when Prudentius. The Hymn, Nos, et tenebræ, et nubila. Caligo terræ scinditur, Percussa solis spiculo, Rebusque jam color redit Vultu nitentis sideris.

And nothing can be finer than the vindication of GOD’s dominion at the beginning of each new day, the earth is the Lord’s. Nor must we forget the grand effect which these words possess, when set up over the place of meeting of the merchant princes of the earth. S. Paul uses this verse to settle the controversy regarding meat offered to idols; how that, like everything else, belongs to GOD, and could not really be affected by its pretended dedication to those idols that are nothing in the world. It is used in a very glorious sense by the Eastern Church in her Funeral Service, when at the moment in which the coffin is let down into the grave, the Priest exclaims, ”The earth is the LORD’s, and the fulness thereof: that is, the multitude of the bodies of the faithful who there are awaiting His Second Coming. And again: Innocent III. uses it as an argument for the payment of tithes; as if it were not much for man to return the tenth to GOD, of that which belongs to GOD entirely. And all that therein is. Notice the difference between the blessing of Jacob and Esau, which at first sight seems precisely the same. ”GOD,” says Isaac to Jacob, ”give thee of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine; ”Behold,” is the benediction of Esau, ”thy dwelling shall be the

fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. The difference consists in this:

that, in the one case, heaven is put first, as imparting a true benediction to earth: in the other it is mentioned last, as having no real lot or portion in the matter. Origen well observes that till the time of our LORD's Advent, the earth's fulness was not as yet: as it is written, "Of His fulness have all we received. The compass of the world, or "the round world," as it is called in another Psalm; to show that the Church is not now, as of old, confined to one land and to one nation, but spread abroad over the whole face of the earth. The earth is the Lord's. And therefore was this Psalm well said on the Sunday, since it is His because He made it, and He began to make it on that day, and His because He redeemed it, and He finished its redemption on that sacred day. The earth is the Lord's. And yet the devil, the father of lies, ventured to say to its rightful owner, "All this will I give Thee, and the glory of it, for that is delivered unto me, and unto whomsoever I will, I give it. Be then, says Gerhohus, like Him, Who did not say in return, The earth is Mine, and the fulness of it; and not like the "great dragon," which said, "My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself. And notice the dif-

S. John i. 16. ferent way in which our LORD met two false claims of possession, Satan's and Pilate's. Satan's boast, "This is mine," was only answered by a dismissal, "Get thee hence, Satan;" Pilate's speech, "Knowest Thou not that I have power?" was met with an argument, "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee." Satan, to whom no place was left for repentance, was not thought worthy of a reply: Pilate, who might yet have been saved, was. "The earth is the LORD's;" and therefore, it was well and wisely ordered, just before her LORD and possessor came to visit her, that "there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." 2 For he hath founded it upon the seas : and prepared it upon the floods. The literal sense of this verse is much disputed; but two explanations stand prominent above the rest. The one, which is that of S. Augustine, that, since by the LORD's command the waters were gathered together into one place in order that the dry land might appear, so in a certain sense, the earth may be said to be formed by, or founded upon, this gathering together of the waters. The other explanation, which the Greek Fathers adopt is, that of the earth's being founded on or fashioned by the admixture of water, without which, say they, it would become dust and crumble away; a somewhat violent and forced interpretation, but giving the same sense as that verse of the hymn;

Firmans locum coelestibus, Simulque terræ rivulis, Ut unda flammas temperet, Terræ solum ne dissipent. But in the mystical sense, the seas may be taken for troubles and temptations on which the earth, that is, the Church dispersed through the earth, is founded; while the floods signify the effusion of GOD's graces by which also she is established. The bitter water and the sweet water, says S. Albertus

Magnus, are both equally necessary for her; the waves of the sea that ”are mighty and rage horribly” on the one side; the rivers of the flood that make glad the city of GOD on the other. S. Ambrose, but less happily, understands both the seas and floods of one and the same thing, namely, tribulation: In tribulation, says he, the Church is founded, in tempests and storms, in anxieties and griefs; and it is prepared in the floods of adversities. 3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD : or who shall rise up in his holy place?

It is as if we, yet tossed about by the waves and storms of A. The Hymn, Immensa cæli conditor. S. Bernard. in loc. this troublesome world, those waves in which the Church is founded, were asking the way to that mountain of heavenly peace, whither our LORD has already ascended as of old time, to pray for us. It is the same thing that is written in Isaiah: Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the House of the GOD of Jacob. Many will say, Let us go up: but here the prophet asks, Who of all that number shall ascend? seeing that ”many are called, but few chosen.” And having gone up, Who shall stand, for so it is that the Vulgate translates arise, in that holy place? But the interpretations of this hill, are endless: and may well afford matter to S. Bernard for a whole sermon. Some will have it to be the Church Militant; some the Church triumphant; some understand it of CHRIST Himself; in which they are authorised by that prophecy of Daniel, when Nebuchadnezzar beheld the ”stone that was cut out without hands, and became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.” Others, strangely enough, explain it of Satan; some of the state of perfection; and some of the Cross. But the explanation which sees in it the heavenly mountain, the mountain ”in which the LORD of Hosts shall make a feast of fat things,” ”Mount Sion, the city of the Living GOD, the heavenly Jerusalem,” as S. Paul writes, is by far the best and the truest. And no doubt there is an allusion to those mountains to which Moses, Lot, Aaron, Abraham, and Elijah were commanded by GOD to go up.

4 Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart: and that hath not lift up his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour. Now we come to the four conditions requisite to render such an ascent possible. 1. Abstinence from evil doing: He that hath clean hands. 2. Abstinence from evil thought: and a pure heart. 3. Who does that duty which he is sent into the world to do: That hath not lift up his mind unto vanity; or, as it is in the Vulgate, Who hath not received his soul in vain. And 4. Remembers the vows by which he is bound to GOD: nor sworn to deceive. And in the fullest sense there was but One in Whom all these things were fulfilled; so that in reply to the question, ”Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD?” He might well answer, ”No man hath ascended up into heaven, save He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man Which is in heaven.” ”Therefore it is well written,” says S. Bernard, ”that such an High Priest became us, because He knows the difficulty of that ascent to the celestial mountain, He knows the weakness of us that have to ascend.” It is like the ladder of S. Perpetua which

she saw set upon the earth, and reaching to heaven, our LORD as a Shepherd at the summit; a fearful dragon guarding the access to it. He that hath clean hands:

so clean that they cleansed the leprosy,—so clean that they not only healed all manner of sickness and all manner of disease, but were stretched out to pardon sin; so clean, that the streams which poured from them on the Cross, are to be the cleansing of all evil deeds till the world's end. And a pure heart. "Who," says S. Bernard, "can conceive, much more express, the purity of that shrine—that heart—where purity strove with love, which should have the pre-eminence, in a most sweet and tender contest, never to be decided; that heart, which, being opened by the spear, gave access to all guilty, all polluted creatures; offered a hiding place in the rock from the anger that consumed a corrupted world." That hath not lift up his mind unto vanity. No, for being in the form of GOD, and thinking it not robbery to be equal with GOD, He yet made Himself of no reputation. Nor sworn to deceive his neighbour. That promise to redeem man, that declaration that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, was, as S. Paul says, a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance. And therefore, well says the same S. Paul, that "by two immutable things in which it was impossible that GOD should lie, we may have strong consolation."

S. Bernard. in loc. 5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD: and righteousness from the GOD of his salvation.

He, whether like rich Abraham he entertained Angels unawares, or, like miserable Lazarus, was carried by the same angels into Abraham's bosom, he shall receive the blessing from the Lord. And righteousness: that is, love and mercy, so called, because faithfully promised, and therefore righteously bestowed. Of his salvation. And notice here, again, the appropriating pronoun: the GOD of the salvation of all men spoken of as the GOD of his salvation only, who is thus blessed. A mediæval author says, "This Bishop, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, is recorded to have given His blessing, over and over again, to foes as well as friends, to evil-doers, as well as to them that work righteousness; but very rarely do we read of His pronouncing a curse. Would that the Bishops of our own day would follow His example! Would that for injuries inflicted on them they would learn not to anathematize, and to cover themselves with cursing as with a raiment!" Righteousness. And yet S. Augustine, commenting on such passages as this and those others, "which the LORD the righteous Judge shall give me in that day," "that they may have right unto the Tree of Life," and the like, says beautifully, "He, O LORD, that enumerates to Thee his true merits, what else doth he count up but Thy gifts?" And in another place: "When GOD crowns our merits, He crowns nothing else but His own gifts." Yet it is better to see, in this and in the following verse, the connection of the Head with the members, of the Captain with His soldiers, of the King with His people. [And a most pathetic application of the same idea is found in the use of this Psalm, in

the Western Office for the Burial of Children.] He, that is, our LORD and SAVIOUR, shall receive the blessing; and not He only, but all His faithful people together with Him; for it is written:

6 This is the generation of them that seek him: even of them that seek thy face, O Jacob. Because this mountain is so difficult to climb, because this law of GOD is so hard to keep, therefore it might well be thought that only two or three in an age, nay, perhaps only He Who alone is righteous, had been able to ascend it. This verse shows how mistaken is the idea: This is the generation. S. Bernard has a sermon addressed to the Cistercian brothers on this text. He distinguishes these generations: the first, those who remain yet unbaptized, who neither seek nor are sought by GOD; the second, those who are sought by GOD in Baptismal regeneration, but who seek Him not, because not crucifying, and utterly abolishing, the whole body of sin; the third, those who both seek and are sought, having been found by Him in Baptism, and finding Him every day in earnest prayer and in holy life; the fourth, those who seek Him in a more especial sense, as having given themselves up to Him entirely in the religious life; and these last he exhorts with all his own fervour from that text in

Isaiah, "If ye will seek, seek ye." That seek thy face, O Jacob. Or, as it is written in the Vulgate, That seek the face of the God of Jacob. If we take our own translation, we may explain it, with some of the Fathers, of our LORD spoken of under the title of Jacob; to show that it is by means of His Incarnation, His becoming like us and being called as we are, that only we venture to approach Him. But Bredenbach explains it in a more ingenious manner. That seek thy face, O Jacob, means according to him, "That seek the Face which thou, O Jacob, didst behold when thou didst wrestle in that night-struggle." And then, in allusion to this, we may very well take Jacob's own exclamation, "I have seen GOD face to face, and my life is preserved." That is, we for this reason seek the face that Jacob saw, that our life may also be preserved. But, if we take the more usual translation, then He Whom we seek is called the GOD of Jacob, to signify that we also must struggle and wrestle, if we would attain to Him: which lesson of earnestness in prayer is also taught us by the double repetition. Them that seek Him, even of them that seek Thy face. "That seek Thy face!" exclaims Venerable Bede: "but what shall it be when the seeking shall have passed, and the finding shall have begun! when we not only behold the goodly pearl, but, having sold all that we had, merit to purchase it! when the time of prayer is over, and that of praise shall have commenced!"

"JESU, the Hope of souls forlorn, How good to them for sin that mourn! To them that seek Thee, O how kind, But what art Thou to them that find?" 7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors : and the King of glory shall come in. Notice, in the first place, the difference of our version from the Vulgate: Lift up, ye princes, your gates. Yet the sense is the same in both: whether the gates

are called on to lift up themselves, or those who have the charge of them to throw them open. Now there are five principal meanings which have been attached to this verse: we will take them in turn. The first would apply to CHRIST's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday. There is no doubt that, originally referring to the ark, the Psalmist had an eye to its many wanderings through the forty years' desert to Gilgal, to Shiloh, in the land of the Philistines, to Kirjathjearim, to the house of Obed-Edom, and now finally to its appointed resting-place in the hill of Sion. In like manner, after so many journeyings from Nazareth to the house of S. Elizabeth, back to Nazareth, to Bethlehem, into Egypt, to Nazareth again, and thenceforward through Judæa, and Samaria, and Galilee, our LORD now came up to His final earthly abode in Jerusalem. This interpretation, however, has received but very small support; and indeed is very mean compared with the others.

The second, which is received by very great authorities, would refer it to our LORD's descent into Hell, His bursting the gates of brass, and smiting the bars of iron in sunder. To this the Latin Church would seem to appropriate it, by appointing this Psalm as one of those for the Second Nocturn for Easter Eve, with the antiphon from this verse. S. Epiphanius has a magnificent passage, in which he represents our LORD attended by an army of angels, Michael and Gabriel in the fore-ranks, demanding admission at hell-gate; bursting open the unwilling doors, tearing them from the hinges, casting them forth into the abyss, commanding that they shall never be raised any more. "CHRIST," he exclaims, "CHRIST, the Door, is present: unto GOD the LORD belong the issues of death." In the same sense, Lævinus Torrentius, in one of his poems for Easter Eve, writes: In this sense S. Gregory, Hom. 21, in Evang.; S. Athanas. Orat. 4, in Arian.; S. Peter Chrysolog. Serm. 65.

Ferali linquens pendentia stipite membra, Spiritus infernas Victor adibit aquas: Debellanda illic sēvi fera numina Ditis, Magnaque de magnâ præda petenda domo. Ite Duci comites! Nondum via trita: sed ipse, Ipse per insuetum vos bene ducet iter. Idiomela for the Great Sabbath. To the same effect the Eastern Church, on the great Sabbath, exclaims: "To-day, Hades groans and cries out, It had been profitable for me if I had never received Him That was born of Mary; for, coming upon me, He hath dissolved my strength, He hath broken the gates of brass: He, as GOD, hath raised up the souls which I before held. Glory, O LORD, to Thy Cross, and to Thy Resurrection! To-day, Hades groans and cries out, My might is dissolved: I receive to myself a mortal, as one of the dead; Him I can in no way have strength to hold, but I lose with Him those over whom I rule: I detain the dead for all ages, but behold, He raiseth up all. Glory, O LORD, to Thy Cross, and to Thy Resurrection! Of this day Moses beforehand spoke mystically as in a type: 'And GOD blessed the seventh day.' For this is that blessed Sabbath, this is that day of rest, in which the Only-begotten SON of GOD rested from all His works, keeping Sabbath in the flesh, on account of His device which He had devised concerning death; and returning

back again to that which He was by His Resurrection, He hath bestowed on us the life which is eternal, as only good, and the Lover of men."

"Therefore," exclaims Gerhohus, "O infernal princes, at whose persuasion the Innocent suffered unjustly, now ye must lose even them whom ye appeared to possess by a kind of justice. Away, then, with your gates! speak no more of the cause which ye seem to have of justly detaining them! keep silence when He is at hand in Whom your prince, when he came, found nothing. Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. It is a reiteration of the command: Let Pharaoh hear whose princes ye are. For our true Joseph, though sold, is yet alive, and hath dominion over all the land of Egypt, not only in the world, but also in hell. On His part we command you, be ye lift up, ye gates, that were subject to the hard bondage of the Egyptians; for they that were retained by them shall no longer groan under that domination, but, baptized in the Red Sea of the Blood of CHRIST, shall enter into the land of promise."

In this sense S. Basil, Theodoret, S. Cyril of Alexandria, Tertullian, S. Cyprian. The third signification would see in this verse the exclamation of the angels attending our ascended LORD. None can express this meaning more beautifully than our own Giles Fletcher: "Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates, And let the Prince of Glory enter in! At Whose brave volley of sidereal states, The sun to blush, and stars grow pale, were seen; When leaping first from earth He did begin To climb His angel flight; then open hang Your crystal doors: so all the chorus sang Of heavenly birds, as to the stars they nimbly sprang. "Out leap the antique patriarchs all in haste, To see the powers of hell in triumph led; And with small stars a garland interchased Of olive leaves they bore to crown His head, That was before with thorns degloried : After them flew the Prophets, brightly stoled

In shining lawn, and wimpled manifold, Striking their ivory harps strung all in chords of gold. "Nor can the Martyrs' wounds them stay behind; But out they rush among the heavenly crowd, Seeking their heaven out of their heaven to find; Sounding their silver trumpets out so loud That the shrill noise brake through the starry cloud; And all the virgin souls, in pure array, Came dancing forth, and making joyous play: So Him they led along into the courts of day. "So Him they led into the courts of day, Where never war nor wounds abide Him more; But in that house eternal peace doth play, Acquieting the souls that, new besore, Their way to heaven through their own blood did score: But now, estranged from all misery, As far as heaven and earth discoasted lie, They bathe in quiet waves of immortality." The King of Glory shall come in. "O Faith!" exclaims Gerhohus, "O eternal gate, by whose present vision thou art perfected and exalted! And Thou, O Hope of the elect, which, fixed on eternal blessings, canst never disappoint, now exult, now rejoice; for lo! the King of Glory is about to enter in, to disappoint His servants of no part of the blessings which have been promised by Thee." And so the Eastern

Church: ”To-day the heavenly powers beholding our nature exalted to heaven, and marvelling at the strange ascent, doubted and said one to the other, Who is this that is at hand? And beholding their own LORD, they exhorted each other to lift up the celestial gates. In company with whom we praise Thee ceaselessly, Thee Who wilt in the flesh come again from that place as Judge of all, and Almighty GOD.”

The fourth meaning is that of S. Augustine, but followed by few, though Venerable Bede accepts it. According to him, the princes are the kings of the world, now called, by accepting the Gospel, to permit the King of Glory to enter into their several territories. A very poor and unworthy sense. The fifth meaning sees in the verse a prophecy of the Incarnation; and on this account it is, that, in the Mass of the Vigil of the Nativity, it forms the offertory. This sense is adopted by S. Jerome; though here also he would find a spiritual reference to the virtual opening of the gates of heaven by the fact of our LORD’s taking flesh upon Himself. In all the services for the dedication of a Church, this Idiomela for the Ascension. A. verse has been prominently used; the entrance of the LORD into His new temple being regarded as symbolical of His entrance into the ”house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

[There is yet a sixth meaning attached to this verse. Ye who once were the slaves of sin, but are now not only free, but princes, as GOD’s kings and priests, lift up your gates, removing the barriers which sin puts between you and GOD, and those once gone, be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors of virtue and holiness, which cannot pass away, and then the King of Glory will enter His palace of the believing soul. The Mozarabic Missal employs the words in a further sense, in the course of a collect said just before the consecration of the elements into the Body and Blood of CHRIST.] 8 Who is the King of glory: it is the LORD strong and mighty, even the LORD mighty in battle.

The explanation of this must of course depend on the meaning we have attached to the demand. If that demand were addressed to the spirits of darkness, then the attendant angels may well speak of the victories won by the LORD in former days: won for His people Israel, when He overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea,—when the walls of Jericho fell down at the blast of the trumpet,—when the seven nations were cast out before the chosen tribes: the victories over all their enemies, from the possession of Canaan till the overthrow of Antiochus. If we see in the demand the voice of the triumphant angels at the Ascension, well may they speak of the LORD mighty in battle, when Satan and all his hosts, when sin, and death, and hell have just been utterly vanquished. The words of Vieyra are well worth notice: ”When CHRIST ascended in triumph to heaven, the angels who accompanied Him said to them that kept the guard, Lift up, O ye princes, your gates, and the King of Glory shall come in. They think the term strange; and before opening the portal, they inquire, Quis est iste Rex Gloriæ? This Whom you call the

King of Glory, Who is He? To the one, and for the other band, of angels, S. Augustine replies with these noble words: 'The heavenly spirits beheld CHRIST all-glorious with His wounds; and bursting into admiration at those glittering standards of Divine virtue, they poured forth the hymn, Quis est iste Rex Gloriæ?' Wonderful saying! CHRIST our LORD, in the day of His Ascension, went arrayed with glorious gifts, like the Blessed One that He was; but the angels called Him not King of Glory because they saw Him glorious, but because they saw Him wounded. Far greater glory they were for CHRIST and for the angels, those marks of His Passion, than the endowments of His blessedness."

Then, if we refer the former verse to the Annunciation, the question here is only that of S. Mary, Who is this King of Glory? And herein is the greatness of His love, that the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, did not abhor the Virgin's womb, and vouchsafed to tabernacle there the appointed time. Ibi— and lay great stress on that adverb— Ibi regem de Sion Expaveseit rex Ammon; Ibi tremit Babylon, Quia noster Solomon Coronatur in Gihon. The Hymn, Quando noctis medium. 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors : and the King of glory shall come in. 10 Who is the King of glory : even the LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.

There remains but one observation to be made on the repeated demand and reply. In the first the LORD, victorious over the grave, was ascending into heaven, alone, so far as human nature was concerned,—alone, so far as regards His faithful servants, yet bearing the burden and heat of the day, while He was entering into rest. But now we look forward to the end of the world. And behold, He reascends, not now by Himself, but with all the multitude of the redeemed, with all His saints, from the beginning of the world to the last that was written in the Book of Life. Well, therefore, was the reply to the first question,—"The LORD, strong and mighty;" for what greater proof of might than the overthrow of death and hell? And with equal force the second reply is, The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory: when it is not a single warrior returning in triumph, but a mighty Chief, followed by the multitude of His victorious soldiers. "And may the Lord of Hosts," so a mediæval preacher concludes his sermon on this verse, "the true David, the Victor over the spiritual Goliath, the Founder of the everlasting city on Mount Sion, be to us the pacific Solomon, the Lord, yet in another sense, of Hosts, and introduce us one day into that land where Judah and Israel shall be as many as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry!"

A. And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Whose is the earth and all that therein is; and to the SON, the King of Glory; and to the HOLY GHOST, the Righteousness of the GOD of our salvation. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen. O GOD, the establisher of the world, to Whom all the plenitude of the earth is obedient: restore us to the innocency of life, that

Thou going before us, we may ascend to the mountain of sanctification. Through (1.) LORD, strong and mighty, LORD, mighty in battle, cleanse our hearts from all sin, and keep our hands without guilt, and purify our souls from vanity, that we may merit to stand in Thy holy place, and to receive the blessing from the LORD our GOD. Through Thy mercy (11.) Mozarabic, for Ascension-tide. O LORD, the King of Glory, Who, by the completion and opening of the prophetic oracles, didst, as it were, lift up the eternal gates, and didst return to Thy FATHER'S seat,—because, while Thy Godhead, which had never departed thence, is again there, access is open to the human race,—grant that thither our desires may arise, where our Redeemer has already preceded, and that we may never be detained by the captivity of our lusts on earth, when the Head of our body is already rejoicing with Thee in heaven. Through Thy mercy (11.)

[O LORD of Hosts and King of Glory, purify our conscience, that alway being clean in hands and pure in heart, we may receive blessing and everlasting mercy from Thee. Through (1.)]

Psalm 25

TITLE. A Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST, when the temple of His Body was destroyed, should raise it again after three days. He hath sent a song to His elect. The song of the elect. Concerning the doctrine of Confession. The voice of the Church repenting with her whole soul. The voice of the Church against her enemies. By fasting. A song for the catechumens and elect. VEN. BEDE. Through the whole Psalm the Church prays that she may not, before the Presence of the LORD, appear contemptible to her enemies. In the first part she makes supplication that she may be taught the commandments of the LORD, and His ways: Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. Secondly, she asks for the favours which He hath bestowed on the Holy Fathers from the beginning: Call to remembrance, O Lord, Thy tender mercies, &c. Thirdly, she showeth how they that keep the commandments of the LORD merit eternal rewards, and protesteth that she will constantly remain in the will of the same LORD. The first portion, therefore, consists of five letters; the second of six; the third of nine.

S. JEROME. The 25th Psalm contains the prayer of the Mediator offered to the FATHER: it may also be the clamour of the Church making her requests to GOD.

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Tuesday; originally Sunday: Prime. [Office for the Dead: II. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: II. Nocturn. Eastern Church. Ferial: Terce. In Lent: Compline. Benedictine. Sunday: I. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. [Office of the Dead: The sins * of my youth and my ignorances, remember not, O LORD.] Ambrosian. My GOD, my GOD, look upon me. K. K. K. Mozarabic. My GOD, I have put my trust in Thee: O let me not be confounded. Benedictine. Mine eyes * are ever looking unto the LORD. This is the first of the Alphabetic Psalms: that is, of those in which each verse, or each clause, commences consecutively with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The others are the 34th, the

37th, the 111th, the 112th, the 119th, and the 145th. Besides these, the Lamentations of Jeremiah are written on the same system, and the 31st chapter of the Book of Proverbs. Some of the Psalms, of which this is one, are not absolutely perfect in this acrostic arrangement. It is a more ingenious than likely suggestion of Cassiodorus, that those in which the acrostic is maintained without a flaw are intended to describe the state of the perfect; the Psalms in which it is not unbroken, of those who are only striving after perfection.

Probably from these Psalms arose the ABCdarian hymns of the Latin, and Canons of the Eastern Church. The former are by no means uncommon: as, for example, that of Sedulius, A solis ortus cardine: that beginning, Æterna cæli gloria: the A Patre Unigenitus: that of Ethelwald, Alma lucerna micat: the Altissimi verbum Patris: the Agni Genitor Domine. In the Greek Canons many might be quoted: it will suffice to mention those in the Octoechus, and one on the Metastasis of S. John (Sept. 27) antistrophic: (i.e., beginning at the end.) 1 Unto thee, O LORD, will I lift up my soul; my GOD, I have put my trust in thee: O let me not be confounded, neither let mine enemies triumph over me.

The Apostle commands us, ”Cast not away, therefore, Heb. x. 35. your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. Acting in agreement with that command, the Psalmist begins with the expression of his own confidence: My God, I have Ay. put my trust in Thee. And if we take the words as spoken by our LORD, they merely assert that which He said on the Saturday before His Passion: ”I knew that Thou hearest Me always. He says Himself, I have put My trust in Thee. He commands it to us: ”Ye believe, or rather ye have confidence in GOD; have confidence also in Me. Do I lift up my soul. It is well and wisely commanded by Isaiah, ”Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: because by nature our soul ”cleaveth unto the dust. In the very beginning of this his prayer, David commences by raising his mind. It is the Sursum corda which has commenced the Christian sacrifice from the very beginning. Well says S. John Damascene: ”Prayer is the elevation or ascent of the soul to GOD. O let me not be confounded. It is the Second Adam that speaks. The first had said, ”I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. Of the second it is written, ”Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon. Let not mine enemies triumph. You may take it of Satan and his hosts, as S. Athanasius does: or, as S. Jerome, of temporal enemies;

as Gentiles against the Jews, or heretics against the Church. Let them not triumph, when we are beginning some holy work, as Tobiah against Nehemiah: ”Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall: or as the Jews at the day of Pentecost, ”These men are full of new wine. Unto Thee, O Lord. Erchembert says, beautifully enough: ”It is the voice of the Church to CHRIST: that Church, which lay low in the valley of tears, before CHRIST came into the world; but by His Advent, He hath raised her in faith, in hope, and in love. It is just

the same thing as corn, which, if it lies low in the ground, rots: if it sprouts up, it shall be preserved. Thus the soul which perseveres in its sins goes to decay, and perishes; if it is raised up, and amends itself, and stands in faith, hope, and love, it is guarded by the LORD."

2 For all they that hope in thee shall not be ashamed: but such as transgress without a cause shall be put to confusion. The wise man is the best Commentator. "Look at the generations of old, and see: did ever any trust in the LORD, and was confounded? or did any abide in His fear, and was 1 It is a curious example of the way in which Gerhohus presses the verse on which he is commenting to apply to the religious state of the time, when we find him thus writing on this first verse: "My GOD, I have put my trust in Thee: I trust not in the traditions of the Pharisee; I trust not in idols; I trust not in the sects of heresies; I trust not in the interdicted masses of Simoniacs."

forsaken? or whom did He ever despise that called upon Him? The multitudes, as the Fathers remind us, hoped in CHRIST for three days, and were rewarded by being fed with five loaves and two small fishes. S. Albertus Magnus well says: They that hope in Thee; but it must be with courage, as it is written, "O tarry thou the LORD's leisure: be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart; and put thy trust in the LORD. It must be even under correction; according to that saying, "Yea, in the way of Thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for Thee. It must be, although He seem to procrastinate, giving us that for which we hope; according to that saying, "Reward them that wait for Thee. And the end of this waiting the wise man tells us: "The patient man will bear for a time, and afterward joy shall spring up unto him. And again: "Yea, I am with him in trouble: I will deliver him and bring him to honour. Deliver him, that is, liberating him from the punishment he has deserved by nature; bring him to honour, bestowing on him the glory that he has merited by CHRIST. And notice that this verse begins with the letter Gimel. Now Gimel, by interpretation, is perfection; because patience is the perfection and crown of all virtues. As S. James saith, "Let patience have her perfect work. And again it is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Through patience the promises are inherited. Shall be put to confusion.

Thus He turns back the shame on His enemies which they have poured upon Him. And so the Church applies in Passiontide those words of Jeremiah, "Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded; let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed; bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction. The translation of the Vulgate is somewhat different. Confounded be all they that do wickedness vainly. S. Augustine understands it of those who so vainly toil to acquire those earthly riches which make themselves wings and fly away. Ruffinus takes it to show how vain is every work of the wicked, seeing that it cannot be carried on in the next world; that there its contriver may

say with Job, ”My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.”

Ecclus. i. 23. S. James i. 4. A. 3 Show me thy ways, O LORD : and teach me thy paths. Notice the difference between ways and paths. By ways, we understand GOD’s laws, that are common to all men; by paths, which are straighter and narrower than ways, those evangelical counsels, such as poverty, chastity, and obedience, of which it is written, ”All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.” Observe also the difference of the verbs to show and to teach: as, if once shown, the ways were comparatively easy, but the paths must be taught Serm. 58 in Cant.

with difficulty and perseverance. Or, as Gerhohus puts it neatly, Show me Thy ways by the most shining example of Thy conversation among men in the active life: and teach me Thy paths, in the contemplative life, by which the saints desire to behold Thy divine face in heaven. Thy ways, not any of which lead to destruction, but all are ways of life. S. Bernard teaches that the soul desirous of GOD is said in the Psalms to be continually searching out these things, namely, justice, judgment, and the place of the dwelling of GOD’s glory, as the way in which she is to walk, the rule by which she is to journey, and the goal to which she is to tend. S. Augustine, the Doctor of Grace, who never misses one clause that tells of grace, takes occasion to deduce its necessity from this verse. Show me, because I cannot show myself: teach me, for without Thee I can never learn. Thy ways: and principally Him Who said, ”I am the Way; and Whom Solomon calls the Beginning of GOD’s ways. Show me Thy ways; according as it is written, ”The LORD directeth the steps; and teach me Thy paths, according to that saying, ”Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of GOD in truth: the motive, as S. Albertus speaks, thus coming before the apprehension. Teach me.

Corderius well observes that we are not here to understand the word teaching in the way in which Scripture or any external authority is said to teach; for in that sense the prophet had already been taught the ways of the LORD: but of the inward teaching of the SPIRIT of GOD, and that twofold. The first, that by which He persuades men to embrace His ways as really desirable, and to be followed for the sake of happiness; the other, that by which He takes advantage of every little external circumstance or accident to draw His own lessons therefrom. After all, I know not but that I prefer the brief comment of Ludolph to any other, who, after quoting the text, merely says, ”O LORD, let me not err.”

4 Lead me forth in thy truth, and learn me: for thou art the GOD of my salvation; in thee hath been my hope all the day long. Rom. i. 20. And here we have what we always must have in the service of GOD—progress: Lead me forth. There is among the works of S. Chrysostom a homily on this verse; which, however, is not Chrysostom’s, but some Latin author’s. He dwells on the principal means by which

GOD does learn us, namely, by that Church which cannot err. Learn me, that I may understand what I believe: for faith precedes, understanding follows: as it is written, ”If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.” Learn me; not in the book of nature, as the philosophers, for so it is written, ”The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made:”

nor yet in the book of Scripture, in which Thou teachest theologians; as it is written, ”The vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee, and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed:” but in Thy very truth, which is the book of life. For Thou art the God of my salvation. ”There are two things,” says Cassiodorus, ”which make good Christians: the first, that we should believe God to be the God of our salvation; the other, that we constantly set His final retribution before our eyes.” In Thee hath been my hope. It is the voice of the saints before the Advent waiting and expecting the Coming of the LORD. And in this sense it may well be said, For Thou art the God of my salvation. For who is the God of our salvation but JESUS? All the day long. S. Chrysostom takes it as opposed to night, of our LORD Himself, the true Day. As if the Prophet said. In Thee hath been my hope, on account of that SAVIOUR Who is to come. For Thou art the God. Notice the twofold pleading in this petition for help: the one on the part of GOD, the other on the part of ourselves. On the part of GOD, love; on the part of ourselves, patience. And these both taken together, make good the initial letter of the verse, He, which is life.

In S. Johan. xiv. 31. Notice that this way of understanding ”all the day long” is precisely similar to the English vulgarism, ”all along of a person;” meaning to say, ”for the sake” or ”because of that person.” It is worth while noticing, both as a piece of ecclesiastical history, and also as a specimen of the manner in which Gerhobus applies the Psalm to himself, the extraordinary insertion which he here makes in his commentary. After speaking on the clause, In Thee hath been my hope all the day long, he dwells at great length on the example of S. Peter waiting for our LORD’s pardon after his threefold denial. And he then proceeds:—”But that I, the writer of this work, may speak of my own especial needs, did not the cock crow well to me”—he is referring to the cock that crew for S. Peter’s warning—”when they were increased that trouble me, and many one there was that said of

my soul, There is no help for him in his God; when by their prejudices I was condemned as a heretic and schismatic,”—he alludes to the Council of Badenberg, in which his teaching with regard to the Hypostatic Union was called in question,—”and in living with them I felt as it were the cold that Peter felt in the hall of Caiaphas, when the ministers of Antichrist stood around me, and my friends retreated afar off. When the night was cold, and the coals of my enemies were suspected by me, in the midst of the sorrows of that dark night, the cock crew; for the Roman

Pontiff, having heard of my persecution, and the causes of that persecution, wrote me consolatory letters in this fashion." He then quotes a brief of Celestine II., who sat from September 25, 1143, to March 8, 1144. "By these letters I was evoked to the Apostolic See, and came thither, and found Pope Celestine already dead, to whom It would seem, as Dr. Good very well observes, that from the latter clause of this verse has been separated the clause which now forms the end of the sixth. According to most mediæval commentators, the Vau verse has accidentally been lost. He would arrange the Psalm so that it should take its proper place, and the fourth verse be relieved of its third member thus:

"He. Lead me forth in Thy truth, and learn me : for Thou art the GOD of my salvation. "Vau. In Thee hath been my hope all the day long : for Thy goodness, O LORD." The sixth verse (according to our numbering) will then stand: "O remember not the sins of my youth : but according to Thy mercy think Thou upon me." 5 Call to remembrance, O LORD, thy tender mercies : and thy lovingkindnesses, which have been ever of old. And here we may notice the manner in which the Psalmist carries on his supplication. For this Psalm is the pattern of all prayer. 1. He calls on the mercy of GOD to pity him. 2. He exposes his own infirmity that it may be helped, in verse 6. 3. He tells how He has been heard, that others may be comforted, in verse 7. Call to remembrance, O Lord, Thy tender mercies; and GOD makes answer, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Why does He say lovingkindnesses in the plural, rather than lovingkindness? And they give the answer, Because it is written, "How multiplied" (our version reads excellent) "is Thy mercy, O GOD!" And it has been well said that this very verse, in its method of addressing GOD, is another proof of His mercy : that He allows Himself to be asked to call to remembrance; as if He, the omniscient, ever could forget. Think Thou upon me. We cannot read such words without remembering the most marvellous as well as the most touching time that they ever were uttered, "LORD, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!"

6 O remember not the sins and offences of my succeeded Pope Lucius, who by his consolations was again my morning cock, as may be seen in his brief;" he quotes one to Conrad, Archbishop of Salzburg, in which that Pontiff highly commends the doctrine of Gerhobus: and the whole ends with a thanksgiving to GOD. "For," says the writer, "unless I had been defended by the Pontiffs of the Apostolic See, or by some other intelligent cocks, I should have been long ago prescribed by the Simoniacs and Nicolaitans." youth : but according to thy mercy think thou upon me, O LORD, for thy goodness.

Notice the difference of sins and offences : as the Vulgate has it, delicta et ignorantiæ : following the LXX., ἁμαρτία καὶ ἐγνοία. The greater part of the commentators take the sins, in the full force of the Latin word, to mean sins of omission : but

Cassiodorus, though not employing the word, understands them to be venial sins. So early a passage on that subject is curious, and worth quoting : ”They will have delictum to be something that is of less moment than a sin, and is so called because it leaves the way of strict justice, but yet is not conversant in any deep depravity of crime. For it is a delictum to take one’s food too greedily ; to give way to immoderate laughter ; to waste time in idle words, and other matters of the same sort, which do not appear to be very heavy sins, but which nevertheless are manifestly prohibited. Dionysius observes that all sins may be divided into three classes,—the three bands of the Chaldæans again,—the three companies of spoilers that came out from the camp of the Philistines : sins of ignorance, sins of infirmity, and sins of presumption. Sins of ignorance, he says, are especially directed against the SON, as the personification of wisdom ; sins of infirmity against the FATHER, as that of power ; sins of presumption against the HOLY GHOST, as that of goodness. Hence the expositors take occasion to discuss the question, how far ignorance exempts from or palliates sin.

”I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. Those are noble words of the Second Council of Utrecht, directed against the miserable laxity of later times, that ignorance exempts from sin, properly so called. ”The eternal law, naturally implanted in all, can only be matter of ignorance, from the blindness and corruptions of the heart ; therefore this ignorance can never, in the case of adults, who have the use of their reason, be properly, fully, and entirely invincible, nor can it excuse from sin. Wherefore the Psalmist saith with tears, O remember not the sins of my youth and my ignorances. ’Which class of offences,’ says S. Augustine, ’unless they were imputed by a just GOD, would not need the prayers of a faithful man for forgiveness.’” Euthymius ingeniously asks why he prays especially for forgiveness of ignorances ? And replies, Because sins of malice are not to be removed by prayer alone. Of my youth. Many do not take it of the literal season of youth, but of those passions which are most common to that season ; and so regard it as a prayer for the remission of the sins of concupiscence. Youth. Gerhohus sees in this, as in the preceding verses, a reference to S. Peter, and refers to that text, ”When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst ; which he ingeniously compares with Ahab’s reprimand of the Syrian’s boast, ”Let not him that girdeth on his harness, boast himself as he that

1 Tim. i. 13. Opus imperfect. i. 105 ; Neale’s Church of Utrecht, 316. putteth it off.” This accidental resemblance is worked out by him at very great length, and with more ingenuity than probability. Parez sees a reference to the sin of Adam, which was indeed the sin of the youth of the world: Theodorus of Heraclea, to the sins of the people in Egypt, the youth of the Israelitish Church. S. Augustine has a noble passage on the blessedness of those whose youth has passed without any special outbreak of mortal sin; and bitterly laments in his Confessions his own crimes at that age, when he was tantillus puer, sed tantus peccator. I will end with

a fine passage (though containing a different view of the text) from Vieyra with reference to this verse. He is preaching on S. Augustine's day, and telling of the confessions of that saint.

"David, when he is asking GOD's pardon for the offences of his youth, (such as those of Augustine also were,) makes his prayer after this fashion: O remember not the offences of my youth, nor my ignorances. These, which in the first place he calls offences, in the second he names ignorances: and the reason of his calling sins ignorances, is because he desired to palliate and excuse them under that name. But it seems that it neither ought so to have been, nor ought he so to have spoken. Ignorances are defects of the understanding: sins are defects of the will: and having to excuse one defect by another defect, it seems as if he ought to have charged it on the less noble power, which is the understanding; and not on the more noble, which is the will. And so David would have done, had he spoken and meant like a man; but he spoke and meant like a saint. The saints, as they know the weight and nature of sin, and how much more ugly are the defects of the will than those of the understanding, are more ashamed of being wicked than of being foolish; and had rather seem ignorant than sinners. Wherefore David, confessing his sins, alleges his ignorances as their excuse. Delicta juventutis meæ et ignorantias meas."

7 Gracious and righteous is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

Ay. Gracious and righteous. Gracious, says one, in respect of the mercy whereby He forgiveth sin; righteous in respect of the justice whereby He will by no means clear the guilty: gracious, in respect of His saying, "Behold, thou art made whole; righteous, in respect of His adding, "Go, and sin no more: gracious, when we look back to His first Advent, in great humility; righteous, when we look forward to His second Advent, in great justice. Gracious. It is in the Vulgate, sweet. But yet the wise man advises us well: "Say not, I have sinned, and what harm hath happened unto me? for the LORD is long-suffering; He will in no wise let thee go. And say not, His mercy is great, He will be pacified for the multitude of my sins: for mercy and wrath come from Him, and His indignation resteth against sinners. Will He teach: or, as it is in the Vulgate, Will He give the law to. "GOD," says Dionysius, "hath given a threefold law to man: the law of nature, the ceremonial law, and the evangelical law; and every one of these comes of His sweetness and of His love. Sinners in the way. They understand this expression in many different senses. Some take it to mean, He will teach sinners, who, though they are constantly offending, falling seven times a day, turning to the right hand or to the left hand, nevertheless, and on the whole, are keeping His commandments;

and in this sense the Western Church prays by the side of the dying, "For although he hath sinned, yet he hath not denied the FATHER, the SON, or the HOLY GHOST, but hath believed; and had a zeal for GOD, and hath faithfully adored GOD, Who made all things. Others, again, take the way to mean our LORD JESUS CHRIST,

the true WAY; so that the sense should be, Therefore will He teach sinners in, or because of, the Way, namely, our LORD. And yet again they take the way, after its common ecclesiastical meaning, to signify this life, so as to make the signification, Therefore will He teach sinners, while yet there is time and space for repentance, according to that saying, ”He is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto GOD by Him.”

8 Them that are meek shall he guide in judgment: and such as are gentle, them shall he learn his way. Meek. And who are they? Those who do not resist the leading grace of GOD. As it is written: ”So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of GOD that showeth mercy.” And again: ”A man’s heart deviseth his way, but the LORD directeth his steps.” It is the same command that is given by S. James, ”Receive with meekness the engrafted word.” In judgment. It may be understood in two different ways: either He will direct them by judgment, or prudence, so that they shall not turn to the right hand nor to the left, which is the usual interpretation of the later commentators; or He shall so direct them, that in the last judgment they shall stand unblamed before Him. We may apply to the Psalmist’s declaration, that the meek shall be guided in judgment, the explanation which S. Augustine gives of a similar passage. When he had written in his book, De Verá Religione, the following sentence: ”Attend therefore to that which follows as diligently and piously as thou canst; for it is such that GOD helps,” he explained it in his Retractations thus: ”I do not wish to be understood as if GOD only helps those that give all their attention with the greatest diligence; for He sometimes so assists those that do not, that they may become among the number of those who do.” So here GOD

S. James i. 21. Q De Serm. Dom. in Monte, c. 4. does not only guide the meek, but sometimes also He so directs the unmeek and ungentle, as that they may become meek; as S. John, who once demanded, ”Wilt Thou that we call down fire from heaven?” was afterwards guided and taught, till he became the Apostle of love. Such as are gentle: or, as S. Augustine will have it, humble. In his commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, he tells us, in imitation of the famous saying of Demosthenes about action, that for those who would learn God’s ways, humility is the first thing, humility is the second, humility is the third. And therefore our LORD Himself says, ”Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.” Shall He learn His way. Well says S. Gregory: ”The preacher can pronounce words which shall enter into the ears, but he cannot open the heart; and unless by internal grace God, only omnipotent, invisibly causes the spirits of the hearers to receive the words of the preacher, the latter labours in vain.” Them shall He learn His way. Wherefore David proceeds to show us what are God’s ways: saying,

9 All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth: unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies. In III. Reg. cap. 7.

This, then, explains the conclusion of the last verse. The Gloss says, ”Although the ways of the LORD, are, as it were, infinite, yet all are included in these two: whereof He exhibits the one by forgiving sin, the other by rewarding according to merit. All the paths of the Lord. ”Those ways,” says S. Bernard, ”which are everlasting, and under which, as Habakkuk says, the perpetual hills did bow: the hills being understood of those evil spirits who are to be cast down at the Coming of the LORD. Mercy and truth. They are here joined by God Himself; and those whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. S. Thomas, treating on this subject with a depth worthy of himself, explains mercy of the free, unmerited forgiveness of sins bestowed on us in Baptism; truth, of the reward given us according to our works, when the grace to do those works has once been put into our power. S. Anselm beautifully says: ”Thy mercy springs from Thy justice, because it is just that Thou shouldest so be good as to manifest Thy goodness by sparing. But if we consider justice, how it awards prizes and punishments according to our merits, mercy comes first: for God is moved by Himself and by the primary act of His will; in giving a reward or a punishment, He takes the occasion from ourselves. And that is a secondary and consequent act of His will. Rupert understands the two columns that stood before the temple to mean the same thing.

”There are,” says he, ”but two paths of the Lord; the whole house leans on two pillars; the whole edifice of Holy Scripture is supported by these two attributes. For whatever we have heard of all the ways of the LORD may be referred either to mercy or to truth. Again, as in a preceding verse, we may understand mercy and truth of the first and second Advent. And with this verse we may compare the expostulation in Ezekiel, ”Yet ye say, The way of the LORD is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel: is not My way equal? are not your ways unequal? Unto such as. Not to all; for as the house of Israel in that text, there are those who will persist in calling them harsh and unjust. His covenant and His testimonies. Here, again, the commentators differ as to the meaning of these two phrases. Some, as Venerable Bede, will have them to signify the Old and New Testaments: others, as S. Jerome and S. Albertus, by covenant understand the writings, by testimonies the human authors of Holy Scripture. On the whole, this chiefly, as Dionysius the Carthusian tells us, are we to learn from this verse, to pray that we may be kept from presumption, because all the paths of the Lord are truth; to pray that we may be kept away from despair, because all the paths of the Lord are mercy.

”But why GOD chooses justly to have mercy on one evil man rather than on another, cannot be discovered by us: nay,” S. Augustine saith, ”do not thou investigate this matter, if thou wouldst not err.”

A. 10 For thy Name’s sake, O LORD: be merciful unto my sin, for it is great.

I cannot do better than quote one of those beautiful passages of the great Vieyra, which gave him the character of the first preacher of his age. ”I confess, my GOD,

that it is so; that we all are sinners in the highest degree. He is preaching on a fast on occasion of the threatened destruction of the Portuguese dominion in Brazil by the Dutch. "But so far am I from considering this any reason why I should cease from my petition, that I behold in it a new and convincing argument which may influence Thy goodness. All that I have said before is based on no other foundation than the glory and honour of Thy most holy Name. Propter Nomen Tuum. And what motive can I offer more glorious to that same Name, than that our sins are many and great? For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin, for it is great. I ask Thee, saith David, to pardon, not every-day sins, but numerous sins, but great sins: multum est enim. O motive worthy of the breast of GOD! O consequence which can have force only when it bears on Supreme Goodness! So that, in order to obtain remission of his sins, the sinner alleges to GOD that they are many and great. Verily so; and that not for love of the sinner, nor for the love of sin, but for the love of the honour and glory of GOD;

which glory, by how much the sins He forgives are greater and more numerous, by so much the more ennobles and exalts itself. The same David distinguishes in the mercy of GOD greatness and multitude: greatness, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam; multitude, et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum. And as the greatness of the Divine mercy is immense, and the multitude of His loving-kindnesses infinite; and forasmuch as the immense cannot be measured, nor the infinite counted, in order that the one and the other may in a certain manner have a proportionate material of glory, it is necessary to the very greatness of mercy that the sins to be pardoned should be great, and necessary to the very multitude of loving-kindnesses that they should be many. Multum est enim. Reason have I, then, O LORD, not to be dismayed because our sins are many and great. Reason have I also to demand the reason from Thee, why Thou dost not make haste to pardon them?"

11 What man is he, that feareth the LORD: him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. Ay. Ecclus. i.21. Ecclus. xxxiv. 14. That feareth the Lord. There are three principal effects of the fear of GOD. It purifies, according to that saying, "The fear of the LORD driveth away sin." It fortifies, as it is written, "Whoso feareth the LORD shall not fear nor be afraid." Thirdly, it sanctifies, as Cassiodorus says: "The law of GOD begins in fear, and ends in love." What man is he? "Is there such a man!" exclaims one of the Fathers, "if there be,—but I much fear whether any hearers will be found,—let him attend." In the way that He shall choose. And here they dispute to whom the pronoun belongs: whether to GOD, or to him that feareth the LORD. The greater number of interpreters, headed by S. Jerome, understand it in the latter sense. Thus, for example, when the soldiers demanded of John Baptist, What shall we do? the publicans, What shall we do? and the common people also, he gave them an answer applicable to the way of life which each of them had chosen. Thus, also, there must be special rules for those that have chosen the secular and

the religious life. And this affords a very good meaning, and may well teach priests how, in giving their advice, they follow the example of the great High Priest, and teach each man who comes to them in the way that he shall choose. But surely it is better to understand the verse in the other sense: in the way, namely, which GOD shall choose. Thus Gerhohus and Jansenius expound the clause.

12 His soul shall dwell at ease: and his seed shall inherit the land.

Shall tarry in good things, as it is in the Vulgate. Unlike the soul of Adam, who, being put into possession of the delights of Paradise, tarried there but a few days or hours. His soul must indeed at first sojourn in Mesech, and dwell among the tents of Kedar; but it shall tarry for ever in those good things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. S. Ambrose takes it in the sense that the righteous man, however surrounded by affliction,—nay, however oppressed and encircled by the wicked,—does even at that very moment tarry among good things; because ”all things shall work together for good to them that love God. Cassiodorus, rejecting every idea of a purgatory, applies it to the state of the righteous immediately after death: surrounded, indeed, with good things, but yet tarrying for the completion of happiness, the Beatific Vision. To the same purpose speaks the Eastern Liturgy, when it asks a place for the departed ”in tabernacles of light and gladness, in habitations of shade and quiet, amidst the treasures of happiness, whence all sorrow is banished afar, where the souls of the righteous expect without labour the guerdon of life, and the spirits of the just wait for the end of the promised reward, in that country where the workers and the weary look on to Paradise, and they that are invited to the wedding long for the Celestial Bridegroom, and ardently desire to receive that new state of glory.

Others explain it of the possession of heaven itself, and its three principal blessednesses—vision, love, fruition. But, taking it in the sense which would see in it a promise on earth, Hugh of S. Victor says admirably, ”He expresses with great sweetness spiritual delectation, where He says, His soul shall tarry in good things. For whatever is carnally sweet yields without doubt a delectation for the time to such as enjoy it, but cannot tarry long with them; because, while by its taste it provokes appetite, by its transit it cheats desire. But spiritual delights, which neither pass away as they are tasted, nor decrease while they refresh, nor cloy while they satiate, can tarry for ever with their possessors. And his seed shall inherit the land. Almost all the commentators take his seed to signify his good works; and S. Albertus collects, in illustration of this sense, the texts which I append in the margin. And with this may be compared the verse, ”That when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations,” if by the they we are to understand the good works we have sent afore.

In Liturgiâ S. Clementis Syro-Jacobticâ. Et virtute meritorum Illic introducitur Omnis, qui ob CHRISTI Nomen Hoc in mundo premitur. The Hymn, Urbs beata

Hierusalem. Others, again, will have the earth to mean the body of him of whom the Psalmist speaks; and the sense to be, that his seed, his higher self, his new nature, shall keep that body under subjection, and rule over it with an absolute sway. Others, again, see in the earth a figurative expression for our LORD's Body, which the righteous possess in the Blessed Sacrament here, and shall more gloriously and entirely possess there. And if we apply the whole text to our LORD, His blessed soul, now no more "troubled," now no more "exceeding sorrowful," dwells in everlasting ease in the kingdom which His might has won for Him; and His seed—for "now are we the sons of GOD,"—shall one day possess the earth, the new earth, the ἀντίχθονα, as the Pythagoreans express it, which He Himself has purchased for them.

13 The secret of the LORD is among them that fear him: and he will show them his covenant. Here again the Vulgate differs: The Lord is a strong foundation to them that fear Him. For the fear of men weakens, says one; but the fear of the LORD strengthens. "In the way of GOD," says S. Gregory, "we begin in fear, and we end in fortitude." Gerhohus takes the firmamentum of the Vulgate, and sees in it a reference to the separation of the waters from the waters, and of the firmament which was called heaven. But, if we take our own translation, we shall find it authorized by the secretum Domini of S. Jerome, the ἀπόβρητον of Aquila, and the μυστήριον of Theodotion. And they quote the "Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," of our LORD: and again, His "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what things his LORD doeth; but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of My FATHER, I have made known unto you." Think again, too, of the declaration in Amos: "Surely the LORD GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret to His servants the Prophets;" and the equally loving question in Genesis, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation?" We may take it, if we will, as spoken of Him Who once said, "Why askest thou thus after My Name, seeing it is secret?" and then, in the next clause, He, He Whose Name is thus wonderful, shall show them His covenant; His Cross, which is to be their crown; His imprisonment in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, which is to be their everlasting peace.

[Yet again, the secret of the LORD dwelt within her who feared Him, His lowly handmaiden, to whom He showed His covenant by the voice of the Archangel. Sedulius. The Hymn, A solis ortus cardine. Castæ parentis viscera Cœlestis intrat gratia; Venter puellæ bajulat Secreta quæ non noverat. Firmamentum: the LXX., κραταίωμα, which does not seem to come very well from . His secret, the mystery of the Sacrament of the Altar, "latens Deitas," as the hymn says, abides amongst His faithful ones, to whom He discloses Himself in that bond of the New Covenant, when they feed on Him in faith. Mary's womb the folded bloom of Sharon's Rose contained, And I may share the load she bare, though not like her unstained: Joy such as hers

my spirit stirs, the hungry Thou hast fed, My GOD, my King, to Thee I sing, Who art the Living Bread.] S. Thomas Aquinas, The Rhythm, Adoro te devote.

14 Mine eyes are ever looking unto the LORD: for ye he shall pluck my feet out of the net. And this is the same thing which is written in Ecclesiastes: ”The wise man’s eyes are in his head:” that is, in our True Head, our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Out of the net, which Satan, that diligent fisher of souls, spreads in the troublesome waters of this world, ”wherein,” as they remind us, ”are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts,” all manner of temptation, both in its tremendous and in its meanest forms. ”The eye,” says Hugh of S. Victor, ”is the active intention: he therefore hath his eyes ever to the LORD, who directs, by intention to the Law of GOD, all that he does. And his feet are set loose from the net, because that cannot be an evil action which is set on foot by the law of GOD.” S. Chrysostom remarks, ”Birds, while they cleave the air at a height, are not easily taken. Thus thou, if thou wilt only fix thine eyes on the things that are above, wilt not easily be taken with any snares. Birds have wings given to them to this end,—that they may avoid snares: men have reason,”— but he should rather have said the power of prayer—”that they may avoid the temptations of the devil.”

15 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me: for I am desolate and in misery. Thou, Who causest mine eyes to turn to Thee, turn Thine also to me. Thou once, when Thou didst create Adam, didst only see a noble creature, formed after Thine own Image, in Thine own likeness, endued with every glorious power of soul, when man was very good. Now Thou beholdest one of whom Thy Prophet saith well, ”From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.” Nevertheless, turn Thee unto me! If Thou turnest from me, who will turn to me? Isa. i. 6. The Priest beheld, and passed The way he had to go: A careless eye the Levite cast And left me to my woe: But Thou, O Good, O Loving One, draw nigh; Have pity on me! say, Thou shalt not die!

Triodion, the Great Penitential Canon. Ezek. xvi. 6. Ven. Bed. in S. Matt. xxvi. S. Alb. Mag. Gen. i. 31. If Thou turn to me, Thine own love will compel Thee to have mercy on me, as on the woman that had had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years: as on the impotent man that had none to put him into the pool when it had been stirred up by the Angel: have mercy on me as Thou didst on her of old, of whom it is written, ”I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.” Ven. Bede well says, ”For GOD to look upon us is to have mercy upon us: for He looks not only on us when we turn to Him, but looks on us also that we may turn to Him.” And notice: GOD is said to look in three ways. There is the glance of His Wisdom, which He throws on all His creatures; ”GOD saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good:” the glance of His anger, which He casts on the ungodly; as it is written,—”His look resteth upon sinners:” and the glance of His love on the righteous, according to that saying,—”He hath respect unto His elect.” And

this verse well answers the 14th: for on whom can GOD look, save on one who is always looking to Him?

For I am desolate: or as it is in the Vulgate, The only one: in the LXX., The Only-begotten. And here, then, we have a key to the true sense. Who is this that cares to be looked upon, and to receive mercy, save He Who is the Only-begotten SON of the FATHER? Some take it indeed, to mean the only one, as not having a double heart: and that is true also: but far better it is to understand the verse of Him Who, being the Only and Eternal SON, yet became, of His own free will, subject to such misery as none else ever knew: Who was desolate beyond all earthly desolation, when He cried out, "My GOD, My GOD, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And then to Him, as to none else, the verses that follow will apply. 16 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.

Enlarged, indeed! From the moment that He was born "in the manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn," how did they increase, and gather, and multiply, till they found their full accomplishment in the Cross! And He speaks of the sorrows of His heart first, because that Agony in the Garden where they all found vent preceded in time, and—if we may without irreverence compare that which is infinite—exceeded in heaviness, the troubles of Mount Calvary. Out of my necessities, it is in the Vulgate: and Gerhohus beautifully dwells on the expression. "I know that it is necessary for me to eat, to sleep, to drink, to be clothed, if I desire to live: but, in order that I may be set free from the bonds of such necessities, therefore, 'to me to die is gain:' and therefore I 'desire to depart and to be with CHRIST.' I ask for a happy death, then, O my GOD! when I say, Deliver me out of my necessities. That rich man, who died ill, and in hell lift up his eyes being in torments, was not delivered from them, since, being athirst, he desired a drop of water to cool his tongue. But I desire so to die, that I may be with CHRIST. For if Lazarus, before the Advent of CHRIST, was free, in the bosom of Abraham, from these necessities, how much more I shall be liberated from them, if when dissolved I am with the LORD?

And then he goes on in a passage, the antithetical beauty of which could not be preserved in a translation: "O Domine! sic de necessitatibus meis eripe me, ut quæ non possunt mihi viventi deesse, non possint obesse: sic insint, ut non obsint: serviant, non dominentur: sint mihi ad usum, non ad abusionem. The Italic version has dilatatæ instead of multiplicatæ: and Cassiodorus, who applies it to the Church, ingeniously observes, and like a consular as he was,—"Necesse est enim ut copioso fasce depuniatur, qui pro multis affligitur. The Saints take occasion from this verse to dwell on the danger of turning what are necessities into sins. Perimus licitis. And S. Augustine in his Confessions sadly complains that he had often sinned in this way. It is surely rather a hard construction put by the same Saint on this verse, where he understands sins to be signified by necessities, because through

the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright. Are enlarged. Many they are in kind, many in species, many in number, says the Biblical S. Albertus. Many in kind: Eccles. iv. 4. Many in species: Isa. xxxviii. 15, 2 Cor. xi. 29, Ecclus. xxv. 15. And in number: Ps. cxx. 4, Job iv. 20, Ps. xlii.

17 Look upon my adversity and misery: and forgive me all my sins. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, my humility and my labour. And what humility ever like His Who left the Throne for the Manger, the utmost bound of the everlasting hills for the womb of the Virgin? And what labour ever like His Who taught the multitude by day, continued all night in prayer to GOD, fainted under the weight of the Cross on which His own weight was so soon to be hung? Nor must we be afraid of applying the verse to our LORD because of its conclusion: forgive me all my sins. My sins,—those which for our sakes He bare,—those which bearing He atoned for,—those which, more than anything else, wrung from Him the Eli, Eli, lama And so we read in the Gradual of the Roman Missal for the Second Sunday in Lent: perhaps the translators read ἐπλατόνθησαν instead of ἐπληθύνθησαν.

This verse in the present text begins, like the succeeding one with , behold; which cannot be right, because the acrostic requires a , take away, seems the neatest word. G. sabackthani? But we may well also take the prayer into our own mouths. Adversity, every man that has a soul to save must expect from the enemy of that soul: misery is pledged to us by that saying, uttered too by him who was called the Son of Consolation, ”that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” S. Augustine ingeniously turns the verse against the Donatists: ”See my humility, whereby I never, through the boasts of righteousness, break off from unity.” Abbat Antiochus tells us, quoting this passage, that labour, undertaken for the sake of God, is one of the most favourable breezes which can carry us into the everlasting harbour. And S. Bernard affirms that humility and toil are the two uprights of the ladder by which we ascend to Paradise.

18 Consider mine enemies, how many they are: and they bear a tyrannous hate against me.

Consider: and why? Because, as Job says, ”He looketh upon men; and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profiteth me not: He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Consider Mine enemies. As He saith, ”FATHER, forgive them: for they know not what they do. How many they are. Look upon Me the Only One (ver. 15) on the one side: Mine enemies, banded together on the other: on Pharisees and Scribes, Jewish Rulers and Roman soldiers, Pilate and Herod: and they bear a tyrannous hate against Me, ”that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause. Or, if we understand the words as uttered by any afflicted Christian soul, then Gerhohus will explain them for us. ”Look upon the demons as the soldiers of Pharaoh, look upon the crowds of malignant men as the chariots

and horses of the same devils, look on the concupiscences implanted in my flesh and senses, look upon those undisciplined motives, of which I might well say, 'A man's foes shall be they of his own household.' Consider all these mine enemies.

And since I know not what I should wish with regard to each of them, since, as saith Thine Apostle, 'we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the SPIRIT itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered,' let that good and benign SPIRIT teach me what I should desire to happen to each of mine enemies; whether to devils, that they may be kept off, or to men, that they may be converted, or to carnal concupiscences, that they may be extinguished, or to those men who will not be converted, and are hardened in their nature like the Pharaoh, that they may be hindered from their evil effects. Cassiodorus ingeniously joins the multitude of the enemies with the prayer that they may be considered and so pardoned. The destruction of a few might not have seemed so great a matter: but the greatness of their ruin itself cries out to, and claims, mercy.

19 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in thee. Keep my soul in the first place from sin, and then deliver me, if it be Thy will, from affliction. If I am cast into the raging sea of this world, deliver me by sending the whale that, however unlikely a minister of safety, shall bear me securely to the shore: If I am thrown into the furnace of Babylon, deliver me, and let the Angel of the Covenant stand by me. If I am cast into the lion's den, deliver me by sending Thy Angel, who shall shut the mouths of those beasts. Let me not be confounded. "How should I be confounded?" asks the great hymnographer, Joseph of the Studium: "when Thou didst stretch forth Thine Hands on the Cross, to atone for the ill actions of my hands: when Thy heart was wounded with the spear, to propitiate for the crime of my wicked thoughts: when Thou didst taste of vinegar, to do away the pleasurable sins to which I have yielded?"

Canon of Wednesday in the 4th week of Lent. 20 Let perfectness and righteous dealing wait upon me: for my hope hath been in thee, O Lord. The Vulgate gives it differently. The innocent and the right adhere to me, because I have waited for Thee. See, they say, the efficacy of prayer! But two verses back, the Psalmist had interceded,—"Consider mine enemies;" and here those very enemies are become the innocent and right. According to Cassiodorus, it is the Church Triumphant that is speaking. Because in the days of my warfare I waited for Thee, therefore now the innocent, those little ones that have been called from earth in their baptismal purity, and the right, those who have been tried and found true in their many struggles, adhere to me: have a portion and an inheritance with me: are denizens in the "many mansions" prepared for them in the heavenly Jerusalem. There may again be a reference to that 15th verse, where he describes himself as alone. Now he stands no longer alone, but girt about with the assembly of the innocent and upright.

21 Deliver Israel, O God: out of all his troubles. As that first Israel, after his compelled flight from his father's house, after his hard bondage with Laban, after his marvellous escape from Esau, after the ruin of Dinah, after So the verse ends in the LXX., Italic, and Ambrosian; and though S. Jerome, Ep. 136, calls it superfluous, it seems needed to make up the metre of the original. the loss of his best-beloved Joseph, was at length brought into the best of the land, into the country of Goshen, while that same Joseph was raised to be lord over all Egypt. "Therefore," cries Gerhohus, "in the same way in which Thou, O God, didst then deliver that Israel, now deliver Thy whole Israel: leave not off consoling him, by showing him the glory of the True Joseph reigning over the Egypt of this world, till that glorious and beautiful sight shall make him cry out, 'It is enough; I will go and see Him before I die.' I will see him, in types and riddles, before I die: but face to face, after I die: now I see Him reigning over the whole land of Egypt, but then I shall see Him reigning in Heaven, when the kingdom of Egypt shall have been destroyed. Now I shall see Him in Egypt feeding His brethren, and distributing corn to all people: but then I shall see Him, the Living Bread of Angels, and feeding both Angels and men with the glorious Vision." The Roman version has, Deliver me, O God of Israel, from all my afflictions: but far nobler is the common reading, which winds up this Psalm of prayer with a supplication, no longer for one, but for the whole Church!

And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, Who is gracious and righteous; and to the SON, the Way in Whom sinners are taught; and to the HOLY GHOST, the Secret of the LORD. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

Deliver us, O most merciful GOD, from all our miseries, because we lift up our souls unto Thee; remember not, we pray Thee, the offences of our youth and our former ignorance; and if we have through negligence offended Thee, do Thou, of Thy clemency, pardon us. Through (1.) To Thee, O LORD, we raise our soul by the assistance of hope; and we beseech Thee so to embue it with celestial desires, that it may cease to have its conversation upon earth. Let not the enemy deceive it by promising terrestrial pleasures, but do Thou draw it to Thyself by offering celestial joys. Grant to it, O Almighty GOD, such wisdom, that it may cleave to the truth rather than to a lie: may follow after humility, and be on its watch against pride, and participate Thy rewards with the Saints. Amen. Through (11.) Remember us, O LORD, according to Thy mercy and goodness, and set free our feet from the nets of our enemies: that, once ready to run in the path of evil, they may at length take hold of the path of righteousness, and constantly and perseveringly follow the same. Through (1.)

Psalm 26

TITLE. A Psalm of David.

Argument.
ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST hath established the Church unto the innocency of a better life. The Prophet under the Person of CHRIST beareth record of himself. His earnest supplication, who maketh progress according to GOD. The voice of the Church, which consenteth not in the Passion of CHRIST, imploring the judgment of GOD against her enemies. Concerning the tribulation of the enemies. VEN. BEDE. The whole text of this Psalm is to be applied to the perfect Christian, who persevering in the acquirement of different praises in the Church, consoles himself with the Divine blessing. The Saint, of whom we speak, maketh supplication at the beginning of the Psalm that GOD would have respect unto his innocence: because he hath not had his portion with wicked men: Judge me. O Lord, &c. Secondly, he maketh request that he may not in the Judgment of the LORD be reckoned with heretics and schismatics, since he declareth his love to the house of GOD: Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thine house, &c.

SYRIAC PSALTER. Of David, when his friends left him, and he was an exile: but to us the prayer of that man, who makes progress in virtue.

Various Uses.
Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: II. Nocturn. Monastic. Sunday: Matins: I. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Mozarabic. LORD, I have loved the beauty of Thine house, and the place of the glory of Thy Majesty. Monastic. Mine eyes * are ever unto the LORD. 1 Be thou my judge, O LORD, for I have walked innocently: my trust hath been also in the LORD, therefore shall I not fall. It is a serious and seemingly perilous wish, which he expresses for himself,—that he may be judged! But all the I cannot but think that this is a mistake; and that the present Psalm is one of the earliest of David’s writing, and so to be classed with the 8th and 23rd.

It is worth noticing that some copies of the LXX. have κρίνου commentators take it, if spoken by David, of the judgment or separation from others, not of decision as regards himself; —in the same sense, that is, with the opening of the 43rd Psalm,— ”Give sentence with me, O GOD, and defend my cause from the ungodly people. But we choose to apply it to the Son of David: and then indeed from that unrighteous tribunal He may well make His appeal: ”What think ye? They all condemned Him to be guilty of death. ”Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. Be THOU My Judge, O Lord, for I have walked innocently: or in My innocency, as the Vulgate has. My innocency, says Gerhohus, in the same way in which we speak of our FATHER, or our daily bread. Ours because given to us. By two kinds of steps, he adds, we approach the LORD; those of intention, and those of action. My trust. When?—or rather, when not? For present assistance: ”I knew Thou hearest Me always. For future preservation: ”Thou shalt not leave My Soul in hell. All through that troubled and sorrowful Life: all through that agonised and living Death, ”JESUS would not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men. No: My trust hath been in the Lord; I shall in no wise fall: or, as a reading of the LXX. has it, be weak. Yet Thou wast weak, O Lamb of GOD, for our sakes!

Yea, that we might be strong to the keeping of Thy commandments, Thou didst gird Thyself with the fleshly vesture of our weakness: that we might be strong to agonize at the entrance of the strait gate, Thou wast weak in that mortal agony in the Garden: that we might be strong to cast off the dominion of death, Thou wast wounded to the death on the Cross! I shall not fail. Because He failed, Who is our Strength: He was sick, Who is our Health: He died, Who is our Life.

2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me: try out my reins and my heart. Examine me, or as the Vulgate has it, tenta me—probando, non reprobando. But they ask, Can it ever be a lawful prayer, that we may be tempted? There are two kinds of temptations, replies Cassiodorus. The one of the LORD, by which He tries the good, that He may lead them; as it is written, ”GOD did tempt Abraham:” and again, ”The LORD your GOD tempteth you.” The other of the devil, which always leads to evil, and concerning which we pray, ”Lead us not μοι, not με, and Apollinaris, in his version, thus paraphrases: It shows in what different senses the word is used by the Church, when we find Cassiodorus here condemning the ”detestabilis arrogantia meritorum.”

into temptation.” ”God tempts that He may crown: the devil that he may subvert,” says S. Ambrose. And S. Augustine dwells at great length on the difference of the two temptations; how, by the one, the man comes out as silver purified in the fire: how, by the other, it is of the LORD’s goodness that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. Or it is the Lamb of God that speaks. For how was He not examined, how was He not proved, from the temptation in the wilderness to the last and most fearful trial of the Cross? From the ”if Thou be the SON of GOD” of Satan,

to the ”that the world may know that I love the FATHER” of Himself. My reins and my heart. The one the seat of pleasure, the other of business; my recreations, and my work: that which I eschew, and that which I engage in. Try out. In the Vulgate it is Burn. And with what heat? asks S. Augustine. Surely with the fire of the SPIRIT: of which it is said, ”None can hide himself from the heat thereof.” And again: ”I am come to send fire on the earth.” And that this purification is the effect of GOD’s mercy, not of His severity, He continues:

A. 3 For thy lovingkindness is ever before mine eyes: and I will walk in thy truth. None can explain this verse better than Hugh of S. Victor. ”It is the mercy of GOD which spares: it is His truth which corrects. By His mercy He repelleth not penitents from indulgence; by His truth, while He punisheth sin, He hath respect to the crime, not to the person. It is needful therefore that he, who would attain to salvation, contemn not these two remedies of the medicine of GOD. For without mercy, he cannot obtain pardon: without truth, he cannot be amended. But there are some who, while with hasty presumption they expect their faults to be pardoned by the mercy of GOD, will not patiently endure the scourges of correction: and if perchance they acknowledge that they have suffered as the punishment of their sin, they are forthwith puffed up with the swelling of pride, and on that account think that they have no occasion for the mercy of GOD, because, by their own performance, they are fully justified before the Divine tribunal. Against these let us hear what the Psalmist says: Thy lovingkindness is ever before mine eyes: and I am well pleased in Thy truth. I see that Thy lovingkindness is everywhere necessary to me; and the strokes of Thy correction, by which Thou closely punishest my sin, I not only do not shrink from, but receive with joy: nay, even in these, I acknowledge that Thy mercy is not wanting. I am well pleased (saith he) in Thy truth. Elegantly said, laudably said: a saying worthy of imitation. As if he said, I have no complacency in myself except in Thy truth; because that which displeaseth Thee in me, this even I myself reprehend. In

Hugo, Victorin, Ser. i, 44. E. Thy truth I have complacency with myself: because, while Thou pursuest my sins with the scourge, Thou makest me glad with the love of correction. For why should I not be complacent with myself in Thy truth, who formerly had an evil complacency with myself in my own falsehood?” [Thy lovingkindness,—and now it is the sinner speaking to GOD—is ever before mine eyes in the story of the Passion, and I am well pleased in Thy truth, because all my delight is in conforming myself to the likeness of Thy Son, Who is the Truth. And, taking the exacter English rendering, I will walk in Thy truth, we can keep to the same interpretation, remembering that He Who is the Truth is also the Way.] 4 I have not dwelt with vain persons : neither will I have fellowship with the deceitful. Brev. Col. cap. i. 9.

He pleads for Himself,—the Son of David here speaking,—first, from His freedom from sin; next, from His fulness of good. The former, I have not dwelt with vain persons: the latter, ”I will wash my hands in innocency.” And the former,—first as regards GOD: next as respects the righteous. Again: in the former we have the action,—have not dwelt: the word,—neither will I have fellowship: the thought,—”I have hated the congregation of the wicked.” The Vulgate has it, I sat not with the counsel of vanity. No, of a truth, O LORD JESU; Thou didst stand before it, Thou wast smitten at its command, but sat with it, never! And so, after Thy example, Thy followers may sometimes be called to draw nigh an assembly of wickedness, but never will they dwell with it, or take part in it. The abuse of this verse by the Donatists is well known; and the rebuke they incurred from S. Augustine for refusing to sit in a Catholic Council, when, to be consistent, they should have carried out the latter part of the verse also, and not have appeared there at all. Tertullian also abuses the text to the support of his Montanist dogma, that adulterers were not to be reconciled to the Church. The council of vanity is taken by primitive writers to mean that of idolaters, idols being so often called by the name of vanities in Holy Scripture. ”They have provoked Me to anger with their vanities.” ”Turn ye not aside; for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.” ”What iniquity have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?” The deceitful. And how did He reject them with, ”Woe unto you, Scribes, and Pharisees, hypocrites!”—”Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites?”

The commentary of Gerhohus on this passage is well worth reading; though his vehemence against the simoniacs and con- cubinaries of his time leads him to believe that an interdicted Priest cannot validly consecrate the LORD’s Body and Blood; 5 I have hated the congregation of the wicked : and will not sit among the ungodly. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, The Church of the malignant : a fearful Church indeed : Satan’s parody of the Immaculate Bride. That reprobate Church, as the wise man says, ”is like tow wrapped together, and the end of them is a flame of fire to destroy them.” The Church. They observe that, except in one passage of the Acts, this word is always taken in a good sense ; yet S. Ambrose remarks that the Apostle does well to salute the Churches of CHRIST, because there are also churches of the devil. And the hatred of GOD’s enemies, quà His enemies—”yea, I hate them right sore”—so entirely opposed to the indifferentism of the present day, has always been one distinguishing mark of His ancient servants. Witness Phinehas ; ”and that was counted unto him for righteousness among all posterities for evermore:” Samuel with Agag : Elias with the priests of Baal. And notice the commendation of the Angel of Ephesus, ”Thou canst not bear them that are evil.”

Ay. S Albert. Magn. Ecclus. xxi. 9. L. In Roman. cap. xvi. 16. Ps. cvi. 31. Rev. ii. 2. 6 I will wash my hands in innocency, O LORD : and so will I go to thine altar. Two principal explanations are given of this altar. The one that it is our own heart

: that altar on which the ”fire” of love is always to be burning : ”it shall never go out.” Hence they run into all the richness of mediæval theology, to explain how the various altars of which Scripture tells, of wood, of brass, of stone, of earth, of gold, can apply to ourselves. So S. Bruno of the altar of earth, which he explains of humility. So Ven. Bede, of the altar of shittim-wood, which he understands of purity. So Solomon’s brazen altar, of constancy. So Joshua’s altar of unhewn stones, of earnestness and the rejection of vain glory. And so, finally, the golden altar of incense is interpreted of love. Others, again, understand the altar to be our LORD ; as Him by Whom all our prayers must be offered, in Whom all our oblations must be made ; Himself Priest, Altar, Victim, and the GOD to Whom the offerings are made. But by far the greater number of expositors take it in the former sense. In innocency. Because it is possible to wash them among the guilty, and say, with Pilate, ”I am innocent of the Blood of this Just Person,” while the

Ay. S. Albert. Magn. S. Bruno in Ex. xx. 24. Ven. Bed. in Ex. xxvii. 1. Josh. viii. 31. one of the hasty and unfounded assertions which gave such advantage to his enemies. Here he also debates the question, whether an individual Bishop can tolerate the functions of one whom the Pope has interdicted : a doctrine, he says, taught by many learned men, and capable of seducing, if it were possible, the very elect. Church of GOD replies with one voice, ”Suffered under Pontius Pilate.” This verse no doubt suggested the rite of the Lavabo in the Western Church; what millions of times, by what multitudes of lips, must it have been repeated, by those who have now put off the corruptible and put on the incorruptible! So will I go to. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, So will I go round: as they say the Jews did on great festivals, with green boughs, whence the idea of the procession of palms.

[So will I compass Thine altar, (A.V.) Origen, explaining the altar to be the soul of man, further adds, ”When the soul nods not outwards, but looks towards herself, and to her own centre, she compasses the altar of GOD, framing no angle which can retain corruption, for the wise Solomon tells us that folly ’lieth in wait at every corner.’] 7 That I may show the voice of thanksgiving: and tell of all thy wondrous works. Acts i. 1. A. Or, as it is more truly in the Vulgate, That I may hear the voice of praise. For GOD must teach us, they say, first, before we can hear, secondly, tell of His works. Even as the LORD taught His disciples, before He sent them forth to convert the world; even as the LORD Himself sat among the doctors, both hearing and asking them questions, before He Himself ”began to do and to teach.” And notice, up to this verse we have the righteous man’s actions as regarding himself; negatively, forsaking evil; actively, doing good: now we come to his deeds as regards others. He must teach. ”So hear the voice of praise,” says S. Augustine, ”as not to praise thyself even when thou art good. For, in praising thyself as good, thou art become evil.” But what is this? ”I will wash my hands”—that I may hear? Yes: for it is only the pure that can hear so as to understand: it is only they who are cleansed from sin to whom the voice of praise will speak. The voice of praise.

They take it in a most blessed signification of that voice, ”Come, ye blessed of My FATHER,” that voice of heavenly and conclusive praise for which all earthly blame were well and happily borne.

The Rhythm Heu, heu, mundi vita. O beati tunc lugentes Et pro CHRISTO patientes! Quibus sæculi pressura Regna semper dat mansura! And may tell of all Thy wondrous works, in that glorious land, whose eternity, and that only, will suffice for the relation of all. If that may be gained, most willingly ”I will go to Thine altar,” O LORD, even though it be as the victim myself, even if Thou hast need of me, not as the worshipper, but as the burnt-offering! 8 LORD, I have loved the habitation of thine house : and the place where thine honour dwelleth. I have loved. For How lovely and true, how full of grace, O LORD, Thou GOD of Hosts, Thy dwelling-place! How elect each architect! How serene its walls remain! Never moved by, rather proved by, Wind, and storm, and surge, and rain! The Sequence,

The two clauses may be taken of the material and the spiritual Church: the one, those walls which are raised by earthly hands: the other, the house not made with hands, where each of the LORD’s saints is an elect stone, in heaven. Or, if you will, of the Church militant and the Church triumphant. And when we think how low the habitation of GOD’s house seems to have fallen,—how thieves and robbers have come up into it,—how that which we build, if a fox go up, he shall break down our stone wall, it may be a comfort to know that the cry of GOD’s servants, in all ages, has been the same; as here S. Albertus, writing in the tenth century, in the full fervour of so many monastic institutes, makes grievous complaints of the dishonour done to the habitations of His house, and the ruins in which it lay. But, applying this verse to the material temple, the author of the Opus Imperfectum would nevertheless understand the beauty of the spiritual sacrifice, of the ardent love, the earnest praises, that there abound; not of the glory of shining marbles and precious metals. ”O house of GOD,” S. Augustine bursts forth, ”luminous and beautiful! I have loved thy beauty, and the place of the habitation of my GOD, thy Builder and Possessor! To thee my exile belongs; night and day to thee my heart yearns; to thee my mind stretches forth; to the partnership of thy blessed my spirit desires to attain.

”LORD,” whispered the dying Paula, ”I have loved the habitation of Thine house, and the place where Thine Honour dwelleth; O how amiable are Thy dwellings, Thou LORD of Hosts! Yes, we have a better right than had Balaam to cry, How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! we, who see that ministration of the SPIRIT, which is ”rather glorious. ”Our bed is green,” quotes Gerhohus; ”the beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters fir; and then continues, ”But thou who readest or hearest these words of the HOLY GHOST, canst thou apply to thyself any of them? Dost thou recognize in thyself any of the felicity of the Bride, described by the SPIRIT in this song of love; or

Hom. xlvii. in S. Matt. L. Numb. xxiv. 5. 2 Cor. iii. 8. Cant. i. 17. See the splendid passage in S. Maximus, where he compares the whole world to a temple, de- dicated to GOD'S worship. It is too long to be quoted here. hearest thou His voice, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth?" It is the sum of his lucubrations—most precious and beautiful they are—on the text: would only we could follow him through the whole! [The Carthusian sees in the beauty of GOD's house the devoutness of priest and people in divine worship, and in the place where His glory dwelleth the desire of Saints to approach their LORD when veiled on His altar under the forms of Bread and Wine. The English version, rendering habitation instead of beauty, is in accord with the Hebrew text. The Rabbins agree in explaining it of the Ark of the Covenant, whence 'we may well transfer it to the higher and deeper love which the Saints bear to the Man of Sorrows, in Whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "O good JESU," exclaims the Illuminate Doctor, "whose heart is there that would not be softened, kindled into love, roused to devotion, moved to sympathy, when we consider Thy deepest poverty, wondrous humility, and most ardent love towards us!" And loving Him so, we shall remember too where His honour dwelleth, namely, in the bodies and souls of those who are called by His Name, and love our own selves with that true and unselfish love which makes us adorn ourselves, for His sake, with all holy words and works, that He may tabernacle gladly in us.

Make us those temples pure and fair Thy glory loveth well, The spotless tabernacles where Thou mayest vouchsafe to dwell.] 9 O shut not up my soul with the sinners: nor my life with the bloodthirsty; 10 In whose hands is wickedness: and their right hand is full of gifts. A. The sinners: offenders against GOD: the bloodthirsty, against their neighbour. And they see a connection between the two clauses of the eighth and the ninth verses: the former in each having rather a reference to the present, the latter to the future, life. The commentators have singularly little to say on these verses; the almost only noticeable note being that of Hugh of S. Victor. Leaving the natural sense in their right hand is full of gifts, which S. Augustine applies, with terrible minuteness, to those judges whose sentence is influenced, not by bribes indeed properly so called, but by any consideration of popular applause, or the like, he understands it thus. He would see two classes of the wicked; the first, in whose hand is wickedness, those who give themselves wholly to Satan's work: the second, those who for a certain time, and to a certain extent, serve GOD, and who for that service will obtain a certain temporal reward; so that it may be said, their right hand, that is, their labour, is full of this kind of gifts, which the merciful LORD bestows on them whom His Justice debars from higher reward. Thus Jehu, though he "took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD GOD of Israel with all his heart, yet because he did well in executing that which was right" on the house of Ahab, had the crown of Israel secured to his family for four generations.

11 But as for me, I will walk innocently : O deliver me, and be merciful unto me. In innocentiâ meâ ingressus sum. It was Innocent the Eighth's motto. For my own part, I would rather say with S. Bernard: "My merits are Thy mercies." And in this verse we have working out our own salvation—I will walk innocently, and GOD working in us—O deliver me. Cassiodorus sees an antithesis between this and the last verse. They may bring gifts, such as they are,—a multitude of sacrifices, countless money cast into the treasury: I will walk innocently: so as to give the same sense as that noble passage of Juvenal, But if innocent, why need to be delivered? Because, they say, I will walk in MY innocency, implies the Blood which alone can be our innocence, the Blood of that Lamb Who taketh away the sins of the world. And they dwell on that world-famous passage of S. Augustine, which the Master of the Sentences has made his own: "Omnes justi, sive ante Incarnationem Christi, sive post, nec vixerunt, scilicet spiritualiter, nec vivent, nisi ex fide Incarnationis JESU CHRISTI, profecto; quia scriptum est: Non aliud nomen sub cœlo, in quo oporteat nos salvos fieri."

12 My foot standeth right: I will praise the LORD in the congregations. What are the feet, but the affections of the soul? If thy foot offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee. What is the right way, the shortest, most compendious route to heaven, but love, without which nothing can save, but which can alone save without anything else? My foot standeth right, then, or my affections are settled in love. In the congregation: or, as the Vulgate has it, In the Churches. And so, while yet the Church of GOD is scattered over and divided into so many various nations, before we attain to the one "general assembly and Church of the first-born," oh how truly have these words been fulfilled! Oh how truly has David praised the LORD in the Churches, when not one among the countless office books of the Christian world, but is based on the Psalms! They also take the foot of fixed resolutions, like that of the Apostle: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith: quit you like men: be strong." But the former meaning is the best; because, as Albertus observes, when once we have this love, we cannot contain it within us, we must communicate it to others; and thence we get to—I will praise the Lord in the congregations. But more blessedly still, in that one congregation, in that one general assembly and Church, when, as S. Augustine says, "We shall be at leisure and shall see, we shall see and shall love, we shall love and shall praise. Behold, joy without end! To which leisure, seeing, loving, He bring us Who is blessed for ever and ever. Amen."

And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, to Whom we seek for judgment; and to the SON, the Truth in Which we walk; and to the HOLY GHOST, Who is merciful unto us. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.
Grant, O LORD, Thy mercy to them that call upon Thee; and make us so constant in Thy truth that, our acts being restored to innocency, we may be freed from

the wicked. Through (11.) Redeem us, O LORD, and have mercy upon us, that our voice may praise Thee in the Church, and our lips may bless Thee among the people: purge our reins and prove our hearts by Thy love; and cut off from us all pleasures, and stop the influx of evil thoughts. Amen. (11.) Mozarabic, Common of a Martyr. O GOD, Who by Thy lovingkindness didst prove Thy blessed martyr N. on earth, nor didst permit him to be tempted above that he was able to bear: preserve us from all temptation, which may oppress our minds; that we, faithfully serving Thee, may so be proved, as that our temptations may not turn to the confusion of grief, but may bind us to the embrace of the truth. Amen. (11.)

[O GOD, the author of innocency, and hallower of righteous souls, try out our reins and our heart, by grafting in us the calm of purity, that we may not dwell with the council of vain persons, but with our feet standing right, we may worthily praise Thee in the congregations. Through (1.)]

Psalm 27

TITLE. A Psalm of David. In the LXX.: A Psalm of David before he was anointed. ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST is the illumination, protection, and safety of His servants that put their trust in Him. To those who for the first time enter into the LORD's house. Concerning the love of the Law. The voice of them that are baptized. To them that first enter into the faith of the LORD. To be read with the lection of Isaiah the Prophet, "Behold, they that love Thee shall eat good things." The voice of the Prophet crying to GOD. VEN. BEDE. David was thrice anointed: once at Bethlehem, in the house of his father, by Samuel; secondly, in Hebron, by the Tribe of Judah, after the death of Saul; thirdly, in the same place, by all Israel, after that the son of Saul was slain. But since we read not that he composed any Psalm before his first unction, it follows that the second is that to which this title refers; before which, while he was yet an exile because of the snares of Saul, he is recorded to have written a Psalm. Note, that before he was anointed is not found in the Hebrew.

Since frequently before he ascended the throne David was troubled by his bitter enemies, the Prophet speaks (with reference to these his escapes) through the whole Psalm. In the opening he declareth himself to fear the LORD, and to tremble at none else: he testifieth that, in the adversities of the world, one refuge remains to him,—that, though he be tempest-tossed by corporeal dangers, he dwelleth in the house of the LORD by the unchangeable devotion of his soul: The Lord is my Light and my Salvation. Next, delivered from manifold destruction in divers manners, he returneth thanks; and in the spirit of prophecy promiseth to himself the reward of future beatitude, Hear my voice, O Lord. SYRIAC PSALTER. David, on account of the sickness which had fallen on him. S. ATHANASIUS. A Psalm of boasting in the LORD. (It is manifest, on careful consideration, that this Psalm consists, properly speaking, of two: the first, a hymn of triumph, ends at the seventh verse; the other, a penitential ode, is clearly in a different metre, as well as on a different subject.)

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Monday: Matins. [Good Friday: I. Nocturn. Easter Eve: II. Nocturn.

Office for the Dead: II. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week: III. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. Ferial. The LORD is the strength of my life. [Good Friday: There are false witnesses risen up against me and such as speak wrong. Easter Eve and Office for Dead: I believe verily to see * the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.] Monastic. The LORD is the strength * of my life. Parisian. Be my helper, O GOD; leave me not. Quignon. The LORD * is my light and my salvation. Mozarabic. My light and my salvation is the LORD: whom then shall I fear? 1 The LORD is my light, and my salvation; whom then shall I fear: the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid? The anointings of David were three: in Bethlehem, in Hebron over Judah, and again in Hebron over all Israel. So were those of CHRIST: in His Mother's womb, in His Baptism, and after His Resurrection, when all power was given unto Him in heaven and in earth. Cardinal Hugo sees the same triple unction in us: (1) in free grace, in our first vocation; (2) in sanctifying grace, after which we have to fight, as David with his enemies, and our LORD with the devil in the wilderness; (3) in heaven, for a blessed immortality.

L. My Light. And as Baptism is illumination, and so spoken of both in Scripture and the Primitive Church, my Light is well put before all other titles of the LORD. Then comes the salvation in all those battles to which we are, as it were, girded in Baptism. Notice the paronomasia between my light, and shall I be afraid? And, as in the first clause, at the word light, we have the Sacrament of Baptism, so in the second, at the phrase, the Strength of my life, we have that of Confirmation. Or, again, you may take it as S. Albertus does: The Lord is my Light against the curse of ignorance, and my Salvation against the impotence of infirmity. Well says S. Augustine: "The Emperor is protected by his guards, and is safe; mortal is shielded by mortal, and feels secure; the Immortal defends a mortal, and do you dare to tremble?" The Lord is my Light. And how so? Pseudo-Dionysius explains it well. First, as being the Source of all physical light and brightness; secondly, because all spiritual light and illumination, whether in angels or men, comes from Him, Who is the Father of lights. Thirdly, because He is the Comforter of them that are in mists and darkness; as it is written, "Unto the godly there ariseth up light in the darkness; He is merciful, loving, and righteous." Fourthly, because He is the Source, the one only Fountain of that Light of Glory, which forms the Beatific Vision. Or again: The Lord is my Light and my Salvation. The Law was a light, showing

These three unctions are very variously explained by different commentators. Ayguan dwells at prodigious length on the subject; making the first unction Baptism, the second, death, the third, the beatification of soul and body: and this, I confess, seems to me the more likely idea. what must be done, and what must be avoided; but in no sense a salvation, for it gave no power to do that which it

enjoined, or to keep from that which it forbade. ”The Law made nothing perfect; but the coming in of a better hope did.” And we may boldly put the verse into our LORD’s own mouth; for, speaking according to His Manhood, it was from GOD that He increased, as S. Luke testifies, in wisdom; of GOD, that He was enlightened and upheld in the darkness and struggles of His thirty-three years’ life on earth. And now, O LORD JESU, Thou art our Light! If Thou be our guard, who can harm us? If Thou be our illumination, what can darken us? So lead us on through the dim twilight of this world by the light of Thy grace, that hereafter we may attain, in heaven, to the unclouded light of Thy glory!

2 When the wicked, even mine enemies, and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh: they stumbled and fell.

In the first and most natural sense, our LORD would tell us of that night, when His enemies, as soon as He had said, ”I am He,” went backward and fell to the ground. Ger-hohus not inelegantly refers to the speech of S. Laurence on the gridiron, when it was indeed as though his enemies would eat up his flesh: ”Assatus sum; jam versa, et manduea. They stumbled: or, as it is in the Vulgate, they became weak: and so we are reminded of that long war between the House of Saul and the House of David, which must be carried on during the whole course of every individual Christian life; and, in a still higher sense, between the Church of the Living GOD and the legions of Satan, until the consummation of all things. But we must see a far deeper mystery in the verse. ”When the wicked”—thus speaks the Immaculate Lamb, Whose Flesh is meat indeed, and Whose Blood is drink in-deed—”came to eat up My Flesh at the altar, came unwor-thily, came profanely, they stumbled and fell: this was the key-stone of their iniquities, this put the finishing stroke to their punishment. The story is well known of the younger infidel, during the epoch of Voltaire, inquiring of his more hardened and older friend, how to get rid of the prickings of conscience by which he was even still sometimes annoyed. ”Take the Sacrament,” replied the hoary sinner. The advice was followed, and GOD’S SPIRIT strove no more with that man: he stumbled and fell.

Others understand my flesh of the fleshly failings and infirmities of every true servant of GOD; and the complaint to be of the joy and eagerness with which the LORD’S enemies hunt them out: just as Job speaks, ”If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied. Or we may take they stumbled and fell in a good sense. ”Whoever shall fall on that stone, shall be broken. While they came, as Saul,

R yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter, they fell to the earth at the voice of the LORD Himself; while they came, as another Saul, to destroy David at Naioth in Ramah, the SPIRIT descends upon them, and they lie down and prophesy. 3 Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid : and

though there rose up war against me, yet will I put my trust in him. L. Deut. xx. 1. S. Hieron. in Zach. c. 10. In Martyr. Exhort. c. 10. S. Athanasius in Vit.

So the Jewish King fulfils the commandment of the Jewish Lawgiver. ”When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them; for the LORD thy GOD is with thee. These are the words that, together with the first verse of this same Psalm, have been in the mouths of many a martyr: and S. Cyprian, in that heart-thrilling exhortation, adduces them nobly. They say that, when S. Antony, after one of those strange physical assaults of the Enemy by which the Divine love permitted him to be exercised, remained victor, but through very exhaustion prostrate on the ground, he chanted lustily, Though there rose up war against me, yet will I put my trust in Him. ”He,” says S. Augustine, ”will give victory to the contester Who inspired boldness for the contest. Let us not fear then the multitude of the enemy, nor the shining armour, nor that mighty and terrible Goliath. One David shall prostrate him with one stone; one youth shall put to flight the whole army of the aliens. And the confidence of the King and of the Apostle was the same; for what is this verse but, in other words, that saying of S. Paul? ”I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,”—and the rest of that catalogue so trying to faith,—”shall be able to separate us from the love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS our LORD.

But let us rather put the words into our dear LORD’s mouth, in the same night in which He was betrayed, or rather offered Himself for the life of the world, and when the band of men and officers, under the command of Judas, were already drawing nigh to take Him. An host of men indeed: Jews and Romans,—Pharisees, puffed up in their boasted holiness; soldiers, the very outcasts of humanity: the fickle multitude that, at the beginning of that same week, proclaimed Him King of the Jews, and now are about to say, ”Not this man, but Barabbas! Then there rose up war, such as never had been since the foundation of the world, such as never can be till the consummation of all things,—a war, the prize whereof was the whole human race,—a contest, where, on the arms of the Cross, as on scales, hung the eternal joy or misery of all generations. Yet shall not my heart be afraid. Yea, and though it were for an hour,—”If it be possible, let this cup pass; that hour went by, and then it was ”the day of His joy, and the day of the gladness of His heart: it was ”the Baptism that He had to be baptized with, and how was He straitened till it was accomplished!”—it was the season when He was reigning ”in Mount Sion and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously! In this will I be confident. They dispute to what the word! this refers;

but let us take it in its fullest and most glorious sense; for never was there, never can there be, such a this as Calvary. A THIS, for Him That endured it; in this mortal agony, in this putting forth of all the powers of all infernal spirits, in this

accomplishment of all prophecies, in this fulfilment of all types, in this the ark of a shipwrecked world, in this the True and Eternal Tree of Life, in this will I, the GOD of confidence, be confident Myself. And clinging to this, O LORD JESUS, crucified to this together with Thee, grasping this as the anchor of our souls, dying if it must be so at the foot of this, this "the place where valiant men are," this the dying bed of the martyrs, the strength of the confessors, in this will I be confident!

4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, which I will require: even that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the fair beauty of the LORD, and to visit his temple. However we may apply the words in a lower sense, their own real meaning can rest satisfied with nothing short of that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" and of this the principal among the Latin Fathers understand the petition. This is indeed the one thing needful; this is indeed the joy to be required, ay, and to be taken by violence. Have I desired: by prayer. I will require, not by prayer only, but by self-denial, fasting, almsgiving, everything which may cause GOD to bow down His ear to my petition. Gerhohus puts the sentence into the mouth of our LORD, and paraphrases it with even more than his ordinary beauty: "I, in that night in which I was to be betrayed to death, to the end that I might overcome death, desired one thing of the Lord; which I will require, I, the True Unity, by interceding for the unity of them that are Mine even till the consummation of all things. And this was My prayer:

A. In hoc ego sperabo, is the Vulgate; but the LXX. has it, ἐν ταύτῃ ἐγὼ ἐλπίζω, in the feminine. Does the ταύτῃ refer to καρδία, so as to make the sense, with this heart, of which I have before spoken, will I be confident? or does it depend on παρεμβολή, though so far back, and thus give a sense, "With regard to the camp of the enemy, I will have no fear?" or is it simply a literal translation of the feminine , which depends on the word before, or the that follows? 'FATHER, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me.' Thus I then asked that one thing from the LORD, when I was about to die for that people; and not for that people only, but that I might gather together in one the sons of GOD that were scattered abroad. This one thing I then once asked, namely, in My death; but I will daily require it in the Sacrament which I have commanded My Priests to offer for My holy Church continually. By My own mouth I desired it once; by the lips of My Priests I still require it continually, as long as My death shall be set forth in the Sacrament of the Altar, until I shall come at the end of the world, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord in peace: all war at an end, all My members completely united to their Head, all the stones banded together in the everlasting building, by the grace of Me, Corner and Top stone, Author and Finisher of Faith."

O how many a soul, now set free from carnal struggles, now liberated from earthly darkness, desired that one thing in the days of her pilgrimage here! in the time of

that life which is not life, that they might stand all the days of their true life in the House of the Lord! "O blessed region of Paradise!" cries one; "O blessed region of delights, to which I yearn from the valley of ignorance, from the valley of tears, where is wisdom without ignorance, where is memory without oblivion, where is intellect without error, where is reason without obscurity! Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be alway praising Thee! The kingdom of GOD is bestowed, promised, manifested, received; bestowed in predestination, promised in vocation, manifested in heaven."—We may also, if we will, take the verse in a lower sense,—lower only comparatively with the highest,—of the religious, as contrasted with the secular, life. In this signification, over and over again have the great masters of spiritual life preached from it to their followers; in this signification S. Bernard impressed it on his Cistercians, Peter the Venerable on his Cluniacs, S. Francis de Sales on his Sisters of the Visitation. Or, again, as most of the Greek Fathers, we may understand it of the visible and material House of GOD, the symbol and foretaste of that eternal dwelling. That I may see the fair beauty of the Lord. The Vulgate has it voluptatem; but Gerhohus, following the Italic, reads voluntatem, and shows how fully our LORD's prayer in this respect was fulfilled. And they may well take occasion, hence to dwell on the two wills of the LORD,—as Perfect GOD and Perfect Man. Never let it be conceived that Mono-

The Ambrosian reads voluptatem. The Vulgate read voluntatem till the emendations of Sixtus V., whence Hugh of S. Victor and Gerhohus have taken it. On the other hand, some MSS. of the Italic have voluptatem. This is, of course, the true reading, corresponding to the LXX., τερπνότητα.

thelism was an abstract heresy, which has no relation to the inward Christian life. It is everything for us, whether our dear LORD, as man, had to utter this prayer, "that I may see the will of the LORD,"—whether He suffered, and therefore can sympathise with, that bitter struggle against our own wills; or whether, by the so-called Theandric operation, that struggle was in name only, not in reality. Well did S. Sophronius labour and suffer for this, the engrafting in the Catholic Creed that precious doctrine of our LORD's Sympathy. Let the Scriptural Albert explain the verse to us: "That I may dwell. Here is what he seeks and requires; that celestial habitation which is the House of GOD. O Israel, how great is the House of GOD, and how large is the place of His possession. And this all the days of my life! As if he said, I will never cease. And in these words we are taught that there should be unity in our prayers; that we should not ask for many things, but for one. 'When ye pray, use not vain repetitions.' There must be diuturnity,—have I desired; and continually,—which I will require all the days of my life. 'Be not thou hindered to pray continually.' 'Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.' It must be spiritual, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord: all the days of our present life, laboriously, in the Church Militant: and after that, for ever and ever, gloriously, in the Church Triumphant.

First, of the first: 'Neither death nor life . . . shall separate us.' Of the second: 'Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My GOD, and he shall go no more out.' That I may see the will of the Lord. According to that glorious petition, 'Thy will be done.' And to visit the Temple. CHRIST the Man, the Temple of the Divinity. 'The LORD GOD Almighty, and the Lamb, are the Temple of it.'" Thus far S. Albert.

5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his tabernacle: yea, in the secret place of his dwelling shall he hide me, and set me up upon a rock of stone. Or, as the Vulgate gives it, He hath hid me. That tabernacle, of which Isaiah says, "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chamber, and shut the doors about thee:" the Rock which is to be the hiding-place for the persecuted and feeble conies: that safe cleft, opened by the spear in the day of Calvary, and since then, and to the end of all things, afford- This, although proceeding from so perfectly sound a theologian as S. Albertus, has rather a curious sound, and may serve as an example of the Nestorianizing way of talking (for it pro- bably was only a way of talking) prevalent in Germany in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and which Gerhohus so vigorously opposed.

ing a refuge for all troubled souls until the indignation be overpast. His tabernacle, won for us when with His own Right Hand and with His Holy Arm He gat Himself the victory: but yet "our chamber" also, because belonging to each of us as much as if none other had a right to that hiding-place. Here let my LORD hang up His conquering lance, And bloody armour, with late slaughter warm; And looking down on His weak militants, Behold His Saints, amidst their hot alarm, Hang all their golden hopes upon His arm: And, in this lower field dispacing wide, Through windy thoughts that would their sails misguide, Anchor their fleshly ships fast in His wounded Side! S. Bernard. Serm. 61, in Cant. S. Bernard. Hugo Victorin. in Ps. xxxviii.

Venerable Bede, connecting this with the preceding verse, says very well that, it is as though some one, amazed at the boldness of David's desire "to visit the Temple," had asked: Do you, spotted with sin, do you, from the sole of whose foot to the crown of whose head there is no soundness, venture on such a request? Yes: for in the time of trouble He hath already hid me in His tabernacle; in the time of glory, therefore, He may well give me a place in His mansion. In the secret place of His dwelling. "The LORD said, that He would dwell in the thick darkness. And, no doubt, here we have a reference to the Incarnation; our only defence in the time of trouble, our only hiding-place from the just wrath against sin. Upon a Rock. "What is there of good," cries S. Bernard, "that is not to be found in the Rock? On the Rock I am exalted; on the Rock I am secure; on the Rock I stand firmly. Secure from the enemy; brave, as regards accident: and this because lifted up from the earth; for changeable and perishable is everything earthly. And no doubt there is

a reference in this to that magnificent vision in Exodus: ”Behold, there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the Rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by.

And thus is God’s glory seen in the Incarnation. They take it, again, of the religious life; those holy men who, in the midst of those tempests of iniquity, those frightful storms of violence and ungodliness, had experienced this strong Tower; where they, in the deep secret place of the Tabernacle, communed with their LORD, leaving their converse with Him as the teaching and the delight of all ages. O happy and holy tabernacles—ἀθάνατα κάλυβαι—of Citeaux, Prémontré, Cluny, Monte Casino, Fontevraud, S. Gall, how, while studying the Psalms which so gloriously echoed among you, how do we still feel the influence, how do we still drink into the learning, how may we still taste of the holiness, of those night-watches, of those fasts, of those vigils, which made your Saints that which they were, and you the nursing mothers of religion in the midst of floods of ungodliness!

6 And now shall he lift up mine head : above mine enemies round about me. 8. Bernard names three ways in which our heads are lifted up: by disenchaining our hearts from earthly affections; by conferring on us Divine knowledge; by kindling in us the love of heavenly things. But let us rather take our Head in the sense of Him Who is our only and our True Head, JESUS CHRIST. Now, whatever happens to me, my Head shall be exalted; now, whatever sufferings are appointed for me, my Head shall be honoured. ”Now also CHRIST shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.” Lifted up. But how? He was lifted up on the Cross, as well as to the Throne: and in that sense also may we take it,—that when we are suffering from our enemies round about, our Head makes those sufferings His own. If we are crucified, He shares our cross; ”Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” If Stephen is stoned on earth, JESUS is standing in heaven. He hath exalted my Head is the reading of the Vulgate; and well does S. Augustine remind us that, our Head being already there, we, His members, ought to be with Him now in thought and desire, as hereafter in joyful reality.

S. Bernard. Hom. xv. in Ezech. Phil. i. 20. A. Sic nobis cum coelestibus Commune manens gaudium, Illis, quod se præsentavit, Nobis, quod se non abstulit. The Hymn, Optatus votis omnium. 7 Therefore will I offer in his dwelling an oblation with great gladness : I will sing, and speak praises unto the LORD. Or as it is in the Vulgate, I have gone round, and offered the sacrifice of vociferation. And this going round, if fancifully, is at least beautifully applied to the Litanies of the Church; which, beginning from the Blessed Trinity itself, the Source of all being, go round or through the economy of the Christian dispensation, commencing at the Incarnation, continuing through the Life and Passion, culminating in the Resurrection and Ascension of our LORD, and the sending down of the Paraclete; and

then again returning to that glorious Trinity whence the office began. And the sacrifice of vociferation gloriously describes the one and completed oblation of the Cross, that most precious Blood, which cried aloud for better things than that of Abel. Or the going round may be the going through the world with the glad tidings of salvation: ”So that from Jerusalem, and round

A. & In Apoc. c. 1. about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of CHRIST.” Ambrosius Ansbertus refers us to the going round Jericho, the devoted city: and thence gathers that it is when the sins and temptations of our corrupt nature are devoted to GOD, then a true sacrifice of peace is offered. Albertus reminds us here, when we go round this lower world, and all its beauty and glory, we shall find it nothing but a book full of the praise of GOD; and ”marvellous is it,” cries Gregory, ”that man is not always praising, since everything amidst which he dwells is continually inviting praise.” Or, finally, we may take it, with others, of a soldier diligently going his rounds, keeping a diligent look-out on the enemy, and fulfilling the last command, delivered to the multitudes, of the Captain of his salvation: ”And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.” I will sing and speak praises. But how is this? to begin with singing, and to descend to speaking? Yes; for as he that was not rich enough to bring the bullock or the goat, was allowed to offer the pair of turtle doves, or the two young pigeons, so here the meanest, as well as the highest praise, is not rejected from the service of GOD.

[There is yet another offering, when he whose ”life is hid with CHRIST in GOD,” offers the oblation of self-denial and holiness, according to those words of a Saint: Nec CHRISTI exemplo suavior exit odor Quam cum homo castorum profert libamina morum, Et de virtutum munere sacra litat.] 8 Hearken unto my voice, O LORD, when I cry unto thee: have mercy upon me, and hear me. My Voice: that Voice which the precious Blood of Calvary utters from the ground. Remark, he saith not, words; for this is a mute voice, not articulated into phrases, but none the less mighty, yea rather, none the less Almighty, to bring down GOD’s pardon. The Voice of that Blood, whether on the Cross or in the chalice: ”one thing have I desired of the LORD,” the pardon of man. It has been well observed, that this verse contains nine necessaries to prayer. It must be, for a worthy matter; vocal; rational; proper; devout; right; humble; necessary; continuous. S. Gregory well says, with a turn that can best be given in its original idiom: ”Æternam etenim vitam si ore petimus, non tamen ore desideramus, clamantes tacemus. Si vero desi-

S. Albertus has here a curious passage, directed against those who recite the Hours in bed, and against those also who say them vicariously; as, for ex- ample, if a Priest recited Tierce to himself, while attending Sexts in Church, and so intended to satisfy the canonical requirement for both Hours. I said, in the introduction to this Psalm, that this eighth verse manifestly began a new composition; the triumphal thanksgiving of the former having been succeeded by penitential depreciation. The

two Psalms, however, seem to have been joined into one long before any historical evidence. 9 My heart hath talked of thee, Seek ye my face: thy face, LORD, will I seek. Or, as it is in the Vulgate, To Thee my heart hath spoken: Thee my face sought out: Thy face, O Lord, will I seek. "This," says Vieyra, "is the discreet energy wherewith David repeats to GOD that which he had already said to Him, To Thee my heart spake. He saith not, 'To Thee, O LORD, I spoke;' because to GOD the heart alone speaks, and with GOD the heart alone holds converse. And as the heart is the instrument and the tongue which speaks to GOD; thus, as men understand only that which the tongue says, and comprehend not that which the heart speaks, so GOD hears only that which the heart speaks, and pays no attention to that which the tongue says. Hence it follows that, if the heart speak not, though the man may say the same thing a hundred and fifty times, yet, so far as GOD is concerned, he speaks not one word, and is dumb. Voce sonant, corde muti sunt."

The Hebrew in itself presents considerable difficulty; and hence the very different reading of the Prayer Book and of the Bible version, which, amplifying that of Tremellius and Jerome, gives, When Thou saidst, Seek ye My face. But this is clear: that whatever the Psalmist had done in past times, that he now stirs himself up to do manifold times more. Thy face, Lord, will I seek. As Moses did in the Mount, when he partly, but not fully, obtained that which he desired; and as the same Moses, nearly fifteen hundred years after, did on the holy hill of Tabor. "The LORD is good unto them that wait for Him, for the soul that seeketh Him," says Jeremiah. "And if good," asks S. Bernard, "to them that seek Him, what to them that find Him?" Or, as the Saint says in that most precious rhythm: S. Gregory complains that, after his elevation to the Pontifical dignity, he had so much less opportunity for this most sweet search after GOD than had been possible to him before. Others, again, take the word face in the same sense in which S. Paul speaks of the brightness of the FATHER's glory, and the express image of His Person, namely, of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Here, it has been well said, in seeking for the glory

S. Bernard. Serm. lxxx. in Cant. 1 Sam. i. 13. and manifest vision of GOD, he asks, in fact, for two things: 1, for the end itself, in this verse; 2, for the means requisite to that end, in the next. And he prayed as the mother of his master did: "Now Hannah, she spoke in her heart." Notice that there are some who in their prayers speak, not to GOD, but to man; who seek not GOD's face, but man's: and these are the hypocrites. And then, the bold, fearless declaration, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. It is needful, indeed, that he who makes it should have that perfect confidence in GOD, of which we before read, "Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid;" for let but once this calm, unflinching resolution be expressed, and their name will be legion who attack us.

10 O hide not thou thy face from me: nor cast thy servant away in displeasure. L. S. Isidor. Pelus. Epist. i. 143.

Three times is that expression, the face of God, repeated; whence they gather the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. But GOD's face may be hid for other causes besides that of displeasure; whence the second clause of this verse. It may be in pure love; it may be for our own preservation, as was the case with Moses in the rock; it may be only that we may seek more earnestly, and find more gloriously. And this whole verse shows how GOD worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He had said in the verse above, "Thy face, LORD, will I seek. But of himself he could never find; therefore the second petition, I seek: O hide not Thou. S. Augustine breaks out into a fervour of rapture in his second exposition: "O hide not Thou Thy face from me. Magnificent! nothing can be more divinely spoken! This is the feeling of those that truly love. Another man would be blessed and immortal in the pleasures of those earthly lusts which he loves, and peradventure for this reason would worship GOD, and pray, that he may long live here in his delights, and that nothing should fail him, which earthly desire has in possession, neither gold, nor silver, nor any estate that charms his eyes; that his friends, his children, his wife, his dependents, should not die: in these delights would he live for ever.

But since he cannot for ever, for he knows that he is mortal, for this haply does he worship GOD, and for this pray to GOD, and for this sigh to GOD, that all these things may last even to old age. And if GOD should say to him, Lo, I make thee immortal in these things, he would accept it as a great boon, and in the exultation of his joy and congratulation would be unable to contain himself. Not so doth the man act, who hath made one petition of the LORD."

11 Thou hast been my succour: leave me not, neither forsake me, O GOD of my salvation.

My succour: and what does that prove save that the petitioner is at work for himself? One may move a stock or a stone, that do nothing for themselves; one cannot be said to succour, unless the thing succoured try with its own strength. And not less true is the remark of S. Jerome: He that remembers so gratefully, shall certainly be assisted most hopefully. Leave me not: and so he attributes all his past good actions to GOD; for, unless the LORD had been with him before, He could not be asked not to forsake him now. Leave me not, neither forsake me. And thence they draw an argument for the difference between mortal and venial sins. Leave me not: not even for one moment; not even so that I may commit one folly, may be guilty of the least and most trivial fault. Neither forsake me. For, if Thou shouldest leave me to myself for any time, there is no depth of guilt into which I may not fall. It is no merit of mine, but simply Thine own watchfulness, which has hitherto preserved me. And remember, says one earnestly, that though none ought to despair while yet in the Way, because till the very end the grace of GOD stands open, yet none can feel secure, because, till the very end, the devices of Satan will not be concluded. If, on the one hand, He is able to save unto the uttermost;

on the other, ”he that is dead”—and therefore none but he that is dead—”hath ceased from sin. Or, if we put the verse into our LORD’s mouth, we must understand it: ”Be Thou My helper, O LORD, My FATHER, co-operating with Me in all things: leave Me not in the hand of the wicked, on the Cross: leave Me not to the guardianship of the soldier, in the sepulchre: nor forsake Me, that is, My mystical Body, for which I lived, for which I suffered, for which I died, for which I rose again from the dead: leave Me not, neither forsake Me, O God of My salvation.”

”One of the things,” says Vieyra, ”which I have much noted in David, is the great frequency with which he beseeches GOD not to leave him; and the many and divers ways in which he repeats and urges this same petition: ’O go not from me, for trouble is at hand;’ ’Leave me not, neither forsake me;’ ’Go not from me, O LORD;’ ’Cast me not away from Thy Presence;’ ’Go not far from me, O GOD;’ ’O let me not go wrong;’ and five times in the same words, ’Forsake me not.’ If GOD for a sin of David’s left him once, and afterwards restored His Grace with so much certainty and efficacy, why does he so often, and in such different ways, The singularly double sense in which, in early times, the word merit was used, is well illustrated by the commentary of Cassiodorus on this verse: ”Ubi sunt, qui humanis meritis dicunt aliquid applicandum? Petit Rex

et Propheta, plenus gratiâ et benedictione coelesti, ne deseretur a Domino. Scit enim quia si ille reliquerit, nulla se regere potestas prævalebit.” A. beseech GOD not to leave him? Certain it is that the Prophet would not discover so many ways of supplicating, unless GOD had as many ways of leaving. And why? The reason depends equally on His mercy, and on our misery. GOD never leaves man, unless man first leaves Him; and because we have so many ways of leaving GOD, therefore GOD has so many ways of leaving us. Thus wrote GOD in an express law: ’This people will forsake Me . . . . and I will forsake them;’ and in another place drew a consequence from it: ’Because ye have forsaken the LORD, He hath also forsaken you.’ So that to leave and to be left is, between GOD and man, a reciprocal condition. If GOD were to be the first to leave, never should we be left; but because we are the first to leave, therefore it is that so often, and in so many different ways, we are forsaken by GOD.”

12 When my father and my mother forsake me: the LORD taketh me up. A. Look for a moment at King David, when he gave his father and his mother to the care of the King of Moab; and thus, in the midst of his dangers and wanderings, was forsaken by them. And then consider the Son of David, forsaken and rejected by His own relations,—”for neither did His brethren believe in Him,”—and yet taken up by that FATHER, of Whom He said, ”I knew that Thou hearest Me always.” But mystically, human nature was forsaken by its general father and mother at the very beginning: when, forgetful of the misery and destruction they thus entailed on their race, they ate of the forbidden fruit; and GOD took it up, by the promise given as

soon as the sentence was pronounced, that ”the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” It is a singular explanation of S. Augustine, that by the father, the devil, by the mother, corrupt human nature, is signified; both of whom forsake us when we earnestly and with purpose of heart turn to GOD. Others, again, see in this verse the complaint of our LORD of His rejection by His father, the Jewish nation, and by His mother, the synagogue,—that mother who platted for Him so cruel a diadem in the day of His Passion. And notice: when David complains that his father and mother had forsaken him,—(and compare the text, ”Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite,”)—in the person of Adam and Eve, it was his Son, as well as his LORD, Who, taking him up, was to repair his loss: ”Instead of thy fathers, thou shalt

Ayguan gives a curiously feudal explanation of this sense: ”Si rex militis donasset castellum pro se et posteritate suâ, miles autem efficiatur proditor regis; non digne non solum privatur pro se et totâ posteritate, castro, verum etiam perpetuo damnatur exilio?” have children.” There is a Hebrew tradition, to which the verse may refer, that GOD had bound Himself by oath to be the Father and Mother of the orphan, who with all his heart and soul had resort to Him. 13 Teach me thy way, O LORD: and lead me in the right way, because of mine enemies.

And it may still be the Son of David Who, according to the flesh, speaks. For He knew the malice and bitterness of His enemies: He saw how they ”watched Him;” He knew how they would entangle Him in His talk. And what, in so far as He was Man, He in the days of His flesh prayed for Himself, that He still prays for those that, being His, are Himself: ”Why persecutest thou Me?” And this verse well connects itself with that which precedes: for, if the LORD has taken us up as our FATHER, then it is His to lay down the laws by which we are to be governed and guided. And David had good occasion to offer this prayer: he, of whom, on account of one unhappy deed, it is written, ”Thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme.” Teach me Thy way. And who is the way, save He That said, ”I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life?” Him we have to learn as the Way; Him we have to strive after, as the end. Teach me: or, as others have rendered it, Enlighten me: in Him and by Him Who is the Light as well as the Way. Or take it as the voice of CHRIST Himself: Lead Me in the right way, namely, from darkness to light, from the sepulchre to the palace, from the darkness of Joseph’s cave to the ineffable light of heaven. And this because of Mine enemies: for they have set the seal, and appointed the guard, lest ”the last error should be worse than the first.”

14 Deliver me not over to the will of mine adversaries: for there are false witnesses risen up against me, and such as speak wrong. Of David, no need to show how he was persecuted by the false witnesses who chased him from city to city, from wilderness to wilderness: how Doeg, how the Ziphites, how the men of Keilah

rose up against him with their falsehoods: and how, but by GOD's perpetual love, this "morning hind" must have been taken in the toils. And so of the Son of David: "There arose certain, and bare false witness against Him, saying, We heard Him say, I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands." Well says Vieyra: "If we read the Gospel of S. John, we shall find that CHRIST had of a truth said the aforesaid words. If, then, CHRIST in reality had said that He would rebuild the temple in three days, and

A. S. John xiv. 6. Aquila and Theodot. φάνιον με. S. Ambros. in Ps. xxxvi. Ode 5 for the Great Sabbath, (by Mark of Idrus.) A.

this is the very thing that the witnesses deposed to, how can the Evangelist call them false witnesses? . . . They were false, because CHRIST spake in one sense, and they reported in another; and to report the words of GOD in a different sense from that in which they were spoken, is to bear false witness against GOD. Ah, LORD, how many bear false witness against Thee now! how many times do preachers make Thee say that which Thou never saidst! how many times I hear, not Thy words, but the preacher's imaginations!" The latter part of the verse thus runs in the Vulgate, and it has probably been as often quoted as any clause of the Psalms: and iniquity hath lied to itself." It is confessedly one of the most difficult verses in the Psalms; whether one ends the meaning with the conclusion of the clause, or, with Tremellius, carries it on into the next verse, "and they that breathe out violence would have carried me off, unless I had believed to see," &c. And iniquity hath lied to itself since the beginning of the world; but never so as when that old Leviathan swallowed the bait of the LORD's Humanity, and perished by the hook of His Divinity. Let the Eastern Church tell us so in her own glorious language: διὰ θανάτου τὸ θνητὸν, διὰ ταφῆς τὸ φθαρτὸν, μεταβάλλεις· ἀφθαρτίξεις γὰρ θεοπρεπέστατα, ἀπαθανατίζων τὸ πρόσλημμα· ἡ γὰρ σάρξ σου διαφθορὰν οὐκ εἶδε, Δεσπότα, οὐδὲ ἡ ψυχή σου εἰς ᾅδου ξενοπρεπῶς ἐγκαταλέλειπται. Iniquity lied to itself, when the Jews were pursuing the Spotless Lamb with their "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" but Satan (now too late discovering his mistake) had stirred up Procla to send the message, "Have thou nothing to do with that Just man." It has been imagined, but surely without sufficient cause, that this verse was corrupted by the Jews, in order to obscure the reference to the false witnesses against our LORD.

15 I should utterly have fainted: but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. S. August. in S. Joan.

Oh, happy verse, comfort and support of so many travellers in the vale of Baca! Oh, blessed words, the last that have been pronounced by so many Christian lips before they were hushed by death! Fainted! Yes: who would not? Fainted utterly! Yes, and that a thousand times, but for that very belief, the Land of the Living! O my land! true Land of the Living, true Land of Life! life, blessedly eter-

nal, eternally blessed; where there is certain security, secure tranquillity, tranquil jucundity, happy eternity, eternal felicity; where perfect love, nevermore fear, everlasting day, agile motion, one spirit in all! O Land of the Living, though the eye hath not seen thee, yet the heart can long for thee, can groan for thee, can yearn after thee, can aspire to thee. Yes: if for a time we give way to the faintheartedness of Hezekiah, "I said, I shall not see the LORD, even the LORD in the Land of the Living," that I believe verily of David comes in to be our comfort and our strength. In the Land of the Living. It is but little we see of Him here, in the land of the dying, in the land of types and symbols, in the land of figures and enigmas, in the land where "the days of darkness shall be many; and "few and evil are the days of the years of" every "pilgrimage. Of this Land of the Living S. Jerome collects and explains many and many a happy passage of Scripture:

the earth that the "meek shall inherit; the "delightsome land; the "place of broad rivers and of streams; the city, whose "foundation is upon the high hills; the earth that is "visited and blessed by GOD," that is "made very plenteous; the land "that floweth with the true milk and honey. Yes: however, in a low and unreal sense, we may apply this verse to our life in this world,—however much, beholding the multitude of life that goes on, and is supported and kept up here, this globe may be called the land of the living,—yet the united testimony of the Saints calls by that name the kingdom of heaven, and that kingdom only. Hear S. Albert, as always, Scriptural: "The Land of the Dead is Hades; 'a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.' The Land of the Dying is this world; 'For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.' The Land of the Living is Paradise; 'Ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: . . . a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth.'" Even the Pythagoreans had their ἀντίχθονα,—their Land of the Living; and GOD forbid that a Christian soul should use the word in a lower signification than they did!

S. Gregor. Nyssen. in S. Matt. v. 4. Origen. Hom. xxvi. in Num. S. Albert. M. Job x. 22. 2 Sam. xiv. 14. [Note, too, how the Western Church, by taking the latter clause of this verse as the Antiphon to the Psalm both for Easter Eve and the Office for the Dead, leads us from the thought of CHRIST's victory over the grave to ours in Him. Fear'st thou the death that comes to all, And knows no interceder?— O glorious struggle, thou wilt fall, The soldier by the Leader! CHRIST went with death to grapple first, And vanquished him before thee: His darts, then, let him do his worst, Can win no triumph o'er thee!] The Hymn, Huc ad jugum Calvariae. 16 O tarry thou the LORD's leisure : be strong, and he shall comfort thine heart; and put thou thy trust in the LORD.

O blessed words, that have comforted so many a mourner's heart,—that have braced so many a trembling spirit,—that have gone to the prison or to the place

of torture with the Church's heroes! Yes, it matters not in what sense we take the words—whether as said by David to himself, or by David to another, or by GOD to David. Tarry thou the Lord's leisure. But how long? The people whom the LORD fed in the wilderness tarried His leisure three days; the inhabitants of Bethulia five days, and their heroine said, "And now who are ye that have tempted GOD this day? For if He will not help us within these five days, He hath power to defend us when He will: . . . do not bind the counsels of the LORD our GOD." It is written, indeed,—and blessed be GOD for that promise,—"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "But he," says S. Peter Chrysologus, "who, when he hath once knocked, is angry, because he is not forthwith heard, is not a humble petitioner, but an imperious exactor. However long He may cause thee to wait, do thou patiently tarry the LORD's leisure. If He suffer thee to be imperilled on the sea until the fourth watch of the night, He doth it to teach thee trust in Him, and patience in time of adversity." Be strong: viriliter age it is in the Latin,—a fair translation of the LXX.'s ἀνδρίξου,—but the Hebrew word has no reference to man. And rightly, they say: some women have so often stirred up men in faith and love. So Deborah,—so the wife of Manoah,—so Judith,—so the holy women who returned from the Tomb while the Apostles doubted,—so S. Blandina and S. Ponticus in the amphitheatre of Lyons,—so S. Faith and S. Caprais in the fire at Agen. A saying of Gerhohus, though not so intended, will make an admirable proverb for the daily use of a Christian:

And the LORD will undoubtedly say to every faithful waiter, what He said to the multitudes of old, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now waited on Me three days:" the three days that remind of the threefold promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "In this verse," says S. Albert, "he touches on four difficulties which suffer us not to enter into eternal life. The first, the dilation of GOD's answer; against the which he saith, Tarry. The second, the difficulty of doing well; against the which he saith, Be strong. The third, the danger of pusillanimity; against the which he saith, He shall comfort your heart. The fourth, the bitterness of trouble; against the which he addeth, and put your trust in the Lord." And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, in Whose house we desire to dwell all the days of our life; and to the SON, the right Way in which we are led: and to the HOLY GHOST, in Whose tabernacle we are hid.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.
O GOD, Which art the Helper of all, defend us from the camps and the battles of the enemy; so that we, dwelling in the eternity of Thy House, may merit to behold Thy Face by spiritual contemplation. Through (1.) Deliver not, O LORD, Thy Church into the bloody hands of her enemies: grant that, when false witnesses rise up

against her, they may be put to confusion as soon as the banner of the Cross is set up in her. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) O GOD, our Light and Defence, remove from us the night of sorrow and ignorance; give us the light of truth and knowledge, that all our hope may remain fixed on Thee, and that all the assembly of them that would seek to hurt us may be brought to nought. Grant that we may be set on the rock, that, being made strong in CHRIST, in Him we may be lifted up in charity, by Whom we are edified in faith. Amen. Through Thy (11.)

[Almighty GOD, Helper and Strength of our life, defend us from the snares of our enemies, and from all perils of soul and body, that, by the gift of Thy lovingkindness, we, steadfastly persevering in works pleasing to Thee, may be found worthy to behold Thy goodness in the land of the living. Through (1.)]

Psalm 28

TITLE. A Psalm of David.

Argument.
CASSIODORUS. In the number of the present Psalm, and of those which follow, we have in no wise been able to discover any sufficient reason: which, for example, was fitted to be the 26th, the 27th, or the 28th. But we leave this point to the studious,—that, in the examples, for instance, to which we have alluded, when they find no mystical signification in the number as it stands, then they should divide it into its component parts, whether two or three. For instance: they should divide twenty-six into the separate numbers of twenty, and six; twenty-seven into thrice nine. For it may be that by this method of division the reason of the Psalm may more easily be discovered. What does it matter whether the vessels of the Psalms contain two or three firkins apiece? If not even so can you discover any likely signification, it befits you to believe that the Creator of the earth and heaven hath distributed His works and His sayings, without any doubt, by mystical excellencies,—He Who doth all things in weight, number, and measure.

ARG. THOMAS. That CHRIST, assisted by the FATHER, arose from the sepulchre with a glorious Body. CHRIST speaketh concerning the Jews. The voice of the martyrs. The voice of the Church against them that are treacherous. This Psalm is to be read with the lection of Daniel the Prophet. VEN. BEDE. It is well known that David, in the title of the Psalms, always signifieth CHRIST; as mighty in hand in the contest of His Passion, desirable in the glory of His Resurrection: but it applieth to Him sometimes in Himself, sometimes in His members. But when the word himself is added (Venerable Bede refers to the title, Psalmus ipsi David,) we must understand no other than the Mediator of GOD and Man in and by Himself. And He it is that speaketh through all this Psalm, praying on account of the humility of the flesh which He hath assumed, threatening the punishment of His adversaries, not through any desire of revenge, but for the vindication of the truth. In the first section the LORD CHRIST prayeth by His humanity that His prayer may be heard in the time of His future Passion: Unto Thee will I cry. Next He rendereth thanks, for that He hath been heard in those things for the which He made request: Praised

be the Lord, for He hath heard. In the end of the Psalm He addeth His desire, that, as He Himself hath been raised up by the power of His Resurrection, so the people that shall believe in His Name may obtain salvation: O save Thy people.

SYRIAC PSALTER. A supplication and prayer, and an encouragement to ask for help. S. JEROME. This Psalm hath the voice of the Mediator Himself speaking in the conflict of His Passion to the FATHER. And the ills which He desires for His enemies He willeth not of malice, but predicteth as a Prophet that which certainly will be the punishment of their sins.

Various Uses.
Ambrosian. Tuesday of First Week: III. Nocturn. No doubt because the verse, "Reward them according to the wickedness of their own invention," applies so admirably to the infliction of the same fate on the enemies of Daniel which they had intended for him. Gregorian. The LORD is the strength * of my life. Parisian. In GOD * my heart hath trusted, and I am helped, and in my song will I praise Him. Quignon. The LORD is my light and my salvation. Mozarabic. The LORD is my strength and my Redeemer, * my heart hath trusted in Him, and I am helped. 1 Unto thee will I cry, O LORD my strength: think no scorn of me; lest, if thou make as though thou hearest not, I become like them that go down into the pit.

They well say that the first verse contains a petition that the Divinity may not withdraw its affluence from the Humanity of our LORD; for that was the strength indeed by which the LORD Who came to suffer was enabled to conquer. Think no scorn of me. The Nazarenes might think scorn when they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" His relations might think scorn of Him when they said, "He is beside Himself." It was for the FATHER to say, "This is My Beloved SON, in Whom I am well pleased." And when at last the same FATHER did make as though He heard not, immediately there followed that great and bitter cry, the most bitter that the world ever knew, "My GOD, My GOD, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Unto Thee will I cry. They fail not to point out in how many ways CHRIST did cry: in the plain, sowing the good seed among the multitude; in the temple, preaching the law: He cried in the heart of others, turning them to GOD; He cried on the Cross, conquering death. From this they take occasion to discuss that most difficult question, why our LORD prayed for that which He knew would come to pass. And after all, perhaps it is beyond the limits of human comprehension to fathom; and the best answer that they can give is, that He would sanction by His example that which He commanded by His Word: as in the LORD's Prayer, when He enjoins us to say, "Thy kingdom come," which certainly will come whether it be prayed for or not. And notice: man cries to the end GOD may not be silent; for if we keep silence He will also be to us as He was to Saul in the day of his despair; "When Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets."

Gerhohus, interpreting the Vulgate, Ne sileas a me, does not fail to enter at length into the mediæval belief that the lion's whelps are born dead, and that the parent lion, by roaring over them, raises them to life on the third day. Keep not silence over me, to the end that I may not remain in death. 2 Hear the voice of my humble petitions, when I cry unto thee: when I hold up my hands towards the mercy-seat of thy holy temple.

D. C. And what was the time when our LORD's hands were thus held up, save those most holy hours in which He hung upon the Cross? The voice of My humble petitions, in the plural, not the singular; for we may piously believe, as Dionysius says, that though only one intercession of our LORD is mentioned, yet never did He pray so earnestly and so lovingly for the salvation of the world, as in the time of the world's evening sacrifice. Hear the voice. It is as if He said, "I, Who kept silence before Pontius Pilate, before Annas, before Caiaphas,—I, Who replied never a word to the accusation of the false witnesses,—I now cry unto Thee, O My FATHER, Who canst hear the supplication of the heart as well as the voice of the mouth. Towards the mercy-seat of Thy holy temple. For so indeed they were stretched out to that holy temple which is in heaven. But there was also a holy temple then being reduced to dissolution, and by its very reduction becoming the mercy-seat; that temple which, being destroyed, was to be raised again in three days. The words of Gerhohus are so striking, that I may well quote them entire. "I, the assumed Human Nature, will cry unto Thee, O LORD: Thou art My Deity, in which I, the Son of David, am the Son of GOD, equally as the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST are GOD:

Thou art My Deity, and since Thou art the word of the FATHER, keep not silence from Me, from Me, the Human Nature, which Thou, O WORD, didst personally unite to Thyself. By the voice of My Blood, crying from the ground, do Thou, O WORD, so speak as to be heard even in hell, when My soul shall descend thither: make manifest that I am not like them that go down into the pit, from the weight of original, or the guilt of actual, sin. For I, untainted by any sin, shall so be 'free among the dead,' that I also shall be able to deliver others thence, and to insult even death itself, saying, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'" And the tradition is, that as it was commanded the Jews, in whatever part of the earth they should be, to pray towards the temple at Jerusalem,— C. as we find Daniel praying towards the place where that temple stood,—so the Cross was set up in such a manner, that our LORD's dying eyes rested on that same temple in which He had so often taught, but the worship of which He had come to abolish. S. Augustine takes it yet in another sense, as if the LORD said, "While I am crucified for those

It may be worth while to observe, that in the following passage Gerhohus most amply vindicates himself against the charge of Monophysitism, however imprudently

in one or two other expositions he may have spoken. who by My death shall become Thy holy temple." They notice on this verse how very rarely CHRIST prayed for any individual. There is the exception addressed to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not;" but that is hardly an exception, because in Peter He interceded for the other Apostles, as the very conclusion of that sentence shows: "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Hence they take occasion to discuss the curious question,—whether the same prayer, if offered for one friend, has more value than it would have for each of three friends, if offered for them. And, notwithstanding the authority of S. Thomas Aquinas, the greater number of the schoolmen answer, that such is the virtue of charity, that each of the three is as much benefited as one would have been. Nay, they go further, and affirm that, if we pray for one person, our prayers are equally effectual for all those who are in the same condition as himself, whether they mention him or not: which they illustrate by the simile that if you light a candle for the benefit of a rich man sitting in his hall, it equally illuminates all those who are in the same chamber. S. Albertus says, neatly enough, that in these verses we have the model of all prayer: firstly, the oratio; secondly, the ratio.

3 O pluck me not away, neither destroy me with the ungodly and wicked doers: which speak friendly to their neighbours, but imagine mischief in their hearts.

They usually understand this of heretics, who seem to speak those things which are consonant with the words of GOD, and yet all the while are inspired by Satan to imagine mischief in their hearts. And how often did the enemies of CHRIST send forth those who should feign themselves just men, and so entangle Him! And, as Cassiodorus well observes, it is not only the voice of the LORD, but of the dying LORD: He knew that His time was come; He knew that they fools would soon "count His life madness, and His end without honour;" and therefore He prayed not to have His inheritance with them. And as the same writer most truly says, "Where are they now who affirm that CHRIST had no human soul, when it is said here, according to the Italic version, 'Destroy not my soul with the ungodly?'" And in that neither destroy Me with the ungodly, there is no doubt a reference to the fellow-prisoner of the LORD, Barabbas. And this is more especially the case if we read the verse in S. Matthew as it ought to be read, according to the best MSS., "Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Jesus which is called Barabbas, or JESUS Which is called CHRIST?" Or they take it again in another sense, as the LORD's prayer that His Flesh, naturally subject to corruption, should not be left to decay, but should be preserved by the especial and miraculous power of the Godhead from any the least yielding to the dominion of death. For herein were the three Holy Children emblems of our LORD: not only were neither they nor their garments subject to the power of the flame, but neither had the smell of fire passed upon them.

4 Reward them according to their deeds: and according to the wickedness of their own inventions. 5 Recompense them after the work of their hands: pay them that they have deserved. Here again we have some of those expressions which have been a stumbling-block to many a mind in its use of the Psalms. Nevertheless this we must constantly remember, that we may, if we will, take them in a future tense; or else as the great majority of commentators hold, interpreting them of God's determined enemies, and conforming ourselves wholly to His will, that must happen to us which the Psalmist in another place says, "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance." It is a very pretty meaning which some mediæval writers deduce: that here we have the words of the LORD on the Cross. Reward them according to their deeds, not according to their designs: they intended to destroy a guiltless Man, but whatever they intended, their deed was to offer up the evening sacrifice of the world. And according to that deed, and according to the blessings it brought down, many of them at least were rewarded, as the centurion, and no doubt others. Notice that recompense them after the work of their hands is not in the Roman Psalter, though to be found in the LXX. and the Hebrew. There have not been wanting those, as the poet Apollinarius, who, by a very forced construction, apply the whole of the two verses to the good.

6 For they regard not in their mind the works of the LORD, nor the operation of his hands: therefore shall he break them down, and not build them up.

Here we have ignorance alleged as the cause of the destruction of the wicked; as saith the Prophet, "Therefore My people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge. The works of the Lord. And first and principally that His greatest work, the Incarnation, by which the very nature of matter has been changed, and all our relations with the visible world, and its relations with us, transfigured. And from the Incarnation, and the conversation of the Word Incarnate among men, arise the operations of His hands, those operations which the Scribes and Pharisees attributed to Beelzebub,—those operations which an evil and adulterous generation persisted in neglecting, and desiring a sign from heaven. How they regarded them let S. Peter explain: "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life, Whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. . . . And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all His Prophets, that CHRIST should suffer, He hath so fulfilled. And in like manner Moses speaks to the Jews: "Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, yet the LORD hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day.

Gerhohus enters into one of his curious discussions as to the understanding the works of the LORD, when it pleases Him to bring evil upon any place. Quoting that

text, ”Every one that doeth evil hateth the light,” he says, acutely enough, ”Note the difference: it saith not, ’He that doeth evil things hateth the light,’ but ’He that doeth evilly hateth the light.’ There is a vast difference between the two. It is true, every one that doeth evilly doeth evil, but not true that every one that doeth evil doeth evilly. For there are evil works of God: and these are the most difficult to understand. As He Himself saith, ’I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I, the LORD, do all these things.’” It is no wonder that the Christians of that time saw a marvellous fulfilment of this verse, when the plan of Julian the Apostate for rebuilding the Temple was miraculously frustrated. He indeed regarded not in his mind those prophecies that foretold that of the Temple there should not be left one stone upon another; and therefore God did break down and not build up his abortive attempt, causing the very heathen to confess that there was somewhat miraculous in his failure. And Origen very fitly applies this verse to those who can see and study the works of God, and pass over all thought of the Workmaster;

according to that saying of the Wise Man, ”If they were able to know so much that they could aim at the world, how did they not sooner find out the LORD thereof? And we must observe the elegant paronomasia in the Hebrew between understood and build up, and .

In Ps. xviii. 7 Praised be the LORD : for he hath heard the voice of my humble petitions. Here, as the commentators tell us, we must distinguish 1 This observation of Gerhohus shows how completely writers of his stamp look to the Vulgate, and not to the original Greek. For in the latter it is distinctly, ”Every one that doeth evil things.” between the prayers of CHRIST and the prayers of His people. The latter, though they are always heard in a sense, they are heard only so far as they are for the good of the petitioner; so that either that is given which is requested, or something that is better is given. But the prayers of our LORD are always heard exactly as they are offered; because nothing can be better than that for which He makes request. And here they dwell on the difference between the blessing which the Creator gives to the creature, and that which the creature gives to the Creator. ”Note,” says S. Albertus, ”that the creature praises the Creator by attributing to Him the good things which it possesseth: the Creator blesseth the creature by doing good to it; the Creator blesseth the creature by increasing, whether its merit or its happiness. Hence it is that, after each Hour, desiring as it were to attribute to the LORD all the good that we have done, we say, ’Let us bless the LORD;’ and immediately we add, doing that which we enjoin, ’Thanks be to GOD.’” And Cassiodorus well says that the thanks in the text are paid before that for which GOD is thanked is wrought. For this is the work of faith,—to believe that that which is prayed for will be granted, and to return thanks for it as if it were already granted.

8 The LORD is my strength, and my shield; my heart hath trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart danceth for joy, and in my song will I praise him.

Or, as it is in the Vulgate, Therefore my flesh hath flourished again, and with my whole will will I confess to Him. Eusebius very well observes that it is the usual custom of GOD's providence to give an earnest to His petitioner that he has been heard, by impressing him with the feeling that he has not prayed in vain. And in this sense many and many a saint has said, My heart has trusted in Him, and I am helped, long before that for which he prayed came to pass: just as our LORD Himself said, "FATHER, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me," before Lazarus was raised from the dead. And they notice the difference between the expressions, My strength and My shield. My strength, in enabling me to carry on an offensive warfare against Satan; my shield in giving me power to resist his temptations. So our LORD might say, "My strength, when I went forth into the land of darkness and in the shadow of death, when I preached, 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' when the people that walked in darkness saw a great light. But My shield during the three temptations in the wilderness, and again when the prince of this world came and had nothing in Me. Therefore my flesh hath flourished again. Hear what S. Ambrose says on this text: "My flesh," saith he, "hath flourished again. Notice the verb which he uses. He saith not flourished, but flourished again.

But nothing can flourish again, save that which has flourished before. Now the flesh of the LORD flourished for the first time when it sprang from the womb of Mary. As Isaiah saith, 'There shall come forth a rod from the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.' It flourished again when the flower had been cut down by the Jews, and budded forth from the sepulchre with the reviving glory of His Resurrection. Cardinal Hugo shows the resemblance between our LORD's flesh and a flower in these verses:

And almost in the same words, S. Maximus, Serm. 5. "Flos pulcher redolens spes fructus et brevis ævi; Mel dat api; sertum capiti; sine semine nascens." And so in Isaiah we have, "And when ye see this your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish as an herb." [And when our flesh has become weakened by sin, defiled with impurity, and enslaved by its passions, it can by repentance be made to flourish again with the blossom and fragrance of chastity.] 9 The LORD is my strength : and he is the wholesome defence of his Anointed.

Or, as it is in the Vulgate, The Lord is the Strength of His people, and the Protector of the salvations of His Christ. S. Augustine, we may be sure, would not lose so very favourable a text for preaching the necessity of accompanying and assisting grace. As it stands in our version, one cannot but notice as so often, the allusion to the Trinity. They observe also that the expression His people (plebis suæ) shows, in its very nature, how poor and contemptible they are in the sight of the world,—how many Lazaruses there are for one Dives, that are CHRIST's. And nothing can

more beautifully express the whole scheme of salvation than that expression, the Protector of the salvations of His Christ; the constant guiding, and guarding, and defence of those persons or those things (for, as they constantly tell us, we must take the phrase in its widest sense,) which CHRIST, by His precious sacrifice, has won to Himself. S. Jerome takes this expression CHRIST to mean all CHRIST's people; like Him, anointed; like Him, made to our GOD, kings and priests. And then the salvations of His CHRIST will be the poor little works which we, each in our own small way, may be privileged to do or to bear for Him. In the Septuagint it is, He that holds the shield over the salvations. Whence probably the old hymn:

A. S. Hieronym. in hunc locum. The Hymn, A Patre Unigenitus. 10 O save thy people, and give thy blessing unto S thine inheritance : feed them, and set them up for ever.

L. O how often has this verse been repeated by the Church from one end of the world to the other! Save Thy people: those who lead the ordinary life of GOD's servants; and bless Thine heritage: those who, like Levi, "hath no part nor inheritance, the LORD is his inheritance; according as the LORD thy GOD promised him." It is worth while to translate the beautiful explanation of Gerhohus. "According to this distinction of Thy people and of Thine heritage, from the very beginning of the Church, two kinds of lives have been followed: the one practised by the debility of the more infirm, the other perfected in the blessed virtue of the stronger; one remaining in the little city of Zoar, one ascending to the height of the mountains; one by tears and almsgivings atoning for daily sins, the other by the daily instance of spiritual exercise acquiring eternal merits; the one inferior, the other superior; those that hold the inferior are engaged in earthly occupations; those who follow the superior despise earthly things altogether. The former are the people of God: the latter, His heritage." Feed them: or, as it is in the Vulgate, Govern them. Here we have one of the clauses in that wonderful hymn, the author of which, like most of the other everlasting possessions of the Church, will never be known till the end of all things; for none can doubt that it is far older than its usually alleged parentage, which would attribute it to S. Ambrose and S. Augustine. Lift them up for ever. Hence they well gather the everlasting perfecting of righteous souls; that the Beatific Vision will be a state of perpetual progress, as well as of infinite happiness. And Rupert well remarks that the way to be lifted up at last is to be governed at first; even as the Wise Man says, "Before honour is humility."

And therefore: Glory be to the FATHER, the LORD our Strength; and to the SON, in Whom our heart hath trusted and we are helped: and to the HOLY GHOST, Who is the wholesome defence of His Anointed; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.

O GOD, the Strength of all, preserve Thy people from going down into the pit;

and so knit us together with one heart in Thy holy Temple, that the peace which we profess with our mouth we may hold in our heart. Through (1.) We pray and beseech Thee, O LORD, not to keep silence from consoling us; neither do Thou give us up to the desires of our own hearts, and shut up our souls with sinners; but save Thy people whom Thou hast created, and bless Thine heritage which Thou hast redeemed through Thy precious Blood. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.) O GOD, our Keeper and Redeemer, look in mercy on us, and grant that our flesh may flourish again in the blossom of chastity and the flower of holiness; and because Thou art the fortitude of Thine elect, save Thy people and bless Thine heritage with the riches of Thy benediction. Amen. Through Thy mercy (11.)

[Lifting up our feeble hands towards Thy holy temple as we kneel, we beseech Thee, O LORD, shut not up our souls with the ungodly which know Thee not: leave us not, nor destroy us with them that work iniquity, but governing us, lift us up with Thee in the kingdom of heaven. Through (1.)]

Psalm 29

TITLE. A Psalm of David [at the completion of the Tabernacle.]

Argument.
VEN. BEDE. The completion of the Tabernacle signifies the perfection of the Church; which, since it wageth wars against carnal vices, hath rightly received the name of a military tent. The Prophet, foreseeing that the ends of the world would be brought to the faith, first addresses all the nations, commanding them to bring sacrifices to GOD. Next, in a sevenfold series, by various allusions, he enumerates the graces of the HOLY GHOST: The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. But that he may show that the power of the FATHER and of the HOLY GHOST is one, he telleth, thirdly, how the Holy Trinity effectuates Baptism, and how the LORD giveth virtue and benediction to him who is regenerate from it: The Lord maketh the water-flood to be inhabited, &c. EUSEBIUS OF CÆSARÆA. An enigmatical prophecy, teaching concerning GOD. ARABIC PSALTER. A prophecy of the Incarnation, and concerning the Ark and Tabernacle.

[This Psalm would appear to have been composed during an equinoctial tornado at the Feast of Tabernacles, which, falling in the month of Tizri (August, September,) must often have been accompanied with hurricanes. Compare Ezra x. 9: ”All the people sat in the street of the house of GOD, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain.”]

Various Uses.
Gregorian. Ferial. Monday: Matins. [Epiphany: I. Nocturn. Transfiguration: I. Nocturn.] Ambrosian. Tuesday of the First Week. III. Nocturn.

Antiphons.
Gregorian. O worship * the LORD in His holy temple. [Epiphany: Bring unto the LORD, O ye sons of GOD, worship the LORD in His holy temple. Transfiguration: The LORD hath discovered the thick places, in His temple doth every man speak of His honour.] Monastic. O worship * the LORD in His holy temple. Parisian. Ascribe unto the LORD * glory and honour. Mozarabic. In the temple of the LORD all shall tell His glory, and the LORD shall remain a King for ever. 1 Bring unto the LORD,

O ye mighty, bring young rams unto the LORD: ascribe unto the LORD worship and strength.

There is no Psalm which has been thought to contain more mysticism than this; and, as Didymus tells us, its very number, twenty-eight, is in itself a mystery. It contains four septenaries; or, taking twenty as the symbol of perfect virtue, and eight as that of regeneration, the two—both the beginning and the completion of the Christian course—are both contained in it. Notice the difference between the Bible and Prayer Book versions: the former translating this verse, Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty: give unto the Lord glory and strength. These young rams, as they beautifully say, are the same of whom the LORD spoke to the Prince of His shepherds, ”Feed My sheep; feed My lambs.” And as He then spoke thrice, so here a triple answer is given. O ye mighty, or, as it is in the original, O ye sons of God: whereon S. Basil takes occasion to observe, that only they who are the sons of GOD by purity of heart can offer gifts acceptable to Him; whence CHRIST Himself commanded us at the commencement of the prayer which He Himself instructed us to offer, to say, ”Our FATHER.” Richard of S. Victor treats this verse, and indeed the whole Psalm, at great length, in a treatise founded thereupon to those engaged in the religious life. S. Peter Chrysologus, not unnaturally, takes occasion from this verse to exhort parents to bring their children to GOD as soon as possible in Holy Baptism. And we may well compare the text in Hosea, ”So will we offer the calves of our lips.” Based on the glory and

Of these numbers I would say with Lorinus, ”Equidem non istis arithmeticis mysteriis honour of this verse is the Canon of the Fourth Council of Toledo, which orders, under pain of excommunication, that instead of the Glory be to the FATHER, &c.,” adopted by all other Churches, ”Glory and honour” should be ascribed, as it is done by the Mozarabic Office to this day. [”He who collects the scattered sheep of CHRIST, who turns back the erring, and finds the lost, this man brings young rams unto the LORD.” And as the Apostles are the leaders of CHRIST’s flock, so those children whom they have begotten in the Gospel are fitly called sons of rams.]

2 Give the LORD the honour due unto his Name: worship the LORD with holy worship.

And what honour is that? What honour is due to that S. Bernard. Name, once the laughing-stock of the world, once the scorn and derision of sinners, now the joy and safety of the saints, and the happiness of the blessed? As the hymn says: ’Tis the Name, by right exalted Over every other Name, That when we are sore assaulted Puts our enemies to shame; Strength to them that else had halted, Eyes to blind, and feet to lame. The Hymn, Gloriosi Salvatoris. With holy worship: or, as the Vulgate has it, In His holy temple. And this temple the commentators understand in very different manners. In that tabernacle, say the Jews, which, after all its wanderings in the wilderness, and its varied habitations at Shiloh, Kirjath-jearim,

and elsewhere, was now decaying and waxing old, and ready to vanish away. The Church Militant, say the Greek expositors; holy, notwithstanding all its sins, all the tares that grow together with the wheat, all its miserable weaknesses and shortcomings. In the Material Church, say most of the ritualists; and some of the Offices for the Dedication of a Church employ this verse as the antiphon. It is the religious life, writes Richard of S. Victor, in a passage which may well be quoted. "Above," says he, "we are commanded to offer a sacrifice; here the precept is to adore in the temple: the one

S. Basil and S. Athanasius. It is a mistake of Lorinus to say that the honour is now omitted by every church; as he might have convinced himself by merely looking at the Mozarabic Breviary. [This reading, which is also that of the Syriac, has arisen from taking the word as though from , "a ram." The LXX., which seems to have had this originally as a mere variant, now stands with both meanings attached to the same words in the text. The Targum, not looking to the idea of sacrifice, paraphrases as "companies of angels."].

that we may not enter with empty hands; the other that we may not stand with idle bodies. That we may not enter with empty hands, Bring young rams unto the Lord; that we may not stand with idle bodies, Worship the Lord in His holy temple. What is it to worship, except to bow down our whole body to the feet of Him Whom we adore? The Prophet wills, then, that we should be subject, not only to the higher members of the LORD,—that is, to prelates,—but even to those that are lowest, and that of our own free will. Fulfil S. Peter's command, 'Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the LORD's sake,' without doubt thou hast worshipped the LORD. Enter, therefore, that august gate with the vows of your religion, with the habits of your profession; remain in the house of discipline, hold the institutions of your rule. This is truly the worship that David here requires." Others, again, take this Temple of GOD to be a pure conscience, without which all worship is utterly valueless. And they observe that in this Temple it is the part of the FATHER to lay the foundation, that of the SON to build, that of the HOLY GHOST to complete. Thus it was that David made preparation for the Temple; that the Son of David, the pacific King Solomon, erected it. It would be endless to tell how others have seen in this verse an allusion to the offerings of the wise men; or how in the four clauses about offering, S. Basil and S. Athanasius see the Trinity of Persons and the Unity of Essence.

[The holy temple, or hall, observes S. Bruno, the Carthusian, is our own heart, now narrow, but soon to be enlarged by charity, so as to make it a dwelling ample enough for GOD Himself.] 3 It is the LORD, that commandeth the waters: it is the glorious GOD, that maketh the thunder. Now follows that remarkable description of the sevenfold effects of the voice of the LORD, which has given rise to so many expositions, and which, no doubt, is as deeply mystical as any part of the Psalms.

Let us take them as they stand in the Vulgate, and then return to each verse as it is given in our version: 1. The voice of the LORD is upon the waters. 2. The voice of the LORD in virtue. 3. The voice of the LORD in magnificence. 4. The voice of the LORD that breaketh the cedars. 5. The voice of the LORD dividing the flames of fire.

6. The voice of the LORD shaking the wilderness. 7. The voice of the LORD preparing the stags.

It is not wonderful that, with such a leading idea as that suggested by the first clause, Baptism, many commentators should have seen the Seven Sacraments in these voices. On the waters, Baptism; in virtue, Confirmation; in magnificence, the Blessed Eucharist; breaking the cedars, Penance; (compare the saying of Isaiah, "The day of the LORD of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up;") shaking the wilderness, Orders; (compare "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness;") dividing the flames of fire, Matrimony; preparing the stags, Extreme Unction; (each Christian being here symbolised by the stag, as we saw that our LORD was called the Morning Hind in the 22nd Psalm.) This is the symbolism given by Lorinus. Ayguan gives the same interpretation, but with a different adaptation of particulars. The more usual way, however, is to see in the seven voices the seven graces of the HOLY GHOST, the seven thunders which S. John heard in the Revelation. And thus it is that Gerhohus writes, "The voice of truth is not the voice of man, but the voice of the Lord; whether that voice insinuates the fear of the LORD upon the waters,—that is, the minds of earthly men, unstable as water,—or whether it is in virtue, alluring them that are heavenly-minded; or whether in magnificence, preparing a glorious consolation to happy mourners; or whether it be the gift of fortitude, breaking the cedars; or whether the gift of counsel, which divides the flames of fire: or the gift of understanding, which shakes the wilderness of Cades: or, finally, of wisdom, which reveals the thickets and prepares the stags,—that is, which reveals the hidden meaning of GOD'S Word, and prepares Christians to act upon it."

The voice of the LORD is upon the waters. Where Ayguan says very well, "Because CHRIST was baptized, the voice of the FATHER was heard, 'This is My beloved SON, in Whom I am well pleased.' The SON appeared in the flesh, so it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Oh, how wonderfully this Voice thundered, and afforded an example of humility to the whole world!" Whence Remigius saith, "The LORD also thundered out of heaven; and the Highest gave His thunder, whence CHRIST saith, 'Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness:' that all the proud may learn the example of humility, and may not think scorn to be baptized by My poor members, when they see Me, the LORD of all, baptized by John, My servant." S. Basil takes the voice of S. John the Baptist. "John," says he, "was the voice of the LORD in

magnificence, when he preached such glorious mysteries concerning JESUS." And notice the difference between the voice and the Word; between the voice of one crying in the wilderness, and the WORD That was with the FATHER; the inarticulate sound, and the perfect character and image.

4 It is the LORD, that ruleth the sea; the voice of the LORD is mighty in operation: the voice of the LORD is a glorious voice. By. That ruleth the sea. So it was when the waves of the Red Sea were made a path for the ransomed to pass over; when the sea of Galilee was swept by the tempest, and the LORD awoke and said to it, "Peace, be still." Or, on the other hand, when Jonah was passing from Joppa to Tarshish, and the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea. Mighty in operation. And so it was when that marvellous Voice was heard, "Lazarus, come forth:" and he that had been dead four days, came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes. And so, since our LORD's time, what His Voice was then, that of His Apostles has been since: "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." Or, as it is in another place, "In power and in the HOLY GHOST, and in much assurance." Or again: That ruleth the sea. By the sea we understand the various peoples of this world; as the metaphor is explained in the Revelation. And so it was when, at that first Pentecost, Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the rest of that noble catalogue, heard the Gospel message, every man in his own tongue.

5 The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedar-trees: yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Libanus. Procopius in Isaiam. Rupert.

And first, they take these cedars as the symbols of the proud and haughty. It is written in the book of Job that Behemoth lieth under the shady trees; that is, mystically, that Satan finds his dwelling-place in the heart of the proud. And the voice of the LORD breaketh them: breaketh them, that is, in the first place, by giving to those haughty ones a broken and a contrite heart; or if that fails, then by grinding them to powder. Hence it is written in the Magnificat, "He hath showed strength with His Arm: He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart. And so it is written in the Prophet, "Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars. . . . Yet I destroyed his fruits from above, and his roots from beneath. And so Procopius very well observes, that the cedar, itself lofty, grows on lofty places, and bears no fruit. And yet from these cedars of Libanus were the beams taken which built the house of the LORD at Jerusalem. And it is so still, Saul the persecutor, the Cedar of Lebanon, becomes Paul the Apostle, one of the main supports of the LORD's house: Margaret, the sinner, becomes S. Margaret of Cortona, famous to all ages for her penitence. I am afraid that Ayguan's distinction between lower cedars,—those in other parts of the world,—and cedars of Libanus, the most towering of all, however true physically, cannot be confined to his mystical interpretation:

that the haughtiest of all GOD's enemies are the Jews. For surely, even among Christians, and even in this age, we shall find some that as truly crucify the LORD afresh,—that as boldly say, "We will not have this Man to reign over us,"—as ever did Annas and Caiaphas, and their companions. Breaketh the cedars. S. Albertus, with his wonderful knowledge of Scripture, reminds us of S. Paul's warning: "If some of the branches be broken off, and thou wert graffed in among them, boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."

6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf: Libanus also, and Sirion, like a young unicorn.

The Vulgate is so entirely different, that we must consider it also. And he shall diminish them as the calf of Lebanon: and the beloved is as the son of the unicorns. To take our own version first: Sirion is spoken of by Moses before: "Which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion; and the Amorites call it Shenir. And so we read afterwards that "the half tribe of Manasseh increased from Bashan unto Baalhermon and Senir, and unto Mount Hermon. And so when David speaks here of these mountains skipping like a young unicorn, or rather buffalo, it is but that which we shall find hereafter of the mountains skipping like rams, and the little hills like young sheep, when I will speak of the mystical sense. Now let us take it as it is in the Vulgate. Nothing has given the commentators more trouble than the phrase, "He shall diminish them as the calf of Lebanon; or, as it is in the LXX., "like the calf Lebanon. Generally they seem to understand it of the effect of God's grace, in not only breaking down the pride of the haughty, but in so touching their hearts, as to give them the gentleness and playfulness of a young calf. Or, again, as in Lebanon was the best pasture for calves, hence those destined for the Tabernacle service were most frequently taken thence: so that here the conversion of the proud into holy, reasonable sacrifices to God is foretold. And the Beloved is as the son of the unicorns.

They take it as a prophecy of the Incarnation: that the "Beloved," the Only-begotten, He in Whom the FATHER was always well pleased,—He should in no respect be different from the other children of the Jews,—symbolised by unicorns, because the favoured people of God, and intended to push their enemies right and left, and to trample them under foot. I do not dwell on these interpretations, however ingenious and however beautiful, based as they are on so manifestly untenable an interpretation. Still, such is the sense which the Church has usually attached to the words: and it would have been unpardonable,—let that sense be as ungrammatical as it may,—to pass it over.

[The skipping denotes, as they for the most part agree, The LXX. probably read instead of . A. Ay. In Ps. cxiii. Isa. i. 18. the "joy of exultation," the gladness of the sinner after he has been humbled by GOD, and taught His law. They skip, but not till

they have first been broken. And note who they are that so skip with joy. Libanus, ”white,” because their sins, which were as scarlet, have been made as white as snow. Sirion, the ”breastplate,” because they who were weak, strengthened by GOD’s might, have become breastplates of ”righteousness,” of ”faith and love.”] 7 The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire; the voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness: yea, the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Cades. G. Liranus and others. Fire they take of the concupiscence which is in human nature even after Baptism. GOD’s grace does not destroy or remove this altogether in this world, but hinders it from bursting forth into active corruption, prevents the soul from being kindled by temptation into a furnace of iniquity. But we may also see here those divided flames of fire which descended at the great day of Pentecost upon the Apostles; when

The Hymn, Beata nobis gaudia. The quivering fire their heads bedewed, In cloven tongues’ similitude, That eloquent their words might be, And fervid all their charity. Cathisma after the second Stichologia, Whitsunday Lauds. In S. Matt. cap. iii. Or, again, dividing the flames of fire, so that they lighted on the Apostles, but hurt them not; were kindled on each forehead as a lambent brightness, not an injuring heat. ”Fountain of the SPIRIT!” exclaims the Eastern Church, ”divided into rational and fiery streams, bedewed the Apostles to whom it gave light; that fire was unto them as a dewy cloud, illuminating them,—a raining flame, by which we have received grace, through water and fire.”

In another sense they also take it, and that an even more solemn meaning. GOD so divides the light and heat of His ineffable glory: to the blessed it is a brilliant splendour without heat,—to the damned it is a fearful fire without light: or if there be any light, teaches S. Gregory, it will only be such a light as shall add to, by revealing, the horrors of that dismal place. Others, again, take it of GOD in His Providence refraining the angry passions of wicked men, as when His command was to Laban, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness. And marvellously that Voice of the LORD, the Forerunner of the WORD, shook the wilderness, when he proclaimed, ”Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” S. Chrysostom says, ”Verily, Judæa was a wilderness, empty of righteousness, full of sin; and though the LORD had planted it, the LORD irrigated it, all the prophets had tilled it, it bare nothing but thorns and briars, and with those thorns it crowned its own LORD.” The wilderness of Cades. Cassiodorus reminds us very well that in the wilderness of Cades it was that the stricken rock gave out its water. Hence the wilderness of Cades may be interpreted of human nature lying in its original sin, before the Sacrament of Baptism is conferred on it. This wilderness the Voice of the LORD shook, when His Apostle and other preachers made proclamation, ”Flee from the wrath to come;” when they answered the question, ”Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?”

8 The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to bring forth young, and discovereth the thick bushes: in his temple doth every man speak of his honour. There is no verse which has given to commentators more trouble than this, in its mystical sense. And no wonder: for, as I said before, the translation is manifestly founded on a mistake. There can be no doubt that the proper interpretation is, The voice of the Lord shattereth the oaks; and to that the same meaning will apply as to His breaking the cedar-trees, namely, His putting down the proud in the imagination of their hearts. But as to the hinds, commentators are reduced, either to the mediæval fable that stags, by breathing into the holes of serpents, have the power of fascinating them out, and then destroying them, and that it is thus that the LORD from generation to generation gives power to His people to triumph over that old serpent Satan; or they observe that hinds are the only animals which calve with pain and difficulty, and thus it is that the voice of GOD enables His servants to bring forth good works, at whatever cost of labour and pain to themselves:—which interpretations it is very evident only arise from the determination of making some sense where there is none. And discovereth the thick bushes. Here all the expositors agree in understanding the thick bushes as the mysteries of Holy Scripture, revealed and explained by the Incarnation of the SON of GOD. So the Eastern Church:

Rod of the root of Jesse, Thou Flower of Mary born, From that thick shady forest Cam'st glorious forth this morn. In the same sense they also take that passage in Habakkuk, "The LORD came from Teman, and the Holy One from the thick and shady mountain." S. Jerome dwells at length on the metaphor, and shows how the forests, where wild beasts lurk and thieves lie in ambush, typify those times of temptation which every Christian and the whole Catholic Church must go through; and that the prophecy here is of GOD's turning it into pasture land and corn field, just as tempta- S. Hieron. In Isa. cap. xxxv. S. Cosmas of Maiuma: Canon for Christmas. S. Hieronym. in Isa. lxv. 10.

tions and trials are changed into means of grace and comfort. So the prophecies in Isaiah, that "Carmel shall become a fold for flocks;" that "on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briars and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and the treading of lesser cattle." Nevertheless, it is better to follow the usual interpretation, that by the voice of the LORD, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the LORD is with thee; blessed art thou among women," the thick and obscure bushes of many an ancient prophecy were revealed; and thence it immediately follows, In His Temple doth every man speak of His honour. For His Temples have since been filled with the praises of Him, Who, by revealing the thick bushes, hath brought us from darkness into His marvellous light: and of His honour, Who, because of His humiliation, hath been highly exalted, and received the Name which is above every name. Notice, also, that with the same reference to this deep obscurity, Euthymius refers that text, "Deep calleth unto deep," to the two Testaments, the Old foretelling the New,

the New appealing to the Old. In a plainer signification, S. Basil takes occasion to rebuke those who discussed their own matters in the House of GOD. ”In His Temple,” says he, ”does every man speak, not of worldly business, not of other men, not of gossip, but of His honour.” Lorinus does well to remind us, that while sacrifice was being offered or the auguries consulted by a Roman Imperator, it was the duty of one man to make proclamation, Hoc age: and how much more ought the same rule to hold good in the worship of the one true GOD!

9 The LORD sitteth above the water-flood : and the LORD remaineth a King for ever. Or as it is in the Vulgate, The Lord maketh the waterflood to be inhabited. Nothing can be a more beautiful symbol of Baptism than this. That is the true deluge, not of vengeance, but of grace, that was spread over the face of the whole earth; and wherever its waters have touched, there have new children been born to GOD, there the LORD has added to the Church daily such as were being saved. And if we ask why Baptism is here spoken of as a flood, rather than, as in other places, as a river, we must remember that the deluge itself has always been regarded as the Baptism of judgment preceding that of grace. So Hildebert says: The deluge o’er the earth at midnight burst, The fearful baptism of its sin accurst.

It is needless to seek other and further-fetched metaphors, such as that of S. Albertus, who sees in this passage a proof that bad as well as good are contained in the Church militant, because by means of that the LORD makes the waterflood of sin still to be inhabited by His children. And therefore it follows, The Lord remaineth a King for ever. Because by Baptism He has dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the world, therefore the LORD shall reign over the people thus purchased to Himself, when grace shall be turned into glory, and the sea of Baptism shall have had its end in that sea of glory which is before the everlasting throne. 10 The LORD shall give strength unto his people : the LORD shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Take the preceding verse of Baptism, and this remarkably applies to Confirmation and to the Blessed Eucharist. The LORD maketh the water-flood to be inhabited : The Lord shall give strength unto His people, as His whole armour is then bestowed when Confirmation is given : the Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace, that Sacrament which was instituted in the same night in which He said, ”Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. Or take it in another sense, as the history of the whole Christian life. The Lord shall give strength unto His people : there you have all its battles, fightings without, fears within. The Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace : peace unbroken, peace everlasting ; Jerusalem, which is the Vision of Peace. ”Then,” says Richard, ”we shall obtain fourfold peace : peace from GOD, from the world, from the flesh, from the devil. The first, by obedience ; the second, by patience ; the third, by abstinence ; the fourth, by prudence ; and all, by prayer. Hear Gerhohus : ”The Lord shall give strength unto His people :

the Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace. There will be a distinction between people and people, as well among the elect as among the reprobate.

For among the reprobate there will be a people that is not to be judged, as it is written, 'He that believeth not is condemned already.' And there will be a people that is to be judged by those words, 'Depart from Me, ye cursed.' In like manner among the elect, there will be a people not to be judged—even those who shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel ; and there will be a people to be judged with those most sweet words, 'Come, ye blessed of My FATHER.' Oh, what strength doth the LORD now give to that His people, even the least among them,—to them in whom He is received and comforted, when an hungered, athirst, sick, and in prison ! Oh, what peace will He hereafter give to all, when He shall wipe away all tears from all eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain ; when of the increase of His government and peace, there shall be no end !"

And therefore : Glory be to the FATHER, That commandeth the waters ; and to the Son, Who is mighty in operation; and to the HOLY GHOST, Who shall give His people the blessing of peace; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Collects.
Give, O LORD, strength unto Thy people, and make us the Temple of the HOLY GHOST, that out of a pure heart we may prepare a whole burnt-offering, that may be acceptable. Through (2.) O GOD, Whose sons—that is, the Angels—offer glory to Thee, and at Whose feet all the Saints lay down their crowns, we beseech Thee with all humility to receive the vows of our minds, and to restrain the concupiscence of our flesh: accept the prayers of Thy servants, and give them the fellowship of Thy holy Angels, that He, Whose voice thundered in majesty and shone in magnificence, may remove the darkness of ignorance from their minds, and may give them the lights of knowledge by which they may merit to behold Thee. Amen. Through (11.) Give, O LORD, strength to Thy people against the ills of all adversity; enrich us with the blessing of Thy peace, that in the abundance of our quiet we may all give glory to Thee in Thy holy temple, and forgetting the misfortunes of this life, may ever render to Thee honour and praise. Amen. Through (11.)

[Deliver us, O GOD, from all evils, and give us a contrite and humbled heart to offer unto Thee for our sins, that, quelling, with Thy mighty operation and glory, all offences which work unrighteousness, Thou mayest bless Thy people in peace. Through (1.)]

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